

March 2000



▶▶ *TOY RUN 1999* ▶▶ *Front Number Plate Saga*

▶▶ *A Day in the life of a Motorbike Cop*



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MRA

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION Inc

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COVER PHOTO

Toy Run 1999 courtesy of
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.....from the editor.....

Surprise! Well I am sure that some of you nearly choked on your tea when the postie delivered your Centrestand! I hope you aren't too disappointed. I know there is a distinct lack of whizz bang graphics, but I am working on it!

So we've made it to another year, THE year, 2000. What a fizzler! Who was expecting aeroplanes to fall out of the sky, nuclear reactors to meltdown or your microwave to teleport itself (whoops, wrong century). And how many of you spent the MOST exciting time of the year staring at your computer to see if it was Y2K'able! (and did you feel silly?) Well you are not alone.

Talking of alone, it appears that a lone policeman is making quite a name for himself, and what a furore it is causing. No doubt you have heard of the number plate saga, well get the low down on page 7.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for their contributions (I still have some stashed away for the June edition). So keep the letters & stories rolling in with LOTS of photos. I welcome any comments or suggestions you have on the new format & I look forward to hearing from you all. (PS, see you on the Rivergum Rally) -Ashley



MRA SA Notes & Stuff

Run 2000

RUN 2000

The first in the series of MRA runs for the RUN 2000 badge will be held on 12th March. This will be a Poker Run of about 110km and will leave from Povey Motors, 140a Tolley Road, St Agnes at 10am finishing at Kersbrook Tavern for lunch. Cost will be \$5 per hand (does not include lunch). Don't forget to fill in the form (the insert in the Centrestand) to have your distance recorded for the Millennium Badge. This is an ideal run for learners & 250cc bikes in general (guess who is going to wobble her way there!) For more information call David Povey at 8265-5388. See you there



IN BRIEF

MRA SA Members are being offered access to all the discounts that MRAA members receive in Victoria. With WSB at Phillip Island coming up, this is a very welcome offer from our counterparts in the MRAA. Thanks Guys!

MRAA has also advised us that for anyone going to the Melbourne Formula 1 GP on March 9, 10, 11 & 12 by Bike, the MRAA has 2 supervised Motorcycle parks with luggage storage facilities.

The parks are located

1) Just off Fitzroy St in St Kilda
2) Cnr Albert rd and Kings Way
Cost: \$5 per bike (Supervision from 7 am to 7 pm each day)

Luggage: \$2 per item eg helmet or jacket. For any MRA members (ACT, TAS, SA, WA, VIC, Townsville) luggage storage is free upon presentation of a valid MRA membership card

Also, this year, the MRAA is providing supervised parking of bicycles as well. Cost: \$2 per bicycle. The proceeds of the parking go to help fund the MRAA.

On top of that, MRAA have advised us that they are organising a trip up to the Easter Bathurst Races. Anyone interested in joining this run can contact either Dale (MRA SA) on 0413 721 923, or email Garry at the MRAA direct at Swirlball@aol.com

STAR BEARS RALLY

This is actually a day run which is organised by the Star Bear Foundation Inc. a grief support program for the children of SA. This is a non-profit charity which funds counselling and support for bereaved children and their parents and opportunities such as camps and other sharing experiences to help children come to grips with the death of a loved one.

It will be held on Sunday March 5th leaving Westfield Marion Shopping Centre at 10am heading for Warland Reserve at Victor Harbor. Cost is \$5 per vehicle.



At Victor there will be a band, rides for kids, food stalls and displays. You can also meet the Star Bear. This run will include cars and other four wheeled vehicles.

Enquiries to Sandra on 8322 4574 (h) and 8416 5240 (w).

SNIPPET

MRA SA will shortly be holding a Basic Bike maintenance night. Date & Venue TBD.



Keep an eye on the bike shops for this upcoming event.

SCRIBBLES

We have introduced 'Scribbles'. A new column specifically for readers letters, on page 15. Scribbles can only continue with your support & submissions.

So please put pen to paper & send us your views or put finger to keyboard & e-mail them to us at editor@mrassa.asn.au
Ashley - The Editor

MRA ROAD RUNNERS

Every year Uncle Pervie wends his lonely way from the City to the Bay in the famous 12k Adelaide fun-run. He waves the flag by wearing an MRA T-shirt and sometimes even gets noticed by the TV cameras.



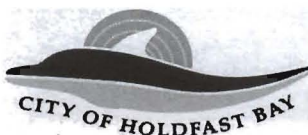
This year some of us have decided to join him by forming an MRA fun-run team.

So if you have an inclination to join us to walk, run or glide to the Bay in September let Coach Les Dicker know on 08 8262-2209 and he will note your particulars.

With enough of us running in a group wearing MRA t-shirts all those tin-top drivers couldn't miss us. It would be a first. A supporters team would also be nice.

If enough people get involved we might even organise a BBQ after the event.

TOY RUN SPONSORS 1999





Residents Report

Welcome to the year 2000. I bet you all just can't wait for that countdown to the end of the year and the 2nd Millennium. Of course we aren't in the new Millennium yet, that was just the practice blast to make sure we could handle it. Besides, nothing has changed. The air we breathe still smells, politicians still mouth the same old platitudes and bikers are still being unnecessarily slammed. Admittedly, Bill Clinton hasn't been as active this year and in previous ones, but give him time. Wait for Al to become President first.

But I mentioned bikers being slammed. There is a definite push on in certain circles, namely the police, under the guise of road safety, to bring back front number plates for bikes. This is ironic because we were successful in arguing front number plates away on road safety issues. It is interesting to see that front number plates have become a safety issue now that police statistics have shown that too many (according to them) are slipping through the speed cameras by being photographed from the front. More on this issue in Peter Mount's column elsewhere in the Centrestand.

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Peter is representing SA motorcyclists on the Road Safety Consultative Group which will be making recommendations on this issue to the SA Road Safety Executive Group and so on up. Hopefully we can nip this retrograde idea in the bud and have the Group start dealing with some positive road safety initiatives like DRIVER TRAINING.

Interesting also is that the Perth City Council has just banned motorcycle parking in car parking bays in the city precincts. Yes, this means you. Designated bike parking bays are all right but anywhere else will cop a \$65 fine and this includes ticket meters. So even if you pay for the use of the space as a legitimate road user you will still get pinged. This comes just after the provision of 24 new bike parking spots in the adjoining suburb of Northbridge. A fairly nonsensical piece of logic it seems to me. So if you are planning a biking holiday anywhere but Perth, why not write to the Perth City Council telling them why you will not be choosing sunny, friendly Perth as your preferred destination. It will help our MRA colleagues over there in their fight with the PCC.

Coming up for the MRA SA, the Riverland Run 25 March (counts for the RUN 2000), Great Escape Rally 8-9 April, MRA Raffle 2000, Mother's Day Run 14 May, Share the Warmth Run 6 June, as well as a couple of RUN 2000 outings.

See you there.

Stay Upright, Harald

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE TOYS?

You've survived the run up, had a drink, got your badge, "asked" the big guy in red why your new bike didn't turn up last year and handed your toy over and the last you saw of it was in a cage being loaded onto the trucks.

Well what happens to the toys after that?

Firstly the toys are unloaded onto the floor of the storeroom at St Vincent de Pauls Edwardstown complex. Then the toys are sorted, mainly new from old, the categorised e.g. water pistols, jigsaw puzzles, toy cars and the inevitable fluffy stuff.

Sean McPherson

Then the wrapped gifts are unwrapped (sorry to those people who spend so much time doing it, but some heartless bastards wrapped up Ratsack and the likes in previous years!)

Then the toys are allotted to the various conferences in age grouping and sex, the toys are selected by a group of people, so that each area gets fairness of choice. The toys are then bagged and sent to the areas for distribution prior to Christmas.

The "used" toys are put to one side as only new toys are given at Christmas

and the others are used as gifts during Birthdays etc.

Overall the amount of toys has gone down, but the quality has gone up, so keep up the good work, and do what I do, buy toys early on in the year, and you won't have to worry about it when you can least afford it.

(Sean's idea is to buy cheap Walkmans which are fantastic for Boys AND Girls... Cars and water pistols are great toys for boys, but lets not forget the Girls in future. Thanks - Editor)

Where are YOU?



Membership Number

Name

2003	David Alm
3365	John Best
3807	Alan Boldock
3755	Sue Bolin
3239	Jennifer Brandejsky
3775	Ian Brock
3705	Greg Butler
938	Ian Buys
3796	Wayne Carvosso
5025	Lee Clark
3548	Darryl Cutting
3561	Robert Darby
1131	Adrian Dormer
3783	Anthony Eglinton
3669	Ian Hammond
3457	Russell Johnson
5080	Mark Jonas
5017	Dennis Leader
3887	Herb Mack
3650	Andrew Mathias
3552	Ryan Merrett
2493	Jamie Moore
3637	Peter Naujoks
3722	Etienne Odwell
3500	Robert Quinn
3815	Gareth Thomas
3191	Roy Thompson
3158	Craig Vesey
3641	Ashley Ward
3448	Tim Weiss
3659	Mark Wood
3583	Michael Worthington
3629	John Wozniak
3738	John Zarb

IF YOUR NAME IS ON THIS LIST, PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR WHEREABOUTS.

PERCEPTIONS

Ashley Knöote-Parke

When I last wrote this column, I was attempting to attain my learners permit. After 3 visits to RiderSafe, lo & behold, I finally became the proud holder of a license to thrill.

Cast your mind back to when you were learning. Do you remember being poop scared going around corners, and dropping your bike? (or were you too macho?) I bet you had no problem picking your bike up. (Think of me, 5ft2" & a mere 116 pounds).

Well, I confess I drive like a little old lady, they say that confidence comes with practise, humph!!, I have yet to discover this. I still have to say to myself "clutch in, back brake, uuuhhhh accelerate" (this would help, methinks). Laborious!, when does it become automatic? When do you get over the fear of being squished by a huge truck? When do you start going around a corner faster than a pedestrian? Does there come a time when you actually drive like you own the road, or is this a fallacy?

They say in the classics, I have lived to tell the story, and rumour has it that that's the key? So I bid you well and will endeavour to stay upright.

Ashley

NUMBER PLATE FIASCO

Peter Mount

SAPOL has presented a proposal to the South Australian Road Safety Consultative Group that front numberplates be reintroduced on motorcycles. Some twenty years ago the MRA successfully argued for their removal on the grounds that they constituted a danger for riders, pillion and pedestrians in the event of a crash, that motorcycles could be adequately identified by the rear plate, and that, especially with the change to transverse mounting (i.e. forward-facing), motorcycle technology, design and materials could no longer accommodate them safely.

The police now argue that "technology has progressed to such an extent that numberplates could be replaced on the front of motorcycles without the previously identified safety issues being of concern". However, the proposal fails to specify what technology, and ignores developments in motorcycle design which preclude front plates even more than when they were removed.

SAPOL's proposal relies essentially on the argument that, as "speed has been identified as a contributing factor of (sic) vehicle crashes in South Australia and speed enforcement is a major component of the road safety strategy", and radar cameras are unable to identify speeding riders when photographed from the front, the reintroduction of front plates would be a safety measure which would benefit riders.

Nevertheless, it appears that none of the reasons for their initial removal have altered except to strengthen the argument against their use. Even if a place on a fairing for a stick-on one could be found, as the police have suggested, not all bikes have fairings. Trail riders still bend their rear plates in to avoid being lacerated in a crash, and front plates would only double the risk of injury.

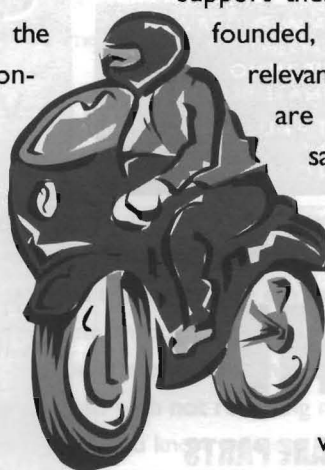
The police say 580 unidentified riders were found to be speeding between July and November last year, but fail to give this figure any statistical significance by saying how many riders overall were booked, or how

many drivers were photographed from the front but unidentified due to illegible plates. They also imply that motorcyclists speed much more frequently and excessively than the average for all vehicles, yet the average speed in excess of the limit for motorcyclists is 13.6 kph compared with 13.1 kph for all others. Does this insignificant difference justify such a draconian proposal? On the other hand, it does represent lost revenue of about \$58,000...

The police claim motorcyclists are 20 times more at risk than drivers, but of 140 deaths last year, 13 were motorcyclists and, when registration differentials are accounted for, the risk becomes two times, not 20. It is also of interest that of 468 reported motorcycle crashes last year, in only 10 was speed listed as the causal factor.

The police have used many other arguments to support their case, most of them vacuous, ill-founded, unsubstantiated, misleading, irrelevant or invalid. In essence, what they are trying to do is replace a proven safety initiative with a potential, and subjective, one that just happens to be an income spinner. They are also trying to "lead the nation in this road safety initiative", notwithstanding that the only countries in the world which condone front numberplates are India and China. Even speed-conscious USA and technology-conscious UK have seen more harm than value in such a move.

The RSCG has deferred discussion on the proposal until the March meeting to give the MRA time to prepare a response for prior circulation to the members. A complete report of the proposal, the MRA's response, and the recommendation of the RSCG will be in the next issue of *Centrestand*.





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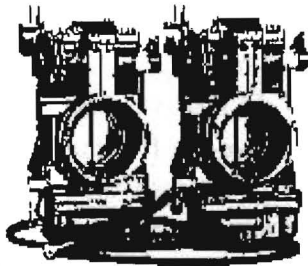


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CHAIN REACTION

Igor Trnovsky

It was Thursday before Easter and as usual, my GT 250 was parked amongst hundreds of bikes on the Western side of Hindmarsh square. Remember those days in mid 70's when bikes were used for commuting? And the Adelaide City Council provided free parking for us? Those were the days...

At about mid-afternoon it started to rain. I loathe to start riding in rain. If I get caught in a downpour, well, bad luck, you have to go through. So I decided to get a lift home and collect my bike a little later. Eventually it stopped raining in the evening, so I decided to ride my bike home. Parking space for bikes was empty apart from my solitary Suzi. Good!

After starting my 'Wundertoy', my wife left me to my own devices and drove off. Making sure the seat was dry, helmet and gloves on, I pushed the bike off the Centrestand, into first gear, clutch slowly released, revs up... and stand with my trusty steed motionless! Back into neutral, repeat the procedure but still sitting pretty, no movement.

I put my brain into overdrive trying to solve the mystery of 'non-motion' when I wanted to move as per instructions in the Rider's Manual. Was the translation into English so bad I had missed something?!

(Continued on page 14)

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STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Aiden Hanafin

W

ell, having recently taken on the role of Membership Secretary I thought that it was time that Centrestand included an article relating to membership.

As an association whose aim is to represent the needs of motorcyclists and provide an effective voice both in the public and political arenas, the MRA is dependent on the support of its members and also on the size of its membership.

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www.ibmwr.org
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www.ausmoto.com.au
Australian Motorcycle buyers guide

www.laverda.it
The Laverda official website

If you have found any cool sites worth sharing, please e-mail me the URL, Ed

To be able to lobby the various government bodies and politicians whose decisions impact on the enjoyment of the motorcycling lifestyle that we all enjoy so much the MRA must be able to show that it is truly representative of the motorcycling community, and one of the main ways that it can do this is by showing the size and commitment of its membership.

Activities such as the **Toy Run** certainly provide a very visible demonstration of the commitment of MRA members and provide a very good means of gaining press coverage, public awareness and support.

However, when it comes to dealing with politicians and particularly government bodies they are very aware of the saying '**Strength in Numbers**' and the more members a lobby group has, the more notice they take of it. This means that for the MRA to continue to be an effective voice for all motorcyclists it is very dependent on the continued support of you as members as well as always actively seeking new members.

How can you help the MRA in doing this?

Well there are a number of ways that you can help...

- Make sure that when you get your membership renewal fill it out and send it in so that we can maintain the size of our membership. I have just gone through a process of tidying up the membership database with the aim of eliminating some of the issues that members have experienced with not receiving renewals or new cards.

- If you know or meet fellow motorcyclists who are not members then tell them about the MRA and encourage them to join. Tell them about the MRA website at www.mrsa.asn.au, it has an online membership application form as well as information on the MRA, its aims and a current calendar. Well worth a visit if you haven't been there yet

- Come along to a General Meeting, Social Sips or one of the events that are advertised on the *Pick your Date* and in *Centrestand*.

If you have any queries or suggestions relating to membership please feel free to contact me on (08) 8346 4071 or email me at aidanh@sa.sybiz.com.au.

Remember that it is you as members that make the MRA.

OCHRES PIDDLE PUDDLES

I'm sore, someone chucked crackers over the fence on Christmas day and I tried to hide and hurt myself. I had to go to the vet TWICE ! But I'm getting better. But what's worse, Micks gone ! I howled and howled and howled, then I crawled under the couch and sucked my blankie.

How'd did everyone like the toy run ? Dad couldn't get Suzi started and I told him that Micks not using his anymore, maybe he should get it. Dad yelled at me !! But I hid under the couch. Dad changed the spark plugs four times then he got Suzi started and we raced down to Glenelg - it's lucky Dog's are colour blind !! We lined up and Georgia hopped on - I wasn't sure what to do, Dad's never let anyone on Suzi before! Mr Dix waved us off and someone hit us and I got scareded and had an accident on Suzi, but Dad kept us up, maybe he CAN ride after all ! (But I think he's going to get a new nickname after this !).

We got to the Oval, parked Suzi and Georgia scratched my ears - I gave her a kiss ! Dad had to give out boards for the bikes and direct traffic then we had our picture taken, but I don't know why ? We went to the Oval and walked around giving out the showbags, I talked to Santa and told him what I wanted, then Dad yelled at Santa and Santa punched Dad on the nose !

Aunty Linda took me home and I watched all the bikes coming back, but Dad wasn't on any of them. Don't forget the colouring competition Boys and Girls - the prizes are still on the fridge ! Dad hasn't noticed there's more than he said I could give away, but we won't tell him. Anyhow, I have to eat my tucker now so keep barking, stay upright and keep all paws on the tank

Ochre, Woof!



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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MOTORBIKE COP

The following article was submitted by Senior Constable Tony Grigg who is a motor cycle officer in the South Australia Police, stationed at Holden Hill in the northern suburbs of Adelaide. Having had nearly 30 years experience on Police motor cycles, he trained and spent his first few years on BSA's. He experienced the transition to Japanese machines and then to the current BMW's.

Its Saturday morning, the first of seven day shifts in a row following four days off. During my days off, I've had my bike in at Pitmans for some maintenance and have given it its usual thorough detailing. Normally we start day shift at 0700hrs, but this weekend we're starting at 0300hrs to carry out some RBT duties. Knock-off time is still 1530hrs however.

Having showered before bedding down early last night, I wake at 0220hrs and have a quick "dad 'n' dave", dress and grab a can of coke from the fridge and a couple of bananas on the way out to the garage. This is where I kit up with my leather jacket, BMW System IV helmet, radio, 'phone and gloves. Once on the bike, I press the remote button to open the garage door and anxiously watch to see if the driveway is wet or dry. Thankfully, the forecast rain hasn't arrived - yet. I fire up the K1100 and quietly sneak off into the darkness. As I bump over the kerb into the street, I notice that the rattle I've become accustomed to hearing has been silenced thanks to Greg Slattery fitting new rivets to my front brake discs. The rattle had become progressively worse of late and sounded a bit like someone chinking loose change in their pocket.

By about 0250hrs, I'm at the 'rv' (rendezvous) point with the rest of the team and there is time for a brief chat about the events of our four days off. I also sink the can of coke as we kit up ready to start RBT duty. A few minutes later Geoffrey turns up in the 'smart car' and we all chip in to set up the RBT station.

Shortly after 0300hrs, we're in operation and my very first alcotest is positive. The client and I retire to the 'smart car' where I conduct a Breathalyser test, the result of which is 0.065. The lady receives an on-the-spot fine of \$129.00 and rings her husband to come and get her. Here's an interesting twist - she's not looking forward to the tongue lashing she expects to be given by the old man.

Before I have finished processing my client, there is a line up of my mates with their clients waiting to use the breatho in the 'smart car'. After finalising the paper work, its back on to the 'line' for me and the previous scenario is repeated three more times during the morning. My stats for the session are about ninety screening tests, with four positive and of those, two were over the limit and two were under. In total there were about four hundred screening tests with seven people booked for being over the limit. This had been one of the rare occasions without a memorable incident occurring.

Packing up a little earlier than usual, we grab a quick coffee and head back to base at Holden Hill for a briefing leading up to our commitment to the Adelaide Classic car rally. A chance to catch up with a few old mates from the southern side of town - Sturt Patrol Base is taken advantage of as is the opportunity to sit with my feet up for a few minutes while demolishing a couple of bananas.

By 0745hrs we are all on our points at road closures along the 'Special Stage' of the car rally and this brings another golden opportunity to interact with the motoring public. Ninety nine percent of motorists read the situation ahead as they approach the road closures and without any drama take an alternative route. However, its a different story for the other one percent or less. Faced with a road completely barricaded and signed, they will pull across to the incorrect side of the road and expect to go around into the closed off area.

You speak to them as nicely as you can and typically, the conversation goes something like this:-
 Motorist, "Can I go up this way?"
 Me, "No you can't go up this way, the road is closed."
 Motorist, "But I have to go to....(town in the hills)."
 Me, "No problem, you can go via.....(alternative road nearby)."
 Motorist, "But I always go this way."
 Me, "There is a car rally on and the road is closed."
 Motorist, "So I can't go this way?"
 Me, "Today you can't go this way because the road is closed."
 Motorist, "So what are you saying, I can't go this way?"
 Me, "YOU CAN'T GO THIS WAY."

Following the lifting of the road closures just before noon, its back to base for a quick bite to eat, a bit of office work, on the computer for a while, ring Dave Povey, etc.

During the afternoon there is a function at a town in the hills attended by the Governor, Premier and other dignitaries. It is decided that someone should take a ride up there to make sure things runs smoothly. I put my hand up for this 'chore' as a ride through the hills would round out the shift nicely. Whilst my machine was at Pitmans, Greg also fitted a new cam chain and follower and the engine is purring like a kitten. The forecast rain still hasn't arrived although its been cool and overcast all day. The weather is perfect, overcast and dull, I don't need bright sunlight after being out of bed for as long as I have. The ride is taken at about three tenths, eastbound traffic is reasonably heavy so largely it is a matter of adjusting the screen down, sitting back enjoying some wind in the face and soaking up the atmosphere.

As expected, the function in the town is orderly so I do my obligatory Laser time in the main street. Hopefully my presence will modify the behaviour of a few motorists in order that no nasty incidents occur. (There were no vehicle accidents that afternoon - maybe it worked)

By about 1500hrs, its time for me to head for home and unfortunately the forecast rain arrives as I am about half way there. The ride is spoilt, but worse than that, all of my effort with the Autosol and ArmorAll has gone down the gurgler. Once back in my garage, I wipe off the water and road grime so that my machine will look presentable for my next shift. At this

time I remind myself of a saying used by Speed Cops - "the worst day on the bikes is better than the best day in the cars".

Speaking of the next shift, it arrives all together too soon. I shower and hit the sack at 1915hrs, but am woken at 2000hrs by someone in the street mowing their lawn. By about 2100hrs I am back in bed asleep only to be woken up by loud thunder and rain during the night. The alarm again does its thing at 0220hrs and the same process as yesterday is followed. Much to my surprise when the garage door opens, the driveway is again dry, can't believe it.

The routine of meeting the blokes, setting up the RBT station and starting testing is repeated with results similar to those of yesterday. At about 0420hrs, I stop a driver who gives a positive alcotest and when directed out of his car, nearly falls over. This guy is quite noticeably affected by alcohol, he is showing obvious faculty impairment and I decide to process him for DUI irrespective of the Breathalyser test outcome which ultimately is a reading of 0.146.

While standing with my client attending to the documents, I hear a loud "LOOK OUT!" and look up to see a Commodore thread the needle between the 'smart car' and the cop on the road whose job it is to pull traffic into the RBT station. The Commodore is doing at least 60km/h and runs straight over several traffic cones, scattering them in all directions and then continues on, accelerating while doing so. The car is pursued and stopped a couple of km away.

The driver of the Commodore is transported back to the RBT site and in due course registers 0.172 on the Breathalyser. He is given strong advice concerning the implications of re-offending and is allowed to leave the scene. However he leaves some property behind and when we pack up, the cop who chased and caught him in the first instance, decides to take the property to his car only to catch him driving off again. This time, the driver is arrested and again processed for drink driving, the result of the second Breathalyser test is 0.143, he is also found in possession of drugs and is booked for that as well.

During the two sessions of RBT, over eight hundred screening test have been conducted with fifteen persons being booked for drink driving offences. These stats do not include the second offence by the character in the Commodore.

After packing up at the RBT station, the same procedure as yesterday is followed, same road closure duty, but at different locations.

Whilst at my location, I am approached by a couple of people out on their usual Sunday morning walk. They state that they live just down the road and complain about the speed of motorists past their place. Being required to deploy the Laser gun for two hours each day, I take the opportunity to cut out some time and also to show some response to the complaint just received. In the time I am there I detect a few speedsters, they weren't outrageously over the limit however. I also check the speed of many of the rally cars on the 'parade' section of their run and not one is over the speed limit, loud yes, speeding no. Incidentally, had any of them been over the speed limit, they would be treated just like anyone else. No doubt there would have been people driving past saying "look at that revenue raising bastard, trying to pinch us poor old motorists, but doing nothing about the rich boys playing with their expensive toys."

By the time the special stage is over at about noon, it is really good to get back on the lambs wool covered seat of the K1100 and take the weight off of the feet. Once back in the office again it is much the same procedure as yesterday, but for a longer session in front of the computer due to the DUI offence.

One of my clients from RBT earlier in the day has evidently given a false name so a couple of follow-up inquiries in the afternoon round out the shift. At 1530hrs, it is time to saddle-up and head for home.



Toy Run Fun 1999

TOY RUN REPORT

Paul Morgan

The 1999 Toy Run was a great success, with over 12,000 taking part.

With the Vietnam Vets Motorcycle Club on the gates, it showed us how many people do not bring toys, the figure was in the hundreds. All the sites reported a steady trade with a few selling bikes on the day.

We must apologize for running out of drinks quite early in the afternoon, which was most unusual as we usually have quite a few cartons left over. Thanks to Kiwi who made a dash into Mt Barker to get more supplies. This year we will order more, so hopefully we will not run out

Parking at the oval was a lot better, this year it will be even better with the area to the left of the main gate smoothed and flattened.

This year's run is on Sunday, December 10. The first committee meeting is on Monday, April 17, so if you would like to be part of this year's Toy Run Committee, please come along, we need all the help we can get. The meetings are at the Maid and Magpie Hotel, Stepney at 7.00 p.m.

I would like to thank the following for their help with last years run.

- B & C Security Services (SA)
- St Vincent de Paul
- Kiwanis
- Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club
- St Johns
- Mt Barker SES
- Holdfast Bay Council
- Mt Barker Council
- Hahndorf Oval Committee
- South Australian Police

And our sponsors.

- Toll/SPD
- Aqua Vital
- Jender Hire
- Toys 'R' Us

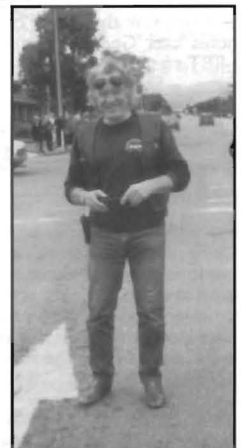
Finally, a big thanks to all the people who were on the 1999 committee, to all the marshals, Paul and Anika Levai, Les Dicker, Robyn Gaden, Georgina, Renee, Dale and Ashley Knöote-Parke and everyone else who helped on the day.

1999 Toy Run Co-ordinator

The Ed, getting ready



Marshall, the Marshall



Peter Mount...Seemingly happy with the results of sledge inspection



David Povey, Peter Mount & Santa inspecting Santas 'Sledge-Mobile'



Woof woof arwoof, pant pant, slurrp, arooooo, woof, woof & woof!

Toy Run Fun 1999



14,000 bikes ready for the off!



Even canine 'Tankions' (well Ochre's not a pillion!) require helmets



Remember the last editions cover?

MY DAY AT THE TOY RUN

Robyn Gaden

Wake up, shower, get dressed, have breakfast, get ready. Run through the list in my head. Have I forgotten anything? Pack the car (yes, I know, it's that 4 wheeled thing that takes up so much space in the drive!) Drive up to the oval, still going over my list. Oh well, it's too late now. The toys! What did I do with the TOYS???? Oh, that's right, they're on the back seat. Wave to the eager beaver bikers already on their way down to the bay, with the tinsel glittering and toys safely strapped to the bikes.

Arrive at the oval. It's 8.30am. That's good, I'm not running late! OK, let's get started. Unload the car, and park it around the back of the tent. Now, let's see. The tables have been set up for me, but I might have to move them this way just a fraction. Let's sort this stock out. What do I want on the display board? At least one of everything. Pull it out, and start pinning. Stand back, and have a look, ask someone who's racing past if it looks ok, adjust, then up go the prices. Look at my watch and gasp "Oh my god, they will be here soon!!!" Finish getting ready. Where's my hat? What did I do with it? Good, there it is, in go the batteries, turn it on. Ok, I'm flashing, I'm ready to go!!! Better have a quick bite to eat, because I know it is going to be a long time 'til I can stop to eat lunch.

The first few people start to filter through. Then I see him. There he is, in his sleigh (well, in the outfit anyway!) My peace has been shattered. Here come the hordes. How many have come in for stock, or have they heard that I'm flashing????

The next two to three hours fly by, with hardly a moment to scratch myself. Lucky I don't get itchy...Was there a band playing?? I think I saw them up on stage, but who knows? I couldn't hear them, perhaps we need a speaker just outside the tent.... Maybe not, I couldn't hear myself think as it was. I think about changing my name, as it was getting used quite a bit, but what would I change it to???? (Don't even think about answering that!)

Finally, the end of the day is nigh. The second band is still playing, but to an ever diminishing crowd. Let's pack up. Everything away. Pack up the car, and off we go to a secret location to count the profits....

It is a great day, and seeing so many familiar faces make all the aches, pains and tiredness worth it. There are so many people to thank for making it a great day, but let's thank all the motorcyclists who come along and do something to help someone they don't know.

So come again next year, and pop your head into the stock tent. You never know your luck in the big TOY RUN. I might even still be flashing!!!!

Robyn Gaden (also known as BOB)

REVEREND RITES REVEREND RITES REVEREND RITES

Giddy again. So we all survived the party of the millennium? Well, we didn't exactly have a wild party my place. We had some rellies from New Zealand and the UK here. We got drunk, watched the ABC millennium celebration coverage, and got drunker. (The coverage had such an effect that my 4 year old keeps saying "Happy New Year Sydney"). About 1 am, I got out the old records, and for the next few hours, we went on a trip through the better music of the 60's and 70's - Deep Purple, Black Sabbath, Blue Oyster Cult, Bowie, etc. Now the reason I am bring this up is that I've noticed the birth of a new millennium (in the western world, at least) has brought with it a spate of looking back as well as looking forward. We are in the middle of retro fever (much like Saturday Night Fever, without the back aches and spandex rash). I've reflected on this and bring before you this convoluted collection of musings on this phenomenon. Please enjoy, dear reader. And whilst you do, you might like to play spot the oxymoron (huh?). Answers at the end of the column.

The new game show on the ABC is based on trivia from last century. New bands are turning to old bands for inspiration. Rap artists cover old classics. We get it in clothes - in my opinion the person who thought up the idea of reviving flared pants should be buried in the sand at Glenelg beach just below the high tide line, and forced to listen to a continuous loop of Bay City Roller hits. However, if he/she confessed to being instrumental in the return of the boob tube I may choose to be lenient. Even ugg boots have made a bit of a comeback. But the humble Flanno shirt has yet to return as a fashion statement like it should.

Now I'm am a sucker for retro. I love old things (except flairs). I'm the moron who always says, on hearing new music from an old band (or even a young one) "yeah, but I liked their early stuff better". I drive a 37 year old car. I could have got a half decent Toyota Corona for the price, but a Corona just isn't in the same class as an EJ Premier. When the starter gear on

my FT broke, and I was horrified with the price of new stuff, I just fitted a kick start. (I never could figure why a basic 500cc motorcycle did not have one as standard anyway, like the SR). No bike should be without a kickstart, its one of the things old bikes had, and should have kept. I liked the old Superman. I liked the old Batman. (By the way, I wish they'd bring back Wonder Woman, although Xena is almost as good). But even Xena is a throwback. You can't have a Warrior Princess in 2000, can you. Magical powers don't exist in the age of enlightenment. It just wouldn't work.

Even motor vehicle manufacturers are into it. The new Jaguar XK. The Dodge Prowler. The new VW Beetle. (I wonder if it catches fire at any naked flames within five miles of it, just like the old one). The new Kawasaki W650. Looks almost British, feel nice, just enough vibration. Looks old, looks good. Bicycles are being made in an old fashioned cruiser style. Why? Why are the "olden days" as my kids call it, so attractive at the moment? There could be many reasons, one of which may be that the olden days are remembered selectively. We get this idea that life was simple back then. People were gentler, there was work for all, a good days work for a good days pay.

And motorcycles were reliable. Bullshit!! Perhaps they were easier to work on yourself, but not more reliable. I had a Bonnie once. It was nice to ride, cruised well at about 70 mph, sounded horny. But in the 7 months I owned it, it was off the road for 3 of them. It was unreliable, a co-op model, and never quite right.

The reality is that things had to change, things had to get better, more reliable, stronger, faster. The change is inevitable, no matter how much we kick against it. Sacrilege is committed in the name of progress and market needs. Moto Guzzi is developing a new engine. There is a sport bike with a Harley engine in it. A BMW cruiser!!!!!! (just try and convince yourself it is a beautiful motorcycle. Near bloody impossible!) And Japanese cruisers built

(Continued on page 19)



(Continued from page 8)

I decided to dismount and inspect this contrary piece of latest technology for it's stubborn refusal to move. Pushed under a streetlight, I gave it a good looking over. Nothing untoward on this side of the beast, what about the other side? Checking the various attachments to the mighty frame, it became suddenly very obvious that the most important link - on most bikes - was blatantly missing.... A chain!

Yes, folks, some lowlife took off with this item, without touching anything else. The only thing I could do at this time of night, was to push my Suzi into the middle of my Snack Bar, clearly visible to passers-by for a couple of days until the RAA towing service transported us home.

To this day I have not been able to solve a great mystery: You can chain your bike to a post or whatever. BUT... how do you chain your chain securely!!!

Stay chained and upright,

Igor *The Chainless*



MRA SA CentreStand - March 2000

HOW OFTEN DO WE CHECK?

Sean McPherson

I was riding along the other day (like we all do!) and was smacked in the face by a Kamikaze Euro wasp, it was only then that I realised I left my allergy drugs at home, which leads me to ask "how often do we really prepare before jumping on and going for a blatt?"

Simple things like correct riding gear, oil levels, chain tension (if you've got one) even something as mundane as air pressure is of importance (I've got a leak in my rear tyre so I have to check it daily - just aside, I don't like to single out companies, but some of the newer BP stations have an electronic air pressure system which is an absolute pleasure to use. Pressure is automatic and the nozzle fits onto a wide mag valve with no problems - check them out sometime)

It's usually the small problems that bring us undone out there, aside the mindless twits in cages we have to contend with our fine road services trying to kill us. So if you've had any grief with white lines, the black 'snail trails' or the latest blackout paint obscuring the white paint, please let us know, as we can try to do something about these problems, but we need support and information from our members. Without it, we can't do too much. Go out and check your bike, have a blast and stay upright.

Sean

HOW OFTEN DO WE CHECK?

Scribbles



Box of Bits for letters. This is the platform to air your views. Send your news, views, compliments & complaints to The Editor, GPO Box 1895, Adelaide SA 5001. Or e-mail editor@mrasa.asn.au

TOY RUN THANKS

Love the [web] site – very informative. Loved the toy run thank you for organising another great day

Jeff Lane
Adelaide Gay Rider Outings
By e-mail

MORE TOY RUN THANKS

Just a short message on behalf of the MRAA (Vic) to congratulate MRA SA on their 21st annual toy run. Channel 10 gave both Melbourne and Adelaide runs coverage, which means more positive air time for bikes in total, a very good thing.

Congrats and well done
Cheers

Garry Yip
On behalf of the MRAA board
By e-mail

... AND AGAIN

Dear Sir
I write to you on behalf of the PBC (**Peter Badcoe Complex of the Ex Military Rehabilitation Centre – Editor**) to thank you for allowing us to participate as part of the activities following the annual Toy Run. We were happy to provide a sausage sizzle stall and were extremely busy throughout the day. We would appreciate being given a similar opportunity at next years' Toy Run and look forward to working with

you in the future. The funds raised from functions such as this, go towards providing facilities and services for ex-service personnel of the Australian Services. Thank you once again, we wish you and your organisation the compliments of the season **(That's the problem only having 4 issues a year.. the letter arrived before Xmas, but after our December issue...Editor)**

Yours sincerely
Brad Walker
Admin Officer,
For
Sam Witjas,
Chairman

...AND MORE

Heartfelt thanks to all members and friends of the MRA for the outstanding support you have shown to the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

This Christmas, members and volunteers of Vinnies have helped 17,000 people across South Australia, half of these being children. The thousands of toys collected from the 1999 Toy Run have bought a smile to a needy child's face. Thank you for making this Christmas brighter for many South Australian families and children.

Yours sincerely
Georgia Symmons
Public Relations and
Fundraising Manager,
St Vincent de Paul Society, Inc.

PATS ON THE BACK

Greetings all !
This is just a short letter to let you all know how much our club enjoyed the Toy Run on 12th of December, and to give you guys a hearty slap on the back for such a professional and well organised event. We would also like to say a huge 'THANK YOU' for the stall space you let us have free of charge. Although we didn't sell much, that was not our intention, we were more into

being involved with the good will behind the event and just letting people know about the Club, as we've only been going since June this year. Each of us contributed on the day to the St. Vincent de Paul and the M.R.A. as a token of our appreciation. Hopefully, when we get more established, (and get out of the red), we can offer our assistance in a more substantial way! Most importantly, we won't forget the help you gave us when we were just a fledgling club, when the initial setting up is the hardest part. So, 'thanks' again. The N.M.C.S.A. Inc wishes you all a happy festive season with another prosperous and enjoyable Toy Run for the Year 2000

Highest Regards
Lee Ellis (Sec)
Norton Motorcycle Club of
South Australia Inc.

...AND MORE

Just a quick note to say Congratulations on another great TOY RUN. As a participant in the "Trade Displays" we have appreciated the smooth organisation of the event. We knew exactly what time to be there and where to set up and where to park etc etc, all thanks to your thoughtfully provided information. And when we did have a small problem (where to plug in our power, as someone else had already overloaded the point we were allocated) your committee members made alternative arrangements quickly and efficiently. Thanks guys. We are very pleased to be a part of such a well run event and for such a good cause. All our staff members donated toys. And to top it all off we had a fun day catching up with old friends and customers. Again Congratulations and Well Done !! We look forward to Toy Run 2000.
Best Regards
Wayne Miller & Staff

ON TOY RUNS AND ROADS

Toy Run was fantastic as usual, I thought the organising committee showed real strength when organising the weather, possibly they could pass on their secrets to next years committee. (**Consider it done Ken – Editor**). The ride up the hill to Hahndorf went well, although I did notice someone looking a bit crook lying on the side of the road and being tended by SA Ambulance. If you know them, please pass on our "Get well soon" and we do hope their pride and joy didn't take it in the fairing too hard. I also noticed in 'Centrestand' that all the roads you complain about are mostly north. For my personal tip, if you want to have your fillings rattled out of your head or the loose change shaken out of your pockets, try riding along Portrush Rd. between Magill Rd. and Greenhill Rd. This is a positively appalling road – I'm talking if you own a Harley, stay right away from this road!! It has become this way because the Norwood council spend all their money on The Parade and Burnside council spend all their money on whatever completely rich persons spend their money on, and of course the area is a safe Liberal seat so bugger all is going to happen in a real hurry (**Not quite... you'll be pleased to know that plans are afoot to improve the diabolical Portrush road – Editor**) There are others, but this stretch of road is so appalling that I don't travel along it anymore or should I say only when totally necessary. The bumps are so bad and so continuous that it becomes impossible to have any level of interaction with the bike that could in any sense be referred to as control.

Ken Binns
By e-mail

Keep them rolling. – Ed





RIGHT HAND CORNERS

Sammi Ross

After I'd got through my initial stages of mild panic when I was learning to ride motorcycles, I settled into fine-tuning my newly acquired skills, and discovering as much as I could about this cute

Honda XL125 (mid to late 70s, orange tank model) which I meticulously cleaned every Sunday, before setting myself another skill to be mastered.

Although I'd begun my riding experiences with a friend, Roger, following along behind in my ute, with loading ramp in the back for when I'd "had enough", it wasn't long before I was confident enough to venture forth solo. Experimentation was all the go.

There are several dirt roads and tracks in the hills near where I live. One day I decided to give myself a touch of dirt-road riding with no one watching me. Some half an hour later I found myself standing next to my bike which gurgled as it lay on the gravel road – the result of going too slow (an "accident" because of going too slow!), looking the other way at a road junction, turning the handle-bars too far, and putting the wrong foot down (the down hill foot). Well, down, down, and down the foot went, and over the bike went. After it'd had its fill of chortling at me I picked it up, kick started it, and rode away, thinking through the incident.

My second bike, a Kawasaki GPZ250, 1982 model, purchased after six months on the Honda, gave me my next memorable lesson on cornering – that all bikes handle differently. The first lengthy ride was to Mannum via Mount Torrens. The curves above Palmer was where I found myself, following fellow riders who were on much larger capacity bikes (and probably cursing quietly to themselves about being held up by this learner rider!). Into the first right hander I went, attempting to throw the bike over as I'd been so used to doing with the XL, but – surprise – without the desired result! Yes, that gravel verge got quite near.

As I gained more confidence on the Kwaka, I discovered that I did not like right hand corners very much at all. I recall asking the fellow riders what to do when riding into a corner too fast. They'd replied, "Lean your bike further," "Don't button off," "Just keep the power on and gradually increase it," and was relieved to know that I'd done all of those things when I'd again scared myself on a 55 kph corner between Nairne and Kanmantoo the weekend before.

Last week an experienced rider, who rides

regularly in the city, admitted that he had lost his country riding skills. On questioning, he clarified that he has lost his confidence when cornering.

If we're honest, we do know that, in order to maintain or improve our skill levels, we need to ride regularly. Also, the temptation is there to be enticed by others' acts of bravado, or exaggerations of their feats, or to react to their scoffing at how slow we went around particular corners which they can do at "double your speed!" It really depends on whether you want to be safe or not, feel the thrill of adrenalin or not . . .

So, what is it about right hand corners? Is it because I'm right handed? Is it because the throttle is on the right? Is it because of the fact that there is no 'run off' area – just gravel verges, or guard rails, or trees, or fences, or stobie poles, or cliffs, or drop-offs, or cows, or goats tethered beside the road when you go too wide, while on left handers you have the other side of the road to power out of (thankful that there was no on-coming vehicles!) Do the riders in countries where they travel on the other side of the road have the reverse problem?

After several years of riding I've just accepted the fact that I have an aversion to right hand corners, and prefer not to ride in front of other riders because I invariably hold them up.

But it was of interest to read that right hand corners resulted in double the numbers of motorcyclists dying compared to left hand corners. This fact is evident in the Department of Transport's report titled 'Factors Contributing to Fatal Motorcycle Crashes in South Australia 1985 to 1991'. Now, admittedly this is almost ancient history statistics, but, over that period of seven years, of the total of 232 motorcycle fatalities, 54 happened when motorcycles went off the road on a curve. Of those 54, 36 went off the road on right hand curves, 18 on left hand curves: that is, twice as many died on right hand bends.

Perhaps I don't need to feel so foolish now when I'm extra careful on these curves. Perhaps I'm even allowed to make myself twice as scared – or get twice as much of a thrill out of a well executed right hander!

And, heaven forbid getting rid of some pearlers of right hand corners – a favourite of mine is the drop down over an old bridge, the second to last right hander going up to Eagle on the Hill. And, anyway – turn around, and lo and behold, they're suddenly twice as safe because now they're left handers!

Enjoy cruising the curves!



RALLIES IN 2000

It's time to get all the rally gear out of the mothballs. Air the sleeping bags and inflatable mattresses, give the Trangia a good clean and replace the batteries in the torch. Yes the rally season is on us again and there's plenty to do this year. The Jolly Good Run Committee has got some special events planned for this year and they will be publicised in due course, meanwhile here's a brief survey of some of the events coming up soon.

River Gum Rally. 3-5 March

This is run by the Z Owners club and is at the usual site on the banks of the river at Renmark, so bring your swimmers. This is a back to basics rally so you need to bring everything that you need, some people call up the Renmark pizza shop on their mobile phones and get them to deliver!

Star Bear Rally. 5 March

This is a fun run for cars and bikes leaving the Marion shopping centre and going to Victor Harbor via Delamere. This is run by the Star Bear Foundation which gives support to grief affected children. Catering and bands at the finish at the Warland Reserve.

Riverland Run. 25/26 March

Starting at the Adelaide Oval and riding up to Renmark showgrounds where there's plenty of camping, bands, sideshows, eats & drinks. This is conducted by the Childhood Cancer Association and has one of the best fireworks shows that I've seen.

Great Escape Rally. 8/9 April

The annual rally conducted by MRA-SA at farmer Murray's property near Marrabel. Fully catered with firewood, toilets etc. Gymkhana courtesy of the Whale! It's worth going just to see the MRA committee reduced to tears when they attempt to erect the big tent!

Swagman Rally 6/7 May

This is a great rally run by the Mallee branch of the Ulysses club, top camping site, fully catered, great bonfire Sat night. Usual site at Bower on the Eudunda-Morgan road.

Wanbi Run 27/28 May

This is at the Wanbi Hotel and is run by the very busy Z Owners club, catering by the publican includes a spit roast (yum!) Camping sites everywhere around the pub. Wanbi is on the Loxton road via Karoonda, don't blink or you could miss it!

Well that's all for now, hope to see you at a rally soon.

Leslie Dicker (Uncle Pervie to you!)



FREE WEEKEND



All financial members at the time of the September 2000 AGM, will go into a draw for one years free membership. Six current members will be picked at random, and put into a hat for a final draw of a FREE weekend for two in the Barossa Valley and five FREE memberships for one year.

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ON RUN'S & THING'S

'TWAS two weeks before Christmas,
And all through the crowd
Various sounds could be heard,
Roars, snarls and growls.

But when Glenn waved us away,
There arose such a clatter
Of Machines colliding
Of bikes beginning to scatter

My heart gave a lurch,
Oh my, what a sight,
For there was poor Sean
Getting rammed by a bike

Yes, Okay, I know.... Poor attempt, I won't give up my day job....But it got your attention, didn't it?

The incident to which I refer occurred in this last Toy Run... No sooner had Glenn Dix waved us away, than some silly pratt decided to dive out of the garage at the bottom of Anzac highway, and try and dart to the front, to be at the FRONT of the Toy Run. Hello!, there were an AWFUL lot of bikes in his way, and, unfortunately, he picked on Sean's to collide with – Sean was 3 up (Sean, Ochre the Dog, and Georgina from St Vincent de Paul society) and it ISN'T a small bike. ANYWAY... the inevitable happened, and said silly pratt was last seen sitting on his bum, bike on it's side, pouring fuel into the road... it is believed said pratt ALSO collided with a Harley rider, so his present condition is unknown...

Sadly enough, this was not the only incident to mar what was otherwise an excellent day. At the Mount Barker turnoff, someone realised at the last minute that he was alone in going straight ahead, and tried to rejoin the rest of the pack in turning off the highway. He didn't make it, broke his leg, and wrote his bike off, I am given to understand... Not only that, but the scooters ridden by Santa's 'Elves' at the front of the run had to be spoken to by the Police, due to riding that could best be described by the most charitable amongst us as 'causing concern'.

With just a little more thought, these incidents could have been avoided. There were a few thousand bikes there, that day, and with numbers like that, you REALLY have to be aware of what is happening around you, and ride accordingly.

"Why is he telling me all this?" you may ask yourselves. Good question. As sane sensible members of the MRA, you wouldn't DO such a thing, WOULD you? You all KNOW that the Marshals get to ride at the front of the run, for two reasons – 1). They have been the ones organising the run, and have bloody well earned that privilege, and 2) they are there to stop other silly pratts trying to get to the front and have a fang up the South Eastern Freeway. Lets face it, although the ladies and gentlemen of the SA Police are VERY accommodating at Toy Run time, they are NOT going to look kindly on someone haring off ahead to blast along a semi-deserted South Eastern Freeway. I mean, there are two Motorbike coppers at the front.... Do you HONESTLY think they are going to sit back and watch this display of idiocy and applaud the offender as he / she hares by.... Or are they going to give chase, and nick the silly bugger.... I favour the latter... "So What?" You may ask "It's my license if I get nicked".... Well, yes. That, and the fact that relations between the MRA as the organisers of the Toy Run, and the SA Police, without whose co-operation, the Toy Run would not be the success it is, would sour considerably.... And would impact ALL of us, and spoil EVERYONE'S day.

This coming year, I am sure, will see more measures by the MRA to ensure we do not get a repeat of last years stupidity at the start. As I have stated, we have built up a good relationship with the SA Police, and don't want to have that destroyed by irresponsible behaviour. Can you imagine the consequences of the SA Police suddenly deciding that they could no longer support this run, because of this irresponsible behaviour? Would make the Toy Run a bit dubious, wouldn't it? "Not good" you all think to yourselves ... Now think of the reason we have the run, St Vincent de Paul Society.

Think of the good we do for the Kids at Christmas time, think of the joy and smiles we bring to those young faces. Now think of Christmas for those Kids with no Toy Run to bring them that joy.

Think...

Dale Knöote-Parke

(Continued from page 14)

in America. A Triumph Thunderbird with three cylinders and bits from all over the world.

Change happens, sometimes good, sometimes bad. How we handle the change ourselves is the point. We get an attitude, get used to something and if it changes, we feel like our whole world has changed. There's a joke I heard once about the Anglican church, but could equally apply to all of us.

Q. How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb?

A. One to change it, and 10 more to sit around and discuss how good the old one was.

Does the reluctance to let go of old things mean a reluctance to handle change? It is an interesting fact that was once pointed out to me, that with change as an inevitability, a person who wants change, whilst usually regarded as a radical, is actually a conservative, going along with the generally accepted paradigm. (Huh?)

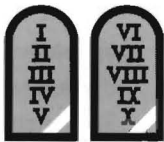
Someone who doesn't like change, then, is going against the common consensus and battling the conservative element, so is considered a radical. So what does this mean? It means that all you dudes on the latest "radical" super quick Japanese multis are conservative, and funny buggers like me who like older, slower, more practical and "conservative" bikes are radical. Cool. I like being radical.

But there definite advantages to being conservative. Old bikes have character, but are more likely to break down, and develop around a quarter of the power. Same for cars. A new Jag XK has styling aspects similar to an older Jag, but is a hell of lot faster and much more reliable. A good compromise. The conservatives are catered for better - spares, range, price. Try getting anything more than the basic needs for an early 70's Japanese Motorcycle, for example. If you can get it, its gonna cost you heaps.

Change, as previously stated, is inevitable. If you don't change, then you stay the same. And you look silly. Look at the Amish people in America. Radical, maybe, but probably once considered conservative. And only radical because they haven't changed. I guess we shouldn't get hung up on keeping things the same. Embrace the best in everything, old and new.

I don't actually know where these ramblings have got us, or if in fact they have taken us anywhere at all. And the only tip for life I can offer here that is in any way related to the concept of change is borrowed. This pearl of wisdom is the motto of the Ulysses Club - "Grow Old Disgracefully". What better advice can I give?

Ride safe.
The Rev



P.S. The answers to the spot the oxymoron contest are:

1. Bay City Rollers Hits.
2. BMW Cruiser.

AVUNCULAR TALES

The turn of the year madness that we have just seen got me to thinking about all the unnecessary hoo haa about new beginnings and resolutions and so forth. On New Years' Eve I watched the worldwide telecast of midnight passing in cities all around the planet and each time that nothing occurred I cursed the lack of an apocalypse appearing or for that matter even the smallest nibble by a Millennium Bug! Why was I feeling cheated by the media that had given so much attention to the coming of the year 2000?

The constant use of Y2K for 2000 was just one of the many things which continually annoyed my elderly neighbour, a man in his 80s, who asked me what it meant, so I had to explain that it was just a shorthand way of writing 2000, and he wasn't convinced by it. They could have used Roman numerals of course, that would have been even shorter as 2000 is written MM. The Roman system of numerals works quite well for most things and you don't need a separate numerical keypad as it uses letters for the different values, eg, I + I, X = 10, L = 50, C = 100 etc, as I'm now aged 59 that would be written as LIX ! I don't wish to hear any funny comments about that either! The big drawback with the Roman system of numbers is that there is no zero, and that stopped the Romans from advancing very far in mathematics.

In the year 1000 the great Viking explorer Leif Ericson was wandering around parts of what we now know as North America and which he called Vinland. The Chinese Empire was in an era called the Sung Dynasty, and in merrie Englande the Saxons were in power.

The numbering system that we now use was not then established so the year was written as M. Not a very impressive number eh!

A thousand years from now, when no doubt an FM radio station will make a great deal about the year being MMM in Roman numerals, who knows what the world will be like? But it is nice to speculate. For example, just as Arthur C Clarke gave his impressions of the future in 2001 A Space Odyssey, I'd like to give some of my thoughts about how the future of civilization will look a thousand years from now.

No doubt most of the planets of our solar system will have been colonised by then and even the planet Mercury has a settlement on it, appropriately named Freddy!

Transportation will have completely changed with all movement of people and cargo being done by teleportation, although it's a good idea to give the cubicle a good squirt of Mortein before going anywhere, just in case!

Due to the increased use of computers and implanted silicone devices (no not those sort of silicone implants!) it became necessary to change over to using the binary numbering system early in the 27th century, so that the year 3000 is not given as MMM or Y3K but is written as: 101110111000 ! Now that's an impressive number by any standard! I must get a binary notation speedo and put it on the ZZR!



Ride safe and stay upright!

Uncle Pervie

National Road Safety Strategy

Peter Mount

The NRSS Panel met in Canberra on January 31 with the principal purpose of discussing the Draft Strategy for 2000/2001. All members had had the opportunity of commenting in writing on the Draft prior to the meeting, but space here does not permit a reprint of the AMC's response. A second Draft will be considered, with final recommendations going to the Australian Transport Council (ATC - which consists of all Ministers of Transport) for approval on May 18. A detailed report will therefore be provided in the next issue of *Centrestand*.

In order to develop appropriate and effective strategies the panel must have access to all relevant information including reports from bodies such as Austroads, ATC, Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee (ConCom), the Australian Traffic Policing Forum (ATPF), and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB). Information derived from those reports can therefore be summarised within the context of the NRSS. It will also help you, and reduce space in this column, if you make a permanent note of these acronyms so that I don't have to write them in full each time; alternatively, you could obtain a complete list by writing directly to the Australian Council for Review of Names You Might Save.

A national strategy for ITS (see last issue for full name, and put it in your notebook) is being developed which will focus on:

- the ability of the many forms of ITS to work and communicate together, and to be compatible with international progress in the field;
- high risk travel issues such as fatigue, collision avoidance, and driving in unfamiliar conditions;
- ecological benefits;
- metropolitan, regional and rural safety;
- development of an economically viable and competitive Australian ITS industry;
- Electronic Toll Collection (ETC). The fully automated cash register of the future, from vehicle identification to bank account debit, is with us even as we speak, and will be standardised throughout Australia, possibly similar to Melbourne's CityLink. Motorcycles are not ETC compatible at present, and can travel on such transport corridors free.

A performance based approach will be adopted to improve vehicle emissions in line with the trend towards cleaner fuels; i.e. strategies will be devised to reduce emissions by targeting the performance of vehicles.

The panel is attempting to clarify the definition of

"serious injury" or, to be more precise, to establish a uniform definition. Currently, there are almost as many definitions across Australia as there are states and jurisdictions, with the confusion exacerbated by highly individualised reporting practices. For instance, "serious injury" can mean anything from merely being treated at a hospital to an overnight stay or having injuries considered by medicos to be life threatening or permanently disabling.

What does this matter to us, as bikers, or to anyone, for that matter? For starters, no jurisdiction follows up hospital admissions to determine the accuracy of the information on the police forms, hence data collected relies entirely on that provided by police at the time of the incident. Secondly, as many countermeasures are aimed at reducing the severity of crashes, not just the number of crashes, if there is no standard measure of severity the effectiveness of the countermeasures cannot be reliably determined. Thirdly, where the number of serious injuries is relatively small, as with motorcyclists, any small variation in this figure will represent a large percentile change, leading to a belief that a certain safety initiative is, or is not, effective, and that, say, radical targeted measures are necessary.

Poor definitions and inconsistent reporting compound the problems for motorcyclists by corrupting the statistics which govern the creation and implementation of countermeasures. Examples which come readily to mind are pillion passengers being defined as motorcyclists when passengers of other vehicles are coded separately, and moped riders who are permitted to ride on a car licence but who are defined as motorcyclists when they crash.

The use of standardised definitions and reporting systems in data acquisition is integral to any safety strategy as it underlies the entire mechanism by which road safety will be improved. This is the only way in which causal factors can be identified with the high degree of specificity needed to accurately assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of road safety initiatives.

Black Spot Program approvals are currently ahead of the funding cycle, although expenditure by each jurisdiction is behind. As funds not spent by the federal government cannot be carried over to the next fiscal year, jurisdictional allocations may be at risk if implementation remains incomplete. Since 1996, 1488 programs have been approved at a total cost of \$154m.

The Australian Traffic Policing Forum (ATPF), which met last December, will present a proposal at the next Police Commissioners' Conference to reintroduce front number plates on motorcycles. We may expect its approval to be a

AMC REPORT AMC REPORT AMC REPORT AMC REPORT

fait accompli as it must already have been agreed to in principle for it to have reached the stages of preparation and formal presentation. A win in the political arena is another matter altogether, and may be a more effective recourse for citizens concerned about discriminatory police practices intended to close revenue-raising loopholes under the guise of road safety initiatives.

Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee

In the light of data presented to ConCom suggesting that female motorcyclists have a disproportionately high injury rate, a targeted program will be developed which will involve direct consultation with women through clubs, communication through specialist magazines and direct mail to female riders. The program will be subject to ratification at the March ConCom meeting.

Motorcyclists have strongly endorsed the concept of a national Motorcycle Awareness Week, and a detailed proposal will be presented to ConCom in March. (For many AMC members MAW will not be a new concept. It has enjoyed a great deal of popularity and effectiveness in its previous form of Motorcycle Awareness Month, but proximity to the Toy Run, its cost, duration and the amount of work involved became insurmountable obstacles to its continuation) Although no general funding from ATSB will be available, support will be provided in the form of planning assistance, promotional material, website listing and the like.

Unlicensed and unregistered riding remains a national problem, particularly as such people appear to have a higher-than-average crash rate, which in turn places inequitable demands on the motorcycle insurance system. The Tasmanian government is trialing a 3-month amnesty period for unlicensed riders, and a proposal has been made to prohibit the sale of motorcycles to unlicensed riders. This may be undesirable for a number of reasons and difficult to implement without the support of the dealers and distributors. The views of the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI - which represents eight of the major motorcycle manufacturers) will be presented to ConCom in March.

The *Ride On* video and *Making Motorcycling Safer* materials were formally released by the Minister last year and have been widely disseminated through motorcycle distributors, clubs, trainers and other organisations. 5000 have already been distributed, with another 7000 to go. Video shops, libraries and insurance companies will also be included.

A national system of riding instructor accreditation has been proposed (again). This was originally proposed, and established in principle, at the Training for Safety seminar at the Gold Coast in 1992. The Australian Rider Trainers Association (ARTA) was created at that time (consideration was first given to the name Federation of Australian Rider Trainers), with the Motorcycle National Accreditation Board (McNAB) being devised to have responsibility for accreditation and standards of trainer competency. For reasons unrelated to these groups or their objectives the anticipated coordination of effort and structural development did not eventuate according to plan, and although a repetition of that scenario is possible, the idea still has great merit; we can but hope that the timing now is more propitious.

Two reports from the Wire Rope Working Party were considered: one from ATSB summarising material from Australian and overseas authorities and various research literature; the other from the AMC focussing on barrier choice and installation issues and motorcycle-specific research. The ATSB paper will be supplemented by AMC input on installation and non-compliance issues to form the core report to the Minister. It will also include a recommendation of the AMC's that a moratorium be placed on new WRSB and Armco installations until a suitable barrier test regime for motorcycles can be implemented.

This recommendation has been endorsed in principle by all ConCom members with the exception of ATSB. ATSB will prepare a dissenting argument for inclusion in the report to the Minister. The report will also pick up other AMC recommendations covering site and installation audits, compliance with standards, quality control, maintenance, product development and data collection and dissemination.

Australian Design Rules (ADRs) are undergoing a process of review which will include consultation with rider groups. No substantive changes to lighting requirements are anticipated, but brakes are expected to harmonise with the UN/ECE regulation which is considered to be an acceptable alternative standard. Other changes are expected to improve drivers' visibility of motorcycles, such as a proposed rule allowing convex external rear vision mirrors on vehicles.

Three noise ADRs, including those for motorcycles and mopeds, are listed for review in 2000. The ECE standards, which are reflected in the current ADRs, were tightened in the mid 1990s, and the federal government's Motor Vehicle Environment Committee (MVEC) therefore believes there is a need to review the ADRs in light of these new limits. The "usual consultative arrangements" will be in place, including a 3-month public comment phase.

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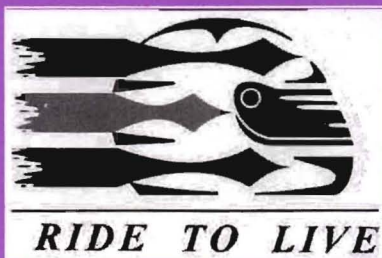
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