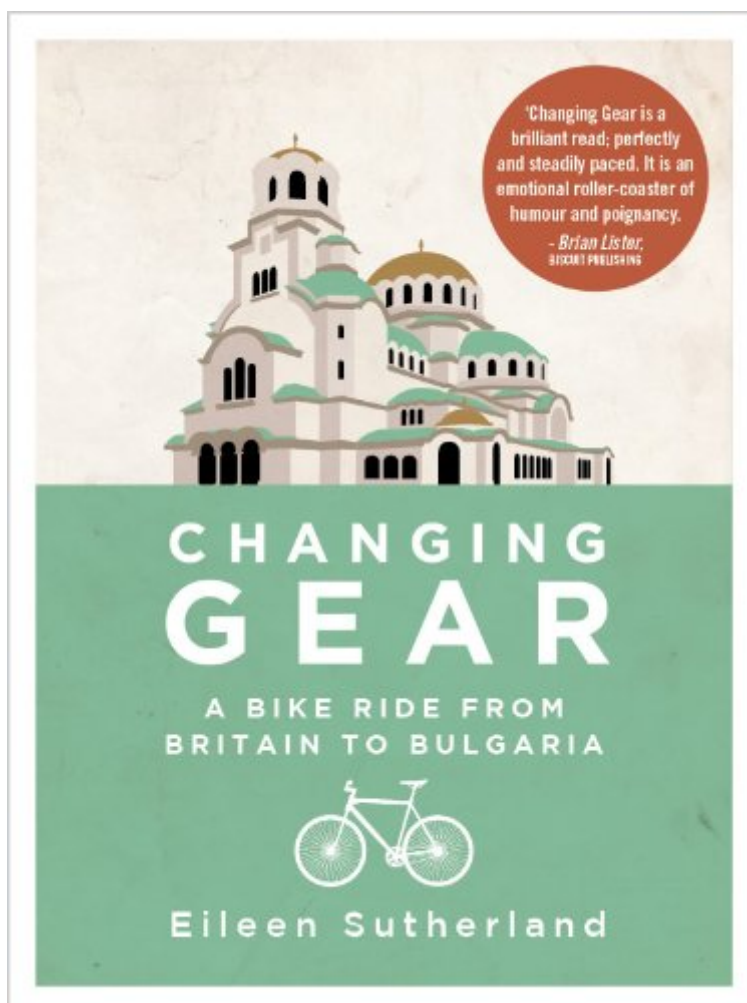


The book was found

# Changing Gear: A Bike Ride From Britain To Bulgaria



## Synopsis

Changing Gear is about love, loss and adventure. In the summer of 2006 Allan and Eileen cycled from Britain to Bulgaria. He was a fit 52 year old with a new Dawes Galaxy bike and she was an overweight 54 year old with a dodgy knee and an old Trek. They set off with only a hazy idea of the route and not much money. Three years earlier, on the 8th August 2003, their son Matt had died unexpectedly while on holiday. Things were never the same after Matt's death. Allan and Eileen had tried living normally and found they couldn't do it. So they looked for alternative ways of being, one of which was to cycle from Britain to Bulgaria. As we got on our bikes I experienced an intense sense of freedom. A fraying of the cord of sadness. I felt light and irresponsible. With few possessions to worry about and a sense of space stretching ahead, anything seemed possible.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ok, I'll admit two things up front: I like books about families and how they deal with challenges and grief, and I am addicted to books written by travelers. It may seem odd to cycle 2,000 miles in 49

days across eight countries in order to deal with your grief over a son dead all too soon. But not to this couple, and after reading Eileen Sutherland's account of their trip, not to me either. A very important part of the book is how well this couple knew each other, how well they take care of each other, how well they share the joys of the journey, and as someone mourning my wife of 40+ years, how well they handle their grief. Read this section, and see if you see agree: 'Al, do you know where the map is?' 'I'm not going to get maps out at this time of night Eil,' he muttered through toothpaste foam. 'Is there a time lock on maps then? Can we only look at them at certain times of day?' I said, warming to my theme. 'Could be tricky if we're lost at a time when we're not allowed to open them.' 'That's enough', he said, 'there's no need to take the mick. I'm just saying it's late, we've got a full day's cycling ahead of us tomorrow and we'll make ourselves tired by looking at maps at this stage.' I grinned at him. Al's great skill is sounding reasonable when he's prevaricating and I'm familiar with the technique. As a last ditch attempt I said, 'You do know where we're going don't you?' He smiled across at me, 'Ah the old tracking instincts,' he said getting into bed, 'they've never let me down yet.' Then he kissed me and turned over, taking the duvet with him. \*\*\*Gosh, that seems so real to me. My wife always wanted to have a map to consult, but couldn't read any of them worth a darn. I love maps, but greatly prefer to follow my nose -- and am almost never lost. And we were very, very happy together for many years. Al and Eil are too, despite the loss of their son. Heart warming, inspiring, tragic, all of that and more. I hope Eil will write a sequel about their further attempts to build a new life. Robert C. Ross June 2012 revised December 2012

I found that I was pulled into the story more and more as they biked further across Europe. Reading this on a kindle is great because you just tap on a word to get its definition. I now know what a mozzie net is. Many of the colorful British expressions made sense once I looked them up. It's a good read of a good ride.

For some reason, I am a little bit addicted to travel stories of people cycling to places. This is one of those. Not a very well written one, but one nonetheless. It's obviously taken from blog posts written during the trip, without much editing to bring it up to the standards of a book. It does convey well enough how the trip was, and it was clearly a cathartic experience for the author.

I am so happy Eileen wrote about this trip. To date this is the first book I read about grief that is honest, deep, and personal. There are no gods used to hide the grief away. The bike trip was not used as a distraction or a cure. There is not a powerful awakening, no USA created drama. This is a

trip humans make. A story of change, natural growth, and Love. Real romance and great travel tips. Thank you Eileen.

This book manages to be a good and funny travel book while getting the reader involved in understanding the effect the tragic death of their son had on the writers. Recommended

This an account of a journey across Europe by the parents of a young man who died trying to make this trip. Very funny and uplifting.

Interesting story line, makes you want t get out your bike...or just read about their journey! Easy to read, goes fast.

Not my kind of book - maybe some other time I might have liked it but it was too homey for me.

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