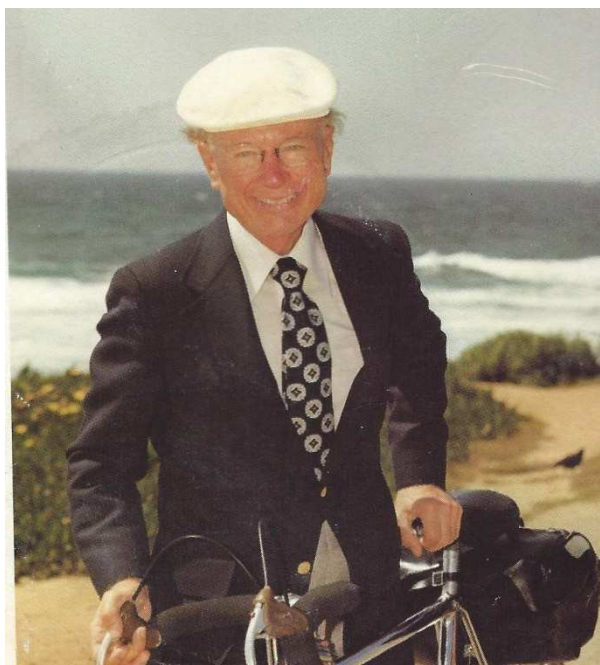


Evolution of the *BICYCLE TOURING CLUB* from the *INTERNATIONAL BICYCLE TOURING SOCIETY*

John McManus, February 2015

Bicycle Adventure Club (BAC) evolved from another organization, the International Bicycle Touring Society (IBTS).



IBTS was formed in 1964 during a tour of New England, organized by Dr. Clifford Graves, a Dutch-born surgeon who had a practice in La Jolla, California. During World War II, he served as a surgeon in the U.S. Army. Twice caught behind enemy lines, he escaped by riding his bicycle through enemy territory to the Allied side. One of these episodes was during the Battle of the Bulge.

When he was drafted into the army in 1941 he was assigned to Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver. Under the pressure of gas rationing, he began riding a bicycle. This, unintentionally, was the beginning of a love affair with the bicycle.

After the war, unable to find serious cyclists' in the Sand Diego area, he formed an American Youth Hostel chapter in 1950 and eventually took teen-agers on tours in the U.S. and Europe.

In 1964 Clifford decided to host a bicycle tour in New England and managed to attract an impressive list of riders. Forty signed up for the whole two-week tour and another forty came just for the first weekend. Among the notables on the tour were:

- John Auerbach, executive director of the Bicycle Institute of America.
- John Bauman, president of the Los Angeles Wheelmen.
- Dr. Medwin Clutterbuck from Howe, England.
- Fred Delong, at that time one of the most knowledgeable students of bicycling and bicycles in the world. He later wrote one of the first modern bicycle books, "Delong's Guide to Bicycles and Bicycling".
- Otto Eisele, president of the Amateur Bicycle League of America.
- Dr. Clifford Graves, president of the San Diego chapter of the American Youth Hostels.

- Captain Dan Henry of American Airlines and Vice-president of the New York Cycle club. Dan developed a system of marking bicycle routes with circles on the road, commonly known as “Dan Henry Arrows”.
- “Huffy” Huffman, owner of Huffy Bicycles.
- Keith Kingbay, public relations counsel of the Schwinn Bicycle Company.
- Jean and Helene Nogrette from Paris. Jean wrote financial columns for newspapers in France.
- Dr Dudley White, President Eisenhower’s physician.

At the time of this tour, there were no touring companies and no national touring organizations. Based on the tremendous popularity and success of this tour, Dr. Graves formed the International Bicycling Touring Society.

The concept behind the International Bicycling Touring Society was “*members organize and lead tours for other members*”. ‘A simple concept but one that continues fifty years later in the Bicycle Adventure Club. In its first twenty years, IBTS members organized over 200 bicycle tours, both in the US and international.

Former IBTS members have many fond remembrances of Dr. Graves and those early tours:

- Always the dapper man, Dr Graves would come to dinner with coat and tie. Many members followed suit.
- Catharina fixed Dr. Grave flats. How can you not like a woman like this?
- In 1971 Dr. Graves was one of the first Americans to attempt to ride Paris-Brest-Paris, a 750 mile marathon over roller coaster hills on a national highway – in less than 90 hours.
- Also around 1971 Clifford became aware of custom bicycles made by Rene Herse in France. These not only had features to help prevent breakdowns but the “Demontable” model split into two sections for transport. So the Doctor and a few other IBTS member ordered these chrome-plated Rene Herse bicycles.
- From George Root: The first time I met Dr. Graves was in 1980 on a tour of New Zealand that he was leading. It rained a lot on that trip. One morning broke with a particularly miserable and cold drizzle. We ate breakfast under a cloud of gloom. Suddenly, one of our more enterprising members said “Why don’t we hire a bus?” Our spirits were suddenly lifted as though the sun had come out. Of course - a bus! A short time later, we had all of the bikes and riders safely packed into a nice warm, dry bus. Well, not quite all of the riders. As the bus pulled away taking us on to the next hotel, we looked out the rear window to wave to Dr. Graves, who was dressed pretty much as you see him in the picture on page 1, as he mounted his chrome plated bike and started pedaling. He was 74 years old at that time.

IBTS did not have by-laws, meetings or officers; Dr. Graves ran the club and everyone was happy with the way he did it. In 1978, at age 72, he discovered he had prostate cancer and,

after a lifetime of bachelorhood, married his office manager, Catherine (or Catharina). With his declining health, Clifford turned the organization and running of the club over to Catherine. Over the next 5 years, Catherine made policy changes that did not go well with the long-time IBTS members. Finally, a majority of the members rebelled and formed another club, Bicycle Adventure Club. Margaret Howland was the leader of the revolt and served as chair of the board of BAC from 1982 through 1986.

Dr. Graves passed away in 1985; Catherine passed away in 2014.

IBTS and BAC members remember Dr. Graves because he was a serious cyclist who promotes cycle touring. But he had many other interests, as detailed in his obituary:

- He wrote two books about his experiences, "*Front Line Surgeons*" and "*My Life on Two Wheels*".
- He studied medical history and wrote about it in the bulletin of the San Diego County Medical Society.
- He was co-founder of the San Diego Society of General Surgeons and was its first president.
- Dr. Graves was founder of the David Hoffman Society of Medical History and president of the staff of Scripps Hospital.
- He was a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons and a diplomate of the American Board of Surgery.
- He founded the San Diego chapter of the American Youth Hostels and was its president for 18 years.
- Dr. Graves was a classical pianist and the founding president of the La Jolla Symphony Association.
- But to those of us who knew him and cycled with him, he was our friend and the pre-eminent bicycle tourist.

Upon his death, remembrances of Doctor Graves include the following thoughts:

- "He was interested in everyone except himself." – John McManus, Dallas
- "Above all, Clifford had the gift of making friends. He was a good listener." – Malcolm Coutts, San Diego
- "I will always remember Dr. Graves as a kind and gentle person." – Jess Martin, Memphis.
- "Clifford was a marvelous man, modest about his own achievements and quick to praise and encourage others." – Florence Stephenson, San Diego
- "Clifford was interesting and interested. He was wonderfully charming and gracious, but direct and candid." – Judge Howard Wiener, San Diego
- "Clifford Graves always impressed me as a true original, one of the few genuine gentlemen I've known." – Bill Harlon, Rochester

- “Clifford opened up doors for me in cycle-touring, creating the ‘Golden Age of Cycling’” – Joe Dietrich, Vista, Ca
- “Aristotle said a man should have as many friends as he could serve. This is why our pal Clifford Graves had so many friends – he served so many people, not only served, but in such a kind and gentle way.” – Tad Hankley, Indian Wells, CA
- “The world of bicycling was much better because of him.” – Carol and Scott Brewer, Chevy Chase, MD
- “The skills and courage to travel by bicycle I learned from Clifford’s example and the memory of him travels with me” – Caryl Russak Englewood, CA

You will find several attachments to this document:

A – A letter Dr. Graves sent to IBTS members three days before he passed away

B – Dr. Graves’ obituary

C – A letter Catherine sent to members announcing Dr. Graves’ death

D – Catharina Graves Obituary

For over 30 years (as of 2015) BAC has carried on the IBTS tradition of tours by and for its members. In September 2014, Ida Nystrom recognized our heritage and organized the “Huff and Puffer’s” tour in New England. This re-created, as much as was possible, the original 1964 tour that started it all.

From 1983 through 2014, BAC has conducted 1,034 tours, growing from 6 tours per year to over 50. There are 57 tours scheduled for 2015; 27 domestic and 28 international. Membership exceeds 2,000. If this were a commercial business, we would have annual revenue of over \$1.5 million. This is most impressive for an organization run by volunteers. And it all started in 1964 by Clifford Graves and the formation of the International Bicycle Touring Society.

CREDITS

Thanks to former IBTS members who contributed to this document. In particular I’d like to thank Ann Hiltz and George Root. Much information about Dr. Graves and his life is from his book, “*My Life on Two Wheels*” published in 1985 by Minivelle Pross. I believe there were only 1,000 copies printed.

ATTACHMENT A
Letter to Friends,
Three Days Before His Death

December 4, 1985

Dear Friends,

After the many letters I have sent to you announcing the news of the IBTS, I am sending you the final one about myself.

Since July, things have not been well with me. Eventually, it became clear that my cancer of the prostate is spreading. It is now in the bones and also in the liver. The way I look at it I have from six weeks to six months to live.

I'm home and reasonably comfortable. I can still do a little work on my writing projects, such as the family history and other autobiographical material.

Just one last thought: If there had not been a lot of wonderful people like you, I could never have written *My Life on Two Wheels*.

Clifford Graves

ATTACHMENT B

Obituary



Dr. Clifford L. Graves of La Jolla died after a long bout with cancer on Saturday, Dec. 7, 1985 at his home in La Jolla. He was 79.

He came to the United States as a boy of 17 with the name of Grevinck, which he changed to Graves. Intent on becoming a doctor, he earned a bachelor's degree from Columbia University and a M.D. Degree from the University of Michigan.

Following nine years of surgical training, mainly at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, he was called into the Army in 1941. Here he was put in charge of a collection of mobile surgical teams, working in the forward zone. This experience, both in the Mediterranean and the European theater, led him to write a fascinating book, *Front Line Surgeons*. It was published in 1950. Dr. Graves retired from the army with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Dr. Graves established himself in the private practice of surgery in La Jolla in 1946. He retired in 1978.

Fellow doctors in San Diego will remember him for his writings in the bulletin of the County Medical Society which he edited from 1950 till 1958. His special interest was local medical history which he resurrected from a mass of yellowing and long-forgotten documents.

Particularly significant was his research on the founding of the county medical society in 1970. He wrote entertainingly of our medical pioneers, such as Dr. David Hoffman who founded the medical society, and Dr. Rawson Pickard who created the fictional and hilarious International Board of Hygiene.

Dr. Graves had other hobbies. He was a classical pianist, and he liked to ride a bicycle. In 1950 he founded the San Diego chapter of the American Youth Hostels. In his 18 years as president, he led many tours for young people, several abroad. In 1964 he founded the International Bicycle Touring Society, a unique organization that has conducted more than 250 bicycle tours for adults in various parts of the world.

In 1982, Dr. Graves and his wife made a two-month bicycle tour of China without guides or interpreters. Dr. Graves put all these adventures together in a book, *My Life on Two Wheels*, published in 1985.

Both the American Youth Hostels nationally and the League of American Wheelmen, Bicycle USA, conferred their distinguished service medal on Dr. Graves.

Dr. Graves was co-founder of the San Diego Society of General Surgeons and its first president. He was the founder of the David Hoffman Society for Medical History, and president of the staff at Scripps Hospital in 1955. He was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a diplomat of the American Board of Surgery.

As the founding president of the La Jolla Symphony Association he originated the youth talent competition which has given many fine young musicians in San Diego their start.

Dr. Graves married Catherine Hippen in 1978. He is survived by her and two stepchildren, a son Mark in Flagstaff, Arizona, and a daughter Diana in Holland.

ATTACHMENT C

Letter to IBTS Members Announcing Dr. Graves Death

Dear IBTS members,

No need to tell you how sad I am to give the news of my husband's passing. I am devastated and sad without him.

Before he died, he talked about the IBTS and what would happen to it in the future. His words to me were, "Catherine, without the IBTS my life would not have been the same. I would not have so many friends worldwide. Do as you have in the past and you will be rewarded as I have. Let's set the schedule for 1986. It will keep you busy when I am gone. The biggest problem I see is the writing of the newsletter. See if you can get some help.

"The IBTS has been unique and I want it to continue and it will so don't be sad. Just remember the fine rides we've had and the great company of all our friends. I wish my book was in print so I could see it. I hope I made it but I am not sure."

My husband was in the hospital for two weeks then found out there would be no recovery. So we decided home would be the best place for him. He was home in bed for a month and kept relatively comfortable. He worked on his family history and other writing projects, dictating to friends who would come to the house and type for him. With their help he did finish all his projects.

When we knew the end was near I talked to the book binder and told him we needed a bound copy. The day before Clifford died, I placed a bound copy with the lettering on the outside in his hands. There was no printing on the inside pages but it did not matter. You should have seen the big smile on his face. Needless to say, that copy of the book is my most precious possession.

Doctor was alert until two days before he died and the last two days he mostly slept. He died on the morning of December 7th in his sleep. We had a memorial piano concert at La Jolla in lieu of services and many friends wrote on the blank pages of his book. It will be a lasting tribute to a wonderful husband.

In his honor a 20-mile memorial bicycle ride has been planned for 11:30 am Sunday, February 16. We will start from the De Anza Cove parking lot in Mission Bay (near the Mission Bay Information Center) and ride to La Jolla for a short program and refreshments. If you can join us we would love to have you along.

Many IBTS members have written and called to pledge their support. I am touched. We have already eight domestic trips promised for 1987 so we are in good shape.

Catharina Graves

ATTACHMENT D

Catharina Graves Obituary

Catharina Graves



Graves, Catharina H. 09/26/1934 *N* 11/04/2014 LA JOLLA, CA -
- Catharina Graves was an avid supporter of the San Diego Youth Symphony, Classics for Kids, Young Buffs Opera, San Diego Repertory Theatre and Advocates for Classical Music's docent program. For many years she was involved with the American Youth Hostel Association. Her generous contributions and support to these organizations gave her purpose and she found great satisfaction in watching those individuals grow because of her gifts and support. Catharina was an adventurous and independent-minded woman who welcomed new experiences, embraced life, and truly understood why music, theatre and art matter. Many residents of San Diego County have benefitted from her dedication to sharing her love of beautiful music, great theatre, and exciting learning. Catharina H. Graves is survived by her son Mark Hughes and daughter Diana Hughes. She will be sorely missed by all. A concert in honor of Catharina Graves will be held in Escondido by the SDYS, on Jan. 18, 2015.

Published in U- T San Diego on Dec. 20, 2014