

Tailwind Express

January, 2013



www.annapolisbicycleclub.org

ABC News



The ABC winter party will be held from 4pm - 7pm on Saturday, January 19th at Poncho & Pepe's Mexican Grill in Crofton, MD. The cost for the evening (subsidized by the club) is \$15 per person which includes a dinner fajita bar and soft drinks; alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase at individual expense.

Please RSVP by January 15th using the [club's event](#); you have the option to pay online or you can bring check or cash to the party.

We have been promised a finished sample of the new ABC jersey in time for the party, and we will have a jersey fit kit and plenty of order forms.

One of the party rooms at Panco & Pepe's:



Reminder

Start times for ABC weekend rides are now 10:00 AM.

ABC Officers

Co-President: Jim Black

Co-President: Jim Van Horn

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A Tale of Two Eggs

Two members of the ABC were surprised to learn that they were Oscar Egg bicycle owners. Following a recent Saturday ride David Bleil mentioned his Oscar Egg during a discussion about trail rides and Jim Black said “What? You’re the only person I’ve met in 45 years who has owned an Oscar Egg!” David and Jim agreed to share the stories of their Oscar Eggs. (We explain who Oscar Egg was at the end of the article.

The Touring Oscar Egg by David Bleil

In 1958 my family took a vacation through Europe. I was a High School student at the time and I intended to use that opportunity to do a little adventuring on my own via the Youth Hostel organization. I purchased Youth Hostel pass, AYH panniers and had a sheet sack made to specifications by my mother. The only thing I did not have when we arrived in Europe was a bicycle. Europeans were the only ones making interesting bikes at the time and I had an image in mind of what I wanted. It was called a Cyclo-Tourist and featured fenders and luggage carriers. Beyond that I knew nothing about bikes. My father was meeting with other physicists involved in writing a book and asked one of his French colleagues to recommend a shop in Paris where I could buy a bike. His wife said I know just the place and took me to the shop of Oscar Egg on the Avenue de La Grand Armée. I was disappointed. There were no bikes there. With the French woman acting as interpreter I explained what I was looking for and the old man in the shop indicated he understood. Then he took out a tape measure and measured me as if he were going to make a suit. He said come back in two days and we would pick out the wheels and gears. Three days later I was the proud owner of a pinstriped green touring bike with 2 rings front and 4 cogs in the back, 650 B balloon tires, center pull brakes and luggage

A Tale of Two Eggs (continued...)

racks braised onto the frame. The frame was Reynolds 531 double butted steel tubing braised into curved stress relieving lugs which Oscar had invented. The full fenders were aluminum. There was an aluminum chain guard and a generator on the rear wheel to power front and rear lights. The front light had the mandatory French amber bulb. An aluminum pump was mounted on pins braised to the frame.

I paid with Travelers Checks in U.S. Dollars for which I received a discount. I do not believe that it was more than \$500. Oscar said it was the most expensive bike he had sold in a year.



My first ride was through the traffic in Paris, which so terrified me that I had my parents haul the bike outside of the city before I started on my Youth Hosteling journey through parts of France, Switzerland and Germany.

I still have and ride the bike although I have worn through the rear cassette, numerous chains, two saddles and had to replace the rims after a trip through a wood fence on a rainy steep hill. The amber front light bulb still works, as does the generator. The original green handlebar tape, original tool kit, pump and the aluminum chain guard are long gone but the frame is still as

rugged as ever.

The last time I rode this bike with the ABC was the North Central Rail Trail Ride October 20 of this year.

The Road Bike Oscar Egg by Jim Black

My family spent the academic year 1966-1967 in Paris while my father, a professor of Russian History at Princeton University, was on sabbatical. He spent the year doing research on Peter the Great; I'm not sure how much research he accomplished but we greatly enjoyed our year in Paris. Once we were settled in an apartment near the Arc de Triomphe my parents purchased a bicycle for me. I don't remember being involved in the purchase, but I do remember puzzling over the bike's brand name: Oscar Egg. I was in middle school at the time; I really wanted to be just like everyone else but here I was with a bicycle with this odd name.

It was a sturdy bike but not heavy; it had a generator on the left side of the back wheel that powered the lights much more effectively than the batteries available at the time (remember the old pre-alkaline Radio Shack batteries?) although it created a lot of drag on the wheel. At one point the generator got misaligned and wore through a tire during a 100 mile ride (now known as a century ride).

The Oscar Egg served me well for about 15 years until it was stolen one sad day in Philadelphia. It had taken me down a steep New Jersey hillside and refused to slow down, sending me out of control across oncoming traffic into someone's front yard. But it made sure I landed on the seat and pedals and came safely to a stop after going airborne. Note to self – maintain those brakes!

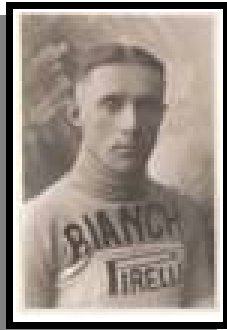
A Tale of Two Eggs (continued...)

And then there was the day in college when I rode across campus carrying a cane because of a sprained ankle. The cane somehow became intertwined with the front spokes and over the handlebars I went. The Oscar Egg was unharmed but I suffered some road rash.



Circa 1966 AD: Jim Black cycling through the Bois de Boulogne, an area now better known for its nocturnal activities. Note the custom lace-up cycling shoes. The cast on the left arm was the result of punching a classmate on his skull during a schoolyard brawl.

The original Oscar Egg



Oscar Egg was born on March 2, 1890 in Switzerland, and died on February 9, 1961. He became a professional racer in 1912 and, in 1914, won the Paris-Tours Classic. His one-hour distance record of 44.247 km on 18th June 1914 stood for a further 19 years. In fact, Egg's record was not broken by a racing bicycle, but by a recumbent designed by Charles Mochet. After an illness caused him to retire from riding he built bikes. He invented the wide range derailleur shifter, the stress relieving frame lug and several other innovations. Lots more information is available about him on the Internet; see:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Egg and

<http://www.cyclingarchives.com/coureurfiche.php?coureurid=572>

Out of area rides with the Annapolis Bike Club.

By David Bleil

The usual routes that the ABC rides each week are pleasant and often challenging but the real fun can come on out of the area rides organized by Jim Van Horn.

On October 20th we rode the North Central Rail Trail (NCRT) from Ashland, Maryland to New Freedom, Pennsylvania. Eight riders met at the trail-head parking lot at 9:00 AM. The weather was crisp and cool. The trail was uncrowded with a gentle slope up from the start to New Freedom. The NCRT is stone dust and hard packed dirt so hybrid or touring bikes were the order of the day. The trail runs through largely wooded and agricultural areas and is really scenic.



An unexpected addition to the atmosphere of the ride

was a dog sled race mimicking the Iditerod with cheering fans at stops along the way bearing the names of Alaskan communities along the famous dog sled route. Of course the sleds had wheels. But of all the obstacles I have met on a bike it was the first time that I ever had to pass dog teams.

Susan Robinson had promised us a memorable meal at the Italian restaurant right on the trail in New Freedom so we all ate lunch there. The food was good. The trail is a Maryland State Park up to the state line. It continues on to York, Pennsylvania under different management. The days grow short in October so no one wanted to explore the trail further North. The park provides restrooms in several locations including the former train station in Moncton. We used these with appreciation for real plumbing instead of plastic outhouses. We returned to the parking lot by early afternoon but a communications failure prevented a group picture at the other end of the ride.

Out of area rides (continued...)

On November 17th Len Jones organized a 40 mile Covered Bridge Ride in the Monocacy Valley of Frederick County. The rolling terrain was good road bike country. The ride started from the Monocacy Middle School parking lot. Nine riders headed up Opossumtown Road in the valley toward Thurmont, MD. A new to the group rider, Joan Chevalier, joined us, and turned out to be a strong rider. Three covered bridges are maintained on the route as tourist attractions. When we reached the bridges the riders took turns photographing each other riding through. A short delay occurred when Jim Black and Jim Van Horn waited patiently for Susan Robinson to ride through the second bridge while Susan waited on the other side for the two Jims to ride through. Here they are waiting for Susan.



The bridges were not the only scenic attractions. Paralleling the mountain we passed the Catoctin Furnace park, the Catoctin Wildlife Park and the Cozy Inn. Crossing Route 15 with high speed traffic in both directions on the divided lane highway provided the excitement for the day but fortunately no casualties. After the ride most went to the Hard Times Cafe for a late lunch.



Stay Warm and Fit this Winter!

