

APRIL 87

Good Vibrations



MOTORCYCLE TOURING CLUB OF VICTORIA

P.O. Box 453, Richmond 3121, Victoria

ITINERARY

APRIL 1987.

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| SUNDAY 5th | VIOLET TOWN. 9.00 KBCP 10.15 Yarra Glen. | From Yarra Glen to Yea, Merton, Strathbogie and Violet Town. Home via Seymour, Kilmore Wallan and Whittlesea. |
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| <u>SATURDAY 11th</u> | Halley's Comet ANNIVERSARY Ride. 6.00PM KBCP 7.00PM DENNY'S CAMPBELLFIELD. | Due to the popularity of this ride here is a repeat. After dining join Ben as we travel out into the DARKNESS to CHINTIN, (near WALLAN). Unfortunately Ross King is unable to lead, but has invited us back to his home for PORT and COFFEE. |
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| SUNDAY 19th. | TRAFALGAR. 9.00 KBCP 10.15 Hallam. | Although this is Easter Sunday don't forgo this ride, as the route is gleamed from the famous "Jack Youdan Ride Book" |
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| SUNDAY 26th. | Mt BULLER. 9.00 KBCP 10.15 Yarra Glen. | This ride will encompass Healsville, The Black Spur, Mansfield to the Mount. Home via Yea, Flowerdale and Whittlesea. |
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MAY 1987.

SUNDAY 3rd to

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| THURSDAY 28th. | CAIRNS, QLD. | See Peter Dwyer for details. |
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| SUNDAY 3rd. | LAKE GOLDSMITH. (Ballarat) 9.00 KBCP | Tony Gustus will lead us to the Beaufort area to view this World Famous Steam Rally. Time will be spent viewing the sights. |
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| THURSDAY 7th. | ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Club Hall 8.15 Sharp. | Please attend this important meeting, after Presentation of Annual Reports the Election of Office Bearers will take place. If you cant attend in person, Postal votes are permissable. |
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At our JUNE meeting the guest speaker will be PAUL from PABLO'S TYRES.

Also in JUNE we have the Sunday YUM CHA. As only 30 vacancies exist, Geoff Webb is collecting a \$5 deposit to secure your seat.

WHO's NEWS

If your finding PIRELLI TYRES hard to obtain its because the Importers, MATICH Aust. P/L. are in financial trouble and the Customs Dept. will not release any of the tyres in its stores until the appropriate DUTY has been paid. One source claims it could be 6 months before the tyres are released.

Ouch
Ben found the WET WEATHER limits of his DUNLOP RADIAL on the Poker Run. Fortunately the barbed wire fence cushioned his fall. Not only were his leather pants TORN but also the part of his anatomy they protect. (It hurts to sit down) The bike faired a bit worse but could be ridden home.

A recent amendment to the WRONGS ACT 1984, (Animals straying onto Highways) has effectively removed the Protection of OWNERS, including FARMERS & the owners of domestic pets, for accidents caused by straying animals. They now must take precautions to ensure their animals donot stray onto roads. All one has to do is prove ownership of the animal involved inthe accident.

The FIRST AID / REPAIR KIT provided for members on Club rides, must always be checked that its contents are complete and in a useable condition. If for any reason a member uses an item from the kit it is his duty to make sure the item is replaced.

\$\$\$
Congratulations to Mick Fagan, now \$30 richer after winning the Poker Run.

With the recent introduction of the DUAL LICENSE SYSTEM, refunds are applicable if you have a NEW Dual License PLUS one of the existing licenses. Refer to the Motor Reg. for full details.

The Radar Warning Receiver Industry is to challenge the Vic. Govt. in the High Court over its banning of Radar Detectors, points raised include;

- 1/ It breaches the FREE TRADE between STATES Act.
 - 2/ Police position the units at low accident areas such as Freeways etc, and not at known BLACK SPOT accident sites.
 - 3/ Their use is for REVENUE collection and not accident prevention, ie; Sydney's five Slant Radar Units alone are bringing in HALF a MILLION DOLLARS a MONTH in fines.
 - 4/ To enforce the law a detailed search of the suspect vehicle AND a body search of the DRIVER would be required, Due to the small nature of the devices.
 - 5/ In their favour the Industry believes Detectors contribute to road safety by making Traffic Enforcement more visible, thus slowing the user down.
- And finaly in Alberto, CANADA they have stopped enfocing the imposed Detector ban, saying the State was NOT interested in writing more tickets but in getting people to drive more safely.

Hooray
After SIX months of discussion plus the intervention of President Wurster the Club Constitution has finally been updated. At the April meeting members present will be able to view the document, after which we elect the Public Officer and the Incorporation procedure begins.

Another SHAFT convert, Ray Thomas seen astride a new XJ900.

As well as the Committee Elections in MAY. The CLUBPERSON of the Year Award is also presented. Suitable nominations should be fowarded to the Committee for consideration.

Is there no end to the BMW WARRENTY. Hans has scored a NEW BATTERY (\$120 worth) after the failure of the original.

Peter Dwyer, Ross Bradshaw, Mick Fagan (with old tank bag on bike that kept knocking his lights), Rod Miskin, Sue & Peter Moreland, Gary Osborn, Peter Philferan, Ray Thomas (with brand NEW XJ900, Maroon & Black with Gold pinstripe and VERY large headlight), Geoff Webb, Jack Youdan and Ross Gabriel (bright YELLOW Suzuki).

Peter Dwyer led himself on the ride from KBCP to Denny's in Ringwood. He was greeted by Geoff, Ross, Jack & Ray, Sue & Peter then arrived followed closely by Ross, Rod Peter and Gary.

A hearty breakfast was had by most of the Club and an early departure was made, (in comparism with other rides). At 10.30 we were well on the way to Menzies Creek heading along Kellots Rd at a brisk pace, then onto Wellington Rd past Cardinia Reservoir and on to Old Menzies Creek Rd to our first destination - The Puffing Billy Museum at Menzies Creek.

We entered the Museum freely, the money collector must have taken fright at seeing a group of "bikies" and headed for cover. Peter P. having been before stood guard over the bikes while the rest of us admired the exhibits. Even Jack managed to drag himself away from his bike!

Mick Fagan arrived just as the rest of us were having a last look around. The amusing part was that Mick was charged \$1 for seeing nothing and we were charged nothing for seeing everything! Mick grumbled about this all day while the rest of us appreciated the FUNNY side. That will teach you to turn up late for a ride Mick! Once in the hills we now headed for Gembrook where Peter pointed out a vacant piece of land which he assured us was once the large Gembrook Terminus. Amidst doubtful mutterings, Peter produced evidence of existance in the form of photographic slides, he did resist the temptation of bringing along his projector!

The old, still standing although leaning, engine watertank was the point of reference in the photo.

We then headed through the delightfully pleasant countryside, down a slightly unnerving gravel road, into a very pretty and intriguing historical site known as the Kurth Kiln. This is the remains of a factory which was used to turn wood into charcoal. The charcoal was then burnt, converting into a gas which was used to power cars during the World War 2 years.

A few of the older members of the group reminisced about the hard old days (no names mentioned, I am sure you can guess who), and educated us younger ones about the operation of "CHARCOAL POWER".

We continued on older and wiser to the next stop which was a former railway station at Yarra Junction. The station, which is supposed to serve a useful purpose as a museum, contains old artifacts which are in plain view from outside the wire fence. Its not that we did not want to donate the small entry fee for admittance to the museum, it is just that the ticket seller was nowhere to be found.

RELICS RIDE cont.

Had he too run away at the sight of "bikies"?

Peter D. informed us that it appeared the phantom ticket seller did not abide by the advertised opening times and that the phantom had not been present the week before either.

On to Warburton, where despite Peter's pleas NOT to eat yet, we hogged into home cooked pastries and delicacies prepared by the local establishments.

Next stop was Big Pats Creek where we were supposed to have our picnic lunch, however, since the unruly element, ie. most of us had disobeyed instructions and eaten, we instead began our little walk along the signposted track to sight remains of a tramway. Some of the more unruly members found a new game to play which I will call "Tree Shaking".

A few people gather around a rotting tree and take bets on its stability. One or two persons then shake the tree for between 5-- 10 minutes and then try to direct its fall towards other innocent, unsuspecting persons walking along the track. Perhaps "innocent" is not really an apt adjective to describe Mr Fagan, however, the term was used loosely.

Speaking of Mr Fagan, it certainly was not his day. The third and final straw for Mick was that the advertised stop at Brittania Creek did not occur. At the stop at Powelltown, Mick innocently (again used Loosely) asked when we were going to Brittania Creek, to which Peter D. replied "not today as we do not have enough time". Mick ranted and raved for awhile about the Brittania Creek stop being the HIGHLIGHT of his day. Never mind Mick - next time!

The rest of us kept ourselves amused by climbing on the giant logs at Powelltown. Mick took a group photo by setting his automatic picture taking device and then doing a sprint to join the rest of us on the log. Peter M. & Gary decided to help or hinder Sue in her efforts to climb off the logs and insisted on grabbing ankles and arms to carry/push her off.

Peter D. the historian, gathered from his well prepared pack, a book on Powell town. No doubt about Peter, he really throws himself into these rides with gusto! We headed off to The Bump next, no, not a rally cross course, but the former township of Nayook West. We scrambled over hill and dale to view the once flourishing, but no longer existant township of Nayook. Peter (always prepared is my middle name) Dwyer, again produced some photos showing the township in its heyday.

With the day coming to a close, we headed home through Powelltown and Yarra Junction, stopping at Lilydale to bid our fond farewells, No doubt about it, Peter Dwyer certainly knows how to organise a very enjoyable, relaxing and informative ride.

When is the next one?

SUE MORELAND.

APOLLO BAY * LAVERS HILL . . . 8/3/87

Starters :- Jack GPX1000; Darryl & Kaye XJ 900; James RG 250;
Craig CBX 750; Ross BRADSHAW GS 1000 and Hans K100 RS.

Weather forecast:- Strong Winds and Showers.

When I arrived at the KBCP Darryl & Kaye had just arrived and Jack and James arrived shortly after. The weather at this stage was fine but windy.

Left for the Laverton pick up point travelling straight over the Westgate & up the Highway. At Laverton found Craig waiting and Ross arrived shortly after.

We were just leaving when James decided to have breakfast and held up the ride. He was Politely informed to have breakfast in his own time before the start of the ride or when the ride stopped for a scheduled stop.

Left Laverton for Geelong at 10.15 am into a strong head-wind. I was leading with Jack rear rider. After leaving Geelong we ran into the first of many heavy showers forcing us to stop and don wet weather gear. At Anglesea we re-grouped and then continued on to Lorne. The G.O.R. was a little damp at places and very wet at others when we were hit by heavy showers at regular intervals.

At Lorne we again re grouped now with Craig as Rear rider. After a short stop headed to Apollo Bay for lunch at our usual Cafe. It rained off and on all the way there. During our lunchtime chat found that the others were reluctant to head for Lavers Hill over the dirt section. Darryl & Kaye decided to head back home along the G.O.R. The others decided to come with me after I told them that Jack was also going, and I said the dirt was probably tarred by now.

After lunch left for Lavers Hill and found that the dirt was not as bad as they had thought. We re-grouped on the other side of the dirt section and James decided there he didn't want to go on and went back. The rest of us carried on although Ross said he would later take the road to Colac.

We carried on to Lavers Hill and then back east toward Beach Forrest. At the Colac turn off Ross, Jack and also Craig decided to head for Colac. I left them there and headed for Beach Forrest along some dirt (Good stuff not slippery) for about 12 km and back onto the road leading back down to Skenes Creek. It had stopped raining when I got back on the good road and soon after everything was dry.

From Skenes Creek travelled back to Geelong on the now dry G.O.R. at a fast clip and arrived home at 4.30 pm after a total of 460 km for the day.

Weather wise I expected a lot worse for the day and I quite enjoyed the ride. In regards to following the ride with the leader it was awful, with 6 starters, and only myself to finish the planned ride.

H. WURSTER - K 100 RS

Arriving at KBCP at 9.25 I saw our fearless leader Ian (in his shiny new Leathers) with pillion passenger Kerrie. With him was Peter P, Murray Brown, Ben Warden and his pillion Sue, Frank Bloxham, Ross Bradshaw, Gary Clifton and new member Ross Gabriel on his RG250 and also James Liversay-Cole (also on a RG250)

As we were about to leave Wayne Fitzsimmons arrived on his new EMU chaser, XLV750. Out over the Westgate Bridge, now that there is no longer any toll we might as well make the most of it. Down to the Laverton pick up where Gary O. was waiting with a new rider, Mark who rides a RT500 Suzuki. Kenny Wurster was also there to hand over the Emergency Kit and to wave goodbye to 13 bikes & 2 pillions. The weather was magnificent. No wind, rain or cloud, just beautiful warm Autumn sunshine. The kind of weather that makes you fall in love with Melbourne.

Down the freeway, through to Werribee. A mix up at the lights occurred due to a couple of OTHER bikes making a right hand turn and us late arrivals followed them around the corner. Maybe we should have identifying emblems on our helmets so these sort of mix ups do not occur?

Not to worry, we caught up with the others, though about 15 minutes were lost. High speeds were reached in this neck of the woods (a leisurely ride?) Down through Little River to Geelong and Point Lonsdale via Barwon Heads.

In the car park were lovinely restored jalopies and hotrods. As we admired their machinery, they admired ours. A sort of mutual admiration society.

A short walk to the Lighthouse and the cave where Buckley lived in the late 1700's. Why he didn't book into one of the Hotels or Motels instead of living in a grotty old cave is a mystery.

From Pt Lonsdale we headed for Queenscliff for lunch. The usual culinary delights of fish & chips, hamburgers, pies etc were consumed. At this stage Ben and Gary brought out their souvenirs of the Q.L. Rally in Tas. POSSUM SKIN HATS. Talk about your poor mans DAVY CROCKETT. At least they provided a laugh for the Queenscliffites.

A train was due to leave at 1.15, we rushed down to the station where we had the choice of a 40 minute ride for \$3 or a 3 hour ride to Drysdale for \$6. We decided on the trip to Drysdale. Scrooge Mc Warden organised a group concession thereby saving everybody a \$1. thanks Ben.

An old steam train took us to Lakers Siding, where we boarded the Deisel Train. This was pure LUXURY, real genuine cracked leather seats with a table for playing cards (if you had any) overhead luggage racks and best of all ONLY two other passengers. So the boys could run up and down the carriages and hang out the doors and be real little HOONS without interfering with anybody else.

The train duly arrived at Drysdale as promised, where we had a half hour break. Not much too do, play on the swings, chin ups on the bar or sit down. The Train

driver came over and explained how the line was started again and how it was maintained etc. Everything is done by volunteer work and donations. Ampol donate \$3000 worth of Diesel oil each year to keep the train going.

With a shout of "all a board" we clattered on for the return trip. The "boys" again ran up and down the carriages, hung out the doors and waved to all the people. Murray even played with the DRIVERS HORN. Gave the poor bloke quite a start.

Whilst we were talking to the driver he told us of the near misses and collisions between the Train and cars. After one bingle with a Toyota, the drivers excuse, He might have seen the train if it had been blowing smoke from its stack. Doesn't give much hope to us poor bikers, If the drivers can't see or hear trains. There was quite a large crowd of people back at the station when we arrived. So as we left a little EXTRA revving to give them a thrill.

Returning to Geelong via St Leonards and a short stop at Indented Head to view what is left of an old paddle steamer. On through Port Arlington and Geelong East where we stopped for petrol. Ian decided to go home via Bacchus Marsh, but as the day was drawing to a close, some of us preferred to go straight home. Heading through Norlane the road was choc-a-bloc with cars, as one of the lanes going over the bridge was blocked off. The traffic got heavier as we left Geelong. It wasn't till we reached Werribee that it thinned out a little. We passed a flock of Honda Scooters which sounded like a hundred mosquitoes at mating time. Over the Westgate Bridge and more heavy traffic. Thought I would detour along Flinders St, "mistake" the traffic was at a standstill and me on reserve. Finally made it to Collingwood and cheap petrol, then home. A very enjoyable day, magnificent weather, good roads and an interesting train trip. Must do it again.

Geoff Z500.



"Go Ahead make my Day"

Gary C. at Tas. Rally

TEN DAYS IN TASMANIA

March 1987

Preparation included buying tickets on the Abel Tasman (person and bike return cost \$234 less \$18.80 group discount for travelling with the Quarter Litre Club), sleeping bag, tent, sleeping mat, clothes, and bike.

Who went: Gary Clifton (K100RT), Tony Gustus (XJ900), and Ben Warden (GPz900R).

Friday 27th February, Melbourne to Devonport, Tasmania

I left work at 4.00pm in stinking hot weather to board the Abel Tasman at 4.30pm and load/tie down the bikes. Later my three unknown cabin mates enquired *did I smoke? was I a cop? and would I like a "cone"?* Played 500 till bar closed, then another cone (part of a water filled device (patra bottle) used for inhaling sweet smelling smoke) consumed by cabin mates before attempting to sleep.

Saturday 28th February, Devonport - Deloraine - Mole Creek, MRA TAS Rally.

Overcast, raining, and cold weather greeted us as we disembarked. We followed Colin - QL Club President and 15 or so members to Deloraine and Mole Creek, the sight of the MRA TAS Rally. A U-turn at some stage saw my \$20 rear tyre slide out dramatically. Hmmm. By this stage I had already lost Gary and Tony but caught up with them at the Mole Creek Pub. A local told us of a rodeo at Gowrie Park, 40 km away, which we attended, climbing a lookout on route, after having set up camp alongside the river. We arrived back after dark to enjoy the QL campfire and singing, and later endure a very cold night.

The rain had stopped and I was already impressed with the roads and scenery.

Sunday 1st March, Mole Creek

Tony, Gary and I took a guided tour of King Solomon's Caves, and then Gary went in search of relatives near Launceston. Tony and I headed on to Sheffield to do something about my top fairing subframe. Two finger thick bars had broken clean through.

It was not long before a crowd of "experts" had formed. Thanks to Tony's help, it only took 1 hour to dismantle the fairings, remove instruments, mirrors, blinkers, speedo cable, get the welding done (\$5 on a Sunday afternoon seemed very reasonable), and re-assemble. Practice makes perfect I guess.

It had been hot work with the sun streaming down, so we spent one and a half hours in the pub recuperating and waiting for the toasted sandwiches to arrive.

On to Cradle Mountain along a fantastic road which ended abruptly in dirt. The subframe and I did not fancy 15 km of dirt road, no-matter how good it was, so back to the rally site to catch the end of the gymkhana.

The winning(?) burnout lasted six minutes and forty seconds resulting in one GS750 Suzuki buried in dirt up to the rear axle destroying tyre, chain and motor. As the chromed header pipes burned, the color changing from silver to blue to yellow to black, a strange sadness fell upon the crowd. It is not pleasant watching a bike slowly destroyed. Ho-hum.

A notable feature of the rally site was the **Frigmobile** - a semi-trailer load of alcoholic beverages, worth in the vicinity of \$55,000. A diesel generator started up each morning to power the giant fridge. Business was brisk with over 1400 rally participants.

The day ended around the campfire drinking port, singing with kazoo accompaniment, and many jokes and stories.

After two days, my tyres were dying fast, Tony's fork springs had sagged to the point where he preferred not to use the front brake, and Gary had failed to locate his aunty and had been asked to move on by the local constabulary when an elderly neighbour had complained of a scruffy bkie asleep on the front lawn!

Monday 2nd, Mole Creek - Boat Harbour

Decamped and were on the road by about 11 am, planning to travel anti-clockwise around the island

to make the races at Symmons Plains on Sunday.

At Sheffield we plugged my flat rear tyre in a matter of minutes. The flat explained why the bike was handling so badly, and gave us a chance for everyone to check their tyre pressures, which were generally 10 pounds low. Hmmm.

We reached the scenic Boat Harbour Caravan Park in the early afternoon and booked into a cabin. At last a shower. (The river at the Rally Site was not that enticing - shallow and cold.)

With unladen bikes, we headed west along the north coast, stopping to ascend The Nut via a chairlift at Stanley. While walking around the few acres at the summit we learnt of the problems of dealers servicing K100s.

Continuing westwards the road turned dirty. Oops! I had mistakenly taken the Montague Island road instead of the Marrawah road, so we back-tracked to Smithton and continued on to Marrawah. There was only a large, modern pub and general store with petrol pump. But the road was magnificent. Gary was really enjoying himself. Bend swinging theory was becoming a regular topic of discussion.

Gary and I told Tony we would wait for him at the Wynyard turnoff where we planned to have a counter tea. Well, we lost Tony and spent about an hour waiting and riding in circles. Gary and I had blasted past the first Wynyard turnoff without even seeing it. Tony waited, we waited at the next major turnoff; Tony went, we went. At one stage the cops flagged me down and asked me if I was looking for a guy on an XJ!, and he was waiting back there

We missed the counter tea and settled for terrible hamburgers. Ho-hum. Though in the hunt I did manage to do the exquisite five corner "S" five times. Oooooe!

Tuesday 3rd, Boat Harbour - Savage River - Strachan (330 km).

The west coast has the best roads in Tasmania. Highlights included the road through the Hellyer Gorge and, for me, the Savage River Road, 45 km of Reefton Spur. (A little tight (99 corners in 3 km) and cliffish for the others I suspect).

Photographically we checked out the Savage River Iron Ore Mine, then headed back to the highway and south to Zeehan and the mining museum. Most fascinating. On to Strachan where we booked our Gordon River Cruise (\$25) and camped at the small, protected council-run caravan park, near the Something Falls. Bikes everywhere in Strachan.

Wednesday 4th, Strachan, Queenstown, Hobart (300 km)

I fetched breakfast from the "CAFE" (which opened at 9am) to reach the 9 am departing boat in record time. In four hours, the 106 foot long, 21 foot wide wide Gordon River Cruiser traverses 160 km to the upper reaches of the Gordon (below Franklin) to Sir John Falls, Sarah Island and the Marble Cliffs, at times, cruising at 25 knots. Hells gates - where the Gordon River meets the sea - has a tidal rip of 12 knots due to it being only about 35 meters wide! The number of wrecks and lives lost was almost unbelievable.

An intermittent commentary was provided by ex *piners* (Huon Pine loggers). Notable trees along the bank were evaluated in terms of what could be done to them: X was good for furniture, Y burnt well, and Z made excellent building material. We thought of the poor conservationists and could only laugh. They would have died. And no doubt the wash from the boat was destroying the banks!

That afternoon we rode some 300 Tasmanian kilometres (1 Tas km = 1.8 km) to Hobart. Gary stopped to inspect my chain lube can on a couple of occasions, (it having abandoned ship, the road quite bumpy), the second time leaving it to bleed to death. Barren Queenstown, (106 corners in 3 miles), and the sulphur defoliated surrounding mountains came and went, but not before Tony and Gary had raided the money dispensing machines.

At Tarraleah we stopped for petrol and possum hats! Possums are a protected species on the North Island, but it seems everything goes in Tasmania. (aboriginals, rivers, trees, possums). We passed the couple riding the GPz100RX and R100RS for the second time. The BM was sick.

Blundering our way through Hobart, we arrived at Sandy Bay Caravan Park, only to find all the caravans booked out. So we put up the tents, as it turned out, right in front of the QL club. The park was fairly seething with motorcyclists. Our possum hats made a big impression. They wanted them badly.

Later, we headed for the Casino, after Gary and I dressed me. Well, the food was good, and, the dealers ... fast ...

Thursday, Hobart

We climbed the 259 steps of the shot tower on our round-about way to Mt Wellington. The weather was great, views exceptional. We spent at least an hour taking photographs. A cold wind howled, a test our possum hats passed with flying tails. It snowed the next day.

Back to Hobart for lunch, money, and a parking infringement notice. The weather was hot and sticky. We agreed that I would meet Tony and Gary at Dover, 120 km south, the southern-most pub in Tasmania.

I needed a tyre (or two) and headed for Moona and 'Total' to replace my \$20 second hand, 4012 km old tyre. I had a choice of a Dunlop radial or a Dunlop radial. I took the Dunlop radial. Boy, did they have trouble. They were breaking the bead putting it on the rim, and it took half an hour of continuous massage before the tyre would "pop". Ho-hum.

The choice of front tyre was even more limited (none today, but tomorrow the world). Well, I could not quite see the canvas, and so long as it did not rain

While waiting I changed the front right hand side pads, which were almost through. Total cost for tyre (\$146), pads (\$23.70), and chain lube (\$5) was a very reasonable \$148.

Streaming south now on the Southern Outlet freeway I enjoyed the fast series of 55, 65 75 km/h corners, noting the corrugations on the last corner for the return trip.

I missed Tony and Gary at Dover, realising later that Tony's XJ looked like a BM from the rear (passing by at speed), it was that low. The bike was sinking on its lack of suspension. The rear shockers were now bleeding profusely, and the front springs had given up the fight long ago. (Linkos up front and Konis at the rear was now planned for Melbourne).

At Southport the bitumen became a boat ramp. Back to Dover, a good counter meal, and we headed back to Hobart. Tony had the map, but sensing a few worthwhile corners approaching I whisked past, Gary slotting in behind. Darkness descended as we droned northwards, fast, too fast.

Woops, this is the 75 km/h corrugated corner followed by the 65 and 55km/h, further complicated by a stream of blinding car lights. Push the bike down, assume the corners goes round, and hope like hell.

Gary, having previously noted I rarely brake for corners, noted my touch of brake, panicked, forgot the newly learnt cornering techniques, and proceeded to scare himself silly.

I waited quite awhile at the Hobart left, somewhere else right Y junction. Tony whistled past taking the right fork. As the Hobart lights gradually grew dimmer, I finally worked up enough courage to halt Tony. We were lost. *As long as it does not turn to dirt it must go somewhere*, quipped Tony. Three corners later it turned to dirt! And the road was positively crawling with rabbits and possums and native-cats and rats and ...

Eventually we found the highway, Tony made it back to Sandy Bay Caravan Park - I missed the turn-off - and Gary and I waited in Town, and finally went back to the caravan park.

Off to the local pub (over-run with QL), then back to the tent where rowdy and raucous singing resulted in a call by the local constabulary bringing *Silent Night* (ironically) to a premature finish. It had been another big day. (The fact that Gary sleeps with his radio on was only noticed by a few people.)

Friday, Hobart - Bicheno

Gary wanted to go on the jet boat up north and Tony and I wanted to see Port Arthur, the old penal settlement, down south. So we decided to regroup at Bicheno on the east coast.

A day could be spent at Port Arthur. The prison conditions were quite barbaric, with men who could not be "broken" by ordinary means (cat-o-nine tails, etc) spending between 4 and 12 months in solitary confinement in total darkness. All human interaction was suspended. The prisoners invariably committed suicide or went insane.

The east coast road is relatively open and fast. The weather had turned cold and windy, an occasional shower or wet road. One car wearing NSW plates had tangled with a tree, and shortly afterwards we noticed a police car which had met a similar fate.

At Bicheno we caught up with Gary, who had had a thrilling time in the jet boat, booked into a caravan and returned to the pub for an inexpensive counter tea whilst overlooking the magnificent harbour. A few games of Kelly pool saw the day out.

Saturday, Bicheno - Scottsdale - Launceston

At Elephant Pass my speedo clocked over 100,000 km so we stopped for the obligatory photo. Continuing north, after about an hour it began to rain and a gale cross-wind was blowing. Gary was blown across the road on one occasion, and travelling at what felt like 45 degrees to the horizontal in a straight line was not pleasant. There was the distinct possibility of being blown into the path of oncoming vehicles and on a couple of occasions I considered stopping.

Heading into the mountains from St Helens and 150 km of twisty roads partially solved the wind problem, only to highlight other handling quirks. My triangular profile front tyre combined with the already light front end (due to luggage on the back) resulted in a couple of "moments" when the front end washed out. Ho-hum.

At last the roads opened and dried out as we fanged into Launceston. We pulled up at the first milkbar but walked out almost immediately as the proprietor was more interested in listening to the races than serving us, cold and wet bikies.

Outside the milkbar Gary was almost cleaned up during a U-turn. The white Sigma left 20 foot skid marks up a hill. Gary squirted away just in time, only to run out of road, lose balance and put the bike down gently, pride the only casualty. The car driver was more worried about warping his disks than seeing if Gary was okay.

Launceston Caravan Park was booked out - Symmons Plains car and bike racing the next day. Hoping for a cancellation we left the bikes for a couple of hours while Gary took us on a guided tour up The Gorge including a chairlift across the river, and a riverside walk.

With the 5 pm deadline approaching fast, Gary took a shortcut back to the caravan park, while Tony and I took the more scenic route. We all became separated, I got lost in the city, the caravan park had no cancellations, and the rain continued unabated making tenting an unpleasant prospect. Luckily Tony noticed a Youth Hostel in which we stayed quite happily for \$6.00. (Tony and I had our cards, and Gary paid a visitors fee.)

After ever lengthening directions we found a good pub selling counter meals complete with log fire and sing-along. Back to the hostel, a few games of pool, and much enjoyed sleep.

Sunday, Launceston - Symmons Plains - Devonport

Tony and I headed for the track to see rounds 1 and 2 of the "Aussie-land Superbike Series" and a round of the "Australian Touring Car Championship", while Gary visited an aunt and would meet us at the boat.

It was the coldest March day for 30 years. Our possum hats attracted envious looks and weird comments. To meet television transmission times, the Touring Car race was brought forward at the expense of the second round of the superbikes. We spent the day wandering around the track, meeting the QL Club again. The wind was freezing, and at one stage it hailed. On the track, the braking duals at the end of the straight, to negotiate a tight hairpin, were quite spectacular.

Come 3.30 pm and Tony and I were the last starters in the 120 km Symmons Plains to Devonport Classic bike race. (I was distracted in the pits, and had no watch), the boat loading at 4.30 pm. We made it, despite the wet and freezing conditions, and I missing the turnoff.

With glasses sliding around the tables, the sick bags having been distributed earlier, and feeling a lot queasy, I decided discretion was the better part of valour and retired to my cot. I heard next day Tony had further enhanced his drinking reputation by sculling half a bottle of port and not retiring till very late.

Monday, Melbourne.

Docked on time at 8.15 am, mobile by 9.00 pm after group photos on the wharf with the QL Club members, then off to work!

Statistics: We travelled about 2,870 km doing a complete loop. Petrol was quite expensive: worst 67.4 c/l, best 63.2 c/l. (Melbourne around 57 c/l.) I spent \$108.60 on petrol using 168.6 litres at an average consumption of 17.0 km/l or 48.1 m/gal which is probably good for a 100,000 km old motor. Total costs were about \$400, excluding a tyre (\$148), and boat trip (\$216).

Gary, Tony and I recommend that a similar trip be put on next year's itinerary, maybe as an annual or bi-annual event.

Ben (GPz900)



Our intrepid Trio on top of it all

Sez it all!



BEN

TONY



Tony HELPING Ben Undress!!!

...February, 1987.

Dear

Regarding motorcycle third party premiums. The Victorian motorcycle community numbers 80,000 people. There are about 500,000 motorcyclists in Australia. This group is larger than many ethnic groups and faces the same kind of prejudice, and problems associated with ignorance, as they do in society.

A soon to be released survey by the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education's Senior Lecturer in Psychology has important statistics. The first aim was to describe motorcyclists in Victoria and N.S.W. in terms of demographics and attitudes. It found that 81% of respondents were male. 19% were female and the average age was 27 years. 34% were skilled workers/foremen. 16% were professionals. "The remaining 50% were evenly divided amongst all occupational categories." 40% earned over \$350 per week. 11% completed university or higher. 27% had some tertiary and/or sub professional education. A further 17% completed secondary education. 81% owned their own motorcycle outright and 70% also owned their car.

The summary said "The motorcyclists of N.S.W. and Victoria are 'relatively normal' people. A high proportion are well educated, hold very respectable jobs...They are car owners...as well as bike owners." The negative image of 'bikies' is a myth.

Motorcyclists have been contributing to their society in many valuable ways since the motorcycle was invented in 1885 a year before the car. Motorcyclists are in entertainment, sport and recreation but the role is much wider. They contribute in primary industry, exploration, search and rescue, the Army, Police, City Councils, Australia Post, as couriers and more. The motorcycle industry provides Victorians with more than 2,000 jobs and pays the Government more than \$15,000,000 per year but gets NO assistance. Motorcycle consumer groups struggle for paltry handouts for their road safety, charity and service work. By contrast the bicycle lobby gets regular, large grants.

The Melbourne Strategy Plan. Policy M.S. 20. Objective 1. "To encourage the use of motorcycles." Elizabeth St. Melbourne is the traditional home of Australian motorcycling, is one of the oldest and largest bike centres in the world and will be promoted by the M.C.C. as a tourist attraction. Motorcycles are legitimate, energy efficient vehicles that help solve problems of traffic and parking congestion, pollution and provide economical, reliable commuting.

The Government's new compulsory third party insurance system is clearly unjust and discriminatory. It cannot be justified morally or financially.

- a) Why did the Government ignore road safety measures that would save lives and money? Why were discounts of 25% on the next year's premium for riders who complete an approved novice or advanced training course not introduced? In law it is the Government's responsibility to provide adequate rider training. This would raise skill levels, promote retraining and produce safer road users. It would save the tax payer money by reducing road trauma. A similar scheme operates in the A.C.T. It would create jobs and increase expertise in road user education.
- b) Why did the Government fail to introduce 'no claim bonuses' for good road users nor penalty rates for bad road users?
- c) Why were premiums introduced that fail to reflect the true road trauma situation? A.B.S. figures show there are over 2,000,000 cars, wagons and utes in Victoria and about 80,000 motorcycles. Government statistics show that car drivers are at fault in 70% of car/bike crashes. Statistically riders rarely injure car or bike passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians and almost never injure public transport users. Riders are victims in most cases yet are forced to subsidise those who cause crashes and/or those who do not contribute to the third party system. Motorcyclists should not pay the same fee as drivers in any class. A just system reflects who costs the community in terms of cash and casualties. Bike fees should be less than $\frac{1}{2}$ that of cars. This financial year fees for bikes rose about 130%. Fees for cars rose about 30%. Cars outnumber bikes nearly 30 to 1. The increase in motorcycle premiums for one year is not enough to cover one week's loss in a system that was losing \$2,000,000 a day. The number of riders injured in single vehicle crashes is very small and the problem of 'hit and run' drivers is increasing. Making motorcycling safer is the logical way to reduce the cost of road trauma which is not caused by riders.
- d) Why did the Government ignore the fact that the huge debt incurred by the third party system was not caused by riders? Losses were caused by departmental inefficiency and failure to police fraud competently. Riders' injuries generally cost the community more but the rider does not seek injury nor does he/she submit fraudulent claims. Fraud is usually in the area of claims under \$15,000 for intangible injuries such as 'whiplash'. Motorcyclists wounds are generally tangible and while they are more prone to 'whiplash', claims are not common. Faking injuries after a car has made an illegal right turn (a common scenario) and rammed your bike is difficult.

- e) Why was the Road Safety Bill passed when it removes the power of elected representatives to make road law and gives regulation to the public service? This is a disaster for the consultation process. Traffic fines have risen to cover the debt incurred by the third party system. The public and Police were dismayed when they heard of it and the excuse that it was to give victims better care. The author of the reforms has fallen from grace and is no longer involved. The increases were on selected offences and have little to do with road safety. There was no consultation. Chief Inspector Tom Rippon of the Police Association slammed the increases saying that Police were being used as tax gatherers and worried about the public backlash. "Its really another exercise in indirect taxation...Going from \$55 to \$85 for exceeding the speed limit by up to 15 kph is a bit rough...disobeying a traffic signal is only the same penalty. Surely there's more potential for something going wrong when a motorist goes through a red light, but perhaps they are working on the assumption that more people speed a little so there is more money in that." Motorcycle offences were picked for increases.
- f) Why was the need for a commercial registration category for riders in the growing courier industry ignored and existing categories altered without consultation? The new two class system, up to 500cc and over 501cc creates the ridiculous situation where a 50cc moped that cannot achieve 60 kph is allowed on 100 kph, high risk roads and 500cc race replicas capable of over 200 kph pay the same fee.

The new third party system and the Road Safety Bill demonstrate what happens when meaningful consultation is not entered into. The motorcycle industry has the same problems as the motor industry. The third party 'reforms' are already costing jobs. Dealers in Elizabeth St. report an increase in the number of people selling bikes and not buying a replacement. This industry employs more people than the logging industry yet the Government, which claims to be concerned about employment, has put jobs at risk.

A review of motorcycle premiums must take place immediately. The total rise in fees in this financial year should not exceed the rise for cars, i.e. approximately 30%. The highest fee class should not exceed \$170. A special category for mopeds and small scooters must be introduced with a low fee. A condition of registration should be that bikes that have a top speed of 60 kph or less should be banned from 100 kph zones, in the interests of road safety.

Stolen bicycles waste thousands of hours of Police time and cost the community \$3,000,000 per year. About 12,000 are reported stolen a year. In August 1986 the Government recommended a national bicycle registration scheme, no action. Bikefile is a voluntary bicycle registration system and could be introduced as another two wheel category with little additional cost. Bicycles are carrying paying passengers as pedicabs in the high risk areas. As with other motorcycles the income from such registration would be small but the benefits in reducing theft and freeing Police for more serious duties would be in the best interests of the community. An Australian Institute of Criminology report said that there was a 'deeply disconcerting' increase in major crime and that the clearance rate was declining. The report said that only 64 per 1,000 crimes reported to Police are solved. Bicycles should be registered and public transport passengers should contribute to the third party system through a percentage of fares since they are covered under third party reforms.

The Government must immediately set up a review committee with representatives of the consumers, Mr. S. Bond and Mr. D. Codognotto and the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce Motorcycle Industry Division.

I request your answers and comments in writing.

.....(signed)

.....(name in block letters)

Address.....

Age.....

Occupation.....

Dependants.....

Years experience M/C.....

Car.....