Sometimes the Adventure Cycling headquarters sounds like a typical office — keyboards typing, phones ringing, indistinguishable voices chattering in the next room. Sometimes at the beginning and end of the workday, it’s so quiet you can hear a gear shift from across the building. But far more often, the Adventure Cycling space is bustling with excited noise from visiting cyclists from near and far who make the pilgrimage to our headquarters in Missoula, Montana.

“There’s something kind of magical about opening that door; it makes it real for them,” said Geoff McMillion, Adventure Cycling’s membership manager. Visitors are amazed by the office from the time they step through the entrance, where handlebars wrapped in rainbow bar tape function as door handles, opening to the Adventure Cycling mecca.

If you’ve made it to the office in the last five years, McMillion is likely a familiar face. He’s worked with Adventure Cycling for over a decade and has greeted thousands of visiting cyclists while stationed at the front desk. Even during the summer of 2020, when the pandemic kept most riders from traveling outside their regions and kept everyone from entering buildings, McMillion sat under an umbrella outside the office, keeping a safe distance and ensuring all 68 visitors that season were properly greeted. This year is quite a bit busier; by mid-September, about 360 cyclists had signed our guest book, 53 cyclists had their photos snapped for our National Bicycle Touring Portrait Collection (adventurecycling.org/resources/portrait-gallery), and many more stopped by. The 2023 cycling season isn’t over yet! We typically average between 50 and 100 portraits per year, so the remaining season may see an influx of northbound or westbound riders nearing the ends of their longer tours.

Every cyclist has a story, McMillion said, and since 1976, Adventure Cycling staff has kept an impressive record of the travelers who make it to headquarters. When cyclists visit, they sign our guestbook and are greeted with a “wall of fame,” an ever-shifting scrapbook of Polaroid portraits along with the cyclists’ names, what route they’re traveling, and their social media handles if they want others to follow along on their journey. They sometimes find familiar faces among the photos — friends they made at a campsite along the way, passersby whom they recognized going the opposite direction, cyclists from back home. When McMillion asks if visitors want to become part of the wall themselves, “usually it’s a very excited ‘yes!’” We offer a tour of our workspace, which doubles as a museum of sorts — incredible pieces of bike travel history decorate the interior. In the cyclists’ lounge, you’ll often find riders enjoying a cold drink, ice cream, wifi, or just the great conversation.

“I love hearing people’s impression of humankind across the United States,” McMillion said, adding that visiting cyclists are often surprised by how kind and welcoming strangers are during their tours. He also enjoys learning about where cyclists are from, where they’re going, and noting trends in bike travel. In years past, most visitors stopped by on their way eastbound or westbound on the TransAm, one of Adventure Cycling’s most popular routes. Lately, though, McMillion has noticed more people riding custom or shorter routes, making space for all types of bicycle travel.

At first glance, you might mistake our downtown Missoula office as a church building. That’s because it was a place of spiritual worship before we purchased the building in 1991 and made it our own sort of sanctuary. Like many modern nonprofits, we utilize a combination of hybrid, remote, and in-office spaces to get our jobs done. But our brick-and-mortar office is a special place where routes are created, magazine stories are edited, Cyclosource items are packaged, and more. It’s a space where bike travel is truly celebrated by staff and visiting cyclists, and we welcome everyone Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. We can’t wait for you to visit later this season, next year, and beyond!