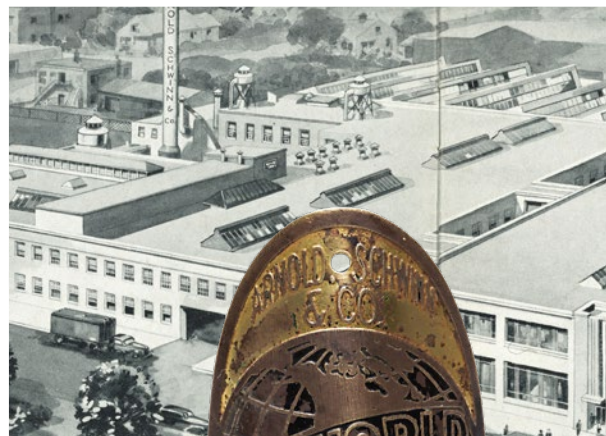




SCHWINN®

125 YEARS OF ADVENTURES





It's been an amazing 125 years.

Let's take a look back and reflect on the journey of Schwinn over the many decades.

In the 1890s a new technology was all the rage: the bicycle. Bicycles offered riders transportation, recreation, and a sense of freedom. Early models had an enormous front wheel and no gearing, but a revolution was just around the corner.

After moving to the U.S. from Germany, Ignaz Schwinn developed a new version of the "Safety" bicycle, which resembled what we ride today. This design attracted the attention of the investor Adolph Arnold, and in 1895, the Arnold Schwinn & Company was born. They began producing bicycles in Chicago, Illinois, under the trade name "World."

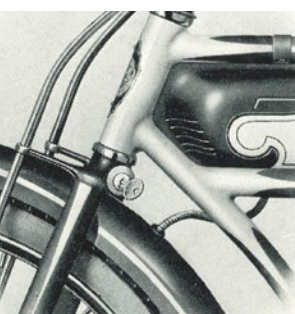
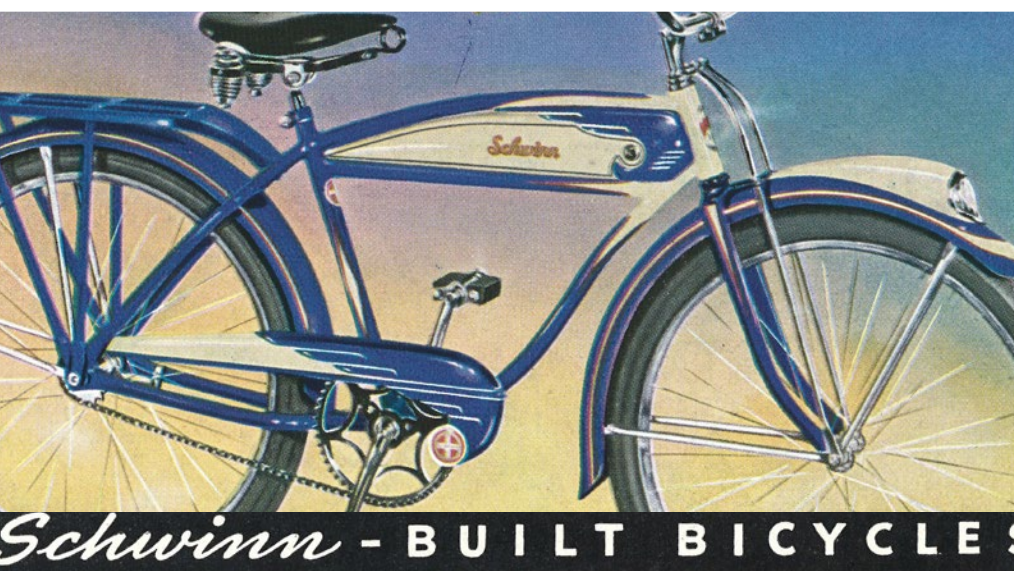
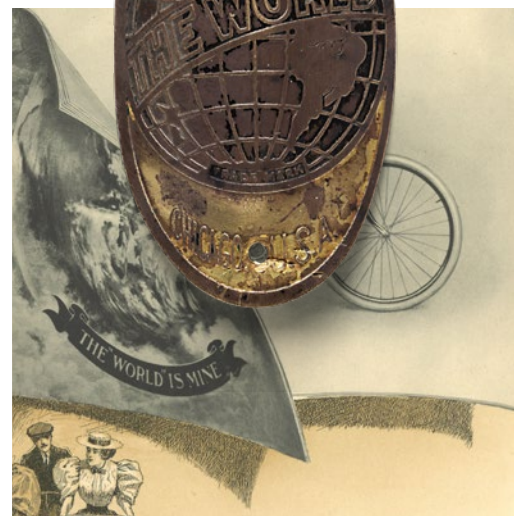
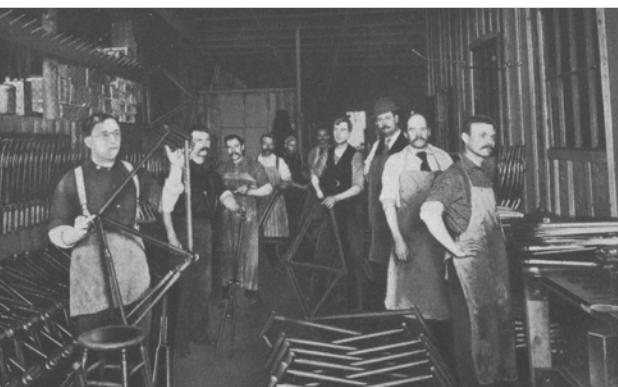
Soon, business was booming. Many bicycle companies suffered after the arrival of the Ford Model A, but Arnold Schwinn & Company flourished, using the opportunity to build market share. By 1908, he bought out his partner, dropped 'Arnold' from the name, and became what we know today: Schwinn.

In 1910s, Schwinn bought two motorcycle companies to create Excelsior-Henderson, a brand that became known for its excellent engineering and luxury looks. However, motorcycle popularity waned in the 1920s. Schwinn eventually closed Excelsior-Henderson, returning its focus to bicycles.

Around that time, Ignaz Schwinn transitioned to retirement, handing the business down to his son, Frank. Ignaz Schwinn would pass away in 1948, leaving behind a legacy and name that has become synonymous with bicycles.

Schwinn survived the Great Depression thanks to new innovations and popular designs. The balloon tire was introduced in 1933 and quickly became the industry standard. New models featured steel welding for added durability, and cruiser designs enjoyed significant popularity. This included the Aerocycle, Cycleplane, and Cycle-Truck - a bicycle that could carry 150 lbs. in its basket alone.

In the 1940s, the company continued to expand and innovate. Front wheel brakes were added for improved performance, while accessories like headlights served both function and style. The 1946 catalog even featured stars like Bob Hope, Humphrey Bogart, and Lauren Bacall.



In addition to the popular cruisers, Schwinn also developed the Paramount during this period. A lightweight “high sports” model, the Paramount was designed for racing. It was soon dubbed the “king of the track” for both speed and endurance riding.

In a business move, Schwinn moved away from department stores and developed a network of authorized dealers. Authorized dealers received training from Schwinn on repair, parts, and even selling techniques. As a result, by the 1950s one in every four bicycles sold in the U.S. was a Schwinn.

The frames of iconic models like the Collegiate, Varsity, and Traveler showcased bike silhouettes that would become ingrained in American minds. In particular, the Varsity offered style and an affordable price that helped make cycling a more widely available pastime. It became the most widely sold derailleur-equipped bike of all time, with nearly 2 million units sold.



In the 1960s, muscle-car style and bicycle design were combined to create Schwinn's most celebrated model of all time: the Sting-Ray. It featured high-rise handle bars, a banana seat, a stick shifter, and a racing slick tire. The Sting-Ray quickly became the bike to have and came to embody a childhood rite of passage for a generation.

But that was just the beginning. Another revolution in cycling was on the horizon.

The success of the Sting-Ray was continued by the Krate models in the early 1970s. The Krates had the same muscle-car look as their predecessor and came with names like Apple Krate, Orange Krate, and Lemon Peeler. New colors and accessories were released every year, which only added to the bikes' popularity.



Schwinn...for the young in heart



Meanwhile, something new was happening in Southern California. People began to hold motocross-style races and perform stunts with bicycles, most notably the Sting-Ray and Krate models. Thus, BMX was born. And thanks to a scene in the documentary *On Any Sunday* (1971), its popularity soon spread across the country.

The BMX craze was at full tilt by the late 1970's. Extreme sports were becoming popular, and there was a seemingly endless appetite for all things rad. Meeting the aesthetic of the era, Schwinn released the Predator – a gleaming chrome BMX-style bike with an aggressive style. It soon became wildly popular among kids and enjoys a cult status to this day.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of mountain biking. Though this style of cycling had existed for some time, it had only just become mainstream. In a secret effort known as “Project Underground,” Schwinn developed their own high-tech, lightweight line of mountain bikes: The Homegrown Series. Made in the U.S., the Homegrown Series featured a radically new suspension system with an isolated drivetrain.



Moving into the new millennium, Schwinn became even more widely available, meeting consumers wherever they shopped so everyone had the opportunity to own a bicycle. Schwinn continued to innovate with new models and technologies. This included the Vestige, the first flax fiber bicycle with an internal light system; Smart Start technology, changing the geometry of kid's bikes to better fit a child's proportions; more relaxed cruiser geometry for an easier ride; and Smooth Ride Technology (SRT) which injected comfort into Schwinn's aggressive adventure bicycles – just to name a few. And as the world became more connected, Schwinn went “E,” offering e-bikes for every type of cyclist.

The late 2000s marked a trend for all things vintage, including the classic silhouettes of some of Schwinn's most beloved models. With college kids picking up old steel-framed Schwinn bikes like the Varsity and Collegiate, and celebrities and TV shows alike gravitating to everything vintage, Schwinn once again found a place in the American public's heart. Several vintage designs were brought back to life for the modern consumer, with enthusiastic reception.

Looking forward, Schwinn is committed to bringing its unique ability to combine heritage and innovation, spreading the joy of cycling for years to come. ♦

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