

22/3/86

TO M.R.A. STATE COMMITTEE

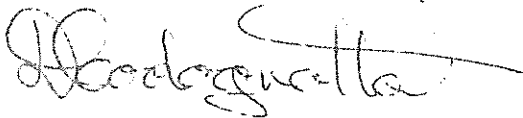
RE: M.R.A. Promotions Pty. Ltd.

1. I request permission for the use of space and facilities in the M.R.A. shop for the purpose of conducting business under the M.R.A. Promotions Pty Ltd name. Space and facilities to be rent free in return for the services provided to members of M.R.A. ie: discounted insurance, organisation of The Deciding Factor etc.

2. Through the insurance discounts offered to M.R.A. members, M.R.A. Promotions has signed up a large number of new members for the association.

As all M.R.A. registers receive the joining fee for signing members up M.R.A. Promotions requests the same deal, ie. if M.R.A. Promotions signs a new member then they receive the joining fee. We propose to keep track of the members we introduce to the M.R.A. by marking their application form with an M.R.A. Promotions stamp.

sincerely



D. Codognotto
M.R.A. Promotions



B. Hardiman
M.R.A. Promotions

NO DECISION TO
8/4/86

warren,
I did intend to send this lot to the Registers, Committee and people like Tim Gurvey and Bythe. But I won't do that unless I have to defend myself again.

Dan

All correspondence to:

Electorate Office,
312 Rossiter Road,
Koo Wee Rup. 3981.

Telephone: 059 971 808



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
MELBOURNE, VIC 3002
TELEPHONE 651 8001
EAT

ALAN BROWN M.L.A.
MEMBER FOR GIPPSLAND WEST
SHADOW MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

25th March, 1986.

Mr. D. Codognotto,
Director,
Motor Cycle Riders Association,
P.O. Box 389,
CAULFIELD EAST. 3145.

Dear Damien,

Thank you for forwarding me a copy of correspondence sent to my colleague Geoff Leigh M.P., Member for Malvern, and dated 11th March, 1986.

I can inform you it is the proposal of the Opposition to introduce during the current session of State Parliament the Private Members Bill to which you referred, to eliminate the necessity for dual licences for motor cycles.

The only difficulty which may arise in this regard is if Parliamentary Counsel are unable to have the Bill finalised prior to the session ending. I am pressing Parliamentary Counsel in this regard and I am aware that they have a large workload including Government Bills being prepared. You may be assured that as long as I can obtain same before the session ends I propose to proceed with the measure.

My colleague the Hon. Ian Smith, M.P., did introduce a Bill in the form of a First Reading on Thursday 13th March, 1986.

I would be happy to accept your invitation to join the proposed bus trip as long as I am available on the proposed date. Will you please inform my office when the date is known.

Please continue to keep me informed on all matters of interest.

Yours sincerely,

Alan J. Brown, M.P.

National Australia Bank

National Australia
Bank Limited

FITZROY - 275 BRUNSWICK ST VIC 3065-120

TEL. 400
415 4047

MR D COGNOTTO,
22 TOORONGA RD.,
MELBURN EAST...3145
VICTORIA

Dear Mr Cognotto

20 JAN 68

Personal Loan Account No. 80-810-0811

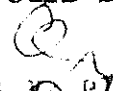
FINAL NOTICE.

The payment of \$560.03 due on 21/02/68 has not been made and you have been in default under your Contract with the Bank since that date.

The Bank hereby demands of you immediate repayment of all moneys now owing by you on above Personal Loan Account to the Bank.

The amount of the said indebtedness as at date of this letter is \$24,392.13.

Yours sincerely


G. V. Ploenges
Manager.



THE MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED (VICTORIA BRANCH)
PO BOX 64 COLLINS ST., MELBOURNE 3000.

DATE: 28.3.86

Mr. Damien Codognotto.

- MRA Promotions PTY.LTD. -

c/o MRA. Elizabeth St.

MELBOURNE. 3000.

Dear Damien,

firstly let me introduce myself. My name is Paul Hanrahan and as of two weeks ago I was elected the new Secretary of the State MRA - Victorian Branch. I have only seen or heard you from afar, usually at Safety runs.

I have been requested to correspond to you regarding the issues listed on a sheet and handed to the committee last meeting - (26.3.86) - Your sheet dated: 22.3.86.

The committee decided that you attend the next monthly meeting at 7.30 PM, to address the group concerning the issues raised in your note, namely;

- Permission to use space and facilities within the shop
- MRA Promotions PTY. LTD. receiving the joining fees of new MRA members.

Another issue was also brought up at the meeting, the matter of publishing a letter from yourself to D G J. Westbury in Moriac Vict. in the next issue of the Deciding Factor.

The members and the committee voted unanimously not to have the letter published in the May issue of the Deciding Factor. Members and the committee have the last say on issues that are to be published in a magazine representing MRA views, image and policy.

Thank you for your efforts and contribution. Till we see you at the next meeting.

Yours faithfully,

VICTORIA BRANCH HEAD OFFICE, 1/440 ELIZABETH ST., MELBOURNE 3000.
(03) 663 2210, 662 1889.

Secretary.

let those who ride decide



M.R.A. PROMOTIONS PTY. LTD.

28 th. March, 1986.

MRA Australia Incorporated
Victorian Branch
Committee.

Dear Committee,

I understand that the committee meeting on Wednesday March 26 th., failed to address any of the problems I wrote to the committee about.

The Toy Run is already 2 months behind compared with previous years. No thankyou letters have been sent nor have any of the usual bookings been made.

Failure to shoulder your responsibilities and procrastination lost the Howqua to the MRA. No one did anything. I do not propose to let such an important event, that I have organised since 1978, go the way of the MRA's first rally.

The committee did not have to OK the budget. I wrote clearly that no firm budget could yet be established. The committee did not have to commit one cent, just make a decision that would let me get on with the job.

Similarly, to give the members the next issue of the Deciding Factor I needed the position of Executive Editor, with a committee vote, just as the Recovery Service and Rider Training areas have.

In the normal course of events, the ex President would have an ex officio vote for 12 months after leaving office. However, after leaving the job I discover that we no longer use the the Constitution. This Branch does not even worry about the spirit of the Constitution. Tony Scicluna, who wrote the articles of incorporation, stripped the Presidents position of all ex officio rights. I was told that when the new Constitution was drawn up I would be given a 1 in 5000 say like any new member.

Be that as it may, I personally lost \$2000 and Traz lost \$1000 on the Deciding Factor. I consider that an investment in motorcycling as I did when I paid out the extra \$500 or so that was needed to put on the Toy Run '85 TV & Radio ads and the Blood Challenge ads.

I am not asking the committee for a financial committment. I need, in writing, the committees decisions on the Toy Run and on the magazine by April 11 th. 1986.

I feel you should also address the question of monthly public meetings so the members can regain their democratic right to front the entire State Committee and ensure that that right is enshrined in the new constitution. I hope that the postponed Registers

1/440 ELIZABETH ST., MELBOURNE 3000.
(03) 663 2210 662 1889

let those who ride decide

2.

Conference will include a study of the draught of the new Constitution.

Please inform me of the date and venue of the State Registers Conference.

Also, it is most important that the State Committee come to an appropriate arrangement regarding the name of the Broken Bones Rally. It is unfair to the Gippsland Register and sets a bad precedent that the name of the event is held by people with no say on the State Committee.

I stress the committee must reply, in writing, by April 11 th.



D. Codognatto
Director.



● An angry spectator argues with Mr Leong (right) who claimed the rickshaw race was demeaning.

Rickshaw race called of as angry Chinese protes

By LEONIE WOOD

A RICKSHAW race along the banks of the Yarra was cancelled yesterday after angry exchanges between organisers and Chinese community leaders.

Angry words interrupted the Victorian Dragon Boat Festival, of which the Grand Prix Rickshaw Race was part.

People were invited to race against the clock trailing a rickshaw laden with bales of hay.

Australian-born Chinese Anthony Leong, 34, argued with organisers that the rickshaw race was demeaning.

It was a spectacle portraying humans as beasts of burden, Mr Leong said.

"The rickshaw race is parodying our Chinese culture," he said.

The clash followed an earlier assurance from organisers that the rickshaw race would not take place "due to lack of interest."

A competitor grabbed a rickshaw in belief the race was to go ahead.

Confronted by an angry Mr Leong, festival organiser Mr Alan Tobin said the race was intended "in the spirit of fun."

"The rickshaws will be acting on as vehicles," he told protesters.

Members of the Chinese community strongly disagreed and called for the rickshaw races to be cancelled.

Melbourne city councillor Morr Milder backed the angry Chinese. "The whole thing is a demeaning and degrading spectacle which shows total lack of sensitivity and is quite outside the theme of the Dragon Boat Festival," he said.

Melbourne city councillor Wellington Lee said he would have preferred the event to have been left out of the festival.

"It smacks of insensitivity," he said. "The caricature which it presents is an image we have tried to shrug off."

Exploitation complaint puts rickshaw dragon Boat Festival

By GAYLE AUSTEN,
urban affairs reporter

An angry Chinese photographer stopped a rickshaw race going ahead as part of a Chinese festival yesterday, accusing organisers of using a symbol of exploitation for entertainment.

The confrontation came at the Dragon Boat Festival by the Yarra, as Mr Anthony Leong compared the planned "Rickshaw Grand Prix" to making Jews relive Dachau or Belsen.

"A rickshaw is a symbol of the domination of one person by another," he told a crowd of competitors and onlookers.

"That rickshaw represents inequality, and that's what's important. It means so much to the Chinese people in terms of their struggle against exploitation."

Mr Leong said the rickshaw race was demeaning to the Chinese, and organisers had been insensitive to include it in the festival program.

"While we have people being used as beasts of burden as entertainment, you can't have peace or equality," he said.

After a heated clash at the starting line, festival publicist Mr Alan Tobin agreed to cancel the race, much to the discontent of some competitors who had

already taken part in heats the day before.

"It's a fun thing, it's a learning exercise, and it's a bit of competition," Mr Alan Kent, of the Motorcycle Riders Association, said. "Our history isn't as long as theirs, therefore we welcome the opportunity to learn a bit about what it was like."

The race was organised by the Dragon Boat Festival committee, which has four Chinese representatives, with the backing of the Hongkong Bank, Melbourne City Council, Victorian Tourism Commission, Melbourne

a little concerned that it had been persuaded by the festival's publicists, discussions, we agreed to an event," Mr Ong said. "It's popular support except for But if they're going to be will just drop it."

he also thought Mr Leong cited. "Rickshaws have 200 years, and it's only people have been feeling so them," he said.

The winning dragon boat, manned by Canoes Plus, won the championship late in the afternoon.

Mr Ong said the festival was proving a popular event, and a good way of promoting Melbourne's Chinatown.

THE AGE, Monday 31 March 1986 = 3



M.R.A. PROMOTIONS PTY. LTD.

MRA Australia Inc.
Victorian Branch
440 Elizabeth St.,
Melbourne. 3000

Sunday, April 6th. 1986.

Sir,
regarding your letter of 28 / 3 / '86.

For future reference please address all mail to P.O. Box 389,
Caulfield East. 3145.

A point to note. I do not believe that any MRA Committee has the power to "decide that (I) you attend the next monthly meeting". Your letter fails to tell me what sort of meeting it is or when and where it is to be held. That is not a good reflection on an organization that has some 5000 (?) members and spends more than \$100,000 (?) of their funds per year.

An audit may reveal what happens to the members money.

I will not attend "the next monthly meeting" unless you are talking about public meetings where MRA ordinary members get to have a say.

I am joining the ACT Branch of the MRA and as such am loyal to the ACT President and the National President. I will negotiate with the new Victorian President, Warren Gordon and the Membership Secretary, Ben Hardiman, only.

I hereby end all financial commitments to the Victorian Branch of MRA Australia Incorporated. Your committee is instructed that it will have to find new guarantors for equipment such as the computer.

I have been forced to take this action by the Treasurer, A. Scicluna who has publicly threatened me with violence and said that he would see me out of the Shop and MRA Victoria. His power play has been successful.

At a time when the MRA needs professional, full time staff, I cannot accept that the Vice President Dave Hornsby will be good for the Victorian Branch.

As Executive Editor of The Deciding Factor, I have dealt with the letter of D & J Westbury in the proper manner. I wrote a reply and discussed the 2 letters with the Broken Bones Rally organizers. The final say normally rests with the editor Mr. T. Parish. You will find Mr. Parish a man of integrity who will not bow to editorial censors. If he feels it should be published that is his decision and I will support his judgement.

2/

1/440 ELIZABETH ST., MELBOURNE 3000.
(03) 663 2210 662 1889

let those who ride decide

2.

I find the second last paragraph of your letter puzzling. I am a member and I was certainly not a party to any "unanimous vote" on the content of the Deciding Factor. The Victorian Branch Committee DO NOT HAVE THE LAST SAY ON ISSUES THAT ARE TO BE PUBLISHED.

MRA Promotions was registered on February 9th. 1981, with full committee knowledge and approval. The company has operated continuously for 5 years. It has achieved its aims of supplying services to the MRA Membership, supplying full time staff to the Association at no cost to the members and upholding the 3 original aims of the MRA.

MRA Promotions has given the members 3 Motorcycle Expo's, with another planned for 1988. It has given the members The Deciding Factor which it has developed from a newsletter to a quality consumer magazine. It was responsible for the concept and the finance required to move the MRA to Elizabeth St., and more.

The Deciding Factor is a direct mail publication, financed by MRA Promotions mainly from insurance commissions and advertising. It is registered as a business with the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs by MRA Promotions PTY. LTD. The Deciding Factor has been owned and operated (at a considerable financial loss) by MRA Promotions for more than 3 years.

I have carried that financial loss hoping that the MRA would become more professional and the Factor would supply full time staff for the Association, improve the Associations image and give motorcycling a real consumer voice in this country. It will be a sad day for the members if they lose the Factor because of the actions of the new committee.

MRA Promotions Pty.Ltd. books are in order and are available for inspection by MRA Australia Inc's accountants in my presence.

The Toy Run is already 2 months behind. The committee failed to do anything about this so I have begun to organize the event. I introduced the first MRA Toy Run to Australia in 1978. I have organized each one (8) since.

Toy Run '85. Last year MRA Promotions produced and distributed 1 x TV ad distributed to 10 TV Stations. 2 x radio ads distributed to 15 radio stations. Cost to the MRA around \$1400. Cost to Promotions \$500. This was very inexpensive public relations for motorcycling and that was the second aim of the MRA under the Constitution. "A better image."

Of course, while Mr. Scicluna was the only committee person he virtually replaced the Constitution with the articles of incorporation which he wrote himself. There was no consultation with the members and the Association now runs with no real access by the members to the decision making process nor do they see where their funds are spent. To back his threats against my person he destroyed the authority of the President and stripped the past President, me, of all the normal rights that would apply in this type of organization. I speak of the ex officio vote.

The Treasurer has already decided what the committee will do this year. He told me point blank "you are not doing TV ads this year you know."

I believe that I already have a major sponsor for this years Blood Challenge and Toy Run.

3.

Whether or not sponsors are found, the Toy Run organization must go ahead. This does NOT require the MRA to outlay any funds. I do not believe that the Victorian Branch has anyone with more time, experience or energy to put into this event. I feel the reluctance to approve the work is part of a paranoia about keeping the past President off the new committee in any form, despite the wishes of the members and the founders.

It seems to me that what is happening here is what happened to the Howqua Rally. The original organizers build the event up for five years then new organizers take over and the event goes down hill until the whole thing grinds to a halt. We have lost the National Rally.

Unless I misjudge the situation badly I feel that there is a good chance that the Victorian Branch will lose not only the Howqua through amateur thinking and petty power games but the Factor and the Shop as well.

The potential of the MRA Shop has been wasted. There is little security. Stock and equipment to the tune of thousands of dollars have been lost in the last 2 years. There is no management, no stock control, no service to registers. Problems with the computer and so on. The Shop needs a manager who is security conscious and who has authority. Hilton McMahon was an enormous help to me while ~~NE~~ kept the Shop open over Christmas. Again this year I cancelled my holidays to work unpaid for the members.

The irony is that I had mortgaged my home to allow the move into the shop. I worked there 6 days per week for some 15 months. They were 50 hour weeks for the most part. Now, if the Association paid me for that time at a rate of \$200 per week, no overtime, I would be owed more than \$12,000. But there was no pay even from Government grants and most of the insurance commissions went to build up the Factor.

While I was too sick to attend, a meeting was held where the treasurer decided that, even though the Shop was in my name, paid for with my mortgage, that I was a tenant and that all the shop fittings, carpet etc. should be confiscated in lieu of rent. Last week he said that I owed another \$1200. I have news for you. Contra that and the court costs against my contributions in the last 2 years.

A further irony is that Mr. Scicluna saw a previous treasurer, L. Bordon as a threat to the MRA if he became President. He took weeks to talk me into running against Mr. Bordon. I did not want to be President again. There was a condition. Mr. Scicluna would become another director of MRA Promotions since I could not carry on alone with no income. I mortgaged my house to finance the move to Elizabeth St. I did the dirty work and won the election, committed myself to another 12 months hard work for motorcycling and got into it.

Within 24 hours Mr. Scicluna was a blubbering mess and broke his promise. I was left to try to hold the Shop together for the next 15 or so months. Since that time the Associations management systems have deteriorated.

Important lobbying with the Melbourne City Council was seriously damaged by the lack of action by Mr. Scicluna. I arranged the Dragon Boat for our members as a P.R. effort to help with lobbying for better parking in Melbourne and to remove the "yellow brick road". Out of more than 40 x 22 man crews (more than 800 guest competitors with the Prime Minister and many M.P.'s and Councillors attending the festival) the MRA was

4.

the only crew to hog large amounts of media as people in conflict with the organizers. Try a role change. What would you feel if a member of a car club, or any other organization, were to come to a Toy Run or a Poker Run as guests, and then interrupt the show trying to get us to put on their band even though we did not feel it appropriate and bad publicity followed. I would be angry.

But it would be unfair to lump the blame on Alan Kent. He spoke reasonably well, considering his inexperience with the media. I wish he had been so passionate about a road safety matter rather than just trying to protect egos and records. The real blame lies with the senior MRA member there at the time. He was a full executive committee member and has the experience to know what the media could use and the lobbying repercussions. He did nothing. Each crew man was wearing the MRA Logo on his back.

In this kind of situation Mr. Scicluna has been known to come out with "We're bikers aren't we?"

That is a juvenile and pathetic excuse, if it is used, for bungling an MRA public relations event.

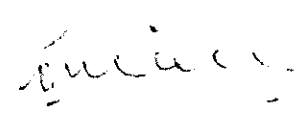
Finally, I am not on the dole and have not been in the last 10 years. I do not make "cash in hand payments" nor have I taken a position Under the grants recieved by the Association as Mr. Scicluna has done while being unreliable at his paid position at the Shop and working part time.

I have worked hard for motorcycling in Australia for nearly a decade. I have paid many times more than I have recieved and I now face a \$25,000 debt due to my involvement with the MRA.

Our lawyers asked the Treasurer to set up a fund to help pay the court costs but he has not done so. Nor has he bothered to make the agreed AMC or MRA Australia payments which has damaged Victoria's relations with other States.

I feel in no way guilty over my actions but very sad that the MRA has come to this. If we get to a stage where we have a constitution again which protects the three original aims and the logo and colours and we have annual audits and monthly PUBLIC meetings and we set up some real management systems so that members and Registers get the service they deserve, then I might consider working through the State Branch again. Till then my boss is Hal Caston.

At the last Registers Conference at Geelong I warned the members that my resources were all but exhausted. I asked for support, loyalty and for the Registers to take a bigger role in supplying organizers. We lost the Howqua. You lost me. You will probably lose the best source of INCOME you ever had the SHOP unless you get your act together and work for motorcycling instead of yourselves.


D. Codognotto
Director & Executive Editor TDF.