

ChainLinks

The newsletter of the Cycling Advocates Network (NZ)

Apr - May '04



Auckland Mayor John Banks presents the awards for the Auckland Commuter Challenge on 18 February. From left: Ron King (bicycle), Ray Williams (car), Jon Bridges (bicycle), John Banks, Maureen Thompson (bicycle), Lenny Bloksberg (organiser, Cycle Action Auckland).

See page 3 for more details. Photo courtesy of EECA.

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Are rail trails the future? – page 22



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The views expressed in *ChainLinks* are not necessarily those of CAN.

EDITORIAL

Such are the wonders of modern technology that editing this issue of Chainlinks from the other side of the world, some six months after I returned to the UK, has proved remarkably easy. I have enjoyed updating myself on what is currently happening with cycling in New Zealand, and I'm struck both with the variety of activity, and by the similarity with issues here – despite now living in one of the more cycle-friendly cities in Britain (Oxford) many of the problems faced seem very similar to the frustrations felt in New Zealand. In a world made ever smaller by constantly improving communications, we shouldn't forget international experiences and 'best practice' when seeking to champion the cycling cause, as we can increasingly find useful lessons the world over.

The NZ Ministry of Transport recently saw a new minister take charge, Pete Hodgson, and on behalf of all at CAN, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome him to the post. Pete was a tenacious champion of the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change two years ago in the face of heavy 'anti' lobbying. We look forward to introducing our organisation to him in the near future, and hope he can show a similar dogged determination in implementing the new Walking and Cycling Strategy. We also say goodbye and thanks to the previous Minister, Paul Swain. Paul has been an enthusiastic participant in Bike To Work Day for the last couple of years, and we wish him hours of puncture-free fun on his local Hutt Valley tracks.

Finally, it has been a strange sensation reading about some recent cycling activities 'down under' – in contrast to the warm antipodean sunshine in February's BikeWise week, only now am I beginning to see the disappearance of a grey and wet Northern Hemisphere winter, to be replaced with the more cycle-friendly conditions of spring and the summer ahead. But whatever conditions you face while cycling in the months to come, I wish you safe and enjoyable riding.

Matthew Ledbury



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REVIEW OF BIKE WISE WEEK: 14 – 22 FEBRUARY 2004

This year's Bike Wise Week once again saw events across the country to help promote cycling for both recreational and transport purposes. Chainlinks takes a look at some of the activities, while Leonard Bloksberg asks how the Commuter Challenge can be improved.

Auckland - Cyclists left racing car drivers in the dust as they pushed their bikes through Auckland's gridlock traffic. The Auckland Commuter Challenge saw four sets of cyclists, racing car drivers and buses stage simultaneous races across Auckland, with each mode competing to see who could get through the gridlock fastest.

The success of the cyclists, averaging a time of 26:51 minutes, is the latest demonstration of Auckland's traffic crisis according to the event's organisers, Cycle Action Auckland. Jon Bridges was the first to the finish point at Aotea Square, cycling 10km from the west Auckland starting point at Lynn mall.

The TV3 presenter and producer, who clocked in at 23:49 minutes, delighted in his moment of passing outright New Zealand land speed record holder, Owen Evans, on Great North Rd. Mr Evans, who was driving his wife's Audi V6 Turbo, said the cyclist would have been in for some "real competition" if he didn't have to find a car park.

Meanwhile, Waitakere Mayor Bob Harvey and his Stagecoach bus driver were content to cruise along. "It took us 40 minutes but then that's understandable given that we made about 20 stops," he said. "In my last campaign I said I would not use the mayoral car and would start biking to work but I have to admit that I'm eating my own words."

The cars came in second at an average of 31:32 minutes, with the buses last at an average of 53:10. Professional rally driver, Stig Blomqvist of Sweden, even had his Subaru passed by cyclist Ron King in the east Auckland race.

In one for the racing car drivers, technical New Zealand land speed record holder Ray Williams came first in the south Auckland race, clocking in at 27:37 minutes.

Event coordinator Leonard Bloksberg, of Cycle AA, said the event proved that if more commuters rode bicycles, traffic congestion would be less of a headache. But many chose not to as they feared being hurt. "If you're riding a bike you are probably more likely to get a skinned knee but if you're in a car you are more likely to be killed."

[NZPA, 18 February 2004]



Wellington - Wellington turned on the fine weather for Bike To Work Day, with cyclists turning out in their hundreds for the free bikers' breakfast in Civic Square.

Marilyn Northcotte of Cycle Aware Wellington (CAW), who co-ordinated Wellington's Bike To Work Day, said, "It was great to see so many cyclists coming in for the event and shows that Wellington is a good place to bike. The Bike To Work Day breakfast is a chance to celebrate and recognise the contribution that cyclists make to the city. We were really pleased that there were a lot of people there who don't normally commute by bike, and hope that they realise cycling is a great way to get to work."

More than 500 people rode in for the breakfast - a significant increase on the numbers who came to last year's event. Brief comments were made by a range of speakers including Wellington's mayor Kerry Prendergast, Greater Wellington Chairperson Margaret Shields and Government Ministers Trevor Mallard and Paul Swain. The increase in cycle commuting in Wellington - against the trend in New Zealand as a whole - was highlighted by several speakers.

CAW expressed their thanks for support from Wellington City Council, Bike Wise and ACC, for breakfast food sponsorship from Tasti Cereals, Healtheries Drinks, Mainland Products, Commonsense Organics and Nui Cafe, and for free bike checks from On Yer Bike.



Nelson - Nelsonians appear to be better than most at getting on their bikes, with local firms winning two out of three national awards in the annual Bike Wise Business Battle. Nayland Physiotherapy picked up the prize for the greatest distance and greatest number of hours cycled by any small organisation in the country. Its team of five people clocked up 1557.5km and 3936 minutes on their bikes during the course of the week.

Richmond-based engineering and environmental consultants MWH took out the same prize in the medium organisation section, completing 2484km and 7691 minutes. The national prize for greatest distance and greatest hours cycled by a large organisation went to the Marlborough District Council.

Bike Wise Week co-ordinator Thomas Stokell said 130 businesses took part in the competition nationally, with 46 of those coming from the top of the south region covering the South Island north of Christchurch.

"The businesses from this region who took part employ 4500 people, 746 of which took part in the battle. This gave a participation rate of 16.5 percent which is a very positive indicator for cycling in this region."

[The Nelson Mail, 5 March 2004]



Hamilton's first Bike-to-Work Breakfast held at the new Environment Centre was a big success. It encouraged new people to try out cycling to work, and valued those who already bike regularly. 118 cyclists enjoyed the free breakfast event.

A big thanks to Tegan, Liz, and Tamzon from the Hamilton City Council Sustainable Environment Unit, Katherine from the Environment Centre, and Marganne from Waikato University, whose efforts made it all happen.

- Rob Davidson, CAW Secretary



Post-Script: a review of the Commuter Challenge

by Dr. Leonard N. Bloksberg

The 2004 Auckland Commuter Challenge was very successful. As the organiser, I would like to review why it worked, what we accomplished, and where we can improve.

The wider public don't care about cycling. They do care about transport. Our members are dedicated cyclists. While it's good to consolidate their support, we also need to reach out to the undecided majority. As for our enemies, the goal is to marginalise them as irrational fringe. It is rare that anyone has ever converted deep-set antagonistic views.

A key to our success was to present a transport event that included cycling, rather than cycling event that included transport. In addition, Commuter Challenge events have been held before, but rarely this big. We brought in the biggest names we could get, and promoted the event big.

The cycling lobby is no longer a small time voice in the wilderness, desperately trying to get noticed. With new law changes, the urgency of transport, and the large number of cyclists (1 in 5 New Zealanders), we are a major player in a big issue. CAN/CAA leaders and members need to stop acting like radicals trying to stir things up, and start acting like statespersons and leaders of the community.

The challenge drew good media attention, and people continue to write about it. We captured people's attention and raised the profile of cycling. Mayors Bob Harvey and John Banks, Councillors McKeown and Harland, and others stood up before the public and the media and professed their commitment to cycling. With an election coming up, they will not forget that we have provided them with this opportunity to look good. We need to follow up these alliances.

As long as we keep focused on solving transport issues by improving cycling, we have their attention. If we take advantage of their attention by letting our focus drift to side issues, we will lose. While it is hard work to

get their attention, it is a lot harder to regain it after you have lost their respect.

The management of Stagecoach buses was already interested in working with cyclists, but now they recognise CAN/CAA as a major ally for their wider business goals as well. Mr. Alasdair Thompson, president of NZ-EMA, has been the most powerful and outspoken critic of the Government's shift to alternative transport. Not only did he ride a bus in support of alternative transport, but he also expressed a desire to work with CAN/CAA to pressure government to solve our transport problems. These business alliances are not trivial, and should be maintained.

Everything was not perfect, however. When the Mayors got their chance to address the crowd, they looked out onto about 50 cyclists. It was embarrassing, and while they did not comment on it, I am sure they will not forget the lack of cyclists. The media was clearly embarrassed by the small turnout, and chose to ignore it, for fear of losing the newsworthiness of the story.

According to ARC, there are 20,000-30,000 people who cycle to work every day in Auckland. According to Cycling NZ, there are 100,000-150,000 competitive cyclists in Auckland. According to Statistics NZ, there are about 250,000 people in Auckland who cycle regularly. At future cycling media events, we need to work a lot harder to insure that between 1-10% of our constituency comes out to show support. I want the media and invited speakers to look out on a mass of 250-2,500 cyclists and know that we are an important part of the community, and we expect to be served better. 🚲

CYCLING NEWS FROM AROUND NEW ZEALAND

January:

- Waimakariri District Council begins developing a cycle and pedestrian strategy.
- The LTSA are to pilot Safe Routes projects in Manukau, Nelson, and Dunedin, to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists getting around their communities.
- Auckland's Western Bays Community Board commission a report investigating waterfront pedestrian/cycleways between Westhaven and Auckland Harbour Bridge.

February:

- Greater Wellington regional council promote a “don’t burst their bubble” cycle safety campaign encouraging motorists to give cyclists space.
- Cyclists all around the country celebrate National Bikewise Week and Bike to Work Day.
- A new cycling map of the Kapiti Coast district (developed by our own Kapiti Cycling) is distributed around the region.
- Elmwood businesses and residents in Christchurch are at loggerheads over plans for cycle facilities near a local shopping centre.
- More than 1000 riders from Australia and New Zealand explore the lower South Island as part of Bicycle Victoria’s Great New Zealand Bike Ride.
- The opening of a new \$1.3 million cycle/pedestrian overbridge at Waterview completes a key missing link in Auckland’s north-western cycleway.
- A North Canterbury safety campaign to minimise conflicts between school cyclists and logging trucks wins the promotion category of the inaugural national Road Safety Innovation Awards.

March:

- Auckland City plan to restrict the landmark Grafton Bridge to buses, bikes and pedestrians only, as part of a proposed Central Transit Corridor.
- Christchurch City Council finally gives the go-ahead to contentious traffic management works along Hagley Avenue, including new cycle lanes and intersection facilities.
- Wellington City Council intends cutting speed limits in most residential areas to 40 km/h over the next few years, as part of its new ‘Safer Roads’ initiative, with plans for Ngaio-Khandallah and Tawa out for consultation.

‘Nearly \$1.2m spent on walking and cycling in New Zealand’

Pedestrians and cyclists around New Zealand will welcome the news that nine walking and cycling projects totalling nearly \$1.2 million have been funded by the government’s land transport funding agency, Transfund New Zealand.

The projects funded are:

- cycleway improvements in North Shore City (\$50,000)
- further development of a walking and cycling strategy for Papakura District Council (\$30,000)
- construction of a cycleway in Nelson City (\$415,000)
- construction of cycleways in Christchurch on Centaurus Road (\$172,000), Halswell-Lincoln Road (\$146,500), Papanui Road (\$136,400) and Waimari Road (\$91,900)
- development of a walking and cycling strategy for Central Otago District (\$25,000)
- cycling improvements for Invercargill City (\$121,400)

"Transfund is pleased to be able to fund these projects, which contribute to a safe, integrated, responsive and sustainable transport network," said Transfund chair Dr Jan Wright.

[Transfund NZ, 29 March 2004]

Cycling highlighted by road safety innovation award winners

Two of the winners in the recent inaugural NZ Road Safety Innovation Awards are of particular interest to cyclists. Inspired by the Prince Michael Road Safety Awards in the UK, the New Zealand awards highlight examples of road safety innovation in this country with the aim of encouraging others to follow suit. The awards were presented on February 24 at a Wellington ceremony hosted by Transport Minister Paul Swain.

A road safety programme aimed at protecting young students cycling to a small rural school in the Waimakariri District won an award for Innovations in School Road Safety. North Loburn School is located in forestry country, 17km inland from Rangiora. The community had long held concerns for the safety of children travelling to and from school on roads travelled by an ever-increasing number of logging trucks.

This concern led to the development of Sharing Our Roads - a learning partnership for rural schools and truck drivers. School staff met with local police, trucking firms, LTSA, the Waimakariri road safety co-ordinator and other schools. The result was an educational programme where school children and truck drivers are brought together to learn about practical safety measures that can keep kids safe. Reflective safety vests have been provided to children riding bikes, trucking firms have voluntarily reduced

the speed of their vehicles around the school, children feel safer and the community has developed a more positive view of truck drivers.

The award for Road-Based Innovation was won jointly by Christchurch City Council and High Technology Systems for a speed control system used to implement temporary 40km/h speed limits in Christchurch school zones. The Council introduced temporary speed limits to reduce traffic speed outside schools with a high risk of crashes involving arriving and departing children. As no proven method of temporary speed control existed, the Council undertook pioneering research, consultation and reviews, including two years of practical trials.

After the trials proved successful, the Council continued working with roading and traffic authorities, the community and High Technology Systems to finalise the legal, technical and operating standards for 40km/h School Zones. By early 2004, fifteen Christchurch schools were using the company's fixed electronic LED signs to implement temporary 40km/h limits. Regular checks by police show excellent driver compliance with the 40km/h limit and few infringement notices issued. Opinion polls and feedback from schools and parents have shown strong public support for the temporary school zone speed limits. As a result of their success in Christchurch, temporary school zone speed limits have been introduced at more at-risk locations in other parts of the country.

The winner in each award category received a cash prize of \$2000. The 2004 Awards will be open from July. For more information on the awards, including the criteria for entry in the different categories, visit www.roadsafetyinnovationawards.org.nz.

[P.S. Watch out for CAN's own Cycle-Friendly Awards again later this year!]

Wellington to cut speed limit in residential areas to 40km/h

Wellington City Council has said it intends to cut speed limits in most residential areas to 40kmh.

First off the block will be Ngaio, Khandallah and Tawa, where it is hoped the new speed restriction will be in place later this year. The council's move is linked to the introduction of the new Speed Limit Rule which comes into force on April 4, allowing local authorities to set speed limits under 50kmh on local stretches of road.

It hopes to have 40kmh go-slow zones in most Wellington residential areas within seven years. Senior road safety engineer Paul Barker said the Ngaio-Khandallah-Tawa project had been developed in consultation with each of the communities involved.

He said the present 50kmh speed limit would remain on most main roads, with a 10kmh reduction on streets where there was a lot of pedestrians, including the main thoroughfare through the Ngaio shopping centre.

New roundabouts, colour-coded surfaces, traffic islands, give-way signs, improved lighting, speed humps and a raft of other engineering, education and enforcement initiatives were also planned. Police would also be targeting excessive speeding and unsafe driving with additional mobile speed cameras in designated areas.

Mr Barker said Wellington was the first local authority in the country to align itself with the Land Transport Authority's Safer Roads goal of reducing road crashes by 33% over the next seven years on such a large scale.

- Details available at: www.wcc.govt.nz/news/projects/saferroads/

[NZPA, 10 March 2004]

Auckland completes north-western cycleway



Mayor John Banks and Councillor Greg McKeown from Auckland City Council congratulate veteran cycling advocate Kurt Brehmer at the opening of the completed North West Cycle Route. (Photo courtesy of EECA)

The completed north-western cycleway was officially opened on 19 February by Auckland City's Mayor, John Banks, and the Transport Committee chairperson, Greg McKeown.

The completion of the cycleway by the placement of a cycle overbridge across Great North Road and an off-road path over UNITEC's campus provides cyclists and pedestrians with a more convenient, safer and direct route through and around the area.

Investment in the safety improvements has cost over \$1 million, partly funded by Transfund New Zealand.

'The construction of the Great North Road cycle and pedestrian overbridge has provided an important missing link. Not only does the bridge complete the

cycleway, but it also improves safety for cyclists and pedestrians around

the busy Waterview interchange on the north western motorway,' said Councillor Greg McKeown, Transport Committee chairperson.

The initiative allows commuting and recreational cyclists to ride on a mostly dedicated off-road cycleway, from the central city to Te Atatu, with numerous on and off points along the way.

The 9km route improves cycling safety and access along the western transport corridor, including UNITEC, Point Chevalier Shopping Centre, Pasadena Intermediate School, Newton Central School, Western Springs College, Auckland Zoo, Museum of Transport and Technology, Western Springs Park and Western Springs Stadium.

Pilot safe routes study 'a good start'

The Nelson City Council has accepted an offer of \$80,000 to pilot a study aimed at improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in the central business district. Nelson cycling groups see the study as a "good start" but they are still working on their own initiatives to make the region's roads safer.

Councillors at an infrastructural assets committee meeting on Thursday voted to be one of three cities in the country to take part in the Land Transport Safety Authority study, along with Dunedin and Manukau City. Council roading engineer Peter Kortegast said the \$80,000 would be used to fund a part-time coordinator over three years and LTSA staff would also be involved.

According to LTSA figures, from 1998 to 2002, one pedestrian was killed and 25 seriously injured in Nelson city. Over the same period, there were 107 crashes involving cyclists that resulted in injury. Eighteen cyclists were seriously injured.

Bicycle Nelson Bays member Iain Dephoff supported the pilot but said cyclists' safety in the rest of the city also needed to be addressed. Mr Dephoff said Bicycle Nelson Bays was trying to get the LTSA to set up an 0800 number for cyclists to report accidents or problems with motorists. "With cellphones, (that's) something quick and easy to do while you're lying in the gutter fuming with rage. You can at least ring them up."

Star and Garters Wheelers cycle club official Les Vincent said the study was a good idea and a "start". The club was still keeping its "blacklist", or register of motorists it considered to be dangerous to cyclists, with two vehicles on the list so far and another to be added this week after an incident during a race.

[The Nelson Mail, 2 February 2004]

Gales prove a challenge for Big Coast cyclists

A wet and chilly southerly blast made the Big Coast cycle event a memorable and challenging one for the more than 1000 cyclists who took part.

Heavy rain combined with strong southerlies forced the cancellation of the stage between the Turakirae Pt campsite in Wairarapa and the coast south of Wainuiomata. Instead, about 800 hardy souls who chose to continue battled 40 kilometres inland through driving rain to a new finish line at Featherston.

Karori man Rob Duncan, who took part in the event on a tandem cycle with his seven-year-old daughter Isabelle, had a simple description of the conditions: "Man, it was pretty rugged." Winds were hitting 100kmh when the decision to cancel the coastal section was made. "It was so cold on the coast that some people would have got hypothermia," he said. However, Isabelle had coped well. "She tagged in behind. She pedalled all the way. But I made sure she was well wrapped up."

Event organiser Steve Hart said the health and safety of the participants were his highest priority. He sought weather advice before the decision was made to reroute the event, and organised buses to transport riders who chose to withdraw. He also arranged for Red Cross and rescue service personnel to help participants when they arrived at the Featherston finish line.

Despite the conditions, Mr Hart said he was unaware of any weather-related injuries. "On Saturday a couple of people slipped on the Rimutaka Incline. And one woman in Featherston looked a little cold. But as I drove up the road to Featherston it looked as though everyone was having a jolly good time."

[Dominion Post, 16 February 2004]



The Amphibious Bicycle

- Roger Bloxham thought there had to be an amphibious version of the Aquada (price tag \$480,000), so he came up with this version for a mere \$750. Perhaps it could form part of the solution for new crossings of Auckland Harbour?!

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN TIME COMING UP FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

Do you have a cycle-friendly council? Draft Annual Plan time is fast approaching, which is your chance to have a say on what they're doing. Check out your local authority's plan and make sure they have included something for cyclists. If they have, make a submission in support. If they haven't, tell them what they should be doing, e.g. developing a cycling strategy, putting in cycle facilities, supporting Bike To Work Day activities, becoming a cycle-friendly employer. A full list of websites for local councils around the country can be found at: www.govt.nz/en/search/govt-agency-list/. In the meantime, groups around the country have already been successfully lobbying for action:

Kapiti Coast - The Cycling/Walking and Bridleway (CWB) Working Party worked for more than a year on the strategy which was passed 11 March, just in time to become part of the Long Term Community Council Plan "Choosing Futures".

It is probably unique in that it consists of an overarching broad strategy and three sub-strategies for cycling, walking and horse riding. The very different needs of the groups meant that cyclists in particular opted for this approach.

It turned out to be much simpler to formulate the actions for each group in this way. It also meant that each group represented was able to present their viewpoint and maintain their unique outlook.

User friendliness for Council staff is another outcome i.e. being able to go directly to the Cycling Sub-strategy people for planning purposes.

The CWB Strategy will be available as a PDF on Kapiti Cycling's web page on the CAN website - www.can.org.nz/kapiti - in the near future.

- Kapiti Cycling

Cycle Aware Wellington put in a detailed submission on Wellington City Council's draft Transport Strategy. CAW was pretty unhappy with the strategy: a commitment to 'sustainability' wasn't matched by any fundamental change of emphasis. The 'business as usual' approach of the strategy would leave cycling marginalised.

The CAW submission can be seen at: www.caw.org.nz and the draft strategy at: www.wcc.govt.nz/policy/current/trans-strat/

- Cycle Aware Wellington 🚲



CHRISTCHURCH CITY CYCLE STRATEGY UPDATE

In 1996, Christchurch City Council was one of first in New Zealand to adopt a strategy for cycling. The strategy is used by the council to set direction and policies.

The current version of the strategy, adopted by the council in 2000, is being updated. It is now available as a draft, showing the council's vision for cycling and sets objectives and targets for the planning and funding for cycling for the next five years.

The draft strategy can be found on the CCC website, or hard copies picked up from any Christchurch library or service centre. Anyone is welcome to provide feedback on the draft document. All you have to do is just get your comments to CCC by Friday, 7 May 2004.

- The draft strategy can be downloaded from: **<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Recreation/Cycling/strategymonitoring/index.asp>**

Christchurch mall inflexible over bike ruling

After three years of looking Lauren Dunn thought she'd found the wedding ring of her dreams. But when she and husband-to-be Dave Cahill arrived at Northlands shopping centre, Christchurch, with their bikes and two young children, they were evicted before they had had chance to try the ring for size.

Dunn, who was looking forward to getting married, said she felt humiliated that they were asked to take their bikes out of the mall. "It's not like we were hanging out on skateboards. We went prepared to spend thousands of dollars on a wedding ring and we were treated like children," she said. The couple had wheeled their bikes into the shop to avoid waking their slumbering children - Layton, two, and eight-month-old Tahlor.

Northlands spokesman Karl Retief said allowing bikes into the mall could jeopardise health and safety. "Allowing just one bike, even if it is just being wheeled, into the shopping centre could compromise our health-and-safety policy," he said. "It is very rare that we find the public object."

"We believe it could give the message to others that bikes are permitted in the centre. This could lead to people riding bikes within the centre, which would potentially put the public at risk."

[The Christchurch Press, 11 February 2004]

ROUNABOUTS 'RISKY FOR CYCLISTS, PEDESTRIANS, AND MOTORCYCLISTS'

Roundabouts are risky places for cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians, according to research by Auckland University Master of Engineering student Nathan Harper.

Mr Harper has built a database of 95 urban roundabouts in New Zealand to help traffic engineers understand what makes roundabouts safer. The database includes simple single-lane intersections, and large multi-lane roundabouts like the notorious Panmure crossing. There are an estimated 500 roundabouts throughout the country.

In the last five years, Blockhouse Bay town centre and Panmure roundabouts are at the top of Mr Harper's sample list for the most injury crashes, while the intersection at Dominion Rd Extension and Richardson Rd came in second with six injury accidents.

Roundabouts have a lower injury accident rate than other intersection types, including traffic lights, he said. But cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians face a significant injury crash risk at roundabouts.

Cyclists were involved in 24% of injury accidents, with pedestrians in 15% and motorcyclists in 10%. "These injury figures are disproportionate to the number of cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists who are on the roads. These users are more likely to be seriously injured in a crash, as they don't have the car to protect them in an accident," he said.

Cars entering roundabouts and failing to give way caused 45% of injury accidents, with other accidents relating to loss of control (19%), rear end crashes (16%) and sideswipe crashes (5%).

The research aims to make roads safer by predicting which planned roundabouts would be susceptible to accidents. The database will enable the user to put in variables such as how many roads feed into the intersection and what the traffic flow is like. It will then respond with how many injury accidents are likely to occur.

*[New Zealand Press Association, 11 February 2004
and Central Leader, 25 February 2004]*

Teens Tell Transport Truths

Most young people think there are too many cars and too many drivers, including too many 15-year-olds driving who should be cycling or walking those three or four kilometre trips – judging by the nearly 200 essays generated in the CAA-Bike Barn Essay Contest this year.

According to the overall winner, Alexander Vink, an Epsom fourth former, “businesses could provide ‘cycle facilities’ – showers, changing rooms, and bike sheds. It will be a lot cheaper than paying for company cars and parking spaces in the city.” Vink won a new 21-speed commuter bike donated by Bike Barn for his essay effort.

Some 89 Auckland schools were invited to submit essays with the title, 'The Bicycle: Reclaiming the City.' Auckland Grammar School won the prize for most essays contributed, with 195. The school's cycling coach, Lance Bowden, received the prize of a pro wind trainer on Wednesday morning at the Bike to Work Day celebration at Aotea Square in Auckland. Nineteen other students won prizes for their essays, including a prize for the most innovative essay in each of the categories, Forms 3-7.

Cycle Action Auckland contest coordinator Dale Johnson said, "I believe there will be a sea-change in the minds of those young people who wrote such perceptive essays about the kind of environment they want to inherit. They will think carefully about transportation choices, and opt for combinations of public and private transportation that optimise personal health and produce a clean city. The day of regarding the car as a panacea of getting from A to B is over."

- The winning essay, by Alexander Vink, appears on the CAA website at: www.caa.org.nz.

Dale Johnson, Secretary CAA ☪

Tax killing transport proposals says ECan

Environment Canterbury (ECan) is calling on the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) to exempt companies from paying fringe benefit tax (FBT) on subsidised public transport costs. The exemption would be an incentive for firms to pay employees' public transport costs and would increase the effectiveness of ECan's business travel plan.

The plan is the first of its kind in New Zealand and should reduce single occupancy car use by 10 per cent, if the results are comparable with those in Britain. "That's like reducing peak-hour traffic to that experienced during school holidays," said ECan transport policy analyst Michael Blyleven.

The firm MWH Engineering and Environmental Consultants co-ordinated a one-year trial of the plan. The firm's transportation group leader, Andrew MacBeth, organised email campaigns to encourage walking, cycling and ride-sharing, arranged free breakfasts and increased the availability of public-transport information. The numbers who cycled rose by almost 10% among the 100 staff, he said.

The FBT was originally designed to tax company perks such as private vehicles and business flights. ECan wants the IRD to encourage company payment of employee public transport. "The FBT is one of the barriers to businesses subsidising public transport," said Mr Blyleven.

[The Christchurch Press, 22 March 2004]

BIKE TRANSPORT ON LONG-DISTANCE BUSES

In the Feb / Mar 04 edition of ChainLinks, our member Lynn Conant reported on her survey of South Island coach companies. There were particular concerns with the standard of information provided by Intercity to their cycling customers.

CAN has been in ongoing contact with the Bus and Coach Association, and their Executive Director John Collyns has sent us a reply from David Strange, CEO of the Intercity Group:

For Intercity, the bike fare for each sector is \$10, pedals should be removed and handlebars turned 90 degrees. It is difficult to get uniformity with 400 individual agencies as well as their own people. Intercity would like to do better though and will address that.

Intercity does guarantee space. Space will only be a problem if there is a large number of bikes or a peculiarly large amount of luggage on heavily loaded service.

Intercity cannot use bike racks because they will create over-dimension issues (i.e. extend beyond the maximum 12 m length for a coach). The shuttles with racks have a limited number of slots, and on a per passenger basis the company thinks their bike capacity is no worse or better than anybody else's.

We appreciate that Intercity are intending to review their processes and performance. This will help both our members (by better service) and Intercity (by repeat service from satisfied customers and an improved image), so this is a win-win situation.

As for the over-dimension subject, this is something that CAN has already raised with the legislator LTSA. We would like to see bike transport by front-loaded bike carriers allowed for urban bus services (see the article "Impressions from Europe: Taking Cycling Seriously" in the Dec 03 / Jan 04 issue) as well as the possibility of rear-loaded racks for coaches. We would very much welcome the support of the Bus and Coach Association on this issue.

Axel Wilke, CAN Technical Advisor 🚲

Extensions planned for Hutt River Trail

A new section is to be added to the popular Hutt River walking and cycling trail at Birchville in Upper Hutt, and is expected to be open next summer. The Phoenix Trust charitable trust has donated \$85,000 to the project.

When completed the trail will extend more than 24 kilometres from Hikoikoi Reserve in Petone through an underpass at Beechwood Lane in Te Marua to the start of Plateau Rd. From there existing tracks and minor roads will link up with the Rimutaka Incline track, making it possible to walk or cycle from Petone to Wairarapa away from main roads.

[Dominion Post, 26 March 2004]

End of the road for Nelson's Southern Link

Nelson's proposed \$22.4 million southern link has been given the thumbs down in an Environment Court decision which has shocked the road's supporters and delighted its opponents.

Transit had argued the 5.6km-long, two-lane southern link highway was needed because Nelson's two main routes would be operating at full capacity most of the time by 2021, in terms of their ability to move traffic. Transit had the highway earmarked to replace the Rocks Rd-Wakefield Quay route as the State Highway 6 connection through Nelson, with construction starting in 2010-11.

Spokesman for anti-link lobby group Nelsust, Don Murray said the Environment Court's decision was a victory for the health and well-being of up to half the children in Nelson. Nelsust was one of the main groups that brought the appeal against Transit, when it signalled it would go ahead with the highway and disregard an independent commissioner's ruling that denied it consent to do so. A group of schools, a business, and a kindergarten also opposed the highway and were part of the hearing that took place last November.

After almost 70 pages, the court's decision concluded the highway should be 'cancelled'. "Fundamentally this is the wrong place to put a State Highway," Environment Judge Jeff Smith said. The highway was originally going to cost \$14.5 million but Transit revised its costs earlier this year to reach the \$22.4 million figure.

[The Nelson Mail, 31 March 2004]

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"It would be swift and to the point."

South Canterbury community constable Colin Hawke considers emulating his Hawkes Bay Police colleague who issues 55 press-

ups instead of a \$55 fine for not wearing a helmet or riding on the footpath. (High Country Herald, 28/01/04)

“We shouldn’t be so arrogant to think that we know everything about our traffic problems.”

If only more council politicians and staff took the refreshing view espoused by Nelson City Councillor Nita Knight, when it comes to accepting outside advice on cycle safety... (Nelson Mail, 02/02/04)

“Bikes don’t have the cool factor, whereas cars do.”

Cycle Action Auckland campaigner Dale Johnson succinctly explains the uphill battle to get secondary kids on bicycles. (Central Leader, 04/02/04)

“Even though additional signage has gone up, you would have to be a rocket scientist effectively to find your way through it.”

Nelson coroner Ian Smith is unimpressed by new cycle underpass signage in the wake of the recent death of a cyclist using a busy road instead. (Nelson Mail, 10/2/04)

“Even though I had not cycled for decades, the joy and freedom I felt as a child when I learnt to cycle was there again and it was wonderful.”

Paraparaumu resident Diane Kershaw finds getting back in the saddle a pleasant surprise. (Kapiti Observer, 23/02/04)

“At the beginning of the year there are about 20 who are bringing their bikes and this increases to about 80 or 100.”

Takapuna Normal Intermediate School Principal Owen Alexander notices the effect on student travel patterns of the school’s road safety programme, which includes a cycling camp on Waiheke Island. (Gulf News, 04/03/04)

“Transport is by far the biggest energy user in this country. We seem to have left the critical issues of road, rail and urban form to local body politicians whose electoral cycle is an incentive to take a short-term view.”

WEL Networks CEO, Mike Underhill, laments a lack of innovation by engineers in tackling the country’s energy problems. (e.nz magazine, March/Apr 2004)

CYCLING THROUGH THE LAND OF GOLDEN PAGODAS

Frank Pearson describes his recent cycling experiences in the relatively untouched South-East Asian country of Myanmar.

With two overseas contacts recently fingering Myanmar (Burma) as a place to get to quickly I was fortunate to find on the web (spiceroads.com) a fortnight's cycling tour that fitted into those first three weeks of January when it remains respectable in New Zealand to close the office. Fortunately that's also the coolest time of year for South East Asia.

This is penned from the relative luxury of Yangon (Rangoon) after over 700km of pedalling. The lips are cracked, the body achy but the opportunity taken of catching a glimpse of old Buddhist Asia via a country that is "opening up" only very slowly, relative that is to the likes of Vietnam, Cambodia and even Laos.

I haven't seen a mobile phone, Internet is sparse and apparently much of it "blocked" and the press censored. International embargoes are in force on account of the military regime's refusal to acknowledge the results of democratic elections. Against that background, barely a couple of hundred thousand tourists a year visit what is a physically large country of approaching 50 million people.

Our tour commenced at Mandalay in the centre and took us to Bagan (one of the three major ancient Buddhist sites in the world - the others being Angor Wat (Cambodia) and another in Indonesia), Mt Popa, Kalaw, Pindaya and Inle Lake. For me, more fun was the exhilaration of cycling through fields and villages off the tourist routes and seeing snatches of life as it has been lived for centuries. I only saw one tractor the whole time, bullocks and oxen continuing to be the primary power unit for both tilling the fields and grinding (as they trudge round and round) the likes of peanut oil. Road and irrigation construction was by hand, most often by 'slight' teenage girls.

Burma is within the poorest 10% of countries in the world. Going through airport security is hilarious as western procedures are aped without any care or attention - bags go into holes and out the other side - whether there's a machine x-raying is unclear - that no-one is at the machine viewing the luggage is obvious.



The people themselves seem good-natured and outside of the main tourist sites very, very friendly. Life must be hard, the barter system widespread with faith in paper money likely to be low following overnight arbitrary confiscations by the military regime a couple of

decades ago (apparently by cancelling larger denomination notes and

allowing only military and civil servants to swap them for other denominations).

The Burman people constitute the largest proportion but many other "minorities" (outside of the central lowland area) actually total a greater number - conflicts over time have been many, not to mention the British for 150 years (around 1800-1948). With the military regime ostracised nowadays by the West the China connection is strong - reflected by a rising flood of cheap consumer goods in the markets.



That 99% of the folk outside of Rangoon wear colourful traditional costume adds immensely to the charm but the markets are full of modern clothing (David Beckham shirts, etc). Buddhism is devoutly practised (one of the reasons of course why so-called progress is slow) and during the many festivals during the year night-long chanting in the monasteries (which are literally everywhere) are broadcast to all and sundry. There remain few cars outside of Rangoon, bicycles still constituting the morning rush hour in Mandalay, with scooters present as well. The international postcard rate is 30 "chats" (NZ 5 cents) but a bit like the old pony express or indeed newly hatched baby turtles racing down the sand to the water- not all of the mail apparently gets through!

So long as you don't mind dust everywhere, hard beds, 'on site' (rather than en suite) facilities, ho-hum cuisine, taking your shoes off virtually every time you visit a temple site, lots of overloaded tut-tutting tractor vehicles, heaps of black smoke from trucks blown into your face as you're forced off the road and "every car in the country seeming to have its horn connected to the accelerator peddle", then Myanmar might just be for you.

Positive memories are of the daily intoxicating mixture of smiling faces, colour, noise and attention as we cycled past fields and through villages and towns or the sight of lines of monks walking single file into town each morning with bowls in hand to collect food from the townspeople. Other reflections are of the very social people with many roadside tea houses. The temples are truly magnificent, contrasting so greatly with the poverty. The economist Galbraith 40 years ago contrasted private wealth and public squalor in the US and one is tempted to reverse that description in respect of Myanmar. I'll conclude with a quote from a Sydney-based Burman on returning for a visit: "Whatever inconveniences and difficulties are encountered in visiting Myanmar, there is the compensation of seeing a country more truly itself, not a place that has adapted to foreign culture." ☸

I also travelled (by car) alongside part of the proposed Motukarara–Little River rail trail (www.littleriverrailtrail.co.nz) soon after and imagined how enjoyable this piece of line would be on a bike, particularly with the increasing amounts of people travelling the short distance by road to Banks Peninsula. I have been surprised how few cyclists are aware of this development. It has been proceeding at a rather glacial speed as a result of a lack of funding, issues arising from differing lease arrangements and perceptions of the various landowners. I believe this is all about to change for the better.

We could draw our inspiration from developments in south-eastern Australia. Just pick up a copy of **Rail Trails of Victoria and South Australia** published by Rail Trails Australia (www.railtrails.org.au) and go green with envy. It is a well-assembled book with excellent maps and photographs. One difference between New Zealand and Victoria is the different attitude of government to ownership of closed rail corridors is shown in this quote:



Andrew Couper on the Otago Central Rail Trail

“The ecological value of railway corridors has long been recognised and was a factor in the Victorian Government’s involvement in the retention of these corridors as public land. Rail trails are great places to see plants, birds and other wildlife” (‘Rail Trails of Victoria and South Australia’, p.iii). However, a unique situation exists in New South Wales where rails cannot be lifted from closed lines without an act of parliament being passed. This retains right-of-way and solves any tenure issues. Railtrails Australia favours creating trails between the rails of these closed lines.

Another excellent book you may wish to read is **Exploring New Zealand’s Ghost Railways** by David Leitch and Brian Scott (published by Grantham House) to see some of the potential for rail trails in New Zealand and from which the map was copied. On a similar tack (track?), why don’t we make more use of the many kilometres of stopbanks, our equivalent of canal paths in Europe and North America. Potential also exists in the use of existing rail corridors as happens in the U.S. (www.railtrails.org, www.trailsandgreenways.org). Many lines already have service tracks adjacent to lines that provide good alternative routes to roads for cyclists. CAN has been more vocal in this area lately with the Government about to involve itself in the running of our railways again and in its submission on the Transport Sector Review (read CAN submissions on www.can.org.nz/submissions).

Of course as a cyclist I find it ironic to consider the cost of building “roads” for cyclists compared with roads for motorised vehicles. Although it appears to be a given that more roads attract more cars, this mantra isn’t so well-known by those who fund cycling facilities in order to attract more cyclists. I wonder whether the time has come for the formation of a national organisation similar to Rail Trails Australia here in New Zealand to promote the idea and facilitate the development of these marvellous ways of reusing old resources.

I would like to hear from any of CAN members who would be interested in cycling a few of these trails in Victoria over a week (best in Spring or Autumn) and catching up with some of the movers and shakers over the ditch. If there is the interest I would consider organising a trip and enjoy some of the cheap fares across the Tasman – please contact a.s.couper@xtra.co.nz. 🚲



Widespread support for rail trail idea

The idea of a bike trail following the rail route from Washdyke to Fairlie has caught the imagination of South Canterbury people. Cycling enthusiast Trevor Karton said he'd also heard from people involved with walking groups who are keen, and harriers. “One organiser of road races said having a trail would be great for them because there are so many hassles these days organising events on public roads.”

Central South Island Tourism general manager Glen O'Brien is also enthused by the proposal. “The visitor potential could be huge and it would have great benefits in terms of recreational activities, the health benefits, and the social and economic spin-offs.” He said the estimated 15,000 people who used the Otago Central Rail Trail every year was an indication how popular such facilities could be.

“I've just read a report presented at a New Zealand Cycling Conference by Owen Graham, the project manager for the Otago trail who commented how many people were opposed to it at first, but what an outstanding success it proved to be. Mr Graham said even organisations such as Dunedin's economic development unit said it was unrealistic, and one politician called it a pipe dream. However, it is now regarded as major success story and is used as benchmark of how to generate widespread community involvement.”

[Timaru Herald, 27 January 2004]

Plans for Christchurch rail trail move forward

In 2000, a young man by the name of Paul de Spa convened a meeting of like-minded people at Environment Canterbury who became the

'Christchurch to Little River Cycleway working group.' Their mission: to build an off-road cycleway between Christchurch and Little River.

Among other things this group carried out public consultation, produced promotional material and identified a possible route for the cycleway. In 2003 (as the project began to near the building stage), a more formal and robust legal entity was established to raise funds and manage construction, and so the Christchurch Little River Rail Trail Trust was formed.

The cycleway / walkway will be constructed in three basic sections:

1. City to Lincoln – This will be predominantly a commuter route linking the west and south of Christchurch with the townships of Prebbleton, Lincoln and the trail beyond. With its dual commuter / recreational function, it will be the only section to be sealed.
2. Lincoln to Birdlings Flat – This section will be built on the old rail embankments sidling around the northern shores of Te Whareora (Lake Ellesmere).
3. Birdlings Flat to Little River – This section will also be on the old rail embankment and winds its way towards Little River alongside Lake Forsyth. The construction of this section is being undertaken by the Wairewa Community Development Trust and is already underway.

When completed it is intended that the trail will be 'off road' for its entire length and will form the back bone of a network of walking cycling paths in each of the villages / townships its passes through, thus providing safe routes for young and old to move between schools, parks, shops and other locations of interest.

The value of this project as an inspiration and learning resource for future projects throughout New Zealand should not be underestimated as it is the first project of its kind to span three territorial authorities.

*Chris Freear, Deputy Chair, Christchurch Little River Railtrail Trust
email: chris@windflow.co.nz ☞*

Got something to Advertise?

Short "classified" advertisements of up to three lines (approximately 35 words) will be printed in *ChainLinks* for CAN members free of charge (one per issue) – contact the *ChainLinks* editor at **chainlinks@can.org.nz**.

For details of commercial advertising rates, see our website at:

<http://www.can.org.nz/chainlinks>

NEW ZEALAND BICYCLE REGISTRY

The New Zealand Bicycle Registry (www.mountainbike.co.nz/registry) is a free online service for storing vital information about your bike - most importantly your bike frame serial number. In the event of your bike being stolen you can notify the Registry so the Police, and others, can search for your bike if they recover it - anywhere in New Zealand.

This national registry is open to police agencies throughout New Zealand to simplify the return of found property. Hundreds of bicycles are found by police every year, and without the Registry, there would be no easy way for them to find the rightful owner. The Registry also has a public list of stolen bikes, so that you can search through it before purchasing a second hand bike and make sure it isn't stolen.

The New Zealand Bicycle Registry is modelled on the highly successful US National Bike Registry (www.nationalbikeregistry.com). The US registry site also has some useful tips about locking your bike, to help prevent it getting stolen in the first place.

Although the New Zealand registry is hosted by the NZ Mountain Bike Web, it can be used to register any type of bike. Do it now!

Cellphone implicated in cyclist's death

A 16-year-old driver who allegedly hit and fatally injured a Christchurch cyclist was possibly texting or talking on his cellphone when the accident happened, according to police.

Mitchell (Mitch) John Kingsley Button, 34, died several hours after receiving severe head and chest injuries when he was struck by a car on Marshland Road. The driver stopped his car after the accident but allegedly then left without helping Button.

New Brighton police constable Roydon Turner said it appeared the driver might have been texting or talking on his cellphone when he hit the cyclist. The cyclist was wearing reflectors on his jacket and helmet, and had lights on his bike. Turner said Button often rode his bike along Marshland Road not far from his Lower Styx Road home. He was on a training ride when he was hit.

The youth was tracked to his home and later charged with failing to stop to ascertain injury and failing to render assistance. Turner said information from the public had helped track the driver.

Infrastructure Auckland awards \$1.8m for walking and cycling

Infrastructure Auckland has offered a grant of \$1.8 million to Auckland City Council for walking and cycling improvements in its suburbs of Grafton, Avondale, Otahuhu and Panmure.

The improvements include such elements as walkways, cycle tracks, safety barrier fences and pedestrian refuges. They are aimed at improving the ability to walk and cycle to and around the centres of the above suburbs.

The end result is a reduction in traffic congestion through walking and cycling routes that are better used because they are safer, more convenient and better integrated with public transport.

The projects are expected to increase the proportion of non-motorised trips – from 19% of total trips to 25% over a 20 year timeframe. This means nearly 10,000 people using these facilities each day.

LETTER – Parking bars in front of Wellington Railway Station

Thank you to Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) for installing parking bars for cycle commuters, visitors and tourists to the city. These will be placed on both sides of the main entrance in full view of foot traffic.

Although it took CAW and in the end Kapiti Cycling two years to achieve this, it is very worthwhile. Visible, up front cycle parking sends the message: It's all right to cycle! It is also a little WIN for you as a cycling campaigner – a small feel good thing.

So I urge you to do what you can to get your regional council, district council or city council to put up cycle bars in public places: stations, libraries, swimming pools, supermarkets, sightseeing spots, cafés, parks and reserves.

Perhaps some of you have already achieved that, lets hear about it. Why don't we see who can have the most parking bars per population.

Liz Mikkelsen

Kapiti Cycling Inc. 🚲



Want to check out old copies of *ChainLinks*?

Check all back-copies of ChainLinks on our website at:

<http://www.can.org.nz/chainlinks>

IMPRESSIONS FROM EUROPE: SUBDIVISION DESIGN

This is my third article about impressions from Europe, gained during my trip in August to October 2003. After the Velocity Conference in Paris, I teamed up with Tim Hughes from the Land Transport Safety Authority (Pedestrian and Cyclist Guidelines Co-ordinator) to have a look at continental subdivision designs. Can there be much of a difference how you go about designing your subdivisions? You bet!

Table 1 shows the different design approaches and their consequences.

Table 1:
NZ and European Subdivision Design Approaches

NZ Approach	European Approach
Wide roads	Narrow roads
Roads are for cars	Shared use approach
Pedestrians / cyclists come second	All transport modes are equal
50 km/h speed environment	Slow speed environment

Bigger is not necessarily better, especially not when it comes to local roads whose function it is to give access to private properties. Having excessive road width has all sorts of problems associated to it. The layout of a road creates a certain speed environment, and a road as shown in Figure 1



Figure 1:
NZ subdivision road

gives the impression that it's OK to drive along at 50 km/h. That is contrary to European philosophy, where a 30 km/h (or less) speed environment for local roads is intended. On wide

roads with fast-flowing traffic, cars rule, and it's no wonder that the young cyclist in the photo chooses to ride in the gutter keeping as far away from the cars as possible.

The situation is quite different in the example we found in Houten (Netherlands), as shown in Figure 2. Although the road is the entrance to a good-size subdivision, and thus can be expected to have to carry a reasonable amount of traffic, the road is narrow and winding.



Figure 2:
*Subdivision road in
Houten (NL)*

Figure 3 shows a cul-de-sac in a German subdivision. Note that the area to the right of the drainage channel **is not** a footpath, but forms part of the normal carriageway. A footpath in this environment is not necessary, as the road environment does not favour one mode over another. The chosen approach is coexistence of the different transport modes.



Figure 3: *Subdivision road
in Hannover (Germany)*

Common to both the Dutch and German example is the placement of the drainage channel in the carriageway as opposed to at the side of the road.

The channel forms a depression deep enough that it would be an inconvenience to drive along it. Hence, traffic is encouraged to drive in the centre of the road, having to move across the channel in case of oncoming traffic. This further reduces the inclination for people to drive at excessive speeds.

I can see NZ safety auditors cringing at the thought of omitting the footpath. But the European experience is of course that their local roads are significantly safer than ours, due to the reduced travel speeds. Figure 4 shows the relationship between impact velocity and the comparable height of fall. Reducing speeds simply reduces both the crash occurrences and the crash severity.

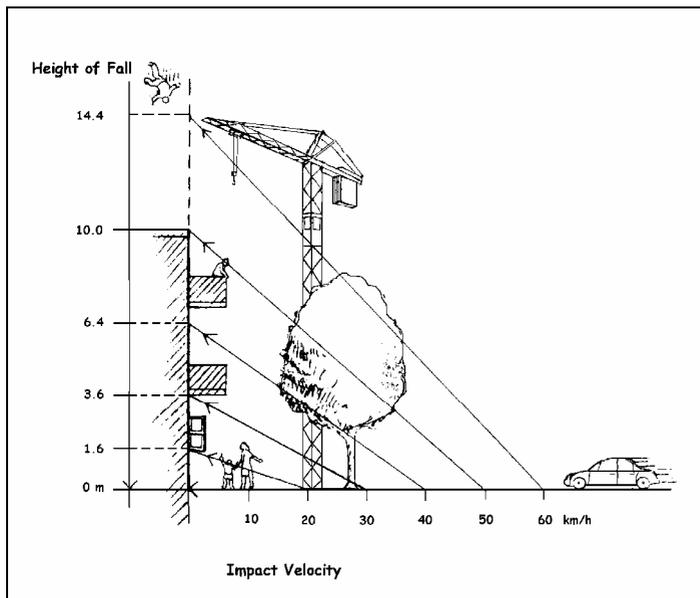


Figure 4:

Relationship between Injury Severity and Speed (Reproduced from Monheim, H. and Monheim-Dandorfer, R. (1990) 'Straßen für alle: Analysen und Konzepte zum Stadtverkehr der Zukunft.' Rasch und Röhrig, Hamburg, Germany (p.195).

In my professional life, I spend a lot of my time retrofitting traffic calming to local roads where crash problems have developed, or where concerned residents managed to persuade elected members to do something before a crash happens. But developers keep building the subdivisions with the same wide roads in compliance with our district plans that ask for these excessive road widths. What we are building today are the roads that we will be traffic-calming in years to come. To me the associated waste of money is one of the lesser problems with this.

Axel Wilke - CAN Technical Advisor 🚲

RECENT CAN EXECUTIVE ACTIVITIES

In the past couple of months, the CAN Executive Committee has been busy as usual on many things:

- Assisted with numerous local BikeWise Week activities
- Made submissions on the DOC Recreation Opportunities Review, Government Transport Sector Review, and Transit NZ State Highway Programme
- Responded to various letters to the editor in Wellington & Christchurch newspapers
- Provided advice to BikeNZ on sponsorship/commercial opportunities for everyday/recreational cycling
- Started planning forthcoming meetings with key Government agencies in Wellington
- Provided assistance to a unicyclist (!) regarding rights on footpaths
- Discussed parking provisions in local authority planning codes
- Met with Harry Barber of Bike Victoria to discuss cycle advocacy issues
- Investigated effectiveness of NZ Bike Registry to combat cycle thefts
- Provided further feedback to LTSA on the final draft Cycle Network & Route Planning Guide
- Discussed with Transit the status of the upcoming Cycle Design Guide
- Prepared overseas application for US\$5000 cycle project funding
- Collated and sent out e.CAN issues
- Discussed future funding options for BikeWise/Cycle Steering Cmtee
- Further developed plans for a 2004 CAN Workshop
- Considered CAN support for Transfund cycling research proposals
- Discussed with LTSA about cyclist consultation of speed limit changes
- Developed updated websites for some of CAN's local groups
- Discussed Government's response to cellphone bans in motor vehicles
- Arranged an online Exec chat meeting to agree on various actions
- Prepared this issue of ChainLinks

If you want to know more details about anything, contact Adrian (secretary@can.org.nz).

CYCLING RESEARCH: the accidental type

We often have fairly pre-conceived notions about what are the most dangerous issues for cyclists out on the roads. So what are the main types of cycle crashes? Here is an analysis of all reported injury motor vehicle accidents involving a cycle during 1999-2003.

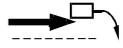
According to LTSA's Crash Analysis System (CAS), there were over 3400 reported injury crashes involving a cyclist in that five-year period, including 59 fatal crashes. Over 3200 of those (92%) were in urban areas, as you might expect, although 53% of all fatal crashes were on rural roads (demonstrating once again the effect of vehicle speed on cyclist safety!). 59% of urban crashes occurred at intersections (not including driveways), as opposed to only 29% in rural areas, where intersections tend to be less common. Here are the top crash types:

Description of crash type (LTSA Movement Code)	Diagram	% Of Crashes
Cyclist hit oncoming Vehicle turning right (LB)		12.2%
Vehicle hit Cyclist crossing at right angle from right (HA)		9.4%
Cyclist hit Vehicle turning right from the left (JA)		8.0%
Cyclist hit Vehicle crossing at right angle from right (HA)		7.0%
Cyclist hit opened door (EE)		4.5%
Cyclist hit Vehicle merging from the left (KA)		4.4%
Cyclist sideswiped by Vehicle turning left (GB)		4.3%
Vehicle hit rear end of Cyclist stopped/moving slowly (FA)		3.3%
Cyclist pulling out/changing lanes to right hit Vehicle (AA)		3.3%
Vehicle hit Cyclist turning right from the left (JA)		3.2%
Cyclist hit Vehicle doing driveway manoeuvre (MD)		2.9%
Cyclist hit parked Vehicle (EA)		2.6%

You can see a number of common intersection issues for cyclists, often to do with motorists failing to give way. The classic “door prize” (EE) also features quite highly, and may also include some of the crashes coded EA (“hit parked vehicle”) as well. Sometimes the crash codes used raise

questions about their appropriateness; for example crash type AA – presumably this generally relates to cyclists pulling out to overtake *parked* vehicles, not moving ones...

For rural crashes, the crash pattern is somewhat different. Here are the top six:

Description of crash type (LTSA Movement Code)	Diagram	% Of Crashes
Vehicle hit rear end of Cyclist stopped/moving slowly (FA)		17.7%
Vehicle hit rear of Cyclist stopped or turning from left side (GC)		7.0%
Cyclist pulling out/changing lanes to right hit Vehicle (AA)		6.3%
Vehicle cutting in/changing lanes to left hit Cyclist (AC)		5.2%
Cyclist hit Vehicle crossing at right angle from right (HA)		4.8%
Cyclist hit Vehicle turning right from the left (JA)		3.7%

We can see that the predominant movements involve vehicles coming up behind cyclists and either not being able to avoid hitting them or causing a crash when passing them. Some intersection problems also show up, but they're less of an issue.

While this information is useful in prioritising some road safety interventions, it is important to remember that this only tells us about **reported** injury cycle crashes involving a motor vehicle. Firstly, many minor and non-injury crashes don't get reported to the Police; everyone just picks themselves up and gets on their way. Our own CAN Member's Survey last year found only 1 in 10 injury crashes by CANNers being reported to the Police. This figure will also include many non-motor vehicle crashes that don't get picked up by the LTSA, such as falls on loose gravel or collisions with objects or pedestrians – some estimates put their number at 2-4 times as many again as motor vehicle crashes.

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Glen Koorey (koorey@paradise.net.nz, 03 331 7504) 

LAW AND ORDER: CYCLING PERMITTED

In the last ChainLinks, I wrote about ‘Right of Way’. One correspondent pointed out that “in legislation, no-one has any rights. Road users have responsibilities and obligations”. Also, the view was expressed “that ‘right and dead’ is not a good choice”. This is indeed correct, and the object of writing the article is to give readers an insight into legislation, rather than encouraging potentially dangerous behaviour.

Common Law

In this article, we have a look at where cycling is permitted, and where it is not.

The ‘right to pass and repass’ on the ‘Queen’s highway’ derives from *Common Law*, and is as such not explicitly stated in legislation. There is sometimes the misconception that the right to use the road is somehow related to paying for this privilege, implying that cyclists as ‘freeloaders’ have lesser rights. Road user charges in their various forms are more akin to the *Resource Management Act* principle that those who impose an adverse environmental effect should be the ones who pay to avoid, remedy or mitigate that effect. Cyclists and pedestrians pay nothing in direct usage charges (although many pay rates), and that’s justified as they cause no or insignificant adverse effects. And the Crown is committed to safeguarding the ability of all road user groups to ‘pass and repass’.

The Power of Road Controlling Authorities

The 74 territorial local authorities (i.e. district and city councils) control the roads in their areas, with the exception of the State Highway network, for which Transit NZ is responsible. These road controlling authorities (RCA’s) have powers to restrict certain vehicle classes from using certain roads using a bylaw process (e.g. impose a ban on cycling on a road). They also have the power to restrict the use of traffic lanes to certain classes of vehicles (e.g. create a bus and bike lane).

The “Cyclists on Expressways: North v. South” article in ChainLinks (Aug-Sep 2003) dealt with the process (or lack of) used to determine when to ban cyclists from certain roads (see the photos opposite for an interesting example). It was argued that local perceptions seem to be a major driver, rather than a clear technical assessment based on safety or efficiency. With a lack a national technical guidelines, it can be expected that future decisions will continue to arouse emotions with the cycling fraternity.

Cycling on Motorways

For some reason unbeknown to CAN, motorways have with the *Transit New Zealand Act 1989* their own piece of legislation. Section 89 says that a person may operate a vehicle on the motorway if “the vehicle is a cycle being operated on a part of the motorway where such operation is

approved”. (Note that **motorway** means a motorway as defined in section 2(1) of the *Transit New Zealand Act 1989* (i.e. declared a motorway by the Governor-General and gazetted accordingly). It would therefore appear that in theory, cycling on (some) motorways could be permitted by Transit NZ. Discussing this topic with some Transit officials arouses reactions though, that can only be described as being akin to holding a red cloth in front of a bull. Maybe interested CAN members want to discuss this issue with their local Transit cycling champion (see www.can.org.nz/contacts/cycle_champions.htm for contact details).



Figure 1: No shoulder, 70 km/h speed limit, 10,000 veh/day – cycling permitted.

Figure 2: Same road, same traffic volumes, same speed limit, but this time with a 1.5m wide shoulder – cycling not permitted.



More to come

In the next edition of ChainLinks, we will look at further pieces of legislation that allow or forbid cycling.

Axel Wilke - CAN Technical Advisor 

CYCLING NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

£8m for injured cyclist

Guildford, UK - An £8 million settlement has been agreed for a cyclist who was run down and crippled by a driver who was using a mobile phone. The collision took place in broad daylight on a section of the A3 near Guildford on February 14, 2002.

The driver, who hasn't been named and who was making a call to his bank on a hand-held phone, escaped prosecution. He admitted to police that he had not seen 28-year-old triathlete Timothy Sanders until he was 10 yards away.

Simon Holt, the CycleAid solicitor acting for Sanders and who specialises in serious injury claims, said that in his opinion, the driver was "almost wholly to blame". Holt explained: "Timothy sustained catastrophic spinal injuries which have left him currently bereft of most bodily functions while remaining mentally alert."

[Source: Cycling Weekly, UK]



Italy plans to build 10,000km bicycle lanes network

Rome - Italy plans to build a bicycle lanes network of some 10,000 km in the near future, in addition to the already existing 4694 km and in line with EU policy to protect the environment by promoting clean urban transport.

The EU policy framed by the Aalborg European Cities Chart for Sustainable Development, advises local authorities to give priority to ecological, non-polluting transport means, especially cycling and walking. Among the many Italian regions which included cycling policies in their legislation, the northern Lombardy region ranks first, with two of its twelve laws on ecologically sustainable means of transport focused on boosting bike riding activities, while integrating them in the existing transport network.

Towns like Asti, in Piedmont, approved a project to build 413 km of bicycle lanes, while Bologna is already equipped with a network of 354 km. Ferrara, with its network of 1115 km, ranks first in Europe.

[ANSA - English Corporate News Service, 9 February 2004]



Rome and Milan ban cars for the day

Italy - Cyclists cruised and families strolled around the centres of Milan and Rome today as cars were banned in moves to reduce pollution in the two main cities.

Milan's day without cars had been planned back in the autumn as part of a wider strategy against smog; Rome's was an emergency measure announced Friday after fine particle pollution remained above safety levels for five straight days.

Milan Mayor Gabriele Albertini crowed about how his city had long ago launched its strategy, programming no-car Sundays and banning uncatalysed cars from the city during the week.

In Rome, pollution levels returned to safe levels today, thanks in part to the traffic ban, and thanks also to the light rain which fell last night, washing some of the fine particle pollution away.

[ANSA - English Media Service, 8 February 2004]



Launch aims to get refugees rolling

Melbourne - Labour MP and keen cyclist Glenys Romanes has kickstarted a campaign to get and restore 30 bikes for asylum seekers. She recently delivered the first two bikes to clients supported by the North Melbourne-based Asylum Seeker Project, based at the Hotham Mission.

"Asylum seekers in our community are at risk of isolation because they have limited means of transport," she said. "This is a chance for people in our community to show their generosity and support."

Ms Romanes also called on businesses to get behind the project, saying that Pushi, (formerly the Bike Hospital) in North Melbourne had offered to service and repair all donated bikes.

Hotham Mission social worker Katherine Marshall said the Asylum Seeker Project annually helped about 200 people living throughout Melbourne's suburbs. "For the few people who have managed to get a bike through other means, it has just been really good because they've been able to get around and do things they need to do."

[Melbourne/Yarra Leader, 9 February 2004]



More pedal power needed for Melbourne

Melbourne - A world-renowned town planner has told Melburnians to push for more pedal power on city streets. Danish urban designer Jan

Gehl has urged city planners, residents and workers to embrace the cycling culture that has long gripped European cities.

He advocates expansion of the city's bike-path system and the placement of bike lanes between kerbs and parking spaces to increase safety for cyclists, motorists and pedestrians.

Mr Gehl's 1994 Melbourne Council-commissioned Places for People study recommended connecting Melbourne with the Yarra River, increasing the number of city residents and cafes. His advice led to the transformation of the city in the past decade.

Mr Gehl was in Melbourne said there was still more that could be done to increase the city's vibrancy, but first, city planners should encourage more cycling.

"It's healthy, it's cheap and it's environmentally very sound and it doesn't take up much space and it's not noisy," he said. "Instead of asking people to go to the gym or run madly around during the lunchtime, ride a bike. But then there needs to be a much better bicycle path system and I think that's certainly wanting."

A third of the residents of his home town Copenhagen cycled to work, and that figure was increasing he said.

[Melbourne/Yarra Leader, 9 February 2004]



Thailand proposes 'model bicycle town'

Thailand - If residents of Muang Lamphun have their way, the small town will be turned into a bicycle town with a model bike lane that lets local people take this mode of environmentally-friendly transportation into their everyday life.

A project to build a network of bike routes, stretching more than 33 kilometres at a cost of 220m Baht (NZ\$8.1m), is being proposed to the government. If approved, it would be the country's longest and most complete bicycling route.

The idea to promote all-out bicycle use has been adopted in a bid to prevent Lamphun from becoming another Chiang Mai, its twin city beleaguered with traffic jams, traffic noise and air pollution. The project is a big step forward from the launch of a campaign on bicycles initiated five years ago by Prapat Poocharoen, former mayor of Lamphun municipality. He said bicycles could help preserve the peaceful lifestyle of this 1,300-year-old town.

"We want to make this town a unique place where residents don't need to buy cars and motorcycles," said Mr Prapat, who is running for another term in elections later this month.

A survey conducted by the municipality last year showed 44% of residents ride bicycles every day, mostly for commuting and physical exercise. More importantly, 95% of the respondents said they would leave their cars at home and turn to cycling if a safe bicycle lane is provided.

Under the bike lane network project, 24 streets around temples and tourists attractions would be developed into bicycle lanes for eco-tourism while 25 major roads would get a separate bicycle path. Footpaths will be developed into bike lanes. Included in the network will be a bicycle lane on the picturesque Chiang Mai-Lamphun local road.

[Bangkok Post, Thailand, 2 February 2004]



Classic Chopper bike is relaunched

London - Classic 1970s bike the Chopper has been relaunched with the makers hoping the redesigned model will capture the imagination of a whole new generation.

With its trademark long handlebars and elongated seat, the bicycle gained cult status, selling some 1.5 million models. Makers Raleigh have taken nine months to redesign the cycle and they are confident it will prove a success.



"The new Chopper has been restyled for the new century and a new generation of kids," Raleigh Sales Director Carl Wright said. "We have taken advantage of new materials, safety features and production methods while retaining the flair of the original look."

Chopper owners' clubs already exist around the world but Raleigh hope the bike will find new fans in a similar way to other relaunched retro products such as the Volkswagen Beetle and the Mini Cooper.

[Reuters News, 25 February 2004]



Cycle ban, but now Shanghai pledges urban bike paths

Shanghai - Labelled bike-haters in a country of cyclists, bureaucrats in China's largest city now appear to be back-peddalling.

A ban on bicycles in much of this busy commercial hub's downtown area took effect last month, drawing widespread scorn. With cars clogging city streets, residents have scoffed at suggestions that the prohibition was needed to reduce congestion.

A tenfold increase in traffic fines for cyclists - punishment derided as harassment aimed at discouraging bike use - was to take effect in May.

During the weekend, however, city officials announced plans to build a downtown network of pathways for cyclists, newspapers reported Monday.

While not an outright repeal of the ban, the bike path plan appears to reverse a trend toward pushing cycles out of the city centre, where traditional structures housing shops and homes are being razed to make room for skyscrapers and shopping malls.

"The bicycle is still a premier transport tool in the city," Wu Jiang, deputy director of the Urban Planning Bureau, was quoted as saying in the Shanghai Daily. Few details were given, although Wu said the bike paths would be integrated into urban renewal projects ahead of the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai.

With a population of about 20m people, Shanghai is home to about 9m bikes. Although incomes have boomed along with China's economic fortunes, most people still receive the equivalent of about US\$100 (NZ\$145) per month and favour bikes for their convenience and low cost.

[Associated Press Newswires, 24 February 2004]



Orange offers Dutch hands-free bike phones

Netherlands - Cyclists in the bike-mad Netherlands can get a two-wheeler with a hands-free mobile phone kit if they become a customer of wireless telecoms operator Orange.

In the country which has more bikes than its 16m inhabitants, the plan was dreamed up by Bernard Uyttendaele, Orange's Dutch chief financial officer who thought it unfair that only car owners are offered hands-free calling kits.

Customers who take a two-year subscription at a minimum of 30 euros (NZ\$55) a month will receive an Orange-branded bike, a mobile phone charger attached to the handle bar and a wireless headset that will allow them to negotiate traffic while keeping both hands on the wheel.

Handheld calling has been outlawed for car drivers in the Netherlands, but Dutch bikers can still be seen swerving around cars, trams, buses and pedestrians while steering with one hand and holding a mobile phone to their ear with the other. More than 1.2 million Dutch, or one quarter of the employed, use a bicycle to get to work every day.

"Mobile operators give away handsets or even DVD players to customers, but many people are quite happy with their handset. This package makes a lot of sense in Holland," Orange said.

Subscribers can stick their old phone in the holder, which has a wireless Bluetooth element that beams the call to the headset. The removable

holder is connected to the bike's battery and the handset charges during the ride.

[Total Telecom, 17 February 2004]



Cycling scheme boosts pupil riders

Somerset, UK - A cycling scheme at a Nailsea school is being hailed as a success after its launch last summer. Parents and staff at Golden Valley Primary School took on the project when many of the pupils said they would like to ride their bikes to school if there was suitable parking.

Following a successful £7,000 (NZ\$19,500) bid to the Department of Transport's Cycling Projects Fund, the school's PTA and governors raised an extra £2,000 (NZ\$5500) to enable the project to be completed. The scheme was also introduced as part of a Government initiative to stop crowded parking outside school gates at peak times.

Headteacher Alan Shaw said: "As many as 100 pupils were cycling every day last summer, but the number has dropped off during the winter months. However, because of the project's success we will be looking to introduce more bike stands in the future." Under Nailsea's Travel Plan there could also be a toucan crossing installed near the school entrance to make travelling to and from school safer.

[Clevedon Mercury, 11 March 2004]



Amsterdam to deploy GPS to catch bicycle thieves

Netherlands - Amsterdam is about to launch a campaign to catch bicycle thieves, armed with cutting-edge technology.

City officials will use four bicycles with a built-in global positioning system (GPS) to find out about the traffic of bicycles in the capital city. Amsterdam city officials reckon that it will be possible via satellites to follow the course a stolen bicycle takes.

Of 520,000 bicycles, between 80,000 and 150,000 are stolen annually in the city. Although fines for thefts have risen, they do not really deter the systematic bicycle thefts. Many Amsterdam citizens do not bother to go to the police to report the theft of their bikes because there are slim chances of their getting back their bikes.

A city spokesman said that most bicycles were stolen and sold to dealers, who then sold them to other dealers. The aim was to get a picture of the organised crime in bicycles in Amsterdam, he said.

[Kyodo News, 12 March 2004]



PLANNING & DESIGN FOR CYCLISTS: The Right Stuff

Ask many cyclists and they'll tell you that the most difficult manoeuvre to make when riding is a right turn. The prospect of moving into the middle of a road (and crossing busy traffic to do so), then waiting there (often unprotected) until a gap appears, can deter many cyclists. Indeed, some will choose an alternative, more indirect route to avoid having to make a difficult right-turn.

For confident cyclists, it's very useful to learn how to "claim the lane" for situations where cycle facilities are not available. But what can we do to make right turns easier for all? Of course, the ultimate solution would often be a nice underpass or overbridge to completely separate the various movements, but it is rare that this can be justified. So here are some other suggestions:

- For a start, many of the same tools used to make turning right easier and safer for motor vehicles also provide some assistance for cyclists. So even by providing a right-turn bay/lane or a painted ("flush") median strip, you may also be helping to give cyclists a safe refuge.
- Likewise, features to help pedestrians cross may also be useful for cyclists. For example, central refuge islands also provide a physical shelter for cyclists. If one is located near a side-road, cyclists can wait in the "shadow" of it when trying to cross. Cyclists could also be allowed to use signalised crossings to get to the other side.
- A common problem for cyclists is finding a suitably clear time to cross over to the right, preferably without having to stop first. One option is to provide a long length where cyclists can cross at any point. The right-turn bay shown below has a special cycle lane in advance of the full turn lane, allowing cyclists to move over when it is convenient to them.



- In some locations (especially T-intersections), a waiting place on the left can be provided for cyclists to stop clear of the traffic and cross over to the right when safe to do so. For example, a hold-rail on the left-hand kerb provides a comfortable stopping place to check for traffic. Even better, a special kerb area could shelter turning cyclists outside of the through lanes (motorists and straight-through cyclists!), and point them perpendicular to the traffic, with a hold-rail to wait at.
- Intersections with merge and diverge areas (e.g. those that have a bypass lane for through traffic) can be pretty difficult for cyclists, especially on high-speed roads. In the adjacent picture, the location for cyclists to cross over to the right has been moved away from where the traffic lanes diverge (a hold rail on the left hand side would be handy too). Meanwhile in the picture below, side-road cyclists turning right onto the main road can avoid a tricky merge further up, by waiting here to cross over to the shoulder.



side-road cyclists turning right onto the main road can avoid a tricky merge further up, by waiting here to cross over to the shoulder.

There are some other innovative treatments that have been specifically developed for cyclists turning right at traffic signals. Next time, we'll look further at some of these.

Some Relevant Reading

- Austroads 1999, *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14: Bicycles*, Section 5 (Road Intersections).
- Christchurch City Council 2001, *Marking of Advanced Cycle Lanes and Advanced Stop Boxes At Signalised Intersections*, provides some useful research on the effectiveness of some treatments. <http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Recreation/Cycling/TechnicalResearch/>
- CROW, 1993. *Sign up for the Bike: Design Manual for a cycle-friendly infrastructure*, especially Sections 6.2-6.3, which discuss various design aspects of intersection facilities for cyclists.

All feedback please to **Glen Koorey** (koorey@paradise.net.nz, 03 331 7504) 🚲

Police tackle wheels of Justice

The death of a suspected bicycle thief has saddled Australian police with a problem - what to do with his houseful of bikes. Police said that the man, who was in his 60s, died last week while trying to steal a bike in Melbourne. Officers discovered the cache of about 1000 bicycles when they went to inform the man's relatives in Geelong of his death.

Senior police Sergeant Adrian Benny said that police now have to work out which of the roughly 1000 bicycles were bought by the man and which were stolen.

[AP/The Star, 19 March 2004]



Cyclists 'at risk from road safety schemes'

Scotland - Road safety measures designed to protect cyclists are putting them at greater risk from other traffic, according to a new Scotland-wide body. Cycling Scotland said the shortcomings of some traffic-calming and road "improvements" had increased the danger of cyclists being hit by vehicles or colliding with pedestrians.

The group said that despite such schemes being funded by Scottish Executive grants to make streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians, local authority officials had failed to follow design guidelines. Cycling Scotland said they include slippery rubber "speed cushions" in Ayrshire, cycle lanes being introduced against the flow of traffic in Glasgow city centre, and awkwardly positioned cycle lanes near roundabouts elsewhere. 'Pinch points' that narrow crossings for pedestrians also funnelled cyclists into traffic, it said.

Spokesman Michael Addiscott said: "There are many places where cyclists get squeezed into the traffic flow, are directed into pedestrian crossings or are faced with pedestrians walking off pavements on to contraflow cycle lanes. Unfortunately, the engineers who are responsible for installing these treatments do not often understand the needs of the intended user. They are discouraging those they are meant to be helping, and in many instances putting them at real risk."

However, he said he hoped the official launch of Cycling Scotland as the country's first national umbrella body would improve the co-ordination and planning of future projects. The organisation, which is funded by the Scottish Executive, aims to help ministers meet their target of quadrupling cycling between 1996 and 2012. While surveys have shown 46 per cent of children would like to cycle to school, just 2 per cent do so. Cycling Scotland said 80 per cent of households had access to a bike, and twice as many bikes as cars were sold in Scotland every year.

[The Scotsman, 16 March 2004]

REMINISCENCES OF A MATURE CYCLIST

*Although cycling is traditionally seen as best in your younger years, there is no reason why age should be a barrier to enjoying active cycling. **Tom Leach** writes about some of his more memorable trips since he rediscovered cycling later in life.*

My first bike was at the age of seven to enable me to get the four miles to school. The same bike lasted me to the end of school at 15 when I acquired my first motorcycle. But that was the end of my cycling until I got a very second hand Healing 10 speed at the ripe old age of 61. I took it to pieces and straightened it out and repainted it but soon wanted something better and bought another 10 speed Japanese one which I think was a Centurion. I joined the Wellington Cycle Club and did quite a lot of local rides, which were as much off road as possible.

I now had got the bug and got kitted out with front and rear panniers a small tent and the rest of things to go camping. My first big trip was by ferry to Picton then on to Upper Moutere where I met my daughter, who was already into cycling. We then went by back roads where possible to Christchurch via Reefton, Lake Brunner, and Arthur's Pass, which we both rode up with stops for a breather at each corner. After a couple of nights with friends in Christchurch we got the train to Kaikoura and biked by back road to Hamner Springs, which is or was the worst road I have been on – it was all gravel and mostly about fist size. At Hamner we met up with some other like-minded members of the cycling club and went to Blenheim via Jacks Pass and Rainbow Station. In those days you had to get permission, in advance, to do that ride, from Blenheim to Picton and back home for a rest.

In 1984, aged sixty-five, I went to England to visit relatives and run the London Marathon. While in Manchester I bought a NEW bike built to my specification. It was built by Harry Hall and it had 15 speeds. Back home with my prized possession it was time for another good ride with the cycle club, by train to Timaru from where we cycled to Pleasant Point and Albany. There we left sealed roads for quite a time going to Hakataramea Downs, on to Hakataramea and Duntroon, where I suffered my first broken spokes, in the back wheel and of course on the sprocket side. We got them fixed as I always carried spare spokes and I had my helpful friends with me.

Off we went over Danseys Pass to Kyeburn and a good sealed road to Middlemarch and it was going down to Middlemarch that I went at a quite frightening speed, a gale force northerly and a long down hill with a heavily loaded bike. I hate to think what would have happened with a blow-out in the front tyre. We carried on to Brighton and then followed the coast where

possible right down through the Catlins to Invercargill. It was a super trip with lots of excitement and marvellous scenery.

I had promised my wife that if we moved up the coast I would give bowls a go and this occurred in 1988 when I was seventy. I enjoyed the game and played a lot at the expense of cycling. However a trip to England and a heart attack with two blocked arteries put me in hospital for ten days where they got me stabilised and pronounced fit to travel home. As soon as possible I had angioplasty and a couple of stents inserted and I was as good as new. So to celebrate, and for my 83rd birthday, I bought an Avanti mountain type bike complete with sprung front forks and super brakes. I pottered around on this for about 12 months and then entered a two-day event, which was, I think described as a fun ride. We started off in Q.E. Park down to the car haulage place near Paekakariki and that was more or less the last of what you could call a road for the next two days. We pushed up hill for an hour and a half to the transmission lines and then rode tracks to Waikanae for lunch. In the afternoon more of the same, finishing for the night at Otaki.

The following morning was very pleasant up and down both sides of the Otaki river, but the afternoon I found really hard going back to Otaihangā because of a very strong southerly wind and by the time I got there I was all in and decided to call it a day and go home. It was on this occasion that I met Liz Mikkelsen who was manning a stall touting for members of what has now become Kapiti Cycling Inc.

I have many happy cycling experiences and hope the foregoing may encourage some of the young guys who think they are too old to keep on riding. I am sure they will find it just as enjoyable as when they were young! 🚲

Are you a CAN Local Contact?

As well as our various local advocacy groups like Kapiti Cycling, Spokes Dunedin, etc, CAN also maintains a list of other local contact people in towns without groups, who have offered to be focal points for cycling advocacy issues in their district. You can see the list on our website at:

<http://www.can.org.nz/contacts>

If you would like to be a local contact in your area, get in touch with CAN's secretary at ***secretary@can.org.nz***. Who knows, maybe one day, you can start a local group there!

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