



## Lake Eppalock – Heathcote

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

Misho Zrakic	Honda CBR1000	Cliff Peters	Kawasaki ZX10R
Tony Stegmar	Honda CBR1000	Aiden Baker	Kawasaki ZX10R
Dave Byrne	Honda CBR1000	Dave Humphries (2 <sup>nd</sup> ride)	Suzuki Bandit 1200S
Ben Warden	Honda CBR1000	Ron Johnston	Suzuki GSX1250
Tim Emons	Honda CBR1000	Rob Langer (rear)	BMW R1150R
Michael MacRae (3 <sup>rd</sup> ride)	Honda CBR600	Geoff Jones (leader)	Yamaha R1
Jesvin George	Honda CBR600		
Pina Garasi	Honda CBR600		

*14 bikes, 14 people*

Today seemed like a day made for cyclists; they were everywhere. Cycling is a cheap way to travel and get fit at the same time. Which reminds me, the way the power bills are going, we will all be riding pushbikes in the lounge with a generator on the back wheel so we can watch telly.

Travelling along Wonga Road heading for the ride start, there were four cars in front of me and I was wondering what the hold up was. As we travelled a bit further I noticed some push bike riders. The person in the front car wouldn't pass them, even though they were riding single file and there was plenty of room to manoeuvre around them. Some people shouldn't drive cars. I saw the same thing on Arthurs Creek Road, except the cyclists were coming towards me and a lady in an X-Trail following two cyclists riding single file would not pass them, and we were the only ones on the road.

Just past the Yan Yean Reservoir someone had lost a load of used fence palings, now spread across the road, creating an unexpected slalom course. I passed a lot of postie bikes on the way as well; must be a convention somewhere because we passed more of them throughout the day.

I check the clock on the dash: time is running out. Why is it that some times, no matter how hard you try to get to somewhere, it just seems to take forever? I finally arrived at Whittlesea with quite a few people already there. After refuelling I join them, noticing the postie bikes are now parked across the road.

Today we have a new rider, Dave Humphries, on a Bandit 1200S. His bike brings back a few memories. Apparently, he first rode with the Club in 1991, and could remember Ben on the ride, and where they

went. So, this is his second ride. Ben reckons he needs to get out more. Twenty odd years between rides is stretching it a bit, but I think we will see more of him.

Geoff gets our attention and tells us there could be a couple of unmarked police cars up on the hill, and that we could go a different way, or just take a punt and go quietly. We continue as planned and don't see anything untoward. First Aid: Aiden; Scribe: me; Rob rear rider.

Tim arrives just as we are leaving, parking on the other side of the road. Pina ran over to him and told him who the rear rider was. Then we were on our way.

A law-abiding ride up to Kinglake West, From there the pace picked up. Going through Kinglake West, I thought I saw a couple of koalas, but on closer inspection it turned out to be a couple of teddy bears!

On the downhill run after Kinglake West the pace picked up even more and we passed a few cars, continuing on to Flowerdale. At Flowerdale it was a go-slow Strath Creek turnoff with heaps of loose gravel everywhere. A place looking for an accident to happen. On the Strath Creek Road some riders bunched up and went for it. I had to watch for cockatoos in groups on the side of the road, flying off at a moment's notice.

At Strath Creek we left turned and headed towards Broadford. This is usually a good road but due to lots of rain it has suffered a fair amount of damage making it unsafe in places. On the first uphill left hander, I had the back end step out. Careful! Off the throttle, then feather it for the rest of the climb up. As we came into Broadford, I notice the servo across the road is still closed. The loss of another business means we now have to travel further for fuel, making it awkward at times.

I corner marked at the top end of town. It was interesting to watch people in their cars at the intersection doing stupid things. It amazes me that there are not more accidents. Luckily, it didn't take long before the rest of the Club came through.

We bunched up for a short distance up the hill, left at the top, and were gone. As we follow the river in to Pyalong, we pass the Mollison Creek viaduct, which was part of the Heathcote Junction to Heathcote rail line. The line finally closed on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1968.

At Lancefield, fuel first and then food. Dave Byrne joined us here. Everyone was enjoying the warm sun.

The next leg of the journey was up the Burke and Wills Track which starts out great and then narrows and is rough as guts on the up-hill climb before smoothing out over the top. Eventually we turn on to the interesting Watchbox Road, a first for me. It is pretty good for the first half, but after coming off the bridge I hit a hell of a bump which knocked me out of the seat. Tim was telling me at lunch time that he watched someone get tossed out of their seat, so prepared himself for the impact by standing on the footpegs, only to have his crown jewels hammered on the tank, after sitting back down, not seeing a second bump. The road was hard to read in the shadows.

Northern Highway into Redesdale. Nothing like a bit of variety in the ride, especially on roads that I haven't been on. There were a lot of people at the Redesdale Pub for lunch. Clearly a popular place.

We found our way to the dam wall where we stopped in the car park and observed the water flowing over the spillway. It was 0.1m deep (4 inches in the old money). Lots of photos were taken, the view quite spectacular and rare. Victorian water levels were discussed.

Just before we left a gentleman on a white Suzuki Bergman scooter and a woman on a white Vespa scooter arrived. They looked very smart.

After the spillway we rejoined the highway and followed it before turning right on to the Derrinal Road to Mia Mia. This is another good road with plenty of variety. Back to Heathcote for lunch.

We parked outside the park in the normal spot opposite the bakery. I bought a chicken and salad sandwich instead of a hot pie, followed by a hedgehog chaser, washed down with coffee.

Soon it was time to go, and, as usual, I was dragging the chain. Rear rider Rob left and I had to catch him down the road. At Tooborac there were vintage cars, and not so vintage cars, on display, parked outside the pub, with lots of people in attendance.

The next section took us through Emu Flat to Pyalong before retracing our morning route down to Lancefield. Then eight kilometres of highway to Romsey before picking up the great switchback road to Wallan where the ride finished in the bus stop opposite the shops.

Another good ride with good roads, good company, good friends and good weather. Thanks Geoff for leading and Rob for rear rider duties. I forgot how many kilometres we did, but that's what happens when you leave it too long to put pen to paper. Until next time.

**Ron Johnston**