

Ben Warden (lead)	Honda CBR1000	Richard Paulsen (4 th ride)	Kawasaki ER-6N
Paul Southwell	Honda CBR1000	Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ER-6N
Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Eddie Simonis (rear)	Moto Guzzi 1200S
Craig Morley	Honda VTR1000 SP	Michael Henriksen	BMW R1200RT
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600	Geoff Dick	BMW R850
Phill Hotschilt	Suzuki GSXR1300	Stewart Hosking (2 nd ride)	Aprilia V4R Tuono
Ben Fuller	Suzuki GSXR1300	Mark Rigacci (1 st ride)	Aprilia SMV750
Vince Green/Kathy	Yamaha XJR1300	Cindy Lee	Triumph 675

Leg 1: Whittlesea, Flowerdale, Strath Creek, King Parrot Road, Goulburn Valley Highway, Yea for morning tea. (74 km)

Leg 2: Back track on the Goulburn to Highlands, Gin Gin, Caveat Terip Terip, Gobur, onto the Maroondah Hwy to Merton. Through the Merton twisties, right towards Strathbogie and on to Euroa for lunch and fuel after a further 126km.

Leg 3: Back through Ruffy, Highlands, Seymour, Trawool to finish at Broadford.
16 bikes, 17 people, 330 km, 21 deg. fine

It was a strange day with lots of comings and goings, very cool weather, a few former members and a few non-members. And what a formidable array and variety of bikes with 8 manufacturers represented including six European bikes out of the 16 bikes.

Easter Sunday and the weather had turned from 10 degrees above the long term average to 5 below as the last of our Indian Summer disappeared in the overnight driving rain. A forecast of 21 degrees for Melbourne – the maximum temperature - meant it would be very cold across Kinglake, around Highlands and around Strathbogie – often the coldest place overnight other than the alpine areas.

Dress warmly I instructed myself – two thermals, a long sleeve T-shirt, two throat coats and a jumper with leather jacket and waterproof overjacket saw the top half protected. Long johns, leathers and waterproof pants and waterproof boots saw the bottom half done. That is, full winter attire! Summer has gone. Winter is here.

With Ed rear rider, Aiden the medical officer, GPSs turned off, magazine article scribe asked for but not received, and the route outlined, 14 bikes and riders set off for morning tea at Yea. Geoff Dick joined us at Strath Creek, having ridden down from Tatura. It was his first ride with the Club since his horrific outback accident where his leg was pinned under the hot exhaust requiring extensive skin grafts to repair. Welcome back Geoff.

Ben Fuller had mentioned he would leave the ride at Yea to head north on one of his regular pilgrimages to the Snowy Mountains, mates providing accommodation in the area. Lucky him as the weather was encouraging; though cold, the sun was bright and burning.

Richard, on his fourth ride and keen as mustard to sign up for membership, was absolutely freezing, wearing only light summer gear. Not enough layers. Rather than suffering anymore he headed home with a promise to transfer membership fees to the Club coffers. He duly did, bringing the membership up to 85. Last year it reached 90. Richard's first ride was way back on the 15th May 2011 to Eppalock. He was back a week later to Red Rock and then went missing for months before finding us again. He is another Kawasaki man riding a 650 Versys.

As those two riders departed we picked up Vince Green and partner Kathy on the mighty XJR1300. Vince was Club President back in the 1980s for a year or so and rode a series of XJ900s. He is still

a Yamaha man I see. He looks pretty good for his age – 71 he proudly boasts - which shows the rest of us what is possible. He decided to join the ride for part of the trip – up to Caveat.

Morning tea dispensed with, most bikes fuelled up, we head for Highlands, Caveat, Merton and Euroa. Cindy is also freezing and together with Craig I suggest they stay with us until Caveat and Gobur – the fantastic uphill section and wide roads through the tree tunnels before rejoining the highway at Yarck to head home from there. Craig is still spooked by the Merton Gap twisties where he planted his CBR929 headfirst into a tree, failing to negotiate the corkscrew blind lefthander a few years ago. The 929 is now a track bike and Craig refuses to go on the road.

By the time we regroup in Euroa, we are down to 12 bikes. Vince ran out of petrol 50 km out of Yea and was last seen heading for a farmhouse to procure fuel. If only I had known as I always carry a siphon and water bottle which usually gets people out of trouble in a few minutes. Vince has probably forgotten about the “Emergency Kit” the rear rider was once obligated to carry – which included a siphon.

Easter Sunday and the Bakery in the main street is doing a roaring trade. At least they were open and were well stocked. My usual ham and salad roll was consumed in the warm but overcast conditions. We sat outside joining a few tables together – except they were concreted in to the ground. The chairs were portable.

Come time to leave and Eddie is nowhere to be seen. He eventually appears and we set off on generally less bumpy roads, covering the best bits from the morning around Caveat and Highlands before heading west towards Seymour.

Just before Seymour, I selected a new road, the Telegraph Track, cutting off 6 km of dead straight roads around Trawool before cutting across to Tallarook and down to Broadford. Historically I would have headed down to Yea and Kinglake West but with a police blitz in full operation, motorcyclists specifically targeted, I was happy to avoid this hot spot. As it was, we didn't see one police vehicle all day, the devious route worth the effort.

Alas, Broadford was closed, with nothing open, despite hosting two bakeries and various cafes. With the nominal finish of the ride at Wallan, only 30 km away, it was generally agreed that here was as good as any place to finish the ride. This provided Phill with the opportunity to head towards Strath Creek and maybe the Reefton to finish off the day. He loves riding with us.

Thanks Ed for rear riding and for the other participants who clearly are without family commitments and made the effort to come and enjoy a MSR ride together. It was a pretty enjoyable day is my overall impression.

So, the ride over, Misho, Pina and I headed down through Wandong and on to Epping where I refuelled at the 309 km mark using 17.07 litres at an average of 18.1 km/l. Brilliant!

The forecast for tomorrow looks bleak. I wonder how many intrepid souls will venture out.

Ben Warden