

Granny Bike Saga

In their retirement, Ruth's Aunt Elinor and Uncle Jay transported luxury motor homes from the factory, near their home in Arkansas, to buyers throughout the United States. They were paid a fee for the delivery with the agreement that if they could sell the trade-in above a specified amount, they could keep that as a profit. Uncle Jay was a very handy man and after each delivery, they would park the used motor home in a mobile home park for a week or so as Uncle Jay made the needed repairs. On almost every occasion, they made a sale, a nice profit and had a vacation in a nice, and new, location. Uncle Jay, being a very enterprising man, decided to add another item to his "retail" operation...Granny Bikes. Uncle Jay would, upon arriving at their temporary home, use a kit to assemble two bikes together, side by side, into a four wheeled contraption, safe for older adults or adventurous youth. The bike's handlebars were connected so that steering was not a problem. Uncle Jay and Aunt Elinor would then ride around the park each evening, stirring lots of interest and many sales of these then \$59.00 kits.

Many years have passed since the above story took place (Probably fifty or so) but I never forgot about the Granny Bikes. Although I didn't remember the Granny Bike name, I decided to try to locate where one might buy a kit for our bikes. I emailed Uncle Jay's children but

no one knew anything about, or even remembered, the connected bikes. I went online and found the owner of Granny Bikes!

The following email exchanges took place:

Glenn: Please send price. I have Trek bikes...male and female. Can I install myself...is it difficult? Thanks.

Hugh Skeldon, OWNER OF GARNNY BIKES
(mailto:mailus@thegrannybike.com}: Hi Glenn-What is the model number, size and name of your Trek bikes? Hugh

Glenn: My bikes are Trek 730's (man's and woman's) Multi-Track, 26-inch tires. I purchased the bikes in 1986 and have ridden them approximately 200 miles! Just had them tuned up with new tires etc. What model would you recommend for us? My wife is afraid to ride in our neighborhood as it is very rolling and I think this might be just what we need. We are 79 and are very fit. Warmly, Glenn

Hugh: Hi Glenn-I would think the Granny Bike kit would work with Trek 730 bikes. Just be sure you read the technical words on my web site. Thanks again for your interest. If you have more questions send me a e-mail. I am 81 but maybe just fit. Hugh

Glenn: Hugh- I want to order a kit with carrier. My only question is: Do women's and men's bikes hook together without problems? What will the total cost be...shipping, etc. Glenn

Hugh: Hi Glenn-There should be no problem so long as both the woman and man's bikes are the same size. Where do you live? Shipping costs vary depending where you live. Shipping will be about about \$40.00 Can\$. Basic Kit and Carrier would be \$160.00 Can\$ for a total of Approximately \$200.00 Can\$.

Thanks for you pending order. Hugh

Glenn: Hugh-Got the package this weekend. Won't have time to put it together until Wednesday...will let you know how it is working. Thanks. Glenn

Glenn: The granny bike saga of my life has been very interesting. My grandson and I spent seven hours assembling the kit and it was not working. I hired a bike mechanic (Ron Dilley) to help me. He spent: the first 1.5 hours undoing our mistakes; the second 1.5 hours determining that new parts were needed because of



our bikes' brake and gear cable locations; and, the last 1.5 hours putting everything together.

Glenn: I write short stories on my web site and may use this adventure for a new story, then disassemble the bikes and ride solo. We haven't given up entirely but are heading in that direction.

I promised to give you an update and wish I could be more hopeful for a smoother ride but it has been a difficult project and one I would have given up on if it had not been for the mechanic's optimism and delight in solving problems like this.

When, and if, I write this story (with pictures) I can assure you that I will take ownership of the problems and not blame you for my misdeeds. Warmly, Glenn

The bikes are now assembled, thanks to Ron Dilley and Andrew Saltzman. The main problem with the assembly process was my lack of knowledge and the fact that our bikes contain brake cables, gear cables and gear sprockets interfering with the attachment devices. It has been raining for the last few weeks when I wanted to



adjust the hardware for our maiden voyage but the sun is now shining and I will report with a video and comments.

Success! Ruth and I completed our first trial run and the following link will show how things went. Other than Ruth exclaiming, “Oh, my God!” several times, the first trip went well. I can envision parades, long rides on mountain trails, TV interviews and autograph opportunities..... but Ruth is not so sure.

Note: To see our first ride tap: [Granny Bike Saga](#) It is two minutes long and shows us riding our new contraption for the first time!