
Raymond Henry

Remembering an Inveterate Cyclist

Raymond Henry was a world authority on the history of cycle touring and the Fédération Française de Cyclo Tourisme (FFCT) and a frequent contributor to the International Cycle History Conference. His knowledge of cyclotourisme, early derailleur development and bicycle technology was built over a lifetime of serving as the repository of knowledge, years of excellent research and many kilometers of riding his 1952 Routens.

His first occupation was as a school teacher and his second occupation was as cycle historian. He was an outstanding handyman and builder, collector of cycling ephemera, cycling technology and classic touring cycles. In his collection were machines by Herse, Singer, Narcisse, Reyhand, Daudon and Routens.

Raymond's contributions to our understanding of French cycle history are without parallel. His classic book, *Du Vélocipède au Dérailleur Moderne*, covers the subject of early derailleur development and the contributions of Vélocio, Albert Raymond and others that previously had been forgotten. His work in bringing to light the Vélocio bicycle collection at the Musée d'Art et d'Industrie in Saint-Etienne is remarkable. Raymond's book *Vélocio, L'évolution du cycle et le cyclotourisme*, is one of the most highly researched cycling biographies ever written, and will serve cycle historians with a wealth of information for generations to come.

His knowledge of changements de vitesse, or

derailleurs, also enabled him to make a significant contribution to the book *The Dancing Chain* on the history and development of the derailleur bicycle. Raymond said he was surprised that there was a worldwide interest in early French derailleur development and that no one had really made an effort to write about the subject. He certainly filled

that void with his extensive writing on the subject and saved that knowledge from being lost.

Raymond made significant contributions to the International Cycle History Conference over decades. His fifteen papers covered the range of topics from a history of the FFCT, biographies of leading French cycling figures, stories of cycle constructors, and riding the diagonals of France. In addition to presenting papers, Raymond was also organizer

of the 26 th ICHC in Entraigues-sur-la Sorgue, France in 2015. This conference celebrated the 150 th anniversary of the first long-distance velocipede journey and was one of the most successful conferences to date.

While it is worth remembering all of the cycle history contributions that Raymond made, it is also essential to remember his love of cycle touring, his accomplishment of riding all nine of the diagonals of France, riding Paris Brest Paris and his affable demeanor that led to friendships with a vast number of people around the world who shared his passion for all things cycling.

- Tom Baker



Raymond Henry 1944-2020