



**GLASGOW
WOMEN'S
LIBRARY**

Clydeside Women's Heritage Bike Ride

"Let me tell you what I think of bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel... the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood."

Susan B. Anthony, 1820–1906

Abolitionist and leader of the American women's suffrage movement.

This ride will take us from Riverside Museum along the Clyde, through Glasgow Green, to the Velodrome. The stops along the way illustrate some key events in women's history and the role cycling has played in these.

We begin our ride at the ① **Riverside Museum**, Scotland's Museum of Transport and Technology. The museum opened on 21st June 2011, on a site where bustling Glasgow shipyards once stood. Looking westwards we can see the River Clyde heading towards Helensburgh and Greenock. The museum is situated along the Sustrans 75 cycle route, which we will be cycling on towards Glasgow Green.

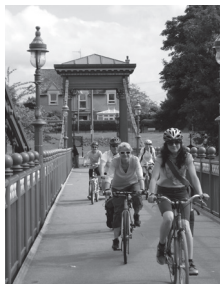
Amongst the many vehicles on display in Riverside is the Faslane Caravan (also known as Number 10), which housed protesters at Faslane Peace Camp for over twelve years. The camp was originally set up on 12th June 1982 when anti-nuclear protesters Margaret Harrison and her husband Bobby pitched their tent on the side of the A814 to protest against the presence of the nuclear submarine fleet being based on the Clyde. A year prior to establishing Faslane Peace Camp, Margaret and Bobby set off on a pilgrimage of peace, cycling from Iona to Canterbury to campaign for nuclear disarmament. They made several stops along the way to hand out leaflets and to speak to residents about their campaign to

change public and political perception about nuclear weapons. There are newspaper accounts of the two cycling on a tandem bicycle, for a period of 6 weeks. Their

journey concluded in June 1981. Margaret's efforts, along with her husband's, were instrumental in changing public attitudes to nuclear weapons but also in alerting people, on an international scale, to their danger.

From the Riverside Museum, let's cross onto the cycle path leading east, continuing until we get to ② **The Pumphouse** on Yorkhill Quay. Built by the Clyde Navigation Trust around 1908, Yorkhill Quay and Basin were used as the Glasgow base of the Anchor Line

shipping company until the 1960s. Looking north is Haugh Road, the current site of the Glasgow Bike Station, headquarters of Belles on Bikes. This cycling group, which was set up for women in and around Glasgow, organises rides and women-only bike maintenance sessions. There are rides for all abilities and whether you want to commute confidently by bike or (re)learn how to take



off on two wheels, this group is for you! Mixed cycling clubs that developed during the 1930s gave young women a chance to socialise and gain freedom away from the home. The 1930s also saw the revival of the socialist Clarion Cycling Club, which sought to promote freedom and class equality through cycling.

Riding along the cycle path towards the River Clyde and heading east we pass the Millennium Bridge, Bell's Bridge and The Clyde Arc (known locally as the Squinty Bridge). We continue until we pass the

③ **Kingston Bridge** in the Anderston area of the city. At the start of the 18th Century Anderston was a village located a short distance from Glasgow. The textile weaving industry was prolific during the following decades, before giving way to shipbuilding and engineering during the 19th Century. Women's involvement in all of these industries has often been overlooked (you can find out more about the hidden histories of female shipyard workers like Big Rachel in GWL's West End Women's Heritage Walk) and they were also amongst some of the early champions of cycling. Cycling brought freedom to women, importantly in relation to the way they dressed. In the late 19th Century there was discussion as to whether the corset should be discarded for cycling. Wearing long skirts proved to be dangerous, especially with the Safety Bicycle which operated on a chain mechanism. To prevent



clothing getting tangled in the chain, women adopted the use of divided skirts, contributing to radical changes in women's fashion.

On Customs House Quay, just after the Glasgow Bridge, we find **4 La Pasionaria**, or The Passion Flower, one of only three statues representing women in Glasgow. The statue is of Dolores Ibarruri (1895–1989), a Spanish communist who became a symbol of Republican resistance during the Spanish Civil War. The Republicans, who were fighting in Spain against Franco's regime,



received support from the people of Glasgow and many women showed their dedication to the cause. Amongst them were Ethel Macdonald (1909–1960) and Jenny Patrick (1884–1971), who worked as journalists in Spain during the height of the civil war. There

Ethel worked in an anarchist radio station and during her time in Spain she was arrested several times, finally returning to Glasgow in 1937 to a welcome of 300 people at Central Station. Her speech was reported by a newspaper: "I went to Spain full of hopes and dreams. It promised to be Utopia realised. I returned full of sadness, dulled by the tragedy I have seen".

We pass the Briggait (Glasgow's old fish market) on the left and cross the road at the Albert Bridge, stopping as we reach Glasgow Green. **5 The McLellan Arch** welcomes us into the area known as the Saltmarket. If we

were to continue north up this road we would reach Duke Street. Just off Duke Street is where Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was staged from November 1891 to February 1892. Amongst the main acts of the show was Annie Oakley (1860–1926), one of the first women to earn superstar status as entertainer and



sharpshooter but also to be hired by a Wild West outfit in a role traditionally held by men. Also known as the "Little Cycling Sure Shot", she ordered her first bicycle in Glasgow. One of her most famous performances aboard the wheel involved shooting clay pigeons thrown into the air whilst riding a bicycle.

Our next stop is **6 Nelson's Column**, in Glasgow Green, which was once an important meeting point for suffragette rallies. The bicycle became instrumental in suffragette campaigns, making it easier



to advertise rallies and distribute leaflets. It also made quick getaways possible, but not always. One account tells of two suffragettes attempting to set fire to Robert Burns' birthplace in Alloway in 1914, and failing to escape on their bicycles from

the authorities. The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) had a dedicated team of Cycling Scouts, whose role was to spread the word beyond urban areas. The renowned Flora Drummond oversaw the group as an extension to her role within the WSPU.

We continue our cycle through Glasgow Green, keeping to the right, heading towards the crossroads that lead on to James Street. To our left, in the last stretch of Glasgow Green, we can see a cycle training centre where **7 Free Wheel North** carry out their training classes. The organisation promotes physical and mental health, providing opportunities for people with additional needs to participate in cycling activities. Katy O'Rourke,

a bicycle mechanic, works at Free Wheel North. She had her first bike at the age of 16 and quickly learnt



how to maintain and repair it. Working as a mechanic she has worked on tricycles, tandems and side-by-side bikes. For women who want to pursue this career she advises

to “buy a good book about mechanics and read it cover to cover, invest in some high quality tools, and explore options of professional training courses”.

Cycling towards James Street we join the cycle path to the left of the main road. Here we continue until we reach Landrassy Street, and the premises of **8 Glasgow Women’s Library** (GWL). GWL is a vibrant information hub housing a lending library, archive collections and contemporary and



historical artefacts relating to women’s lives, histories and achievements. The library holds books by women cyclists and books aimed at women who would like to cycle. The library also offers women cycle lessons and has its very own team of cycle couriers called the PaperGirls. One of the books in the collection by Kate Rawles recounts her trip by bike through the Rocky Mountains in the USA in 2006 in order to raise awareness of climate change. On her journey she talked to people about climate change “to find out what they knew about it, whether they cared, and if they did, what they thought they could do”. ‘The Carbon Cycle: Crossing the Great Divide’ is an account of her adventure and can be borrowed for free along with hundreds of other inspiring books from GWL’s unique collection.

Make your way to Bridgeton train station, where you can join the cycle path along London Road. At the Police Station, look up Fielden Street. At the crossroads with Avenue Street is where the premises for the

9 Howe Machine Co. were.

The American company was well known for its production of sewing machines, turning to the manufacture of bicycles in the 1880s. Tricycles were an important part of the production because they were popular with



lady cyclists. Social norm required women to wear tight corsets and long dress which essentially precluded them from riding high bicycles. Once the high bicycle, like the Penny Farthing, became less popular and gave way to the Safety bicycle, little changed in public attitude towards women cycling. Many were opposed to women riding astride a bicycle, concerned that it may cause sexual arousal and “damage the female organs of matrimonial necessity”.

Our last stop is the **10 Velodrome**, which we reach by cycling east on London Road. Here female athletes, including Paralympian cyclist Aileen McGlynn OBE and Louise Haston, will compete in the Commonwealth Games 2014. Aileen McGlynn began cycling at five years old and joined the Glenmarnock Wheelers cycling club (which started running a women’s cycling group in March 2014) at 18. During her career she has won a gold and a silver medal in her Paralympic debut at the Athens Paralympics in 2004, followed by two gold medals at the Paralympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and a silver and bronze at the London Paralympics in 2012. Louise Haston,



Aileen’s pilot in the Commonwealth Games, switched over to cycling from athletics in 2009. Together they are competing in Glasgow 2014’s para-cycling events, the 1km Time Trial and Sprint. In 2014 Glasgow Museums worked with the athletes, documenting their journey and personal experiences. This collaboration culminates in the addition of the tandem bike used by the athletes in the 2014 games to the contemporary collection of Cycles and Road Transport and Disability Transport of Glasgow Museums.

Having reached the end of the route, let us reflect on the role that bicycles and cycling have had on women’s history. A symbol of freedom and possibilities, the bicycle continues to inspire women to explore their environment and their role within it. We hope that you’ve enjoyed the ride and that you feel inspired to discover more about women’s cycling history and follow in the trail of these women cyclists! ■



START

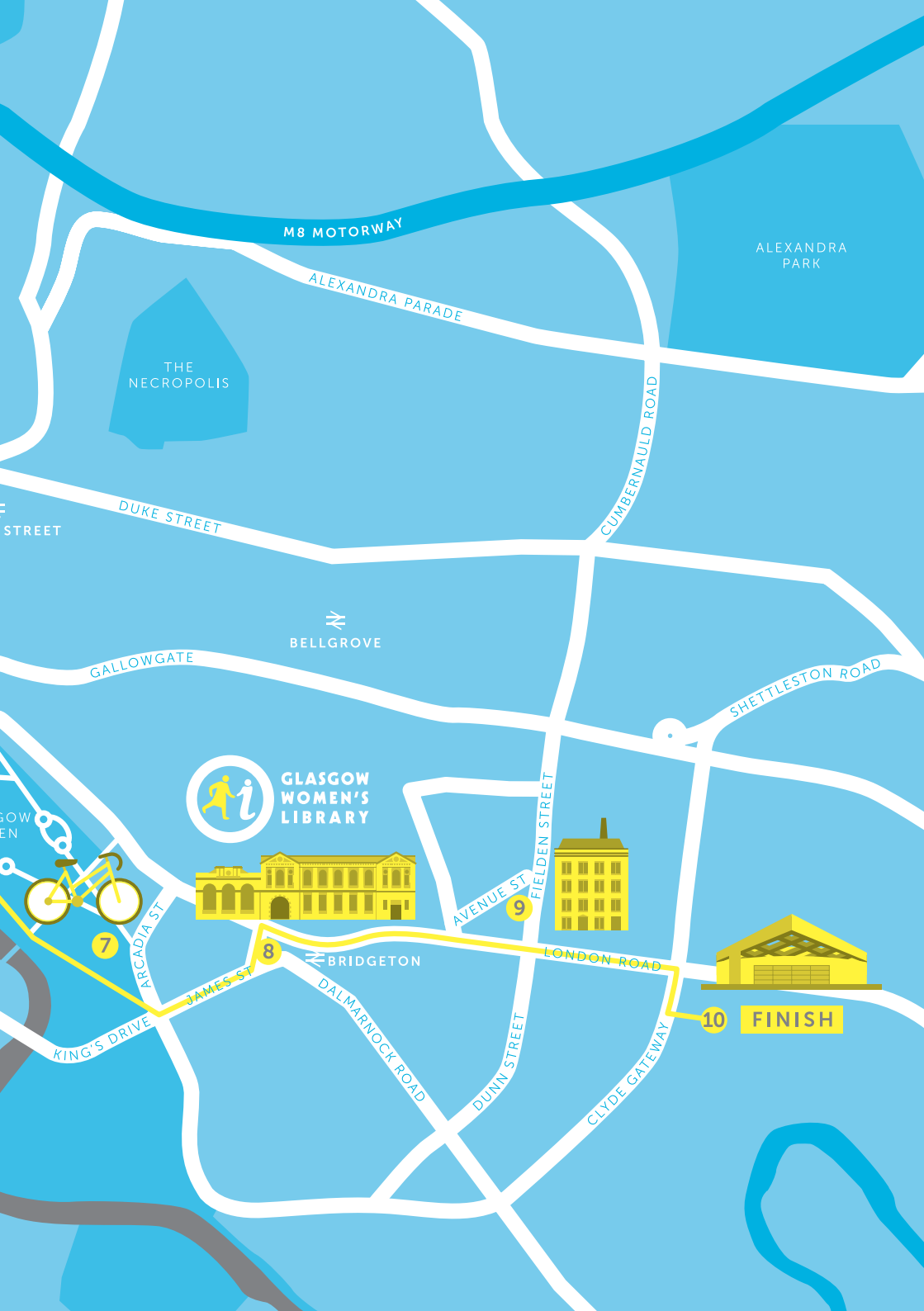
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**GLASGOW
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Clydeside
Women's Heritage
Bike Ride



M8 MOTORWAY

ALEXANDRA PARK

THE NECROPOLIS

ALEXANDRA PARADE

DUKE STREET

CUMBERNAULD ROAD

BELLGROVE

GALLOWGATE

SHETTLESTON ROAD



GLASGOW WOMEN'S LIBRARY



7

8

9

10

FINISH

STREET

EN

ARCADIA ST

AVENUE ST

FILDEN STREET

KING'S DRIVE

JAMES ST

BRIDGETON

DALMARNOCK ROAD

DUNN STREET

LONDON ROAD

CLYDE GATEWAY



Produced by Glasgow
Women's Library's
'Women Make History'
project

Produced as part of the Glasgow Cycle Festival 2014. The Festival is a partnership between Glasgow Women's Library, Free Wheel North, CTC and Glasgow Bike Station.

About Glasgow Women's Library

Glasgow Women's Library is no ordinary library. An Accredited Museum, it is a national treasure and the only place of its kind in Scotland. A place for browsing, borrowing and being inspired, GWL is welcoming, free and open to all, with programmes of events and activities that offer something for everyone, from film screenings to literacy support, from talks to supported volunteering opportunities, and from exhibitions to workshops.

About Women Make History

Women Make History is GWL's women's history project. Volunteers research and deliver pioneering Women's Heritage walking and cycling tours in Glasgow and related maps and audio tours. Other activities include talks, workshops, recording the history of living heroines, tour guiding, training and ongoing women's history detective work. For more details contact GWL.

How To Get Involved

Glasgow's women's history is still largely hidden from the general public. There are many ways to get involved to address this. Why not join our women's history detective or tour guide teams? You may have information you think could be added to this tour or suggestions on how it could be improved. If so, we want to hear from you. Some people have chosen to show their support of GWL by sponsoring a book, shelf or library section and dedicating it to one of Glasgow's forgotten heroines. This fundraising campaign is called *Women on the Shelf* and you can donate at www.womenslibrary.org.uk

Contact Us

To find out more about Glasgow Women's Library, Women Make History, our downloadable maps, audio tours and dates of other guided rides and walks please visit our website at www.womenslibrary.org.uk or email us at info@womenslibrary.org.uk



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