

2009-12 Focus on Members

Our Focus this month is on Mike and Phyllis Suber.

The Princeton Free Wheelers has been a wonderful part of our lives since the day about 30 years ago when we saw a notice posted on a construction fence in downtown Princeton inviting people to contact Dick Bograd, ride together, and consider forming a bike club. We had been riding on our own for a few years and jumped at the opportunity to ride with others. Soon, a group met and organized the club, with Dick as president and each contributing financially as charter members.

Looking back on some of our first rides, the equipment was laughable: e.g., some bikes had floor pumps strapped onto the rear rack, and we struggled up the Route 518 hill past Trap Rock riding our three speed 40-pound steeds. A 10-mile ride would prove exhausting! Over the years our bikes got lighter even if we didn't, and we even pedaled through a few centuries (one with Frank Stanski to Belmar and back), including our last one, in RI on September 9, 2001.

We still have hand-lettered cue sheets from the 1980's bearing the leaders' names, such as Dave Varney, Andrew Gale, Frank Stanski, Fern Goodheart, and Dan Rappoport. Among our fondest memories are Mike Lurie's Mansion Rides; we stayed overnight in Lavallette and rode back the next day.

We recall joining Diane Hess who led a beautiful and hilly 50-mile club ride to New Jersey's only remaining covered bridge in Sergeantsville. This remains our favorite ride, which we like to do on our wedding anniversary, often continuing on to the Rosemont Café for lunch.

We enjoy riding to nearby towns for lunch, taking a roundabout route to get in extra miles before eating. During these rides, Mike has been known to chase down a speeding cyclist to offer a PFW business card and membership brochure. At our choice eateries in Lawrenceville, Pennington, and Hopewell, we are greeted warmly, and often with a bemused expression at our biking "uniforms."

Phyllis became a board member many years ago when charter member Barbara Hunt



died suddenly and Phyllis agreed to take over Barbara's membership responsibilities.

Picking up the club mail several times a week from a box in the Princeton P.O. gives Phyllis another reason to go for a walk, a favorite activity.

As an At Large Board Member, Mike focuses on enhancing the bicycling environment while also chairing a Princeton bicycling/pedestrian advisory committee. Club duties include his role as LAB representative, bicycling advocate, and publicity coordinator for major club activities such as the Princeton Bicycling Event, at which we both continue to volunteer each August.

The best thing about the PFW is, of course, the people, some of whom we have known for the nearly three decades of the club's existence. Service on the PFW board of trustees has been most rewarding, as we have enjoyed working with numerous congenial and capable board members. Volunteering on the club's behalf has sometimes been challenging, but the rewards have been abundant. For both of us, the PFW continues to be a major source of inspiration and enjoyment.