

SEABREEZE CYCLE FACTORY

George Cousins began manufacturing Ladies Bicycles in his workshop near Birchington Station in about 1880. His was the first model to be built specially for ladies to ride. He altered top of the triangular framework to a lower, curved bar, making it much easier for ladies to mount it. It later became known as the 'step-through' cycle.



He set about getting the patent for the invention of his design registered, but did not complete the process, thus opening the doors for other more commercially-minded developers to use his idea.

In one of his early adverts, he states that the lowered bar and the raised handlebars were to "eliminate the unsightly cyclists hump". We have a photograph of two lady-cyclists in the village, one of whom is holding up a parasol as she rides towards Margate!

Advert for a Seabreezes ladies' bicycle – c. 1880-85

SEABREEZE CYCLES

The Popular Exhibit of the Stanley Cycle Shows.



The Novelties for 1894 are the new Patent Spring Frame applied to either Ladies or Diamond Framed Bicycles.

The Ladies' Tandem Bicycle.

The Anti-Hump Diamond, the winner of the Principal Races at the Hall-by-the-Sea.

The Pearl Seabreeze, The Fairy Seabreeze, Ladies' Bicycles.

→ THE SEABREEZE ALUMINIUM ROLLER SKATE WHEELS ←
(Undetachable).



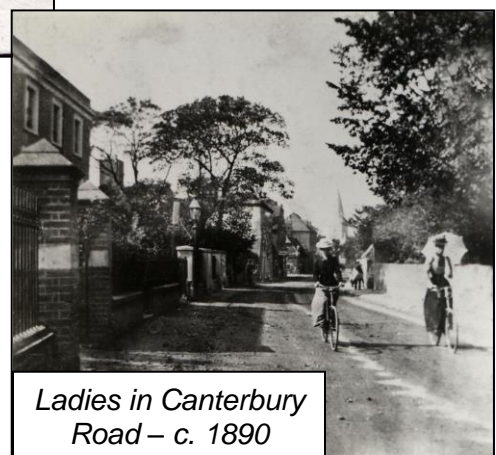
The Seabreeze claims to be the pioneer of Ladies' Bicycling, the Seabreeze being the first and only Exhibit at the Stanley Shows to bring before the public the suitability of Bicycling for Ladies. This is no mere brag but is a fact.

GEORGE COUSINS, Patentee & Manufacturer,
BIRCHINGTON-ON-SEA, KENT.

Cousins also began producing tandems for ladies - again, a most unusual form of transport at this early date - 1894.

When he found that other manufacturers were using his designs and that his patent was not valid, he gradually stopped making the cycles and branched out into selling land and houses. He built an extension onto his 'factory' and turned this into an Estate Agency. When he first came to Birchington, he was listed in Kelly's Directories as a "builder" and built all the five large houses at the top of Minnis Road, as well as the terrace of three flat-roofed properties next door.

George Cousins died in Birchington 19th August 1908 and is buried in All Saints churchyard. His wife Sarah had died just over a year earlier. Their son George Sebastian died in 1935 and his wife (1950) were both buried with George (snr) and Sarah.



Ladies in Canterbury Road - c. 1890