



Narragansett Bay Wheelmen



Our Origin

The Narragansett Bay Wheelman is a descendant of the Providence Wheelmen, founded May 15, 1879. The Providence club eventually merged with the Rhode Island Wheelmen. The next succession was a joining with the Yankee Wheelmen, the only bicycling club in the United States authorized to use the "Hat in the Ring" emblem of the Arnold Schwinn Company. Although World War II took its toll of members, many continue to ride.

In late 1970, a brief notice appeared in many bike shops. "Bicycle riders interested in a bike club, call 555-1179." A meeting was held at the Pembroke Fieldhouse on Cushing Street in Providence, February 11, 1971. A two page newsletter and the election of club officers marked the rebirth of club bicycling. Reflecting the statewide membership, the founders chose the name "Narragansett Bay Wheelmen." Eventually many of the Yankee Wheelmen joined, continuing the long, fine tradition of bicycling in Rhode Island.

The following years were marked by growth—in membership, rallies, centuries, and activities related to cycling. "The Flattest Century in the East" has become the largest century on the east coast and the third largest in the nation. The 100th anniversary of the League of American Wheelmen, our parent affiliate, hosted 1800 cyclists from all the U.S. and beyond in Newport, birthplace of the L.A.W. in May, 1880. Currently it is known as the League of American Bicyclists.

1980 also marked the beginning of the Rhode Island Bicycle Coalition, an outgrowth of the political activism of the NBW.

Tandem '81—the largest Eastern Tandem Rally to date—was hosted in New Bedford in August of 1981 by the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen.

Membership

Our membership fees are nominal. Your membership card will be the mailing label of your bulletin, the *Spoke'n Word*. Keep it with you to be eligible for discounts offered by our Super Cycle Shops. All memberships expire automatically, one or two years from enrollment (depending on the term).

If you'd like to join us, see website form

Interested in Us?

The Narragansett Bay Wheelmen is a club for riders of all levels of ability. The novice, the commuter, the seasoned veteran and the serious rider will find their special interest in the NBW. As one of the largest clubs in the United States, our diverse membership offers programs for everyone.

Rides

Weekly rides start at various locations throughout Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut. You ride at your own pace over well-mapped and marked routes. There is never any pressure to ride further or faster than you wish, and all rides include shorter loops for anyone wishing an abbreviated ride. Covering a great variety of terrain and scenery, most rides are on back roads seldom seen by the average traveller.

You and Your Bike

All that's required is a love of cycling and a bicycle in reasonably good shape. An expensive bicycle is not necessary. Special equipment and clothing can be added later, as your proficiency increases. However, helmets must be worn to avoid serious head injury.

Bicycle Advocacy

This committee advocates on state and local levels to assure roads are made safe for bicycling. Bicycling educational programs for adults and children are provided in the community. Support for the development of alternative transportation strategies is another focus.

Special Events

Membership in the NBW offers you the chance to cycle in other parts of New England and the Northeast, often at reduced rates. Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and New Hampshire are regular destinations for the NBW. The *Spoke'n Word* lists these events, and rides offered by other clubs. During off-the-saddle hours, cross-country skiing, planned and spontaneous get-togethers are some of the typical events for NBW members. Check the nbwclub.org website and [e-mail list](#) for updates.