

# CANDo bike loan and airport pickup service

By Steven Muir, October 2008

In October 2008, 56 cycling enthusiasts gathered for the Cycling Advocates Network CANDo conference in Christchurch which included some field trips by bike. Steven Muir coordinated the bike loan to enable those without bikes to participate in field trips, commute around the city and go on the Little River Rail trail two-day excursion that followed the conference. Steven also offered an airport pickup service using his tandem and bike trailers that he produces himself.

There were eighteen people expressing interest in a bike loan and so the first task was to locate suitable bikes, which wasn't too hard. Two local Spokes members were away for the weekend and were happy to loan their families three bikes. Steven and his neighbour Nigel, made up the rest of the numbers from their extensive collections of bikes. The first problem was how to transport the bikes to Steven's house, to be later handed out to delegates, preferably without using a car. Steven managed to do this by mounting the three bikes on his large size trailer with the use of three sets of bent, threaded rod, that the front forks were bolted to. Being the first time that Steven had carried more than one bike on a trailer, it took about twenty minutes of fiddling around, removing front wheels, getting them mounted securely, as well as locating as many lights and locks to accompany them as possible. The setup worked extremely well and Steven took them 7km or so back to his house with not too much effort, though the pace was a bit on the slow side to avoid any potential accidents with the valuable and somewhat top-heavy cargo.



Three bikes being collected by bike trailer using a bent threaded rod bracket to secure the front forks.



On the 7km journey back home

The next piece of action happened on the way to the digital strategy hackfest on Friday morning with the meeting starting at 9am. There were three people arriving on the 9.25am flight from Wellington, two of whom (Thomas and Pete) were concerned that they were running late and so turned down the offer of a bike pickup and opted for a taxi. Nathaniel, on the other hand, accepted the ride into town on the tandem, with luggage in one of Steven's trailers. All passengers emerged from the airport terminal about the same time, and Steven and Nathaniel waved to the others as they set off into a slight head wind along the relatively uncongested, 60km/hr Memorial Ave route into the Central City, expecting to be overtaken by the taxi at any moment. Twenty four minutes (approx. 11km) later the tandem pulled in to the Twisted Hop café/bar where the digital strategy meeting was being held, and were pleasantly surprised to see they had made it there first, beating the taxi by a clear five minutes. Thomas and Pete had apparently made a small detour to look at previous places of employment, and then were dropped 50m or so from the actual venue,

which slowed them a minute or three, but it still seems a good example of how unexpectedly efficient the bicycle really is in terms of commuting.



Nathaniel and Steve about to leave the airport on the 'Clean Green Limousine' featuring one of Steven's own trailers.



Thomas and Pete arriving at the Twisted Hop, 5 min later than the tandem, having travelled the 11km by taxi.

There were about fifteen bikes required after the digital strategy meeting, and Steven didn't have the time to do four runs using the bicycle trailer, back and forth to the twisted hop, with associated loading and unloading times. Instead he sacrificed the car-free principle and opted to put them on a car trailer to deliver them. This proved to be the most frustrating part of the weekend as the Twisted Hop is on a very narrow street, and the Poplar Street entrance was blocked by a campervan. Steven had to circle the block (avoiding several one way streets) and find another side road to get in, and unloaded in a great hurry, before a traffic parking attendant started glaring at the car and trailer blocking the road. In the end Steven departed with the car and returned on a more practical bike to sort out the lights and locks for everyone.

On Saturday the CANDo conference started and required a further five bikes to be delivered which was achieved by biking on one bike, holding the other bike at the side, then jogging the short distance back home to collect the next set of bikes. This took about the same time as setting up a bike trailer to carry three bikes. Conference delegates then enjoyed a pleasant outing through Hagley Park and Riccarton Bush on their lunch break.



Bikes on the car trailer being picked up after the CANDo



The CANDo Saturday bike ride about to leave.

Sunday was the last day of the conference and, while Steven was rounding up all the loan bikes to be return home on the car trailer, Rory used his tandem and BOB trailer, with Steven's old Dahon folding bike, to accompany three delegates (one with his own bike) back to the airport. Steven dropped another two delegates to the airport later on Sunday, and had another trip to the airport on Monday to retrieve a loan bike from an early morning self-drop-off.



Rory securing the baggage for three people to the BOB trailer.



Steve and Kelvin being dropped at the airport

There were a few more bike retrievals on Monday after it became clear who had taken a bike on the Rail Trail and who had left theirs in the conference bike shelter. It was quite hard to keep track of who had what bike, as the initial allocations were all changed when preferences for size, suspension and bike racks all emerged, despite a table of bikes and delegates being kept. One puncture was suffered and resulted in a bike swap also. Eventually all bikes were returned to their original owner, but a really good system for tracking who has what bike, would be very helpful for anyone considering such a scheme for another conference. All in all, it was a fair bit of work, but much appreciated by those who received a bike and so well worth the effort.

If anyone is interested in obtaining one of Steven's bike trailers contact him by email [thepope@cyclingchurch.org.nz](mailto:thepope@cyclingchurch.org.nz) or phone 03 3658238. They are available as a kitset (\$180 small, \$200 large) or as a fully made trailer (\$140 extra for wheels). Steven is also looking for people in other centres around New Zealand who have an engineering bent and access to a tube bender, who might be interested in producing and selling these trailers in their own region. If you know of anyone, Steven would be keen to hear from you.