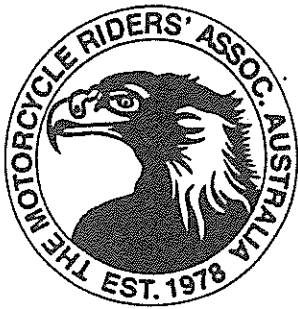


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September 1994

THE DECIDING

FACTOR

The Motorcycle Riders Assoc. of Australia Inc. Tel. 03 663 2164. 03 271 5127. Fax 03 563 5248.

MRAA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, RENEWAL OR STOCK ORDER FORM

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Signature _____

Editorial. Those members who noticed a new format for The Deciding Factor in the July issue may have deduced this, but for those who didn't, the magazine has a new editor.

After editing the newsletter from the time of it's inception, MRAA president Damien Codognotto has handed the job to me, vice-president Jim Cutts, and I will be putting it together every second month leaving

Damien more time for the political lobbying on behalf of motorcyclists and our lifestyle, the work that he does so well.

Although news of issues important to motorcycling will continue to be the major role of the newsletter, I want to include a lot more input from you, the members of the association. Get busy with your pens, word processors or whatever and have your say.

Obviously I can't include everything so don't be disappointed if your letter fails to appear, it could appear a year down the track, I don't throw anything out. As long as it relates to motorcycling whether it be political, lifestyle or even whinges about the association itself, send it in and I'll try to run a balanced selection each issue.

Ride safe.
Jim Cutts.

TOY RUN 94

SUNDAY 11th DECEMBER 1994

RIDERS FROM THE LATROBE VALLEY, CRANBOURNE, FERNTREE GULLY, BROADMEADOWS, FUN CITY AND MELBORN WILL ASSEMBLE IN ST KILDA ROAD AT ROY STREET FROM 10AM, COLUMN DEPARTS AT 11AM FOR PALACE NIGHT CLUB, ST KILDA VIA THE CITY.

MRAA Hotline
0055 13 118

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ENJOYMENT AND CAMARADERIE.

Carole Miles' letter in the July "Deciding Factor", about the joy she has found in motorcycling, has prompted me to write about some of the particularly joyous aspects I have found from motorcycles.

There are two things about riding motorcycles that give me great joy, and no, they have nothing to do with any particular roads, like the Black Spur or Reefton Spur!

I'm not sure whether it's partly due to the distinctiveness of my motorcycle (a BMW R100RS), or whether other riders also get the same treatment (anyone else like to comment?), but to me, a great joy is when I pull up next to a car in traffic, and a little face peers at me through the window, then breaks out into a combination of smiles and waves when I wave to them. This seems to occur on days that have otherwise been pretty black, and I can tell you that to see those little smiles is more than full compensation for numerous close calls with Volvo's!! For two reasons, I would strongly encourage any other riders who get those same stares, to also respond with a wave and a smile. Firstly, it does *you* a power of good! Secondly, it's an opportunity to show tomorrow's motorists and riders (and their parents) that bikers are considerate and friendly. It's good community relations, both for now and for the future.

The other joy unique to motorcycling is the camaraderie among bikers. I expect other BMW riders will exchange a wave of acknowledgement but I've noticed

that riders of bikes other than BMW's will also exchange waves, even around the suburbs, or have a chat at traffic lights. That's something else the four wheel brigade miss out on. I suppose both of these joys of motorcycling are simply showing other people that we enjoy riding motorcycles. So thank you to all the riders with whom I've exchanged waves or a few words.

Peter Roga.

DON'T SPILL IT ON THE ROAD. *it's needed!*

From Mrs Bo Rutecki,
Special projects officer,
Red Cross Blood Bank.

Once again the Red Cross Blood Bank is asking for your help in recruiting donors in August. It has been a particularly difficult winter for us, everyone seems to have a cold or the flu! Donor attendance during the last few weeks has been very poor and we are desperate for more donations.

The Blood Bank is at Cnr Kavanagh St and Balston St, South Melbourne, Call (03) 694 0111 for details of Mobile blood banks in your area.

A PROFITABLE USE FOR YOUR CARD.

Word from a member who recently came into MRAA headquarters at 380 Elizabeth St, City was that dropping his membership card on the counter, and

politely asking, would result in a discount at most of the bike shops that he visits, usually around 10 percent.

If you ask, and receive this consideration, then let us know the name and area of the shop concerned. Traders who support the association in this way are deserving of the publicity we can give them through this magazine

CONSTITUTION REFORM.

Sometime within the next month or so, all members will receive, by mail, a draft copy of the upgraded constitution.

The association has struggled with the old constitution for several years now, a constitution more suited to a club than to a non profit, service type organisation such as ours.

Although still heavily based on the model rules for an incorporated association, and completely unchanged in most areas, the intent of the changes that have been made has been to give stability to the association, and to give a more effective voice to our country and interstate members. A draft copy presented to members at the AGM in August was well received, and a few additions and comments were made.

The two major changes are, longer terms of office for elected board members which will allow for staggered elections, and universal postal voting which will mean a voice for country and interstate members who, having been unable in the past to make the AGM in person, have been effectively prevented from having a say in the structure of the association. Longer terms of office will mean not more than two officers will be required to stand for re-election at any AGM, thus avoiding the possibility of total loss of experience from the board, and a new committee coming into the office on monday morning not knowing even so much as where the coffee cups are.

By the time it reaches you, it will already have been gone over by our legal people, when it lobs in your letterbox, please read it thoroughly and, if you wish to comment, get it back to us as quickly as possible along with your notes and highlighting. After a reasonable time we will be calling a special meeting for it's formal adoption, probably early in the new year.

Members Detlef Lamp, Jim Cutts, Gus Cummings, Guy Allen have worked hard on this new document and a host of others have offered constructive comment and pointed out errors. Many thanks to all those people.

Sick of the rest? Then... GET THE BEST!

By HARLEY PEOPLE For HARLEY PEOPLE

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MULTITUDE WITH A MISSION PARISIAN PARALYSIS

By Ian Mutch.
courtesy of
Heavy Duty.

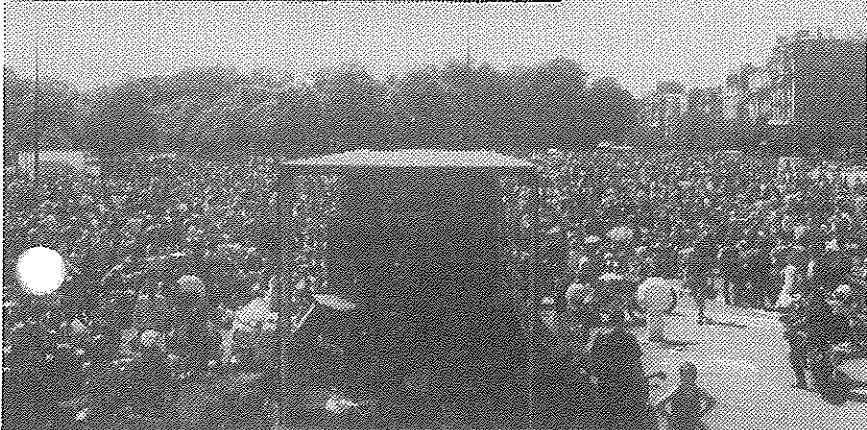
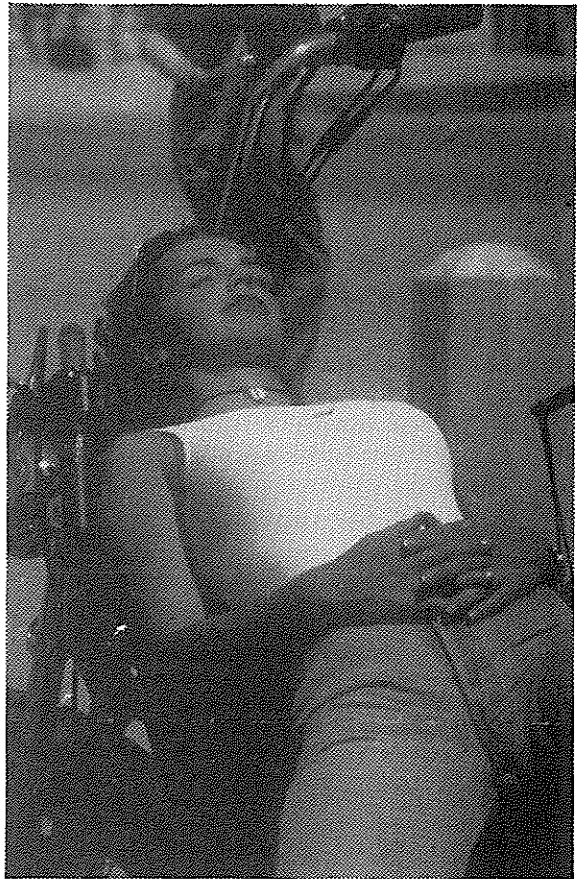
You may think Europe is on the other side of the world and what happens there just don't bother anyone south of the equator. Well, two world wars laid that notion to rest, and what's happening in the old world right now is going to have repercussions for everyone on two wheels from pole to pole. Europe is harmonising legislation to smooth trade between all member states, the Japanese will, of necessity, tailor their production to meet whatever ridiculous bullshit flies from the beaureacrats of Brussels. Why? Because the European market will be the single biggest motorcycle market in the world, if one set of rules prevails there then the major manufacturers will meet them, just as politicians thrive on conformity so too do the Japanese. Right now European bikers are not to happy with what the pen pushers are concocting, and the Federation of European Motorcyclists are not taking it lying down.

If you've never been in a convoy of 25,000 motorcycles it may be a little difficult to imagine what it's like. Try to imagine a cavalry charge taking place in a thunderstorm while the ground shakes in an earthquake and you may have some idea. Paris was designed to accomodate Napoleon's victory march's, but it couldn't cope with the massed ranks of the FEM. Under a blistering sun, by the thousands, from every corner of the continent they came. Honda's, Ducati's,

Triumph's, Suzuki's and Harley's, boy racers and bandana'd bro's rubbed shoulders, a multitude with a mission.

When the talking was over and the run proper began it was as if a gigantic orchestra had burst into life; a menagerie of musicians with a common song sheet. "Bangemann, we're going to kick your arse!" roared Simon Milward as the colossal conga moved slowly out of the Port de Bercy like a sluggish river of lava pouring toward it's destination; Paris and the Eiffel Tower. Doubting Thomases and sneering sceptics eat your words, the locals loved it. Shouting support from the sidewalks, they leapt in blatant jubilation, waving victory signs as they crowded the pavements to watch the procession pass. It was early evening before the mass of bikes had made their victory pass of the famous tower and Paris was returned to the Parisians. When all the shouting was over and the streets un-jammed, what was acheived? A morale boost surely, a hell of a day out for sure, but something more too. No-one is daft enough to believe that demonstrations change laws overnight, they don't. What they do acheive, is the provision of tangible proof that the views expressed by motorcycling voices in the corridors of Brussels, are expressed not through the lone voices of loonies, but reflect the overwhelming will of the motorcycling population. That is critically important to a comprehensive campaign. It may have looked shaky for a while with a rather loose degree of organisation that was salvaged by timely intervention on the part of the Motorcycle action group's Craig Clinch and Simon Milward, but it came together "on the night". Congratulations to every-one who made the effort, you did us proud.

Scenes from Eurodemo, held in Paris on 18 June this year. Expect to hear more in this magazine about the going's on in Europe coming from the, so called, European Parliament, in reality a small group of elected members perched atop an enormous beaucracy. You can bet our own fat cats in Canberra are watching with avid interest, and as Ian so rightly points out, Europe will be the legislative engine for the entire world over the next decade or so. MRAA is developing close links with FEM and the AMA in America.



DRIVER AWARENESS RIDE 94`

November 13th.

The one day of the year when drivers can't use the old favourite, "I didn't see him". Last years event, though not well publicised, attracted a column of 2000 plus bikes starting from A`Beckett St in the city and following an approximately 40 kilometre route through the suburbs past all the major hospitals, taking in the Kew Boulevard on the way. Police and MRAA marshals joined forces to make the ride one of the safest and most enjoyable for some years.

This years ride will again begin from A`Beckett St, riders should assemble from 10am for an 11am start

AMCN RIDE DAYS AND TRADE EXPO

Australian motorcycle news will again hold this enormously succesful event at Phillip Island, and this year at Sydney's Eastern Creek.

The inaugural expo at Phillip Island last February attracted 10,000 to 12,000 people with their hearts set on motorcycling. Most were current riders, though many were thinking of starting, or even returning to the fold. Over 1000 people got a taste of the Phillip Island circuit, most on manufacturers new bikes, but a lot went round on their own machines. From the MRAA's point of view, it gave us a chance to meet members whom we've only previously known as a name on a membership listing. That in itself was enormously worthwhile, and with around 30 new members enrolled over the weekend you can be sure we'll be there again, at both events.

The exact date for the Phillip Island expo is not finalised at this stage, but it's either 3-5 February or 10-12 February 95.

The dates for the Eastern Creek leg are 20-22 October 95. AMCN are a little concerned that this date clashes with the weekend of the Sydney Motor Show. I suppose that from an exhibitors point of view it's a nuisance, but for we riders, I could think of worse ways to spend a week-end than a ride to Sydney for a day at the Motor Show, then a slash around Eastern Creek on the latest machinery on the next.

For a ride, either on a manufacturer's demo bike, or your own rat, pre-booking is essential. Keep an eye on AMCN for details of how to book.

MEETING WITH THE RACV.

Good news!

Thank's to all members who voted in the recent RACV council election and supported the MRAA preferred candidates. Your votes have helped ensure a seat on the RACV's governing body was filled by a candidate sympathetic to motorcyclist's.

As promised, Dr Michael Heffernan has opened up regular communication, meeting with MRAA's Margaret Stewart, Moira Stewart, Damien Codognotto, Jim Cutts, Paul Webster, and Linda Berends, a research student with Monash University. Also present at the meeting on 30th August was RACV Assistant General Manager (public policy), John Sanderson.

Both John and Michael understand the complex problems we face because riders are seen as a nuisance rather than legitimate road users.

Blood Challenge

Dr Heffernan is interested in having the RACV help promote this MRAA event for this summer, and perhaps next year supporting a state based team challenge against NRMA of NSW and the motorcycling organisations in the other states.

Driver Education

John Sanderson gave some interesting information on traffic education, particularly in primary and secondary schools. Apparently the newly released Traffic Safety schools curriculum does not mention motorcycles. MRAA reps will be addressing this omission with the Department of Education, and preparing material. If you are a parent or teacher and interested in helping out in this area, call the MRAA so we can put you in touch with the members working on this one.

The RACV is willing to consider an article giving practical tips for drivers on how to be aware of motorcycles, for example on how to adjust external mirrors. Space in Royalauto, the RACV magazine is at a premium however, and it may be many months before this appears.

The meeting also touched on motorcycle insurance, testing for car driver permits / licenses, and research into motorcycle crashes.

After this positive start, MRAA expects to meet quarterly with the RACV from now on.

Western suburbs riders have a new postal address. It's :-

P.O Box 466, Sunshine, 3020.
The phone number is unchanged, and is (03) 311 8256.

MRAA Calendar for October / November.

Western suburbs Riders. 03-311 8256. Meets at Fun City. 234 Ballarat Rd, Braybrook. 8pm on the 4th Tuesday each month.

WSR general meetings. 27th September, 25th October, 23rd November.

Video nights. 8th October, 12th November.

Statewide tin rattle. 25th September. For kids with leukemia. Please call WSR as soon as possible if you can help anywhere in Victoria. Get your club involved!

Canteen Kids ride day. 16th October. Only current MRAA members with card may carry passengers for legal reasons. It's for teenagers suffering from cancer and a WSR cheque will be presented. Side-cars are especially needed. Please help. Departs Royal Childrens Hospital in Melbourne at 11am. Have your MRAA card with you.

Wine Run. 17th October. Free barby, free wine tasting. Great family day for responsible riders.

MRAA Kickstart. Exclusively L & P plate riders. Meets at the Anchor & Hope (481 Church st, Richmond). 8pm on the second tuesday each month. 11th October, 8th November. Visitors welcome.

Dandenongs ride day. 17th September. Leaves from the carpark at Brentwood youth club, Ferntree Gully road at 11:30am. Bring some meat for the barbecue.

MRAA General meeting. 6th November. 2pm, 380 Elizabeth street. Melbourne.

Driver Awareness Ride. 13th November. 10am, A`Beckett St. Melbourne.

Rider training awareness day. 20th November. Aerospace technologies carpark under the Westgate bridge. Whether you're on your "L's" or whether you've had your license 20 years, come along and see where your strengths and weakness's are. More details next issue.

Blood Challenge. 1st December to 28th February. More on this next issue.