



Not The Spoken Word

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

Notice of a Special General Meeting - March 21st Term Limits for Committee Members and other matters

Under rule 82 the Club Committee gives notice of a Special General meeting to consider the following alterations to the club rules (changes in bold).

- **Removal of clauses 8 - 13 inclusive**
- 49.3. A committee member may be re-elected **to the same position for a maximum of 5 terms**
- 82.6. A special general meeting convened by members under rule **82**

Discussion

- There is a typo in rule 82.6; the rule referred to at the end of the line should be 82, not 83.
- Clauses 8 to 13 of the rules impose an impractical burden on committee.
- At the club's September 2021 meeting there was some discussion about term limits for committee members and the matter was referred to committee for recommendations. Committee met early in February to consider the issue. It may interest the reader to know that current committee members have served an average of 5.2 years each! The risks of having no term limits are;
 - the loss of opportunity for club members, particularly newer members to shape the direction of the club and;
 - loss of corporate memory should long term office holders leave their positions or the club and;
 - lack of financial oversight.

Instituting term limits for committee members is widely considered a good way to round out the composition of a committee and replenish committee talent. Term limits allow committee to a constant inflow of new talent to the management of the club. Without this policy the club could face the need to replace a large number of committee members, along with their expertise and knowledge at one time.

The 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' principle summarises the arguments against imposing term limits.

The recommendation is that the club rules be altered to incorporate a term limit of 5 years for any one member in any one committee position. This will not preclude committee members running for for a different position on committee once their term is up.

A quorum of 20% of members present in person, or online, or represented by a proxy will be required to make the changes to the club rules. If you can't be at our March meeting in person or online please take a minute to appoint a proxy. You may give specific voting directions to your proxy or leave the vote to their discretion. A proxy may only vote on behalf of 5 members.

The club rules are available on the website at the bottom of the About page.

Doug Cash

Doug was born in Manitoba, Canada, and migrated to Australia in 1923, where he attended Perth Boys' School and the University of Western Australia.

In 1958, he was elected to the Australian House of Representatives as the Liberal member for Stirling and in 1968 he was elected to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly as the member for Mirrabooka, a position he held until 1971.

Doug was involved with cycling for much of his life and was Patron of the League of WA Wheelmen from 1959 to 1976. He died in 2002.

The following is an extract from his extensive writing on cycling in WA, if you enjoy it you can read more here; <https://bit.ly/3heTrHZ>

A highlight of the first half of the year was the running of the "Malvern Star Australian Schoolboys Cycling Championship" heats on the Welshpool Road on 10 June. Two PBS heats over ten miles with winners to the final. There were ten starters in each heat. I rode in the second heat and struck disaster right at the start. When we jumped away my "pusher off" was slow in letting the bike go and down I crashed gathering a few wounds as I fell.

Willing hands got me back on the bike and away I went after the field. In the movies I would have caught the field and then passed the leaders to go on and win. Nothing like that happened here. It took me most of the race to catch them and sit in for a breather. Over the final stages they were too good and I had to settle for fifth place. The winner of the heat was Keith Andrews who went on to greater things in his senior career. I feel sure that the race was always going to turn out that way. I have the Sunday Times (11 June 1933) photo of the pre-start lineup and from that I can recall some heat placings. The first heat was won by Harvey Opie from Tom Patterson, Ean McDonald and H. McLaren. In my heat the minor placings behind Keith Andrews were A. Freeman, R. Cole and my friend Sid Belicke, who finished just in front of me. The times for the ten miles were just over 30 minutes in each heat. I think that was my first or second ride in a race. I was only riding a standard road bike with heavy tyres as did many other juniors. The next year I was to change that and have a more successful season. The Sunday Times picture showed Perth Boys School Headmaster, Tommy Chandler, and our Sportsmaster, Bill Skipworth, with Hubert "Oppy" Opperman and the contestants for the PBS heats.

One piece of luck that I did have earlier in the season was the getting of Hubert Opperman's autograph. Oppy and several other Eastern States riders came to Perth for the cycling championships and thrilled the crowds with some great riding at the WACA. The West Australian riders were top class in those days, notably the Smith brothers. Horrie Marshall, in later years a good friend, was another great rider. On the main night Eddie Smith just beat Oppy in the fifty kilometres track race. Oppy won 20 out of the 28 sprints including the final sprint but Eddie won the race on an overall points tally scoring 88 to Hubert Opperman's 87. When Oppy put his autograph in my book it was like I had won the lottery. A hero is a hero. Who was to know that twenty-six years later we would sit together in the Federal Parliament, and go on to become good friends in politics and in our retirement.

The 1930s were good years for both cycle racing and organised bike-hikes. 1933 was the year of the three-speed gear row, when

referees ruled that variable gears were mechanical devices not approved by the rules. The official approval eventually given for their use only lasted six months, and they were then banned right across Australia by professional and amateur cycling associations. Late in 1933 the WA Amateur Cycling Union broke the ban, and let riders use free-wheel and variable gears in races over 30 miles. In later years common-sense prevailed and their use became common.

The start of the 1934 cycling season saw me join the Metropolitan Junior Cycling Club. The races were held along the Welshpool Road and organised by Greg Chipper, a well-known cyclist who worked for the Malvern Star cycle firm. In 1931, at the Perth trotting track, he raced against a pacer named Desert Bells over one mile. Greg came home strongly to get up and win on the line. Later he specialised in motor-paced cycling. In these record attempts he used a stock model Malvern Star with a 24-inch front wheel fitted. The front forks were reversed to enable the cyclist to keep as near to the pacing motorcycle as possible. The motorbike seat and a 36" windshield were set at the back of the machine to help break the wind. Long handlebars were fitted. Record attempts were over a flying quarter mile, and Greg reached speeds around 70 mph, the fastest the motorbike could go. The many cycle shops did a good trade in new machines, repairs and spare parts. They were run by men who did a lot for cycling. Several shops were run by ex-cyclists or men who had cyclists in their family. It was the cycle shop men who put the club notices and programmes in their windows and donated the race prizes. A new saddle, a tyre or a pair of gloves, was always worth winning.

I rode a Gordonson bike so Tommy and Neil Gordon are first on my list. Tommy won the first Northam-Perth and later held several WA motor-cycling records. The Gordons did a great service to cycling at the 340-342 Wellington Street shop where they made their bicycles. They went out of their way to be helpful and friendly to us all. Later they moved from the north side of the street to across the road when their premises were resumed by the Government. However, fifty-plus years later, you can still buy a Gordonson bicycle in Wellington Street but you must go to the modern premises at No. 587.

The 1934 price for a Gordonson club tourer cycle was about nine pounds (\$18) with a free raincape and a free accident and theft insurance policy thrown in. The usual deposit was 20/- (\$2) and repayments were 4/- (40c) a week. I do remember licensing my bike for 1/- (10c) and the policeman stamping a number under the frame. A number plate was issued. We never had the cycle theft problem that we have today and I believe that all bicycles should come under a stamping system that will give clear proof of ownership.

Other cycle shops that I remember are Arrow Cycles run by the McDonalds who also made trotting spiders. The Swansea Cycles shop was owned and run by the Baldwin brothers, Howard and Les, at Fremantle. Congress Cycles was run by Syd Congdon at his shop on the east side of Barrack Street, probably at number 122 or 124. Bruce Small and Malvern Star were in a big way in Forrest Place, having been helped along by the fame and popularity of the legendary Hubert Opperman and other great riders of the Malvern Star team like Hefty Stuart, Fatty Lamb, and the Smith brothers.

My cycling career was not spectacular in any way but I was happy to achieve moderate success. In the 1930s many of us mixed cycle racing with football. This was not seen as an ideal combination of sports if we were hoping to achieve success at top level in either field. However we enjoyed both sports so much that it was hard to make the decision to concentrate on one only. Two riders who did make a good job of the two sports at the one time were Colin Campbell and Athol Barker. Another good rider of my time was Jack Cassidy who in later years switched to yachting and achieved fame as the skipper of twenty-two yachts named "Evelyn".

In the early part of the 1934 junior cycling season I made little progress. However, once I started work, I benefited from the extra training received while riding to and from the job, and pedalling about the city each day. By the time I left McAlinden's I had shown some form and racked up a few points in the Arrow Cycles Consistency Competition. By the middle of September I had scored 46 points which put me 10 points behind the leader, Harold Smith, on equal terms with Tim Hutchinson and Andy Ford, one point ahead of Brian O'Keefe, and 2 points ahead of Len Sutton. Lennie had shown consistent form by gaining the fastest time in 13 races. He went on to greater things in the sport and his boys followed him.

The last race of the season was held at Welshpool on Sunday 28 October and it was won by a front-marker named Fletcher from Ean McDonald (now a city architect and long-term councillor) and

then came Jim Skett. Fastest time went to Vin Wallis (a member of our Yokine Bowling Club) from Ray Moore, who was also a friend down through the years. In this race the leaders in the Arrow Cycles award for consistency finished in a bunch and after the points for the season were tallied and checked, my score was 72 points.

It gave me the Cup from Brian O'Keefe with 66 points and Harold Smith with 65 points. Most of our prizes through the season were orders on cycle shops so I was pleased to win another cup, having won an eight-mile Cup race earlier in the season. Somewhere I have that little cup with its race details, including the time 20 mins 45 secs. One reminder of the Arrow Consistency Cup win is the Mirror photo captioned "HE WON IT ON A GORDONSON". (CORRECTION: The Mirror read "He May Be An Opperman One Day", it was the New Call and Bailey's Weekly that read "THE WINNER ROAD A GORDONSON".)

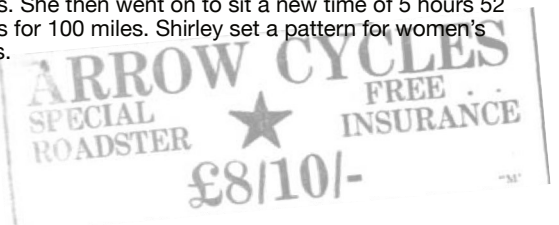
Some fellow riders I remember are Charlie Capstick, Bill Innes, Sid Belicke, Bill McWhirter, Jack Concannon, Bill McDonald, Ken Vidler, Merv Fimmell, and the Schoolboys' Championship riders of 1933. The Metropolitan Ladies Cycling Club raced fortnightly and the girls I remember racing include Gladys O'Connor, Gwen (?) Barrow, Jean McWhirter, and Shirley Hillman. We were all good friends and had lots of fun on the regular sponsored bike hikes.

Over the next few years I would become more involved with cycling on the official side while still having a ride or two. Later I would be organiser, secretary, and commentator at different times in an association with cycling that would last for forty years or more. I was not to know that my continuing interest in the sport would culminate in my being Patron of the League of WA Wheelmen from 1959-1976, that is until we moved to Darwin early in early 1976.

Bill Humphreys was one member of the Malvern Star/BSA team who rode with success. He put up a great ride in 1935 to win 1st and Fastest Time honours in the Bunbury to Donnybrook race. He was at his best in long-distance cycling and had a few records to his credit. A barber by trade he later teamed up with W.J. Lucas. I saw Bill in action in the shop windows of Lucas Cycles in 1936 pedalling away on a Lucas on his way setting a record of 3 hours 40 minutes for 100 miles (160km) on rollers. Roller competitions were popular in Perth. The public enjoyed the one-to-one contests and record-chasing rides held in Boans' Murray Street windows. They attracted big lunchtime crowds. Boans-named bike was the Bluebird and I remember that good cyclist "Blue" Pender riding a Bluebird in those window demonstrations of cycles, rollers, and records.

How did we fill in our time after the cycling and footy seasons were over? Bike hikes were the answer, sometimes to the beach and sometimes to the countryside which was not really far from the city in those days. Armadale was only 18 miles (29km) out then but the countryside along the way has now disappeared. Development along every mile has gradually swallowed up every little farmlet, roadside fruit and produce stall, and every shady spot alongside the highway. No more do those bright little Willie Wagtails flit from the back of one animal to another for the sheep and the cows and other grazing stock are missing, and our cheeky little birds are no longer there. The bush creatures have migrated and only the crows and the magpies and an occasional kookaburra are left to mock us for our lack of a greenbelt philosophy in past years.

Shirley Hillman, a regular hiker, was also a keen competitor. She had reddish hair and freckles and a friendly personality. She would have been about five feet tall and about eight stone (50kg). She trained hard for an attempt on the Women's Cycling record for the 61-mile (98km) course from Northam to Perth. When the big day arrived the winds were blowing so strong that Dean Toseland, the South Australian road champion, and his partner Billy Read had to postpone their attempt on the men's tandem record for the same trip. Shirley decided she would go. It was a brave decision for the strong winds at gale force almost pulled her off the bicycle. After a very hard ride she reached Perth just two minutes outside the record. A few weeks before Xmas Shirley set a new record of 2 hours 59 minutes. She then went on to sit a new time of 5 hours 52 minutes for 100 miles. Shirley set a pattern for women's records.



Port Hedland by Recumbent

Port Hedland. Bob Reynolds reckons that's the furthest anyone rode one of his Flash 'Easyrider' recumbent bikes.

Recumbents place the rider in a laid back position with the pedals forward of the rider's hips. Riders choose the design for ergonomic reasons: the rider's weight is distributed over a larger area than an upright bicycle. Most recumbents also have an aerodynamic advantage too; the reclined, legs-forward position of the rider's body presents a smaller frontal profile. In fact the world speed record for a bicycle is held by a recumbent rider. While the basic design has been around since the late 19th century the comparative rarity of recumbents lends them an air of innovation.

Once long term Flash frame builder Bill Shackleton taught Bob how to braze bicycle tubing he set to work prototyping his idea. The first design, a prone bike, was abandoned due to poor rider visibility.

Conventional 'diamond frame' bikes are strong and light, but they place the rider high up and a fall such as the one 16 year old Ron Witt had in his teens can result in serious injury. Ron dreamt of owning a long wheelbase bike with a low centre of gravity for years after his accident and had even mocked up his own design out of timber. Driving through Midland one day he was excited to see a display of five recumbents outside the Flash shop. Ron commissioned a recumbent with the intention of touring.

In 1985 he set off on his first long ride - Port Hedland and return. Loaded touring can be slow at the best of times but strong headwinds on the road north saw Ron's speed rarely go above 11kmh. On a 500km side trip to Shay Gap, where tailwinds boosted him to 40kmh on gravel roads, the Flash's long wheelbase handling was surefooted and relaxed.

Ultimately Bob Reynolds sold a dozen Flash 'Easyriders' from the early 1980's to the early 1990's. Ron Witt still rides a recumbent. He was part of the team for the locally designed Cruzbike Sigma for which he holds two patents.



Stuck in the Shed with Robbie Harrold

What are you currently working on?

The shed actually, not the one in the photo but one in Fremantle. Trying to get it sorted to make working on bikes easier.

How many rideable bikes do you have?

Only one! I have several that can go but only one set of reliable wheels to share between them. Once the shed is done the next job is wheel rebuilds!

If push comes to shove what is your favourite bike?

For sentimental reasons only, my Ricardo Le Tour that was bought for me in 1986. Got me to and from high school and many weekends up the bush and on gravel roads before mountain bikes were really a thing. Then several years of service up in Perth, to and from tech and work, with all my gear loaded up in my Wilderness Equipment panniers.

And it's the last brand new bike I've owned!

What was your first bike?

Oh, that was a beauty too!

In 1974 I was given a Malvern Star Scrambler (hi-rise handle bars, banana seat and a sissy bar on the back) for my birthday. It was unceremoniously converted to a BMX about 6 years later, not before the grips slid off those hi-rise bars mid flight over Narrogin's first (unofficial) BMX track on the vacant block next to where the Blythe boys lived.

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

Well I still have dreams of riding a BMX, doing all sorts of tricks I could never do in real life, but the dream usually ends before I can read the make on the head tube. Sorry.

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

Podcasts through headphones mostly, but when I want a break from that it's John Lee Hooker (sometimes with Canned Heat) cranked through the stereo.



Club Calendar

Mon 21st Mar 19:30

Special General Meeting

Speaker Alan Naber - The Social History of Cycling

In-person at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville

Online Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

(Check your email for the clickable link and meeting password close to the date).

Sun 3rd Apr 10am to 3pm Display

Curtin FM Classic Car Show

Trinity playing fields, 6 Elderfield Road Waterford, WA, 6152 Australia

We're joining the infernal combustion engine brigade for this Curtin FM fundraiser. The venue is open to displaying members from 6:30am. Set up should be complete by 9:30am.

Club contact Mal Bell

Mon 18th Apr 19:30 General Meeting

In-person at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville

Online Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

(Check your email for the clickable link and meeting password close to the date).

Fri 22nd - Sun 24th Apr (ANZAC weekend)

York Heritage Festival Display and Ride

Sunday is likely to be the main.

Details TBC - Club contact Bill Raczkowski.

Sun 1st May 09:00 Moondyne Festival

We're back in Toodyay for the Moondyne Festival. The display location is in front of the old fire station on Stirling St.

Mon 16th May 19:30 General Meeting

In-person at 41 Britannia Road, Leederville

Online Zoom Meeting ID: 896 2070 3705

(Check your email for the clickable link and meeting password close to the date).

For Sale

• Sullivan of Tasmania penny farthing - 30 years old, 46" wheel

• 1937 Armstrong mens racing bike

Offers invited

Malcolm Buckland - 95279427

malcolm.buckland@gmail.com

1967 Allin of Croydon - Stan Butler Special

Campag, Fiamme, Stronglight, Ucanitor, Cinelli, Mafac. 63cm seat tube CTT, 58cm top tube CTC

Reasonable condition but will need a clean, new chain and a rear tyre at a minimum. Frame #1952

Photos; <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmWKS66>

\$600 Rob Frith 0411555607 robert@frith.net.au

Lyotard History

Throughout much of the post-war period French firm Lyotard held a dominant position in the lightweight pedal market. Being fitted both as original equipment by most of the major British manufacturers and sold as accessories via the two major importers Ron Kitching and Holdsworth.

Pierre Lyotard founded the company in the early 1920's. During that decade they produced the first versions of the pedal, which I would argue, was their most innovative contribution to cycle development, the "Marcel Berthet" platform pedal (left). The foot rested on a wide platform, by its nature it was extremely comfortable especially for riders with broad feet. It needed to be used with toe clips as it was single sided.

It was named after Marcet Berthet a French racing cyclist who held the hour record three times twice in 1907 and once in 1913, he was the principal rival of Oscar Egg the Swiss rider who later invented the Osgear derailleur.

The Marcel Berthet became known as the MB23 and remained in production until the mid 1980's. Just before the war the shoe pickup plate ceased to be one piece. The earliest reference I can find to this pedal in Britain is in an advert in the CTC Gazette in 1939 when it is referred to as the 'Continental'. For a component with such a long history there were remarkably few variants. However in common with other Lyotard pedals there were different thread lengths for steel or alloy cranks and the MB23 TF which had threaded holes for toe clips.

It was very popular with cycletourists due to the high degree of comfort. During the bike boom years of the 70's Shimano, MKS and SR produced copies. One MKS copy, the 505, was counter weighed so the platform side always faced upwards-facing toe clip entry easy. Earlier in the 50's Constrictor copied the design with their Asp model. A very high quality copy was produced by the British firm Barelli based near Cambridge in the late 70's. This featured a range of detachable plates and is now extremely collectable.

Extract from an article by Steve Griffiths on Classic Lightweights

<https://bit.ly/3t2F2WC>



The Humble Bicycle

Here's a tip from Alan Naber for the listen on demand and podcast devotees among us;

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/rearvision/the-humble-bicycle/12433352>

