



► *President's Corner* . 3



► *An American Cycling Odyssey* 3



► *Tell us your story of how you joined the club.* . 5

The Shore Thing

THE *JERSEY SHORE TOURING SOCIETY*
KEEPING BIKE RIDING FUN SINCE 1981

Bob Spony enjoyed his twelfth BikeWalk Virginia ride and met some interesting people along the way

Widget meets Bob the Builder

I have enjoyed the BikeWalk-Virginia ride each of the 11 times I have ridden previously, and this year was no exception. Last year I went with 9 JSTS club members, this year I was on my own. I left Friday, June 19, and arrived at the Charlottesville High School about 4 P.M. As I registered I received the documents needed for the ride. This includes 4 color maps of the routes, a tee shirt, and a wrist band for your meals, luggage tags, and schedules of events. I dropped off my luggage in the gym and parked the car in the University parking lot about 3 miles away. They provide a system of shuttle busses that take you downtown and hotels. Most of the riders pitch tents on the grounds and stay at this temporary "Tent City".

Although I knew the ride would be hot & hilly, the air conditioning in the gym was set so cold it could pass for a meat locker. They also left the lights on at night. Not the best for sleeping. We all had to go into town to eat and afterward they had a 6 piece band called "The English Channel" playing English artists' songs. They were very good. I had a couple of beers and listened to them.

Saturday was hot and humid. I did a 63 mile loop around Charlottesville and it was very hilly. A lot of people had a lot of problems with cramping. My legs were very tired. Coming back from dinner, a

guy in a scooter tried to cut in front of our bus and got clipped. He was okay and we were transferred to another bus. There was a witness and the cops came as we were leaving.



Sunday we left for Culpepper. The humidity had dropped and the weather was much better. I did 64 hilly miles in about 5 hours 21 minutes. I had a minor mishap about 6 miles in. My chain came off the small ring and got stuck between the bike and ring. Along came a woman who stopped to help. I had a hard time getting the chain out and she came up with a small screw driver. I thought "Oh, Lord this won't work." But working together were able to free the chain. She told me her name was (I swear) Widget from Marietta, Ga. I told her I am Bob. "Oh", she said, "like Bob the Builder". I met her many times after that and was always called "Bob the Builder". I referred to her as my "guardian Angel". Man, could she talk and was really funny.

I found a Sports Bar in town and had a good dinner with a couple from Palm Harbor, Florida and we talked about our experiences on the hills. I went inside, had a few beers and watched the Nats beat the Yankees 6-5. It was talent night where riders performed in the auditorium. I didn't see it but heard that some were very good.

Monday was another nice day for those that wanted to do a century. As for me, 55 miles was enough. As I was sitting outside eating an ice cream, I saw someone wearing our club jersey. His name is Jeff Mines and he was here with his friend Jim Tice. I had a nice talk with them both. They did the century which is a big accomplishment. I found out there was an accident on the road. A woman going wide, probably to pass someone, ran into a car. She was air lifted out but is okay. I met Widget on the road and rode with her for quite a few miles. One of the interesting sights was the "Graffiti House".

Occupied by both sides in the Civil War, They signed their names & dates with charcoal. The most prominent was General JEB Stuart. The signatures were papered over for many years and were only discovered during a 1993 renovation.

Tuesday, the fourth day of riding, going from Culpepper to Orange, I met up with a woman who was in her 60's. Her name is Leah from Falls Church, Va. She said she was going slower today because she did the century the day before, missed a turn and did an extra 8 miles for a total of 110 miles. As for me, I did 55 1/2 miles. I had lunch with Widget, her friend Carol and another fellow by the name of Al. I had a lot of laughs with these people. We had a rest stop at Montpelier, home of James Madison. The house was open for tours for the riders.

Wednesday was the last day and the ride was from Orange back to the start at Charlottesville. I was expecting an easy ride for the last day, but it was not going to happen. There were still lots of hills. I heard that a woman rode into a deer and was badly hurt. She was airlifted to a hospital. Bike Virginia provides a lunch of cold cuts & salads at the end of a ride. I gathered my stuff, said good-byes to my new friend & left for home tired but happy.

I rode a total of 293 miles for the 5 days. Food at the rest stops was good; weather was great; the scenery was spectacular; and the people even better. Remarkably there were 50 riders over 70 years old with the oldest being 85. With 5 days, 4,000 wheels, and 530,000 rider miles it was one Historic Ride!

~ Bob Spomy

SMARTER RIDING

The Jersey Shore Touring Society



The Jersey Shore Touring Society is a bicycle club whose primary focus is on social rather than competitive riding. We have "leader led" as well as "route sheet" rides. On a leader led ride you stay with the ride leader and the group goes only as fast as its slowest member, unless there is an advertised pace. On a route sheet ride, you can proceed at your own pace or hang around with others of the same ability. You can't get lost because you have a route sheet. We welcome newcomers to our club rides and ask that each rider wear a helmet and complete a waiver available at the sign-in before the ride begins. We have monthly meetings and we publish a monthly newsletter. If you like the club, please join by paying dues.

Lance in France!

At the completion of Tour de France stage 9, Lance Armstrong is in third place overall only 8 seconds off the lead behind Rinaldo Nocentini of Italy, and Alberto Contador of Spain.



The Jersey Shore Touring Society
www.jsts.us

The President's Corner July 2009

It's July and although I've been out of school for a few weeks, it's only been the last few days I've been thinking once again about riding.

Recall that a couple months ago, I shared with all of you my feelings about being reluctant to ride. A number of people sent me suggestions on how to get back in the saddle ... and I *greatly* appreciate everyone's comments. Back in May and into June I did 3 rides ... the MS ride, the Diabetes ride, and the Ride for Autism. All 3 rides were great fun and helped me get back to my riding "spirit". Last week, for the first time, I did the Thursday ride, one of

my favorite rides. (I would have come out earlier but as we all know we had the *rainy season* ... hopefully now with July, it's *over!*) I also plan to get out for a Tuesday night ride now and then and some of the Saturday rides.

I'm not in great shape right now and I don't think I'll ever get back to where I was 6 years ago when I rode 5,000 miles in one year to celebrate my 50th birthday. At the same time my intention is to ride and have a *good* time. Over time, I know that I will get stronger and will start being able to do longer rides. I also know that if I push myself too hard, then much pain will

follow. So, for now, my plan is to just ride and have fun ... start slow and push myself a little more each day and each week.

Anyway, that's my plan. Many of you have asked me how I've been doing and when will I be out "there" again. Hopefully over the next few weeks you will see more of me. (Assuming our weather pattern starts to change!!!)

See you all at the picnic ... it's Sunday July 12th!!

~ Steve Karger, President, JSTS

A book review by Bill Anderson

An American Cycling Odyssey, 1887

George Nellis left his home in Herkimer, New York, on a bicycle and arrived in San Francisco 72 days later, averaging more than 50 miles per day on this remarkable trip. This trip hardly seems remarkable today, so you might ask why anyone would write a book about it? Bear in mind that the trip was 122 years ago, in 1887!

George's trip was not the first cross-country bicycle trip, but it set a record over all previous trips by several weeks. Roads in 1887 were primitive, with brick or cobblestone paving in most towns and cities quickly giving way to dirt, gravel, and sand in the countryside. George made the trip with no SAG support, relying on towns that he visited for resupply and repairs. Of course, his choice of bicycle was the "ordinary" as it was called then, or high-wheeled

bicycle, or Penny Farthing, which was the dominant design of the time. Mark Twain had this in mind when we said of cycling, "you'll enjoy it ... if you live."

George's cycle was a Columbia Expert, with a 52 inch front wheel. The pedals were connected directly to the front wheel, giving only a single speed. Tires were hard rubber, so flats weren't an issue, but the ride must have been punishing over the primitive roads of the day. Mounting and dismounting the bike must have been an adventure in itself. Brakes were either rudimentary or nonexistent. Accidents were common due to the high center of gravity and closeness of the rider to the front wheel. Most accidents resulted in the rider being thrown over the front wheel, which mountain bikers would call an "endo" these days, but a new term came

into use in that age that is still commonly used to describe this fall, "taking a header." Long descents were particularly treacherous, and the cyclist was required to shift his weight as far back as possible to avoid the dreaded header. Proper attire for a cyclist in those days included a wool jacket and usually a tie, but no helmets or other protective gear.

Professor Kevin Hayes of the University of Central Oklahoma has put together a fascinating tale of this trip based on George's frequent letters. George was supported by the local newspaper in Herkimer and by a cycling periodical, so he wrote back frequently of this adventures on the road, leaving behind a detailed record and interesting observations on the things he saw en route. Prof. Hayes manages to capture not just the historical detail but also much of

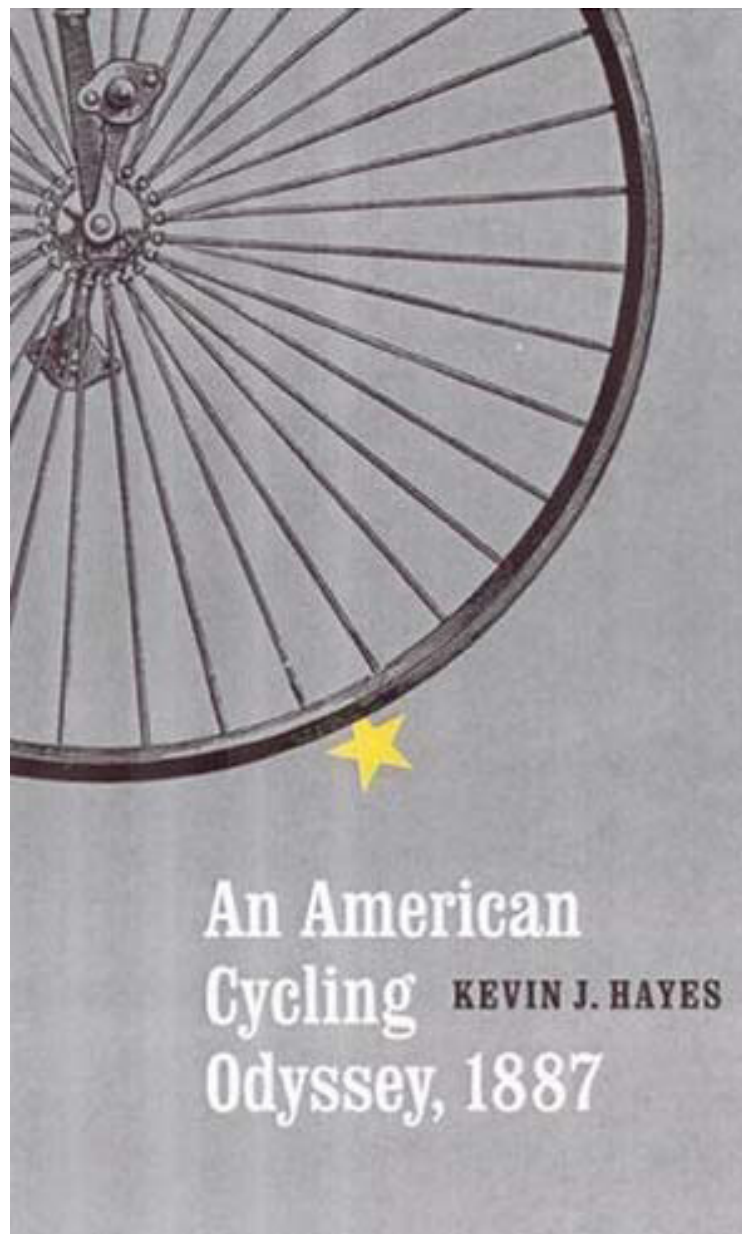
the adventure of the trip, giving a snapshot of American life in the late Victorian period rather than just a dry recounting of a cycling journey. He describes in detail the greetings that George received by the local "wheelmen," as cyclists called themselves back then. His progress was followed in many local papers, so the local clubs would know of his expected arrival. Often they would ride out of town to meet him and escort him back to town, making sure that he found good food and accommodations. On his departure, they would escort him out of town. Cycling was controversial even in 1887, and local clubs of wheelmen worked actively to improve cycling conditions and to share their rides and company, much as JSTS does today.

The US was sparsely populated in 1887, and there were many remote areas with few towns of any size. George Nellis relied on the unfailing hospitality of the farming families that he passed on the route. On a typical riding day, he would rise at sunrise, ride for a couple of hours, and then stop at a farm to find something to eat. George's bike was the first that many of the people in remote areas had seen, and even the poorest farmers shared what they had with this strange visitor. The book describes the farmer's

amazement at the vast amounts of food that cyclists can eat! These descriptions of the unfailing warmth and generosity of people in these remote areas are some of the most interesting parts of this book.

George's daily routine would continue with another three hours of riding followed by whatever lunch he could find, an afternoon ride followed by supper, and often a ride until the sun set. Rides would sometimes be interrupted for a quick bath and washing his one suit of clothes in a stream. Ten hours in the saddle was a typical day, and several times he traveled more than 100 miles in a day if road conditions and weather were favorable. Road conditions varied greatly, and George found the worst roads in the country near the end of his trip, in Nevada.

I would highly recommend this book for anyone interested in cycling. It's a great book to read after your morning JSTS club ride. After you put your carbon fiber bike away and change out of your Spandex and CoolMax bike clothes, enjoy a hot shower and a nice lunch, read of George Nellis' incredible journey with his state-of-the-art equipment, circa 1887.



Save the date

BIKE VERMONT AUGUST 14-16

Pending final approval and food details a weekend in Vermont road riding through the Randolph and Moss Glen Valleys or mountain biking on Lake Champlain is being planned. Final price is still pending but will not exceed \$100 including road route sheets for 80, 50 or 40 mile rides on Saturday and 32, 37 or 50 miles on Sunday or guided Saturday Mountain biking at Lake Champlain and Killington (lift extra) on Sunday on your own. Snacks Friday night, breakfast Saturday, dinner Saturday (TBD)

and light breakfast Sunday. The lodge is community living (10 to a room, bunk beds). Option to stay over Sunday night for an additional \$20. Reservations to Bill Metzgar or Pete Hearth: wmetzgar@aol.com (732) 525 1723 or peth140@comcast.net (732)-991-8213 by July 30 (lower bunks are on a first come bases Friday night).

~ Bill Metzgar

In this sixth article in the series, editor Lee Beaumont appeals to members to share your story of how you joined the club, your most memorable moments, and the significance club activities have for you. I would like to keep this a regular feature of the newsletter, so please send us your story



JSTS Story Book

After four members shared their stories of joining JSTS, it looks like we have reached another break. I hope the warmer weather and new riding season will awaken the muse in more club members.

This series helps us get to know our club members better, makes us aware of the many ways members enjoy the club, and showcases the many benefits of the club to current and future members.

Writing an article is pretty simple, just answer these questions:

1) Describe how you first thought about joining the club.

- 2) Describe your decision to join
- 3) describe your first ride, your first few weeks.
- 4) What went well, what was difficult?
- 5) What do you enjoy most about the club?
- 6) How do you participate in club activities?
- 7) How has the club transformed you?

I'll help you polish the article and make it look good in the published newsletter. I hope to hear from you soon.

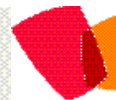
~ Lee Beaumont
JSTS Newsletter Editor
lee@SimplyQuality.org

“Join the club, you can do it, you will enjoy it.”

“What I enjoy most about the club are the very good friends I’ve made over the many years I’ve been in the club”

“I began doing the club rides on the weekend, and became hooked.”

“Of course, I love the people.”



The Jersey Shore Touring Society
www.jsts.us