

BICYCLE CLUBS

If I had the clear tenor voice of a Jim Farrell I would open up this paper by first of all singing "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do"- For the final phrase goes as follows -"for you'll look sweet on the rumble seat of a bicycle built for two". That sort of an introduction would put us in the right mood for understanding and feeling the 1890's and the 1900's - but being sadly deficient in an Irish Tenor voice I will have to forego that and you will be more pleased, I am sure.

I will not go into the history of the development of the bicycle except to point out that it developed as a means of transportation. The Lincoln Library of Essential Information gives the date of the invention of the bicycle as 1840 - Inventor, ^{Kirkpatrick} MacMillan - Scotland. The modern type in 1884 - James Starley - England.

So in this country by the 1890's all sorts of variations existed - single wheel, double wheel, two seaters, etc. With this inexpensive mode of travel at hand compared to horse-drawn vehicles, people of all classes were able to buy bicycles for travel to and forth from work and for enjoyment. It was only a matter of time that clubs were organized, as with everything else new, down through the corridors of time.

The first Maynard clubs we come across in our reading of the old newspapers are the Roli-Boli Club organized in 1895 and the A.T. Cycle Club (Associated Templars). Here are a few excerpts from the Maynard News:

Sept. 22, 1899 (News) (6) A number of members of the A.T. & Roli-Boli Cycle Clubs enjoyed a run to Sterling on Sunday. A large number of Maynard riders are planning to attend the Union Run of the Hudson Cycle Club two weeks hence. The following participated in the run to Sterling: Walter Priest, Fred Binns, George Lawton, Lyman Priest, John Denniston, Fred Hayward, William Parkinson, Samuel Harding and Rob Denniston.

Oct. 27 - 1899 (2) About 20 members and friends of the Roli-Boli Club went on the run to Framingham on Sunday.

June 7 - 1901 (2) A.T. Cycle Club wheeled to Washacum, Framingham, Sunday.

June 21, 1901 (2) A large delegation of local cyclists attended the bicycle races at Charles River Park, Monday.

June 21, 1901 (6) The Associated Templars cycle club has hired a street piano for the night before the fourth. They will give a "musicale" in the club rooms from 10 to 12, after which they will meander about town until 3 A.M., piano, dagoes and all. A supper will be a feature of the night.

Jan. 3, 1902 (1) The Roli-Boli Cycle Club observed its Sixth Anniversary on Saturday night at the residence of George Stokes, Stow Center. The party went by the 7:15 car from Post Office Square. An hour was spent at whist playing after which the company sat down to a clambake. A jolly good time was then in order and those present made the most of it. Songs were given by Andrew Palmer, Thomas Wright, George Stokes, George Miller, Frank Hayward and remarks by Fred Hayward, John Carter and Robert Denniston.

Longer trips were made also. The date in the newspaper is missing - but a trip to Providence, R.I. on one occasion was undertaken. The roads at that period were mostly dirt so it must have been a dusty troupe that came home on these Sunday jaunts.

The reference to Charles River Park Bicycle races indicates that there were many clubs in existence to warrant having races and being sporting events a little wagering on the side must have been in order.

The name Roli-Boli must have indicated something - possibly with a little more research through descendants of members of this club we can ascertain what it did stand for. If so, we will add in addendum to this paper.

We do not know how many years these two clubs existed, plus possibly some others that there is no record of - but with the advent of time and changing circumstances they passed into oblivion, except for the record for posterity that we now make here.

Read at ^A~~the~~ 1966 Meeting
of Maynard Historical Society

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