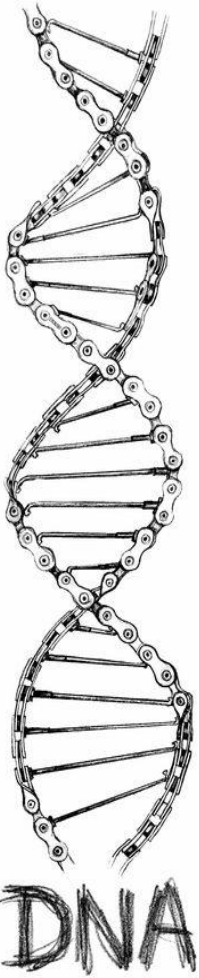


CYCLIST'S



**I ♥
Cycling**

**DON'T RIDE A BIKE TO ADD DAYS TO YOUR LIFE.
RIDE A BIKE TO ADD LIFE TO YOUR DAYS!**



Progressive Breakfast – Cornwall Park



Wednesday Ride - Bridge South Western Motorway

Don't buy upgrades, just ride up grades!



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YOUR COMMITTEE APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2018

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REGULAR CLUB RIDES

Saturday rides depart at 9:00am from regular departure points around the city. These rides include a mid-ride café stop, so remember to bring a few dollars. Rides are about 30-40kms and are usually completed by midday. For detailed ride information, view the Club's website and select 'Rides Programme' from the menu.

Sunday rides depart at 9:00am from differing venues. This is an all-day ride, usually in the country, and can be anything from 50-100kms. A café stop is hopefully included mid-morning. Also, remember to bring your lunch! For detailed ride information, view the Club's website and select 'Rides Programme' from the menu.

Wednesday rides leave at 9:30am from The Bakehouse Café, Kumeu. This is a ride in the country and can be anything from 30 - 60kms, including a mid-morning café stop. Remember to bring your lunch!

1st Wednesday Month Ride 9.30am departure from somewhere in central Auckland (often from the CBD Ferry Terminal). Members are advised of details in advance.

3rd Wednesday Month Ride 9.30am departure from Ron Keat Drive, Papakura at the back of the railway station. This ride will wait for the 9.20am train to arrive. A leader will be decided on the day but Bill Pepler peplers@ihug.co.nz, 09 266 6846, 021 073 7019 is the coordinator and contact for new people who want to try out this ride. **NB: Despite the 1st and 3rd Wednesday rides, the usual Wednesday rides from Kumeu remain unchanged.**

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ACTA editor and/or ACTA. committee. Readers should exercise their own judgement when considering technical matters or any other information/advice.

Hi and welcome to your February 2018 Spokesman...

HAPPY NEW YEAR to all Members! My wife, Gaye, and I hope you all had a lovely festive season and were able to keep cycling.

Thank you to all those who are making contributions to our SPOKESMAN magazine. I am especially grateful that we have quite a full magazine to start 2018. I have since received some articles from others regarding tours in 2017. However, regretfully, I am unable to include them in what is already a full and interesting February Issue. Rest assured that such contributions are not rejected and will be included in the next quarter (May) Issue.

I am also grateful in receiving a letter with comments concerning an article in the previous issue. I welcome such comments in the form of a **“Letter to the Editor”** (due to the nature of the subject, I decided, in this instance, that the writer should remain anonymous). However, I do hope that members will consider writing to the Editor, should they have constructive comments concerning any articles in the previous issue. The writers of such letters would not, normally, be kept anonymous. I would also welcome any feedback as to the current layout and format of the SPOKESMAN and any specific topics for articles you would like included in future issues.

Remember also, that should you have, or have come across, some information concerning cycling that is very brief, but you think it would be of interest to other members, I would also welcome it and include it in the section I have entitled *Snippets*.

While I try to include all upcoming events (especially those concerning ACTA), it is not always possible to include all events (especially some of those being organized by *Auckland Transport Cycling* due to the fact that our SPOKESMAN Magazine is issued quarterly and some upcoming events in the latter part of the quarter including event dates may not have been finalized when the *SPOKESMAN* is issued. Therefore, I would encourage members to go onto the websites of *Auckland Transport* and *Bike Auckland* where they may come across cycling events of interest to them in which they might like to participate.

Just a reminder that *The SPOKESMAN* is issued in February, May, August and November. *Happy reading*, and I hope the forthcoming issues are of interest to you. Also, *happy riding!*



Your Editor,

Stu Andrews

Message from your President...

What a marvellous start to the year! I went on our first ride for the year, the Wednesday ride on 3 January and there were 28 keen cyclists who took the route to the cafe in Mangere. I don't think the cafe quite knew what had struck them, with so many cyclists arriving in one hit! This was our alternative first Wednesday ride and it was excellent to see it so well supported, with people not even put off with Tony Hooks' reputation from his hilly Waiheke ride. And two more people even turned up at Kumeu.

Athol's first Sunday ride was well supported and there were 13 people on Louise's fabulous new ride from Te Hoe, despite it being a long drive for many. It was well worth it to ride on those idyllic Waikato country roads, with an interesting morning tea and lunch stop. It's certainly been hot enough for some superb summer riding.

Thanks to those new leaders who are stepping up after my last plea, it is what we must have to keep the club going strongly as we head to our 70th anniversary in 2019!!

It's sad to have a few of our riders having falls and being off the bike, we wish them all well and hope to see them soon. It's great that some of those who are currently not riding still turn up to morning tea spots to keep in touch with the gang. This shows that ACTA is a wonderful community!

We have our AGM coming up on the 24 March, so please think about whether you would want to be involved in the committee or have a specific skill to contribute.

Cherry Cycling

Annette



Letter to the Editor

Butt Management

It was with great interest I read your article entitled “A Sensitive Subject That Affects Cyclists” i.e. “Butt Management” in the last Spokesman Issue No. 124 in November 2017. I would just like to add another useful tip. Even if one does all the right things that you had pointed out, you can still have major issues down below. Maybe it could be due to an extra-long day in the saddle, or, perhaps, extremely hot weather where you can become extra sweaty, or just bad luck, for whatever reason.

If you are away on an unsupported tour, taking time off the saddle may not necessarily be a practical option. If one has a particularly sore spot, e.g. chaffing, rubbing to the extent of bleeding, and making sitting down on a chair painful let alone the thought of sitting on a bicycle seat, I would suggest the following to be a tried and proven possible solution.

I have found that “Compeed” Blister plasters are worth their weight in gold. (They are designed for a blister on your heel, and available at your chemist). They are oval shaped, with adhesive around the edges, but not in the middle area. They come in two different sizes, small and medium. I find the medium size works well. They work just like a second skin. I now personally carry them at the top of my first aid kit. Also, a very small mirror is useful to be able to assess the damage and to make sure you stick the middle area of the plaster over the wound. The instruction recommends applying to clean and dry skin, but I also use a very minute amount of Benpanthen ointment, which is an antiseptic cream. I apply it directly on top of the broken skin (the wound), but keep the ointment well clear of the outside where the blister pack will be sticking. Perhaps you could put the ointment on the night before, and then, with the assistance of the mirror, apply the “Compeed” blister plaster to your butt the next morning. It can be very soothing and help calm things down a lot. I found it stayed in position for several days, even after showering. Eventually, you may need to apply a second one, if required. I know I am not the only person in the club to have used these blister plasters very successfully for this purpose.



Comment from the Editor

I very much appreciate this contribution, which should be read in the context of the article in the SPOKESMAN 124 November 2017 Issue. However, due to the sensitive nature of the subject, I am deliberately keeping the author anonymous.

Apulia Italy Cycle Tour September 2017 by Robyn and Bill Duffy

(Editor's Comment: This Tour was undertaken by Robyn and Bill in September 2017 before joining an ACTA Group riding in Spain in September/ October 2017. An article concerning the ACTA Spain Tour was included in the November 2017 Issue)

Apulia is a province in the far, south eastern corner of Italy (Sometimes known as the "Heel" of the "boot" of Italy) It's beauty surpassed other areas we had previously seen in Italy. Apulia is steeped in 9 thousand years of history with settlements that make Rome and Florence young towns!



Last September Robyn suggested a "warm up" ride in Apulia with "Exodus Travels" before meeting up with 6 other riders from ACTA in Spain.

Apulia held another attraction, (to both of us) as our fathers had served as N.Z. soldiers during the 2nd World war, and were either stationed near, or, transited through, the Port of Bari whilst on active service in Italy. The small, traditional Trulli dwellings which featured in family photo albums, and postcards from this era, had intrigued us first as children, and had later piqued our interest in the area as adults.

We flew from Zurich to Bari and then went by train to the ancient town of Matera.

Matera is one of the oldest continuously "lived-in" cities in the world, having been inhabited since the 10th Millennium BC. The prehistoric troglodyte settlement is suspected to be among one of the first human settlements in Italy. There is evidence that people were living there as early as the year 7000 BC.

We met up with *Marco*, (local guide and keen cyclist) who explained the 6-day itinerary, and introduced us to the history of the land and the people of Apulia. Approximately 20 other persons of similar age from other European countries were also doing the self-guided 6-day ride around the "Heel". We were fitted with comfortable cross bikes

with map holders and 1 pannier bag each. *Exodus* provided daily luggage transfers to excellent 3 Star B&Bs. Our only responsibility was to read our maps and find our way to the destinations in the heat!



Map Holder provided by "Exodus Travels" for Self-guided Tour



The ancient town of Matera

After filling our new blue drink bottles from the ancient fountain, in the town square – having been assured by Marco that the water, diverted via ancient subterranean aqueducts beneath the city, was safe to drink, we set off to our next destination, Alberobello. We both had to keep reminding ourselves, to keep to the right-hand side of the road, whilst we exited the busy town of Matera, and environs.

We cycled almost entirely on quiet country lanes under brilliant blue skies, (Daily max. temp 26-32) stopping occasionally at ancient wells, for a top up, and spying out large fig trees, for an end of season treat. The roads were generally about 3m wide, lined with dry stone walls alive with darting lizards. Tiny wild, miniature cyclamen and crocus flowers, (curbside) were evidence of autumn. The drivers along these roads travelled at approx. 30 km/h and were courteous! Three flattened black snakes, noted along the way, made us wary of wandering too far into the undergrowth for comfort stops.

The rural scenery was always picturesque, and had a beauty of its own with small, self-contained holdings growing a variety of produce with a dominance of very old olive trees. Local people are poor, but not in spirit! We sometimes lost our bearings, but local people were always helpful, even if we had to resort to sign language at times! Our accommodation was always based in centuries old dwellings, in the historical centers of the towns.

Our 1st day's ride of 75 kms took us to Alberobello, a world heritage town. Many of the houses are the unique "Trulli" style, dry stone, corbelled or keystone vaulted construction of limestone, many centuries old.



One of the "Trulli" houses where Robyn and Bill stayed overnight



An ancient Roman Gate

We then made our way to Ostuni, overlooking the Adriatic Sea. Some of the olive trees here are 3000 years old!



Robyn riding near Ostuni



Ostuni Township



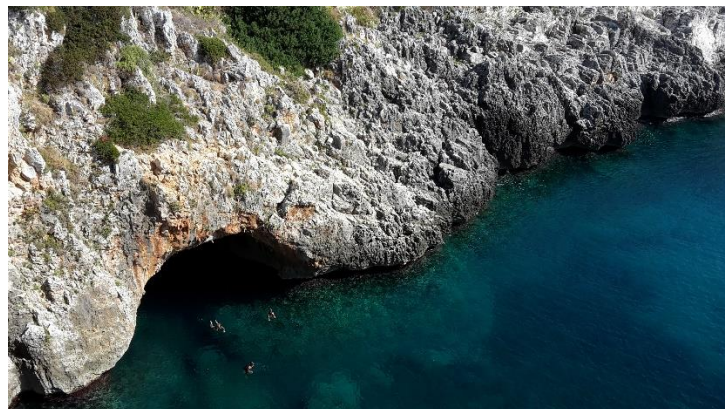
A café near Lecce

The next morning our group of some 25 cyclists went by 2 separate trains to Lecce (about 100kms). The guard on the train was not very impressed as we had to place some bikes in the aisles. We then cycled through quiet roads to the Ionian Sea coast and on to Gallipoli. Each day consisted of about 50 km mainly flat cycling back around the heel, to Lecce.

The ancient towns were again a feast of culture and history. When we could, we took time, of course, to have refreshing swims and stop at the many bars for beer or coffee, sometimes meeting up with the other cyclists.



Lunch at a remote farm



A grotto on the Adriatic Coast on our way back to Lecce

We very much enjoyed this Italian trip, and then flew on to Alicante in Spain, to meet the other ACTA riders for more rides under brilliant blue skies during September/ October 2017! (It rained in Auckland most of the time we were away.)

ACTA Northland Supported Tour Thurs 2 - Tues 14 November by Marieke van Zon

Once again, a group of us took up the joyful challenge to ride the ACTA tour in the far north.



The ACTA November 2017 Supported Northland Tour Group

Day 1

All 15 of us were ready to go early, along the waterfront of Whangarei. There were beautiful paths for both walkers and bikers along the waterfront. We then went through lovely park surroundings with great artworks of Maori design and a walk /bike bridge embedded with paua shell designs.

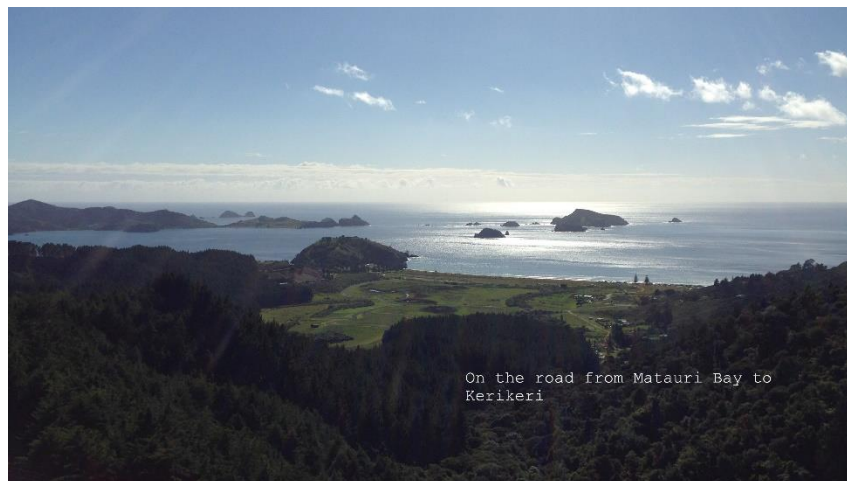
After that we had a steep climb over Vinegar Hill in misty rain and into Hikurangi, a nice little place with a curio /antique shop joint with a cafe where they served a fine coffee and muffins.

After morning tea/ coffee, we started out toward Oakura through Valley Rd., which took us over high hills on gravel. We had lunch on the side of the road and we were almost at the point of getting a rescue party out with first aid gear as "JB" (John Billinge) had not turned up. Fortunately, he and his dearest friends finally joined us. It was then onwards and upwards to Helena Bay. Oh dear! Disaster struck again with "JB" having another flat tyre (where does he buy them?)

Under grey skies when on the road to Oakura, some people shot past in their great haste to enjoy a hot shower! Although it was a little chilly and grey, we all cozied up and enjoyed a scrumptious dinner in the picnic shelter with views of the Whangaruru harbour.

Day 2

We made a start at 0830 from Whangaruru, going up and down hills and along the lovely bays to Russell (New Zealand's first charming capital). There, the first group caught the Ferry, which was just on the point of leaving for Paihia, where John "Sloop" Briers joined the group. Once all the rest had crossed Pomare Bay, we rode to the Treaty grounds and had a picnic lunch under shady trees. After lunch we rode through Opuia Forest over some really quite rough gravel patches to Kerikeri. Some very independent people were led astray by their own navigation imagination but thankfully we did end up together at the camp in Kerikeri.



Day 3

Overnight rain persisted into the day, but we set off hoping for a change! A group of 8 went with Kathy through the Puketi Forest and others went along the main road. Those that rode through the forest had the most glorious experience walking on a boardwalk around a magnificent stand of kauri trees all shrouded in misty rain, a true reward for the soggy ride on gravel. After meeting up in Kaeo and having lunch together, we then rode the steep hills of Martin Rd to Matauri Bay - what a splendid sight from the top of the hill! Some of us had a swim in the crystal-clear water where the gulls screeched overhead defending their chicks. Others climbed the steep hill to the monument in remembrance of the "Rainbow Warrior" (the "Greenpeace" ship bombed in Auckland), which was sunk in the bay to provide an artificial reef for divers. For dinner, we were taxied up the hill where the local ladies served a splendid meal.



Day 4

After leaving Matauri Bay, the first hill of the day was a 170 M climb to work off last night's dinner. We then rode up and down in what had now become a wonderful sunny day with glorious views and a little side tour along the Whangaroa Harbour to the posh boating club to view "Sloop's" motor launch called "Valerie". She was built in 1929 and is still going strong. She is a fine "old lady". Her engine was tested as we admired her fine portholes and native timber decks, all with the penetrating smell of diesel.

After riding a short distance down the main road, we turned into Weber Road and struck more gravel. The group then decided to split into two, some continuing down the main road while others (the tough ones?) chose to brave more gravel. We all met up again in the picturesque town of Mangonui and licked a delicious ice cream while admiring the lovely harbour. A few more "humps" and, yeah, we were in Cable Bay in John (Sloop's) and Jackie's Driftwood Lodge where we had a delicious dinner. From the Lodge we had even more views of the bay. The sounds of the surf sent our wary bodies to sleep.



Day 5: Rest Day

Being a "Rest Day" each member of the group made his or her own choice of activities.

Hats were donned for the Melbourne Cup, with betting on the horses becoming a "must". Dinner that night was a true celebration, thanks to Jackie, our "*chef extraordinaire*"

Day 6

Overnight it was rainy and stormy with waves thundering onto the beach. We felt that maybe we should delay our departure. However, in the end we left at 10 am, in the rain. At the turnoff to Karikari Peninsula five of the group, who had been there before, chose to carry on to Awanui and the others rode to Tokerau Beach, a place with lots of

holiday homes, but not much happening because it was not yet summer holidays. The weather cleared and we had some hot coffee and watched the clouds overhead and the grey seas. Onto Rangiputa Golden Sands where we had a fine view of “gold and blue”, but where the wind was strong and we lunched in the shelter of the van. We then rode back to the main road in a fierce headwind, with cows in the paddocks all looking at us and deciding to run along for a while. We then rode across the island to Awanui and onwards to Ninety Mile Beach Holiday Park. The Tasman Sea looked grey and wild, but magnificent. The dinner served to thwart our hunger was so large that you could feed two persons from one plate.

Day 7

A beautiful day dawned and we got picked up by the 4X4 Harrison's tourist bus to be driven along the spectacularly beautiful “90 mile beach”. Our bikes were, meanwhile, driven in a trailer by John (“Sloop”) to Cape Reinga.

The Tasman Sea, that great blue yonder came in shore with spume fluffed rollers at the incoming tide. Robin Collins our driver (Irish father and Maori mother) was a very entertaining fellow who told us about the land, the beach, fish and birds. He also shared fine jokes!



After 88 km of grand views and great company as well as passing many Te Araroa walkers, we arrived at the Te Pahi Stream and the foot of high sand dunes. Some chose only to climb up and down, but five of us chose to climb up and slide down on a boogie board. Following “OSH protocol”, Robin gave us a quick course in how to slide down safely. “JB” rushed down at a great speed and somersaulted twice into the creek. Susan seemed to be much more skilled and only got a little wet, whereas Margaret could not get enough of it and slid twice! Robin said if there are broken bones with this sliding adventure the Fuller bus company, which are competition to Harrison's, sends for a helicopter and has the injured scooped up and choppered to Whangarei Base Hospital, while he jokingly suggested his company would just shoot them! After this lot of fun, we bussed to Cape Reinga and admired the grand views of Cape Maria van Diemen and the colliding of the oceans just north of the light house - all in azure blue and white.



The bikes had magically arrived and, after lunch amongst the tourist cars and vans on the parking lot, we rode down the road to Waitiki Landing.

A small group went with the van to Spirits Bay. This glorious beach seems to have remained pretty much the same since 1972. The pink areas on the beach are formed by parts of shells endlessly polished by the incoming and outgoing tides. There are more interesting shells higher on the beach, the lagoon runs rapidly towards the ocean full of tannin stained water and the conglomerate of rock pillars have been standing in the centre of the channel for the last century. A homemade nacho meal in the fishy smelling kitchen made a great finish of a lovely day.

Day 8

On our bikes we rode from Waitiki into the cool morning up and down and off the main road to the White Sands Beach. This sand (Silica) has been used for glass making in the past. A quick peek at the settlement on Paua Road was, strangely, not encouraged by the locals! Further down this gravel road and closer to the sand in the lee of a derelict asbestos clad shed on the estuary, we had our tea and coffee. However, we did not tarry there for long, but went back to the main road. Some then braved more gravel riding to Ararawa Beach, while others felt more like having a drink in the Houhora pub. Would you believe that some of those folks did not even see the sign leading to the famous pub - I mean to say!!! We did spy them later in Pukenui having a beer though. Finally, we rode into the camp at Houhora Heads - a great place with a charming 50's and 60's feel, but with modern cabins and views of the tide rushing out.

Day 9

We left Houhora at 0830 and, just over the main road, we rode into a side road with many avocado and kiwi fruit orchards. We then rode through a forest with very young trees and spotted wild horses roaming around. We then proceeded further into mature forests and found an apiary with hives stacked up against the wall of a building and, as you can no doubt imagine, great swarms of bees humming around. Just across the road was Lake Ngatu where the local community had an event encouraging adults and children to walk the 4kms around the lake with their pets! Some of our group took the inland road to Awanui and others cruised along the main road. One of our very enthusiastic touring bikers overshot Awanui and had to come back all of 8 km from Kaitaia, where he had stilled his hunger with an Angus Burger. Naturally, we were all glad to see him return after the anxiety of losing him. We then all enjoyed a

celebratory drink in the cafe on the corner. For the last leg into Ahipara, some took sandhills and others the main road through Kaitaia, which is a busy road to Ahipara. The camp in Ahipara had been modernised in the last few years and was indeed a delight to be in - we could all sit along on the huge macracapa tree slab tables to chat.

Day 10

As this was going to be a rather long day riding, everyone was ready to go at 0745. It was very hilly with a cool breeze and strong head winds. We had to have a “stand up” tea and coffee just before Broadwood. Although we experienced beautiful scenery, paddocks, cattle, little streams and wild flowers in bloom, it was always up and down to test our muscles. Finally, it became FLAT along the upper reaches of the Hokianga Harbour. We rode along great forests of mangrove trees to Kokukoku. We then had a picnic lunch in the nice little park on the harbour before heading for the ferry. However, while our support van got on, all the bikers had to wait for an hour since we arrived at the ferry just a minute or so too late! We whiled away our time in the lee of a shelter, but as this had stoved-in windows, the lee was patchy to say the least.



The ferry to Rawene finally came and we crossed this fine stretch of water to a picturesque little town where some had a nice time visiting the Parnell Art Gallery in which local artists displayed their works. A few more hills and there, around the corner, was Opononi. Bliss, a long ride, but oh so good! Some then had a short bracing swim in the Hokianga Harbour with the incoming tide pushing us along.



Day 11

We left Opononi on a cloudy and chilly morning. We rode up the famous hill to a lookout for a look back onto the magnificent sand dunes and the grey water of the harbour. When heading towards Mamaku, we all donned our raingear as a cold shower rained down upon us. Then, as we rode further up, the weather cleared and the forest and the valley below showed off their beautiful green colours, with cows roaming in paddocks now and then and we also experienced a pheasant screeching. We then rode through the windy road in Waipoua Forest and stopped at “*Tane Mahuta*”, the magnificent kauri tree, (Father of the Forest) and the pride of New Zealand. It is difficult to accurately estimate the age of Tane Mahuta, but it is estimated it may have sprung from seed around 2000 years ago during the lifetime of Christ. A ride through this priceless Waipoua forest is a joy to behold.



Tane Mahuta

We then rode over the hills where we had views of country life and peeks of the Tasman sea. We then visited the Kauri Shop where there were lovely coffee tables, platters and bowls and giant slabs made of beautiful kauri wood, which we wouldn't have minded buying, but, alas, how do you carry that heavy stuff on your bike? From the Kauri Shop we rode around the back including one more little hill and then into Dargaville where we passed some very nice homes - one of those was an Art Deco home for sale! We stayed yet again in the camp made from converted railway freight wagons, which is both interesting and nice.

The official Farewell dinner was at Jo's where speeches were made and great appreciation was shown for the hard work done by Annette, Susan, Ron and Kathy. Special gifts were received by people whom had “happenings”, such as more than one flat tyre or flying past some famous establishment without noticing it.

This then was the end of a memorable tour of the North in this beautiful Land of the Long White Cloud.

"The Art of Getting Lost" on the Northland Supported Tour by President Annette Collins

In her annual speech at the ACTA Christmas Luncheon, President Annette commented on the ACTA Northland Supported Tour in November 2017 and the "**Art of Getting Lost**".

Many would argue about whether this is an art form or not, but we saw such specialisation of it on our Northland tour that I thought I should share with others. Traditionally, what goes on tour stays on tour, but I think this is a story I can share.

On **Day 1** Bill & Geoff started the art form, by overshooting the turnoff and doing a good job of checking out the first part of the next day's ride, Bill got to do some chasing after Geoff once Marg got hold of him.

We were joined on **Day 2** by John "Sloop" Briers, and within half an hour of joining us he, John Billinge "JB" and Warwick, rode at the front and overshot a turning, ending up at Hururu Falls. We were riding in forestry roads and we had to pass through lots of signs saying "*no access*". The tracks had some extra gravel for forestry trucks, making the track very rough for bikes. Eventually, the lost boys found us. However, a short while later, JB, in order to cement his reputation, overshot again, and, predictably, it was just before we turned off. Fortunately, he made phone contact with "Sloop" who worked out he had come out further along the road, so "Sloop" got him to wait and we then met up with JB again picked him up and prevented him from going the wrong direction.

On **Day 4**, we divided into two groups being the "gravel huggers" and those choosing the seal on the main road. Only Warwick, JB, Steve, Kathy and Marg chose the gravel route. Warwick and JB were scooting along enjoying the gravel, so Kathy said to them be sure to stop at the next turning. And you guessed, they sailed on right past without noticing the turning. Out of earshot they didn't hear a shout! When eventually they stopped, they waited, but the others never arrived. The story goes that Warwick and JB had a little nap on the side of the road and then tried to flag down a few motorists, two of who were terrified to stop when they saw that "scrawny scouse" (JB). Eventually one stopped and gave them the direction to get to Mangonui. However, if you talk to Warwick he says he looked to the sky and pointed and off they went. Both groups did eventually arrive at Mangonui, but not together!!!

Further on during the tour we were heading to Houhora and decided we would meet up at the Houhora Tavern, for a drink by the harbour. At the front of the pack this day were Geoff and JB, and who could have guessed it, they missed the large sign and overshot the pub. Fortunately, they found another drinking establishment down the road.

The next day we opted for some more Forestry roads. Warwick was in his element and missed the turning, so we sent the van to chase him. I believe Warwick holds the record for being chased the most by the van. In the end, we thought it best for the van to meet us at the lake for lunch, so it went back to the main road. Warwick cautiously went ahead waiting now and again for the group, but then he forgot and disappeared into the sunset, well actually the forest! We didn't see him again until he turned up several hours later in Awanui!! A real pro!!

As you will be aware from the Upcoming Events listed in the November Issue of the SPOKESMAN, ACTA will be trialling a repeat supported Northland Tour in April 2018. It will be interesting to see if the April trip has enough independent soles to beat our record and improve the art form!!! But we all know if you go ahead it's assumed you know where you are going! JB mostly manages to take a navigator with him!!!

Poem Regarding the Northland Supported Tour by John "Sloop" Briers

Editor's Comment: While this contribution from "Sloop" is much appreciated, it is written more as "in house" for the November Northland Supported Tour Group, and parts of it may not necessarily be understood by other ACTA Members who were not on the Tour. However, his "poem" will give you a "good taste" of what went on!

Welcome to my celebration of the ACTA early summer "laugh a minute" tour!

"Warwick atact with broom, said he should have made more room cos he lost his cellie getting away
JB flatties all the way, cheap tyres and tax to pay
Paihia to KK, W and JB flew ahead to discover the wonders of Hohoura falls, which was not the way
Horrible metal we encountered through the forest made W pay and JB lose his way!
Wimp riders took the high road, but loved the coffee stop for Annette to fix a flatty and Steve, Geoff, Bill, Me, Ron
and Susan and Ron O too, to BP station stop to flop in the pouring rain. Let us use their place and the loo!
Swallow the "pill" of "Martins Hill"
Into a sea mist opening up to magic drop and Matauri Bay
Into the sea went a few ...too bloody cold for all but two! One a "cloggie", the other without a shoe
Up the hill transported to...our dinner place licences too
What a day from Matauri Bay - stunning weather all the way, gravel off road picked by "Sloop" only made the team
want to "puke"
Hardened "metalers" Kathy, Marieke, Margaret too, Warwick and JB once again flew, but became disoriented (lost) and
subsequently came last behind the crew
Rest day we woke. A hearty lot weaving our way through the history of Doubtless Bay
Maurice paid Agnus, the weaver on the way to the fairy dairy taking in the magic views for coffee and scones.
Others "swanned around" in support vehicle to Kaitaia and back
Alas, the night was rewarded with fun and laughter of funny hats worn by all, and Kath took First Prize and had a ball.
Waving the mob off from Driftwood they went, hell bent on reaching the torrid waters of the west and world renowned
rare bats?
Remember the Dinner at Whapapkaui? And hopping on a bus destined for the Cape
The Cape, what can you say, a heart throbbing moment, what a bloody day, shared by tandem friends from distant
lands... thanks to Annette
A "header" all the way to Wageners with awesome estuary views and dinner at the Hub
Into the forest with wild horses and no permit we went, don't mention ACTA whatever you do we're the cries from you
know who! "Just make up a story, "Sloop", anything will do!"
Out of the wind, over gravel we flew through pines galore, lakeside lunch we had
Baker man for coffee and pies too, then off to Ahripaha and more gravel for the hardy few
Big day today, a riders delight, yeah! Across on the ferry to Raweni we went, who paid the ferry man (not a lot),can
he pay his rent!
More hills found us at last in Opononi. Bloody well done, troops, a stirring effort!
Up and at it, at sparrows Fart
No wind to talk of but 1300 m to climb, past "Tani Mahuta" we had a brew
Magic drops and climbs to boot, eventually cruising down into Kimura land to sup a DB export or two
The last night gathering with prizes and stories to tell, some prizes too, Warwick was voted number one and awarded
the "Mutineer of the Year" T shirt

ACTA Northland Twin Coast Cycle Trail Weekend Frid 1st - Sun 3rd December by Lyn Jobbins



By Friday evening, 1st December, 25 keen cyclists descended on Kaikohe looking forward to exploring the newly opened **Twin Coast Cycle Trail**. Simon Bucherer had organized an interesting weekend on the trail linking the Bay of Islands in the east to the Hokianga Harbour in the west. Using Kaikohe as a launch pad allows for a pretty much gentle downhill experience in both directions, but for those of us who chose to cycle back to Kaikohe, an uphill challenge!



Due to the number of Participants, we rode in two groups



Simon's briefing prior to departure on Saturday

Saturday: Kaikohe to Opuia 45kms One Way

- The trail was a combination of a disused rail corridor, private land & road reserves. Near Otiria we came across an interesting swing bridge constructed inside the old rail bridge. We wobbled across trying to take in a breath-taking view of the stream below and nearby waterfall.



Approaching the swing suspension bridge

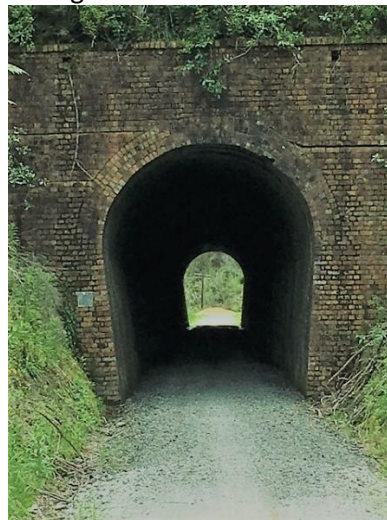


Riding on the swing bridge. Note JB's huge front light!

- Kawakawa, famous for the Hundertwasser public loos, was our morning coffee stop. Our arrival coincided with the annual Christmas Parade so it was hard to find seating at any of the 4 cafes, but the parade along the main street provided interesting entertainment!
- On the final leg to Opuia the trail weaves along the old coal track, skirting spectacular mangrove swamps and passing through an 80metre tunnel before reaching the Opuia marina. We were very fortunate in the timing of our weekend ride because, only a few days later, this particular tunnel was closed as being unsafe, although we did not notice any safety issues in the tunnel, bearing in mind it was dark as we rode through. Well done, Simon! Good timing!



Approaching the Opuia Tunnel



The Tunnel



Riding out of the Tunnel

- We had a lunch stop in Opua, with some choosing to have their lunch near the marina while others rode another short distance to the ferry landing. Afterwards, some took the shuttle back to Kaikohe, while others chose to return by cycle (*making it a 90km day for them!*)



Opua Marina



Car Ferry arriving at Opua Ferry Landing



Lunch near Opua Ferry Landing

- From Kaikohe to Opua and back we encountered about 110 obstacles. Some involved dismounting where we had to push bikes across the cattle stop to avoid a bollard at one end. Another challenge was metal “squeeze bars” of various heights – some we could carefully ride between the bars, others we had to push the bike through.



Having to “Stop and Start” going through cattle stops with bollards and cycle “squeeze bars” in order to prevent stock and motor bikes etc. entering the trail



- On Saturday evening we gathered at the historic “**Bank Bar**” Pub. All enjoyed the smorgasbord meal & dessert complete with Christmas crackers!

Sunday: Kaikohe to Horeke 41kms One Way

- An earlier start was planned as showers/thunderstorms were forecast in the afternoon – a beautiful day and the predicted precipitation did not eventuate during the day! Again, we set off in 2 groups to make it easier for catering at our refuelling stops.
- First leg to Okaihau along the rail corridor passed through unspoiled native forest – totara, puriri, rimu, ponga and then a sturdy curved tunnel built in 1915. Information signage along the route provided an insight into New Zealand’s earliest Maori and European history.
- We stopped for morning coffee at Okaihau, meaning ‘feast of the winds’ in reference to this village set on a ridge overlooking the Hokianga harbour and Waihou valley. It was just as well we were in two groups because there was only one lady to serve us at the café. However, she managed to serve us all without getting too flustered! This interesting town has the “right vibe” to thrive on the cycle trail with several well-maintained historic churches, stunning vistas and boutique accommodation at Okaihau Rail Stay. Here the owners noticed the bike trail went right past their front gate, took a punt and have turned some abandoned railway carriages into stylish, classic living.
- Then it was a steep downhill drop with switchbacks into the Utakura valley. This section follows the river through kauri forest and farmland. As the rail corridor stopped at Okaihau several landowners have fenced off their farmland to form this section of the trail with some grassy, riverside picnic spots along the way.



Scenes in the Utakura Valley after riding down the steep hill with switchbacks

- Near Horeke was a 1.25km boardwalk, the longest boardwalk built on any trail in New Zealand, snaking its way through marshlands.

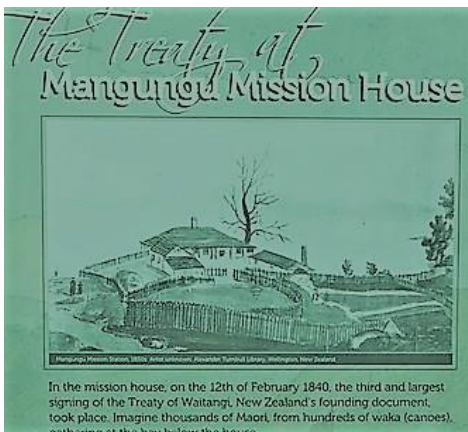
- The trail ended at Horeke on the upper reaches of the Hokianga harbour. This is a beautiful and historic spot – the **second oldest town in NZ, first post Office, Mission house on the hill (biggest signing by the Maori chiefs of the Treaty of Waitangi), first murder trial in NZ and first pub – the Horeke Tavern**. Pete, the publican and a local, has owned the tavern for more than 20 years. It was a busy Sunday with the waters of the harbour lapping at the pub’s feet. We took over the beer garden, relaxed under the pohutukawa trees and refueled.



Horeke Township



Pier at the back of the old Horeke Tavern



The Mangungu Mission House



View from the Mission House

- Half the group elected to board the shuttle and ride back to Kaikohe in comfort. The rest cycled back to base, along the trail and up a steep, winding, tar-sealed hill. After a refreshment stop at Okaihau it was back on the trail for last leg to Kaikohe.

The final result was we all explored Northland’s stunning scenery, discovered the vast heritage, cycled and enjoyed the *Twin Coast Trail*.

Thank you, Simon, for organizing an awesome weekend in the North!



ACTA Christmas Luncheon Annual Report Sun 17 Dec 2017 by President Annette Collins

President Annette welcomed everybody on what was a very good turnout for the ACTA Christmas Luncheon and she also conveyed thanks to John Billinge (JB) for coordinating the lunch with the Birkenhead RSA. She then commented on "The Art of Getting Lost" in relation to the ACTA Northland Supported Tour (refer article above).



ACTA CYCLING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2017	
ACTA RIDES	TOTAL DISTANCE RIDDEN (KMs)
Sunday Day Rides	22,777.5
Saturday Day Rides	19,524.5
Wednesday Day Rides	24,645.1
Weekend Tours	6,276
TOTAL KMs	73,223.10

COMPARISON BETWEEN 2016 AND 2017 STATISTICS

	2016	2017
Collectively, Club Members have ridden	77,984	73,223.10
Sunday Rides	30,706	22,777.50
Saturday Rides	17,439	19,524.50
Wednesday Rides	23,768	24,645.10

TROPHY AWARDS FOR 2017

TROPHY	AWARDEE	COMMENTS
Captain's Cup	<i>Helen Orchard</i>	Since Helen was not present, Pat Shaw accepted on her behalf. For most kms on a Sunday Ride. 1295km achieved by Helen.
Junior Cup	<i>Sandra Knight</i>	Awarded for most kms for first year member. Joined 31 July 2017. Has ridden 217km
Rough Stuff Cup	<i>Ray Mankelow</i>	Since Ray was not present, JB accepted on his behalf and explained the circumstances.
Hill Climb Cup	<i>Maurice Kwan</i>	Maurice won what was a fierce competition with a very close result.
Trialist Cup	<i>Robyn Hodge</i>	Combination of winner of "slow" ride and "coasting" ride
Best All Rounder Cup	<i>Bill Pepler</i>	Bill is always willing to help out and leads an awesome 3rd Wednesday of the month South Auckland ride.
Tourist Cup	<i>Margaret Law</i>	Solo tour on the St Malo to Nice route camping and then on further from Nice to the Liguria coast in Italy, across Italy through Florence, Perugia to Ancona. Then the ferry to Split in Croatia and on to Slovenia & Germany.
Bucket List Cup	<i>Marieke van Zon</i>	We admire and wish to acknowledge Marieke's determination in achieving the following: Silver in the World championship Aquabike in Penticton, British Columbia. Silver in The Cross Harbour Swim and, the next day, Gold in her age group in the Tauranga standard triathlon, (although the only one in her age group, she was faster than 12 much younger ones!!!!)

PRESENTATION OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP TO HELEN ORCHARD

At our AGM we voted to make Helen a life member of ACTA and had hoped to present this to her in person either at the AGM or at this Xmas event. However, we were "Helenless" so I asked her good friend, Pat Shaw, to step up to accept the award on her behalf!

Our Committee felt Helen was deserving of this award as she has contributed greatly to the club since she joined in 1983. She is always willing to lead us on good rides and assist with other club activities. She joins our 7 other life members and is only the second female to become a Life Member.

In May 2009 I conducted some interviews with long-term members to gather their thoughts to share on the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Club. It is not that long till our Seventieth anniversary, which we are starting to think about! 2019 is ACTA's Seventieth anniversary so, if anyone has any ideas for how we can celebrate this, please contact the Committee. I can share some comments from Helen which I think illustrate her long-term loyalty to ACTA and the enjoyment she has from the association.



Helen's Certificate had still to be signed by Annette

It was on a ride in 1983 to Bethels beach that Helen took her first trip with ACTA and she recalls a warm welcome. Helen Orchard (HO): *My first ride (1983) was out to Bethels Beach and I was made most welcome and at the end of the day the other riders all made a point of coming up to me and saying "we will see you again, won't we?" And yes, they did. From then onwards I became a regular.*

Motivations to join ACTA: Members are introduced to ACTA in a large variety of ways, but most commonly by meeting a current member and being asked to come along. There has always been a lot of "cross-over" with members of tramping clubs and some were introduced by tramping friends. HO: *Back in the early 1980's I was riding with an adhoc cycling group called "Shore Spokes" made up of friends from the North Shore Tramping Club (doing the same rides and routes as ACTA). We were only doing one ride every 6 weeks, so, when I spotted the ACTA rides list in the Southern Cyclist Magazine, I thought that's the club for me.*

Who are the members you recall riding with most often in your day? HO: *Chas King, 2xArthurs, Ray, Ron, Peter Buck, Gabrielle and Colin, and, later on, Bryan, Gerard, Pat, Ron Smith, Betty, Briar, John Gregory, Dick & Lyn.*

What bike did you ride when you first joined the Club and what do you ride now? HO: *I started with a ladies carlton frame. Chas King built me a bike. At one stage, nearly everyone had a Chas King (nowadays only myself and Pat Shaw ride them). NB: NO CHAS KINGS CURRENTLY BEING RIDDEN IN THE CLUB.*

Can you recall the hardest day's ride you have done with the club? Why was this? HO: *The hardest club ride was the first Raglan/Kawhia ride. We left Cambridge at 8am and riding via Te Awamutu, Raglan and around Karoi we finally arrived at Kawhia at 8pm. So that was then the club's longest (timewise) ride. It was 130kms, of which 60kms were gravel! We were so tired, that some of us were nodding off at the restaurant. The funniest moment, was the very next morning when our leader Ray looked out the window and said "Damn the bikes are still there". We all cracked up!*

What is the best thing (best places) you recall happening on a ride/tour? HO: *A rough style trip from Whangarei up along the coast from Matapouri Bay, Whananaki, Mimiwhangata. It was something special.*

What is the worst thing you recall happening on a ride/tour? HO: *Having to man handle our bikes one by one, across a tramping swing bridge, way above a deep gorge in the Pirongia Forest Park*

And which is the best coffee/tea shop you think the club has been/goes to? HO: *Best setting is the "Bird House" out at end of the Awhitu Peninsula.*

What have been the biggest changes you have noticed with the club? HO: *We have new people coming in because they have found us on the internet or by word of mouth. The Saturday rides seem to be a great success.*

What would you say to people looking to take up cycling now with the club? HO: *If they are new to cycling, I would suggest they try a Saturday ride and then build up for Sunday riding.*

Where would you say cycling in New Zealand is heading to in the future? HO: *We are getting some good publicity with John Key's nationwide trail. I think if we could get the harbour bridge cycle lanes to happen, then cycling would really take off in Auckland. Doing a circuit from the Ferry building over the bridge to Takapuna (for a swim and lunch) back over on the ferry and out along the Tamaki Drive, would become what both tourist and locals (including families) would do, especially in the weekends. The spinoff would be that this would also encourage others to venture out each day and commute to work by bicycle.*

What else would you like to say to other members of ACTA on this 60th anniversary? HO: *Thank goodness, I found this club! For the past 26 years I have enjoyed great rides in the company of many different people and making great friends along the way. I would just like to thank all the Committee members and leaders and others who have assisted all of us with their knowledge, skill and contribution to making ACTA such a fun club to be a part of.*

Auckland Transport Cycling Information by Joanna Glasswell, Auckland Transport's Senior Media Advisor for Walking, Cycling and Road Safety



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



AND



Summer is a busy time for cycling in Auckland. Several projects are under construction, and lots of events are on to get people out and about by bike. One of our main goals is to encourage people new to riding to get out and give it a go so they can become regular riders. You might have friends or family that you could encourage to join us at one of our events or courses.

The Quay Street Cycleway Extension construction started in the new year, and in February work will begin on the Ian MacKinnon Drive cycleway and the Seabrook Avenue cycleway in New Lynn.

At the end of February, Auckland Council will be consulting on the draft 10 Year Budget, which includes Auckland Transport's projects and priorities. You will be able to give your feedback on the budget on shapeauckland.co.nz.

Editor's Comment Regarding the Budget

Auckland Transport is considering cuts when the current Urban Cycleways Fund, set up by the last Government, comes to an end. The proposed cuts are contained in the draft Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) 2018-2028, which Auckland Transport is putting out for public feedback from February 28 to March 28. The draft proposes reducing capital spending on cycling and walking from \$65m in the 2018-2019 financial year to \$6.5m and \$6.7m in the following two years. AT plans to spend a total of \$4.6 billion on running costs, renewals and capital projects over the three years. The current Government was surprised about the priorities in the draft and expected Aucklanders to make it clear during consultation that that walking and cycling and rapid transit should be higher priorities for the city. A spokesperson for the current Government said it is committed to substantially increasing investment in walking and cycling and it is likely to extend the Urban Cycleway Fund. Your Committee will discuss this issue, and may either join forces with the Cycling Action Network (CAN) and Bike Auckland, CAN's cycling advocacy group for the Auckland Region, in making submissions or will submit feedback directly on shapeauckland.co.nz prior to March 28.

Auckland Transport (AT) Walking, Cycling and Road Safety Response

An AT spokesman said the document was a draft only, and no final decisions have been made on cycling. Beyond 2018/19, the \$6.5 million per annum reflects a base level in the absence of any decision to invest in further cycling initiatives. The draft RLTP budget that was published on AT website was not a final document, and it will be worked through by the AT board before it is then included in Auckland Council's draft 10-year budget, which will be fully consulted on from the end of February. It will not be finalised until after the consultation process is completed. AT encourage ACTA Members to give feedback into the 10 year budget (it's not just for transport, but for all areas that the council funds, like parks, waste services, libraries etc). AT hope that clarifies the matter.

How To Feel Comfortable On Longer Touring Rides

Researched and Opinions by the Editor



Do you feel like this when riding long distances?

To me, there is nothing else quite like a long bicycle ride. Riding in a *group* (such as ACTA Tours) not only provides camaraderie, thereby assisting in taking one's mind off the distance travelled, but can also allow one to conserve energy through drafting, especially if there is a head wind. While there is a lot to be said for riding in ACTA groups, it is sometimes also a good idea to *ride alone*, especially having regard to your current mental situation, such as when you are stressed. Flying up and down hills, riding solo or sharing the group workload when riding into head wind, feeling accomplishment, but drained at the end of an all-day ride—not many other recreational activities have all these things!

Some aspects on how to feel comfortable on longer rides have been covered in articles in previous SPOKESMAN Issues. For example, the sensitive issue of how to overcome *Saddle Sores* was covered in the previous November 2017 Issue. Regarding the bullet points below, forgive me if you consider I am stating the *obvious!!*

Preparatory Items before Commencing, In Order To Make Your Long Cycle Ride More Comfortable

- ✓ **Use Anti-Chafe Cream** in your nether regions between your legs to reduce friction and chafing as you ride;
- ✓ **Wear proper cycling gear** e.g. for longer rides wear bike shorts or tights with padded chamois that won't get in the way of your gears and streamlined shirts designed for cycling with back pockets to stash snacks among other items;
- ✓ **Ride the Correct Type and Size of Bike** dependent on the nature of the long journey you will be doing and the characteristics of terrain you will riding through. i.e road bike, touring bike or mountain bike? Frame size is also important. Handlebar reach is simply the distance you reach from your saddle to your handlebars. A too-long reach (when you're stretching really far to reach the bars) can mess with your weight distribution across the front and back wheels of your bike, meaning that you risk being uncomfortable and having trouble controlling your bike. A too-short reach (where you're sitting more upright because the distance is so short), on the other hand, can be just as bad, making your position too upright, decreasing your power and making your control twitchy. Just as important as how far the bars are away from the saddle, is how high they are in relation to it. If you tend to suffer from pain in your lower back (which your Editor has experienced!), it might be worth putting a few spacers underneath the stem to raise the handlebars by a centimetre or so, which should hugely increase comfort on longer days in the saddle;
- ✓ **Check your Saddle Type, Position, Height, Tilt and Angle** Choose the type of saddle you are personally most comfortable with. Having your saddle too high can cause *Iliotibial* (IT) Band syndrome, which is the most common cause of lateral knee pain (responsible for 15 per cent of all knee pain in cyclists) and, while having your saddle too

low is less likely to cause injuries, it can seriously compromise your pedalling efficiency. Another way to deal with pain in sensitive areas is to make sure that the tilt of your saddle is correct. Particularly if you're spending extended periods riding in a low, aggressive position, then you might suffer from numbness in your nether regions. If this is the case, try lowering the nose of your saddle by a couple of degrees, which should relieve some pressure on sensitive areas. A proper saddle setback (adjusted by moving your saddle forward or backward) can alleviate pressure on the wrong parts of your pelvis while increasing your power;

- ✓ **If you are using Cleats Check their Positioning** The connection between your feet and the pedals is the most important of your three contact points with the bike. You will turn the pedals over thousands of times even on relatively short bike rides, so if your cleats aren't set up correctly, meaning that your foot is attached to the pedal in the wrong position, then it can cause big problems with ankle, knee, and hip pain. A good starting point is to have the cleats positioned in line with the ball of your foot, angled straight. You can then change this as you go along if you experience discomfort or feel you lack power through your pedal stroke, and you may well find that you need a different position on each leg. As you grow older, you may find that moving the cleats back a bit becomes more comfortable. Most pedals and cleats offer some degree of float, allowing your foot to move in the pedal, giving a small margin for error in the setup;
- ✓ **Handle Bar Tape** If you're doing particularly long rides, especially if they're over rough surfaces then keeping your wrists and hands free from pain will be a major consideration. The simplest way to do this is to ensure that your handle bars are wrapped with a thick layer of bar tape in order to give you a little bit of extra padding to take away the worst of road vibrations and pot holes;
- ✓ **Tyre Pressure** Check that it is appropriate having regard to the type of bike you are using and the terrain you will be riding on;
- ✓ **Carrying Weight** If you're going to be carrying things with you on your bike ride, avoid wearing a bag on your back with only a one shoulder cross-body strap, which can put uneven strain on your shoulders. Instead, for lighter weights, use a backpack with twin shoulder straps, which evenly distributes the weight. If you intend carrying heavier loads and/ or you suffer from neck pain, you should consider moving the gear to pannier bags alongside the bike's rear tire, or a front handle bar bag.
- ✓ **Emergency Equipment** Forgive me if I am stating the obvious, but it is important, irrespective of whether you are riding solo or in a group, to carry a pump, spare tyre tube(s), tyre levers and, perhaps, one of those small compact combination bicycle tool packs. When you are riding solo, it is also important to advise someone where you intend to go and carry a mobile smart phone with you.

Tips For Achieving a Comfortable Long Ride Irrespective of Riding Solo or in a Group

◆ Progressive Build Up of Fitness, Stamina and Distances

To build up your endurance before a long bike ride, without taking up all your free time, the best thing to do is find out your maximum heart rate and then do regular training rides for one hour in what "professionals" call 'zone 3' (typically 75-82% of your maximum heart rate). Working at that level – not too fast and not too slow – is a really good way to make gains in your base fitness so you can last the distance.

The physical aspect of training is usually the most common focus for people with a new goal or challenge, and many folks will think that riding as much as possible in the two weeks leading up to the big ride is sufficient. This isn't the best approach though, and what we need to do is "*train smarter*". To ride long, you must first gradually build your strength by increasing the length and intensity of your long rides. You may well start off only riding about 2 hours per week. However, if over a period of 3 months you start to add about a half hour to each week's rides you could well be ready for reaching that "mile stone" of a "*century km*" ride. Also, if you are regularly riding 50-60 kms, then that is already a great start; you could probably get through a *century km* ride without too much bother, although you could be far better prepared if you have gradually increased your riding time and distance on your training rides. Remember,

to do the 100 kms, you don't need to be training by doing 100 kms all the time — 75-80 per cent is ample preparation without adding excessive volume. Your physical training should take into account the following points:

- **Hills:** Is your long ride going to be hilly? Then ride hills on your shorter 60km rides! Some riders can really struggle on climbs. If you are one of them, then make sure you are addressing hills in your training. In many cases, 100 flat kms can seem very easy and very different when compared to a hilly 60 or 70km;
- **Saddle Time:** Try and focus more on the time in the saddle without stopping, rather than kms covered on your training rides. Try riding at a lower intensity and see if you can stick it out for longer. If your average speed over three hours is 20km/h, do you think you can hold it for over six hours? If you can comfortably ride your bike for 4 or 5 hours, then you are in a good place to think about the *century*;
- **Resting:** This is important. Include recovery in your training weeks and make sure you are resting properly. Keep the legs turning in the week leading up to the big ride, but don't do anything that will make you excessively tired;

❖ Segment your Long-Distance Ride

Assuming you have a rough idea where you are going, it is good practice to cover your intended distance prior to commencing, thereby giving you a good insight and feeling for the fuel you'll need; the fluid you will drink; and, of course, the physical exertion you will endure. Divide the ride into two or three more or less equal distances. Whatever the distance challenge you're aiming for, it's best to approach the ride in segments (either halves or thirds). Take into account the speed you're riding and, at the end of the first segment, see how you feel, taking into account the pacing and eating advice provided in this article. It's also best to avoid any specific energy consuming efforts in the first segment of the ride, because this could eat into your overall energy resource. This will stop you from going off too fast when feeling fresh and making the next segment(s) a real grind. The first segment should feel easy, just spinning along. During the next, you should start to feel your muscles working. If you have any energy in reserve, show it in the last segment. Nothing screams more like "rookie" than jumping away on the first segment only to later "hit the wall" and need to be "babysat" to the finish.

❖ Pace Management

It's a natural urge as soon as you start pedalling your bike to wonder how fast you are going. A simple bike computer will allow you to see your max, current and average speed for each ride. Once you have that information the questions start to roll — how do I compare to other riders? Should I be going faster? Keeping an eye on your average is a good indicator of your fitness and development. You're probably wondering, "How do I pace myself?" This can vary from cyclist to cyclist. Aspects concerning pace are as follows:

- **Cadence:** One solution concerning pace, which suits me, is to find the right cadence while riding. Most cyclists typically have a narrow range of preferred cadences at which they feel most comfortable, and, on bicycles with many gears, it is possible to maintain a preferred cadence at a wide range of speeds. Recreational cyclists (ACTA Members?) typically cycle around 60-80rpm. Cyclists choose an appropriate cadence to minimise muscular fatigue;
- **Speed:** Beginners often ask the question — what speed does the average cyclist ride at? This is a really hard question to answer — it depends where you live (is it hilly? windy?), and of course your base fitness level will have an impact;
- **Terrain and Weather:** Pacing doesn't just depend on the route itself (e.g. sections with hills and gravel etc.) but also on weather conditions and especially wind direction. Both terrain and weather will also impact on how long it will take to complete the ride;
- **Strategy:** Bearing in mind the comments made above about knowing roughly where you are going and mentally segmenting the journey, it's a good idea to pinpoint various "milestones" where you think you should be arriving at during a particular time. You can adjust your effort to ensure that you avoid blowing up too early, but that you also aren't dawdling unnecessarily and missing out on a faster time.

❖ Pedal Smart and Saving Your Energy

- **Cadence and Gearing:** On a long-distance bike-ride you need to stay as fresh as possible, and keeping a suitable cadence will prevent you from wasting too much energy. On flat terrain it might be greater than 80rpm and probably less when it's hilly. By maintaining a cadence of about 90rpm, you will give your aerobic and muscular systems a break. If you ride in a gear that is too big, you will eventually wear yourself down because of all the effort required. And if you ride in a gear that is too small, your legs will be working too hard (spinning) to keep up the cadence and you will get tired."
- **Less Braking:** This may seem obvious, but braking slows you down and requires you to pedal harder to accelerate back up to speed. Unnecessary braking is a waste of energy and momentum. So how do you improve? Firstly, try to eliminate 'comfort' braking. This occurs when you are rolling along a fast road or downhill and you start to go a little bit quicker than you are used to. Braking to get your speed down to a level you feel comfortable with is fine, but take a good look around first, if the road surface is good, clear of obstructions and relatively straight there is no reason to slow down so let the bike roll and enjoy some free speed. The next place to improve confidence is during cornering. Braking only when you need to will help you hold your speed for longer. Remember to "feather" your brakes going down steep hills with switch-backs and always brake in a straight line so you are at a comfortable cornering speed before you start to turn.

❖ Aerodynamics and Stretching Out

The biggest thing slowing you down when you cycle is **wind resistance**. These tips concern ways to reduce your frontal area and your drag so you slice more easily through the wind.

- **Bend and Tuck:** The simplest of all is to slightly lower your body position on the bike. Instead of sitting up straight in the saddle and catching a lot of wind, try lowering your body closer to the bars by bending and tucking in your elbows. You'll immediately feel a difference. This may sound obvious enough but, if you duck down on the bike, you're less exposed to the wind. But there's more to it than just *improved aerodynamics*. By crouching, you get more compact on the bike. If you are riding a road bike with drop handle bars, by putting your hands on the drops you also have more control when a gust blows at you. In other words, you have a better chance of keeping your bike pointed forward and out of roadside ditches.
- **Positioning:** Your head is heavy like a bowling ball so holding it out and up in front of you (as you do on a bike) can overextend and stiffen your neck and back muscles. And the longer any given ride is, the more the possibility that your body might hurt afterward. You wouldn't expect to go for a two-hour jog or run without the possibility of being sore the next day, but, sometimes, cyclists can seem surprised when it happens to them on a bike. To relieve your neck and shoulders, shrug for 5 to 10 seconds. The biggest cause of neck and back pains often comes from what we do the rest of the day, in terms of sitting too much and poor posture. I acknowledge I am guilty of this! Being on a bike can tend to exasperate these problems, so if you can improve these habits you'll feel better during and after those your rides. A long time in the saddle can start to create small aches and pains if you stay bolt upright and in a fixed position the whole time, so remember to reposition yourself during the ride. Periodically, change hand positions by shifting your hands along the handle bars, getting used to all positions while keeping your thumbs wrapped around the bar or brake lever for security. Shift forward and back on the saddle to find that comfiest position. Most importantly, relax and enjoy your ride. To loosen up post-ride, bring your hands to meet behind your low back and clasp them together. Stretch for 30 seconds, alternating chin-to-chest, ears-to-shoulders, and looking left and right. Keep in mind these types of aches and pains are more common in newbies, so as with any sport, your muscles will adapt and hurt less as your body gets used to longer rides.

❖ Strengthen your Triceps

Your triceps hold your position and support your weight against the bike. They also act as shock absorbers.

If you don't have solid tricep strength, you'll end up putting excess stress and strain on your shoulders and neck. Interestingly, when I first went to the gym, my personal trainer arranged a program on the basis that I am a recreational cyclist and, as well as strengthening legs, he included the use of a biceps and triceps curl machine. You may like to try some tricep-toning moves in your regular work out to help alleviate any upper-body discomfort.



And, while you are at it, assuming your bike is properly set-up, as stated under the Preparatory Section above, you should be able to reach the handle bars, brakes and gear shifters without straining or stretching. On a clear stretch of road, reach one hand up between your shoulders for a few seconds, then swap hands.

❖ Standing Up

This may seem contradictory to the *Aerodynamics* Section above. Hold for 20 seconds, then switch legs. For most people, about 60 kms on a relatively flat bike tour means about three hours of sitting. That's three hours of pressure, reduced blood flow, reduced ventilation, and perhaps sweat on your nether parts. So, do your butt a favour by *standing on the pedals now and then* to take the pressure off.

Stand up and drop one pedal so your leg is straight. Let your heel sag below the pedal. You can stand while coasting down any little hill. You can stand while climbing a hill. You can stand and pedal even if there is no hill. And, of course, you can stop the bike and stand up to rest. One of the biggest things you can do to improve your comfort level on your bike is sit less, and stand more, during all those hours that you spend off your bike. Do stand up to let some blood and air circulate! It really helps, it's easy, and it's free! (Can't stand up? At least slide forward or backward on your saddle, to change the pressure points.)



❖ Handling Head Wind and Drafting when Riding in a Group

Wind can be your friend or enemy. If you start with a tailwind, roll easy because it is probable you will have a headwind on the way home! As stated in the *Aerodynamics* Section above, if you duck down on the bike, you are less exposed to the wind.

- **Streamline Clothing:** The more formfitting your clothing, the less energy the wind will sap from you, which is why bike-specific clothing is a wiser choice than general outdoor garb. To prevent your jersey or jacket from filling up with air, pull zippers up on your chest;

- **Observing the Wind:** Look for flags and weather vanes—they'll show you what direction the wind is blowing. Often, you're not pedalling straight into a headwind, but rather encountering a breeze from one side;
- **Group Riding and Drafting:** As with most things, long bike rides are best done with friends, such as ACTA rides. Not only does some company make for a more interesting ride, but there are other benefits to riding in a bunch. Usually the nominated ACTA leader leads the bunch. However, if there is a strong head wind, stick together during these stretches because it is a good idea to share the effort, each taking a turn at the front of the group and bearing the brunt of the wind. Once your turn is over, you can slot back in behind a friend and enjoy the rest. This allows you to go faster as a group and conserve energy, plus some practice riding in a bunch is always good for any upcoming long group rides you might have in mind.
- **Pelotons and Pacelines:** Whereas ACTA rides are of a more recreational nature, these terms tend to relate to more serious and competitive riders. While it has become common to refer to a cycling group as a “peloton”, this term is often used mistakenly because a peloton is really the large main group in a road bicycle race or professional cycling tour. If you spend most of your time pedalling solo, you may not fully appreciate the concept of riding in a group and creating a “paceline”. Pacelines can be either single or double file. In a single paceline, everyone lines up behind the first rider (the leader), who maintains a constant speed. Cyclists rotate through a line, taking turns riding up front before peeling off to the side, drifting to the back of the line and latching onto the back. The next rider up front then sets the pace. Riders stay on the front for several minutes. When you draft like this, by tucking in close behind another rider, you spend less energy to the tune of up to about a 27 per cent reduction in wind resistance. When carried out properly, a paceline is an effective tool for a group ride because it enables cyclists to share the work of pushing through the wind. When performed poorly, the formation becomes counterproductive. In strong crosswinds, riders can become offset, forming what is known as an echelon. They also overlap wheels, which can cause a horrific accident if wheels touch causing either the whole bunch, or a substantial percentage of it, to be taken down.
- **Fluid and Fuel:** Depending on how far you plan to ride, you will need to adjust your intake in accordance to distance and effort. Aim to drink regularly, depending on heat and exertion level. Don't worry so much about what you mix with the water; it's the water intake itself that is most important. Also, eat a bite or two of food regularly—consistency over the day is crucial. If you're out beyond two hours, plan a stop to refill bottles and have a snack. ACTA recreational rides are very good because plans are always made to stop at a café for morning or afternoon teas and coffees and snacks as well as reinforcing club camaraderie. Regarding food, consider having an intake of carbohydrates prior to undertaking your ride. Muscles use glycogen (sugar) for energy and that needs to be replaced. If you don't replace it, you'll suffer from hypoglycaemia (a deficiency of glucose in the bloodstream). This need for sugar, however, doesn't mean you need to overload your jersey pockets with gels and energy bars in order to rack up the kms. Though the calorie burn from a day in the saddle is significant, it might not be as great as you believe. Start with a good breakfast (porridge with fruit, for example), and then, if the café stop occurs after about one hour's ride, you could not only have a drink, but eat some food (snacks) as well as refilling your water bottle. Also, I like to carry a banana and a small pack of mixed nuts. You're not trying to replace every calorie you burn, but adjust accordingly (ie eat when hungry).

Using your common sense and, where appropriate, applying some of the “tips” described above, it is hoped that at the end of your long-distance ride you will feel like this!!



Snippets...

❖ Cycling on Water

Walking on water may be the stuff of miracles. But thanks to one Hamilton man, biking on water is now a reality. Guy Howard-Willis, the founder of Kiwi cycling company *Torpedo7*, has turned his dream into a market-ready product and now he's preparing to take it to the world. "I've cycled all my life. I love road cycling and mountain biking, I love water sports, love swimming. So, putting these two things together wasn't particularly hard to do," Mr Howard-Willis says. He says everyone has ideas, but the hard part was implementing his idea and finding someone that could help design and produce it. "I've come from that sort of background of actually developing stuff but this idea, I really wanted to make work. I wasn't sure if it would, but the vision I had back then, to where we've got to today, is far advanced. "I think about what the bike does now, nearly 20 kilometres per hour, and we're going to go faster," Howard-Willis says.

It's a project which was more than 7 years in the making and, at the helm, has been bike designer Roland Alonzo, who was initially reluctant to climb on board. "I can't swim, I don't like the water, I don't like sand in between my toes! I don't even like sun-block! So, when Guy came to me at the beginning. I said 'you got the wrong person'." But three months later Mr Alonzo changed his mind. Even now he has no intentions of riding the bike and comforts himself knowing that many Formula 1 and NASA designers don't know how to drive racing cars or fly a rocket. Meanwhile Mr Howard-Willis had other concerns. "We've kept this "Project" as a secret. My family didn't know for two reasons - one that people can put you off if they don't understand your vision, and the other one is if it didn't work you didn't have to tell anyone."

The Hydrofoil may look like a bicycle above the surface but below, it's something quite different. "Because it's got pedals, a saddle and handlebars, people would naturally assume it's a bicycle on water, but in many ways the characteristics resemble a bit more of an aircraft than that of a bicycle, wings vs wheels," Mr Alonzo says. There have been seven prototypes over the years - each one advancing to get to the final design, which is now ready for production. Even before a single sale, interest began to build with 1,700 orders already.

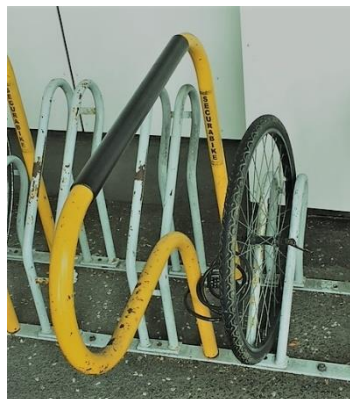


Mr Howard-Willis is already planning the next model. "Eventually we will do a very lightweight race bike. Then it could become competitive and a very interesting sport - an Olympic sport maybe?"

The hydrofoil bike had its first public outing at the "Big Boys Toys" Show from the 10th to 12th of November 2017 in Auckland.

❖ Locking Your Bike Properly in Public Areas!

You need to know how to secure your bike *properly* in public. Whatever lock you choose, if you don't use it properly, your bike *will* be stolen. Below is a picture taken of the bike rack located at the **Remuera Rd. Entrance to the Newmarket Railway Station**. You will note the rear wheel of a bike is still locked on the bike rack, but the rest of the bike is gone!



- **Always lock the frame (not just the wheel!) to a secure and immovable object**

If you only secure your bike through the wheel, a thief will simply remove your wheel and walk off with the rest of the bike. This may sound obvious but it happens all the time...as shown in the picture above.

- **Keep the lock as far from the ground as possible**

Try to keep the lock away from the ground. If it's on the ground, a thief can use a hammer to smash the lock against the hard floor and this will break cheaper models. Also, the closer it is to the ground, the easier it is to use the floor for added leverage in a bolt cutter attack

- **If you use a U-lock, fill as much of the U as possible**

If you're using a U-lock, try to fill as much of the space within the U with the bike and the immovable object it's attached to. The most common way to break better U-locks is with a bottle jack which is inserted into the space within the U. If there's no spare room inside the U, a thief can't use this method.

❖ Northern Corridor Improvement (NCI) Project!

The NCI project will deliver 7km of a new 3m-wide cycleway (actually a shared use path). The path will run alongside the motorway from Oteha Valley Rd to Constellation Drive, then west to Albany Highway. It doesn't have an official name yet, but it can be regarded as the 'Northern Cycleway' – a northerly "cousin" mirroring the Northwestern Cycleway and the Eastern Shared Path from Glen Innes to the CBD. It will become a new long-distance vital link, reaching into the heart of previously disconnected bike territory. The new path will also branch out west, along SH18. Logically, this section will one day connect to the Northwestern Cycleway at Westgate. It will not only prove useful to North Shore inhabitants, but also those who ride with ACTA from Kumeu on Wednesdays. Acknowledgements are made to **Auckland Transport**, **NZTA** and "**Bike Auckland**". "**Bike Auckland**" is to be congratulated for the influence it has had at the Board of Inquiry hearing concerning the NCI Project.

❖ A Couple of thoughts from Arnold Van Zon

When lost while riding your bike, just head into the wind and you will always finish up at your destination!

To improve the relationship between cyclist and drivers, give them a little wave if they either show courtesy or give you a wide berth, while passing. It costs nothing!

Upcoming Events

❖ Auckland Bike Challenge 1-28 February 2018

AT is holding its annual Auckland Bike Challenge in February 2018 as part of the national Aotearoa Bike Challenge. This free, month-long event runs from 1 – 28 February and aims at getting more people cycling in Auckland. The challenge focuses on participation, not distance, to ensure a fair competition that encourages new and occasional riders, along with regular riders. Just log your rides through a simple online platform. There are lots of prizes to be won including bike gear, restaurant vouchers, movie tickets and more. Sign up today at <http://www.lovetoride.net/Auckland>

❖ ACTA Cycle Weekend Taupo Frid 9th Feb – Sun 11th Feb 2018

Next February, Di and Roel Michels are hosting an ACTA weekend away in Taupo. Di and Roel now live at a small fishing settlement on the Waitahanui River which is just a few kms south of Taupo township and, as well as becoming expert trout fisher people and spending time with new grandchildren, they have also checked out many of the new local bike trails.

Two rides are planned: A 70km ride on Saturday 10th and 40km on Sunday 11th. As both rides will be on trails and mountain bike tracks so a mountain bike is recommended or a bike that you are confident of riding on gravel or on grade 2 and 3 mountain bike tracks. The Saturday ride is planned to be a long one from Waitahanui to Aratiatia Rapids via Huka Falls and back. Mostly off road with a few mountain bike trails. There are a few short cuts. Coffee stops are along the way. Sunday's ride is the W2K mountain bike track from Whakaipo Bay to Kinloch and back. There is an option to do the longer headland track.

Accommodation: New Windsor Lodge is just down the road from Di and Roel's place and has a variety of accommodation from tent sites, powered camp sites, basic cabins and self-contained units. Book your own accommodation. Phone 07 376 9080 or at www.newwindsorlodge.co.nz

Shared BBQ on Saturday night: Bring along something to cook and/or share for a pot luck BBQ on the Saturday night. Please contact Di and Roel if you are planning on going. Taupo can get very busy so if you are wanting a cabin rather than a tent site then book your own accommodation soon.

Contact details:

Di and Roel Michel's: 125 Main Highway, Waitahanui, Taupo.
Phone: 021 239 3649 michels.di@gmail.com

❖ Life in the Bike Lane- Go by Bike Day Wed 14 Feb 2018

Ride to work and join us on *Go By Bike Day* for coffee and a muffin at one of our four pit stops. Meet other bike riders and pick up our latest maps and ride information. Keep an eye on the Auckland Transport Cycling Facebook page for details.

❖ Bike the Bridge Sunday 18th February 2018

The 2018 [Bike the Bridge](#) offers 7km, 15km and 22km stages that cater to any fitness. Once a year, the Bike the Bridge event offers your only chance to ride a bike over the Auckland harbour Bridge until the Sky Path comes into being. 4000 cyclists of all levels can bike over our Auckland icon, with 4, 7, 15 and 22km options, there is something for everyone and Auckland Transport is supporting this event once again. Register soon!

❖ **West Bike Fest Sunday 25 February 2018**

The West Bike Fest is a family-friendly event that will feature a hub of cycle orientated activities including cycle skills, route information, decorate your bike and more. Activities will be spread along the cycle path, inviting participants to experience some of the Project *Twin Streams path*. Sunday Feb 25th 10-2pm Henderson Park, off Wilsher Crescent, Henderson.

❖ **ACTA Unsupported Tour Catlins, South Island, Sat 24th Feb - Wed 7th Mar 2018**

Contact Tony Simmons

❖ **Bike Skills and Maintenance Drop-in Sessions for Adults: Throughout Summer**

AT are running regular sessions throughout the summer months for adults who are new to cycling or who want to brush up on their skills. The drop-in session is a flexible format where you can take part in cycle skills lessons, bike maintenance, or a little bit of both. No registration required.

- Henderson Auckland Council Service Centre, Smythe Rd, Henderson: Sat 3 Feb, Sat 3 Mar and Sat 3 Apr, 10am – 12pm.
- Mangere Centre Park, Robertson Rd, Mangere: Thu 15 Feb, Thu 15 Mar, Thu 12 Apr, 6pm – 8pm
- Takapuna Primary School, 23 Auburn St, Takapuna: Sun 25 Feb, Sun 25 Mar, Sun 29 Apr, 10am – 12pm
- Central City: Dates and venue to be confirmed

❖ **Urban Bike Skills for Adults: Throughout Summer**

The Urban bike skills course is an introduction to riding safely in the suburbs for adults. Embarking on shared paths and quiet roads, this course will introduce you to what's available in each area. This is a 4-hour course starting in school grounds to practice some skills before heading out to explore the local area by bike. On the course we'll go through how to choose safe routes, bike handling skills and communicating with other road/path users. Registration is essential.

- Owairaka: Sat 10 Feb, 9am – 1pm
- Te Atatu: Sat 10 Mar, 9am – 1pm
- Grey Lynn: Sat 17 Mar, 9am – 1pm
- Bayswater: Sat 7 Apr, 9am – 1pm

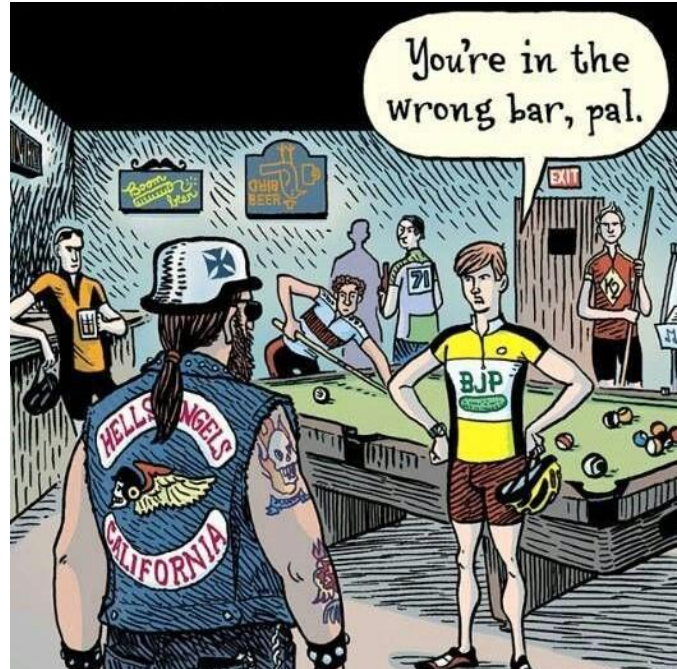
❖ **ACTA Second Supported Northland Tour Wed 4th - Sat 14th April 2018**

Contact Sarah Ley-Bucherer

❖ **ACTA Cycle Weekend Rotorua Frid 4th - Sun 6th May 2018**

Leader Margaret Law

TORTURE! Yes, some more groan-worthy cycling-related jokes!



I bought A new wheel from the Local Bike Shop, but it was missing something in the middle! When I complained, they sent me straight through to their *Spokes-Person*.



When my bike chain rusted, the rest of my bike started falling apart as well. It was a "*Chain Reaction*".



I bought some handlebars recently, but they're a little bare. I told the Guy I bought them from, that he "*Needs To Get A Grip!*"



Did you hear about the vampire bicycle that went around biting people's arms off? It was a *vicious cycle*



Why are bank tellers not allowed to ride bicycles? Because they tend to *lose their balance*.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SPOKESMAN

The Spokesman is your club magazine and as such it needs interesting articles and items to be published each quarter. The Spokesman is issued mid-February, May, August and November. The articles/ items can be full editorial articles about trips or interesting snippets of information you may have. **I WOULD ALSO WELCOME ANY COMMENTS OR “LETTERS TO THE EDITOR”**. When supplying these items to me please send in an electronic format with text as an unformatted “WORD” document and the images or photos as separate files. This will make it easier for me to edit and insert the article into the template I use for publishing. Within the word document indicate where the photos should appear and add a caption. Contributions of other separate photos are appreciated, so I can fill spaces and have something interesting for the front and back covers. However, they need to have a good resolution so the printed version looks ok. Please give each photo a specific name. Articles and information on Future Events can be sent to either:

editor@acta.org.nz or stu.andrews@xtra.co.nz.

Stu Andrews



TAIL END CHARLIE is at THE END