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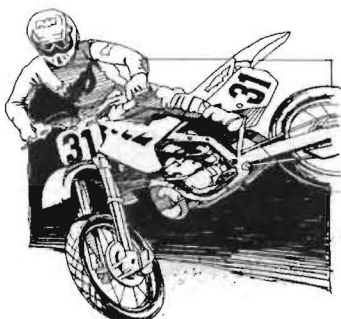
DECEMBER 2005



let those who ride decide

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M.R.A.
MOTORCYCLE RIDERS'
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COVER PHOTO: Santa's pocket rocket: the only way he can visit a billion homes in a night

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EDITORIAL

The MRA AGM in September has been one of the highlights of recent months, with a larger attendance than we've seen for a long time and all positions readily filled, many with relatively new and enthusiastic people.

This was probably due in no small part to the efforts of the SAMRATS in conducting many runs and opportunities to inform other motorcyclists of the MRA's activities and objectives. Well done, SAMRATS, and continue developing your role of being the social arm of the MRA and thereby providing both a service to our members and a means whereby other riders can learn about the MRA and come into the fold.

Many of our new committee members may not have previous experience in similar roles, and many of the roles will be quite different to those in other organizations. In either case, it will take a while to come up to speed on what the specific duties comprise, how the various roles interrelate, how we interact with the outside world, how we interact with other motorcycle groups locally, nationally and internationally, MRA protocols, policies and methodologies, unspoken codes of conduct, current and previous issues, and our basic modes of operation.

Be patient. All will become clear in the near future. Listen. Ask other committee members for information and advice. You will be supported, encouraged and appreciated.

The health of the organisation is of paramount importance. As it is a voluntary body, the committee's capacity to work together is integral to the MRA's welfare. Like the community in which we live, the MRA is a collective entity whose first objective is its own survival, and it has survived remarkably well despite some tumultuous times since it came into being in SA in 1979.

Let's continue to look out for it

Ride on, read on, and write in **Peter Mount**

O the grace some god would give us,
 To see ourselves as others see us

Robert Burns

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Harald Lindemann

The big thing for this month is the Motorcycling Road Safety Strategy 2005-2010 released last month by the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (DTEI). Whatever happened to the Department of Transport? It looks like its not important enough now for its own Minister anymore. It's not as if there aren't enough polties to go around are there? Anyway, this report comes from the Minister via the State Road Safety Advisory Council but the legwork was done by the SA Motorcycle Task Force on which the MRA has representation.

The MRSS 2005 - 2010 is a step forward for motorcycle safety in South Australia. For the first time the government has made specific commitments to improve road safety that is problematic for motorcyclists and not just lumped us in with 'other road users'. It is now up to us to keep the ball rolling and make sure that the commitments turn into results out on the road and ultimately into a decrease in the road toll for motorcyclists. It is also up to us to keep coming up with sensible ideas that will make the MRSS work.

We all know that the commitments of governments are only as good as the amount of time there is to the next election. A change of Minister puts everything on hold, sometimes for up to 12 months. A change of government stops everything, no matter how good an idea was – the attitude is, 'if the other team did it then we have to do it differently'. Getting things done takes time, but we have to keep at it.

There are some good recommendations in the MRSS, however it would be remiss of me if I did not note the following that the MRA has made issues of over the years. MRA SA has been continuously pushing for increased rider (and driver) training for many years. We even had a schools road safety training program at one stage. It proposed power-to-weight ratio instead of capacity limits for learner riders during development of the RiderSafe program in 1986. It lobbied and helped the SA Department of Transport develop a skid-resistant paint for road surfaces in 1992 (we have the photos) and has been complaining ever since that local authorities will not use it. In 1999 at a national parliamentary enquiry the MRA proposed that roadside rest areas should be made more motorcycle-friendly to encourage riders to take breaks on long trips. *(See the article on the MRSS elsewhere in this issue.)*

All of these are in the MRSS and the government has finally made a commitment to each of these issues. Maybe we finally found a government that would listen or, if I were cynical, I would say that maybe we finally found a government that provided a way in which we could make it look like it was their idea. So don't forget, it was in the Centrestand before it was in the Gazette. Whichever way, I believe that we finally have progress and it is up to us to not lose the momentum.

George Dubya obviously doesn't think much of the French. In a recent criticism of their lack of support for his policies he added, "They don't even have a word for *entrepreneur*."

SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Debbie Caudle



What a promising year this is going to be; after the AGM we have a few new faces filling positions, mine being one of them. I have the opportunity to represent all our members at the committee meeting like all committee members elected.

I am looking forward to meeting you all in time on our rides that the MRA and sub committees run through out the year. If there are any questions please do not hesitate to ask me or one of the other committee members as we are all focused on making the MRA one of the best in the country.

I have been around motorbikes for about 5 years when hubby first began riding and attending many rallies. We have 3 children and they really enjoy the family-orientated rallies that are run throughout the year. It is really fantastic to see all riders come together to organise such events as the public are becoming more aware of these rides and clubs that hold them.

I wish all a Very Merry Christmas and I look forward to meeting you all at the Toy Run this year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Fiona Kimber

This is my second year as Treasurer of the Association. I have been a member for two years now and I don't ride and don't have an interest in riding in the near future. I became a member to support my husband (currently the Membership Officer) and to help out with the Toy Run.

Since this year's AGM in September we haven't done too badly. Our current balance is double what it was at the same time last year. Membership renewals and new memberships have helped greatly as has been the payments from last year's Toy Run which I have been chasing up.

We have recently bought a new laptop to help out with membership, so this has been a bit of an expense. We are hoping for a good turnout at the Toy Run, because the money we raise is what keeps the MRA going for the rest of the year. The MRA has always needed a cash reserve to be able to organise the next Toy Run, and with financial times proving hard even for major companies and supporters, membership and stock sales may end up determining the Association's future for this event. Very few people understand the time and money it takes to make the Toy Run happen, hence we need as many people there as possible in support of the MRA and St. Yinnies. Hope to see you all at the Toy Run.

MEMBERSHIP

By Todd Kimber Membership Officer

Hi all. As this is my first membership report, you will have to be understanding of what gets mentioned and what doesn't. A quick introduction is probably necessary for those not aware of the changeover of positions at the AGM. I'm 33 years old with a wife (treasurer) and two kids. Riding history: 4 years, spent on a Z250 (currently for sale – very good condition), then a ZZR 250 (also for sale – great mileage, some fairing damage), and currently a Honda 600F (not for sale!).

A couple of minor offs at low speed in the beginning of my riding life, both with Matt and Pervy, (hmmm, might be a link there). Having avoided any serious injuries, apart from some pride, I have been lucky so far. This is partly due to the constant realisation of what can happen to motorcyclists when things go wrong (not necessarily the fault of the rider). As an Ambo I see and treat the results of all motor vehicle accidents and unfortunately we as riders fare far worse than those on four wheels. I will write a related article about my experiences and opinions for one of the next magazines.

I have been involved with the MRA for nearly 4 years and officially became a member 2 years ago having been helping out in different ways for the previous 2 years. I have learnt a lot about the MRA in that time and felt that because of that understanding and a fair whack of enthusiasm, it was time to step up and offer something more. So here it goes;

Membership Report (the real thing)

As of 2.12.05 we have 286 actively financial members. This includes 13 life members and, taking into account our total database of 574 members, comprises 49% effective membership, with 15 members not yet on the database. While numbers have improved since the AGM, there have been problems with the database in the past which has meant the loss of some data, resulting in part or full deletion of some members' details. This is the problem with trying to update a radically old system to one which will specifically suit the Association. As a result, we have a number of non-financial members which I am endeavouring to work my way through bit by bit, but it must be realised that a majority of these people have been long out of contact and have either moved or lost interest in the MRA for whatever reason. This will change!

Hundreds of phone calls and snail mails have been sent out and new systems and benefits are being put into place to remind members on a regular basis that we do appreciate their financial support and intend to let them know this in many different ways (some of you may have already noticed this). There will be a renewed look at the role the Registers play and how we as the main body can help them achieve this. A reminder to those members who have been in the MRA for 10 or more years (35 members) that a 10-year badge is available and soon we will have a 20-year badge for those (52) members dedicated enough to stick with the Association for that long and then some.

Come December 11 the best event of the year will be upon us. Toy Run 05 promises to outdo itself from last year in both weather and attendance. Given the number of people who ride the course from Glenelg to Hahndorf, the ideal

situation would be to get 20% of those who ride in the Toy Run to sign up as members. The membership tent will be as it has been in previous years: located to the left as you walk onto the oval. I would like to challenge members to bring a pillion or another rider with you and encourage them to join up. Apart from bolstering the numbers and making it an even bigger event than last year, it will help to bring new blood into the Association. Well, enough rambling from me, there will be plenty to talk about after the Toy Run. Ride smart, stay upright and enjoy the blacktop.

TORQUE ABOUT TOWN

NEW TRIKE ADR

An Australian Motor Vehicle Certification Board Working Group (AMVCB WG) was created in WA earlier this year to develop guidelines to "provide a nationally consistent set of technical specifications for the construction and modification of trikes" (from the draft *National Guidelines for Individually Constructed LE1 Motor Tricycles in Australia*). The guidelines have been completed and will be introduced as Australian Design Rule (ADR) 42.04 on Jan 1, 2006.

The Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC) was not invited to participate in the deliberations of the WG or comment on the proposal, nor was due process observed. The review of the existing ADR would normally have been undertaken by the federal Technical Liaison Group (TLG), on which sits the AMC's rep, Blythe Osborne. However, TLG members were not informed of the AMVCB's initiation of the review.

Trike groups and individuals across Australia are asking what prompted the establishment of the WP, why the review was initiated without their knowledge, why consultation has not occurred, why the whole process was conducted "on the quiet", and why the body set up specifically to develop and review ADRs – the TLG – was bypassed.

Kerry Walton, President of the National 3 Wheelers Association, said, "I was amazed and shocked to learn that only the WA trike construction working group compiled the document, with no communication, assistance or comment from riders in other states or territories, yet the governments of those jurisdictions have endorsed the new rules."

Former AMC Chairman, Albert Bowden, was responsible for developing the first design standards for trikes in 1992, and took two he had built to the state and territory authorities to argue for their recognition as a vehicle class so that they could be registered throughout Australia.

Trike builders and owners claim it is an indictment of the bureaucratic process that trike construction will be severely limited regarding design, engine, lighting, fork rake, exhaust systems, wheels, handlebars and controls. They are concerned that the cost of building a trike under the new regulations, plus the cost of certification, will make them too expensive for most people.

PRISON TERMS FOR SPEEDING

Police Commissioner Mal Hyde is calling for tougher laws with harsher penalties for motorists who deliberately engage police patrols in high-speed chases, including mandatory jail sentences for repeat offenders. He is saying that the current

traffic laws are inappropriate for this matter and should come under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act. This would make the community, courts and potential law breakers understand the criminal consequences of the offence and not treat it as a traffic offence.

The rate of high-speed chases is high: 313 in the first nine months of this year - almost one per night. One in ten results in a collision of some sort with some involving serious injury, although no fatalities so far in SA (the rider who died late last month trying to evade the police may be the first, though it wouldn't be classed as a high-speed chase.)

Current traffic laws classify the offence as failing to stop for police, which carries a maximum fine of \$1,250. At the moment many repeat offenders (many of them juveniles) are put through the system, released and offend again.

Mr Hyde makes the point that these people are endangering themselves and other road users by their behaviour. "It is more serious than just joy riding," he said. It should be noted that this almost always involves cars, not motorcycles. What do you think of Mr Hyde's comments? Let us know.

As of December 1, riders and drivers caught traveling 45 kph or more over the speed limit will lose 6 demerit points, \$500 and their licence for 6 months...Ed.

TASMANIAN MOTORCYCLE LEVY

The Tasmanian Government originally proposed to charge a levy of \$15 per year on every licensed motorcyclist to fund motorcycle road safety awareness programs. This was disputed by Tasmanian motorcycle groups as unfair as it would have meant that motorcyclists would have been the only road user group to be targeted to pay for specific user facilities or programs. Their argument was that if the program was good enough to go ahead then the government should pay for it, as that was the government's job.

Good News! After all the lobbying and an intense debate in parliament on October 13 the Bill was defeated in the Upper House. It is believed that the government will fund the programs in spite of losing the Bill. Congratulations to the Tasmanian Motorcycle Council and MRA Tas for their representation on behalf of Tasmanian motorcyclists.

POCKET BIKES

It was recently reported that pocket bikes or 'monkey bikes' as they are also known, are being investigated as to their safety standards. This is being done by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) supported by state fair trading agencies. They are investigating potentially poor-quality brakes, steering, throttle control and inadequate foot peg strength.

The investigation is supported by Honda although no information has been given as to its role in the investigation. Presumably they manufacture them as they are advising riders of these toys to wear helmets and protective clothing and to not ride in public places like roads, paths, parks etc. Members should note that these toys are not designed for road use and you definitely will get booked if the cops catch you even just having a burn on the road out side your house. Send us your stories about your experiences with pocket bikes - good and not so good.

M/C THEFTS UP OR DOWN

While motorcycle thefts across Australia in the 12 months to September this year fell by 5%, almost 600 more were stolen than in the previous 12 months (*Quick - how many thefts over the past 2 years?...Ed.*), and although the number of unrecovered bikes increased by 17%, passenger and light commercial vehicles (which includes motorcycles) still remained at 7 in every 10 missing vehicles.

The dynamics of motorcycle theft are different from those of other vehicles:

- in 2004 more than 6000 bikes were stolen (7% of all vehicle thefts) and
- less than 30% (1800) were recovered
- unlike other vehicles, newer bikes are more at risk than older ones
- the risk of multiple thefts from a single location is greater than for other vehicles
- the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) of non-registered bikes is reported in only 1 in 5 thefts notified to police

The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council, as part of its national systems enhancements program, will improve the collection and exchange of information regarding unregistered motorcycles.

NEW LICENSING RULES

The new Graduated Driver Licensing Scheme for novice drivers was introduced in SA on October 31 this year, which extends the learning (and P) period to 3 years. It is a vast improvement over the previous system, and includes more supervised hours, night driving and a computerised hazard perception test (*One can only hope motorcycles are included in this test...Ed.*). The RiderSafe training course will not be affected by the GDLS.

As a condition of MRA SA supporting the introduction of compulsory rider training in May 1987, the government agreed to our request for the simultaneous introduction of a GDLS as a means of improving both driver and rider safety. The government has reneged on this agreement until now...Ed.

'BLOODY' VOLVO DRIVER

A hit-and-run Volvo driver struck a motorcyclist and drove off with the man's severed foot lodged in his front bumper, Lancashire police said. The victim, 36-year-old Richard Shol, collided with the car when it pulled out in front of him.

The 23-year-old driver later called police when he noticed the foot wedged in his bumper. Mr Shol was taken to hospital where his leg was amputated below the knee.

NEWS SHORTS

- ♣ Bird watcher accused of storking
- ♣ Nerd couple take romantic walk along beach holding hand-helds
- ♣ Man found thinking of ex-girlfriend during sex
- ♣ Woman caught doing things tomorrow that should have been done today

ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

By Peter Goodrich Road Safety Officer

Advanced Rider Training

Two equally important issues are involved: road safety and freedom of choice. They are interrelated as the most efficient method of increasing road safety is to legislate and enforce which reduces freedom of choice. Our aim should be to improve road safety without reducing freedom of choice. This is a difficult task due to the personalities involved. Some people in positions of power and influence desire to take the easy option and legislate against bike riders. This we must challenge at every opportunity.

How many times do we hear somebody telling us to slow down, bikes are dangerous or hear on the news of another bike fatality, but how many of us actually listen to it? Not many. If we did, we wouldn't be riding. Every now and then some bright spark comes up with a new law, rule or brilliant idea to force us to pay attention. The truth is we already know and cringe every time we hear of one of our mates getting killed, but to continually harangue us with well-intentioned controls just makes most of us want to go the other way.

Two important issues affect our riding. One is law enforcement. Although many would argue to the contrary, if the cops weren't there a lot more fatalities could be expected. The other is our own sense that tells us what is safe. We know of the dangers on the road and adjust our riding accordingly despite the opinions of other road users. Knowing what is safe is the key element for us on the road. Bikers pride themselves on being better road users than drivers. However, when pride turns to arrogance we can come unstuck. We can trust our abilities too much and start taking risks. Small mistakes whilst riding is an indicator. Getting booked for a traffic offence is a big indicator. Questioning one's own riding style and choices is good practice. This alone should be sufficient for most experienced riders and probably is normal practice. Could be a good reason why they are still riding. Many other riders don't have the experience. What do we do, continue riding and hope all will be well or seek information and advice on improving riding techniques? I'd rather the latter. I enjoy riding incredibly. If information or training can help me enjoy the ride more, then I want it.

I recently attended an advanced riding course conducted by Road Skills at Mallala racetrack. Apart from learning valuable skills, I thoroughly enjoyed it. The course took me from being apprehensive to "really" enjoying the Great Ocean Road. OK, it wasn't that dramatic in one short day, but it did teach skills in such a way that for weeks after, on each ride, one could improve just a little more.

How important is training when it comes to safety? To give some perspective, according to the "Motorcycling Road Safety Strategy 2005-2010" just released, (www.dte.sa.gov.au/pdf/mcsafety2.pdf) a dramatic drop in road fatalities occurred after the introduction of the RiderSafe Program in 1987: from 42 in 1987 to 14 in 1992. It seems rider training has the greatest effect on road safety than any other initiative. Caution though as the numbers are increasing: 21 in 2004 and 18 so far in 2005.

MRA TOY RUN

DECEMBER 11

ANZAC HIGHWAY GLENELG

LEAVES 11 a.m. SHARP

BBQ BREAKFAST FROM 8 a.m.

Toy or gold coin donation for St. Vincent
de Paul at Hahndorf Oval

Band Stalls Food Kids' stuff

If large numbers of riders attend the advanced riding course it is reasonable to assume that rider fatalities will fall proportionately. Therefore not only I but a number of other more experienced and knowledgeable riders recommend attending the course at the earliest opportunity. Book a place on the Road Skills web site www.roadskills.com.au or email me and I'll organise courses through Road Skills, probably early next year. For those who wish to go further, Road Skills' *Track Day Riding Skills* continues where the advanced course leaves off. A number of other training courses (eg. First Aid) are also in the pipeline. Check the MRASA web site periodically for news.

If we want to keep the pride of being excellent road users, then just believing it isn't enough. We need to prove it. It is up to us to take control of the situation. The first place to start is ourselves. While we do that, tackling all the other problems of road hazards (bad roads, traffic, etc) will continue through the relevant governing bodies.

SAMRATS

By Bryan White Coordinator

MotoGP Run October 12 - 18

The ride started at the Toll Gate 8 am on Wednesday 12th in perfect weather. Our stay in Ballarat was the last time we were to have soft beds for the next few days - a small price to pay for staying less than 50 metres from the hallowed ground of the MotoGP. We can recommend the accommodation at the Windmill Holiday Resort, and the 10 of us managed to get it for \$24.50 each.

Thursday morning and everyone was up and out at the crack of dawn... Oh, not Jodie! She left her toiletries behind. Soon enough we were on the road and making good time. Matt and Todd headed to Laverton to see the military museum while the rest of the group went on the Western Ring Road and down to the track. Apart from a small incident of a truckie who wanted my bike as an ornament everyone thought the ride down to the island was fantastic. Rain earlier that week made sections of the campsite like potters clay. A security guard suggested we set up next to the fence due to a severe wind warning, which gave us something to display the SAMRATS banner on.

Friday morning the track comes alive with the sound of bikes and you know all at once why you are there. Up with the merchandise and display stands and this is how it is for all 3 days...bikes during the day and partying at night!

Although the racing on Sunday was fantastic we also came to spread Tim Hunt's ashes at Turn One. Taking his ashes to the Island was one of the hardest things I have done but it was a promise I had made and I know Tim will be at the Island whenever we go there. Turn One will forever be special to SAMRATS. Tim was a Rossi fan so it was great that he won the race.

Huge thanks to everyone who came to the MotoGP with the SAMRATS. We look forward to your company again in 2006. Photos at:
http://www.mrasa.asn.au/gallery/view_album.php?set_albumName=album23

5 Ferries Run Nov 13

While riders and pillions registered for the ride at Povey Motors and bought bear pins from the Leukaemia Foundation staff to raise money for research and treatment, WIMA Fairies Jen & Jaquie were issuing the poker hands. We had riders pillions from SAMRATS, WIMA, Ulysses Adelaide and Torrens Valley, Cruzn, Christian Motorcycle Riders, GRRR and several other clubs. Mark from Docteur Desmo turned quite a few heads with the new Moto Guzzi, Brevia V 1100, and his pillion Louise from Coffs Harbour easily won the distance award. There were many amusing stories of how everyone came in from different directions and missed intersections.

Prior to hitting the road at 10 am we had a briefing which included advice regarding adherence to the road rules, then the 80 riders and 20 pillions spilled out on to N.E. road and Jock on the trusty 1500 Valkerie settled into the tail-end-Charlie job to watch out for learners Joyce wife Sue and for any problems we might have. The roads were clear and, despite the wind, we made good time to Sedan for a quick stretch and regroup. With the ferries only about 35 kms apart we didn't get too spread out.

There were so many bikes that 3 ferry loads were required to get the group over the river at every crossing, with poker hand cards dealt out at Swan Reach, Walker's Flat and Mannum, where the Foundation staff fed 100 hungry and thirsty riders. After a cake raffle it was a short ride to Jervois and the Wellington ferry, then to Langhorne creek for the last deal. Tony Wood won and donated it back to the Foundation, with Pater Goodrich 2nd and Darren Parker 3rd.

Note from a learner (Joyce):

It was an amazing experience. First and most importantly we raised money for the Leukaemia Foundation. Secondly I have been a part of a day where I felt supported and safe and had the privilege of learning from riders by direct advice or from observation. Thanks for your patience and allowing me to be part of the best motorcycling classroom yet. If this is what the motorcycling fraternity is about I am now proud to be a part of it. SAMRATS is developing into its own and how it was envisioned just a few short years ago.

Note from Tracey Clegg and staff of Leukaemia Foundation: The Leukaemia Foundation was proud to be part of Ride for a Cure. It was fantastic to see around 100 riders for the day, who managed to raise total of \$1154.20 through registrations, the sausage sizzle and raffle. This is a fantastic total and shows just what can be achieved from your support.

The money will be used to continue providing practical support to patients and families through our patient transport service, accommodation units and educational support, and to fund research into better treatments and cures.

Next Run: December 18 Xmas party at National Motor Museum Birdwood. All vehicles can park on the lawn in the museum's grounds. Entry fees for our SAMRATS group are \$4 per bike and \$6.50 per car. If you have children bring a small gift as we are arranging for Santa to be there. Meet at BP West Tce for a departure at 10 am. Bring meat, salad, footy, cricket stuff, family if coming up in the car.

Correction: In the September *Centrestand* p.5 the picture of "Joyce" was actually Jackie on Joyce's bike.

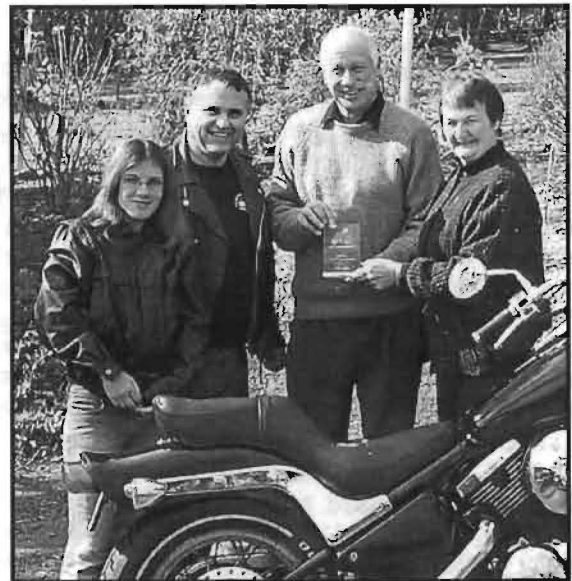
TOY RUN REPORT

By Paul Morgan Coordinator

Now is the time to get your bike serviced, cleaned, decorated and toy securely strapped on. The run leaves at 11 a.m. sharp, so get down to the Bay early. For the safety of everyone, please follow the instructions of the marshals, SES and the police, both at the Bay and Hahndorf oval. Remember they are there for your safety.

Once at the oval, park your bike as quickly as possible; this will avoid any hold-ups and get everyone into the oval safely. After parking your bike, make your way to the main oval and hand your toys to St Vincent de Paul who will be near the stage. If you want to buy a badge or T-shirt etc. these are available at the MRA stock tent next to the BBQ.

Remember, the one-way into the oval will be in effect until 1.00 p.m. so please do not leave the oval until after this time.



Katherine, David, Russell and Gayle

David and Katherine Vaselli made a special trip to Hahndorf to present a Toy Run trophy to Russell and Gayle Grivell.

Russell has made available one of his paddocks for car parking ever since the Toy Run has been at Hahndorf.

We would like to thank Russell and Gayle for helping making the Toy Run the success it is.

Motorcycle Safety Strategy 2005 - 2010

By Harald Lindemann

Mid November the SA Government released the *Motorcycling Road Safety Strategy 2005 - 2010* (MRSS). This has been on the drawing board for about 18 months and comes out of the Motorcycle Task Force set up about two years ago.

The major objective of the MRSS is to reduce motorcycle deaths by 40% by the year 2010. This is to be achieved by:

- SAFER ROADS – improving roads and roadsides and addressing issues at specific locations.
- SAFER PEOPLE – ensuring road users have the necessary attitude and skills: ensuring compliance with legislation (in particular, speeding, drink driving and non-use of restraints); and educating all road users.
- SAFER VEHICLES – promoting new vehicle safety standards and technology.”

The MRSS has a number of interesting facts and figures. For instance, in SA the number of registered motorcycles has fallen from 32,445 in 1991 to 26,320 in 2004. However, the number of fatalities per 100,000 kms has increased, mainly in the 26-39 age group (+57%). Overall this is nearly twice the fatalities compared with other OECD countries. Motorcycles account for less than 1% of kms travelled, but 10% of all fatalities and serious injuries. Of all the states and territories SA has the second-highest fatality rate. Unlicensed riders account for 8% of all fatalities and 27% were over the legal BAC limit. There are a lot more so check it out on www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/safety/mcsafety2.pdf.

Some recommendations:

POWER-TO-WEIGHT RATIO

As of 14.11.05 the 250cc rule will no longer apply. Learners will be allowed to choose a bike that suits them from most bikes under 250cc and around 60 bikes over 260cc to a limit of 660cc. These will include old favourites like the BMW F650 series, the Bultaco Sherpa, the BSA Thunderbolt and Norton Dominator 88 and 90 as well as the Cossack 650 and the Dneiper K650. For the full list visit www.dtei.sa.gov.au These all have the required power-to weight ratio of 150 kw/tonne.

SKID RESISTANT PAINT

The use of high skid-resistant water-based paint for road markings will be increased.

RIDER TRAINING

Improve the opportunities for new riders to continue their skills training after Ridersafe Levels 1 and 2 by introducing a Level 3 advanced training component, allowing returning motorcyclists access to Ridersafe to refresh their skills.

IMPROVE ROAD DESIGN

Apply the AustRoads *Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice Part 15: Motorcycle Safety* in State and local government road designs.

Vision Zero - or is it zero vision?

By Les Dicker

For some years now I've been getting stuck into the policy of Vision Zero which has been bandied about by various groups and some so-called experts as a cure-all for the road safety problems in this country, so it was with considerable interest that I went along to a seminar conducted by the Australasian College of Road Safety (SA) which featured Professor Claes Tingvall from Sweden, the originator of this proposal.

I had what I thought was the perfect argument to shoot it down in flames. I was going to use the fact that one of the most prominent road fatalities in Australian history was when the composer Isaac Nathan was run down by a tram in Sydney. I would then point out that as this event happened in the 1860s it would have been a horse drawn tram! Therefore, as surely as there have been road crash victims prior to the invention of motorised transport, the concept of no road deaths as proposed by V Zero would be a nonsense!

I never got an opportunity to use this argument as the good Professor Tingvall opened his address by saying that having no road fatalities was impossible! The idea of Vision Zero was to give us an ideal goal to aim for even though it was impractical. He explained that the rationale was to construct a clear road safety philosophy which eliminates the present mismatch in road transport systems. The old system of blaming the victims, i.e. the road users, was allowing an unacceptable trade-off of human life. There were unclear road safety philosophies worldwide despite the high risks of road travel and there was no strong driving force for change such as we've seen in the environmental movement.

Traffic safety is a shared responsibility and human life is paramount, and there can be no trade-off against other benefits. The limiting factor in the design of road safety systems is human failure, but citizens demand that life and health be secure. This demand should be the main driving force for change, therefore the citizens must be in the loop when designing and implementing road safety policies.

The principle of Vision Zero for road safety and planning was accepted by the Swedish Parliament in 1997. The initial improvements have been slow coming, and the projected target of 50% reduction in road trauma by 2007 is unlikely to be achieved; however, there has been a reduction of 10% p.a. over the last 2 years.

Professor Tingvall gave some examples of positive actions to promote road safety, such as informing the public of the safety features of various vehicles and their advantages over others and getting public transport and haulage companies involved by using financial incentives to make it in their interest to behave in a more responsible manner.

The most significant point made in favour of this policy was that all road user groups would have an equal say in determining policies relating to their area, and that no group could run an agenda against other groups. In other words, the authorities need to listen to the road users and take their concerns seriously. If that were to be done here there could be more real advances in road safety. We as a motorcycle lobby group could then work more effectively. Most of our time now is taken up with fighting off silly ideas proposed

by non-motorcyclists, which various governments then put into legislation without consultation with us or any other motorcycling organisations.

I don't know if the politicians are interested in this proposal. I did not notice any at this seminar, so maybe they are happy with the current policies. After all, they are working so well, aren't they?

MRA CHRISTMAS BREAKUP
SOMERSET HOTEL
BRIDGE RD PARA HILLS
7 pm December 19

“UNDER-RATED”

By Greg Stevens MRA Mid-North Register Sec

That was the name a group of riders decided to call themselves as part of the “Relay for Life” cancer fundraising program. What started as a couple of riders taking some stress relief from work turned into 9 motorcyclists, 2 pillions and 2 backup vehicles traveling 3000 km to Uluru and back over a 5-day period.

The riders were Steve Woolley (Honda 750/4), Brendon Corby and son Nick (Yamaha 1300. Both work for Clare and Gilbert which generously donated a council vehicle and large trailer for the trip), Larry Vasek and brother Pavel ((Yamaha 1600. See Larry's Takeaway in Clare), Russell McGregor (Kawa 1500), Mark Hill (Ninja 250) and wife Janet in the council vehicle, Rob Watts (BMW 1100. Rob raised \$2200 from the Balaklava community), Peter Prowse (Harley 1200. See Pete's Tyres/BP Clare), Tony Eckerman, Leanne Schirmer, Greg Martin and brother Tim in council and own vehicles, and me and Robin MacInerny on my Yamaha 900.

We left Clare on August 25 with the first stop at Pt Pirie for an ABC radio interview, on to the ‘Gutta for lunch, Spud's Roadhouse at Pimba and Glendambo for a much-needed sleep. Next day, despite a fierce headwind, only a few bikes needed a fuel top-up from the backups to get to Coober Pedy for breakfast, and from there to Marla with our numb bums.

Over the border to Kulgera, Eridunda, Curtin Springs and finally Uluru, with just under 1000 km covered. That night we had hot showers, cold drinks, and raised more money for cancer research. We couldn't clime the Rock due to rain, but we saw the Olgas inlow cloud, and stayed 2 nights at Uluru free thanks to “Relay for Life” sponsorship by King's Canyon Resort.

Next day we headed back early and made good progress (and fuel consumption) with the wind behind us. We made Coober Pedy by 4 pm and stayed at the Oasis Caravan Park and it was great; some went for a look around town while others just relaxed and all the time we were making money for cancer research. The following day we headed back along our original route to our homes.

Overall the group raised \$5000 and a great time was had by all of us. If If the run is on again next year I would recommend it to anyone who owns a motorcycle to join us.

A 4Bs ROMANCE

By Phil McClelland

This isn't a true romance story, but I met a wonderful lady last week.

Her name is Beth White and she lives in Moonta Bay. Beth is 73 and was in the Royal Adelaide Hospital after breaking her left leg learning to ride a motorbike.

I am a member of Motorcycle Riders Association, and I participate in the 4B's. I call into the RAH on Friday afternoons to visit riders who have become eligible for the attentions of the MRA's “Bent and Buckled Bikers Brigade”.

Beth was one of three riders I visited that afternoon. All had leg injuries. The details of the accidents that caused them to be in hospital are of interest to us. The data may help to predict trends or identify black spots. The MRA is especially well-suited to having input into forums for rider safety. Rider safety is a priority and being a politically active body means we get a hearing at many levels beyond the ability or interest of most purely social riding clubs.

Beth was being taught to ride a 50cc scooter by her husband on roads in a new housing estate. Basics took a while, then she was away. Half an hour of navigating the roads and cul-de-sacs was thought by the coach to be enough for a first-time ride. Beth, however, was having fun. The hard part was done. She felt she was getting the hang of it. The joy in riding a motorbike had taken hold.

Now I am sure you know what came next. Increasing confidence took Beth into a turn faster than any novice should when riding, and when you are on a scooter and you encounter a deep layer of loose gravel, it is time to reach for the mobile phone.

Beth hopes to be able to leave hospital soon. The physio has set a goal of being mobile enough to climb a single step unaided. Her main concern is being able to resume her active life wearing a knee brace. Beth's lawn bowls teammates are supportive and confident she will be back playing soon. The bike lessons may be shelved, but the willingness to have a go at enjoying life is still there.

The bonus for me is meeting wonderful people like Beth. The good news is that Beth will be home to enjoy Christmas with her grandchildren and can watch them ride their bikes. I just hope no-one else in her family becomes eligible for a 4B's visit.

$fx = 6x + 3$ walks into a bar.

Goes up to the barman and asks, “Can I have a couple of sandwiches, please?”

The barman replies,

“Sorry mate, we don't cater for functions”

Ochre's Piddle Puddles

By Ochre the Dog

NooooooooOOOOOooooo dad's hired-a-busa , i told him to get mick's bike , i said i wanted mick's bike, even that funny little guy who looks like a monkey's bike would have been better than that thing. Dad let me out front to have a look at it i went "SO" and went across the road to have a widdle. i said that i would not ride it becos it looks bad it looks soooo bad i will not even widdle on it so there dad phhhhlilt!

Dad has been keeping himself clean lately. uncle keith says its becos he is trying to pull a bird at the pub. dad threw a can of beer at uncle keith (his aim is getting better) i said dad does not need to go to the pub to get a bird Jedda got one last week and it should smell just about right now. dad gave me a boot up the bum for bringing it inside but i got dad back by hiding his tucker that he left on the sink in my tummy and uncle keith makes dad open all the cans from now on.

I am getting ready for santa. he allready nos what i want i want a new chewy and a blankie and lots and lots of bones. just becos dad said i can't have any more bones doesn't mean santa will not stop giving them to me. Santa is cool. I have to go becos dad broke the 'puta keyboard last week he said i did it when he was at work but i told santa it was dad.

Bye. woof woof woof.

P.S. i hope dad bins his new bike!

The English Language

Let's face it -- English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?

If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend, that you comb through annals of history but not a single annal? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it? If teachers taught, why didn't preacher praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? If you wrote a letter, perhaps you bote your tongue?

In what kind of language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell? Park on driveways and drive on parkways? How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and wise guy are opposites? How can overlook and oversee be opposites, while quite a lot and quite a few are alike? How can the weather be hot as Hell one day and cold as Hell another?

Have you noticed that we talk about certain things only when they are absent? Have you ever seen a horseful carriage or a strapful gown? Met a sung hero or experienced requited love? Have you ever run into someone who was combobulated, grunted, ruly or peccable? And where are all those people who ARE spring chickens or who would ACTUALLY hurt a fly?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all). That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And why, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I end it.

Author unknown

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