

TMRA ANNUAL RALLY 2023 – RALLY REPORT 15 to 17 September 2023

We had made significant changes to the Rally this year after a suggestion by Jeff Skillen: he reminded us that a significant number of Members were always at the Panorama on the Thursday evening so we should consider a full day ride on the Friday rather than a short half day ride as previously.

The Committee considered this a good idea so a full day ride was arranged. So at 0930 on Friday, 11 of us set off for Millthorpe, hence to Orange & on to Canowindra with Peter Ellwood, Barry Garner & Peter Gallagher, non-riders, following in a car. We did not take a breakdown trailer as I estimated that our group was not likely to breakdown. Lindsay Goard & Lorraine (me) reached the turnoff for Millthorpe to find ourselves alone. It transpired that Jeff Skillen's purple T150 had broken down & without the breakdown trailer we were in a pickle, everybody had stopped to assist.

Peter Ellwood took Skillen back to Bathurst to get his car & trailer whilst Peter & Barry looked after the bike. Lindsay & I were having coffee at the railway station café waiting for the others to arrive; they never did, so we rode on to Orange expecting the rest of the group to be ahead of us, which they were.

Lindsay & I stopped at Cargo to find the two cars & breakdown trailer, right behind us. Once in Canowindra we found the rest of the group & went to Finns Café for lunch. After lunch we took the road to Mandurama. I have to say this was an utterly splendid road through countryside full of Canola flowers, sweeping bends & a good surface.

We crossed the highway at Mandurama heading for the pub at Newbridge. The idea was that later Friday arrivals could ride out from Bathurst to meet us there, an easy 30 Km ride. Instead, just after we arrived, the Canberra riders, Trevor Fowler & Bernie Clark, with Jenny Fowler & Brian Eldred in a car pulled in. We had a pleasant hour in the pub before we rode off to Bathurst.

The usual very social dinner followed at the Panorama with 26 members attending. We all enjoyed renewing friendships with many not having met since the last Rally. Jeff Skillen meanwhile diagnosed a dead battery on his T150 & he planned a buy a new one in the morning before the ride. Bizarrely his dead battery had '1981' stamped on it. Jeff insisted the battery had been dry charged & had not had a long service since filling.

Saturday dawned warm & sunny, indeed the whole weekend was unusually warm for September. This resulted in a pleasant ride for me both up from Canberra & back again. The Saturday ride was going first to a Car & Bike show in Sofala. There we discovered the lovely looking 'Rob North' T150 ridden by Darren Bennett was failing & was on the trailer, with oil leaks & low oil pressure, evidently something serious was wrong. The show was a bit of a Harley & Holdenfest with the only bike of interest to me being an early 1970s Honda Black Bomber. (I have one in the shed).

We rode on to Hill End, a steep & tortuous road in places, but fun to ride. Most had lunch at the historic Royal Hotel, one of the few period buildings still standing in this old gold mining town. There were no more breakdowns on the return to Bathurst where we judged the King

of the Rally at the Panorama Circuit Museum. This award was later given to Lindsay Goard for his lovely Beauty Kit fitted '69 T150. The President's award was given to Steve Arthur for his original 1982 T140W TSS.

The AGM was held later in the afternoon when the membership re-elected the Committee & elected Tim Tapsell as the disputes officer. Two members received 10-year TMRA Membership Certificates along with aged bronze TMRA metal badges. Congratulations to Don Mallard and Phil Bryant. The gathering concluded that the full day ride on Friday was a success & that it would be repeated next year, together with a full day ride on Sunday, making the TMRA Rally a true three-day event. We decided to return to the Panorama in 2024. Shirley Wishart unexpectedly arrived at the AGM with wonderful eats for us all. It was lovely to see her.

Last year the Sunday ride had been cancelled due to a lack of riders, however this year it went ahead with over a dozen participants, Unfortunately, there was another breakdown, this time a 1970s Harley Sportster whose owner was TMRA member Greg (Jack) Stevens from the Hunter, a lovely chap who had saved Tim's bacon at the last Kurri Kurri Rally after a broken chain.

As a further aside Jeff had been sold a defective battery, so he was not able to ride on either Sat or Sun a pity for him. We all eventually arrived at the Station Café in Millthorpe for an early lunch & the end of the Rally. Trevor, Bernie & Lorraine set off for Canberra with Jenny & Brian. It had been a splendid Rally with the loveliest weather imaginable.

Lorraine Litster

For TMRA

Friday, 22 September 2023