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- ▶▶ Front Number Plates... Again...
- ▶▶ Free Weekend Away - A Winner!

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MRA

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION Inc

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DECEMBER 2000

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Toy Run 2000 Poster
Courtesy of Paul Morgan

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.....from the editor.....

If you haven't noticed the number plate explosion in the media, you have definitely been living under a very large rock. A certain person would like to go out with bang, and is determined to do it with the number plate saga. As a result, this issue is predominately about just that. The proverbial smoke in a wasps nest. Needless to say, a number of people are somewhat pissed off, and unfortunately the media, being the media (ask me, I know!) will invariably highlight the juicy bits and manage to omit the spine of the story, therefore leaving their audience reeling with these "bloody irresponsible bikers!" Not good. The biking fraternity has been dealt a very damaging blow as the media paint us with the same brush. It doesn't help, that you & I are responsible, upstanding citizens, it's those REAL bloody idiots, that give us all the bad name. Well we have 2 choices. Lie down, be apathetic & take it. Or set a good example, and have this out with the authorities in a sensible mature, adult like fashion. The latter is what MRA do - for you.

Change of gear - BLOKES, this is for you. Pressie ideas for the Toy Run. Whilst we appreciate all the pressies you bring, please give a little thought to the majority of St Vinnies recipients, 9-15 year olds! Some ideas: make up, compacts with mirrors, toiletries stuff, nail polish kits, cute writing pads & diaries with pretty pens, skateboard, books, cricket sets, 'T' shirts, tennis racquet & balls, game-boys, walkmans, gift vouchers or some movie ticket vouchers. All of this stuff is cheap and most you will find from Target, K-Mart, Supre, Big W or Cunningham's. Believe me, your thoughtfulness will be appreciated. But don't forget a big teddy bear for the bike. See you all at the Toy Run & please drive sensibly & safely.



Ashley

MRA SA Noticeboard

MARATHON MAN HITS 60!



Yes, it's The PERV, and perv he did at his monumental 60th. There was some gorgeous babe all over Perv like a rash (and he was loving every minute of it!). Happy Birthday Uncle Pervie!

GREAT ESCAPE

Great Escape Rally
19th May
ADVANCE NOTICE

The MRASA rally will be held later than usual due to the fire ban restrictions. Get the info flyer at the Toy Run.

NEW SPONSORS

A big thanks to our sponsors, and a warm welcome to new sponsors for the 2000 Toy Run.

Thank you on behalf of the MRA, St Vincent De Paul and all the children whose lives you touch.

CHRISTMAS DINNER DATE MRA 18th December

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2000-2001

At the Annual General Meeting of the MRA held at the Maid & Magpie Hotel, on the 25th September, the following people were elected to the 2000-2001 committee. Congratulations to everybody for their hard work & effort.

HARRY'S PRACTISE

Are doing an article on Ochre. They want as many motorcyclists as possible. Please keep the 4th - 6th open & watch the website for details.

President	Harald Lindemann
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GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dale Knöote-Parke - Michelle Eustace
Janice Wilkins - Brenton Matiske
Jane Collins - Charlie Brown

WEEKEND WINNER!!



Editor handing prize to winner Dave Gabel

CONGRATULATIONS

To Dave & Tracy Gabel for winning the MRA weekend away. Dave said he was very pleased he'd won, since this is his first year back on a bike. It appears that Tracy has it all worked out! Go girl!

A very special thanks to Trish Cosh of Alison's Apothecary Bed & Breakfast, for sponsoring this wonderful prize. (See ad pg 6).

The 5 lucky winners of one years free membership are: 5126 - Trevor Goodfellow, 1214 - Gordon Milne, 3642 - Paul Hooper, 3911 - Chris Gregory, 5095 - Howard & Susan Moss (Family Membership)

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P

Residents Report

FRONT NUMBER PLATES

F This issue is one that will not go away. It looks like we may be in for an extended fight on this similar to the one we had for the 'Lights On' issue. You may have been following the items in the Advertiser over October/November and this will give you an idea of what has been going on. Essentially what happened was this; The Front Number Plates proposal was first brought up by the Commissioner of Police of SA at the South Australian Road Safety Consultative Group which supported the idea in principle against vigorous opposition by the MRA SA. It has subsequently been sponsored by the Council of the Chief Commissioners of Police and discussed at the Technical Liaison Group of the Federal Government which rejected the proposal on the basis of safety and engineering issues. This group is made up of people from government, industry and the private sector and provides expert advice to FORS.

Clearly that was not good enough for the Police Commissioners who have now started the next round in the issue by presenting their case to the public via the media. The article in the Adelaide Advertiser blatantly pushed their viewpoint

INTERNET

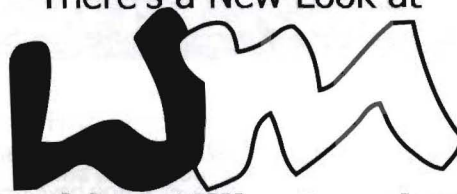


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appealing with the 'bad biker' image to all reasonable safety loving people. The article ignored all the technical and other information provided to the writer on the issue. This is the kind of attitude we have to counter on this issue and I therefore ask all you motorcyclists to make yourselves aware of the issues involved. The Centrestand (June 2000) provides a good reference article with more information also available on the MRA website. Take every chance to inform people who are critical of motorcyclists on the real issues of this matter. Write letters when anti-biker articles appear in the media. My main line will be that if SAPOL think that road safety is losing out because some bikers are not getting pinged then don't mess with vehicle design and unsafe rules just because you can't catch them coming. **TURN THE BLOODY CAMERAS AROUND** so that you catch them going. Makes sense to me, it seems to work elsewhere.

Blood stocks

As bikers we all have a healthy regard for our own well being on the road. We also have a reputation for being concerned with the well being of the community in which we live. One of the ways in which we do this is by donating blood. Adequate blood stocks held by the Red Cross ensure that people can be treated properly in the circumstance of injury or illness where there is a need for whole blood or blood products. Blood donor membership in SA has fallen in the past few years and consequently so have blood stocks. The Royal Show accident in September put a strain on our blood supplies and the recent limitations on donors who may have come into contact with Creutzfeldt-Yakov disease will also be a problem. It may be necessary in the long term to import blood stocks from interstate if the current situation does not improve. So consider giving blood.

(Continued on page 6)

PERCEPTIONS

Ashley Knöote-Parke

I did it! I got the infamous 'P's. (not that I need to display them or anything! *hehehehe*), nonetheless, 'P's I have. If you have been following the antics of the Editor, you would know that JellyAnyDots is now the proud bearer of a 'P' driver. Jelly hasn't been well as her magnowotsitthingymajiggieybobbys weren't working, so she was holed up in Don's bike surgery and I got her back last week. She now thinks she is a _____ (fill in blank for very fast bike!). Since not having to display any 'L's or 'P's, I have noticed the difference in driver attitudes. They don't seem to give me quite the berth I am accustomed to (you know, other side of the road)! They therefore seem to think I am not a 'LP' and wont give me any sympathy for making those really dumb stupid mistakes we all make when we are getting the hang of things. They definitely don't seem to be quite as understanding or maybe it's my imagination.



By the way I was forced against my will to put this picture (doing my crim impersonation!) in to prove that I actually got my licence. (to some of those who still don't believe it!)

Referring back to the relationship thing I wrote about last time, I have had my heart pretty much set on a cruiser style bike and had the opportunity to ride one. It was a strange experience because it was nothing like I imagined. I was disappointed and at that point it occurred to me how important it is to try various bikes before setting a idea in stone for a bike you might fancy.

The lesson I learnt out of this was to really look around at various bikes, styles, handle bars in particular before making that commitment. The other thing that occurred to me (at the same time) was how often do people swap bikes on runs & rallies? Inevitably when swapping bikes one has a tendency to continue riding the swap bike, as you would your own. And if are switching from a cruiser to a racing bike without altering your riding style, you could make some silly mistakes. So think before you ride. Well that's my 10 pence worth! Until next time, take it easy.

Ashley

(Continued from page 5)

If you have never given before then seriously think about it. A Red Cross leaflet is included with this issue of the Centrestand to provide more information about becoming a donor. If you have given in the past and fallen out of the habit, then get back into it. Blood is the gift of life and who knows, it may be yours.

Australia Day Rally

This will be held in Canberra on the weekend of the 27-28th of January and is billed as a *Celebration of Australian Motorcycling*. The last time this was held was in 1996 and 10,000 bikers converged on Canberra. It was a great weekend, especially the run on the ring road around Parliament House. The MRA SA will be holding its own official run to Canberra for the occasion and invites all bikers - MRA members and others to join in. At this stage we will be leaving from the carpark of the Maid and Magpie Hotel at 7am on Friday January 26. An itinerary for the trip is yet to be fully worked out, but we expect to arrange for overnight camping before Canberra ie Wagga (959k), then an early morning run to Canberra (245k) overnighing on site and returning to Adelaide on Sunday. Anyone interested in joining us should contact the MRA by phone or email and we will keep you posted of any new arrangements. Watch out for more information at the Toy Run.

Fun Run

Well, we made it. The MRA Road Runners pounded the pavement from the Festival Centre to the Bay in record time. This was not difficult as it was the first time for most of us and the first time for the team. The results were; Runners- Harald Lindemann 66m03s, Les Dicker 85m50s and Walkers-Robyn Gaden 130m, Sean McPherson 130m, Jedda & Ochre 130m01s. Congratulations also to Janice Wilkins who completed the walk for the MRA. Let's see the rest of you there with us next year.

The Christmas/New Year break is coming up and so are the holidays. So watch out for the knuckleheads (the human kind) and ride safe so that we can send you this magazine next year.

Stay Upright
Harald

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FRONT NUMBER PLATES : THE DEBATE!

Seeing that a large portion of this particular issue of CentreStand, seems to deal with the Front Number Plate Debacle, we have dedicated a page to the responses received so far. It appears that this issue has created an emotive hotbed.

Centrestand has offered you a platform in which to air your views and give you the opportunity to discuss this heated debate, so keep up the correspondence.

The Editor

Letter sent to The Advertiser.
Dear Sir

Having been asked to provide information for a balanced article which the Advertiser was running on the SA Police proposal to re-introduce front number plates for motorcycles (License To Break Laws 23/11/2000) I was disappointed that information which would have provided your readers with a balanced story was not used by the writer John Merriman. I am writing to you to give your readers the other side of the story.

In 1975 legislation was passed in SA on safety grounds to allow for motorcycles to operate without front number plates. Subsequent technology introduced by the police to catch speeding vehicles apparently has not taken that into account. I would suggest that the police adjust their technology instead of trying to change what is a sensible significant and proven safety factor for pedestrians and motorcyclists. Perhaps if they moved the cameras to face in the opposite direction to photograph rear number plates they would have more success.

The legislation was changed in 1975 for good reason and by way of comparison follows the standard set by every country in the world except India.

The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries opposes the proposed change and has advised of the impracticality for overseas manufacturers in retooling and designing to cater for such legislation specifically for less than 2% of the world market in this country, let alone just for South Australia. As legislation would affect all motorcycles imported since 1975 which have been designed without consideration for front mounted number plates this poses compromises to safety on the grounds of aerodynamics, steering, suspension, brakes and cooling. The International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association opposes the proposed change for these and other reasons.

The SAPOL proposal was also recently rejected on safety and engineering grounds, by the Federal Government's Technical Liaison Group which is responsible for considering proposals regarding design rules, which includes front number plates. The police clearly are not accepting this decision and are appealing to the emotions of the general public by pushing the bad biker argument in favor of sensible and rational discussion of the issues.

The MRA does not support irresponsible behavior on the roads by any road user or immunity from detection. We also do not support road safety initiatives which are ill conceived, narrow in their focus and minimalist in their impact on road safety. We would prefer that SAPOL put its energy into supporting initiatives that strike at the proven major causes of motorcycle crashes such as rider and driver training, motorcycle awareness by other road users, roadside hazards and road design and maintenance.

Interested members of the public can access a discussion paper on the issue at the MRA Website on www.mrasa.asn.au. I suggest that your writer take another look at it too.

Harald Lindemann

President Motorcycle Riders Association of South Australia

Dear Mr. Harold Lindeman

Regarding your comments in today's Advertiser.....you've got to be kidding. First point: Why should recklessness be rewarded with no punishment (when other road users are punished). Second point: you are quoted as saying "It's an opportunity to get a few more bucks out of the motorcyclists-it doesn't affect any other road users." WHY DOESN'T AFFECT OTHER ROAD USERS? I'm sure that when a motorcyclist is injured or killed by another road user, that it would affect them and their families for a long time. Third point: Why would introducing some form of accountability be construed as making your association or members a laughing stock? Are you afraid the bikes will look silly? If so you may be putting cosmetics and ridiculous pride before lives. LOOK at the front of your website "Blood Donors Needed". Your association is encouraging more motorcyclists to need this facility (blood) by not acting responsibly in favour of your members.

Yours Concerned
Grant James.

Dear Mr James

Re the article 'Licence to Break Laws' (Advertiser 23/10/2000) and your email comments on this.

First to put the reporting of my comments in the article into context; they were carefully culled from a 20 minute long conversation which I had with John Merriman who chose not to use quite a few other points which I made which would have provided yourself and other Advertiser readers with a balanced article. Mr Merriman chose to selectively report my comments and therefore give the impression that the points which the police made were the only relevant points pertaining to the issue. It is clear from your comments that you were taken in by this deception

Compulsory front number plates on motorcycles were abolished by legislation enacted in 1975 after intensive discussion and research regarding safety issues involving motorcyclists, pillions and pedestrians. It was a sensible move at the time, which on the basis of current world safety standards still stands. The main police argument for the return of front number plates is based on the need for more effective detection methods and we believe that the current technology used by the police can be modified to accommodate their expressed needs. The suggestion has been made that given that the problem of positioning the speed cameras to photograph the bikes from the front is not adequate in identifying the speeders then a re-angulation of the cameras to photograph them from the rear would effectively make identification a high probability in most cases.

The reintroduction of front number plates is opposed by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries and by the International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association. These bodies understand the problems associated with the extra tooling which would be necessary to present for sale motorcycles which would need to fit the standards of such a small portion of the international market (less than 2%). This would in some cases make manufacturers decline to introduce models into Australia or increase the cost of models which were introduced. This would clearly have a negative impact on the motorcycle industry across Australia affecting jobs etc. These bodies are also concerned with the impact of front number plates on vehicle aerodynamics, steering, suspension, brakes and cooling; all with attendant safety issues.

The front number plates proposal was recently rejected by the Federal Government's Technical Liaison Group which considers proposals and advises on issues pertaining to the

(Continued on page 11)

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CITY TO BAY FUN RUN

Robyn Gaden

Fun

run they call it....more like a long hard slog!

Sunday morning, bright and early (well dark and early actually) up I get, shower, dress, breakfast and drive over to Sean's to catch a ride in with him and his "family". Sean gets the kids ready, up in the back of the ute and off we go, into the city to walk the City to Bay Fun Run (via the petrol station so we can get back again).

We parked in Frome Road, near the zoo, and walked through to the Festival Centre, where the run was starting. We didn't get there in time to see Uncle Pervie and Harald start their running, but we were thinking of them, while we were wandering around, trying to find a Band-Aid for Sean's finger.

We eventually found a St Johns Van, and then it was time to start our walk.... Well, and walk we did...."Lets go over this way dad"... "No, we should be over here dad"... "No, lets go back this way"....

Straight down King William Street, and turn onto South Terrace. About half way along, it was time to stop for a toilet break and have a drink of water....Clean up the mess, and keep on walking, down Anzac Highway, and down Anzac Highway, and down Anzac Highway. Zigzagging most of the way. I'm sure we did a lot more than the "12" kilometers.

We had a lot of people commenting on Sean's "kids", as they looked quite cute wearing their jackets with their numbers attached. There was also a lot of "We should enter our dogs next year". I think Sean has started a trend.


Well, it certainly was a long way, and when we finally turned onto Jetty Road, it felt good. One thing that helped us along the way was watching the Bay to Birdwood vehicles going the other way.

Well, we crossed the line in 130 minutes, and we thought we did fairly well considering we had a few water stops with the dogs. I mean, it's easy for us to get a cup of water and keep walking, but the dogs were not able to do this.

After a bit of a relax and look at what was happening at Glenelg, we thought we would try to head back. Slight problem.

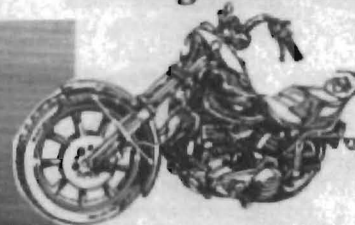
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MILLENNIUM RIDE

Peter Mount

Simon Milward, former Secretary of the Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations, is on a two year around-the-world odyssey to raise \$100,000 for charities Medicins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) and Riders for Health.

Simon started his journey on January 1 this year, putting his faith in his trusty home-made bike with Rotax engine and satellite GPS. He arrived in Darwin on September 1 and is presently travelling clockwise around Oz, having already taken in the Olympics, Melbourne (including bike repairs), and Adelaide, where he met some of the MRA members at a Toy Run meeting, being appropriately impressed that SA has the biggest in the southern hemisphere (Toy Run, not meeting).

To date, Simon has covered 20 countries, including Europe, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, India, Pakistan and Nepal, and has raised \$15,000 towards his target. From Australia he will travel to SE Asia, Japan, Siberia, North and South America, Africa and another 50 or so countries.

His experiences include meeting the Dalai Lama in North India, a marriage proposal in Cairo, and several crashes. "The kindness of the people has been a real blessing," he said. "Perhaps the most significant thing is the potential for motorcycles to save lives in developing countries through using them for primary health delivery."

I met Simon when I was in France for the FIM Conference last year shortly before he left on the ride, and thought it was an excellent idea, not just for its primary purpose, but for its capacity to raise the profile of motorcycling generally and to give the public a more realistic understanding of the sort of people who ride motorcycles.

Simon's trek can be followed on the Internet at www.millennium-ride.com

ROAD SAFETY REPORT

Sean McPherson

It has

been an interesting 3 months or so. Firstly, having another chain throw & total a motor, I'm clutching at straws why a well maintained chain with a 'scott-oiler' fitted comes off, 3 times now! (No, its not because it's a Suzuki!) I've recently been sent to a road safety group in the Adelaide Hills and to the Australian Medical Ass (S.A.) road safety conference as your road safety representative. Both meetings weren't really relevant to motorcycle issues, but I've thrown a couple of posers to researchers and built up some good relationships with SAPOL & SA Ambulance. I've also bought back an interesting souvenir, but you would have to ask all the people who were at Uncle Pervies party about that!

Front number plates has reared its ugly head again! Really guys, lets not give them any more ammunition for a while. Don't Speed, (I cant see why you need to around Adelaide!) and avoid the Gorge until they lay off the heat, there are better roads around, but less well known (Adelaide's best kept secrets!). I refuse to give the Government any more revenue.

Here's a thought - if everyone stopped speeding for one month, imagine how much the government would suffer through the lost revenue - or am beating my head against a brick wall?

If you have to speed, go out on a ride day or join a club - at least the ambulance is there if you crash and not 20 - 30 minutes away. I think we all need to exercise a bit of restraint at the moment as I think we are crapping in our own nest.

Finally, as recently reported in the media, front number plates are an issue again, so I ask all of our members to do what I am going to do, and that is report any motor vehicle that has a missing, obscured or "fold up" front number plate (trader demo vehicles excepted).

I know of one white Subaru WRX station wagon that has an unreasonably small front number plate the folds up when the vehicle is in motion. Just remember, at the moment our vehicles are legal, these other motorists are blatantly breaking the law, so they don't get caught speeding. Information should include: date, time, type & colour of vehicle, where spotted, registration from rear of vehicle. Send this information to Superintendent Roger Zeuner C/O Road Traffic Division, Angas Street Police Station.

Go out and pump your tyres up, and don't give the mongrels any more fuel for the fire.

Sean



SIMON AND HIS BIKE

OCHRES PIDDLE PUDDLES

I'm

a criminal! Someone's throwing crackers over the fence. I ran away and tried to hide, but the policeman's caught me and I got locked up! Dad got reel mad! I went on my firstest rally with Jedda. Dad took us 'cos Suzi went bang! Dad goes outside and looks at Suzi, and cries more than when Mum ran away.

Anyway, I was showing everybody my blankie at the rally & tripped over Dad's stove & I got burnded. Everybody's yelling HOTDOG! HOTDOG! I yelled "forget the food, put me out first!" Aunty Ashley threw water over me & put the flames out. I smelled really cool in Dads tent.

I have had lots & lots of good colourer inners for the competition. Lots of boys & girls are good at staying in the lines when they colour in. Has everybody got their toys for Toy Run yet? I've got a bike but I'm not telling this time, I am going to talk to Santa and tell him I want a new blankie, a BIG juicy bone, Choccies, LOTS of them! Yum Yum Yum. I also want tennis balls becose its good to run and chase and catch tennis balls and I want to tell Santa I want an underwater watch because I want to become a watch dog because I I have been good, well gooder than Dad! (That's not hard - Ed). I think Santas still mad at me Dad for calling rude words. Dad says we are going to have Venison this Christmas dinner. I hope Venison tastes like Choccie pudding!

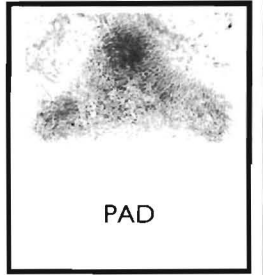
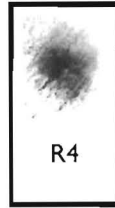
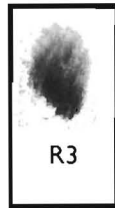
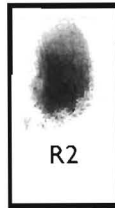
Woof, Ochre

Whoops, I forgot to tell all the Mums, Dads, Boys & Girls. Puppy Dogs and Kitty Cats are not just for Christmas or presents, they are forever, like me! Happy Christmas everybody - Woof!!

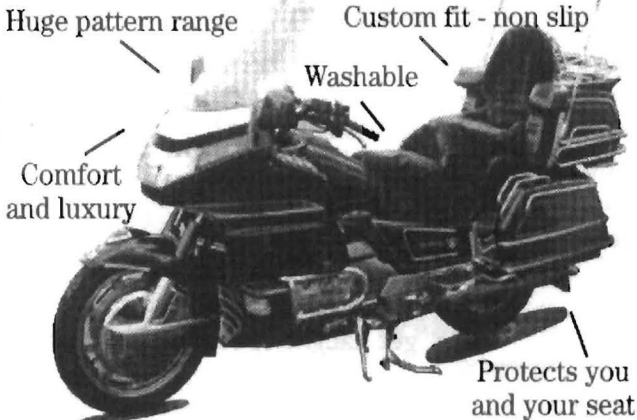
P.S, make sure all Doggies are safe, sound & secure when the New Year fireworks are on.

Woof (again!)

Name: OCHRE



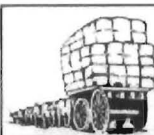
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FRONT NUMBER PLATES : THE DEBATE CONTINUES!

(Continued from page 7)

design of road safety standards. The proposal was rejected on the basis of safety and engineering principles. The reaction of the police is to play on the emotions of the public by pushing the 'bad biker' image in the hopes of making the issue political rather than be judged on its real merits. This is not an uncommon tactic.

The only country in the world which still requires front number plates is India. For this country follow suit would put us out of step with the rest of the world which is moving towards uniform design and safety standards for vehicles, roads and road furniture. Such a retrograde step would very likely make Australia the laughing stock of the world, especially considering the high safety standards which we currently enjoy in this area. As you can see, this is certainly not an issue about "cosmetics" or "putting pride before lives".

The MRA has worked long and hard with State and Federal Governments on many issues of road safety. Our charter is to represent motorcyclists and this we do, but never with a blind eye. The Association has always promoted sensible legislation based on research and discussion and has enjoyed good relations with the various statutory bodies which deliberate on these matters. We are often invited to comment and to sit on committees to represent a viewpoint. We have not always agreed with every result but we have always fought legislation based on prejudice, poor logic and inadequate research. It may surprise you to know that the MRA played a very willing consultative role in the recent road safety audit of the Gorge Road making many suggestions which were taken up as recommendations in the final report.

The contempt shown by you for the Association in your correspondence is ill deserved and is based on ignorance of the organisation and its work.

The Association does not support irresponsible road behaviour by any sector of the road using community and plays an educative role amongst its members and other motorcyclists in supporting community road safety campaigns and presenting regular articles in its quarterly magazine promoting safe and defensive riding and a knowledge of current road rules. The Association also promotes Rider Skills Training days encouraging members to upgrade their road handling skills every few years.

I suggest that you revisit the MRA Website at www.mrasa.asn.au and read the paper by Peter Mount titled 'Front Number Plate Proposal' in the ISSUES section to get a broader viewpoint on this issue. Hopefully now being more aware of the issues you will develop a less rabid attitude to motorcyclists.

By the way, the MRA has supported blood donations from its inception as a socially responsible activity. It continues to assist the Red Cross in its work by soliciting donors from amongst its members, by distributing literature and providing opportunities (such as the Adelaide Toy Run) to promote itself. The MRA is made up of people who represent a broad cross-section of the community and reflects their concerns and interests. As such the Association has for its community work received commendations from the Red Cross, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the National Australia day Council. It works closely with the aforementioned bodies and supports the St. John Ambulance Service, the Salvation Army and the Childhood Cancer Association raising funds for these organisations and assisting them in various ways.

We are very far from being the kind of irresponsible organisation you seem to think we are as evidenced by your email.

Yours sincerely
Harald Lindemann
President

Thank you Mr. Lindemann

Yes it does seem I took the bit between the mouth and ran with it. I must apologise that it was the wrong bit. I most certainly will have another look at your organisations web site and perhaps even take the Advertiser's articles a little bit lighter in future.

Yours sincerely,
Grant James

Dear Sir

I have been reading comments from your members in the Advertiser concerning the number plate issue and I think you really need to get out and have a look at what Motor cycle riders are doing in the big wide world.

Your members may not be breaking the law but have a look at what the majority of riders are doing on the road.

You only have to sit or drive along any of the hills roads on a week-end and watch the idiots screaming around corners and not only placing themselves in danger but also other road users, I don't wish to be hit by one of these weapons.

Also, I travel along North East Road every day and I see Bike riders constantly weaving in and out of traffic causing motor vehicle drivers to brake or swerve and if you toot them they just give you a finger and a mouth full of abuse. This situation happens every day and is not an isolated case so how can you state that drivers of cars don't respect your riders.

You should be out and about educating other bike riders and not worrying about the car drivers so much. Why is it that all bike riders think they have to be up the front of the line of traffic when they are all stopped at lights ? they weave amongst the cars to get to the front I thought there were lanes on the road for a reason.

Yours
Neil M. Denham

Dear Sir

Regarding the Advertisers "Licence to break laws" article, I'm pained after reading the article and the letters in 27th Oct edition of the assumption that if you speed you cant be detected. Every time that rider goes out doing 123km/h over the limit he risks the chance of being caught. If they enforce a front number plate system do they think it will stop them. No way.

Again they will go out and run the risk of getting caught. Its half the reason they would do it. So they say they have done it. Why don't they mention that some of the cameras take rear shots and they can detect those speeding. I thought that would be more constructive. Or has no motorcyclist ever been caught by a speed camera. I think not. I wish they had mentioned this so this unfortunate incident won't be repeated.

Thanks
Andrew Gooley
p.s. I couldn't find the discussion paper as mentioned in the paper.



Rocks Run &

TOY RUN REPORT

Paul Morgan

Finally the time has arrived, so get your bikes polished, decorate them with Christmas tinsel (the best Christmas decorated bike will win a trophy).

A few things to remember:

- The run starts at 11.00 a.m. at Glenelg
- Arrive early, before 10.30 a.m.
- Follow the instructions of the marshals, they are there to make the run a safe one
- Do not get in front of Santa, remember this is a run, not a race.
- Once at the oval, follow the instructions of the SES and the marshals as to where to park your bike, this way we will be able to get the 1000's of bikes into the oval with little delay. These people are there for your safety, so please follow their instructions and be patient
- Admission to the oval is a toy or gold coin donation. Bring a toy of reasonable value and for older kids (12-16 years)

Tell everyone you see who rides a bike about the run. If they have not been on one before they will really get a buzz riding with so many others.

Now all we need is a fine day.

Ride safe and I'll see you down at the Bay.

Paul Morgan
Toy Run Co-ordinator



Pervie showing off his culinary skills!



The Rocks Run gang



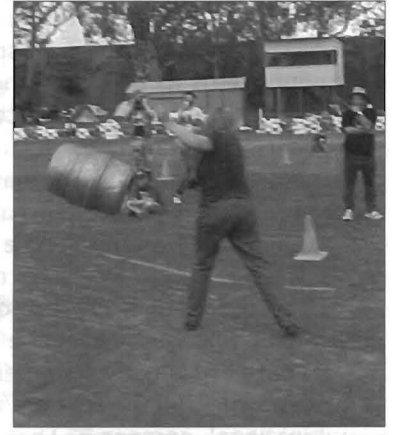
Sleazy Rider!
Bemused onlookers as the Ed tries her hand on a cruiser

Bushpig Rally



Three up to the shops we gooooooo!

Peter Mount offered to be the tent pole! (you had to be there!)



Jane barrelling for Gold!



Dale learning to become an 'Australian'. (Just became a permanent resident!)



And the crowds went wild!



Smoked tongue anyone? Come 'ear gorgeous!



Don't mention 'Hot Dog!'



We'll caught Sean (don't want to be seen with egg on your face!)

Sack it to 'em Jan & Sean!



REVEREND RITES REVEREND RITES REVEREND RITES

The front

number plate debacle has been lifted into public prominence again by the Advertiser, with front page headlines accusing riders of finding a "loophole" through which to escape paying speeding fines. The way the article was written, and the headlines written, and the story placed on Page 1, has prompted quite a lot of feeling, especially amongst car drivers I speak to (I do know a few). The overwhelming sentiment seems to be "Why should they get away with it when I don't". And this is exactly what the article in the Advertiser was trying to engage.

We seem to have an idea that the newspaper and its editorial and journalistic staff have nothing but objectivity and truth as their motives. We accept blindly what they say as the "Truth" - "Well, it must be so, it was in the paper" is something you hear quite often. Well, hate to burst the bubble, but it ain't like that.

Newspapers are mostly commercial concerns. They exist to make money for the owners of the Newspaper, usually a multinational company. They do this mostly through advertising (hence the name of our city's illustrious paper). To get advertising they must sell as many papers as possible. To sell papers, a good headline on the front page is essential, one that is emotional, sensational, outrageous, nationalistic or controversial. The front page story is usually a front page story because of its effect on sales, not because it is a particularly important story.

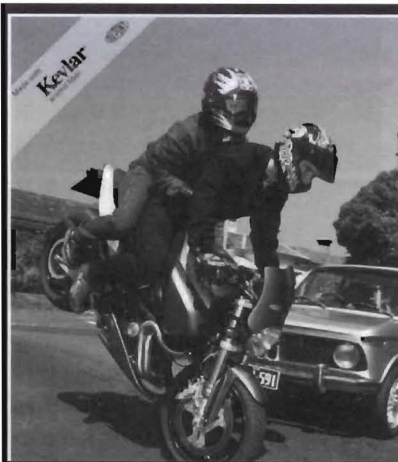
So the article on front numberplates was there to tap into something controversial, something that touches the average Joe in the street, something they can get emotional about. "Those bastards are getting away with it" is most likely the thought going through the head of any non-motorcycling reader. So having bought the paper because it looked interesting and emotional, they then get locked into forming an opinion, which may or may not have

been there in the beginning, but which is being helped along by the paper. The opinions being cultivated by this particular piece of trash are that motorcyclists are irresponsible, we all go too fast, we have actively sought out a "loophole", and that we don't care about road safety. I'll look at these one by one. Do we all go too fast? Some of us do, but not all of us. We need to take responsibility for this. It is not a real good idea to go too fast. It is dangerous, to yourself and to others. Yeah, I know its fun, and all that. You think I'm a goody two-shoes? Even though my old



FT isn't fast, its not the only bike I've ever had, and I've spent a large part of my life at speeds way over the speed limit. But when I've been pinged, I've paid up without complaint. But there is another thing that we

(Continued on page 19)



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(Continued from page 8)

Sean's friend was unable to take us back to the city, so we walked back up Jetty Road to Brighton Road to try to catch the tram, but of course with the dogs, we were not able to take it back to the city.

What to do now....Well, we rang good old Uncle Pervie, who by this stage had finished his run, got back home and had just jumped out of the shower to answer the phone. (Not a good mental picture thanks Pervie) But, he did come to our rescue. We started the walk back as it saved sitting there for about half an hour, and we made it back up Anzac

Highway as far as the racetrack. By the time we got back to the ute, I could feel the muscles start to get sore.

By the time I got home, I was very stiff, and even a soak in the bath did not do enough to relieve the soreness.. But a couple of days later and you would never have known.

The blister has gone now, and yes I will do it again next year as it was a great sense of achievement to know that we made it, and as I said, it was a lot more than the twelve kilometers that Sean and I walked. Next year, I will make sure I do a lot more training beforehand.

Robyn (Bob) Gaden

Scribbles



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

Dear Editor

Hi just thought I'd let you know about the Veterans Motorcycle Riders Association SA Inc. we are made up of war and peacekeeping veterans and supporters, raising veterans issues and raising money for worthy charities. We meet every Friday night at the Salisbury RSL at 7pm everyone is welcome, could you please pass this info on to all members. We would also like to participate in any of your activities and vice versa.

Thank you for your time

Regards
Stephen Burford

Dear Editor

Well I see in your Letters to the Editor column that Male Chauvinist Pigs are still alive and well (going by the name of Kris) Guess we all knew that anyway. I must agree on the point about the Dog's column however!!! I emailed the Transport Aust site and asked for info about the front number plates and was assured that there was no plans to require front plates on bikes for the reasons given in your article in the last Centrestand.

I enjoy the production immensely. Look forward to meeting you at the AGM if

my rosters permit.

Regards
Terry Higginbottom
(Thanks Terry, there is nothing like girl-power!)

Dear Editor

I would like to know if there are more people out there wishing we would have more motorbike only parks provided for us so that we can park in a matter or way so that we do not have to squeeze between cars and perhaps keep an eye on each others bikes the way we look out for each other on the road. Have you ever seen car drivers acknowledging each others presence on the road? We could all ride into town one day and have each bike take up one full car park and say we have 1000 bikes in the city that day we would soon get peoples attention when the road hogs namely cars have no where to park. This worked in New Zealand, why should it not work here. Any comments.

Frank Neis

Dear Editor

After all the lousy weather we've had lately, and me being a geriatric old fart, who's been in the saddle some 40 years, the faithful old FJ 1200 has been under the carport with the electric blanket on. And then surprise, surprise, a fine day, the suns out, the breeze is gentle, so out came the bike, the chamois and Mr Sheen, and last of all the Leathers!!!!

(Did they still fit I ask - Ed!) AH! Nothing like it, so off to the local garage for a tank full before heading into the hills. Shock, horror, 12 bucks to fill the tank. Where is little Johnny Howard at a time like this? YEP, a nice squirt thought the hills with the wind in the grey beard

will make me forget how hard it is to keep a bike on the road these days, thanks to the money hungry polliés. Now, I have learnt from past experience all about little old ladies, Volvo drivers, P platers, about sewer lids on corners, wet white lines intersections, about following quarry trucks and getting sandblasted from the crap flying off the tray, but I quite taken by surprise when passed by a 'Toorak Tractor' (4 wheel drive). This beast was towing a rusted out 6 x 4 trailer with a hire toilet sitting high into the air and it was tied down with a rope about as thick as a shoelace. The bikers brain took over and I buttoned off to let him put some distance between us and changed lanes in the event of needing an escape route. HEY!!!

Whatya know. The shoelace breaks, the mobile dunny tips, and out the trailer she goes, sliding across 2 lanes of traffic in front of me into the footpath. I reckon in 40 years of riding, I have dodged a lot of varied things, I've even ridden some heaps of crap, but I have never had to dodge the elusive hire crapper before! Could things get worse? YEP! - now it starts to piss down! Front gate looks good, FJ's smiling as the blanket comes out, the dogs tail is wagging and the missus says 'JEEZ that was quick, you should ride slower at your age!' Ah, experience, nothing like it eh!

Coxy

PS: Could you let me know if my 10 year membership is close? Keep up the great mag and the good work on all our behalf.

(Thanks - Ed)

Keep them rolling. - Ed



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COOL
websites

<http://www.ftwo.com/tipoftheday.htm>
<http://www.ridegear.com>
<http://www.waldenmiller.com.au>
<http://www.dragginjeans.com.au>
<http://www.mcnews.com.au>
<http://www.bikepoint.com.au>
<http://www.millennium-ride.com/>

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

ON RUNS & THINGS

Dale Knöote-Parke

Well,

once again, the Toy Run is racing around... and here's to be hoped that the day is as beautiful as it was last year. I started off this year with a piece about the Toy Run... seems only fitting that the year finishes with some words on this noble venture.

This is the 22nd year that the MRA(SA) has run this event, and each year it attracts more people – this is great news for everyone – especially the Kids helped by the St. Vincent de Paul society.

With increased numbers though, comes the increased risk of "incidents" and to counter this, you just have to think with your head, and not your throttle hand. The MRA(SA) is taking measures this year to ensure there will be no repeat of last years incident at the start, and will also be ensuring that the turn off the South Eastern freeway will be well marked... so no-one need to go haring up the freeway, see the turning late and wipe out trying to make it. I covered these incidents in the March issue of Centrestand... so I won't bore you by going back over old ground ... all we ask is PLEASE think before you act, and we can all enjoy a fabulous day. And what a day it promises to be, with entertainment a-plenty, and, hopefully, personal circumstances allowing, the company of DARYL BEATTIE on the run and at the Oval.

And now a more serious issue – the spectre of Front Number Plates rears its ugly head once again. How many of you saw the Advertiser on Monday 23rd October, with the headline "LICENCE TO BREAK LAWS" and the picture of the two bikes "proceeding briskly" along Torrens Road? This ties in to what I said above.... Use your head, and ensure it's connected to your throttle hand. None of us REALLY want to see the re-introduction of front number plates on motorcycles – but doing 136 km/h in excess of the posted speed limit is a BLOODY good way to ensure that that measure is introduced. The MRA can only do so much to try and avert this kind of hysterical knee-jerk reaction – but no amount of pleas, statistics or calls for Driver education is going to make ANY difference here if certain elements can't use a bit of discretion and realise that speeding past a camera, in the knowledge that they can't be pinged is the best way to ensure that yet more restrictive legislation is applied to us.

To those out there who would call me a granny, and decry my calls for common sense... well, appealing to your common sense and saying "think about the risk" is not going to make ANY difference whatsoever, so consider this: Australia forms less than 2% of the World Motorcycle Market. If ADR's are changed to require Motorcycles to be fitted with Front Number Plates, and doing so requires Motorcycle Manufacturers to indulge in some extensive – and expensive – retooling to cater for this... do you REALLY think that Motorcycle Manufacturers are going to go to that cost JUST for less than 2% of their Market? Or do you begin to think that maybe, just maybe, the halcyon days of new models every year could be endangered?



Now, like every one else, I do enjoy occasionally opening the throttle and clearing the cylinders... but NOT in a 60 zone at 2 times the posted limit – that is REALLY kicking the arse out of it, and begging for trouble. The problem is, as ably demonstrated by the Advertiser, we all get tarred with the same brush, and these acts tend to overshadow – even make a mockery – of all the good that is done by the Toy Run, and the Childhood Cancer runs. These cretinous few are endangering themselves, other road users and YOUR way of life.

SO... if you KNOW someone who enjoys committing these acts, you would be advised to remonstrate with him or her, and make them see the error of their ways. I don't have to worry about one of those self-same cretins reading this column.... The massive amounts of testosterone coursing through their bodies combined with their assuredly Neanderthal thought process probably renders them incapable of reading anything more advanced than a cartoon book anyway

Happy Christmas One and all...

SEE YOU ON THE TOY RUN!!



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RALLIES IN 2000

Well the year is nearly over and with it the rally season. So far this year I've done 9 rallies, so I'll probably get in a dozen or so by the end of the year. I missed a few during the year, as is nearly always the case. It's impossible to get to all of the rallies that I enjoy, money and time being the major constraints. I missed the Bush Pig and the Alzheimer's rallies due to a virus that I picked up just after the Ghost Town Rally.

The first part of the trip to Broken Hill for this year's Ghost Town Rally was made difficult by extremely high winds, so much so that the power lines were sagging horizontally, if you know what I mean, they were being blown so hard! Once I got to Terowie the wind dropped and it was a beautiful ride the rest of the way.

I camped with Meataxe and Rhino at the site at Silverton, and met up with Smokey who is now the resident police officer at Cockburn, so be careful! Or better still just turn yourself in when you're going through, you must be guilty of something! I did an art gallery crawl around Silverton this year, which proved to be entertaining as well as healthy. One of the artists had lots of highly chromed kangaroos in his paintings, and he called them Robo Roos! They even had inspection plates fixed onto their sides with screws!

The catering at the Ghost Town Rally is always excellent with a large shed devoted to it with lots of tables and chairs for a civilised sit down type meal. The range of food on the menu is quite varied and reasonably priced so that you don't need to spend too much on grub over the weekend.

This year's Redback Rally was at the usual site at historic Overland Corner and had the added bonus of a wedding being held at the hotel, nothing to do with the rally or motorcycles and was non-alcoholic! Yes, that's right, a dry wedding reception at a pub during a motorbike rally! That really took some organising I guess!

This year I had to daytrip the Redback Rally due to my attending the engagement of long time MRA stalwart Chris Fenech and his lovely intended Heather, best wishes to them both for the future. I met up with Jelly Belly at the BP servo at Elizabeth at the appointed time on Saturday morning. Janis phoned us there telling us not to wait for her as her bike's battery had slept in and was getting an injection of fresh electrons to wake it up!

The ride up was quite good and Jelly Belly got a chance to let his new ZX9R off the leash!

This year Ivan had organised a band to keep everyone bopping along on Saturday night and there was a sausage sizzle as well with free tea & coffee from the control tent. The trophies were very impressive, a stylized motorcycle carved into a pine plaque, courtesy of Lez with a Zed.

Everything was just starting to fire up after the gymkhana when unfortunately I had to mount the ZZR and head off back to town, there was quite a bit of wind going home but nowhere near as bad as going up to Broken Hill.

The only downer was that someone stole the flag from the Overland Corner Hotel flagpole during the night. This kind of prank as well as upsetting the publican, can harm the rally organisers who wish to keep the locals on side so that we'll all be welcome back next year. So if whoever it was would care to do the right thing and return it, or if anyone knows who it was, then please contact Ivan on 0403 210 925.

Celebration of Motorcycling, Canberra. 26-28 Jan 2001

This event will be held on the long weekend in January and will have a group ride and rally finishing outside Parliament House in Canberra. MRASA members wishing to ride in a group should meet at the carpark of the Maid & Magpie Hotel Stepney in time to depart at 7.00 am on Friday 26 Jan 2001.

Well that's all for now, hope to see you at the Toy Run, don't forget to bring a toy suitable for an older child rather than the fluffy dolls, as St Vinnies are having trouble finding toys for older children.

Leslie Dicker (Uncle Pervie to you!)



IS THIS YOU?



Well it could be!

All you need to do is keep your membership paid up & you stand a chance of winning a FREE weekend away. Our last winner was David Gabel, Congratulations! We will be drawing a name again in the 2001 September AGM.

Six current members are picked at random, and put into a hat for a final draw of a FREE weekend for two and five FREE memberships for one year.

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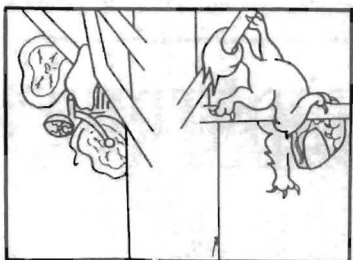
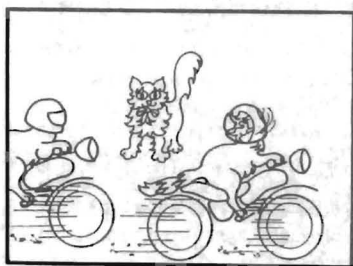
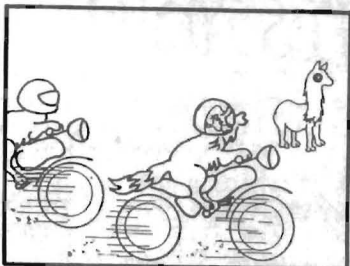
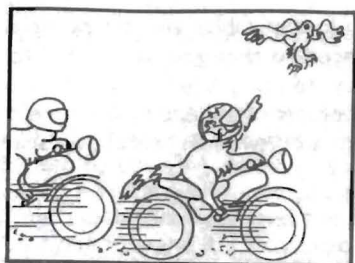
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WINDY WEATHER

Sammi Ross

Well, I had but myself to blame. Being an extremely windy



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day, I'd said at the start of the day's ride that I was going to be taking it easy. There had been wild weather throughout the night before. Emergency crews had been out removing trees from rooves, removing rooves from trees – it was a real winter's winter, "with more to come," promised the weather bureau. So it was to be an early ride that Sunday morning – get the ride in before the weather set in again.

There was to be no tearing around corners with little to spare, in case some poor, unfortunate tree had uprooted itself or lost a branch or two to the stronger elements of nature. Even the odd twigs, discarded bark, and clustered leaves, the gravel washed onto the road were of some concern – but one rides to match the conditions, doesn't one!

The wind was blustery and strong, coming from the west-sou'west so, riding to Strath and then on to the beach at Goolwa, was a balancing act and a fine tuning of one's actions and reactions as you rode and cornered, passed on-coming vehicles (where trucks blocked the wind for that fraction of a second) and adjusted your riding according to the situation.

After arriving early at Strath, we were suddenly inundated as a plethora of other early morning riders bumbled their ways to the increasingly cluttered kerbs. The quick flit to Goolwa was next because the weather was still holding off and it wasn't lunch time yet. By the time we reached Goolwa I was on a high – riding against the elements as they buffeted you around, riding as one with the wind exhilarated me. I was stoked, wanting to share that fulfilment with others, that sense of achievement, unity, fullness, as I whooped with the delight of it all.

For half an hour we watched the spray being blown rainbowing from the tops of the waves, the tide high on the water-dampened sand. Then we decided to go home to swap for

another couple of our bikes – the weather looked like it would hold off for a few more hours.

Once home, it was off the Honda and on to the Kwaka GP250, albeit if her battery did need reminding what it was supposed to be doing – the 15 minutes standing in the sun hadn't enticed her to start any easier.

A quick ride down Greenhill Road and back up the old road to Eagle on the Hill was the decision. Greenhill Road was almost vehicle-less so produced a lovely smooth ride, especially as the wind seemed to have eased up – or else we were reasonably protected in the hills. We zipped through the eastern suburbs and on to the Freeway at the Toll Gate and away.

I'd expressed some puzzlement over the new median strips, concrete kerbing and new surfaces at the start and end sections of the old road, so was into "What's this mean?" mode as well as enjoying the thrill of the ride – dropped the Kwaka into the first right-hander after Devils Elbow (ah, those dreaded right-handers again) and thought, "Wow, I'd better be careful. I reckon my foot's pretty close to the ground." I felt the wind again, holding me – then dropping me! My foot scraped, the footpeg came up, wheels skidded, the bike fish-tailed and then the wind caught me again. "Just teasing," it said – and off I went, a tad more cautiously, but only a tad because I was still exhilarated from the ride, the weather, the challenges.

In the middle of the night I woke and that's when I started thinking – good old rationalization of the scene again. I thought of how the bike could've been a write off, how it probably would've gone under the combi-van I was passing (ah, yes, there had been a combi next to me, hadn't there!) causing it to possibly crash as well, and I more than likely caught up in it all, injured, hospitalized, or worse...

And then I recalled what one of the sisters at Royal Adelaide Hospital said to us during one of our 4Bs visits – "We always get an influx of bikers in here on windy days." So there it is – a double-edged sword. Handle with care those windy days.

Sammi

(Continued from page 14)

also need to keep in mind. We need to accept that we do not have the right to go over the speed limit, and if we do we multiply the risk that we take.

As for a loophole, that is something which we have been presented with and so has been used. New speed cameras have given the police the option of pointing the camera at the front of the vehicle instead of the back. As far as I know, this is a recent change in practise. We have not had front numberplates for a much longer time. Our practises have not changed, and to say otherwise is just bullshit!

The worst charge that is levelled against us is that we do not care about road safety. What crap. Of course we do. Its just that we get a bit sceptical when told that speed cameras are there to save lives, when so many other things that are done on our roads are obviously designed not to save lives (at least, not our lives).

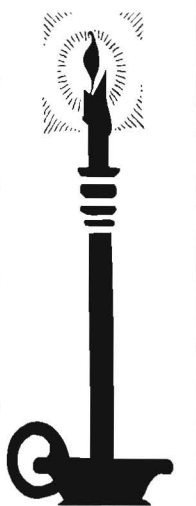
Metal manhole covers, cheese cutter "safety" barriers, slippery white lines, drivers in right hand lanes, all of these things makes us sceptical. We too engage in the us and them dynamic. Roads are made safer for the majority of road users, not all road users. And guess what, we're not in that majority.

So what do we do? Write letters to politicians, the newspapers, everyone. Boycott organisations who are in support of front numberplates (including a certain large Automobile Association) which includes cancelling insurance policies, etc. Make a stand. We don't have to take this shit lying down. It didn't used to be in our nature to roll over and take it. If front numberplates are brought back in, perhaps a concerted program of civil disobedience and clogging up the courts will be needed. Do something, be active and quit being apathetic. Take it to the streets, and don't let it rest.

And just a bit of God talk before I finish (well this is the Christmas issue). A guy was nailed to a cross in Palestine 2000 years ago for standing up for himself and others. People like me, Christians, are supposed to be meek. Well, forget that. I believe we have a mission to stand up against unjust authorities, just as Jesus did, and face the consequences. "On your feet, or on your knees".

Have a good Christmas, and don't let the bastards get you down.

The Rev



known is motocross, which requires any serious competitor to undergo regular physical training of the highest level. The riders that we all enjoy watching in Superbikes or 500 cc GP races must train regularly in order to perform so well. This makes any injury that they may receive in an accident even more of a problem as it will interfere with their training programme.

It only takes a significant change in riding conditions to test your fitness, for example very high winds or an excessively long sandy track into a rally site. Such variations to normal riding conditions can often lead to fatigue setting in much sooner than usual, so you must be aware of the level of fitness that you have in order to complete the trip when such changes occur. So it is a good idea to have a regular fitness regimen if you wish to be able to ride long distances with ease. You do not need to take on any really arduous programme of exercise, just a regular activity such as walking several kilometres about three or four times a week. You can jog the distance if you feel comfortable doing it, just remember whether you walk or jog you'll use up the same amount of energy, it just takes longer when you walk the distance.

Citius! Altius! Fortius! The motto of the Olympics. Faster! Higher! Stronger! Universally accepted in many sporting fields and no less so than in motorsports. Every time that I visit Phillip Island I always make sure I do lap of the circuit first thing, not on the ZZR, but on foot, I go clockwise one day and the opposite the next, that way I guarantee that I still keep my fitness programme going while I'm over there. Also I get to see lots of things going on around the track and meet up with many friends that may be there.

Best wishes for the festive season

AVUNCULAR TALES

Ah!

The games of the XXVII Olympiad, also known as the five ringed circus, are now gone, and only a few sore muscles remind us of those activities. I never even got to find out how many teeth there are on a SOCOG! Due to bad planning on the part of the Olympic organisers they had Cathy Freeman's Gold Medal run on the same night as the MRA AGM which meant that they had very few people showing up to see her win!

I watched the beach volleyball and was very disappointed to see that the players wore clothes, because they always used to be shown playing nude in Health & Fitness magazine which I used to read in my adolescence!

As a sign of solidarity with our athletes this year the MRA entered some teams of runners and walkers in the annual City to Bay Fun Run. Apart from yours truly, there was Robyn, Sean with Ochre & Jedda, Janis, Harald & several members, one named Jim and another whose name I forget (oldtimers disease!). The day was perfect for it, and I managed to get down to the Bay without having to stop, so I got a good time for this year's run. The Bay to Birdwood Run was held on the same day this year, so as I got near the end of Anzac Highway there were lots of vintage motor vehicles to watch going in the opposite direction. All of those attending the fun run had a good time as well as getting some exercise. We also received a certificate of achievement and all the fruit and powerade that we could consume!

No doubt you are wondering what all this has to do with motorcycling, well I can assure you that to do any amount of serious riding you need to be in a reasonably fit state, as motorcycling does require considerable physical effort. One of the most strenuous sports



Uncle Pervie

Front

Number Plates - A Win!

The Federal Government's Technical Liaison Group (TLG), on which AMC has membership, has categorically rejected the police proposal to reintroduce front number plates. Federal and state legislation does not allow dangerous devices such as these on vehicles, and for the proposal to be successful the TLG, in the first instance, would have to endorse a legislative change to the Australian Design Rules.

Without federal support the only recourse for the police is to try to change state legislation, which is similar to the federal approach in that it currently reflects the very real safety concerns of riders regarding dangerous devices on vehicles (see *June Centrestand*). Any such change would pose additional local and national problems regarding interstate travel, second-hand motorcycle sales and bikes manufactured prior to the change.

The police appear to have recognised the inherent difficulty of implementing the proposal through the normal channels for legislative change, where issues are (usually) rationally considered on their merits, and have opted for the back-door method of a media beat-up in SA to gain public sympathy and support.

The motorcyclists' response has been immediate and pointed, expressing concern that identified safety issues for riders have been given no consideration, that the real causes of the vast majority of rider injuries and deaths have been ignored (poor driver awareness and training, roadside hazards, street furniture, road design and maintenance), and that if the police were genuinely serious about improving motorcyclists' safety they would discuss possible solutions with the riders first. Safety strategies are much more effective when everyone is working towards the same goal. It's called consultation.

Although the proposal has been rejected on safety and engineering grounds, AMC members must remain vigilant, for this is only the first (albeit the most significant) battle which police commissioners nationally are keen to win.

Australian Motorcycle Federation

The AMF was born on August 13 this year, after more than two years of dedicated effort by motorcycle organisations and individuals and the unanimous support of all who attended the Riders, Industry and Sport Conference in Melbourne.

It is, as its name indicates, a federation of the three streams of Australian motorcycling whose purpose will be to promote the use, awareness and safety of motorcycles and motorcycling and to pursue relevant issues as necessary. It will meet annually, and function through a Steering Party consisting of Ray Newland (FCAI), David White (Motorcycling Australia), and Greg Hirst and myself (rider groups).

Formal positions and policies of the AMF will be established by consensus only and not by voting. Each stream retains complete autonomy and the right, individually or severally, to pursue any issues, although such issues will not come under the AMF banner.

Australian Coalition of Motorcyclists

A small number of groups have formed the ACM as a mechanism for providing a single voice of the riders to bodies such as the AMF, ATSB and so forth. Although the AMC supports the principle of a unified representative body for motorcyclists, and promoted this view at the AMF Conference, members feel that the AMC currently satisfies that role in large measure and, hence, being party to another organisation which purports to be national and with the same purpose would significantly undermine the AMC's credibility, effectiveness and capacity to reflect its members' best interests.

Therefore, although the AMC will not be a member of this new organisation, it will continue to liaise with it and its constituents in recognition of the benefits to be gained from motorcyclists working together on common interests and towards common goals.

ConCom

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) recently conducted a review of the Motorcycle Safety Consultative Committee at the request of the Minister for Transport, to which the AMC provided input. ConCom was deemed to have performed effectively since its inception in 1992 and it was decided to continue the group until June 2003, when it will again be reviewed.

Membership of ConCom will be reduced to ATSB, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) and major rider groups; other representatives will be invited to discuss particular issues as required.

Major issues considered at the October meeting were:

(Continued on page 21)

AMC REPORT AMC REPORT AMC REPORT AMC REPORT

Women in Motorcycling

The female rider fatality rate is slightly lower than that of males, and the female hospitalisation rate is higher. The AMC has commenced research and has developed a questionnaire and database which, with the joint resources of ATSB, is expected to provide reasons for this phenomenon.

There are approximately 200 female riders on the AMC database, but the more the better. Any women who have not yet contacted the Secretary, Sammi Ross, are urged to do so asap. Sammi is overseeing this project from the motorcyclists' side and will liaise with the ATSB chief statistician.

AMC address: PO Box 250 Littlehampton SA 5250.
Sammi phone: 08 8391 2648.

Unlicensed Riding

This is a significant problem warranting action, for such riders are considered to be at greater risk through inexperience and lack of training (crash stats suggests this); off-road riders could also be contributing to on-road fatality stats. Some points were noted and actions recommended:

- definitive data could be difficult to obtain;
- it could be difficult influencing states/territories to alter data collection methodology;
- AMC has SA and Vic data; info from other regions would be appreciated;
- licensing campaigns are in place in the USA; these will be investigated for possible application in Australia;
- Data will be more widely circulated to bike groups.

Rider Training

A national system for rider training and licensing and for instructor training and accreditation has been determined by motorcycle groups as highly desirable. Although ATSB doubts there is any real benefit to rider training, research by Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) suggests otherwise. To this end a draft Issues Paper has been prepared by FCAI for consideration by ConCom members.

Wire Rope Safety Barriers

The WRSB Working Group report went to Senator Boswell, the Minister for Transport, for consideration (see *June Centrestand*). The Minister accepted the ATSB recommendation against a moratorium on new installations, although it is not clear at this time what position he has adopted on other recommendations. It was noted that ATSB is funding 3 of 15 tests MUARC is conducting into motorcyclists' interaction with barrier systems.

Global Rider Crash Stats

Australia fares poorly compared with many other countries in motorcyclists' fatalities, ranking sixth worst amongst 23 OECD nations. Contributing factors are thought to include:

- high rate of unlicensed riding
- roadside hazards
- street furniture
- road conditions
- motorcycle power
- different patterns of use (recreation vs commuting)

These only reflect ideas raised during discussion, for no particular factors stand out in the statistics.

Fatal Injuries

AMC is seeking an analysis of the anatomical causes of death to enable specific remedies or mitigating action to be undertaken. Coroners' reports are available to the ATSB, although stats have been compiled up to 1997 only. AMC will detail specific requirements of the proposal to ATSB.

Celebration Ride

On Saturday, January 27 2001, motorcyclists will meet in Canberra for the second 'Celebration of Australian Motorcycling'. The first, in 1996, attracted around 14,000 riders, and it is expected that this number will be surpassed. Its purpose is to draw attention to the positive aspects of motorcycling in a festive atmosphere of *bonhomie*.

Riders will meet between 12 and 1pm on the Federal Highway adjacent to the Canberra Carotel and Camping Ground, 7km north of the city and about 2km north of the Yass junction (where the first ride met). The formal ride will leave at 1pm for Parliament House where all will be entertained and suitably impressed by eminent motorcyclists, politicians, and industry and rider group representatives who will expound on the great joys of riding.

Camping is available at the Canberra Carotel and Camping Ground, located between Wells Station Road and Antill Street on the south-bound side of the Federal Highway. Camping cannot be pre-booked, but rooms and caravans can be arranged by calling 02 6241 1377 and quoting account number 34418.

Group rides are being organised from many major centres. Adelaide riders will meet at the Maid and Magpie Hotel on Friday, January 26, to leave at 7am.



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