

A day of better weather helped to bring out 30 riders and a couple of pillions for Jim's once a year ride to Tailem Bend. This year Jim had to be away on this Sunday so Andy took over and did a great job leading us to Tailem Bend for lunch and then to Mount Barker for afternoon tea. The more favorable weather gave us no rain all day with very little wind and although it was cloudy most of the day the sun did come out for a while and the temperature was between 18 and 20 making for a pleasant day. We had the usual crew of riders and about 10 new riders to welcome on their first Samrats ride including 4 new women making the gender balance a bit less dominated by blokes.

After the safety talk we took off from Belair BP south along Main Rd which we followed through Blackwood, Coro Valley, then into the twisties past Cherry Gardens, Chandlers Hill then around the twisties down into Clarendon. Next leg was Kangarilla Rd to Meadows where we had a quick toilet stop and then instead of taking the usual Bull Creek or Paris Creek Rd out of Meadows we went left to Macclesfield which is a great 10 klms of motor cycling road. As all roads in the south lead to Strathalbyn we turned right at Macclesfield and went to Strath along what was once a great road for motor cycling until the road surface deteriorated so badly that even with the lowered speed limit the safety of this section for motor cycling is questionable. Morning tea was at our traditional Railway Park stop where the new toilets are finally open. After a leisurely morning tea in the sunshine we left Strath via the Mount Barker Rd and travelled north until Wistow where we turned right onto Wellington Rd to Woodchester, then a left turn to Langhorne Creek. All these roads being great for motor cycling made for a nice circuit to Langhorne Creek. Andy then made it a free ride to Wellington Ferry for those who wanted to be free of the restrictions of the ride group to regroup on the other side of the river. The tail end of the ride came in only about 15 minutes after the front of the group and once we were all across the river we picked up the SE Princes Highway and turned left into Tailem Bend which is named after the bend in the river but no one knows what the origin of the word Tailem means. About 5 riders did not stop for lunch and took off their separate ways as we arrived at Tailem for lunch.

Andy had phoned the pub overlooking the river saying we had about 25 for lunch and we settled in on one long table for a leisurely lunch which always takes a while with so many to serve. The food was excellent as usual and we spent about an hour over lunch. A visit across the road to the Shell servo for a fuel up was next on the agenda and then we went to Jervois Ferry to cross the river. About 10 riders headed for home down the freeway leaving about 15 of us to carry on for the afternoon ride. A bit of confusion as to which way to the Jervois Ferry led to us crossing on 2 ferries and regrouping on the other side. We then headed towards Murray Bridge but turned left at Swanport and took some back roads to bypass the township to meet up with the Old Princes Highway which is a great ride to Nairne and on this day this section was not windy like it usually is. A few klms out of Nairne we turned left onto Bald Hill Rd and came into Mount Barker from the east where we stopped at the usual Café for afternoon tea. We had planned on a longer afternoon ride but the long lunch meant we rocked up to afternoon tea about 4pm which was a long enough day ride for most of us.

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A great ride day with everyone seeming to enjoy themselves a lot and having a good fun time. Many thanks to Andy for leading the ride, to all the riders who came out on the day, and we hope to see some of the new riders out with us again soon.

Ken King Samrats Coordinator