

# THE OPEN ROAD GALLERY

BY GREG SIPLE

**G**eography has made Missoula, Montana, a crossroads for all kinds of travelers. Even if Bikecentennial was not located in Missoula there would still be a steady stream of cyclists rolling through town. Some of them are here to see the mountains on week-long loops; others are passing through on round-the-world journeys lasting years. Since 1982, I have made an effort to record this remarkable parade of riders in all its variety. This selection of portraits of visitors to our office were taken during the summer of 1991.



**1-** Bikecentennial members Peter and Susan Vander Weide of Battle Creek, Michigan, took time off from their work as physical and occupational therapists to ride from La Push, Washington, to Bar Harbor, Maine, to raise money for Habitat for Humanity. "Overall the trip was great — lots of gorgeous country and super people! We had lots of bike problems, but we seem to remember the good things. Tandeming is not for everyone. If you can't compromise, forget tandeming."

**2-** Nina Nickles is 29 years old and works for *Sanctuary* magazine, published by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. She also is a Bikecentennial group leader. Here she is equipped for a Big Sky Loop mountain bike tour. She has led numerous trips, including a TransAm, a Northern Tier and a Great Parks North. "I think we're meant to live this way — outdoors, moving, going with the rhythm of the day."



**3-** John P. "Indiana Jones" Dodd is a 25-year-old architect from London, England, who is on an ambitious tour of North and South America, Africa, and eastern Europe. He is representing eight international charitable organizations involved in human rights, famine relief and environmental concerns. In Georgia, John, quite by chance, met Fred Birchmore, who did a round-the-world tour in 1935-7, when long-distance touring was virtually unknown in the United States. Fred's subsequent book, *Around the World on a Bicycle*, is something of a classic. John reported that Fred is in good health and had just returned from a non-cycling trip to Scandinavia. When last we heard from John, he was on his way to Mexico.





**4**-Perry de Vos is a 31-year-old graphic artist from Amsterdam, Holland. He was riding from Miami to Los Angeles. Here he studies the news from home in *de Volkskrant*, a Dutch newspaper that was mailed to him by friends. This was his second time across the country; in 1989 he rode from New York to San Francisco.

**5**-Bikecentennial member Laurent C. Eversley decided that after 30 years as an aircraft dispatcher for Swissair he would retire with a bang. He set his sights on the TransAmerica Trail. The 61-year-old resident of New York did the trail in 84 days and then rode down the Pacific coast to San Francisco. "The people I met were the greatest reward. You realize that people's values are pretty much the same all over. The majority were friendly and interested in what I was doing."



**6**-Grace Johnson seemed to be taking her ride from Bombay, India, to Seattle, Washington, in stride. She was traveling with her husband, Paul Jeurissen, of Holland, whom she met on a 1981 Bikecentennial TransAmerica tour (her's was one of two marriages between Dutch men and American women that resulted from that tour). "Since 1981 Paul and I have cycled quite a bit in Europe and some in the U.S.A. and Asia. This trip is a six-month honeymoon for us." Grace is 27 years old and does architectural drafting in Amsterdam, Holland.



**8**-Geraint Davies and Natalie Weston of England were determined to make their New Orleans, Louisiana, to Portland, Oregon, tour no matter what. When Natalie, a 19-year-old nanny, balked at the training required for the trip, they opted for a moped for her instead of a bike. Geraint, 30, a physicist who had done a lot of bicycle touring previously, including a cross-Australia adventure, decided to stick with his bike. The moped did not always perform well above 7,500' elevation and had to be pushed from time to time. Geraint writes, "People told us that 4,500 miles in two months is a lot for a moped. It was strange how people were more surprised with the moped going the distance than a cyclist." The experience hooked Natalie on traveling. Currently she is in Belize doing a survey of howler monkeys.



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**7**-In her portrait, Susan Dixon, of Burlington, Vermont, expressed her enthusiasm in the final months of a 26-month, 30-country, 18,100-mile, One World Tour. The 33-year old Vermont woman left her job in environmental education and set out with her husband "to promote global education and peace through understanding." "Our experiences have left us more committed to living simpler, less materialistic lives. We have grown to appreciate more fully the happiness and pleasure of family, nature, and good friendships."

**9**-Joachim Pohl, 21, of Germany rode a Radius Recumbent on his rambling tour of the West, which began in Salt Lake City and took him to Los Angeles. The trip was a celebration of his completion of service in the army. "It was a wonderful vacation, but it is going to be the last of that sort of thing for a while. I am now studying law at the Eberhardt Karls University. Money as well as time is lacking and a return to the wilderness of the American West must stay a dream."