What in the World Wednesday #5?
Wray Museum Young Historians
Bicycles

World Bicycle Day (June 3) was created in 2018 by the United Nations. They did so, to promote the use of bicycles for health benefits, and to recognize the importance of bikes as environmentally friendly means of transportation. The Wray Museum has a Super Monarch Flyer from the 1950s that belong to Walter Bashford with all of its original parts including the bell and built in headlamp.

Walter Martin Bashford  (1897 – 1992)

Walt Bashford was born at “Two Buttes” near Beecher Island. He was married to Viola Basquin and had four sons, Ronald, Bernard, Walter, and Bruce. During WWI, Walt served in the Navy for 14 months as a fireman on a coal powered destroyer. In 1921 when he returned to Wray, he was employed by the post office as RR1 mail carrier, a job that he held for 45 years. He also worked at the power plant at the same time.

Walt was also a very active man in the community of Wray. He was Deacon at the Presbyterian Church, Master in the Masonic Lodge, Commander of the American Legion, Boy Scout troop master, City Council member, a sponsor of Demolay and Rainbow Girls, and a member of the Wray Fire Department.

Golf was an activity that Walt was an avid participant of and he was known for enjoying a game whenever possible. Later in his life, bicycling became one of his favorite hobbies that he is remembered for. He planned largely for his bike rides and the treks were greatly anticipated by the community. He completed a 14-mile trip to Laird, Colorado and back in 40 minutes. Walt was highly recognized for his 75-mile trip to Benkelman, Nebraska and back. He finished it in 11 hours and 45 minutes and received an engraved pen set from the mayor for this ride. Remarkably, these rides were made when Walt was well into his 70s.
The bicycle has been part of society for many years. There has been speculation that the original idea started in the 1400s. The purpose was for an easier means of transportation. In the beginning, the bicycle was more of a saddle style scooter. Eventually, the designs improved and the bicycle became more user friendly and safer. Between 1890 & 1900, motors could be added to a bicycle for an extra boost.

As the bicycle rose in popularity, it was not only used for transportation, but was considered a device for recreational activity. The primary bicyclists were men that were well-to-do. In the late 1880s women took the notion of becoming riders themselves. It was difficult for ladies to ride in their dresses but it seemed well worth the new-found freedom and made reason for development of the bicycle bloomers and new bicycle design.

As the 20th century moved forward, many modifications appeared such as lights, horns, and built-in kickstands. Also, another purpose was brought to light for the bicycle, it was now considered a great method of physical fitness. Because of the increasing interest in health and fitness, more people started to use the bicycle in racing, riding in the mountains, and cross-country. Bike riding started progressing into another realm consisting of games showing amazing feats of talent that finally became recognized as an Olympic event in 1993.

Bicycling is healthy and enjoyable. Depending upon how you participate, it is both a lifelong hobby and a sport. Aside from competitive racing, biking offers a moderate level of exercise that most healthy people can partake in. It is a low impact exercise, and is easy on your knees and other joints. Biking on a regular basis, helps you to live healthier and longer. Riding a bicycle is relaxing, and helps to reduce stress. It's a great feeling to be out in the country, breathing the fresh air, while taking in the sights on a bike along a pond, a lake or a wooded trail.
Things to do on your Bike

It's easy and enjoyable to celebrate World Bicycle Day. Just hop on your bike and hit the open road. Rather, hit the open bike path! If you are just getting back on your bike for the first time in a while, I'm sure you'll agree with other returning bicyclists who say getting back on their bikes is "pure joy"!

Here are some other things you can do today:

1. Pedal through puddles  Find some big bad puddles to ride through.

2. Plan a fun destination  Biking is the same as hiking have a destination and a purpose. Riding for the sake of riding may work for some but for others, riding to a playground, a duck pond, a big bridge, or even ice-cream shop just might be the incentive they need.

3. Go off the beaten path  Do some exploring and try out some natural trails for a bit of variety. As a plus, it doesn’t hurt as much if you crash.

4. Head for the hills  Find a gentle grass hill and practice gliding down it. Grab the video camera and play the movie when you get home.

5. Have fun with natural obstacles  Set up a natural obstacle course using trees, hills, narrow twisty paths, or piles of dirt to add some challenge.

6. Get your game on  Try setting up some races with friends, a game of Follow the Leader, or a friendly bike competition.

7. Take a break  Stop to play in the mud, collect sticks, throw rocks in a river, play in a forest. Just get off the bikes and some time for free play.

8. Bring friends  It is always more fun to ride with others.

9. Make it a family ride  Get Mom and Dad on a bike, too. It helps relieve stress!

10. Know when to call it quits  Know when it’s time to turn around, and don’t push it.

#1989.232.113 Photograph three unknown children “airing up the tires”