GLORIOUS MAINE:

Ride the Coast

PLUS:

FOLLOW ROBERT E. LEE BY BIKE
FOR THE FAMILY: TRAILER ROUNDUPT
WAKE UP CALL FOR WILLIE WEIR
SHARE THE JOY
GET A CHANCE TO WIN

Spread the joy of cycling and get a chance to win cool prizes

- For every cyclist you sign up through a gift membership or who joins through your referral, you score one entry to win a Novara Verita (rei.com/product/807242) valued at over $1,100. The winner will be drawn from all eligible members in January of 2012.
- Recruit the most new members in 2011, and you’ll win a $500 Adventure Cycling shopping spree.
- Each month we’ll draw a mini-prize winner who will receive gifts from companies like Old Man Mountain, Cascade Designs, Showers Pass, and others.
- The more new members you sign up, the more chances you have to win!

Adventure Cycling Corporate Members

Adventure Cycling’s business partners play a significant role in the success of our nonprofit organization. Our Corporate Membership Program is designed to spotlight these key supporters. Corporate Members are companies that believe in what we do and wish to provide additional assistance through a higher level of support. These corporate membership funds go toward special projects and the creation of new programs. To learn more about how your business can become a corporate supporter of Adventure Cycling, go to www.adventurecycling.org/corporate or call (800) 755-2453.

November 2011

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I recently returned from Interbike in Las Vegas. I think I’ve attended 16 of these industry gatherings but it could easily be 15 or 17. I’ve actually lost count. Regardless of the true number, I’ve been to enough of them to see how this massive trade show has evolved through the years, transforming from a standard insider event into a well-rounded gathering of bicycle-related interests. Yes, there are still all the bells and whistles of a trade show (literally, bells and whistles), a mind-numbing array of products on display, and a ton of mundane but necessary business getting done, but it now feels more like a gathering where like-minded people get to meet and mingle face to face. And in a world where most business is done via email or text messaging, it’s a welcome opportunity. For instance, I’ve emailed and spoken on the phone with Patrick O’Grady but had not met him until Interbike. I emailed Patrick a while back to tell him how much I enjoyed his columns in Bicycle Retailer and Industry News and that led to him contributing a feature story about Adventure Cycling’s supported Southern Arizona Road tour (adventurecycling.org/tours) and a slew of road tests, with more to come. After wandering the show floor with him, I now know that our bike-review program and a first-time attendee Winona Bateman, Adventure Cycling’s Media Director, and Sarah Raz, who handles a variety of duties for our sales department and who also writes the words that accompany Greg Siple’s “Open Road Gallery” Both Winona and Sarah are also instrumental in the success of Adventure Cycling’s blog (blog.adventurecycling.org). Collectively, it’s quite a team. While many of us focus on product, Jim works with the other nonprofit cycling groups to increase our voice within the industry as well as on Capitol Hill and Winona seeks to expand our relationships with other media outlets and get the word out about how bike travel can change peoples’ lives for the better.

Adventure Cycling is involved in a multitude of excellent programs and it takes a dedicated collective of people to make it all work. So thanks to our 2011 Interbike entourage — a terrific example of teamwork for bike travel. Michael Deme
Editor, Adventure Cyclist
editor@adventurecycling.org

**Mirror man not first?**
I recently read in Adventure Cycling in 2004 when I signed up for the Louis & Clark Tour of Montana. This is the way I chose to celebrate my 60th birthday. Since then, I have continued to keep in touch with the Missoula staff and read Adventure Cyclist regularly. I was pleased to read the April 2011 article “The Mirror Man of Gambier” by Greg Siple. I find The Mirror Man very interesting with all the bicycle accessories he has developed, including the rear-view bike mirror for your eyeglasses. However, I’m going to say the original developer of the eyeglass mirror was Dr. Eugene Gaston, M.D. Dr. Gaston, now deceased, was an outstanding surgeon from Framingham, Massachusetts, and past president of the Northeast Bicycle Club. Dr. Gaston also wrote the “Ask the Doctor” editorial section of Bicycling magazine for a number of years. I rode with The Doctor quite often and considered him one of my dearest friends. Not only was he a distinguished surgeon but he was also a good machinist. He had a full machine shop in his basement where he constructed and developed many innovative devices. His first rear-view glasses mirror prototype was a dental mirror that he assembled with little springs that would clip onto a rider’s glasses. This was a wonderful adaptation and every rider who saw it wanted one. He modified his mirror to a small piece of aluminum and used epoxy to adhere a small square mirror piece. There was a small stem that was bent to it and would attach to the temple on your glasses. This device gave the rider a good view as to what was behind him. I hope this brings Chuck Harris’s attention. Easy recumbent.

Iceland won’t discourage you from considering Iceland as a touring destination. We completed a fully-loaded circumnavigation of Iceland on the Ring Road in 10 glorious days in August. We have been traveling as adventure cyclists for more than 30 years, from the Natchez Trace to the Ring Road, among experienced cyclists, but not extreme athletes. We both are celebrating our 60th year. My wife, Sharon, is a grandma of three. We are simply open for whatever nature brings. We used the excellent ‘round island bus service to hop over a few less interesting stretches to complete the route in 10 days, nevertheless, we completed over 500 miles of the total 800-mile route on two wheels.

No doubt, Icelandic winds can be severe. Fortunately, we had them in our favor most of the time. Rains can be torrential but we had mostly clear skies. The scenery was indescribably spectacular. The roads were uncrowded and virtually deserted of cars and other cyclists. We camped every night, enjoying geysers, geothermal hot springs, road-side glaciers, waterfalls and icebergs, quaint villages, colorful history, un-lit terraced landscapes, and an endearing “can-do” attitude by every resident we encountered. Icelandic people boast the longest life expectancy in the world, thanks to their unspoiled environmental and active lifestyles. Exploring Iceland on a bicycle is a top cycling experience at the top of the world.

I hope we haven’t read the last about cycling Iceland in Adventure Cyclist. Roy Wallack’s account (August/September issue, “Vikings & Lagers”), certainly would unfairly discourage most cyclists from considering Iceland as a touring destination. Our advice, not only should you consider it, you should put it at the very top of your bucket list. We completed a fully-loaded circumnavigation of Iceland on the Ring Road in 10 glorious days in August.
Do you know that feeling when you’re just about to launch a new bike journey? When you’re surrounded by gear and you suddenly look up and feel that funny combination of calm, exhilaration, and anxiety? I had that exact feeling this August as I prepared for a nine-day blast of a self-contained tour on our Lewis & Clark Trail (from Missoula to Astoria) with my 14-year-old daughter Samantha. It was a memorable trip that followed the Lochsa, Clearwater, and Columbia River Trail. After 20 years in our charming old church building, we are ready to expand—to provide more space for bike-making, magazine publishing, and program work for bike travel. We are adding a new floor to the building’s west wing, creating a larger courtyard, and improving the building’s energy efficiency. We also hope to give the building exterior a more visible cycling theme. We will be talking with members over the coming months on ways you can support this exciting new addition to a special destination for bike travelers.

New maps and tours: Our cartography company, Mapping Specialists, to convert our existing maps into Geographic Information System software, to help speed our map updates and improvements. On the tours front, we’re rolling out an awesome slate of 2012 trips, including new ones on the Outer Banks, Cape Cod, the Sierra Cascades, and Big Bend, Texas.

National progress: Finally, there’s positive news on the national front. With our national cycling partners, it looks like we’re close to convincing the Federal Highway Administration to issue an improved technical advisory on rumble strips that help (and at least don’t hinder) cyclists. We also helped secure federal support for cycling that is helping to transform America into a more bike-friendly nation. There’s more detail on these efforts at blog.adventurecycling.org under “From the Executive Director.” As with autumn, there’s change in the air. Whatever the new beginnings—maps, tours, expanded headquarters—you memberships, donations, and encouraging words are making all the difference. Thanks to you from your friends at Adventure Cycling.

Jim Sayer
Executive Director
jsayer@adventurecycling.org

NEW BEGINNINGS

Coming soon: a new look to our HQ, new tours and maps, and new progress nationally.

Above: Jim and Samantha at Cape Horn, above the Columbia River. Below, new space and a new look for the bike travel “mecca” of the United States.

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Providing partners for tours, domestic and abroad, since 1978

Letter from the Director
Atlantic Coast Route Improvements
Hello Rhode Island, good-bye busy roads

According to Adventure Cycling’s Routes and Mapping Department director Carla Majerek, a number of substantial revisions have been made to the newly-mapped Atlantic Coast Bicycle Route. Section 1: From Massachusetts into Connecticut, the route was altered to go through Rhode Island, one of the few states that until now contained not one of the Adventure Cycling Route Network’s 40,696 miles. Section 2: In Connecticut, the route was changed to avoid busy U.S. 44, incorporating parallel county roads instead. And, in New York, the route now takes advantage of a portion of the paved Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Section 4: Leaving Richmond, Virginia, we modified the route to go toward historic Williamsburg; also, a ferry is now utilized to cross the James River. Section 9: An entirely new route was mapped to reach Charleston, South Carolina, from the northeast. Section 6: Between Hortense and Folkston, Georgia, we changed the route to take in some existing overnight accommodations. And between Folkston and Callahan, Florida, the newly modified route bypasses a busy highway previously used.

 Meet Rachel and Arlen
Welcome new Adventure Cycling staffers!

Starting in August, graphic designer Rachel Stevens became the newest addition to Adventure Cycling Publications Department. “After a very productive inter- view, I felt I just had to share the response was that it “made my day, my month — probably made my life” what would you call some- thing that made your day, made your year — probably the same time, he was rais- ing funds for the Willie Neal Fund, encouraging people to avoid busy U.S. 44, incorporate parallel county roads instead. And, in New York, the route now takes advantage of a portion of the paved Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Section 4: Leaving Richmond, Virginia, we modified the route to go toward historic Williamsburg; also, a ferry is now utilized to cross the James River. Section 9: An entirely new route was mapped to reach Charleston, South Carolina, from the northeast. Section 6: Between Hortense and Folkston, Georgia, we changed the route to take in some existing overnight accommodations. And between Folkston and Callahan, Florida, the newly modified route bypasses a busy highway previously used.

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Maine Downbound and East
Story and photos by Chuck Haney
crashing waves of the Atlantic Ocean were to my left, and heavily forested hills of jack pine and maple trees blurred by as the miles ticked off, one by one, on the sunny Maine afternoon. The circuit on the main road around Cadillac Mountain. Locals claim that the first rays of the sun to reach the U.S. touch the summit of the mountain each morning from spring to fall. As I gained altitude with each pedal stroke, I remembered my first visit as a 15-year-old during our fam-

The scent of the ocean lingered in the air, and a slight breeze kept just the perfect temperature as we spun past the point.

Acadia National Park is 27 miles in length, but I was having such a pleasant time that I wanted to add a few more miles to my day’s total, so I made an abrupt right-hand turn and began one of the most famed cycling ascents on the East Coast. I shifted down to lower gears and began powering up

In the popular tourist town of Bar Harbor, I spent some time visiting with Joe Minutolo, who since 1978 has co-owned the Bar Harbor Bicycle Shop with his brother Al. One of the biggest cycling draws in town is the over 50 miles of impeccably built carriage roads that tycoon John D. Rockefeller constructed from 1913 to 1940. A large fleet of rental bicycles at the shop testifies to their popularity (the carriage roads were covered in “Cycling Maine's Acadia National Park” by Cindy Ross in the May 2007 issue, so I won’t describe their virtues again here. To read that story, visit adventurecycling.org/library). Bar Harbor is also the beginning or ending, depending on the direction of travel, of Adventure Cycling Associations Northern Tier Route. According to Joe, eastbound riders should “leave a little bit of energy for the end of their tour” so they can experience the beauty of the loop road in Acadia National Park, but some riders simply want to be done with the trip upon reaching town. According to Minutolo, another good option for road riders is riding the island's western portion to the small quaint village of Southwest Harbor. Once in Southwest Harbor, take Highway 102a down to visit the lighthouse in Bass Harbor, then travel north through tiny Bernard on Highway 102, travel to Indian Point Road to Highway 3 and Salisbury Cove, and finally take
Highway 233 back to Bar Harbor.

I found out there are several different ways out of the hustle and bustle of Bar Harbor via two wheels. One is the climb up West Street, which quickly gets you into the relative serenity of the national park. The other way is to carry your bike down to the pier and hop aboard a water taxi as I did with Phil Savignano of the Maine Office of Tourism. We stowed our road bikes in the back of a small boat with Wes, our seasoned captain, and headed across Frenchman Bay for a day of cycling another lesser-known section of Acadia National Park. Schoodic Peninsula is the only part of the park actually located on the mainland. In my vast cycling experiences, I have pedaled under headlamp light to cross a state line beneath thousands of feet of rock in a tunnel and passed through a herd of buffalo while mountain biking, but I have never loaded my bicycle into the back of a small boat before, so it was quite a novel experience as we pulled into Winter Harbor to begin our exploration of the sparsely populated peninsula.

Within a couple of miles, we re-entered Acadia National Park, which looks nothing like the Mount Desert Island version across the bay. Schoodic is flat terrain and mostly devoid of automobile traffic. We cruised along the empty flat road and heard the ding ding of a bell buoy echoing in time with crashing waves from an incoming high tide against pink granite outcroppings. The scent of the ocean sea salt lingered in the air, and a slight breeze kept just the perfect temperature as we spun past the peninsula’s point.

Soon we pedaled back out of the park and into one tiny fishing village after another — with names like Bunker Harbor, Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, Corea, and Winter Harbor — where we literally rubbed elbows with working lobstermen on weathered docks, plying and baiting their squared traps for the next trip out. A highlight of my previous visit to Bunker Harbor was when a local lobsterman showed me a rare blue lobster that he had just caught. Multi-colored buoys adorned outbuildings along the side of the road, and blueberry barrens were just starting to turn color as the fruit ripened in the summer sun. We rode a figure-eight loop that was a feast for the eyes and also experienced sensory overload for the nose as the smell of fresh seafood enticed us to stop for a lunch break back in Winter Harbor. I noticed the church steeple here was, fittingly enough, topped off with an ornamental wind vane shaped like a fish. As I ordered another meal containing lobster, this time a lobster roll sandwich, I flippanly fantasized if I could do an entire bike tour surviving on just lobster and blueberry pie (another Maine delicacy).

As Phil and I loaded our bikes back onto the small boat for the crossing of Frenchman Bay back to Bar Harbor, we rehashed our fabulous cycling outing on the quiet roads of Schoodic Peninsula and listened intently while Wes told stories of the sea. About halfway across the bay, we heard a loud pop, and Captain Wes exclaimed “Oh no, oh no!” A cable supporting the steering wheel had just snapped, leaving us adrift without a rudder. Our day had just become a bit more adventurous, especially when we drifted aimlessly toward a towering cruise ship that was docked and reloading passengers from a town visit. While Captain Wes was down in the hull attempting a repair, Phil told him that we were only about 100 yards away from the behemoth ship, and closing in. The land lover in me started to have an anxious moment or two, and I wished I were back on solid ground still pedaling
Carriage tracks are a good example of American broken-stone roads.

I would suggest riding the park loop in the morning or late-afternoon hours to avoid the heavy traffic. I would say the future of long-distance cycling opportunity has just arrived in the area. The Down East Sunrise Trail, an 85-mile-long stretch of gravel located on a former railbed ends in the forest at Ayers Junction. It's a multi-use trail so you're likely to see an ATV or hikers along the route, but it's not heavily used and the last is smooth enough that a touring bicycle would have no trouble traversing the mostly level pathway. As you cycle along the route, you'll pass by rivers running with salmon, ponds topped with beaver lodges, bogs with carnivorous pitcher plants, and forests that are home to the occasional moose that may pop out on the trail.

After spending a week exploring down-bound and east in Maine while feasting on lobster and blueberry pie and riding some of the most spectacular vistas on the East Coast, it is easy to see why Maine is considered such a bike-friendly state. Chuck can be found at chuckhaney.com.

Did you ever wonder where the next generation of cyclo-tourists will come from? One place they are grooming bicycle tourists of the future is Apogee Adventures. This small company is based out of Brunswick, Maine, and recently celebrated its 15th year in business. Apogee runs tours across North America, the Caribbean, and Europe for teenagers only; mostly 13 to 16 years old. Although they offer hiking courses, most of the trips involve self-supported cycle touring ranging from 11 days to a six-week, cross-country excursion. Each summer, Apogee hosts several hundred young riders who learn the art of packing a loaded touring bike along with the intricacies of map reading, camp cooking, and the resilience required to pedal boiling lobster pots at tiny diners, and weathered headstones at the edge of town signify that communities here are much older than where I hail from in the West. A stop at the local general store where Boston “R” is involved in the English language conversation with the locals reinforces the fact that Mainers sometimes forget the letter “R” is involved in the English language provides quintessential New England Down East charm.

Just north of the island is the city of Ellsworth, where another exciting new cycling opportunity has just arrived in the area. The Down East Sunrise Trail, an 85-mile-long stretch of gravel located on a former railbed ends in the forest at Ayers Junction. It’s a multi-use trail so you’re likely to see an ATV or hikers along the route, but it’s not heavily used and the last is smooth enough that a touring bicycle would have no trouble traversing the mostly level pathway. As you cycle along the route, you’ll pass by rivers running with salmon, ponds topped with beaver lodges, bogs with carnivorous pitcher plants, and forests that are home to the occasional moose that may pop out on the trail.

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anniversaries mean something. They narrow our focus. They stop the hurly-burly of everyday life long enough to make us reexamine the past if it’s our birthday, our relationship if we’re attached, the value of a beloved friend or relative whose death has made a calendar date unforgettable.

Anniversaries of national events can mean something too. But there are so many of those that they must be of great magnitude to touch us personally and to entice us to become involved.

Some of you etched the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial years permanently into your mental and emotional makeup by spending days or months riding their trail. And now there is a more recent, and far more important, anniversary to put on your map—and under your tires—the Civil War’s sesquicentennial (150th anniversary).

Don’t get the wrong idea. We commemorate, not celebrate, the anniversary of this unbelievable national bloodletting. That war cost 100 times the number of American lives lost in Vietnam, from a country in the 1860s 1/9 the size of the U.S. in the 1960s. Or, an easier way to appreciate the scale of slaughter: the low end of most estimates of military deaths in the Civil War is 618,000, out of a population—North and South combined—of 30 million. A proportionate loss today would be six million Americans dead.

Add to the more than 50,000 civilians who were killed during those terrible four years (a half million today, proportionately), plus the hundreds of thousands of soldiers maimed in mind and body (and 1.5 million horses and mules). Just one example of the scale of the wounded—for several years following the war, the majority of the state budget of Mississippi was spent for artificial limbs. No wonder our 1960s-century forebears referred to “the butcher’s bill” of war.

A great lead-in to a fun time in the saddle, huh? Come commemorate the sesquicentennial with a “Pedal the Pathos” ride! I know, it sounds macabre, as well as a real off-putting way to begin an article. But it is precisely these enormous losses that recreated and redefined Americans individually and transformed America into a new nation state. We would not be where we are geographically had it not been for Lewis and Clark. But we would not be who we are (for better or worse) if we had not fought the Civil War. It deserves our understanding. And the nation that endured it 150 years ago deserves our respect.

No matter the horrific reason for the existence of our national battlefields and campaign trails, pedaling them is fun. The physical effort involved helps us handle the awful story behind the often lovely natural scenery. General Lee’s route of retreat away from Gettysburg led south out of Pennsylvania through Maryland to his escape across the Potomac River. He then took his army through splendid eastern countrysides of fat farmland, well-watered green valleys, and deciduous-forest-covered mountains. While these mountains may not tower when compared to the Rockies, they are remarkably steep and winding, as you’ll appreciate when climbing them.

Riding any Civil War battlefield or campaign trail will make this national four-year anniversary more meaningful for you, but choosing what many historians consider one of the two turning-point Union victories (the other is Grant’s capture of Vicksburg, Mississippi, which was sur-

What year is this? Cyclists pass Civil War reenactors in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia.

Towerimg reminders. A cyclist rolls past statues in Antietam National Battlefield, Maryland.

California Wine Country
Glacier National Park
Hawaii’s Big Island
Big Sur Coast
Dolomites
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Provence
Malorca
Tuscany
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rendered on the very same July 4th that Lee began his retreat) should deepen the impression. One week, a couple hundred miles, or just the best bits of them seen from the saddle, and what might have seemed dry and distant will be ever alive inside you.

A final point for all those who have never ridden Civil War battlefields, for those who might wonder when hearing them derisively called “cannonball parks”: The nation dealt with its suffering in part by commemorating huge cemeteries for the slain. In the decades following, we set off scores of battlefields as hallowed ground. Over the next 50 years, individual states honored their veterans with individual states honored their veterans with

most murderous single battle (over 51,000 casualties) ever fought in North America. You’ll think everyone in the world knows about it if you go there on a sunny, cool weekend in spring or fall, when some of the million annual visitors are overwhelming the attractive small town (population of 7,500) and enjoying the battlefield.

(Gettysburg end, immediately after that horrible battle as Lee attempts to save as much of his savaged army as possible for future fights and the North tries to destroy it. 20 battles are detailed, and you will pedal the mountain passes and town centers where they occurred. The authors tell of times when Conostoga wagons filled with Confederate wounded were attacked by the citizens of towns who only two weeks before had endured the theft of their goods and the boasts of Southern soldiers as they marched north through those same towns “headed for Philadelphia!” Axes in hand, the merchants and farmers waited for a chance to leap from roadsides and buildings and cut away the wooden spokes in the wheels of unguarded wagons moving slowly through the mud. In Hagerstown, Maryland, you can sit outside at Skyline Coffee and read of the charges and counter-charges by opposing cavalry units through the surrounding streets in a “saber-to-saber, boot-to-boot affair.” This makes for s-l-o-w cycling, but a wonderfully memorable bike tour.

One Continuous Fight: The Retreat from Gettysburg and the Pursuit of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, July 4-14, 1863. One Continuous Fight

The Gettysburg Nobody Knows

The detailed mileages and even GPS coordinates will keep you from getting lost amidst the many winding roads. Churches, taverns, and the occasional still-standing barn employed as a makeshift hospital in 1863 and are all noted. If always-on-the-actual-route accuracy is your preference, these pages can’t be topped. You will at times be on highways that I found too busy and shoulderless for pleasant pedaling, but few that wouldn’t be acceptable to most riders during non-rush-hour weekdays.

Personally, I’ve always found cue-sheet riding to be a real pain, no doubt in part because I'm always missing a turn while my mind is elsewhere. In addition, I discovered in the first half-day that I was overwhelmed by the combination of route-following and historical detail. Some of the no-turns-to-worry-about stretches were wonderful, especially those that led through the mountains. I could easily imagine exhausted men and tiring horses slogging along the muddy dirt roads, as summer thunderstorms “boomed like cannon” (so wrote numerous soldiers in their letters and diaries) and drenched the 17-mile-long wagon train of more than 12,000 wounded Confederate troops. I found myself reflecting right past required turns.

Here’s what I think is a far better way to follow Lee’s retreat. Begin with two or three days to ride the Gettysburg battlefield, to get a sense of the placement of armies through the electronic maps in the new zillion-dollar Visitor Center (too swell by half), to stroll through town and to turn the pages of One Continuous Fight and The Gettysburg Nobody Knows in the Ragged Edge Coffee House (located on Chambersburg Road a block east of the downtown traffic circle; I suggest it for its location, down-home décor, low-volume music, and hearty black brews). Three days sounds like a whole lot of time for a single battlefield and a little bung, but the park’s suggested “driving route” of 24 miles is, remember, filled to the brim with statues and information monuments.

Besides, you’ll want to add an extra 10 miles (round trip) to take in the East Cavalry Battlefield Site. It’s an important spot that I managed to miss my first three times to Gettysburg — until a Virginia bike friend asked if I knew that 22-year-old General George Custer (later of “Last Stand” notoriety) fought back Confederate

Miles of wood fences and stone walls lace Antietam National Battlefield, much like they did during the Civil War.

Truckin Just Got Deluxe

SURLY

Truckin’ Just Got Deluxe

Truckin’ Just Got Deluxe
cavalryman Jeb Stuart’s attack, which was timed to exploit the success expected from the famed Pickett’s Charge up the center of the Union line. You’ll be biking past — and surely stopping at — this so-called “High-Water Mark of the Confederacy.” Lee’s final attempt to punch through the long blue line. The South alone lost 5,000 troops in a single hour of that massive July 3rd attack. Yes, 10 miles will take you less than one hour to pedal. But you’ll spend several times that reading the plaques and getting a sense of that important piece of the battlefield.

My suggestion is that before you leave Gettysburg, or perhaps before you leave home for the battlefield, you use One Continuous Fight and other sources to choose the most historically interesting points (and other sites) that you wish to visit along Lee’s route. Then don’t worry with bringing on the actual trail to reach them. The freedom of pedaling the network of secondary and farm roads in this region, whether on a series of out-and-back day rides or a week-long loop, is sweet. For example, my 65-mile-long route of the wagon train of wounded heads out of Gettysburg on the old Chambersburg Pike (today’s very busy Chambersburg Road/US 30) toward the historic Cashtown and a great climb through steep wooded hills beyond. You won’t want to miss them. But by buying small-scale maps of the area, or printing those online, you can enjoy a series of quieter routes if US 30 is busy when you ride it. You’ll ride the wagon train route in an arc west and south ending at the small historic town of Williamsport, Maryland, on the Potomac and, most pleasantly, also on the leafy, scenic C&O Canal towpath (which can handle thin tires when dry — but pedal thoughtfully). General John D Imboden, commander of this enormous and perilous wagon train of woe, found a “raging, swollen Potomac” grown wild by the days of thundersstorms, impossible to be bridged until the waters calmed. The small town was the scene of pure chaos, clogged with almost 5,000 wagons of hungry, desperate, hurting troops. The battles fought in holding off their Union pursuers, whether or not Lincoln was correct in chastising the Union commander (and Gettysburg victor) General Meade for “allowing” Lee’s army ultimately to escape, are subjects too lengthy for this article. One Continuous Fight and scores of other books and articles will help you understand all you’ll see and the locals’ stories you’ll hear on your ride.

Lee’s infantry units withdrew from Gettysburg craftily, getting a head start by buying small-scale maps of the area, when you ride it. You’ll ride the wagon train of wounded heads out of Gettysburg on the old Chambersburg Pike (today’s very busy Chambersburg Road/US 30) toward the historic Cashtown and a great climb through steep wooded hills beyond. You won’t want to miss them. But by buying small-scale maps of the area, or printing those online, you can enjoy a series of quieter routes if US 30 is busy when you ride it. You’ll ride the wagon train route in an arc west and south ending at the small historic town of Williamsport, Maryland, on the Potomac and, most pleasantly, also on the leafy, scenic C&O Canal towpath (which can handle thin tires when dry — but pedal thoughtfully). General John D Imboden, commander of this enormous and perilous wagon train of woe, found a “raging, swollen Potomac” grown wild by the days of thundersstorms, impossible to be bridged until the waters calmed. The small town was the scene of pure chaos, clogged with almost 5,000 wagons of hungry, desperate, hurting troops. The battles fought in holding off their Union pursuers, whether or not Lincoln was correct in chastising the Union commander (and Gettysburg victor) General Meade for “allowing” Lee’s army ultimately to escape, are subjects too lengthy for this article. One Continuous Fight and scores of other books and articles will help you understand all you’ll see and the locals’ stories you’ll hear on your ride.

Lee’s infantry units withdrew from Gettysburg craftily, getting a head start on the bluecoats and fighting rearguard actions and some running battles on their way through Fairfield, up Monterey Pass (Cluster again), into Hagerstown, and on to Falling Waters on the Potomac where they too had to wait for floodwaters to cease. So
Travels with Willie

THE DECISION

Vigilence is a virtue when touring solo
by Willie Weir

I was at a large party with a whole bunch of people I didn’t know. In the small talk over beers and chips, the subject of travel came up. I mentioned some of the bicycle trips I’d taken. A guy standing next to me said, “I took a solo bike trip once. Some drunk guys in a car pulled up and threw beer bottles and threatened to kill me. It freaked me out. I’d never travel that way again. You can live in your bicycle fantasyland, but when the real world comes up, you’ll think twice.”

A younger man lingered after everyone else had walked from a beach farther down the coastline. He offered to lead me to a spot. A group of older men were seated at a round concrete table, drinking and playing cards. Some tourists showed up who were only two cars in the parking lot. It was the off season. I needed a place to camp. This area was too exposed. I could easily run into the lobby if he came back. I sat in the sand, gazed out at the ocean, and wept. I had never felt so alone.

Now what? Think. Think. A jumble of panicked thoughts swirled in my brain. Then a brief instant of clarity. The hotel. Get closer to the hotel. But how? I needed him to believe that I wasn’t going to resist. I leaned forward and kissed him. My heart was pounding in my ears. What would he do now?

He looked confused, and his iron grip relaxed slightly. I grabbed his hand and led him in the direction of the hotel. I forced a smile. We walked a short distance. Now we were within sight of the hotel. But suddenly he gripped tight. I thought he’d break a bone in my hand. We weren’t going any farther. Whatever was going to happen next, I just wanted to live through it. I just wanted it to be over. If I’d been a woman, all sorts of alarms would have sounded in my head before this moment. Sexual assault had never entered my consciousness. It wasn’t part of my world.

Welcome to reality. I heard a distant laugh. We both tensed, and I saw an open door at the hotel. And at some moment during those hours of tears and darkness, I made the decision to go on.

I stared out at the ocean. The waves were only visible as they broke toward the beach. I sat there, shivering, hugging my knees to my chest, until the sun rose the next morning. And at some moment during those hours of tears and darkness, I made the decision to go on.

It wasn’t a rational decision made by comparing the pros and cons of ending my trip. It was a gut feeling as raw as the howl that came out of me. Somehow, as the morning light brought the world back into view, I was no longer afraid.

Was it denial? I don’t think so. But for someone who grew up loved and protected and sheltered from most of what is bad in this world — it was an awakening.

My decision could just as easily have been to head home. But I’m not sure I would have ever traveled again. I would have become just like the young man I met at the party. Scared of the unfamiliar. Scared of life. Just plain scared.

The bicycle is a unique travel vehicle. You are exposed and vulnerable. I know that. I’ve lived that. But, because you are vulnerable, people are willing to be vulnerable with you — to open up and share their world.

Over the years, I’ve learned to be cautious instead of afraid. I’ve said it many times before, but it’s worth repeating: “Caution keeps you aware. Fear keeps you away.”

I’ve now traveled long and far enough to truly understand and experience the risks as well as the rewards.

And, from my perspective looking back over 30 years of bicycle travel, the rewards — the people, laughter, vistas, beauty, and adventure — have outweighed the risks a hundredfold.

Adventurer Cyclist columnist Willie Weir has been wild camping and traveling by bike for 30 years. He enjoys the benefits of being uncomfortable, but will admit to sometimes not heeding his own advice.
Honey, can we still bike tour?

Looking into the other child-seat options — the tales of couples with children riding around the world, we started learning how to tour again. Inspired by stories about touring the Himalayas, where families of four can be seen in a Central American swamp, but deep in the mind-boggling tsunami of parenthood.

We found ourselves planning nap schedules rather than bus schedules. Bike touring seemed like a remote fantasy. Rather than bus schedules, the suspension of the trailer effectively softens the ride for your child.

Of all the trailers I tested, this was my favorite, and I would not hesitate to recommend it for a bike tour of any length. I chose it for my son’s first bike tour, a small-tide exploration through the wildlife areas and roads of central Kansas.

Besides the bike trailer, you will also want the stroller conversion kit and the rain cover accessory. We also picked up the Chariot travel bag for flights.

The following trailers represent the best I found available in the US. Standard features on all these trailers include: five-point harness systems, safety flags, screen and rainfly covers, and reflectors. All fold up quickly and compactly for ease of transport.

Most important, these companies emphasize their high safety standards. Focusing on safety seemed obvious to me, but apparently in the US, no safety standards are required by law for child bicycle trailers. It’s simply up to each company to make trailers that meet or exceed standards established by the ASTM International, formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials. If a trailer does not meet or exceed ASTM standards, I would not use it.

Bicycle Trailers to Carry Children

A trailer is the best option when touring with a child between the ages of one to six years. This is not just because you can strap them in so they can’t escape and run away, but also because trailers have room for toys and books, provide a comfortable cocoon where kids can nap, and offer shelter from storms. Plus trailers can be wired with an iPod and speakers, just in case all other diversions fail.

These trailers come at a premium price that can initially be hard to swallow, but with child trailers, you get what you pay for. Good child trailers have excellent resale value, and if you can’t afford a new model, search for a good used model online.

On a related note, child bike trailers have a maximum speed of 15 miles per hour, so the trailer and bike combination is also important. On slight downhill, not to mention the Rockies, it’s easy to go much faster than 15 miles. In hilly areas, pair your child’s trailer with a touring bike equipped with disc brakes to keep the speed under control.

But they’re still sold on Chariot’s unique trailers and conversion kits, which are collectively known as the Child Transport System (CTS). Chariot sells its popular X-Country trailers as a chassis, and then you purchase conversion kits for different activities. The bicycle-trailer kit is one of these conversions.

We tested the Cougar1 model that fits one child and weighs 22.5 pounds, with a total capacity of 75 pounds. One of the Cougar1’s best features is that it’s small and sleek enough to minimize the trailer’s effect in a headwind or crosswind.

The trailer includes side air vents to provide more airflow through the trailer on hot or rainy days. Most important, Cougar1 features a suspension system that can be adjusted for your child’s weight as she grows. If you ride a mix of paved and dirt roads, the suspension system effectively softens the ride for your child.

For all the trailers I tested, this was my favorite, and I would not hesitate to recommend it for a bike tour of any length. I chose it for my son’s first bike tour, a small-tide exploration through the wildlife areas and roads of central Kansas.

Besides the bike trailer, you will also want the stroller conversion kit and the rain cover accessory. We also picked up the Chariot travel bag for flights.

Cougar1: Pros

• Adjustable Suspension: smoother ride for your child.
• Safety: Chariot meets ASTM and stringent company standards

Cougar1: Cons

• Capacity: 75 pounds, and has a capacity of 100 pounds.
• My wife liked this trailer best because even though the trailer is fairly large, it pulls smoothly and easily. Like the Cougar1, I would not hesitate to choose this trailer for a tour of any length.

The Cougar1 features an innovative roll cage, a suspension system based on elastomers, and plenty of storage behind the seat.

Instead of an external storage pocket like you’ll find on the Chariot Cougar1, the D’Lite’s storage area is integrated into the trailer body, more secure and useful. Although the conversion kits for the D’Lite aren’t as quite well thought out as those on the Chariot, they function the same and include options for skiing, jogging, and strolling.

When testing the Burley D’Lite, I simply left it on my yard and let the strong Rocky Mountain sun beat down upon it. In an ideal situation, a person would use the trailer, then store it inside. After about three months outside, the orange Burley cover faded significantly, and the elastomer suspension pieces started to crack in the dry air. The faded cover is just aesthetics, but the elastomer pieces would need to be replaced before we headed out on a long tour.

However, unlike other trailer companies, Burley directly sells nearly every part for every trailer on their website. Parts can be ordered individually, so you can literally use the trailer for many years, just replacing individual parts as needed. It’s a great system that feels very honest. Burley also sells storage covers for people like me that don’t have storage space in their garage.

Burley D’Lite: Pros

• Safety: Burley leads the industry in safety standards and transparency — our top choice

Burley D’Lite: Cons

• Roomy: Bowed-out trailer walls increase internal space, especially if it is only used with one child
• Lightweight
• Ports: customers can directly buy replacement parts
• Lots of storage: The D’Lite actually has enough storage space to be useful

Other excellent Burley Trailers

Solo ($129) — One-child version of the D’Lite Encore ($399) — More economical bicycle trailer with the same safety standards as premium models

Wike Premium Double

$499 with bike kit www.wicycle.com, (866) 584-9452 4 Out of 5 Stars

Built in Guelph, Canada, Wike Bike Trailers makes a wide variety of bicycle trailers for all uses. Not as well known in the US as Burley or Chariot, Wike trailers are an undiscovered gem. When I first unpacked the trailer they sent me, my first thought was “This thing is built like a tank!” Despite its size (and my perception), this trailer weighs less than the two models already mentioned.

We tested the Wike Premium Double, which carries one or two children, and...
weighs in at 21.5 pounds with an overall capacity of 100 pounds. Unlike streamlined trailers, Wike shines out that it is a big trailer with big windows. If we were the child riding in the trailer, the size would be ideal. Because I'm the parent pulling the trailer, I have to admit that the larger profile of the Wike Premium Double makes it a bit harder to tow in headwinds and crosswinds. Whether you like the Wike may come down to what is more important to you — your child's experience or your workload.

Regardless, Wike's Premium Double packs down in seconds into a compact unit. I would not hesitate to take this trailer on tour. It's a simple and durable design that maximizes the experience for the child inside.

Wike Premium Double: Pros
- Quality: Durable and well designed
- Roomy: Tall, wide, and visible on the road
- Lots of storage: The trailer includes a large external compartment and a storage shelf under the seat
- Made in North America
- Bike direct: order directly from the people who make the trailers
- Folds well: despite the large size, this trailer packs very small
- Price: Similar in quality but costs less than its competitors
- Helmet relief cushion: Available as a $20 accessory for kids ages one to three
- Safety: Wike trailers exceed ASTM standards

Adams Trail-a-Bike

Adams Trail-a-Bike Alloy Folder One: Cons
- Hitch design: not a good design for long-term use
- Other Adams Trail-a-Bike Options

Croozer Kid for 1

Croozer Kid for 1: Cons
- Awkward seat: difficult to get the child sitting comfortable and upright
- Safety: No safety information provided but meets ASTM standards. Bike attachment fails apart easily
- Back cover leaks: Must carry plastic bags inside or dry bags

Not Recommended for Touring

We also tested several other child-carrying systems, including less expensive trailers, rear seat carriers that fit on trailing bikes, front seats, and more. I don't recommend any of these for touring, simply from a safety standpoint. Cheap trailers might be good for a run to the park, but not for the open road.

At the same time, bike seats like the Kangaroo Carrier made by Westfliche (weeride.com) are super fun for casual trips around town, but don't work for serious touring.

To sum up, get the best possible trailer or trailing bike you can afford by Chariot, Burley, or Wike. If you can't buy one of these premium models new, search for a used one in great shape online. You can use it for a few years, pass it on, and recover much of your initial investment.

What you can't put a price on is the incredible opportunity to expose your children to the joy of bike travel when they are young; impressive, and ready to take on the world. Hook up a trailer, start pushing those pedals, and let your child teach you something new about life.
**Finish Line Gear Floss**

($7, finishlineusa.com/products/gear-floss.htm; 631-666-7300). Flossing my teeth is one of my least favorite activities, but I’m told it’s necessary. If you’re like me, you’ll find flossing your bike a lot more enjoyable. Gear Floss is made of microfibers with star-shaped grooves (Since I don’t have a microscope, I’ll have to take their word for it) which trap dirt and grim making cleaning hard-to-reach places and components of your bicycle a fairly easy task. They easily slide between the cogs and teeth of a cassette and around the pulley mechanism of a rear derailleur (Not a typo. See sheldonbrown.com/derailer.html). These storage bags are perfect for the bicycle traveler who likes to keep things compartmentalized beyond what pannier pockets offer. They’re all lightweight and weather proof, and from the biggest, the large Caravan Cube ($32, 14.2” x 9.5” x 4”, 2.82 oz) to the smallest, the Portal envelope ($17, 9.5” x 7.25”, 0.85 oz), they offer polyurethane coated zips, stitchless welded seams, and are constructed with repurposed materials — stuff that would be headed for the landfills or incinerated. And both the Portal Deluxe envelopes and the Caravan compartments include a translucent window that makes viewing the contents within them possible. If you’re a compartmentalizer who dislikes wasting materials, you’ll find the range of Innate Travel Storage products useful and conscience pleasing.

**CatEye HL-EL020 Hybrid**

($35, cateye.com/en/products/detail/HL-EL020, 800-522-8393). Though they may not have intended to do so, CatEye has created a light damn near perfect for bicycle touring. The HL-EL020 Hybrid can sit on your handlebars collecting solar energy all day while you pedal away, just waiting for the opportunity to come in handy. Of course no traveling cyclist wants to get caught out after dark, but not every day goes according to plan. Say you get more flats than you planned or get lost. That won’t happen if you’re using Adventure Cycling maps, but it’s also made of spoke. Unlike this nonsimilar, you’ll probably find it very easy to use as it quickly and easily mounts to the underside of just about any helmet. (An innervate non-reader of instructions, I thought it attached from the top. You can see how easy it is here: youtube.com/watch?v=DmI5BAXUDU). The video takes less time than it took for me to type this sentence.)

It takes a bit of time to find the right spot and you may have to bend the spoke section to find your sweet spot. If you do, bend it closer to the mount than to the mirror. If you’d like a more in-depth analysis, check it out here: tandemgeek.wordpress.com/2011/03/05/rear-view-mirrors-my-hubub-mirror-review.

**Dual Eyewear**

($50, dualeyewear.com, 720-235-1112). We all hate to admit it, but time moves in one direction (at least that’s how we perceive it anyway) so we’re all getting older — we tend to suffer from farsightedness. I started wearing reading glasses recently so it seemed coincidental that I got a press release about Dual sunglasses, essentially bifocal shades that allow you to see normal into the distance but magnify close-up objects when you look through the lower interior part of the lenses. They’re stylish, super light, come in three different models, and in 1.5, 2.0, and 2.5 lens power. So if you’ve been struggling to see the gadget you’ve got on your handlebars, you might want to consider trying out a pair.

**HubBub Helmet Mirror**

($29, hubbubcustom.com/store/prod-detail.asp?prod=helmet; 800-888-2027). The HubBub mirror is, as their website states, loosely based on those made by longtime mirror maker Chuck Harris (see “The Mirror Man of Gambier” in the April 2011 Adventure Cyclist). It is a basic piece of equipment consisting of a mirror at one end, a 1-inch left and right, a 2-inch section of spoke, and a helmet-mount bracket that is also made of spoke. Unlike this nonsimilar, you’ll probably find it very easy to use as it quickly and easily mounts to the underside of just about any helmet. (An innervate non-reader of instructions, I thought it attached from the top. You can see how easy it is here: youtube.com/watch?v=DmI5BAXUDU). The video takes less time than it took for me to type this sentence.)

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**Snap-on CDI Torque T-Handle**

($35, 678-948-5001, protoptooltools.com – then search SN50). Now here’s a handy tool that every cyclist will find useful. The CDI Preset Torque T-Handle has a rounded shape that fits nicely in your hand and allows you to tighten the many hex bolts that hold your bicycle together just to the right limit so you don’t end up with either a bunch of stripped-out bolts or lingering doubts as to whether you tightened them enough. It comes in three newton metre versions (Nm); 4, 5, and 6, but 5Nm is generally recommended for bicycle parts. The T-Handle comes with a 4mm bit but its magnetic shank will also accommodate standard hex bits of other sizes. Keep in mind that the T-Handle is only meant to tighten and not loosen bolts so it’s really more of a shop tool than something to throw in your pack.

**Chrome Midway Pro**

($110, chromebagsstore.com/shoes/midway-pro.html, 415-703-1221). Chrome is well-known for messenger bags but they also make cycling shoes. I recommend the Chrome Midway Pro appealing for a variety of reasons: 1) They’re a mid-length high top and offer a bit more ankle support than a low-cut shoe; 2) They have a stiff enough sole to keep feet from getting tired when riding long distances; 3) They’re SPD compatible but perform equally well on platform pedals; 4) They remind me of the Converse Chuck Taylor canvas sneakers I used to wear as a kid; and 5) They’re black and don’t show dirt (and look awesome with red laces).

One thing, though, because they’re constructed of 1000 denier Cordura, they take longer to break in than Chuck Taylors, but, once they are broken in, they’re pretty comfortable.
Some other nice touches:
They have a reflective patch at the back heel; they have steel eyelets to keep their laces from fraying, and they’re easy to walk in due to a recessed cleat and built-in front rocker. The Midway Pro may look like a simple shoe but it’s well designed and well built.

**Freelead Touring Racks**
($140, freeload.co.nz, +64 3 4748 619). Every once in a while, someone takes an old idea and puts a new twist on it. That’s what the guys at Freeload have done with the trusty old bicycle rack. While it’s true that there are a fairly wide variety of shapes and sizes available, the Freeload system is a totally new approach that allows the basic rack structure to mount on nearly any bike and on both the front and the rear.

The system consists of an heat-treated 6061 aluminum frame, a rack deck, mounting brackets with webbing, and steel struts (three sizes are included as are all box bolts and allen keys). The flexibility is provided by the the combination of the frame, mounting brackets, and struts to adjust to and fit many dimensions of bicycle frame tubing, which is why the same system can fit to both front forks and rear seat stays.

The first time I looked at the Freeload out of the box I thought it looked a bit complicated, but it’s actually anything but. Which struts you use will depend what type of bike your going to mount to. The shortest struts (80 mm) are to be used if mounted on the front or on the rear of touring, road, and cyclocross bikes; the medium struts (120 mm) are for the rear of hard tail mountain bikes and some full-suspension mountain bikes; and the long struts (150 mm) are for low-angled, full-suspension frames. Once you’ve attached the struts, you can fix the deck (constructed of glass reinforced polypropylene, 10 mm heat-treated 6061 aluminum rails), making sure the u-shaped end of the frame slides under the green toe plate of the deck. You can then either snap closed the attachment hooks by hand or flip the rack over and push down, which will also engage the hooks.

Now that the basic assembly is in place, it’s time to mount it to your bike, which is just a matter of finding a place on your frame for the mounting brackets where the rack won’t interfere with your brakes or cables, and tightening the webbing. Once this is done, make sure the rack is straight and you can tighten all bolts. The Freeload can be used with just the platforms in place or you can attach the side frames ($37) for attaching panniers. Assembled this way it supports 55 lbs. and weighs 3.2 lbs.

If you’re interested in trying a novel and flexible rack system, check out Freeload. Their website is full of useful information and they’re happy to answer questions.
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