

Riders' Voice



MRAA Toy Run - 12 December, 2004

The annual Toy Run assembled in Latrobe St, Melbourne, before heading off to Williamstown's Bikes by the Bay and the waiting Salvation Army. The Toy Run was a resounding

success. An estimated 8,000 riders turned out for this most worthy annual charity event. Full report and more photos inside.

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Cathy Freeman and Vivian Lunn enjoying an MRA ride to Portsea Pub - Jan 05

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From the Editor's Desk

The MRA's biggest event, the Toy Run has been run. A lot of work went into it to make it a success. An estimated 8,000 riders turned up to donate their presents to the Salvos, who then distributed them to needy families over the Christmas period. A heartfelt thanks to all concerned.

The Annual General Meeting has been held. It's the time of the year when all Board positions fall vacant. Congratulations to all the election winners. We look forward to the new year with reinvigorated enthusiasm and dedication to improve the lot of Victorian motorcyclists. All the details of the AGM can be read from Page 16 onwards.

The various committees have not been idle, either. This issue includes more policy proposals and feedback from their activities. We also hope to include on a regular basis, the various activities and news from our interstate counterparts. In particular, the Motorcycle Council of NSW has been busy lobbying the NSW government to repeal the silly muffler labelling laws that it insists that all motorcyclists travelling in or through NSW have on their bikes (model year dependant), even though no other state in Australia requires such labelling.

Wire Rope Barriers get a fair bit of coverage in this issue. There's even a news item borrowed from the Tasmanian Hobart Mercury newspaper. Hopefully, we will see some progress in this area.

The newsletter now has a name. "Riders' Voice" was picked from a number of suggestions. If you have an artistic bent, perhaps you could design a graphic that can be used in future editions. The current "logo" is a temporary one.

Martin Taylor

Salvos say thanks to the MRA!

By John Dalziel

I have just come from a centre where more than 1,000 families have received toys for their children. The people who have this opportunity are those we have assisted during the year and we know that they are going to have a hard time this Christmas with the extra expense that gift giving, special Christmas foods and holiday expenses for the kids brings. So appointments are made for exclusive shopping opportunities at our centres, the staff spends a great deal of time to make the centres look like a toy supermarket. The toys are arranged by age groups and people browse and think what toy will delight their child the most. Then they are given the wrapping paper and a card, a bag of food and a Christmas greeting.

I see the other side the motor cycles roaring up to the Williamstown drop off point the people handing over the toys to the Salvo vans, the boxes being filled. How can the Salvos say thanks for the generous people we can tell of the people they help? That is the only way we can say thanks for trusting us with your precious toys. We are just the communication link between that so desperately need and those who are so keen to give.

This year the need was greater by at least 13% but the donations of toys was up by at least this amount. We all say thank you and happy Christmas.

For more info, contact John on (03) 9896-6007 or 0417-537-950

\$50 Levy Update: Barrier Protection

VMAC has approved \$460,000 to fund a trial of barrier protection devices. 16 sites are being treated at an average cost of \$28,750 per site. 9.9km of road will be treated. There were a total of 145 motorcycle casualty crashes across the 16 locations.

Why do it? These treatments have never been used in Australia before. They have never been demonstrated as effective in Australia before. No one else will fund them.

Where do they come from? The solutions draw on treatments from around the world.

What are we treating? The treatments are for w-beam (Armco) metal barriers and Wire Rope Fencing (WRF).

- How are we treating it?** Treatments will involve using
- 1) "Mototub": A rubber protective tube placed in front of posts
 - 2) "Rub-Rail" An additional metal rail along the bottom of w-beam (Armco) fences.
 - 3) Impact attenuators will be used on WRF. Impact attenuators are foam cushions placed around the outside of the posts. They reduce impact forces by about 50% at lower speeds. They are extremely cheap by comparison with most other treatments.

Benefits to motorcyclists

- 1) Savings will outweigh the costs. Even though this is a trial it is expected that it will prevent injuries and loss of life in excess of its cost.
- 2) Education of road designers. Most engineers have never seen these treatments which show them that it is possible to make barriers safer for motorcyclists.
- 3) A precedent is set. Such treatments are likely to become more common once the first ones are installed.
- 4) Flow on effects. Most past \$50 levy projects have had flow on effects far exceeding the money spent on them. This one should be no different.

Michael Czajka

MRA Road Safety & Research Officer

Motorcycle injury?

Talk with us.

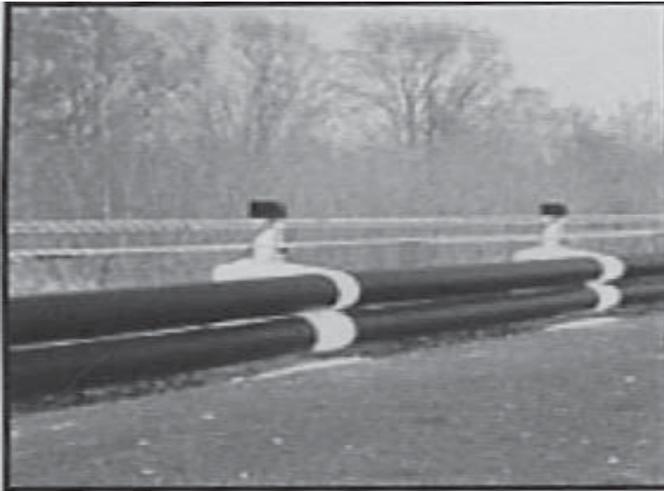
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MRA Policy Document

Wire Rope Barriers

This document is a proposal. It's being published to invite discussion and debate so that the MRA can formalise it as an official policy.

The MRA is opposed to the installation of WRBS.

Why are we opposed?

WRBs contain the greatest density of exposed posts of any barrier system.

WRBs tend to be placed very close to the road which increases the risk of hitting the posts.

WRBs are contrary to the Labor government's policy promises

WRBs are contrary to the Road Design Guidelines (Austroads 15, p.22)

WRBs create a lethal environment for motorcyclists

WRBs are a maintenance intensive barrier. They have very high maintenance costs and long down times (10-30 day repair times). On economic grounds other barriers are more attractive (refer WRF fact sheet).

Alternatives to WRBs

- 1) Create clear zones
- 2) Use safer barriers eg. Race track proven technology (Tyre barriers), barriers with smooth surfaces and no projections, etc...
- 3) Slow vehicles down once they leave the road eg. gravel, sand, water, etc...
- 4) Install newer energy damping barriers eg. water filled barriers

What can be done to improve the safety of WRBs?

- 1) Remove unnecessary barriers
- 2) Remove hazards which make barriers necessary
- 3) Locate barriers as far from traffic flow as practical
- 4) Prevent unnecessary duplication of barriers
- 5) Make the posts soft/weak/frangible enough not to injure a motorcyclist
- 6) Install impact attenuators on the posts
- 7) Install covers over the barrier to prevent contact with the posts

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Toy Run 27 Report



In Melbourne Toy Runs had declined. Back in the 90s up to 15,000 riders assembled. By 2003 only 3000 started the Motorcycle Riders Association's TOY RUN 26. MRA TOY RUN 27 needed major promotion. Victorian Attorney General, Rob Hulls, heard a call for help from Dale Maggs on Neil Mitchell's 3AW radio show. He guaranteed funding calling the event "a Melbourne icon". Lord Mayor, John So, also gave support. Olympian Cathy Freeman and star of silver screen & silver Ducati, Eric Bana helped publicity enormously. The Salvos' influence and expertise was invaluable.

There were problems that must be fixed but on Sunday morning, December 12, 2004, up to 8000 riders assembled in Latrobe Street for the run to historic Williamstown. Regardless of the police breaking the run up and failing to man vital intersections, Chief Marshal, Alan Riley and his team, including Race Marshals Victoria and APEX, managed to get the riders safely parked in Williamstown. En route the run combined with riders on the 20th Cranbourne Toy Run. Those Runs brought a reported 10,000 people to the Williamstown Motorcycle Club's famous Bikes By The Bay festival. More kids got Christmas presents.

www.toyrun.org.au. A tryout web site was set up as a .com in 2003 but not developed. The site was hosted by the MRA in Melbourne and the new MRA Secretary, Derek Clarkson, "renovated" it and made it a .org.au site. Since we were running a campaign to "rescue" the Melbourne event and the media, Internet, bike mags and so on, all operated nationally, it was logical to go national with our campaign too. Working from home required me to collect Toy Run info from around Australia by phone, post & email, sorted, then put on my site www.nmcins.com.au. Derek then put it on www.toyrun.org.au, which was then kept pretty much up to date. We listed around 50 Toy Run assembly areas. Unexpectedly, the bike

mags began promoting www.toyrun.org.au as a service because it was a more efficient use of space. By the end of 2004, www.toyrun.org.au was visited 9723 times. It was decided to add other national charity activities like WIMA's Pink Ribbon Rides.

A CSA (Community Service Announcement) is a TV ad that gets free airtime because it's a community service. We had to promote the website. Friends including Kevin Poulter Studios, Apocalypse Films, the Salvation Army and the Video Copy Centre helped film, edit, dub and distribute the 30-second ad. The ad was general. It didn't promote a particular date, club or charity, just www.toyrun.org.au.

The stickers simply said, in bold black & white, www.toyrun.org.au. The sponsors name was printed *small* underneath. The sticker was sized to be used on helmets but legible from a distance in traffic. The aim was to promote www.toyrun.org.au.

The posters & handbills were a quality colour job printed by Econoprint in Williamstown. These had space for local details so they could be used in any town or city, in any State or Territory. A Salvo shield appeared with a Swann Insurance logo. The charity for most Toy Runs was the Salvos and Swann sponsored the national promotion. Other logos may be considered for the 2005 poster.

MRA TOY RUN 28 in Melbourne will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2005.

Damien Codognotto OAM
MRA Life Member.
MRA TOY RUN 27 Organiser.
www.nmcins.com.au



Eric Bana & Cathy Freeman enjoying the day.

Changed your Details?

If you, or any MRA member you know, have changed your postal or email addresses, please advise us of your new details. This ensures we don't waste money on mailouts that are returned to us, nor time managing bouncing emails.

Please forward updated details to:

membershipsecretary@mraa.org.au

Or, post details to the Membership Secretary at head office

Michael Doedee

Membership Secretary MRAA

Toy Run 28

For those who have never been on a Toy Run it's best to ask someone about them and what one is, what its purpose is etc. For those who have been on a Toy Run previously, you might realise that a lot of work has to go into a Toy Run prior to the day.

Last year Toy Run 27 was organised primarily by Damien Codognotto with assistance from Chief marshal Alan Riley and MRA Secretary Derek Clarkson.

As a new board member at the time and now 2 time Toy run participant and one time involved with the Toy Run organisation (in a very minor way) it was amazing to see how much work actually had to go into a Toy Run prior to the day.

To try and ease the burden on one person and spread the load a bit more the MRA is looking to appoint a team to organise this year's Toy Run.

While Damien did a lot of the groundwork last year, we can still use, with a few minor alterations, the same Event Management Plan (EMP) as last year. We still have fliers and posters left over from last year's run. As they have no date or venue on them we can reuse them this year.

A debrief was recently held with the City of Melbourne and they are keen to start work planning Toy Run 28 (as is the MRA). Meetings will be held with Victoria Police and the City of Melbourne.

TAC is sponsoring the run again this year to the tune of \$25,000 which we can use to pre advertise the route and for traffic management so we can (hopefully) avoid some of the pitfalls that befell us last year.

If you want to get involved in what is an MRA and Melbourne motorcycling premier event, please send an email to mraa@toyrun.org.au or phone the MRA on (03) 9794 5504 and register your interest.

Gippsland Bikers Win Australia Day Award

A fantastic achievement for motorcyclists in Victoria's Latrobe Valley and a credit to riders everywhere. The clubs that organised the 2004 Latrobe Valley Toy Run won the COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR Award. The 3 organising clubs recieved the award at the Australia Day Ceremony in Kernot Hall in Morwell. Awards, including La Trobe City's Australian and Young Australian of the Year, were presented by Latrobe City Mayor, Bruce Lougheed



Alf Vella, President of the Eastern Riders Gippsland, Bill Roberts, President of the Ulysses Gippsland Central Branch and Joanne Creighton of Us and Them Tourers accepting the COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR Award for the 2004 Gippsland Toy Run."

The Gippsland Toy Run was held on Saturday, December 4. 520 motorcycles went on the run, 100 more than in 2003. Some Melbourne riders attended and organisers would like to encourage visitors to join them again in 2005.

Melbourne, Dandenong, Cranbourne, Sale and others centres are within a day's ride of the Gippsland Toy Run and tourers on Highway 1 are encouraged to break their journey and get involved.

The 2004 Gippsland Toy Run raised \$42,000. That was up \$10,000 on 2003.

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Front Number Plates - They Haven't Gone Away.

Recently, an advertisement in a Melbourne newspaper calling for tenders for the design and production of front number plates or identifiers for motorcycles has sparked some rather vigorous debate amongst motorcyclists. Michael Czajka is an MRA rep on the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Committee (VMAC). His response to the issue is below. (Ed.)

VMAC voted down FNPs. Our advice to the minister was don't do it. It's not cost effective.

At the Federal meetings the riders have been directly lobbying the ATSB and the transport minister (who has changed 3 times in 12 months) regarding FNPs.

We asked the Federal minister for some facts to back up the FNP stance. To date we have not received any facts.

We pointed out the discrepancy in the outcomes versus the costs. As the minister has changed yet again I'm sure the new minister Jim Lloyd didn't know these facts until Guy Stanford (NSW MCC) caught up with him privately a few months ago.

Our rep on the NRSS (National Road Safety Strategy), Guy Stanford, lobbied for the inclusion of high priority motorcycle items like a National Road Safety Strategy and the exclusion of low priority low benefit items like FNP's. It should be impossible to include any low priority item in the NRSS as only items with large benefits should go into the strategy.

The MRA has created a draft Policy on FNPs and asked for input. Despite the large amount of rhetoric only a handful of people have been involved in these efforts.

What more can we do?

- We are meeting with the Federal Transport ministers staff to lobby further on this issue.
- We have a meeting booked with the Transport minister on 7th March to put these points to the Minister in Person.
- We have also asked for a meeting with our own Transport minister Peter Batchelor to lobby him on this issue.

*Michael Czajka
MRA VMAC Rep and Road Safety Research Officer.*

Meeting with Attorney General's Department

Dale Maggs, Michael Czajka & Tom (father of the rider who died recently) met with the Attorney General's Office in November. Fiona Hayes, Chief of Staff represented the Attorney-General.

Under discussion was the recent fatality in which a woman was allowed to continue driving after killing a rider.

The meeting was originally scheduled for 30 minutes but went for around 90 minutes.

Tom put forward the injustice of a driver being able to drive after killing someone (pre-hearing).

The MRA put the point about drivers being fined small amounts and retaining their licenses after killing someone (court case).

The Attorney General's office explained that it already has an extensive proposal to toughen the penalties for drivers who kill other road users (penalties).

The MRA suggested that the process be:

- 1) Loss of licence
- 2) Retraining
- 3) Retesting
- 4) Community service

Our suggestions fill the void between Tom's and the Attorney-General's suggestions.

If our suggestions are accepted nobody could walk out of court any more with just a fine.

NB. There was no proposal for impact statements because they already exist.

The meeting went very well. Dale did an excellent job pointing out that the loss of licence is automatic in many other types of industry while an accident is being investigated (showing that a precedent existed for such action).

Our suggestions were based on the MRA's "Appropriate Penalties" policy. The policy was in the newsletter that we sent out in December. It has been widely disseminated for comment over the past year and the families of both 2002 & 2003 fatalities (failure to give way) had input into it. The policy was voted on at the AGM and is now in place as our first official public policy.

We were also able to put a few other issues to the Attorney-General. For example, the \$50 levy

NB. The Attorney-General, Rob Hulls is also Minister for TAC.

We asked for the removal of the \$50 levy.

We also proposed the long-standing MRA policy of 50cc scooters (the road registerable ones) on car licenses as a way of addressing the Monkey Bike issue: the monkey bikes would not meet the criteria required for road use.

We pointed out that 4 other states already had such laws without adverse consequences.

Michael Czajka

MRA Road Safety & Research Officer

\$500 donation sends elves shopping

Thanks to a \$500 donation from a Toorak family, MRA elves purchased two trolley loads of presents for underprivileged children for the MRA Toy Run.

K-Mart made the money stretch even further when the Northland store's Retail Services Manager, Steven Stojcevski, gave additional discounts off the goods. Thank you.

The donor family saw footage of the Toy Run in the media in 2003. Thinking that it was a great cause and a wonderful thing for the motorcycling community to do, they gifted the money to the MRA to purchase the goods and donate them at this year's Toy Run, instead of buying presents for themselves.

On behalf of the kids who received the gifts, the MRA expresses its sincere thanks to the family for their generosity.



Santa's Elves, from left, Alan Zimmer, Mark Ewart, Kmart Elve, Austin Webb, Alan Riley, Lee O'Mahoney and Bob Charlton

Between 2001 and 2002, crashes related to inattention increased by 67% and ones related to disobeying road rules by 86%, while speed-related crashes fell slightly.

These statistics raise doubts as to the safety benefits of governments' continued focus on speed cameras. Because of their prevalence, it seems that people are watching the speedo more and the road less. The net result? Increased crashes.

The report is can be downloaded from <http://www.roadsafety.qld.gov.au>.

Noise laws on a rocky road

The NSW government's new motorcycle-specific noise laws are causing a bit of grief – to the government.

Chris Turner from the NSW Motorcycle Council (NSW MCC) was fined at the roadside for having loud pipes, even though his bike had the recently-imposed label stating that it met noise limits.

Chris appealed the fine and cross-examined the police officer in court. The police prosecutor withdrew the case after Chris argued that the law requires physical measurement of noise for a fine to be issued, not just a police officer's opinion.

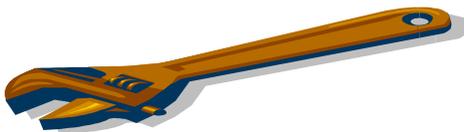
The NSW MCC is lobbying against the requirement to have a noise label on aftermarket pipes. This requirement applies to all motorcycles, even those briefly visiting NSW from other states. Without the label, you may be hit with a \$200 fine.

Around the world by bike

If you dream of touring overseas by bike, grab a copy of *Highlights of the Road*.

Published by Sydney couple Charis and George Schwarz, the book details their 45,000 km journey around the world in the

Keep on keeping on



Wanna learn the basics of maintaining your beast?

Holmesglen TAFE runs a motorcycle maintenance course at Chadstone that covers basic servicing and repairs. Learn about correct tools, handling, maintenance, safety checks, terminology and procedures. \$150 for 3x3 hour sessions over three week period. Tuesday nights. Phone 03 9564 1546, email shortcourses@holmesglen.vic.edu.au or go to <http://www.shortcourses.holmesglen.vic.edu.au/> and search for Motorcycle Maintenance.

Speed kills. Or does it?

A recently released Queensland report has found that speeding contributed to only 5% of road crashes in that state in 2002. In stark contrast, inattention and not obeying traffic rules, other than speed limits, contributed to 39% and 31% of crashes respectively. Inexperience contributed in 21% of cases and fatigue 5%.

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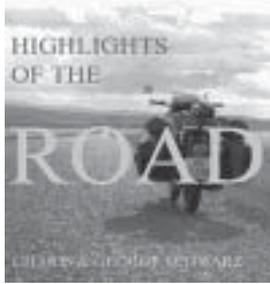
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late 1960's. They are now approaching their 70's and still ride the same veteran BMW bike.



The book gives a day to day account of the journey as love-smitten youngsters from the small Spanish village where they met, through the East, to Charis's home state of Victoria where they married, then from Port Said to Tangier and from Montreal to Buenos Aires.

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The self published book, with 32 pages of colour photographs, retails for \$60 plus \$8 postage and handling.

In celebration of the safe ride, George and Charis are generously donating any profits from the book to a fund for rehabilitating motorcycle crash victims. It will be administered by Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital.

To order, contact George and Charis Schwarz, Publishers, 149 Riley St, East Sydney, NSW, 2010. Ph 02 9361 6452, email gschwarz@iprimus.com.au. ISBN 0-9751877-0-8.

Lee O'Mahoney

Social rides

The MRA's fortnightly social rides continue to be popular, with up to 35 people attending each one.

Last year's rides went to places as varied as Daylesford, Eildon, Mirboo North and Port Albert. Following on from her support of the 2004 MRA Toy Run, Cathy Freeman attended the Portsea Pub ride in January.

Every second ride is tailored to new riders or those who like a more relaxed pace on less challenging roads.

If you're hankering for some good company and good roads, check out www.mraa.org.au or phone the office for dates and destinations.

MRA expertise helps others

The MRA's extensive experience in organising large-scale rides has been put to good use in recent months.

September saw the MRA supporting and marshalling for the Women's International Motorcycling Association's (WIMA) *Pink Ribbon Ride*. The 400 people who attended helped raise \$12,000 for breast cancer research.

December was, of course, the Toy Run, in aid of needy children.

The new year heralded a new ride, the *Ride to Remember*, to raise funds for hospital trauma equipment. Conceived by the police Blue Ribbon Foundation, the MRA helped the organisers with logistics and its hard working band of volunteer marshals guided the 330 riders from Clayton's Monash University to Healesville.

The event raised nearly \$6,000.

"We can't fault the MRA," said John, one of the organisers. "They've been fantastic."

The MRA was also helping the international organization WaterAid with the Australian part of a world fundraising ride.

The organisation helps third world countries get clean drinking water. Unfortunately, this fundraiser has been postponed as the organisers have deemed the timing inappropriate following the Tsunami tragedy.

Event badges for sale

The MRA has a limited number of commemorative badges available for purchase:

Toy Run

2004 to 1998, 1993, 1991

Other events

Metal - 1988 Australian Bicentenary rally; 1988 Seagull rally; 1989 Oz GP Rally; 1993 Driver Awareness Ride; 1997 Oz GP Run; 1998 Oz GP Run; 2003 and 2004 Dr John Pigot Poker Runs

Cloth - 1989 Oz GP Rally

MRA

MRA Australia - metal

MRA eagle logo - cloth

If you missed out, grab one now for just \$2 per badge (except 2004 Toy Run badge - \$10 per badge) plus postage and handling.

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Breakdown blues



Breaking down is never much fun, particularly if you're in the middle of nowhere on your own. Sadly, motorcyclists have nothing like the roadside assistance available for our four-wheeled cousins, nor does it look like we will have in the foreseeable future.

These are the only Victorian companies we are aware of who may be able to help. They provide varying levels of service.

1. *Motorcycle Logistics*. Minor mechanical assistance – fluid levels, punctures, fuel, batteries. Transport throughout Australia. Mon – Fri 7am – 5pm \$80 per hour; other times \$120 per hour with minimum of 2 hours. Ph 0419 521 939, rob@motorcyclelogistics.com, www.motorcyclelogistics.com.au

2. *Motorcycle Transport and Recovery Services*. No mechanical assistance. Transport within 80km of Melbourne CBD 24 hr 7 day. \$66 for first 8km towing; fee for additional km. Also has network of transporters in other parts of Australia. Ph 0416 084 169, info@callmts.com.au, www.callmts.com.au

3. *RACV*. \$66 - \$114 p.a. plus \$38 joining fee for new members. Australia-wide. No mechanical assistance. Fuel. Transport 8km to 100km, depending on membership type. Fee for additional km. When requesting a tow, emphasise that the tow truck driver must be experienced with securing bikes – we have found that not all drivers know how to do this, placing your vehicle at risk. Ph 13 19 55, care@racv.com.au, www.racv.com.au.

You may like to carry their contact details in your wallet, just in case.

Failing these options, either:

- become a competent bike mechanic
- befriend a competent bike mechanic OR
- buy a trailer and permanently loan it to a mate, on condition that they pick you up if you break down, any where, any time.

Similar services are available in most other states.

Lee O'Mahoney

Editor's note: Honda has a breakdown service called "Rider Assist". \$55 pa for the basic service. See Honda's website for more info on www.hondampe.com.au. Other manufacturers may offer a similar service. Best to contact them direct.



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Vincent Genova
Dealership Manager



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MRA 2005 Calendar

2005 Quarterly General Meetings

Last Saturday of May (28th), August (27th) and November (26th) at MRA HQ, 5/2 Quist Crt, Dandenong Sth.

March 19th

Cranbourne Car and Bike Show
Saturday, 19 March 2005
Lawson Poole Reserve, Cranbourne
11:00am - 4:00pm

March 25th (Good Friday)

4 day ride to Broken Hill, NSW
Start Point: Shell Servo Todd Road
Ride leader: Mark Ewart
Mob: 0409 095 382

March 27th

Redesdale Ride
'B' class ride to Redesdale with surprise.
Start point: MRA HQ, Unit 5, 2 Quist Court, Dandenong (Melways 95 D5) at 10 am.
Ride leader: TBA

Monday Nights

Advocacy meetings, 1st Monday of the month at La Porchetta, cnr Peel St and Victoria St, Nth Melbourne at 7pm

Tuesday Nights

Board Meetings, 1st Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt. All members welcome.

Events Committee, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt.

4Bs, 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at Quist Crt.

MRA HQ in Quist Crt, Dandenong for coffee and nibbles, while we watch our own local home grown bike show Two Wheel Torque on Channel 31.

Trivia nights are held at the Quiet Man Irish pub at 271 Racecourse Rd, Flemington. Our team usually meets at the pub around 7:50pm. Just look for the helmets.

Friday Nights

Riders meet for coffee at around 6pm at the Bear Brass Cafe, Southbank and usually finishes up around 9pm. It's not an MRA specific event. All riders are welcome.



MRA HQ at Quist Crt, where you can drop in for a cuppa and pizza and watch Ch. 31's Two Wheel Torque bike TV show.

Current MRAA Membership Discounts

<p>RED WING HONDA 158-160 Bell St, West Heidelberg ph 9459 5553 10% off most accessories including spare parts. Chat to Perry or Chris www.redwinghonda.com.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BIKE BARN 323 Elizabeth st Melbourne Ph 03 9602 4269 10% of most items and accessories Chat to Paul or Sue for discount on large ticket items</p>	<p>MARS LEATHERS 311 Elizabeth st Melb. Ph 03 9670 9430 Free gloves with any purchase over \$300</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">PROMOTO MELBOURNE TYRE & SERVICE CENTRE 76 HODDLE ST ABBOTSFORD TEL:9419 9960 Say hi to either Frank or Liam 10% off Radial Tyres & Accessories 9am-6pm Mon - Fri, 10am-4pm Sat</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Fact 2/ 16 Rosemary Crt Mulgrave 3170 Ph: (03) 9561 5522 5% OFF TYRES 10% OFF ACCESSORIES Chat to Scott or Rick</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">STAFFORD MOTORCYCLES YAMAHA - MuZ Sales & Service 90 Bell St Heidelberg Phone 03 9459 3427 10% off parts and general accessories Chat to Ray for personal attention on other items</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grace Placencio Davies & Company Lawyers Practicing exclusively in Personal Injury Law Speak to Grace Placencio Suite 5 Level 5 517 St Kilda Road Melbourne 3004 Telephone: 03 9867 7769 Facsimile: 03 9867 7750 Email gplacencio@bigpond.com</p>	
 <p style="text-align: center;">WISECO KEN COLVIN PTY. LTD. FACTORY 4, 1 CULVERLANDS ST HEIDELBERG WEST range of both road & off road accessories engine machining & rebuilding facilities. Minimum 10% off (excludes sale items) ph (03) 9459 1158</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BIKE MART Shop 1A, 68 Maroondah Hwy Ringwood Ph 03 9879 5822 Say Hi to Brian Extensive range of motorcycle accessories including helmets, jackets, gloves & bike parts. 10% off for MRAA members</p>	
 <p>196 Wells St South Melbourne. Tel 03 9696 1622 Say G'day to Grant. 10% OFF MOTORCYCLE CLOTHING TO MRA MEMBERS WOMENS AND MENS SIZES AVAILABLE.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">nicolas heaton Hair Dressing 381 Camberwell Road Camberwell 3124 9882 5585 10% off for MRAA Members</p>	
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 <p>MARYSVILLE BAKERY 10% OFF (EXCLUDING COLD DRINKS) This is already a very popular place with heaps of bikes on the weekends</p>	 <p>Healesville Main St Healesville 15% off all food and drinks</p>	 <p>COUNTRY LOOKS HEALESVILLE MAIN STREET HEALESVILLE. Great garden setting & balcony 10% OFF FOOD AND DRINKS UP TO 20% OFF CRAFTS (EXCLUDING SALE ITEMS)</p>
<p align="center">BUXTON PUB (Maroondah Hwy Buxton, 10 minutes from Marysville) Just look for the motorcycle on the roof and the MRA flag in the main bar. 10% off all Bistro meals</p>		
<p align="center">Balwyn Jewellers Dennis Coleman</p> <p align="center">355a Whitehorse rd Balwyn 10% off for MRA members</p>	<p align="center">SOUTH GIPPSLAND HWY & Allied Commercial Wreckers 91 South Gippsland Hwy Dandenong When you need parts for your Holden, Ford , Japanese car or 3 tonne + commercial vehicle CALL Con on 03 9791 5133 or 9791 5611. New aftermarket parts also available. 10% off second hand parts for MRA members OPEN 7 DAYS PER WEEK</p>	
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 <p>233 Moorabool st, GEELONG, 3220. Ph (03) 5223 2822 10% off all accessories on presentation of a valid membership card.</p>		
 <p>10% off tyres on presentation of a current membership card. Only at Bob Jane at Elizabeth St roundabout. Ph (03) 9329 6999 and ask for David.</p>		

Barrier under fire after rider injured

By Damian MacIntyre. 24 Feb 05 - Article, courtesy of the Mercury.

The son of a seriously injured motorcyclist has called for an urgent review of traffic barriers on Tasmanian roads.

Anthony King, 24, of North Hobart, said his father's injuries could have been significantly less if the barriers, made out of tightened metal cables, were replaced.

David King, 46, is in a serious but stable condition after an accident on the Brooker Highway on Tuesday while riding his Kawasaki Z900.

Both northbound and southbound lanes were closed in the Montrose area after the accident, about 3pm.

It is believed the Claremont man was thrown from his bike and landed in the opposite lane. The accident is being investigated.

Mr King was considered a good rider with 30 years of experience.

"The railing is to stop cars but it is a killer for motorcyclists," Anthony said.

"My dad is now in hospital fighting for his life. There should be some kind of railing system to limit injury to motorcyclists.

"He would have had a better chance of taking on the oncoming traffic than the railing which shreds you to pieces."

Among Mr King's injuries are fractured vertebrae, broken leg, broken ankle, split liver and collapsed lung.

His family are staying by his bedside praying for a recovery.

He was due to start a new job at BP this week.

"We want as many people as possible to write to the Government to get these barriers looked at," Anthony said.

Hobart Mercury, Feb, 2005

Around the States

Guy Stanford is a rep on the NSW Motorcycle Council. He attended a meeting on the National Road Safety Strategy panel. Here is his report.

I spent the day pointing out that the proposal for front numberplates was doomed to failure. That this is an INAPPROPRIATE STRATEGY and will cost a heap of money and produce no safety improvement.

I demanded (to the point where the chairman had to say, "its OK, we have got the message") that a National Motorcycle Safety Strategy be prepared in consultation with all stakeholders. I also pointed out that riders as a group have become a lot better organised and have matured in their outlook.

Motorcycles are often overlooked, being classed as "vehicles" and assumed to be captured in general strategies directed to all road users. Yet, Australia's record for motorcycle safety lags behind the OECD countries, whilst car safety is up near the top.

That the experience gained from NSW in preparing a Motorcycle Safety Strategy should not be ignored, as the structure of the Plan enables many different agencies to see how they may contribute and provides riders with the necessary "plug-in" points to government to deal with the myriad of small items, rather than the unapproachable "massive" style that allows little input from the community.

To support this stance, I gave the attached paper and attached to it the 2004 Statistical Summary of NSW from www.roadsafety.mccofnsw.org.au (Safer People section).

The results are worth shouting about.



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Around the States (Cont'd) MCC of NSW News

MCC of NSW has released "Positioned for Safety" in June 2002. In October 2002, the MAA released funds for the first ever State based motorcycle safety program with part of funds directed to riders and part directed to other road users.

The statistical paper shows a marked downturn in SMIDSY type crashes (car-into-motorcycle) from 2002. In fact, an 11% reduction.

While NSW has had an increase of 135% in numbers of motorcycles, the crashes have gone down.

A lot of support came from the Police.

The issue of obscured rear numberplates came up. I grabbed it and spoke on it, to make a point.

I pointed out that at the time of introduction of the Australian Road Rules, about 3 years ago, there was a forced change to wear the rego label holder attached to the rear numberplate. Their Regulation - adopted in all jurisdictions - (*Ed - currently Victoria regs require the rego label to be affixed in a proper holder on the left side of the bike*) was not really workable due to the small area and dodgy nature of bolting up a plastic holder, which may break if too tight, or pivot if too loose. To solve it, all they have to do is change the Reg to require fitment "anywhere on the left hand side" and go back to what it used to be. Police in all States agreed that the timing is correct and it is really only a relatively recent problem. I smiled and pointed out that this is a perfect example of failing to consider motorcycles in Regulations.

Can all States please workshop this proposal and get back to me. Is this a workable change? What downside is there to it?

Are we prepared to discuss the present system and how to improve it for them and us?

I have scored us a seat on a new Federal committee being formed to consider pocketbikes/Segways/scooters, etc.

More news on that as it forms up.

I will be visiting the Electoral office of Jim Lloyd, Federal Minister for Transport, to have a little chat with his advisers about HOW to create the National Motorcycle Strategy, who/money/etc AND to deal specifically with FNP's. This will allow us to have Lloyd briefed before our meeting with him next month, so we can push for a clear decision and ask him to provide the money for the Strategy, so we only have to get the nod from the States, not the money.

We are pulling the rug from under the Victorian FNP stupidity. We have evidence based strategies that are demonstrably working. The FNP proposal has no evidence, only opinion, supposition and guesswork.

Guy Stanford

AMC Representative to NRSS

MCC of NSW

Staying safe in the Yarra Ranges

Mention the Black Spur or Reefton Spur to a Melbourne rider and you are likely to be greeted with a knowing smile. These windy roads pass through beautiful forests and are a favourite for many.

Unfortunately, some riders go home in a worse state than they arrived because of crashes. Unfamiliar roads with tight bends, gravel on corners, wet leaves and roadside trees all add up to a challenging environment for the unsuspecting.

Three years ago, a VicRoads motorcycle safety program was piloted in the Shires of Yarra Ranges and Murrindindi.

Safe roads

The initial Yarra Ranges pilot program raised a number of safety issues, including making the road network safer for riders.

Site inspections and audits were conducted, particularly of areas that featured heavily in motorcycle crash statistics, and recommendations for improvement were made.

Road maintenance staff were then trained to maintain roads from a motorcyclists' point of view, considering things such as road debris and pot holes.

Safe riders

A second part of the strategy aims to improve the riders' skills through on-road instructed rides, led by Honda Australia Rider Training (HART) instructors.

"The number of fatalities and injuries in the Yarra Ranges, as well as the number of bikes that frequent the area, led us to starting the ride program," said Mark McGuire, the Shire's full time Road Safety Officer.

The Shire's approach is very different to the traditional 'big stick' approach that seems to be taken to motorcycle safety by many authorities.

"While we support the enforcement side of things, we also need a pro-active side, informing riders about riding in the Yarra Ranges and riding safely, while increasing their skills," said Mark.

The idea for the training came from a motorcycle skills day at Sandown approximately seven years ago.

"Sandown was really good but still isolated you away from the real environment. I thought it'd be nice if we could transfer it into an on-road component," said Mark.

The course

The training caters both for new riders and those who have been around for a while, with two different rides.

The day is broken into a number of sections, focusing on a different skill or issue in each section and traversing different types of roads.

Skills covered include throttle control, lane positioning during cornering and when in traffic, braking and eye direction. There are also discussions about bike set-up, road conditions, other road users, access to local emergency services, fatigue and protective gear.

With a maximum of 30 riders on each ride, broken into small groups led by an instructor, there is ample opportunity for personal feedback and guidance.



A HART instructor follows behind his group, noting how they can improve their skills

The program has the support of the council and the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council (VMAC). Police are behind it, too - one of the volunteer marshals is a local police officer, as is one of the shire's councilors, Cr Alan Fincher.

Sgt Fincher has spent 30 years in the force and 17 years serving the Yarra Ranges area. He appreciates the hazards facing riders.

"If you come off the road here, chances are that you're going to hit a tree," said Alan.

"At the Healesville police station, they're often going to motorcycle collisions and there's a real interest, at a local level, in doing what they can to prevent accidents from happening."

New recruits

Neither Mark nor Alan rode when they got involved in the safety program. Both do now.

Alan originally got his Learners permit approximately 20 years ago, "out of necessity to save for a deposit for a house".

But Melbourne's winters and riding didn't agree with him and it is only now that he has returned, "for fun, not for commuting."

"I went to the launch of the safety strategy on the back of someone else's bike," he said.

"I thought it was good fun but that I'd rather be on the front. So I got my licence, got a 250 and I'm now looking at getting something bigger."

Mark has his Learners permit but is yet to get his own bike. He borrows a bike from HART for the training days.

Affordable

Thanks to subsidies from the Shire and HART, and the use of volunteer marshals, the full day course costs only \$33, representing outstanding value.

To date, approximately 200 riders have completed the training, many being learners and those returning to riding after a break.

Long-term riders are also making the most of the affordable training, including a number of MRA members.

"One guy was here on Saturday, he did a ride last season to Baw Baw and he's booked in for one at the end of April," said Mark.



Riders debrief after practicing their skills

That guy is MRA member and long-time rider, Mick Dabbs.

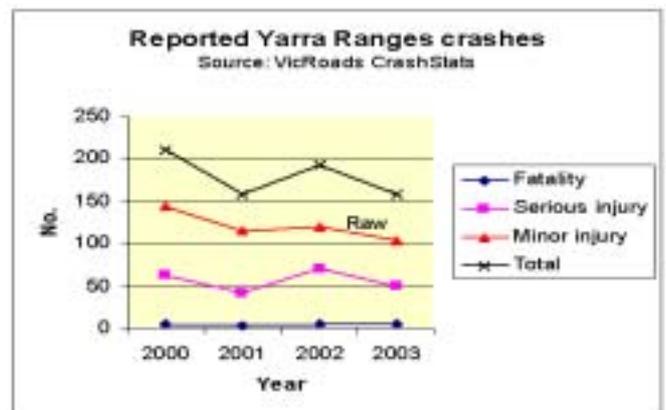
The course has also caught the attention of the BMW Club, which is subsidising private courses for its members.

And the result?

The instructed rides always receive very positive feedback from participants. And we all know that when road works are done with motorcyclists in mind, they can improve safety considerably - the recently improved sections of the Black Spur are nothing less than a pleasure to ride on.

But have these initiatives led to better safety? The statistics are positive, though it is hard to know if this is entirely due to the programs or if other factors are at work.

In 2000 when the program started, there were a total of 210 reported motorcycle crashes. In 2003, this had dropped to 157, a 25% improvement. Fatalities have declined slightly, from five in 2000 to four in 2003. Statistics for 2004 are not yet complete.



Reduced road trauma is not the only benefit of improving motorcyclist safety in the area. There is also the considerable bonus of increased tourism and the economic boost that has on the region.

"Riders all have to stop somewhere, eat and drink somewhere," said Mark.

"If we took out all the bikes, there'd be a reasonable drop in the tourism dollar. If we can make it attractive for riders, we're adding to the economic environment."

Shire joins Toy Run

Having now got into the swing of motorcycling, the Shire last year organised a Lilydale starting point for the MRA Toy Run, joining in with the Box Hill run which then headed to the city. Approximately 70 riders joined the Lilydale part and local residents donated many gifts.

"We had toy bins in each of the five service centres, which were all full," said Mark.

"Someone made some wooden toys – two big boxes full - and one guy turned up with a fully loaded 4WD."

The shire intends to continue this tradition, probably supplying a breakfast to riders next year.

Advice to others

Does Mark have any advice for other local governments who may wish to improve motorcycle safety?

"In the first instance, what the shire did was look at the road infrastructure and, when doing maintenance, keeping motorcyclists in mind. Once you've done that, think about what per cent of riders come into the area and whether it's worthwhile running a rider training program."

Mark advises that the Yarra Ranges, Murrindindi, Nillumbik and Whittlesea councils are in the process of forming a coalition to jointly run motorcycle safety programs, thereby sharing resources and reducing costs.

Upcoming courses

Most things have a lifespan and this program is no different - the rides at the end of 2005 will probably be the last ones for a while. Upcoming courses are Sunday 3rd April for P platers, licensed and experienced riders, going through Reefton and Marysville, and Saturday 23rd April for Learners and new riders, going through Toolangi. Dates for courses at the end of 2005 have not yet been set.

To book, phone the Shire of Yarra Ranges on 1300 368 333 or email mark.mcguire@yarraranges.vic.gov.au.

Lee O'Mahoney

2005 Annual General Meeting

The 2005 annual general meeting was held at MRA HQ at 5/2 Quist Crt, Dandenong Sth, on Saturday, 26th February. About 40 members attended.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- Toy Run 27 report (Damien Codognotto)
- 4Bs - Bent and Buckled Bikers Bureau (Austin Webb)
- VMAC Report – Michael Czajka
- Advocacy Committee – Michael Czajka
- Treasurer's Report – Tony Ellis
- Membership Secretary's Report – Michael Doedee

The meeting opened at around 1.30pm. Harry Listokin chaired the meeting. The previous AGM's minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

The 4 Bs

Austin Webb, the newly appointed 4Bs co-ordinator reported that he has been actively chasing sponsorship for the 4 Bs. There are some good prospects on the horizon. So, watch this space.

For those who do not know, the 4Bs or the Bent and Buckled Bikers Bureau was set up in the late '70s/early '80s. It comprised of volunteers who would visit riders unfortunate enough to crash and end up in hospital. Usually services such as bike crash recovery, legal and medical administrative help, magazines, books, etc. were provided for the downed biker. Austin has been doing a lot of work to get it back up and running.

He also held a raffle which raised a few hundred dollars for the cause, with Derek Clarkson, outgoing secretary winning the \$50 prize.

Recruiting the Young

Dale Maggs reported on a new indoor motocross arena that's being built in the Shire of Casey. And that the MRA's been invited to be get involved with the project. This opens a lot of opportunities to introduce new families and their young riders to the MRA and what it represents for riders.

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2005 Toy Run

Damien Codognotto OAM reported back from the recent Toy Run. Highlights were the problems with TAC funding the bureaucratic hurdles involved in seeking reimbursement. Comments were made comparing the Grand Prix Corporation's ability to get the Melbourne CBD closed off for a lap of the city, while a charity run has to run into obstacles at every turn, just to get a bike procession running on a relatively quiet Sunday morning.

He recommended that we actively pursue corporate sponsorship for the 2005 event, with perhaps TAC being a partner sponsor.

Derek Clarkson and Alan Riley were praised for their efforts with the Toy Run. As a result, they were nominated for Life Memberships in the MRAA. This vote was carried.

General Business

A disciplinary matter regarding a former member was raised. There are concerns that his activities, particularly on some of the Internet forums, amounts to stalking. The MRA has attempted to enter into a dispute resolution with him regarding his attitude towards the MRA. The Department of Justice was involved, as it offers an independent dispute resolution process that's available to all incorporated associations. However, he has declined to take part in the process. The MRA has done all it can do to resolve the issue. A motion was put forward to decline any further applications for membership from him. It was carried.

Michael Czajka reported back on the Appropriate Penalties Policy document. It was formally approved and is the MRA's first official policy document.

The Elections

The elections for the 2005 board were held. As there were no opposing candidates, all the nominated members were elected without contest. Only one position, that of Treasurer, up until the meeting, had no nominations. An offer from the floor was accepted.

President: Dale Maggs

Vice President: DJ McCarthy

Secretary: Tony Ellis

Treasurer: Rik van Zuylekom

Membership Secretary: Michael Doedee

Ordinary board member and 4 Bs coordinator: Austin Webb

Other ordinary board member: Mark Ewart.



The new board. From L-R Mick Doedee, Rik van Zuylekom, Tony Ellis, Austin Webb, Dale Maggs and DJ McCarthy

Committee Reps

Wendy Taylor was nominated the MRA's rep on the Road Safety Reference Group (RSRG). Michael Czajka was officially confirmed as the MRA's Road Safety and Research Officer. Martin Taylor will continue as the newsletter editor.

VMAC/RSRG

Michael Czajka reported back on the various committees' activities that he's involved with. This included front number plates, wire rope fencing and a new riders handbook that was recently produced and upgraded, with input from the MRA.

He also spoke of the upcoming ATSB meeting in Canberra on March 7th, where they'll meet with the Transport Minister

The Lordings Tribute

Tom Lording and Debbie McMellan, the father and sister of Geoff Lording, the motorcyclist who was allegedly killed by a drunk driver, were present at the meeting. Michael Doedee, at the request of Geoff's family was able to source a helmet that was the same as the one Geoff had owned and was buried with. They had it mounted with a plaque and brought it along to show the membership.

The court case against the driver is coming up soon and the MRA will be present to offer the Lording family support.



Geoff Lording's father Tom and sister Debbie pictured with the donated helmet.

Money Matters

Tony Ellis, the acting treasurer, reported some good news, in that the MRA was finally back into the black. Although there are some financial issues still outstanding, the outlook for the MRA is looking much more positive.

Membership

Mick Doedee reported that the membership has increased by about 120 over the past 12 months. We now have about 700 members. More needs to be done to encourage riders to join. To that end, the Cranbourne Car and Bike show will have an MRA presence. So, if anyone wants to help out with the stand, give Dale Maggs a call.

Mick also said that the viability of setting up an online service for people to be able to join the MRA and for members to renew their memberships was being investigated

Constitutional Issues

There was a fair bit of discussion over constitutional changes that were proposed at the meeting. Detlef Lamp, the author of our current constitution offered advice as to the

validity of the changes and what useful purpose that they may provide.

A committee has been formed to review the Constitution. Detlef Lamp will chair the committee and he's looking for people who may be able to help out in this area. If you want to get involved contact Mick Doedee on 0411 183 258.

The Volunteers

The MRA cannot function without volunteers. As with any organisation which relies on volunteers, there is always a dedicated few who make the organisation what it is. Whether it's attending meetings, lobbying government departments and ministers, organising toy runs, membership drives and social events, each member is worth their weight in gold.

Below are some of the many volunteers who deserve our thanks. Peregrine Horton, who is a member of the Advocacy Committee and benefactor of a folding machine; Michael Czajka, Road Safety and Research Officer; Bob Charlton who marshalls at many events; Nick Chippett who marshalls at events; Wendy Taylor who sits on the Advocacy Committee and the RSRG; Mick Dabbs who helps with training and marshalling; Detlef Lamp who is the "Father" of our Constitution, Lee O'Mahoney, Toy Run volunteer, MRA phone contact and advertising "executive"; and Harry Listokin who chaired the meeting.



From L-R, Peregrine Horton, Michael Czajka, Bob Charlton, Nick Chippett, Wendy Taylor, Mick Dabbs, Detlef Lamp, Lee O'Mahoney, Harry Listokin and Mick D's ZZR-600

Some Photos from the AGM.....



President, Dale Maggs showing the Certificate of Appreciation for the MRA's work with the Blue Ribbon Foundation



Lee O'Mahoney tries to steal (a ride on) the 999s



Derek Clarkson accepting his \$50 raffle prize from Austin Webb, while Shane tries to figure out how to separate it from Derek..

Liaising With Other Clubs



Well, the AGM has been and gone and I'm the membership secretary for another 12 months, it seems. Part of my role as the membership secretary is looking after the membership database and keeping it updated. I want to widen that role somewhat and expand the database to include motorcycle clubs Aus wide. In an

attempt to get better communication going with clubs within Victoria particularly and Australia generally I aim to distribute our newsletter nationally to all motorcycle clubs, select politicians, select organisations and media.

The end result will be twofold (I hope). It will bring yet more exposure to the MRA and our work and help facilitate national communication. A lot of issues we are fighting are federal issues and if motorcyclists Australia wide can unite with one voice then our chances of stopping politicians making stupid decisions about motorcycling are far better.

If you belong to a club or know where I can get details of a club please let me know, best option is to email it to membershipsecretary@mraa.org.au, failing that feel free to give me a call on 0411 183 258.

Mick Doedee

Membership Secretary MRAA



Membership Form

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