

VAUGHAN SPRINGS 1/2/1976

It was heavily overcast when I arrived at Kings Bridge Car Park about 9.45am. By the time we were ready to go, there would have been 20 to 25 bikes in all. Most of them were regulars, but there were some new faces. We moved off in an orderly procession to Melton via Keilor and Sydenham.

Just before we got to Melton, Lloyd was run off the road by a truck driver who had a grudge against motorcyclists. If it wasn't for Lloyds quick thinking and long motorcycling experience he would have come off and been killed. Mick Fagan had to use the full braking capabilities that the [BMW] 900S could offer to avoid a similar fate. Boy, was Mick wild at the treatment dished out to Lloyd. The truck was stopped as soon as it got onto the Western Highway. The driver was glad he had almost wiped out both Lloyd and Mick and even had the audacity to say so to their faces. He changed his tune when there was about 15 bikes pull up behind him. Next stop – the Melton Police Station. Typically, they were not there. We let him go. I still think we should have beat him to a pulp, after seeing what Lloyd had gone through. He was still in shock.

After that incident we headed to Blackwood where most of us stopped to put our waterproofs on as it had started to rain. The roads quickly turned to glass, so it was very slow going for those that had any brains. After Blackwood, the next stop was Castlemaine for lunch and petrol. I found my newly acquired Kawasaki 900 was getting quite good fuel economy – better than the Suzy.

We didn't stay long in Castlemaine. So we stuffed food into bags and panniers and motored to Vaughan Springs. After paying 10 cents admission we parked our bikes near the picnic grounds, unloaded our food and restarted lunch. For those that didn't bring anything from Castlemaine, there was a small kiosk open.

Lunch of the day goes to Darren's \$60 burglar alarm which was analysed by Mick and a few friends and was found to be of very poor quality. Darren mentioned that he was given this one – no wonder. I wouldn't pay \$60 for it after seeing its weak construction.

After standing around a while, a few people went in search of the Springs; some went for a slide on a giant slide, built into a nearby hill. When everybody had taken their fill of the local attractions, it was decided to head for home. I don't know who chose the way home, thank goodness, as I'd probably kill him if I did. It was mostly dirt, dirt and more dirt. I HATE DIRT

Five mph most of the way home, on some of the most grotty Forestry Commission tracks I have ever encountered. Ah! Some bitumen up ahead; accelerate; 100km, 130km, 160km, 180km, trestle bridge, back off, the bike wobbling badly, brake, brake, wobble getting worse; sigh of relief as I stopped. The only person that had not passed me was Big Daddy [Peter Philferan] who was rear rider.

I jumped off the bike and took one look at the back wheel, sure enough, I'd had a blowout. SHIT! It was my lucky day. That morning I had chucked a few tools together just in case. There was enough there to get the wheel off and Big Daddy was a godsend as he had a spare tube of the right size, tyre levers and would you believe it – even a pump. Thanks. Big Daddy. They came in handy.

While I was changing the tube some locals pulled up and supplied some moral support. Also, special mention to Brian Avery riding his 750 BMW who came back of his own volition to give a much needed hand as I didn't really know what I was doing. It was really appreciated Brian, thank you.

We put enough air into the tyre to ride on to Malmsbury where there was a general store come petrol station. We asked for air and he showed us a very frail compressor. After some minor modifications Brian made, it started to work. We got our air and he got his compressor repaired. He was very happy he was able to get the compressor fixed as he had had a mechanic in to look at it and all the mechanic did when he saw it was shake his head.

After leaving there it was a quiet ride home via Woodend and the Calder Highway. Today's run a few unexpected things happened, which made it worthwhile, I suppose, but personally it would have appealed to other members more.

Special thanks again to Big Daddy and Brian Avery.