

# Carriage Road Roving Interpretation Report

## 1993 Season

Prepared by Kristen Britain



*Nice job! (Good report)*



Acadia National Park  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Carriage Road Roving Interpretation Report  
1993 Season**

**Carriage Road Rovers:**

Ruth Williams, NPS  
Joan Toolen, VIP  
John Toolen, VIP  
Toni McKay, NPS  
Heidi Himmelberger, VIP  
Bob Fraser, VIP  
Kristen Britain, NPS  
Heather Boothe, SCA

**Visitor Center Rovers:**

Michelle Whitley, NPS  
Steve Scarlett, NPS  
Brooke Miller, NPS  
Kathleen Harter, NPS  
Kate Heath, NPS

The following are exerpts and observations recorded by carriage road rovers in the Carriage Road Roving Interpretation Journal. The information in this report is anecdotal, not scientific.

**Carriage Roads Perceived as Busier Than Ever**

Carriage road roving was initiated May 27. During the summer months, rovers observed that the carriage roads appeared to be busier than ever. Even local carriage road users and repeat visitors have noted the increase in use. Toni McKay spoke to a local couple who thought that there were now three times as many bikes on the carriage roads as there used to be. (TM 8/27) Two women from Waterville visit the park and use the carriage roads only during the fall and spring because the summer is too busy. A couple from Hulls Cove, enjoying the fall foliage, spoke of how busy the summer is. (KB 9/30)

Carriage road users participated in a variety of activities besides walking, biking and horse travel. Photography was popular -- people were seen photographing vegetation at Eagle Lake, vistas at the Amphitheater, and one another. Wildlife and birdwatching were common activities. A couple of visitors watched loons fly overhead at Bubble Pond, a woman observed a mature bald eagle over south Bubble from Jordan Pond, a peregrine falcon was sighted at Jordan Pond. Birdwatchers viewed kinglets, herons and warblers. Rovers regularly received questions about the type of wildlife to be found in the park (moose, bear, osprey?), and natural history questions about kettle bogs, ponds and lakes, and tree identification.

A couple from Derry, NH thought it was great that the park took the initiative to close the Precipice Trail for the peregrine falcons. They felt that the park was adhering to what was important. (KB 8/2)

#### Group Use of Carriage Roads

Many organized groups were seen taking advantage of the carriage roads -- Appalachian Mountain Club, Acadia Bike and Canoe, PATCH, Southwest Harbor Hiking Group, Vermont Cycle Tours, YMCA and youth camps. The Vermont Cyclists were seen by several rovers. Ruth Williams spent some time discussing carriage road safety, courtesy and rehabilitation with the group leaders. (RW 7/13) Toni met the Bar Harbor YMCA group, "...needed to remind them of road courtesy and staying to the right." (TM 7/21) Toni also met an Acadia and Bike Canoe guide who was abandoned with about twenty girls, by camp counselors. The guide seemed to think the counselors were lost. (TM 7/31)

Interpretive ranger, Mark Cosgrove, was leading a walk along the access path, between the visitor center parking lot and Paradise Hill, when a group of bikers led by Cadillac Mountain Adventures sped down the path. The visitors on Mark's program had to leap to safety, to get out of the way of the bikers. Mark was concerned that the group was traveling at an unsafe speed on an unsafe path.

Many informal groups, from large families to a wedding party, made use of the carriage roads. A group of Bar Harbor boys took younger boys from their neighborhood out of the house, and outside to enjoy the park and summer. (KB 7/29) Another group announced that they would probably be the only Mainers Kristen Britain would see that day in the park. (KB 7/29)

#### Cyclists and Courtesy

Several visitors spoke to rovers about the lack of courtesy on the behalf of cyclists. Some retirees along Eagle Lake were very irritated by cyclists who would not ring bells when approaching from behind. (KB 6/30) Bob Fraser observed a "glaring lack of ettiquette" when a cyclist sped around a blind curve on the wrong side of the road. (BF 7/22) A man reported to Toni about a teenager speeding down the west side of Eagle Lake "No hands, no shirt, no helmet." The man was concerned about the crowds traveling up the west side. Toni described that particular day at Eagle Lake as "zooie". (TM 8/3) A Rhode Island couple were concerned about the dangers of bikers speeding around curves on gravel surfaces. (KB 8/9)

Off-duty interpretive ranger, Bob Thayer, his wife, and his father were walking on the Parkman Mountain area carriage roads when a speeding bike forced his wife and father to jump out of the way. The cyclist did not acknowledge them, and continued speeding along. Bob recommended courtesy signs in parking lots,

and whistles for rovers to get the attention of speeders who travel too fast to hear the rover's voice. Rovers now carry whistles. (KB 8/10)

A woman walking her dogs at Witch Hole Pond vented her frustration at Toni because bikers were not warning her when passing. She was very upset and expected Toni to chase speeders. The woman had already registered her complaint with the bike rental shops. (TM 8/10)

Ruth Williams stopped a young man who was speeding, to explain the dangers of excessive speed to him. They were on a blind curve, and "one of the younger kids came whizzing up, tried to brake, and ran into the older fellow." As if that was not enough, another kid "came whizzing up...and slid sideways into all three of us. It was quite a tangle of bikes for a while..." (RW 8/12)

Acadia's volunteer coordinator, Steve Perrin, was walking down the hill on the south end of Eagle Lake. Three cyclists with an unleashed dog were traveling up the hill, towards Steve. Steve was staying as far to the right as possible, to avoid the cyclists and the dog who was wandering all over the road. Suddenly, he was clipped in the elbow from behind by a biker speeding downhill, who was trying to negotiate the dog. Steve did not hear the biker, and said that if he had stepped to the left, he would have met disaster. The cyclist never slowed down. (KB 8/23)

A couple at Witch Hole Pond had given up walking in that area during the summer because of the number of bikes, but found it to be safe after August. (KB 9/9)

Rovers observed many speeding bikers. Kristen was posted at intersection 14 while the Model Mile was closed. Many speeders were observed heading downhill from the Tumbledown -- "Noticed lots of little kids (8-12 years old) seemed to get a thrill riding down the hill towards the intersection -- usually they're way ahead of parents and screaming 'Weeeee'." (KB 8/2) One cyclist was riding so fast he did not see the "road closed" sign. Kristen called to him, he veered into a ditch, looked over his shoulder to see who called, and sped down the road "like a scared rabbit". (KB 8/2) Toni tried to slow ten bikers "racing" down the newly resurfaced Model Mile. "I yelled to slow down but they took little heed." The group consisted of teenage boys with two counselors. (TM 8/17)

Two boys (about ages 8-10) were seen speeding down the hill at the south end of Eagle Lake, one taking to the air. Their parents sped down the hill after them. It was not uncommon to see parents riding as fast as their children. (KB 7/11)

Rovers did encounter courteous cyclists (called out when passing) and the majority of cyclists did not speed. Some cyclists were concerned about courteous use by other cyclists. One bike enthusiast, who has cycled extensively in this park and others, was pleased to see rangers on the carriage roads and the promotion of courtesy by the park. He suggested signs to guide people from Bar Harbor to Duck Brook Bridge, a biker-hiker campground, directing bike tourers to Bar Harbor from Thompson Island via the Crooked Road instead of route 3, opening some hiking trails to mountain bikers, posting signs about courtesy and safety at carriage road entrances. (KB 6/24)

Dave Reed, entrance station ranger, reported that his wife had a strange experience on the carriage roads. She was biking and prepared to pass a group of pedestrians. Although she called out to warn them, the group refused to move out of the way, or acknowledge her. Eventually they did move, but when she encountered them again, from behind, they ignored her and sang loudly, barring her way.

#### Cyclists Off-Road

There appears to be an increased number of bikes used off-road. Kristen caught bikers on the access trail between headquarters and Eagle Lake, three times. On one occasion, the cyclists were lost. On the other two, the cyclists wanted something more exciting than carriage roads to ride on, and claimed to be unaware that bikes were not allowed on trails. They were directed to the Breakneck Road. (KB 7/10) Toni met a group of kids on the trail behind intersection 5 at Duck Brook Bridge. She asked them "what they were doing. Their response was 'looking for thrills and off-road riding'." They told Toni that a waiter in town had directed them there and to the Bubble Mountain trails. When Toni questioned them further, they denied the waiter story and would not tell her where they got their information. (TM 7/30) Kristen caught a local teenage boy riding on the same trail. When she questioned him, he said some bikers in town had told him about it last summer. (KB 9/5) After many reports from carriage road users and other rovers that there was a lot of off-road activity in this area, it was blocked and signed to discourage bike use on trails.

Visitor center rover, Kate Heath, reported a biker at Witch Hole Pond "who was attempting to do donuts off the carriage road. He successfully flattened some blueberries and tore up a little terrain." (KH 8/5)

At Eagle Lake Bridge, Toni "happened to see bikers coming down off the bridge on dirt shoulder paths and jumping onto the carriage roads. I asked them (teenagers) to stop. Their response was 'Where's the sign that says not to?' I explained about bikers riding only carriage roads, etc, etc. No sooner did our conversation stop when a young couple used the same dirt

paths to get to Eagle Lake Road. They just figured it was the easier access to the road."(TM 8/27) Resource management has since blocked and revegetated the shoulders of Eagle Lake Bridge.

### Equestrians

A couple of equestrians commented that cyclists rode erratically and too fast around horses.(BF 7/22) Carriage drivers from New Hampshire and Vermont "said most bikers were courteous and cautious."(HH 7/16) A pair of equestrians "believed that bikers have been very courteous in many instances, dismounting when horses were in sight. They just wished people would call out when passing." The pair also said that they planned on bringing more equestrian friends next fall and wouldn't like riding the carriage roads in the midst of summer due to the crowds.(KB 10/7) One group of carriages and horseback riders appeared to have no problem with cyclists and actually waved them on by.(KB 8/17) Several equestrians expressed to rovers, their disappointment that rovers were not on horseback. "Ran into lady on horseback who thinks rovers should be on horses if park is interested in maintaining tradition of the carriage roads."(BF 8/26)

Only one pair of horseback riders was seen with a dog off a leash.(KB 6/30) Bob Fraser wondered if there shouldn't be a speed limit for horses. He observed a group with two kids on horses and parents in carriages, "traveling very fast toward the south end of Jordan Pond. Seemed to me, dangerous."(BF 8/19) A horse group was observed off-road, first by Kristen, below headquarters' leach field, upper Aunt Betty Pond Loop. The horses were trampling and eating vegetation. She advised them to get the horses back on the road.(KB 7/26) Heather Boothe, who roved immediately after Kristen, met the same group at seven sisters "with a horse off road having torn apart the bank getting to the creek". After Heather explained to them why the horses should be on the road, the group commented that horseback riders were now considered "second class citizens" on the carriage roads.(HB 7/26)

### Dogs

Rovers had to confront many carriage road users with dogs off leashes. Though many visitors are cooperative and friendly when informed of the leash regulation, others are not. When Heather advised some visitors to leash their dog, their response was "Why do you have a rule like that?"(HB 8/9) "Two dogs off leash -- both owners had negative attitude about leash law."(BF 9/21) Pet owners have a variety of excuses for not using leashes: "My dog won't walk on a leash"; "My dog likes to be chased, not to chase"; "My dog is good", "My dog obeys voice commands"; "I leash the dog when we meet other people", etc. Rovers came across repeat offenders, the owner of an elderly cairn terrier named Owen, in particular.

Heidi Himmelberger met a woman walking two unleashed retrievers

at Hadlock Pond who "was not happy about the leash regulation, but was fairly cooperative. As she was trying to catch her dogs, two more unleashed dogs arrived. Quite a sight to watch all the dogs, owners and leashes get tangled up." (HH 7/16)

A local woman complained to Toni about dogs off leashes. "She has a dog which she walks on a leash daily. Last week she was attacked by a loose dog on the Northeast Harbor area carriage roads. She was so upset she reported it to law enforcement." The woman went on to tell Toni, on this particular day, that she had confronted another carriage road user with an unleashed dog. She told the dog owner to leash the dog and that the park had a leash regulation. The owner took little heed. "Finally, she said there was a ranger about on the carriage roads, and the owner leashed the dog." (TM 8/9)

### Swimmers

Rovers found themselves ousting swimmers from Eagle Lake during the hottest days of the summer. Toni was confronted by an "irate woman who wanted her children to be able to wade in Eagle Lake." (TM 8/9) "Hard to keep people from swimming in Eagle Lake and Bubble Pond on a hot day. Stopped about fifteen people from entering water." (BF 8/26) "Ushered about six people out of Eagle Lake." (KB 8/9) A woman notified Toni "that a large group of teenagers swimming with a look-out posted and also a French couple whom she stopped, and told them this was not a swimming lake. They responded abruptly and told her to mind her own business." (TM 8/28) Toni did not catch up with the teenagers or the French couple, but she did follow "a trail of diapers to three babies skinny-dipping. I told their parents about Glen Mary Pond and asked them to please retrieve their dirty diapers." (TM 8/28)

There were many questions about swimming, particularly during hot spells. There were also a few overturned canoes. Toni witnessed an overturned canoe in Bubble Pond. The wet party was a bunch of YMCA campers. Because the weather conditions were in the 80's, it appeared to her that it was "a canoe frolic". The kids took their time exiting the water. (TM 7/13)

### Restrooms and Refuse

Carriage road users were concerned by a lack of restroom facilities, particularly near Eagle Lake parking. "Frequently asked question -- Where are the toilets?" (BF 7/13) "Bicyclist expressed negative opinion of NPS for lack of toilets." (BF 9/2) "I had five requests for toilets coming through the Eagle Lake parking area." (BF 8/10)

Ruth talked with "a local couple who said they walk the Bubble Pond area often. They were very concerned (due to the lack of toilet facilities) about the run-off from human (and horse) excrement into the pond, particularly where the carriage road

borders the water. There was a lot (in my estimate) of used toilet paper along the edge of the carriage road in that area." (RW 7/13)

Throughout the summer, rovers picked up litter when they saw it. Bob felt that for the number of carriage road users seen on a given day, that the amount of litter found was not exorbitant. Kristen found something she had never seen on the carriage roads before -- a dirty, disposable diaper left along the road near signpost 4. Using rubber gloves and a plastic bag, she disposed of it. (KB 7/29) According to Toni, who followed the "trail of diapers", the parents of the infants bathing in Eagle Lake had not, she thought, intended to pick up the diapers, until she requested that they do so.

John and Joan Toolen reported, "...more litter on roads than ever before. Not much, but unusual." (JT 7/23)

### Safety

Besides speeding cyclists, it seems that carriage road users not carrying water was a major safety concern, particularly during hot spells. Rovers carried extra water for those who were without, and seemed desperate. "People seem surprisingly unprepared for the weather and traveling the carriage roads. Many with no water, no map, and no sun protection." (BF 7/8) On a day in the 90's, Toni wrote, "Unbelievable how people arrive on roads thoroughly unprepared, and pedaling like crazy to get somewhere." (TM 7/10)

Ruth asked, "Is there some way we could encourage the bike shops to have available some means of carrying water for their renters such as promotional water bottles or just some sort of plastic bottle they could toss in with the rental for an extra dollar? Most of the unprepared riders are renters." (RW 8/3)

Although the general consensus among rovers was that a good percentage of bikers were wearing helmets, the Toolens observed "lots of people with no helmets" in the Eagle Lake and Witch Hole Pond area. (JT 8/6) "Few cyclists with their own bikes are wearing helmets." (BF 8/10)

Rovers helped with many first aid incidents, involving, mainly, scrapes and cuts. Visitor center rover, Michelle Whitley, was on the scene for one such incident: "Little boy flew off bike coming down the trail [access trail between visitor center parking lot and Paradise Hill]. Very dangerous trail. His knee was cut up really bad. Elbow had scratches also." (MW 7/31) "Responded to accident near west end of Eagle Lake. Boy with new bike had fallen off. Bruise and brushburn to right leg." (JT 6/25) "Helped family with a bee sting." (TM 7/14) Ruth found a boy, about 14 years old, who had fallen. "Boy stopped me for help...had road burns and bleeding on arm. They [father and boy]

were extremely appreciative of the help, shook my hand twice."(RW 7/29) "9 year old boy fell off his bike moving fast on a downgrade. Badly masticated kneecap and abrasions on thigh. Called for pick-up to hospital and administered first aid. Pick-up expedited beautifully - fast and professional."(BF 8/31) Other first aid incidents were of a similar nature.

### Directions

More visitors than ever were carrying maps this summer, yet there was ample opportunity for rovers to assist with directions. In fact, there were times when visitors stood in line to ask questions. "At [signpost] #6 around 11:00, I was surrounded with requests and questions; at least five different groups wanting information all at once."(TM 7/14) Immediately after assisting with a first aid situation, Kristen was "converged upon by three different groups of people wanting distances and directions."(KB 7/7)

Even when visitors were equipped with maps, Toni had the feeling that they "needed to be reassured."(TM 7/6) "They [carriage road users] were amazed how easy it is to get lost."(BF 7/6) Rovers attempted to reunite separated parties. Bob assisted an elderly couple at Jordan Pond.(BF 7/13) Later that month, he observed, "Everyone seems to be lost. Handed out about fifteen maps."(BF 7/29) Ruth helped an overdue walker with a heart condition by pedaling to Duck Brook Bridge where his wife/friends were waiting to pick him up. She reassured them that he was fine, and they arranged to pick the walker up at Eagle Lake parking. Ruth then pedaled back to the walker to make sure he could find his way to the parking area. Ruth received a thank-you note for her efforts.(RW 8/12)

A couple at Bubble Pond tried to figure out where they were by examining the little map on the wayside exhibit by the parking lot. They did have a map with them, but they were not at an intersection and could not match up signpost numbers.(KB 9/3) Toni met a man "who was admonishing the park for lack of signs to get to Duck Brook Bridge [from Bar Harbor]." (TM 8/9)

Rovers found themselves helping to direct hikers to hiking trails. "Helped a family find the Asticou Trail."(KB 7/10) Heidi encountered a man who "insisted" she radio headquarters for directions to a particular trail for him. She informed him the radio was for emergencies only. He then had her walk with him until he found the trail head.(HH 7/30) "Pemetic Trail at north end of Bubble Pond is poorly marked. Four separate parties lost -- could not find trail."(BF 8/3)

### Other Assistance

Rovers, armed with bike tools, assisted with flat tires, seat adjustment, handlebar adjustment, loose chains, etc. The Toolens helped with a lock-out.(JT 8/13)

### Road Conditions

Visitors and rovers reacted differently to the varying road conditions. "An older gentleman complained about the size and looseness of surface rock placed this spring between Half Moon Pond and Duck Brook Bridge. He said others he knew/met, joggers and older folks, were concerned about or avoided that section of road." (RW 6/4) "Told twice about how much better the roads are (condition of) than in the past. Had one complaint of road condition on Witch Hole, east side." (RW 7/6) "Road where horse concession travels -- total sand...Some commented how beautiful the 'bike trails' were." (KB 7/10) "...got into a discussion about Witch Hole road conditions. They [visitors] rented bikes and after doing that loop decided road conditions were too rocky for them." (TM 7/14) "A gentleman...inquired about the variation of road surfaces, so I explained what I knew of the resurfacing process and told him about the Model Mile." (KB 9/9)

### Rehabilitation and the Model Mile

Visitor reaction to rehabilitation work was, on the whole, very positive, even during the closure of the 'Model Mile' between signposts 14 and 21. "Spoke to a local woman who asked about the rehabilitation project. Said she had already contributed to the 'Give a Foot' campaign." (KB 6/24) "A couple who come to Acadia year after year...thought the carriage road rehabilitation was great. They remembered years ago (before mountain bikes) what the roads used to be like -- difficult to negotiate on a bike." (KB 8/2) "A couple who visit frequently expressed that they felt the rehabilitation was definately a good thing, but they also liked the overgrown atmosphere of the past." (KB 8/3)

During the Model Mile closure, rovers were periodically posted at nearby intersections to assist maintenance by redirecting visitors. "Met a couple who felt closure was serendipitous for them because it extended their ride...general feeling towards closure: Amicable." (KB 8/2)

After the Model Mile was resurfaced, Toni "sampled new road - Wow! Wonderful!" (TM 8/6) which was the general attitude of all rovers.

Rovers posted at the Model Mile discovered there was some conflict with closure signage. "Road [intersection] 21 has closed sign out while 14 only has 'road machinery' sign." (HH 7/24) "People coming towards #14 intersection said there was no closed sign on the other side and the workers said nothing about the road being closed...I asked the maintenance truck driver about the closed sign at #21, and he said he himself had put it out...A trip leader said that the maintenance folk let her tired group through. If people ride the road anyway, shouldn't it just be opened with lots of caution signs?" (HB 8/2) "Maintenance, while on break, let some people through from signpost 21. Are the roads closed or not? Either people can pass or not...I am

down on one end telling people not to enter road...and others are being waved through from other end."(KB 8/3) "When I got to #21, no signs were up at all - big machine partially blocked route to #22...checked with maintenance - they said there should have been a sign there at #21. So I rode back to check it. Of course when I returned it was up!"(HH 7/16) "Some confusion about road signs between 21 & 14 - signs said 1) road closed, 2) pass with caution - a couple complained and then proceeded with caution."(TM 8/2)

#### Curiosity About Rovers

Rovers frequently found themselves the object of curiosity and appreciation. "...mentioned appreciation, thought volunteers were a great idea..."(HH 6/29) "Had several folk tell me how delighted they were to see park personnel on the carriage roads."(RW 7/6) "A couple people at Witch Hole Pond wanted my job."(KB 7/6) "People seem surprised by bike patrol and think it is about time."(BF 7/13) "Lots of questions about SCA - next time I'll carry flyers."(HB 7/19) "Every time I go out, even for short rides or marginal weather, I make at least one contact in which I feel I have made a positive contribution to the visitor's experience."(RW 7/20) "Lots of 'glad to see you' comments. That feels nice!"(TM 7/21) "College students wanted information on getting volunteer positions. My job is envied by almost everyone I spoke with."(HH 7/31) "Twice asked: Do they pay you for this?"(KB 8/24) "Great public support for the bicycle rover program. People are very appreciative."(BF 8/10)

"A lot of interest in the VIP program, but I'm tired of being asked 'Are you retired?'"(BF 9/29) Bob, who is not retired, was concerned about the image of the program being only for retired folks.

There was a little confusion as to who rovers were at times. They were called "the police", and Toni was referred to as a "Mountie on a bikie."(TM 7/13)

#### Disabled Carriage Road Users

The carriage roads proved to be an opportunity for disabled folks to enjoy the park. Ruth met a cyclist with one leg.(RW 9/2) Wheelchair users were seen, too. A visitor told Kristen that "she'd like to bring her disabled mother to use the carriage roads. She thought they'd be smooth enough for a wheelchair."(KB 10/7)

#### Repeat Visitors

It was not unusual for rovers to meet repeat visitors, and visitors who come to Acadia just to bike the carriage roads. "They [visitors] come up every year and said this year was toughest with their bikes [due to varied road conditions]."(TM 8/20) "Met another couple who frequently visit park from Ipswich, MA, basically to bike the carriage roads."(KB 8/2) "The visitors I talked to came from Boston specifically to mountain

bike the carriage roads. Evidently, Acadia is a destination for mountain bikers."(BF 9/23) "I ran into a couple of gentlemen from Bangor who ride the carriage roads two times a week and have been doing this every summer for ten years."(BF 9/29)

#### Other Observations

Toni met Paul Simpson III, grandson of the carriage road engineer of the same name. "His mother told him to be careful on carriage roads for fast bikers."(TM 7/31) Heidi recorded, "Met a couple that just got engaged on Giant Slide loop."(HH 8/7) "Saw more people than I've ever seen on Sargent Mountain carriage road, including family groups, which I never used to see."(KB 8/9) "Met an older couple from Rhode Island who have been visiting Acadia in August for the last eighteen years...When they hike, he plays his violin at the summit and she quilts."(KB 8/9)

# Appendix

## Some Thoughts on the 1993 Carriage Road Rove Season

*Prepared by Kristen Britain, Carriage Road Rove Coordinator*

Carriage Road roving operated smoothly this summer despite the fact there were more rovers than ever before.

### Equipment

Bike donations from Friends of Acadia, LL Bean, Bar Harbor Bike Shop, and Acadia Bike and Canoe helped accomidate the increased coverage. I would suggest that next summer, bicycles of a larger size be available. The Bean bikes are on the small side, as were some of the other bikes. Long-legged rovers competed for one or two of the larger bikes, and medium height rovers competed for the medium sized bikes.

Because such an increase in rove staff was not anticipated this season, I did not order as much equipment last winter as we discovered we needed in the summer.

One tool kit, two counter-clickers (one after its companion was lost), one set of panniers (halved when one was lost) meant that only one rover could be fully equipped at a time, though there might be two or more rovers in the field at once. Occasionally, there were radio conflicts, even with two available for carriage road people. These radios were also used when NPS rovers presented interpretive programs. A resource management radio and Beech Mountain radio were borrowed when available.

Acadia Bike and Canoe helped alleviate some of the pannier problems by donating a new set of quality panniers. Panniers are essential for carrying park information, maps layers of clothes, tools, first aid kits, extra water, etc. Two more sets would be ideal. I would not order from Performance Bicycle Shop again. I believe their quality has deteriorated since I ordered my own pair of panniers a couple years ago. Their panniers do not seem to fit any bicycles except probably the ones the company produces.

ABC also supplied excellent helmets which insured rovers' heads were protected on the roads. I recommend affixing NPS decals on two of the three helmets to increase rover visibility. The one helmet without decals could then be available for use by park staff not on duty.

### Supplies Needed

Clothesline was cut up into 6' long leashes for those visitors who possessed none for their pets. I recommend the purchase of more clothesline for this purpose.

More clicker-counters would assist rovers in keeping track of visitor contacts. With the amount of visitors we encountered this past summer, it was difficult to remember the count.

If there is a surge in the number of VIPs used on the carriage roads, at least one more first aid kit should be obtained for their use. We had one kit specifically for the use of all carriage road VIPs, and then mine when I was not using it. Although this worked well, I could see the possibility of future conflict.

Rove bikes should have a mid-season tune-up. We maintained the bikes to the best of our ability through the season, and though there were no serious problems, the bikes would operate more efficiently (and thus, the rovers) with professional help.

Iodine wipes were hot items this season. For some reason, they were difficult to obtain/keep in supply. Rovers dealt with many minor accidents requiring these wipes. When we ran out of them here at interpretation, rovers went without. Fortunately, during the interim, we had no first aid incidents.

### **Rove Staff**

Visitor center staff should be further encouraged to rove carriage roads when possible. Several staff members did manage to get out. However, I believe they were somewhat held back by Class A uniforms (wool pants!). I am not sure how this could be resolved.

VIP support on the roads was terrific. I was impressed by the professionalism these people exhibited. From all indications, it appears the VIPs and SCA were great opportunities for promoting volunteerism in the parks.

If the rove program continues, whether under the auspices of interpretation or law enforcement, I believe that VIPs should continue to rove the carriage roads. They are less threatening, by nature of their uniforms, than even interpreters. If LE rangers pedal the carriage roads with guns strapped on, I believe some balance must be struck. Bob Fraser, VIP, feared that LE rangers would create a different atmosphere on the carriage roads than presently exists. Bob felt that visitors would wonder what problem (crime) exists that requires armed rangers on the carriage roads, and in turn, affect the experience of the visitors.

The carriage road roving manual was a helpful training tool. It pretty much said it all, and because it was written material, it could be referred to by rovers when needed. If carriage road rove does not continue, it could be converted to a manual for regular interpretive roving.

### **Road Closure Communication**

As written in the end of season rove report, there was some confusion about road closures. We were requested by maintenance to assist directing visitors during road closures. We were pleased to do so, but were frustrated when maintenance waved people through the Model Mile from signpost 21, while we stopped and redirected people at signpost 14. It would alleviate confusion if a communication system was established from both ends. Someone from maintenance could be stationed at one end with a radio to contact rover/ other maintenance person on other end. This way, the rover would know if maintenance determined it safe for

visitors to pass, for instance, during lunch break. Highway construction crews use flaggers which the public is very familiar with. Perhaps a flagging system during closures or in areas of heavy rehabilitation would be an effective means of directing visitors.

Signage during road closures should be precise. There must not be one sign that says "Road Closed" with a companion sign next to it that says, "Proceed with Caution". Visitors are receiving a confusing, mixed message.

Considering that so many carriage road users are local and repeat visitors, they will assume, if waved through one year, that it is okay during some future season, to travel through a road closure. This could be a dangerous assumption on the visitor's behalf.

The daily reports on rehabilitation and closures worked well. These reports will be more important when contractors start working on the roads next year.

Occasionally, the reports did not reach me until late in the day, or the next day. On the whole, however, they did reach me in a timely fashion and I was able to inform Wildwood and the bike shops of closures.

### **Final Word**

I was pleased by the team spirit among rovers that evolved as the season progressed. Considering that roving is a very solitary duty, team spirit is not easy to come by. If roving continues, this should be promoted when possible. Everyone did an outstanding job, and though sometimes (like August) when it seemed all the unleashed dogs and speeders of the world were out to get us, everyone continued to believe in what they were doing: Providing essential assistance to Acadia National Park visitors and protecting the resource.

## Carriage Road Roving Statistics

The following is a sampling of contacts made. Variations in the number of contacts made are caused by weather, rove locations, times, dates and individual rovers.

| Date | Hours            | Contacts | Weather        |
|------|------------------|----------|----------------|
| 5/27 | 2:00-3:30 (1.5)  | 12       | Overcast, rain |
| 5/29 | 1:00-3:30 (2.5)  | 30       | Rain           |
| 6/4  | 2:00-3:30 (1.5)  | 11       | Mostly sunny   |
| 6/14 | 10:00-12:00 (2)  | 25       | 91 degrees     |
| 6/25 | 7:45-11:45 (3)   | 33       | Sunny          |
| 6/30 | 9:15-12:15 (3)   | 55       | Sunny          |
| 7/3  | 9:00-12:30 (3.5) | 67       | Misty, foggy   |
| 7/10 | 9:30-2:00 (4.5)  | 147      | Hot, humid     |
| 7/13 | 1:30-4:00 (2.5)  | 141      | N/A            |
| 7/14 | 9:00-12:00 (3)   | 152      | Sunny, hot     |

| Date | Hours            | Contacts | Weather        |
|------|------------------|----------|----------------|
| 7/23 | 9:00-1:30 (4.5)  | 161      | Cloudy, cool   |
| 7/29 | 12:00-4:00 (4)   | 45       | Overcast       |
| 8/2  | 9:30-1:00 (3.5)  | 53       | Foggy          |
| 8/9  | 12:15-4:15 (4)   | 303      | Sunny          |
| 8/13 | 9:00-3:00 (6)    | 178      | Sunny          |
| 8/19 | 9:00-1:00 (4)    | 111      | Sunny          |
| 8/20 | 8:45-11:45 (3)   | 137      | Beautiful      |
| 8/23 | 1:00-5:00 (4)    | 189      | N/A            |
| 8/31 | 7:30-11:00 (3.5) | 24       | Overcast       |
| 9/5  | 1:00-3:30 (2.5)  | 111      | Beautiful      |
| 9/15 | 12:00-4:00 (2)   | 65       | Sunny, windy   |
| 9/28 | 10:15-1:15 (3)   | 59       | Clear, breezy  |
| 10/7 | 9:30-2:00 (5.5)  | 48       | Cloudy, breezy |



# Can carriage-road users coexist?

by Anne Kozak

Looking proud and confident, a woman in her twenties on the Eagle Lake Carriage Road seemed to relish last Sunday's warm temperatures and sunny skies — a day when the leaves were just beginning to turn. Contented, she sat in her wheelchair, momentarily watching the play of the water, the varied colors in the grasses near the shore.

Her look quickly changed. A group of about 10 bicyclists — all apparently training for the Tour de France — yelled to her to get out of their way. As they curved around her to navigate the small space that separated her from a group of oncoming bikers, their speed as they leaned into the turn caused a slight breeze.

I know, because I was just behind her with two dogs — both of whom, although sitting, had visibly tensed up.

If I had propelled myself in a wheelchair around a considerable portion of Eagle Lake, I would have been exultant. And I would have hoped that the particularly large group of tourists (mostly bikers) that I had encountered would have been willing, not only to share a portion of the carriage road with me, but also to recognize and accord me my right to use the road as freely as they did. While I wouldn't have expected any favors, I would have expected courtesy.

For the most part, the many users of the carriage road last Sunday afternoon willingly shared the road, and, like me, they were pleased to see the range of users — children on tricycles, bicyclists, birdwatchers, people walking dogs, and the woman in the wheelchair.

The dozen or so of us who endured the incident,

strangers approaching from two directions, all commented on the lack of courtesy, the potential danger, and the fact that we were all forced to stop.

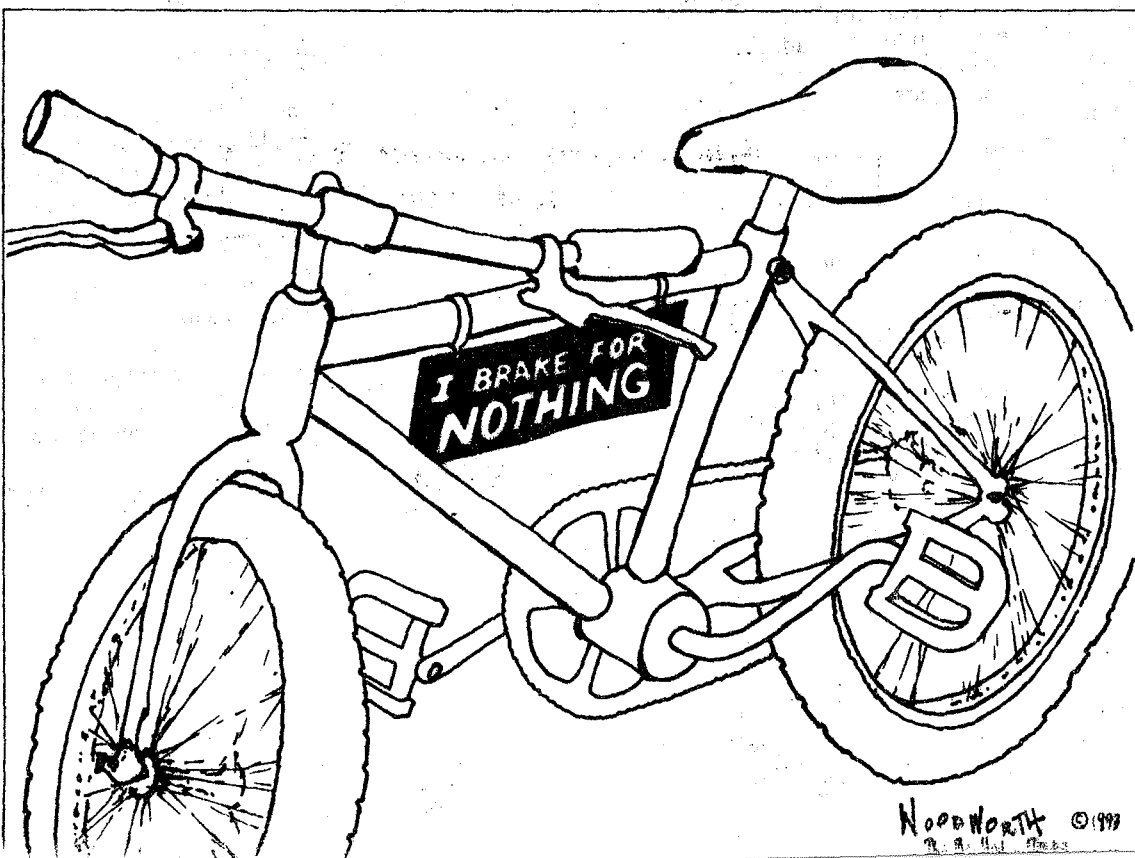
The park, in conjunction with Friends of Acadia, has tried to educate the park's many visitors about the need not only to protect the environment but also to share that environment with a variety of users. Along with maps, bike shops pass out the rules of the road. Some of the interpretive materials developed by the park also talk about multiple users and the need to respect the rights of others to jog, bike, walk, propel a wheelchair.

This past summer, the park has had some of its interpretative staff biking the carriage roads, talking about the restoration and, when necessary, about carriage-road courtesy.

For the most part, the efforts of the park and Friends of Acadia have been successful. But the number of incidents of speeding bikers is increasing and, accordingly, the number of complaints to the park.

Members of the interpretative staff are not rangers; consequently, they cannot give out tickets or summonses. There are no license plates on bikes. One can't report someone on a red bike almost knocking them down. There are dozens and dozens of red bikes, and for most people the distinction between either brands or kinds of bikes is hazy.

Should uses be segregated as they are in the winter — snowmobilers on some roads and cross-country skiers on others? Some have suggested banning bikers from some carriage roads. I personally think that would be sad and unnecessarily deprive the average biker of the right to see a variety of vistas — all because a relatively small number are reckless and selfish. ■



## Near Little Long Pond

# Bicycles prohibited from paths

by Earl Brechlin

MOUNT DESERT — Carriage Roads on land around Little Long Pond in Seal Harbor, recently protected by a conservation easement, will be off limits to motor vehicles and bicycles, a spokesman for the Rockefeller family said this week.

Last week, the Maine Coast Heritage Trust announced that Peggy and David Rockefeller had agreed to protect 1,000 acres around the pond from future development. The Rockefellers still own the land and pay taxes on it.

The ban on motor vehicles is in keeping with standard practice for the Rockefellers' property and for other carriage roads in Acadia National Park. Those roads were built by John D. Rockefeller Jr. earlier this century and given to the nation.

The ban on bicycles comes as conflicts between carriage-road users increase. Horseback riders and walkers have been filing increasing numbers of complaints about speeding racing bicyclists who sometimes yell at others to clear out of their way.

"It is our intention that these lands be used in a way which will complement Acadia National Park. We enjoy seeing people walk their dogs off leashes, and it gives great pleasure that so many people use this area for riding, walking, and driving carriages," Peggy Rockefeller said. "I'm sure it would please my father-in-law to know that this area, which he loved so much, will be preserved and used in the way it was in his lifetime."

According to a prepared statement from the Rockefeller family, the ban on motor vehicles and bicycles will "insure

the property maintains its beauty and serenity," and is in keeping with John D. Jr.'s original intent.

According to Dr. Duane Pierson, director of Friends of Acadia, the ban on bikes around Little Long Pond spotlights a growing problem on the entire carriage-road system.

"Conflicts between bicyclists and other carriage-road users are becoming an increasing problem for park managers and planners," he said.

He noted bicycles had earlier been banned from Rockefeller property open to the public in New York state after conflicts developed there.

Because carriage roads on the Rockefeller property connect with those in Acadia National Park, signs at the property line will advise users that bicycles are prohibited, a spokesman said. ■

## Bike Ban

As part of their move to preserve the area around Little Long Pond, the Rockefeller family has decided to prohibit bicyclists on carriage roads there. Most carriage-road users will no doubt welcome the move. Bicyclists should see it as a warning to begin policing themselves.

Increasingly, a minority of rude and inconsiderate cyclists have ruined the outdoor experience of fellow hikers and bikers, placed themselves and others in physical jeopardy, and shattered the quietude of Acadia. Speed and noise have more than enough addresses without taking up residence on the carriage roads.

Park officials have no easy solutions. Additional enforcement, excessive signage, and education programs will have dubious effect on individuals whose basic character does not include a thread of common courtesy.

The situation is reminiscent of another user conflict a decade or so ago between snowmobilers and cross-country skiers.

Then, too, users who brought speed and noise to the forest were at odds with those who wanted quiet and a more relaxed pace.

Ultimately, the solution was to segregate uses. Snowmobiles were banned on most carriage roads.

While barring bicyclists from all carriage roads would be grossly unfair, perhaps one or two loops could be set aside for walkers.

The Witch Hole loop near Bar Harbor and the carriage roads that would make connecting loops with paths on the Rockefeller land already closed to bicyclists might be just the ticket.

## Yahoos

To the Editor:

I am extremely angry that a bunch of yahoo bike racers are getting away with terrorizing those of us who, leisurely and quietly, enjoy walking and biking on the carriage roads.

Already, a favorite private area (Little Long Pond) has been closed to bikers.

Loud, rude racers, take note!

Should it become necessary to close some other roads to bikers, I hope the decision-makers would consider alternating closed roads each year.

Some of the loops are too far for some of us to walk, but are just right to bike. Closing any roads permanently to certain groups is unfair. Hopefully, something can be done to avoid closing any carriage roads.

Virginia Libhart  
Seal Cove

Christopher H. Keefe  
Laurel Street  
Ellsworth, Maine 04605

Sept 9, 1993

Superintendent  
Acadia National Park  
POB 177  
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

Dear Superintendent,

Know you have a great deal to worry about, but hope you can spare some attention to the speeding bikers on the carriage paths.

This past week produced two instances in which young males nearly wiped out our two small children (and us). They also yelled at us rudely to get off the road.

Perhaps a fee could be collected from the commercial bike renters to promote a safety program.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

CLILS