

FOREVER YOUNG



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Hi There Fellow Riders

The first 6 months of the year have been a rush of activity, along with our regular rides we've had the Memorial Event, Swap Meet, Distinguished Gentleman's Ride, LAMS Ride, Black n Dirty Ride and Christmas in July, and the activities keep on coming.

Beyond the events we have had committees working on the Club Constitution and the Machine Examiners Arrangements, the establishment of the new and fabulous website and continued training in IT skills for the members.

Our club is certainly not sitting on its hands and we have been rewarded by significant increase in membership and a strong following of social media, we still have much planned for the second half of the year and have already put dates in place for the events in 2027 including the DGR, Swap Meet and a two week Worn Out Wander to Tasmania!

All this activity has been supported by an incredibly active membership who have put their best into making the club highly successful and ensuring we meet the needs our organization, local motorcycling fraternity and community.

Great Southern Swap Meet 2026

The Classic Riders Club of Goulburn held its annual Swap Meet over the weekend of 21st March, this is a wrap up of the event to share with our members and friends, if you want to see the full report it's available as part of the club minutes for April.

On Thursday 19th team members met to clean up and mark out sites in the Skillion, Peden Pavillion and the main part of outdoor sites in preparation for the Swap Meet. Bravely, Colin Jewell assisted marking sites while nursing an injury. Signage was also placed in various locations around town directing to people to the Swap Meet, additionally Electronic signage arrangements were made and implemented.

Saturday 21 March 2026

On Saturday our Swap Meet Team met at 9am to prepare and then greet our site holders and their helpers. Many site holders and helpers came from out of town and even interstate. The newly introduced entry form assisted in keeping our records accurate and will allow us to keep site holders well informed of future Swap meets well in advance.

Saturday

Saturday afternoon the clouds came over with a storm, light show and small amount of hail, prompting some outdoor site holders to change to an indoor position. Nothing seemed to dampen our volunteers or the site holders, all remaining positive and preparing for a great day ahead on Sunday.

Many of the site holders had arrived even before our team arrived at 9.00am and some had camped on the Friday night.

Moving Beans were on site from the afternoon on to provide coffee and snacks and this year **Can Assist** had evening meals available from 5.30pm. Some stall holders ventured into town for dinner but most ate on site.

Many site holder slept on site but equally many found comfortable accommodation within town. Those who stayed on site were happy with the arrangements and spent the evening chatting and enjoying each others company..

There were no overnight incidents and everything other than a quickly fixed blocked toilet went exactly as planned.

A very special thank you to Howard and Julie Kneebone from our club, who remained on site for the night to ensure everything went smoothly and to set out any issues that may have arisen

Sunday 22 March 2026

Some of our team met at 5:00 am to open Gate 8 for Traffic diversion and a Swap Meet Team Briefing held at 5:45am just prior to the opening.

There were no traffic incidences or hold ups at the entrances, the site holders were well spread out throughout the area and some chose to use the overflow area for the displays.

CRCG Club Site was manned by our Founding member Richard Corbet, members Chris Thrower, Peter Grady, Andrew Holbery and Wayne Friend. All enjoyed catching up with old acquaintances and did an excellent job.

The club was donated some rare Honda Elsinore parts were sold at CRCG site to a young enthusiast who is going to complete his project.

Site holders and viewers numbers were down from last year, due to cost of fuel and concerns about its availability, however the result was better than the club were expecting due to the situation and our follow-up interviews with site holders showed they were happy and had had a great time. In general it's important to remember that this event is as much a social one for the site holders as it is a commercial one.

Can Assist reported their food stall was so successful they had to do a runner 4 times for extra supplies and were absolutely thrilled with the roll up, they pretty much sold everything. All their profit and donations received help with cancer needs locally.

The second coffee supplier **Baa Ram Brew Coffee Van** sold over 200 coffees and were extremely happy as will donate \$1 for each coffee sold to **Endeavour Industries** to support their disabled workers.

Our swap meet team stopped taking donations at 11am and there were still people coming in to see what bargains they could find. Some sites had already begun to pack-up and our team took the time to have a much-needed break having a look around ourselves, we then conducted a debrief and enjoyed some lunch after the clean-up. We took the opportunity while all together to take a group photo, with only a couple of our team missing.

Overall figures were down from last year (2025 - 35 indoor/120 outdoor & 949 viewers), but a successful Swap Meet considering the then current fuel issues. We extend a huge thank you for the dedication of our Swap Meet team who volunteered their time to assist this weekend working tirelessly like a well-oiled machine, and without them it just wouldn't have been possible.



Some of the Feedback

Lots of positive and happy feedback was received with comments.

- Goulburn's Great Southern Swap Meet is considered one of the five best to attend, thank you.
- Loved the new layout in the Peden and Skillion area – very generous easy to drive in, set up and drive out when needed.
- Thank you for everything it was successful for us, and we would like to pre-book for next year in the same spot please.
- Enjoyed the location food, coffee, ice-cream and bargains, thanks.
- Communication good and Swap Meet Team easily visible, very friendly and helpful.

The Classic Riders Club of Goulburn voted at the November 2025 meeting to conduct the local Distinguished Gentleman's ride for Goulburn in May 2026.

The DGR is a worldwide event conducted on the same date across the globe, first let's delve into a little information regarding the event.

The event was held on the 17th May and 2026, the 15th year of the event and is conducted through the well known **Movember Foundation**. The primary aim of the event is to raise funds for prostate cancer research and mens mental health.

Triumph Motorcycles are the global partner of the event, other sponsors including Quad Lock, CMSNL Elf, Hedon Brett and Brummell.

Since 2012 the event has raised \$60 Million dollars US, and involved over 500,000 riders and been conducted in 121 countries, it's the biggest international motorcycling event outside Racing.

There's a clear Australian linkage as the inaugural event was conducted in Sydney in 2012 and involved another 63 cities. The initial event was started by **Mark Hawwa** who created the event to challenge the negative stereotypes of motorcyclists after seeing a photo of Don Draper (John Hamm) looking dapper on a motorcycle. From the start to combination of Dapper Attire and Classic Bikes was intrinsic and this became the encompassing theme. The events success led to the early sponsoring of **Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia**, with the tie in with **Movember** movement occurring in 2014.

The general idea is to dress up in your finest clothes, for example suit and tie, waistcoat etc and parade through your local city on a vintage, classic or classic inspired bike. Bikes include cafe racers, bobbers and other modified vintage inspire machinery. A key purpose is to break the traditional stereotype of motorcyclist being involved in socially undesirable activities.

How Did It Go?

Blown away I tell you, the Goulburn DGR was beyond our wildest expectations. Our team thought, maybe we'll get 50-60 riders and \$5,000 first time out and we would have been happy with that. How silly were we, our local motorcycling community embraced our dream head on and delivered 128 riders and just under \$17,000 in donations to the DGR cause.

Let's put some meat on the bones, DGR Goulburn had only 18 less riders than Canberra and 4 less than Newcastle and we raised the same amount as Newcastle, punching well above our weight!

We beat virtually every regional centre in Australia for riders numbers and ended up 14th in donations out of 40 rides.



Distinguished Gentleman's Ride 2026

The Goulburn motorcycling community showed yet again they are great supporters of both the local community and important causes, and our club cannot express just how grateful we are.

Yeah I know what you were expecting, Goulburn would turn on it's typical 4 seasons in one day with blustery winds blowing straight through you following up with torrential downpours to teach us a lesson whilst chilling you to the core. Well it didn't, the weather was perfect, we started out with a lovely fog that added some ambience to the 9.00am gathering in Montague St, it was simply stunning with the remainder of autumn leaves still on the Belmore Park trees. The skies cleared to reveal a gorgeous blue sky, the wind didn't bother to show up and the mercury climbed to an incredibly pleasant 20 or so degrees...bliss and a great relief to the organisers.

Then there was the attire of the gentle folk attending, just wow! Check out our gallery and the Facebook channel for the pics, so many went all out, we had top hats, bowler hats, flat caps and snazzy chaps. Pressed suits, ties and scarves were in abundance, heck we even had fob watches. And it wasn't just the men folk, the lady folk embraced the theme with aplomb. I think next year we need to have a fashion parade.

The route worked well having a mix of the main street, city streets and slow quiet rural sections, all ably guided by local all round great guy and well known local supporter of all things motorcycling **Senior Constable Lindsay Wallace**. Brilliant job Lindsay and greatly appreciated by our club.

The entire ride went off without a hitch and our fabulously attired First Aid officer remained on her sweet vintage Jawa at the rear and got to enjoy the ride with everyone else.

Maybe the only slight complication of any note was that somehow the smallest capacity machine on the day ran dry half way round, but the owner does have form on this account and often gets a good natured ribbing from club members, anyhow amazing what you can do with the bottle found on the roadside.

Food, yes of course there was food. The club decided to ask **Can-Assist**, a local cancer support group to cater for lunch at the **Goulburn Waterworks**, after all their goals are very much in keeping with the objectives of the ride and they have a great record of catering for previous CRCG events. Great news, they got excellent sales and good donations from the crowd.

Additionally the local **CWA** ladies had the Waterworks cafe set up and did a brisk trade in tea, coffee and scones with jam and cream, and the icing on the cake, well the **Pump House** was steaming on the day and they took in double the number of visitors they normally would.



From our club's perspective we had a number of goals, to provide a vehicle to raise funds and awareness of Men's Mental Health and Prostate Cancer research, but we also wanted to "value add" to our local community and importantly help put our club top of mind when our community thinks about motorcycling. The DGR is part of a larger strategy of expansion our club has implemented but from a PR perspective the success is over-whelming, we gained 240 **Facebook** followers and over 1/4 million views from 31,000 meta account holders in just 28 days, vastly exceeding our hopes.

We are expanding into Instagram in the next month, the content is already there and will start a YouTube channel before the year is out. Importantly we have a wide array of public and club events coming up before the end of the year and except for a short winter rest from June to August (well Goulburn is pretty miserable in mid winter) we will be relentless in spreading the opportunities for motorcyclists and their family and friends within our community.

The obvious question is will the Club do it all again in 2027, absolutely, in fact many of the DGR team have already being discussing what we can do to make it bigger and better both from a stats point of view but also for the attendees and the public. Rest assured we have plans, lots of them!



It's a Dream, Honda C77/72

The **Honda C72 (250cc)** and **Honda C77 (305cc)** Dream models occupy a pivotal place in motorcycle history. Produced from the early 1960s, they were among the first mid-capacity motorcycles exported globally by Honda Motor Co. and played a major role in establishing the company's reputation for reliability, engineering sophistication, and mass production.

Factory-era styling and design

The Dream series stood out immediately for its pressed-steel frame, enclosed bodywork, and distinctive visual mass. Promotional materials of the time emphasized modernity, cleanliness, and ease of use—often highlighting features like electric start and indicators that were rare in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In reality the design was somewhat of a nod to the past offering a similar aesthetic to the 1955 Honda SA250 Dream and NSU Supermax 250.

The Supermax makes a good comparison as it had a similar level of performance on paper but considering the Dream produced a little more power and weighed less it is likely the Dream had better real world performance.

Engine and Mechanical Specification

The C72 and C77 used a **parallel twin, four-stroke, overhead camshaft (OHC)** engine, which for the era was quite advanced. Compared to many contemporaries it was also oil tight, considerably quieter and had a higher rev limit.

There are two versions of the Dream motor, 247 and 305 cc but outside of small details they are identical and information can be swapped between the two models, additionally most of the mechanical components within the engine are identical. It should be noted however there were many running changes with the two bikes and it's important when ordering mechanical parts that you know which year model you are dealing with, importantly you should check the engine and chassis numbers.

Early dry sump models are considerably different to the models being examined here and the engines are not interchangeable.



The chain is on the right side and covered for longer life though harder maintenance.



In many markets there were no indicators fitted, the indicators are specific to the Dream.

Key specifications

C72: 247cc

C77: 305cc

Configuration: Air-cooled
parallel twin

Valve train: Single
overhead camshaft

Power (C77): ~23 bhp @
7,500 rpm

Carburation: Single
carburettor

Lubrication: Wet sump

Electrical system: 12V



Right: A defining feature of the Honda Dream series machines is the headlight nacelle and unusual headlight shape, if damaged it's very hard to find good replacements.

The move from earlier dry-sump engines to a **wet-sump design in the C72/C77** simplified maintenance and improved durability, visually the machines look similar but there are a large array of design differences.

Compared to British singles and twins of the time, Honda's engines were

Higher revving
Smoother (especially with improved crank design)
Remarkably oil-tight
Had a higher specific power output for the capacity

This engine architecture would later underpin the highly successful Honda CB72 and Honda CB77 sports models.

Gearbox and Drivetrain Characteristics

The Dreams used a **4-speed gearbox**, typically with a heel-and-toe shifter on some variants.

Characteristics

Smooth, light shift action
Wide gear ratios suited to touring rather than sport riding
Early models had a crankshaft-mounted clutch, later relocated to the gearbox input shaft for durability

This redesign addressed a known weakness where crankshaft failures could occur under heavy load. One complaint regarding the gearbox is the chasm between 1st and 2nd gears, modern riders will initially find this annoying but you soon get used to it. Compared to the Dreams contemporaries the gearbox has a good action and is nicely quite but modern owners will be somewhat surprised at how heavy the clutch action is and the pressure required at the foot to change gears.

Final drive was via chain, but notably on the **right-hand side**, unlike many contemporaries and importantly from a maintenance perspective is fully enclosed with a bung hole to allow for lubrication.

Brakes

Drum brakes front and rear
Adequate for the performance, but not exceptional

Compared to rivals like BSA or Triumph, braking performance was similar, though Honda's systems were generally more consistent and less prone to fade due to better manufacturing tolerances. However the system needs to be properly maintained to work well and compared to modern brakes would probably give a first time rider quite a fright if emergency stopping was required. The CB72/77 models have much better braking, in fact exceptional for the period due the large twin leading shoe design.

Frame and Suspension

Pressed steel frame (instead of tubular steel)
Leading-link front suspension
Twin rear shocks

The pressed frame gave:
Excellent rigidity
Weather protection for the running gear
Added weight and gave unusual styling.

For years, many folk considered the machines quite ugly but from our modern perspective they can look quite striking and draw a lot of positive attention.

One aspect of the design is the mudguards which do an excellent job of keeping muck off the rider, engine and exhaust system.

Handling was stable but not sport, being firmly in the touring/commuter category. Oddly the front leading link system works much better than the rear twin shocks, which are somewhat under-damped and these days are unobtainium as either NOS or reproduction items, nor are there kits to refurbish them.

Electrical System

One of the Dream's standout features was its **12-volt electrical system**, at a time when many motorcycles still used 6V setups. Standard equipment often included:

Electric starter
Indicators (turn signals)
Twin seat
Full lighting system

These made the C72/C77 feel more "more modern" than a traditional motorcycle—part of Honda's deliberate strategy. The electric start worked well and had no trouble turning the bike over, but of course a kick start was also provided. In the mid 60s indicators were a rare luxury and are most welcome when riding in modern traffic, equally the brake light can be triggered by both brake levers and the stop light is nicely bright. It should be noted that in some markets indicators were not fitted as standard.

Headlight performance is average but being 12V is easily upgraded to a modern LED glob for improved visibility, it is also possible to upgrade the brake, indicator bulbs and relay units for extra safety.

The charging system is quite strong for the period and has no issue coping with the electrical loads but the ancient points system on the ignition can be less than ideal and many people replace it with a modern CDI unit to give a much better spark and trouble free long term reliability.

Real-world performance

Top speed (C77): ~85 mph (139 km/h)
Comfortable cruising: 50–60 mph
Smooth acceleration, but not aggressive

While not fast by modern standards, the Dream could match or exceed many larger-capacity British singles and easily outperform most 2-stroke commuter bikes. Vibration is moderate, but definitely much better than British contemporaries despite using the same 360 degree crank design and isn't an issue until speeds exceed 60mph. And let's be honest in modern traffic with mid 60s brakes exceeding 60mph is not really a great idea!

The Dream lacked the outright excitement of the highly sort after CB 72/77 sports machines.

Comparison with Contemporary Motorcycles

In the early 1960s, the Dream competed against British twins (Triumph, BSA), European singles (NSU, Jawa), and emerging Japanese two-strokes.

Advantages

Electric start (rare at the time), oil-tight engine, reliability and longevity, modern electrics.

Disadvantages

Conservative performance, slightly heavy and visually unconventional, less sporting appeal.

European riders often found the styling odd, and the bike was considered expensive in some markets. The weight was on the porky side for a 250 cc class machine but if you compare it to modern machines of similar capacity it feels quite light and definitely on the smaller side.



Position in the Honda Lineup

The C72/C77 sat as **mid-range touring motorcycles**, above lightweight commuters like the Super Cub and below emerging performance bikes such as the CB450.

Effectively the Dream represents Honda's first serious attempt at exporting "big bikes" and competing globally in the serious motorcycle sector, which makes it historically significant, especially considering Honda's position in the modern motorcycle market.

Fundamentally the Dream served as a **bridge between utility and performance**, paving the way for the later sporting CB series machines.

Comparison with CB72 and CB77

The later Honda CB72 and Honda CB77 transformed the same basic engine into true sports machine. The CB models responded directly to demands—especially from the U.S.—for higher performance motorcycles, though it should be said the Dream was generally a better commuter machine.

Feature	Dream C72/C77	CB72/CB77
Purpose	Touring/commuter	Sport/performance
Frame	Pressed steel	Tubular
Styling	Enclosed, conservative	Open, sporty
Power delivery	Mild	High-revving
Market reception	Mixed	Highly successful



Sales and Global Markets

The Dream series was among the **first Honda motorcycles exported worldwide** and was sold in Japan, US, Europe, Australia and some parts of Asia

Market performance

Dreams had strong domestic sales with moderate export success. There was some resistance in Europe due to anti-Japanese sentiment, peculiar styling and dealer pressure from other established European manufacturers.

Despite the limitations, the Dream helped establish Honda's international presence which was strongly bolstered by the quickly developing reputation for reliability and ease of use.

Marketing and Branding

Honda marketed the Dream as modern, clean, reliable alternative the sort of motorcycle everyday riders could swing a leg over as opposed to many of the contemporary enthusiast models that were hard to start, difficult to maintain and temperamental and unsophisticated.

Typical themes in advertising of the Dream was ease of use (electric start) cleanliness (no oil leaks) and friendliness and accessibility. This philosophy culminated in the famous campaign: "You meet the nicest people on a Honda"

The Dream was the embodiment of the shift—**motorcycling as transport, not rebellion.**

Maintenance and Restoration Issues

Today, the C72/C77 are collectible but present significant challenges.

Common issues

- Scarcity of original parts, particularly body components
- Worn carb and throttle linkages.
- Electrical system aging and needing a full maintenance and clean.
- Suspension deterioration and replacement parts being very hard to find.

Known mechanical concerns

- Early crankshaft/clutch issues (pre-1960 redesign)
- Oil leaks if seals deteriorate, but much better than contemporary Brit machines.
- Corrosion in pressed-steel frames in markets with salted
- Clutch slippage due to wear or wrong plates being used.



Restoration considerations

Reproduction parts are available but limited
Chrome and trim restoration can be costly, especially the tank chrome.
Original paint and finishes are highly valued, colours were black, red, blue and rarely white.
Rims and Spokes can be easily sourced, but hubs and drums in good condition are rare.

From enthusiast experience, “Expect parts to be a pain to find, but not impossible” Basically grab anything you can, especially bodywork. Front mudguards in particular often get seriously crunched by careless owners riding down gutters.

Riding Experience Today

Modern riders often describe the Dream as smooth and refined for its age being nicely comfortable for relaxed 80 to 90kph cruising, but generally more like a “rolling classic appliance” than a sport bike.

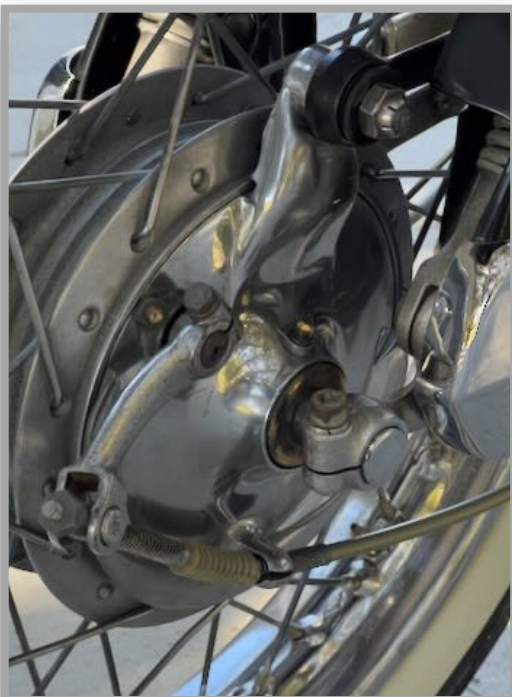
The Dream excels at vintage touring, urban riding and classic motorcycle events, though it must be noted the large gap between first and second gears and somewhat heavy gear change make the bike feel more challenging in tight urban situations.

Conclusion

The Honda C72 and C77 Dream were not the fastest, lightest, or most exciting motorcycles of their era—but were among the most important. They introduced:

Advanced engineering
User-friendly features
Japanese reliability to global markets

While overshadowed by the later CB series, the Dreams laid the foundation for Honda's dominance in the motorcycle industry. Today, they remain fascinating machines—part engineering milestone, part cultural shift, and entirely deserving of their place in motorcycling history with a very individual visual aesthetic that in the modern world adds far more charm than it did when new.



Left: The front brake is a single leading shoe type, the term “brake” is actually overstating its ability, even when in fine fettle.

Right: The alloy on the C76 Dream is of good quality and polishes well and even holds the finish well with minimal care.



Motorcycle Videos top Check Out



Victoria's Best Motorcycling Roads – My Top 30 Twisty Rides

Ride Day regularly publish vids on rides with a dirt road flavor in NSW, this one focuses on the Victorian options and deals more with the blacktop side of things, great for inspiration to encourage you to get out there.

<https://youtu.be/dUiy5Q2EzN4>

Riding the Best Roads in Australia: The Oxley Highway

The Oxley Highway is legendary, many regard it as the ultimate ride in NSW. Nicely detailed vid with good production quality.

<https://youtu.be/cXaqRxycZts>

What makes Adv Riding Amazing... Thunderbolts 3 Day ride in NSW Australia

For those who have a adventurous spirit and a desire to get off the beaten track, try this for size, looks like great fun and certainly a serious challenge, nicely produced vid.

<https://youtu.be/c2oZGDUrIPw>

Riding the stunning Scenic Rim of South East Queensland

When you want relief from the cold and windy Goulburn winters a ride like this looks tremendously appealing, warm air, sunshine, calm, great roads and stunning views. Icing on the cake being it's on the doorstep of the Gold Coast, take the family for a holiday, hire a bike and go for ride while they spend their time on the coast.

<https://youtu.be/FpaRg-dGgiI>

99 BENDS? motorcycle adventure ride along Tasmania's West Coast

Part of a series of videos on riding in Tasmania by motorbike adventurer Joe Ryan. Head along the West Coast of Tasmania through winding roads and old mining towns. Then head south east along the incredible Lyell Highway on a Royal Enfield Himalayan.

https://youtu.be/rRF_KJPtWM

Ride Review - The Omeo Highway



Omeo Highway

The section of the Omeo Highway between Omeo and Mitta Mitta is widely regarded as one if not the most demanding and rewarding motorcycle rides in Australia. Running through the Victorian Alps and the Alpine National Park, it combines very technical road riding with remote high-country scenery, making it a bucket-list route for experienced riders.

Route Overview and Riding Time

The distance between Omeo and Mitta Mitta is approximately 108 km, theoretically a driving time of around 1 hour 15 minutes, however, for motorcyclists, this is misleading. The road's constant curves, elevation changes, and scenic stops mean most riders will take between 2 and 3 hours to complete the section comfortably.

The route passes through isolated locations such as Anglers Rest and Glen Valley, with long stretches lacking services or fuel.

Curves and Road Character

This stretch is defined by relentless corners, you will encounter a mix of tight hairpins, medium sweepers and blind bends, often linked together with little respite. The road climbs and descends through mountainous terrain, following river valleys and ridgelines.

Community feedback often highlights just how intense the riding is, comments such as "4 hours of non-stop turns and bends... utterly shattered" are not uncommon.

The section between Mitta Mitta and Glen Wills has historically been particularly tight and repetitive, demanding sustained concentration.

Road Surface and Conditions

The Omeo Highway is now fully sealed, with completion achieved in 2014. However, the surface varies significantly from smooth well-maintained bitumen to occasional rough patches and repaired areas. You will likely encounter rough gravel wash onto corners, especially after rain. Loose debris and blind corners remain a hazard.

Speed Limits

Speed limits vary along the route, generally ranging from 80–100 km/h on open sections, dropping to 60 km/h or lower through tighter curves and settlements. In practice, most riders travel well below posted limits due to the technical nature of the road and limited visibility.

Traffic Load

Traffic is generally very light compared to more famous routes such as the Great Ocean Road. The northern section is particularly quiet, as many vehicles take alternative faster highways.

However, riders should watch for logging trucks and service vehicles, touring motorcycles in groups and occasional caravans and 4WDs.

Ideal Time of Year

The best riding period is between November and April, when weather is milder and roads are clear. Winter presents significant challenges, snow and ice being common along with road closures. Additionally at the higher elevations the temperature can drop rapidly.

Spring and autumn generally offer excellent riding conditions, with cooler temperatures and far fewer tourists.

Suitable Motorcycles

This road suits a wide range of bikes but some are far better suited to the road:

Sports and naked bikes: Nimble and ideal for cornering performance.

Adventure bikes: Excellent for comfort and handling the rough patches.

Lighter Touring bikes: Suitable but heavier machines will require more effort in tight 25-35kph curve sections.

Very large cruisers can of course be used but limited cornering clearance will mean they will struggle with the continuous tight bends.

Safety Considerations

Safety is a major concern on this route due to its remoteness and technical difficulty. The key risks include blind corners with limited sight-lines, loose gravel and changing surfaces. Additionally you'll probably encounter wildlife at dawn and dusk.

Also consider that there is limited mobile reception across much of the route and possible rapid weather changes in alpine areas

Fuel planning is critical, there is no fuel between Omeo and Mitta Mitta.

Scenery and Viewing Locations

The ride is visually spectacular throughout, featuring alpine forests and high plains river valleys following the Mitta Mitta River, fabulous mountain vistas and rugged ridge-lines.

Along the way the notable stops include Mount Wills area lookouts, River crossings near Anglers Rest and access points to Lake Dartmouth.

The overall region is known for fishing, camping, and hiking, adding to its appeal as a multi-day touring destination.

Accommodation and Amenities

Accommodation options are limited but characterful:

Blue Duck Inn – a well-known historic pub offering meals and lodging

Mitta Mitta Hotel – classic country pub accommodation

Golden Age Motel – basic but convenient lodging

Camping is widely available throughout the Alpine National Park.

Food and coffee stops are sparse, but small cafes and pubs exist in Omeo, Mitta Mitta, and Eskdale.

Nearby Towns

Key towns servicing the route include, Eskdale, Tallangatta and Mount Beauty (via connecting roads). All these towns provide fuel, supplies, and additional accommodation.

Comparison to Other Australian Rides

The Omeo Highway is often compared to iconic Australian rides such as the Great Alpine Road which is more accessible but less remote, Black Spur Drive, shorter and more polished and the Oxley Highway, technically similar riding but with better infrastructure.

The Omeo Highway stands apart in isolation and intensity. It offers fewer services, longer stretches of uninterrupted corners, and a stronger sense of wilderness than almost all other similar rides, no wonder many riders consider the most challenging and rewarding sealed road in Australia.

Conclusion

Riding the Omeo Highway between Omeo and Mitta Mitta is a very demanding but unforgettable experience, endless curves, remote alpine setting, and minimal traffic combine to deliver a pure riding challenge rarely matched.



Ride Review - The Bonang Road



The **Bonang Road** is widely regarded as one of Australia's most remote and rewarding motorcycle rides. Stretching from near Delegate (NSW border) to Orbost in East Gippsland, it winds through dense forest, river valleys and rugged mountain terrain. For experienced riders, the Bonang Road offers a technical and scenic journey, but one that demands considerable respect, planning and caution.

Overview and Distance

The Bonang Road runs roughly 140–150 km depending on your start point, linking the Monaro region of NSW to the Gippsland coast of Victoria. Despite this relatively modest distance it typically takes **around 3 hours to complete** due to its tight, winding nature and terrain and the fact you will probably wish to take a couple of breaks along the way to maintain your focus.

This is not a fast ride, but a highly technical one to challenge your skills and body.

Road Conditions

As of late 2024, the entire road is **fully sealed**, a major improvement over its earlier mixed-surface reputation.

However, "sealed" does not mean easy. The road is typified by **narrow carriageway** with minimal shoulders, **constant tight curves** many of which are blind with decreasing radius. Then throw in **Steep gradients**, climbing and descending ridge lines, limited guardrails in places and the **remote location** with long distances between services...well you get the picture, not easy.

Because the road follows ridges and creek lines you are almost always either cornering, climbing, or descending, there are only a couple of short straight sections additionally there are few points along the road where you can simply pull over safely or overtake. Fortunately the surface is generally ok but there are many dips and harsh bumps which can upset bike balance if you didn't read the road ahead or are traveling too fast.



Curves and Riding Character

The Bonang Road is defined by continuous corner sequences with little opportunity to relax making the road exhausting on large cruisers or heavy tourers.

This is definitely a road where rhythm matters far more than speed and realistically riders should expect a **slow average pace**, often between 50–80 km/h, depending on conditions and be sure not to become target fixated, try to look as far ahead as possible at all times, which can be challenging on this particular road when you are also trying to see the debris on the road in front of you.

Debris and Hazards

One of the biggest risks on Bonang Road is **unexpected debris**, including gravel washed onto corners after rain, fallen branches, trees and leaf litter, mud patches in shaded or low areas. And then of course there are kangaroos, wombats, deer, birds and even cattle!

Does all the above sound ominous? Now throw in some logging trucks on weekdays and the residue they leave behind, logging activity is common all over the region so always assume something large could be around the next blind corner.

The road can be slippery and wet in spots and then bone dry on others due the shading and sun angles.

Safety Considerations

Motorcycle safety is critical on a road like this. Key principles include **ride to the conditions**, especially consider that surface grip can change quickly on the Bonang. Maintain conservative corner entry speeds and stay well within your lane, which can be tricky to judge because there are no centerlines for much of the road.

High-visibility gear and headlights are needed for visibility and avoid riding at dusk or dawn unless you want to go wildlife spotlighting!

Emergency services coverage is limited, riders should carry basic tools and a puncture repair kit, it's probably also a good idea to carry water and snacks. Finally note that mobile phone is patchy at best.



Speed Limits

Speed limits vary along the route are typically 80–100 km/h in open sections, which are few, the advisory speeds for corners are typically low, you'll find many 25kph and 35kph corners, most of which are not constant radius!

In practice, the road geometry dictates your speed more than signage. Excess speed is the major risk factor on the Bonang—reducing speed significantly improves safety margins.

Elevation and Terrain

The Bonang Road traverses the **Great Dividing Range**, with frequent elevation changes, it climbs to over **800–1000 metres** in some sections and in winter can be subject to black ice and snow.

There are several descents into river valleys and forest basins and you can expect cooler temperatures at higher elevations and changing weather conditions.

Weather Conditions

Weather plays a major role in the ride, in **Winter** it's generally cold and damp with possible fog and black ice in shaded areas. **Summer** on the other hand can be very warm with a risk of bushfires and road closures.

Autumn/Spring are goldilocks with Ideal riding conditions with mild temperatures. Rain occurs at any time of the year and when combined with the inherent build up of slime and debris significantly increases risk due to slippery surfaces.

Best Time of Year?

The ideal riding window is, **Spring (Oct–Nov)** – green landscapes, mild temperatures and **Autumn (Mar–Apr)** – stable weather, fewer tourists.

Suitable Motorcycles

The Bonang Road suits a range of bikes, but some are much better than others, adventure bikes (mid-weight ADV), Sport-touring motorcycles, lightweight naked or sports bikes, especially those in the 250-400CC range can be an absolute hoot.

Less suitable

Large cruisers and Touring Bikes due to the very tight corners and limited ground clearance and Supersports whilst ok are really wasted on this road due to having performance which cannot be safely used and often the harsher suspension that will hammer the spine on the rough bumps and defects.

On the Bonang Road, comfort, agility and good suspension travel are far more important than outright power, which sounds like a recipe for a good ADV in particular.

Key Viewing Locations

The Bonang Road is rich in natural beauty, though viewpoints are often informal. You will get Snowy River valley glimpses, forest lookouts near Bonang township and be impressed by **Errinundra Plateau** areas with its towering old-growth forest

Take care when stopping, many areas have limited safe pull-offs and when provided pull offs often have loose gravel which will slip under foot, especially with heavy tourers.

Rest Stops and Towns

Facilities are sparse, but key stopping points include, **Delegate (NSW side)** which has fuel and basic services, **Bonang** with very limited facilities and no fuel, **Goongerah** a small settlement, occasional café or community stop and finally **Orbost** which has full services, fuel, food and accommodation.

Always fuel up before entering the route, there is **no fuel** along the way.

Accommodation

Nearby accommodation options include, **Orbost** with motels, caravan parks, pubs, **Delegate** with basic lodgings and camping and if you have a sense of adventure you can try forest camping, there are several sites in surrounding national parks.

Orbost is the best base for riders wanting comfort and services.

Traffic

Traffic is generally **very light**, which adds to the appeal—but also increases risk, few vehicles means less immediate help if something goes wrong, logging trucks may appear unexpectedly and tourist traffic increases during summer holidays

Mid-week riding is often the quietest other than having to contend with logging trucks.

Time to Ride

Allow: 3 hours minimum riding time, 4–5 hours with stops, photos and breaks, This is a ride to savour, not rush, if ever there was a ride that is about the journey not the destination, this is it.

Final Thoughts

The Bonang Road is one of Australia's great hidden motorcycle routes—remote, technical and deeply scenic. Compared to more famous rides like the Great Ocean Road, it offers far less traffic, far more technical riding and a much greater sense of isolation.

The isolation comes with responsibility. Be well prepared, take a conservative riding approach, allow for your mind and body becoming tired and maintain vigilant awareness of the conditions which will be constantly changing. For riders who value **flowing corners, wilderness and challenge**, Bonang Road delivers an unforgettable experience.

Our New Full Featured Website

For some time the club membership have been seeking to update our website with a new site that better meets both our current and predicted future needs.

Over the past few months we have developed this new site under a new domain name **Goulburn Classic Riders**, rather than the old site which was Classic Riders Club of Goulburn. The reasons for the name change (which incidentally does not change anything regarding to our club name and legal registration) is that it better reflects what most people will go searching for when looking for our site. Google will still find us if visitors search under our official name so there's no issue.

The new site is hosted by WIX and has been developed by Wendy Nichol a club member with assistance from Brad Nichol (club president) and input from various club executive members.

As we now fully control the new site we can add and change content as needed with no delays and we are able to respond in most cases within just a few hours if changes or additions are needed, this means the site is far more interactive and responsive and that alone will give our followers reasons to revisit and keep up to date. Additionally the site is closely linked to our social media output and there's strong cross pollination between the site and Facebook.

Ultimately as the site grows it will include in addition to the very comprehensive information already available, forums, point of sale and merchandising options, active form filling for club activities such as vehicle checks, specific video content and more. In fact one of the prime reasons in going for the WIX option was to create a site that would eventually act a hub for all club activity

At present we have blogs, multiple galleries, document download options, bike reviews, event reviews and information, events calendars, magazines and more. The next step is to commence the forums and the merchandising options will follow on from that.

Video content will become more important as we move towards creating a Youtube Channel and the galleries will form the feed for a curated instagram presence, which will start in the next month.

Our hope was that the website could be of such quality that it would be held up as one of the best motorcycle Websites in the country and we're confident we are well along the path to reaching that goal.

It must be noted that our club has for some time been collecting together content including photos, videos and documents from various members to be used within the website, this was all part of our long term technology plan which we established around 16 months ago.

Please take the time to check out our new website, go to **goulburnclassicriders.com**



Pushing The Club with Facebook

Our club established a new Facebook page a few months ago in response to the requests from club members and as part of our long term IT plan.

There were several reasons for doing this:

The need to expand our reach beyond our local area.

The need for a tool to draw people to our new website once established.

A desire to appeal to a younger group of people in order to build our membership.

The need to have a vehicle to quickly deploy information on rides and events so that members and club guests could remain informed.

To build the general profile of the club as vibrant positive organization.

To create a follower base that could be leveraged off to get the news out there regarding events, rides and club activities.

The ideal vehicle for expanding the reach of the page was the **Distinguished Gentleman's Ride** and we certainly pushed the event with a wide array of posts, including photos, text, reminders, videos, stories about the DGR from all over the world, updates on progress.

So here's the good news, and honestly there is no bad news. The data tells the story.

One month out from the DGR we started heavy promotion of the event, at that point we had 272 followers, checking today as I write this 8 weeks later we have 560 followers, over double. This is an amazing result and for the long term will be highly advantageous as we move to get the word out about upcoming events, and already it has provided considerable assistance in running the Black and Dirty ride a couple of weeks ago.

We will be interested to see how the follower base mobilizes for the promotion of the Annual Ride in October.

Our follower breakdown is also interesting and encouraging, 29% women and 71% men, which shows a better female participation than usual for motorcycle clubs, additionally the age breakdown is evenly spread from 45 to over 65 age groups, with a full quarter of followers younger than 45yr old group. This is pretty much an ideal spread and fits very neatly into our clubs long term growth plans.

To add icing on the Facebook cake, of those 560 followers around 35% are not from Goulburn which is excellent for future events where we want to promote outside our town.

Try this on for size, within the 21 days of the DGR and the week following we had over 270,000 views, for perspective most motorcycle clubs (according to Ai) get around 2500 to 5,000 view per 28 days. Our biggest single day was the 17th May, the day of the DGR with 42,000 views!

A deeper analysis shows that during the 28 day DGR period we had visits from 32,000 individual identities, again this is an extraordinary result from a regional motorcycle club.

Importantly interactions are vital to the growth of a social media channel and in the last 28 days since the DGR we have had an excellent 4,500 interactions, again well above what's usually expected for a local club.

Finally on content, by far video content has been the best driver of views and interactions and we have made a conscientious effort to post a lot of home made video. At this point we have had videos which have landed around the 10,000 view mark, again a surprisingly good result.

In summary our Facebook presence is expanding and working exactly as we planned.

A Very Close Call

Howard Kneebone

On the 17th of March after a group ride to Rockley I pulled up at my front gate and saw a new viewing window on the differential on my Moto Guzzi clearly showing internal carnage that had destroyed the differential!

Mmm, I felt nothing during the ride and as there was still oil in the diff housing I concluded this must have happened pretty close to home. Imagine the human carnage that would have occurred had that diff locked up when cranked over in a curve at 100kph, it hardly bears thinking about. But why had this happened?

The bike was purchased new in 2002 as a birthday present for my lovely Julie and has only travelled 67,000 km, not a lot. It has had the diff oil changed twice. The autopsy showed that at least one cap screw had departed from its assigned position and the witness marks indicate it was ping ponged around for some time before deciding to try the impossible task of passing through between the pinion and crown gears .

That brave attempt by the cap screw then appears to have sheared off the heads of 5 more cap screws then blowing out the diff housing providing the new viewing window seen in the pictures.

But Why ? After lots of head scratching I remembered that just inside the warranty period an oil leak from the diff was spotted during a ride to Nelligan. A trip to The Moto Guzzi dealer Aitkens in Sydney was made and I was told "yes this happens when you wash the bike and water gets in and corrodes the seal area then destroys the seal".

The prevention being you must ride your bike to dry it out after every time you wash it but the permanent cure was installing a stainless steel band called " true seal" plus new oil seal.

To make the repair the diff has to be fully dismantled including removing all cap screws so the stainless steel band can be pressed in, thus I can only conclude that the cap screws were not torqued to spec or possibly no loctight used at the time.

When I turned my attention to the rebuild of the differential I found all the cap screws came out with fingers, no tools required. So literally the diff was a grenade waiting for the pin to be pulled!

After a quick search on ebay I found three diff candidates and an order was placed. The new unit arrived a few weeks later. I opened it up for inspection it looks perfect and thus was re-assembled and installed. The price was surprisingly good considering the complexity of the unit.

My Moto Guzzi is now back on the road, I just have to remember that this new diff doesn't have the stainless steel true seal so I have to go for a ride every time I wash the bike. Hmmm, that a real tuff assignment.



Worn Out Wander 2026

Julie Kneebone

On our first day ten intrepid riders with much anticipation gathered at **Trappers** Goulburn for coffee/breakfast and meet n greet for our 5 day, 4 nights trek around the country side. Originally it was twelve folk but sadly through injury Colin and Lois Jewell couldn't make it. It was an overcast day with a foggy and soggy demeanour and we left in spitting rain with a frosty temperature drop. Chris & Cherrie, Brad & Wendy, John and Soie, Greg M, Ross L, Howard and myself headed off on country roads towards Bungonia and on past Marulan towards Tallong and beyond.

This years theme of **"Mountains, Coast and Corners"** didn't fail to impress, however, I should've added, **"with Four Seasons"**.

With various mixed stops on the way we eventually all ended up at the HARS museum in Albion Park with a few oopsies on the way such as carpark mishaps, forgotten clothing and imagining that bikes could run without fuel.

The boxed lunch and the tour around the hangars and planes was amazing especially with our generous and well-informed guide; the aircraft buffs loved it.

Our later finish and the awful weather that turned up meant that the wander around Saddleback Mountain, Jamberoo Pass, Kangaroo Valley, Berry and the Shoalhaven River was canned for safety reasons. So, we ended up heading down the highway to Nowra and having to tackle some wild rainy and windy weather. The evening walk and RSL dinner/drinks was very much welcomed.

The following day some group members went ahead to scout the road conditions to Braidwood with a report back that there was only 4 kms of roadworks of good quality dirt and some loose gravel. We met up with Rick Harrison in Braidwood and continued down the coast, but excluded the old highway, back road from Narooma to Tilba due to a reported 7-8 km of not so good dirt. The coast road through Bermagui to Tathra was really pretty, the roads were quiet with limited traffic with the sunny weather and spectacular coastal scenery adding to the enjoyment of the day. Some of us had a scenic lookout break at the Tathra headland overlooking the wharf. The Chinese restaurant at the Bega Grand hotel had very yummy food. The beds were ok but have seen better days. Note to self: Saturdays nights bring live bands, not so good when the bedrooms are above them.

On the following day two members of our group decided to head home due to health issues, and we sadly waved them goodbye. We covered some great roads down through Mt Darragh and Myrtle Mountain. However, the previous day had resulted in some storm shrapnel, many leaves and branches, only a taste of things to come for the Bonang. A few also took the scenic route via dirt roads and others the Snowy mountains highway. At least we all ended up at Bombala, phew. Onwards to Orbost for lunch with much dodging of the chicane that the Bonang had become, fallen trees, branches and slippery leaves were everywhere. Onto Bruthen, a stop at Swifts Creek while we waited for a member that had a slight mishap but all was good. Finally, Omeo at the Hilltop Hotel for the night was a welcome stop, and some running repairs made on one of the bikes. They shall remain nameless. You know – "What goes on Tour stays on tour" 😊

A fine Aussie dinner and the room cost included a continental breakfast...bonus. This hotel whilst well priced had shared bathrooms, something to reconsider for next time.

The new day started with a bit of fog, but the road was clear and winding, it went on and on but the views for us pillions was breathtaking. Next stop, Mitta Mitta for a well-earned coffee and snacks. We were now out of the Victorian Alps and with a bit more riding before Tallangatta for lunch. Sadly, Ricky headed back off to Goulburn for work, we were down to eight of us. The Granya Road and gap was next (with more corners) and then the Murray River road before the Jingellic Pub.



The first day took us to the HARS Aviation Museum at Albion Park, a great visit for young and old.



Just what I need says Ross Luff when he finds a new way to capture oil to recycle it for his Norton.

Interesting piece of information...On the Murray River Rd we came across quite a large contingent of police about half an hour from the Jingellic turnoff. We learnt later that it was the driveway where the cop killer Dezi Freeman had been found and fatally shot that morning at Thologolong. It would have been a sobering day for all involved.

At the Jingellic pub we met some Goulburnites and friends doing their own little tour of the countryside, a very friendly group sharing their experiences – something that all motorcyclists can relate to.

Next stop - the Apple Inn at Batlow was a small motel, the rooms were immaculately clean and the bathrooms newly renovated with a nice addition of cereal etc for breakfast for a small fee. Although Batlow has an RSL and a hotel, we had another oopsie. The hotel was closed and there was no restaurant open at the RSL and the IGA supermarket was closed. Batlow is indeed a small place, I was starting to think we may be having cereal for dinner but a stroke of luck meant that the lovely manager at the RSL offered to cook some frozen pizzas for us all, what lovely hospitality and we were all full, washed down with some vino we were well sated.

Next morning, Chris and Cherrie headed home early for another commitment...so...Six intrepid riders headed off on the fifth day on a meandering wander back to Goulburn, stopping at the Adelong Gold Mill ruins, an interesting historical place along the Adelong Creek. North onwards across the highway at Tumblong we took a few detours ending up at Bethungra and Cootamundra for a fuel stop. Gotta stop following Google maps. A slight detour to Ross's brothers place for some 8 gauge wire to do some running repairs on the bike strapping the exhaust back to the frame. How lucky was that to have found the broken bracket on the frame a just kilometre earlier.

Jacksons Bakery and Café at Harden was a welcome stop for lunch. Not only did Ross's lovely Norton Dominator hold together with the 8 gauge wire but he made a new friend – a macaw in a cage that loved his bird talk. Next stop was Crookwell, a farewell to Greg as it was his home stop and then there was five. We all arrived safely in Goulburn with thoughts of it was great to be out on the bike but home is pretty good too.

What a wonderful, interesting 5 days away with many laughs, incidents, weather worries, changes of plans but most of all great company with liked minded people sharing the experience. Thank you to all who came and made it so memorable.

Note: This trip was made even more possible by the kind offer and loan of Chris's BMW so Howard and Julie could ride 2 up. The Moto Guzzi was waiting on parts so Howard would have ridden something not pillion orientated. Julie was committed to driving back-up, however, with the escalating fuel costs it would have been a much more expensive exercise towing the trailer. With our very heartfelt thanks to Chris and Cherrie for the loan, we did indeed have fun.

POSTSCRIPT

In recent times this was our third Wander. I resurrected the Wander back in 2022 with many suggestions from my co-pilot errr.... Pilot.... how about Lead rider.

In the very early years Early 2000's.... the WOW sprung from an idea from Graeme and Sue Cramp to have a leisurely 4-5 day ride before the Christmas holidays to wrap up the rides for the year. Initially it was only for Classic bikes on historic plates.

The first wander started with 6 or so riders. No bookings were made and there was no backup car or trailer, and we stayed in cabins in caravan parks. We just meandered around the countryside, stopping when we felt like it or when someone broke down. Luckily breakdowns were few and far between but running repairs were mostly on the side of the road by many hands; tools came from all sorts of hidden pockets and lots of advice was given.

Many wanders followed, Howard and I have probably attended at least 10 Wander tours over the years. Some have been down the coast, several through the Snowy mountains staying at Jindayne as a hub, or down the Murray with a day trip on a riverboat, country towns and villages, over the mountains into Victoria several times, several up north Mudgee way and as far as Tamworth and out west to Albert and many others usually with a couple of museums thrown in. The wanders have evolved with the addition of planning, bookings, back-up vehicles, tools, refreshments and more riders with a wider variety of bikes.

Many, many people have contributed to the planning of these wanders over the years, but one particular series was boosted by the able backup support by Bronwyn's dad Terry Hancock. Terry will always remain in my memory as a gentle, kind soul and the one who saved me on the highway north of Gundagai after a sudden deflating of my back tire on the little CB Honda, I really did have wobbly legs after that episode but amazingly I didn't drop the bike when I pulled up and being the last day I decided to take the free ride home.

Only time will tell how the WOW will evolve. The next bigger CRCG tour is being planned for 2027 to Tasmania of about 14 days total in around the end of February/early March. The last really big bike tour we had was also to Tasmania but that was back in 2003, definitely about time we had another one. There will be more information on this in the next few months so keep an eye out for it.

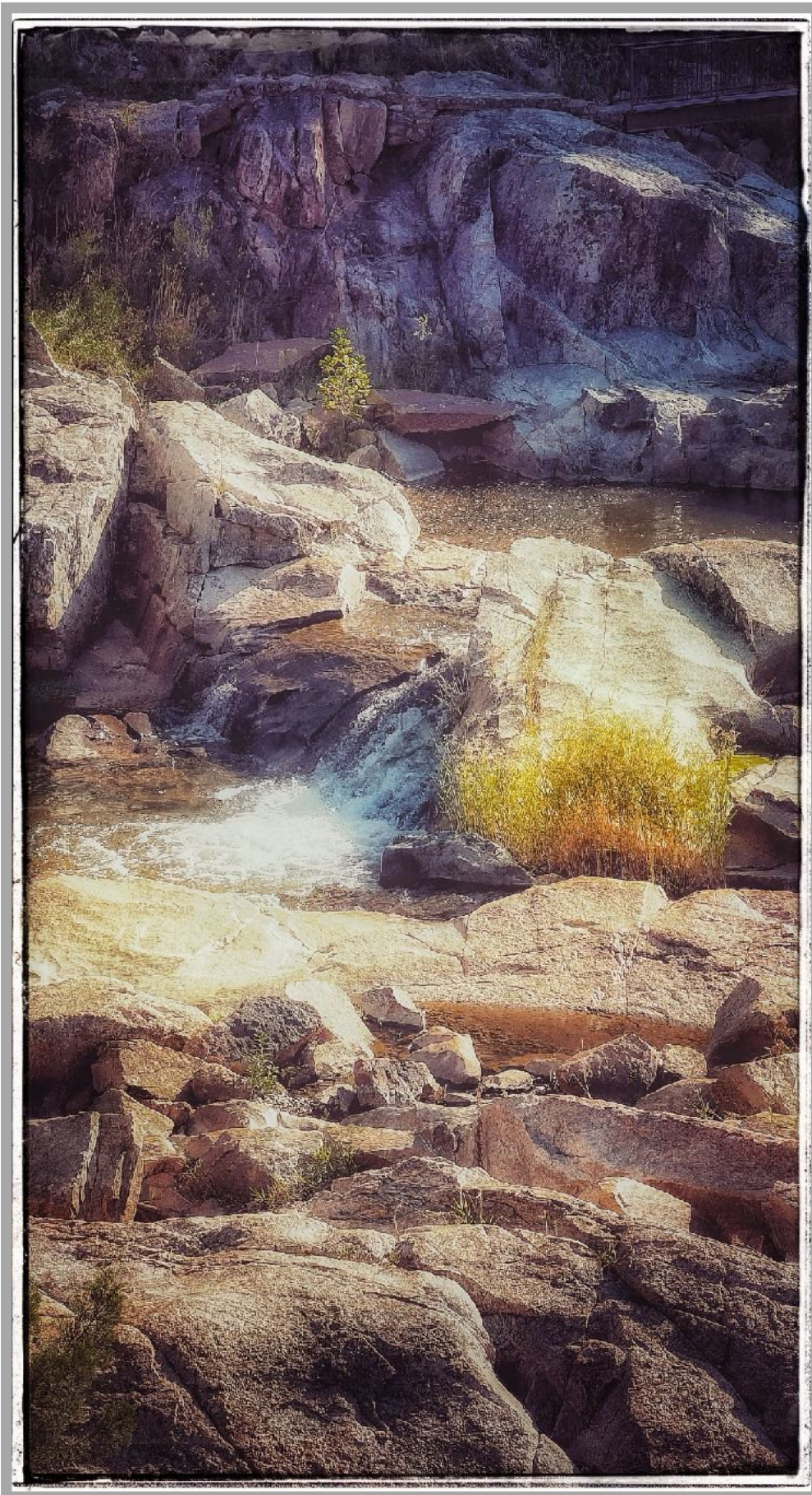


Top Left: Howard Kneebone and Ross Luff trying to work out why an anchor would be dropped here.

Top Right: Rick Harrison takes a break on the Bonang Road.

Bottom Left: Taking a break at the historic Jingellic Pub.

Bottom Right: Ross Luffs' Norton takes a rest for some on the road fettling.



Left: One of the highlights of the wander was the old Adelong Falls Gold Mine and Mill which is very close to Adelong.

Below: The roads included enormous variety, ranging from the tightest twisties to flowing straights over rolling countryside. In almost all cases the traffic was light making for uninterrupted progress.



My Bike - Honda CB900 Bol D Or'

Chris Thrower

I purchased my CB 900 as a 19 year old from Neville Smith at the Power Centre in Goulburn on May 2nd 1982 for \$2995.

I had my heart set on a Black and Silver model when I walked into the shop to start negotiations with Neville. However the bike I bought was an end of model run out from 1981 and Neville told me that the only one available was a red one. I had never seen a red one but I thought I would snap it up.

I clearly remember seeing the bike for the first time and I was smitten. It was parked out the front of the shop on the street in the sunshine and it was beautiful. The bike was run in as per specification but from time on the taco needle was given a big workout.



Specs 1981 Honda CB900 Bol D' Or

Displacement: 901CC
Bore and Stroke: 64.5 x 69mm
Power: 95 hp @ 9000 rpm
Torque: 77nm @ 8000 rpm
Compression: 8.8 :1
Transmission: 5 Speed
Drive: Chain
Frame: Steel, twin downtime
Rear Suspension: Twin Shock
Front Suspension: Telescopic
Air Assisted
Front Brakes: 2 x 280mm Disc
Rear Brake: 1 x 297mm Disc
Front Tyre: 3.25 V19
Rear Tyre: 4.00 V18
Wheelbase: 1515mm
Seat Height: 815mm
Dry Weight: 233 Kg
Wet Weight: 242 Kg
Fuel Capacity: 20 Litres
Top Speed: 217 kph
1/4 Mile: 11.9 Sec
Length: 2240mm
Width: 815mm

At one stage I was working in Yass and traveling on the old Hume Highway and clocking up 1000 km a week traveling back and forth each day. I was wearing out a rear tyre every 3 weeks!

One night riding home to Goulburn I had an alternator failure leaving Yass and had to ride home with just a park light on in total darkness and rain. I was following a car through the Cullarin range when the driver, blinded by the lights of oncoming semi trailers, ran off the road. I followed him and hit the mother of all pot holes on the gravel edge of the road which had me performing a handstand on the handlebars. I was left with 2 large flat spots in my wheels which I had rolled out, the evidence of this close call with death can still be seen today.

I rode the bike for many years before my family came along. The bike had quite a reputation and I received many offers from people to buy it, but my intention was always to restore it some day.

In about 2003 I stripped the bike back to the bare frame and rebuilt it from the ground up. I have always loved the bike and still get lots of enjoyment from riding it to this day. I have no idea how many Kms are on the bike as I have had about 6 different speedos over the years as a result of the needle being weakened by UV and snapping off. I would estimate though that the bike would have north of 200,000 Kms.

Videos On The CB900 F

Refuel Ride and Race

https://youtu.be/0bi_Dsc4x1k

Freddie Spencer talks CB900F

<https://youtu.be/Z5nV96zMhlw>

Classic Superbike

https://youtu.be/pBTMO0b_Ank

What a 37 Yr Old Bike Feels Like

<https://youtu.be/PuPb8Pxt-ns>

First Production Bike with 16 Valve 4 Cylinder Engine

https://youtu.be/wmnDh_3z5Es



Black and Dirty Ride 2026

For some time there have been members of the club who have been seeking the option of dirt road rides, this makes sense of course, Goulburn and the surrounding area have an amazing variety of options in all directions but in particular to the north west are sparsely driven on but offer great views and fun riding.

You don't need a trail bike or even an ADV machine to enjoy the dirty challenge but such machines expand the options available.

Club events co-ordinator, Chris Thrower had an inkling that dirt road rides would prove attractive to potential members and the younger set in particular and decided that the club could trial a new format to test his theory, thus the Black n Dirty was born. Without getting ahead of ourselves the event proved successful and will now become a fixture on our annual calendar.

Here's the formula, create a ride that includes both sealed and a dirt route option, both of which were well away from main highways, with a lunch thrown in (at participants cost). The plan included strong promotion via our Facebook page to encourage non-members to come along and taste our clubs' hospitality, the longer term plan being, should it prove successful we could extend the ride being a two-day weekend event.

The dirty route took riders out through Towrang across to Swallowtail pass then up the range to Taralga. From there the ride went across country to Laggan then north towards Peelwood, then North-West towards Tuena and finally back into Crookwell via the main Junction Point and Binda Road.

Alternatively the Black route took riders to Taralga via the Taralga Road, then onwards towards Richlands, Currawella and Black Springs. Riders re-grouped at Black Springs and then traversed across to Rockley via Dog Rocks Road and then onwards to Perthville for fuel, finally turning South to head towards Crookwell via Tuena.

Sunday 31st May, Black and Dirty day, was unfortunately far colder and damper than the team had hoped, but heck its Goulburn in late Autumn so you get what mother nature throws at you. As might be expected a few folk pulled out on the Saturday due to weather concerns but we still had 22 hardy souls turn up to brave the elements at 9.00 am on the Sunday morning. Bikes consisted of a mix of Road machines, Tourers, ADVs and Chook Chasers and an age range stretching from folk in 20s through to 70s.

You might wonder if we got rain, yes of course, in particular those on the road ride struck a fair amount of the wet stuff on the between Taralga and Black Springs, then again north of Tuena heading towards Crookwell. The dirty contingent were a bit luckier and remained dry.

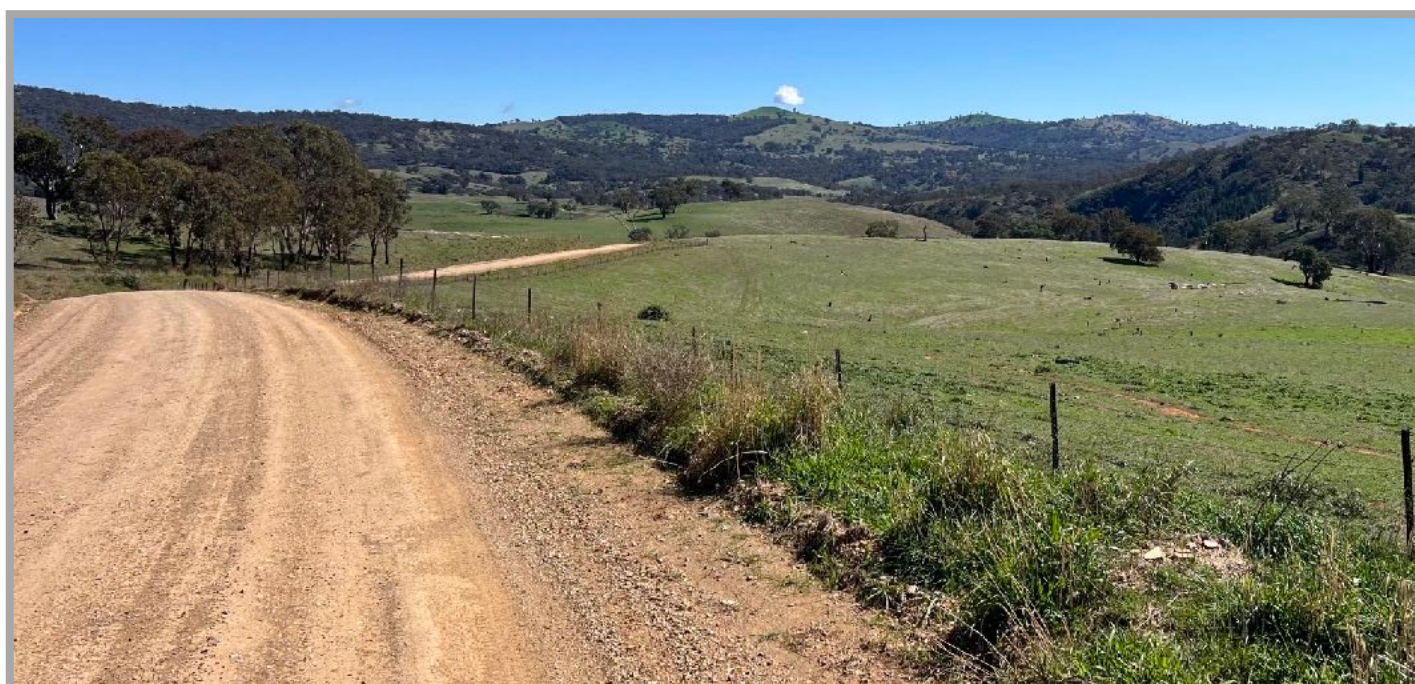
Was it cold? Mmmm, some riders might consider that an understatement, again the roadies got the worst of it with the section around Black Springs serving up exactly the bone penetrating chill one expects at 1300m above sea level on an already cold and damp day. Fair to say that those on touring machines suffered much less than those on naked bikes.

The dirty contingent were much better off because they were somewhat protected by the closed in nature of much of the course and the fact that the elevation was somewhat less, although exposed sections around Taralga and Golspie still had their challenges.



Above: Riders gathering at Black Springs to warm up after the cold climb to 1300 meters above sea level.

Below: Rolling hills close to the end of the dirt near Tuena, the road conditions were very good.





Top: Chris Thrower, our events coordinator near Golspie, part of the Dirty route.

Left: Club Members Rick Harrison and Rob Temple trying hard to look warm at Black Springs on the Black route.

Above: Great open landscape on the way into Taralga as part of the Dirty route.

As for scenery both courses offered stunning vistas, the Taralga to Black Springs section is incredible in places and the Black Springs to Rockley section provides beautiful “top of the range” views with fascinating rocky outcrops and a sense of being elevated above the world.

Generally the road conditions for both courses were good, in particular the dirt roads presented far better than expected considering the amount of rain in the prior week, which was fortunately not enough to close the Swallowtail crossing and force a re-routing. It's likely the rain was just enough to damp down and lock in the dirt road surfaces without creating a muddy mess.

For the road crew the only challenging section was 15km of tarmac in the Rockley area that had become a continuous strip of pot-holes bad enough to require riding at below 40kph, it's no understatement to say this is probably one of the most pot-holed stretches of tarmac I've ever encountered. Just in case you are wondering, the previously notorious section around Palings Springs deep into the Abercrombie river has been upgraded and may even be finished by the time you read this.

The roadies pulled up in Black Springs as planned and after levering themselves of their bikes via frozen knees and hands realized the community hall they were parked in front of was actually open and had heaters turned on! Even better a lovely lady, an ex-Harley owner was set up for a community event and had hot coffee, tea and biscuits, several of the group took advantage of the refreshments and heaters and made a donation to the groups cause.

The dirt route offers fabulous views in particular the section around Swallowtail Crossing, the open country side near Taralga and the section along the ridge line north of Laggan being particularly beautiful with views across the endless rolling hills to the north east being especially captivating.

The ride had commenced around 9.30 and the intention was for both groups to meet at the Criterion Hotel in Crookwell for lunch around 1.00pm. as it turned out the Dirty folk got there around that time but the road contingent due to distance, cold conditions and fueling hold ups, arrived around 1.30. Regardless the meals put on by the Pub were excellent and hearty and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to shoot the breeze on the ride and compare notes.

Our events Coordinator has decided to run the event next year but bring the date forward by a month or so in order to secure warmer and hopefully dryer conditions, the Black and Dirty will precede the 2027 DGR.



Lams and Small Capacity Ride 2026

Chris Thrower

On a crisp, sunlit autumn morning in the Southern Tablelands, the Classic Riders Club of Goulburn rolled out something a little different... and it paid off in spades.

The club's inaugural LAM's and Small Capacity Ride, held on the 18 April 2026, brought together twenty two motorcycles and twenty-five people for a day that proved you don't need big horsepower to have big fun.

Belmore Park in Goulburn provided the perfect staging point, with a line-up that drew the attention of curious locals even before engines were fired. The display was a reminder of just how broad the "small bike" category can be. From a humble Honda 70 step-through and the ever-reliable postie bike, through to a classic Yamaha DS7, a charming 1952 Jawa 250, and even a thumping Yamaha XT 500... the variety alone was worth the visit. But this ride wasn't just about the bikes.

The idea behind the event was simple: create a welcoming entry point for newer riders, particularly those on LAM's-approved machines, to experience the camaraderie that has long defined the club. At the same time, it gave seasoned members the perfect excuse to dust off their smaller machines before the winter chill sets in.

Judging by the turnout, the concept struck a chord. New faces mingled easily with long-time members, and by the time helmets were fastened, the group already felt cohesive. Several non-members expressed strong interest in future events and joining the club—arguably one of the day's biggest successes.

The route from Goulburn to Taralga set the tone for the day. Riders naturally spread out along the road, a thoughtful approach that kept traffic flowing and avoided the all-too-common issue of large groups becoming rolling roadblocks. It made for a safer, more relaxed ride for everyone involved.

At Taralga, the group regrouped before continuing on to Crookwell via Laggan, where lunch awaited at the local pub. A pre-booked table ensured riders could swap stories, compare machines, and enjoy the social side of motorcycling.

The return leg via Kialla and Range Road showcased the Southern Tablelands at its autumn best. Rolling countryside, rich with seasonal colour, provided a stunning backdrop. On smaller-capacity machines, the pace naturally slows... and in doing so, allowing riders to take in details often missed at higher speeds.

Behind the scenes, the club ensured the day ran smoothly. A support vehicle with a breakdown trailer followed the group, crewed by a qualified first aid officer. Fortunately, neither was required and the ride concluded without any incidents or mechanical troubles.

A highlight of the day was the presentation of the "Most Outstanding Rider and Bike Combination" award, which went to Janette Bailie aboard her plucky and beautifully presented 1974 Yamaha YB 100.

The day didn't end there. Riders gathered later at the Goulburn Golf Club for dinner, where good food and easy conversation rounded out the event. Looking ahead, the club is building momentum. The new website launched in May, alongside a very active Facebook presence all helping promote the club and its activities to a wider audience.

If this inaugural LAMs ride proved anything, it's that inclusivity and simplicity can reinvigorate a club. By welcoming newer riders and celebrating smaller machines, the Classic Riders Club of Goulburn has tapped into something important...ensuring the future of the hobby, while honoring its past. Judging by the smiles at the end of the day...They've got the formula just right.



Top Left: Janette Bailie won the award for "Most Outstanding Rider and Bike Combination".

Top Right: Bikes gathering pre-ride at Belmore Park.

Bottom Left: Ricky O'Leary and Howard Kneebone discussing the ride at Taralga.

Bottom Right: Bronwyn Temple and Julie Kneebone at Taralga, Julie drove the back-up vehicle.



Top Left: Janette Bailie with her award. **Top Right:** A great day to ride a vintage Norton Commando.
Above Left: Chris Thrower on the venerable postie. **Above Right:** Honda C70 ready to roll.

For a first attempt the LAMS and Small Capacity ride was a great success and attracted a great group of young and older riders with Machines ranging from Honda Step-Throughs to older British machines and a few newer LAMS bikes. The overall concept was to attract riders who have not previously been members of our club and provide them with a great ride and the encouragement to come and join us. The event will be run again in 2027 and beyond.

Presidents Message

By any fair measure our club is currently going from strength to strength, this has not been an accident but rather the fulfillment of the planning and efforts of all of the folk who undertook the project of driving the club forward for the future in a way that would ensure its longevity.

In short we have established a great social media presence, built a fabulous new website, re-written the constitution, added several new events and shifted focus to attracting a new younger and more diverse group of members. It's been a challenge for all involved but we've all derived great satisfaction from both the journey and results. Now is not the time to rest on our success, we still have much to do.

The first step is obviously to continue doing what we have been but beyond that there is much more to explore, try out and implement. I'll probably miss a few items here but hopefully I can get the key message across.

First up lets talk about the clubs key fund raiser, the Great Southern Swap Meet. The meet has always been successful but the Swap Meet Committee feel it will progressively become harder for the event to turn a good profit using the current format. The reasons for this? First the market is changing steadily, shifting away from the need for people to procure spares at a swap due to the major improvements in the availability of parts via international on-line retailers which offer an easier and cheaper path. Going further the market is strongly trending away from vintage British and US machinery towards Japanese machinery of the 70s and 80s and finally many Swap Meet folk are simply aging out.

We have made changes over the past two years but the Swap Meet committee feel the need to value add to the current format, this could include adding a show of restored machines, hosting restoration demonstrations, talks, attractions for kids, promoting larger specialist suppliers to take a stand. Maybe we even need to promote a large scale market of complete project bikes. Simply put we need to make the Great Southern Swap Meet an event that's different and superior event to the others on offer.

Importantly we have to conserve the social side of the event for current exhibitors, maybe even build on that. Of course there will always be those problems beyond our control which always includes our weather but random factors such as the fuel shortages that impacted this years event.

Moving onto other events, the DGR 2027 is already being discussed and there are plans to expand the event, increase food options and add musical entertainment.

Some changes will include date changes to secure superior weather, for example the "Black and Dirty" and significant increases to the promotion processes that are already in motion.

Members have for a long time been seeking a more dynamic format for monthly meetings, there are several things we can implement and have discussed. These include streamlining processes where possible with key functions that are really committee responsibilities being taken care of outside the monthly meeting so as to free up meeting time to hold talks, demonstrations, videos, how-too and more. Again the concept is to "value add" to monthly meetings and give the average member a really good reason to be there on meeting night.

Most importantly we need to build on the social aspect of the club, which can include dinners, coffee get togethers, post meeting drinks and random rides among members outside the organised calendar.

The committee are well aware that not everything can be achieved at the one time, members need to have good reason to accept changes and embrace them, the logistics need to be in place and in some cases lasting change requires people to experience it in small manageable bites so they are not overwhelmed.

Motorcycle Battery Chargers: An Item Every Rider Needs



Motorcycle batteries have an uncanny ability to fail at the worst possible moment. They'll happily sit there for months while you polish the bike, fit a new exhaust or argue online about tyre brands. But the instant you decide to head out for an early Sunday ride, they'll greet you with nothing more than a sad little click from the starter motor.

The good news is that most battery failures aren't caused by old age alone. Many are the result of poor charging habits, and that's where a quality battery charger earns its keep. Whether you ride every day or your pride and joy only ventures out on sunny weekends, understanding battery chargers can save money, extend battery life and eliminate plenty of frustration.

Not All Batteries Are the Same

The first thing to understand is that motorcycles use several different battery types, and they don't all appreciate being treated the same way. Traditional flooded lead-acid batteries are the oldest design. They're usually the least expensive and can last for years if properly maintained. Some require occasional topping up with distilled water, while sealed versions are maintenance-free.

AGM (Absorbed Glass Mat) batteries are now fitted to many modern motorcycles. They're sealed, resistant to vibration and provide strong starting performance. They also prefer a charger designed specifically for AGM batteries, although many modern "smart chargers" automatically recognise them.

Gel batteries are less common but are very reliable when correctly charged. The catch is that they dislike high charging voltages. Using an unsuitable charger can shorten their life surprisingly quickly.

Lithium batteries have become increasingly popular, particularly on sports bikes and adventure bikes where every kilogram saved is welcomed. They're incredibly light, hold their charge for long periods and deliver impressive starting power. However, they require chargers with a lithium-compatible charging mode. Using an old-fashioned charger designed only for lead-acid batteries can damage them.

Fortunately, many modern chargers now include settings for conventional, AGM and lithium batteries, making one charger suitable for several motorcycles.

Trickle Chargers vs Smart Chargers

Years ago, battery chargers were fairly basic devices. They simply supplied current until someone remembered to unplug them. This gave birth to the classic "Oops..." moment, where the battery had boiled itself half to death overnight.

Modern chargers are much smarter. A trickle charger supplies a very small charging current continuously. While better than a high-output charger, it still keeps feeding power whether the battery needs it or not. Left connected for weeks, some older trickle chargers can slowly overcharge a battery. Smart chargers are a different story, these monitor battery voltage throughout the charging process, starting with a higher charging rate when required then gradually reducing it as the battery fills, finally switching into maintenance mode once fully charged. Finally rather than constantly charging, they simply monitor the battery and provide tiny top-up charges only when needed.

When Should You Charge?

Many riders only think about charging once the bike refuses to start, that's a bit like waiting until you've run a marathon before deciding to drink some water. A battery prefers remaining fully charged rather than repeatedly becoming flat.

If you ride several times every week for decent distances, the motorcycle's charging system will usually keep everything healthy. However, charging becomes worthwhile if:

- The bike sits unused for more than two or three weeks**
- Winter weather keeps it parked for long periods**
- You make mostly very short trips**
- The motorcycle has alarms, GPS trackers or accessories that slowly drain the battery**
- The battery is several years old.**

Many riders simply connect the charger after every ride if they know the bike won't be used for another week or two.

Reading Battery Voltage

One of the easiest ways to judge battery condition is with a simple digital multimeter. After the battery has rested for several hours, these voltages provide a useful guide.

Around 12.7 to 12.8 volts indicates a fully charged lead-acid or AGM battery.

About 12.5 volts means it's roughly three-quarters charged.

Around 12.3 volts suggests it's time for a recharge.

Below 12.0 volts means the battery is becoming heavily discharged, and repeated deep discharges significantly reduce its lifespan.

Lithium batteries operate at slightly higher voltages, with many reading around 13.2 to 13.4 volts when fully charged. While exact figures vary slightly between manufacturers, the key message is simple—don't let batteries remain discharged for long.

Avoiding Overcharging

The quickest way to shorten battery life is through repeated overcharging. Fortunately, modern smart chargers do most of the thinking for you, once the battery reaches full charge, they automatically reduce charging current or switch into maintenance mode, older chargers don't always do this.

If you're using a charger that's older than some of your riding mates, it's worth checking whether it automatically shuts off. If it doesn't, set a reminder to disconnect it once charging is complete.



Can Chargers Stay Connected?

With a quality smart charger, the answer is generally yes. Most maintenance chargers are specifically designed to remain connected for weeks or even months while monitoring battery condition. That's why they're popular with owners of collector bikes, classic motorcycles and weekend tourers.

The charger quietly checks battery voltage, occasionally topping it up if required. It doesn't constantly pump electricity into the battery, that said, always follow the manufacturer's recommendations, ensure good ventilation and avoid using damaged cables or connectors.

Fuses Matter Too

Many battery charging leads include an inline fuse, this tiny component rarely gets any attention until something goes wrong. The fuse protects both the motorcycle and charger if a short circuit occurs while connecting or disconnecting the battery. If your charger uses a permanently fitted quick-connect lead, make sure the fuse remains in good condition and matches the specified rating.

Replacing a blown fuse with a much larger one because "it's all I had in the shed" isn't a clever shortcut, fuses are considerably cheaper than wiring harnesses.

How Long Should Batteries Last?

Battery life depends on quality, climate and maintenance thus a neglected battery may struggle to reach three years, alternatively a well-maintained premium battery regularly lasts five years or more. Some riders even report seven or eight years from quality AGM batteries that spent much of their lives connected to smart maintenance chargers.

Lithium batteries can also provide excellent service life, provided they're charged correctly and not deeply discharged. Like tyres, batteries don't suddenly become old overnight, performance gradually declines, starting becomes slower, and the battery takes longer to recover after cranking, these are useful warning signs rather than invitations to gamble on "one more season."

What Does a Good Charger Cost?

Basic chargers can be found for around \$30 to \$50, although many lack advanced charging modes whilst a good quality smart charger suitable for most motorcycles usually costs between \$80 and \$180. Models supporting lithium batteries, recovery modes and multiple charging programs often range from \$150 to \$250. While that might seem expensive, it's worth remembering that replacing your motorcycle batteries can easily cost \$150 to well over \$400.

A quality charger can effectively pay for itself by extending battery life.

Handy Charging Tips

- Keep battery terminals clean and tight.**
- Charge the battery before long-term storage rather than after it has gone flat.**
- Avoid repeatedly flattening the battery.**
- Store chargers somewhere dry.**
- Use the correct charging mode for your battery type.**
- Don't assume every charger works with lithium batteries.**
- If in doubt, read the label before plugging anything in.**

Final Thoughts

Motorcycle battery chargers are hardly the most glamorous accessory you'll ever buy. Nobody gathers around at the café to admire your maintenance charger or asks whether it's the latest model with automatic de-sulphation mode, but they quietly perform one of the most valuable jobs in the garage.

A good charger means fewer flat batteries, longer battery life, more reliable starts and fewer colourful words echoing around the shed on a cold Saturday morning. Choose a quality smart charger that matches your battery type, use it regularly rather than occasionally, and your battery will almost certainly return the favour.

After all, batteries have one simple request: "Please don't ignore me for three months and then expect me to wake up cheerful." They're remarkably forgiving—but even they have their limits.

Berry Motorcycle Show - Gallery

On Sunday May 3 a group of Classic Riders Club of Goulburn members took a ride to Berry to check out the annual motorcycle show. The show is an annual event that attracts a wide array of machines and their owners. This year as in the past bikes ranges from the very early machines though to the modern classics of the 90s and beyond with a great spread of German, British, American, Italian and Japanese machines.

The Goulburn group took the opportunity to ride to Berry via Kangaroo Valley and return via the Trunk Road via Nowra and Nerriga and Oallen Ford/Windellama, which is one of those rare rides that have everything to offer within its 300km loop. All members had a great day and will of course be back again in 2027, the plan being to leave a little earlier next year to give folk a little more time to peruse offerings.



Incoming - Tiddler Tour 2026

Yes, here it is, our 2nd annual Goulburn Classic Riders Tiddler Tour to be held over 21-24 September 2026.

We'll be limiting the tour to 12 riders, club riders first but if by chance there are left over spaces for 2026 we can invite riders from other clubs or our friends. Due to the current interest we advise you need to get in early as it looks like there are currently just **3 places** left.

You don't need a highly strung 250, even a mild 125 or 250 can be perfect, or why not wheel out that 125 Postie or even a road tyre converted chook chaser. For 26 we are even opening the ride to vintage sub 500 cc machines, Variety is the spice of life on tiddler rides.

You won't be carrying any gear, that's what support vehicles are for, in fact the support vehicle will even be loaded with cool drinks and snacks for everyone so we can stop at roadside rest spots, smell the gum trees and tell lies about our bikes incredible performance.

We'll be riding along quite country roads for the majority with a few busier transit sections thrown in and some short sections of good dirt to test your skills.

The emphasis is on fun, more fun and then even more fun! The daily ride length is approximately 250km and the speed limit is set to 80kph so you can expect to be in or on the saddle for around 3-3.5 hrs, but of course there'll be plenty of stops along the way to rest your bones, wrists and machines and grab some snacks.

Accommodation is in Motels and you are encouraged to bring your partners along in their own vehicle, cause two up tiddling is not really a fun option.

We'll be doing a town ride at each of our overnight stops to get a feel for the location and see the sights, and along the way there'll be lookouts etc to visit.

Day 1 Goulburn to Oberon, via Crookwell, Gunning and Wombeyan Caves

Day 2. Oberon to Mudgee

Day 3. Mudgee to Orange

Day 4. Orange to Goulburn

How Much?

Accommodation is to be paid for on booking in, at this point it will be around \$120-\$140.00 per night, so allow for around \$350-\$400.00.

Fuel? Considering the speeds and engine capacities will be in the range of \$60.00

Morning Tea /Lunch Levy \$80.00 per rider to be paid up front

Fuel levy for Tiddlers who run dry. \$5.00 per rider

Major Incoming Events 2026-27

Christmas In July July 6 2026

CRCG Tiddler Tour 21- 24 Sept 2026

Annual Ride 16-17-18th October 2026

Presidents Christmas Ride and BBQ 12th December 2026

Annual Memorial Ride 7th February 2027

Annual Swap Meet 27-28 March 2027

Worn Out Wander (Tasmania) Feb 2027

LAMS and Small Capacity Ride April 2027

Black and Dirty Ride April 2027



Constitution Revision

All community organizations need to revisit their constitution at regular intervals to ensure that the document is fit for purpose and has taken into account developments that have occurred since the last revision.

Factors that can create a need for constitutional change can include technological advancements, organizational structure, legal requirements, changes to acts outside the club and more. Generally a clubs constitution needs to be examined every five years.

Our club took the decision in 2025 to commence work on a constitution update with the hope that it would be finalized for the 2026 AGM. The committee saw the need to act at this point due to the passage of time since the last revision and some issues that had arisen in the clubs operation in the interim, additionally there had been some minor changes in relation to historic vehicle registration (and others mooted for the near future) and the focus of the club was also in a state of flux.

A sub committee was formed to examine the constitution which consisted of Laurie Jones, Chris Thrower, Charles Hilier, Brad Nichol, Cherrie Thrower, Bill Irvine, Ross Gilchrist, Julie Kneebone.

Several meetings were held and the final draft was sent out following the June club meeting with the July meeting on the 14th being set aside to pass the final version of the document.

Along the way several aspects of the clubs operation and future needs were examined and in the end the committee found they could largely stick with the model constitution with some minor changes to tighten up processes and procedures.

A general principle that was adopted was to avoid the constitution being too prescriptive and thus making it difficult for the club to adapt to changes in operation over the next five years, the committee preference was to add additional documented by-laws were needed which could be amended as needed without requiring full constitutional re-writes.

The new final document has been sent out to all club members for examination prior to ratification and comments have been called for.



Honda History Part 2, 1968 - 1999



From 1968 to 1999, Honda transformed from the world's largest motorcycle manufacturer into the dominant global force shaping modern motorcycling. This period saw the company consolidate the revolution sparked by the Honda CB750, expand into new categories, experiment boldly (sometimes unsuccessfully), and cement a reputation for engineering excellence, reliability, and mass-market reach. It was also an era defined by iconic model families such as the Gold Wing, VFR, XL trail bikes, and the continuation of the Cub—each serving different markets but all reinforcing Honda's philosophy of accessible performance.

The Late 1960s Foundation: The CB750 Legacy

Although introduced in 1969, the impact of the Honda CB750 dominated the early part of this era. It was the world's first mass-produced inline-four superbike with features like a front disc brake and electric start, fundamentally reshaped the industry providing the form for every other Japanese manufacturer.

Through the 1970s, Honda refined the CB platform into multiple variants (K, F, and later DOHC models), setting the template for what became known as the "Universal Japanese Motorcycle." These bikes were smooth, powerful, and reliable compared to British and European rivals.

However, Hondas success meant that by the mid-1970s Honda now faced increasing competition from Yamaha, Suzuki, and Kawasaki. Rather than simply evolving the CB line at this point Honda chose to diversify aggressively to leapfrog the newly competitive opposition.

The Rise of the Gold Wing: Touring Reimagined

One of Honda's most important developments was the creation of the Honda Gold Wing. Conceived in the early 1970s as a technological flagship, it emerged from ambitious prototypes like the M1 project. The production GL1000, released in 1975, featured a liquid-cooled flat-four engine and shaft drive—both very unusual for the time.

Initially intended as a high-performance machine, riders quickly adapted it for long-distance touring. Honda responded by evolving the Gold Wing into a purpose-built touring platform.

The Gold Wing effectively created the modern touring category, especially in the United States, where long-distance riding culture was strong. Early sales success was immediate with over 13,000 units sold in the U.S. in the first year alone. The Gold Wing also demonstrated Honda's strengths of engineering ambition, willingness to redefine categories and attention to rider needs.

Expansion into Dual-Sport: XL and XT Influence

Honda's diversification extended beyond road bikes. The Honda XL series, launched in the 1970s, it helped pioneer the dual-sport category—motorcycles capable of both road and off-road use.

These bikes featured lightweight frames, long-travel suspension, and simple reliable single-cylinder engines.

While Yamaha's XT series became famous for events like the Paris-Dakar Rally, Honda's XL range focused on real world usability and durability. The philosophy was consistent: create motorcycles that were accessible, easy to maintain, and capable in real-world conditions and win over the market.

This segment was especially important in developing markets, where road conditions demanded versatility.

The V4 Era: VF Failures and VFR Redemption

In the early 1980s, Honda made a bold engineering shift away from inline-four engines to V4 designs, launching the Honda VF series in 1982. The aim was to create compact, powerful engines with improved mass centralization, in that sense they succeeded. However, the VF series suffered from serious reliability issues—most notably camshaft wear, often referred to as “chocolate cams.” These failures threatened Honda's hard-earned reputation for bulletproof engineering and proved to be a rare embarrassment for the company.

Honda's response was decisive, they introduced the VFR750. The VFR featured gear-driven camshafts and significantly improved build quality, in many ways the bike was over-engineered, however it paid off, the VFR quickly restored confidence and became probably the most respected sport-touring motorcycles ever produced. The VFR series exemplified Honda's ability to learn from mistakes and engineer its way out of problems—a recurring theme in its history. An early VFR 750 even today remains a great ride and a developing but useable classic.



CB 450s first appeared in 1966, for the time they were very advanced and offered amazing performance for the capacity via the 43hp motor, Honda quickly improved the model adding a 5 speed box, and later disc front brake. The model left the market in 1974, largely due to the success of the CB750 and CB350 models.



The CT (Trail 90) series of machines have a long history, this is an early 1968 version, it used a dual range gearbox giving a total of 8 speeds, 90cc engine and leading link forks. The series lasted from 1966 through to 1979, when it was upgraded to the better known 110 series. Forks were upgraded to telescopic in 1969.

Innovation and Experimentation: Successes and Oddities

Between 1968 and 1999, Honda experimented extensively—sometimes brilliantly, sometimes oddly.

Notable innovations included:

- Liquid cooling (Gold Wing, later sport bikes)
- Shaft drive for touring
- Gear-driven cams (VFR)
- Early fuel injection (late 1980s/1990s touring models)
- Linked braking systems

Unusual or less successful developments:

- Oval-piston engines (NR series)
- Turbocharged motorcycles (CX500 Turbo, 1980s)
- Complex V4 designs that proved costly to build and maintain.

Honda's willingness to experiment often pushed the industry forward, even when specific models failed commercially.

Reliability: Strengths and Setbacks

Honda built its global reputation on reliability. Compared to British and Italian motorcycles of the 1960s and 1970s, Honda machines were easier to start (electric start), almost immune to oil leaks and vastly more durable under daily use conditions.

This reliability was the key factor in global expansion, especially in markets where maintenance infrastructure was limited. The VF camshaft issues of the early 1980s showed that Honda was not immune to engineering missteps but they were also prepared to solve the issue rather than leave owners high and dry. The rapid correction with the VFR series demonstrated a corporate commitment to quality control and continuous improvement.

By the 1990s, Honda motorcycles were widely regarded as the most reliable in the world, a perception strongly reinforced by models like the VFR and Gold Wing.

Sales Growth and Global Dominance

By the late 1960s, Honda was already the world's largest motorcycle manufacturer, a position it maintained and strengthened through the 1970s–1990s.

Key factors behind this success included mass production efficiency, broad product range (from small commuters to superbikes), strong dealer networks, (especially in the United States) and competitive pricing

The CB series dominated large-capacity markets, while smaller bikes and scooters drove volume. Honda's ability to produce motorcycles at scale without sacrificing quality was unmatched by any other company.

The Continuing Success of the Cub

Throughout this period, the Honda Super Cub remained the backbone of Honda's global business. First introduced in 1958, the Cub continued evolving through the 1970s–1990s with incremental improvements. It became the best-selling motor vehicle in history and a key product in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, it literally was the symbol of affordable mobility. At the other end of the market high-profile models like the CB750 and Gold Wing captured headlines but the Cub that generated enormous sales volumes and which sustained Honda's global expansion.

Third-World Markets and Practical Mobility

Honda's strategy in developing markets was fundamentally different from its approach in Europe and North America. Rather than focusing on performance, Honda prioritized: Simplicity, durability, fuel efficiency and ease of maintenance.

The Cub and small-displacement singles became essential transportation in countries across Asia and Africa being used for personal transport but also commercial delivery and taxi services. It's fair to say for many in these markets ones' living often depended on a Honda Cub.

Honda's engineering philosophy—"products for the widest possible audience"—was particularly evident in these markets. The company's ability to adapt its products to local conditions helped it dominate globally.



The CB125 came in both single and twin cylinder versions. Singles were by far the largest seller, the CB125 is still manufactured though in a more modern form. Along with the Cub the CB 125 can be considered one of key machines that put developing nations on wheels. Early 125s and in particular the twins are highly collectable.



The 1990s: Refinement and Maturity

By the 1990s, Honda's motorcycle range had matured into a highly refined lineup which included:

- Sport bikes: CBR series
- Sport-touring: VFR
- Touring: Gold Wing GL1500
- Commuters: Cub and

derivatives

- Dual-sport: XL series

During this period the company focus shifted from radical innovation to refinement, improved aerodynamics, much better suspension systems and enhanced comfort and usability. At the same time Honda still pursued increased reliability and service intervals in keeping with their long term history.

Many regard the mid 80s to late 90s as peak Honda.

Within the Honda catalogue the VFR800 (late 1990s) and GL1500 Gold Wing represented the absolute peak of Honda's engineering excellence being machines that combined performance, durability, and real-world practicality.

Conclusion

Between 1968 and 1999, Honda reshaped motorcycling on a global scale. Building on the revolutionary CB750, the company expanded into touring with the Gold Wing, dual-sport riding with the XL series, and advanced sport engineering with the VFR.

The period was marked by relentless innovation and a preparedness to push the technological envelope. Along the way there were occasional failures (notably the VF cam issues).

Generally there was a consistent commitment to reliability which helped drive massive global sales driven in both premium and utilitarian models.

Perhaps most importantly, Honda succeeded in serving two very different markets simultaneously, both the high-performance enthusiasts in developed countries and everyday riders in the worlds developing regions. By 1999, Honda was not just a motorcycle manufacturer, it was the benchmark against which all others were measured.



Museum Wrap Up

Macleays Machines of Distinction

Should you find yourself on a ride or road trip along the Waterfall Way that runs between Coffs Harbour and Armidale take a break at Bellingen and visit what is likely one of the nicest small motorcycle museums you could come across. Macleay Connelly and his canine mate Buddy run the museum, which is located at the top end of the main drag, Hyde Street.

The collection bar one exception, not currently on display is entirely made up of vintage Triumph machines, all of which have been restored by Macleay. A first point of note is the building itself which a lovely heritage construction which Macleay thoughtfully restored and my first impression in walking through the door was the absolute beauty of the work, the materials, tones and textures are simply stunning and far beyond what you encounter in most small museums of any persuasion.

My eye then turned to spread of glorious Triumph machines on display and even without getting close the quality of workmanship and attention to detail was obvious and the way that the machines and associated Triumph paraphernalia are arranged immediately state “this has been done by someone with talent and a great understanding of fine design.

Mac acknowledges that he had help in the project from local artisans, designers and council but as with any such undertaking the project must first be driven with someone who possesses great passion and vision.

It is also worth noting that Mac is a delight to chat with, he comes across as a very humble but knowledgeable, whilst I was there he took the time to show me his rear storage shed and workshop and explain his motivations and passions. I must say his workshop and storage shed were probably the best organised and cleanest I have ever seen. Most restorers tend to be a little bit messy and lack the ultimate in organization, not so with Mac.

The bikes on display are Mac's personal collection, all restored by himself with some specialists dealing with the aspects that require highly specialized tools, mainly the chrome work and the painting of the tanks and side covers.

I didn't catch who was responsible for the tanks but the quality was exceptional in keeping with everything else on the machines, likewise the chrome work was flawless.

It's worth mentioning that whilst these are all British built Triumphs not one appeared to be embarrassing itself by depositing its lifeblood on the floor, clearly the mechanics were perfectly put together.

The display is of course more than just motorcycles, Mac has collected a wide array of Triumph artifacts including, tanks, posters, manuals, photographs and more which you can take your time to examine and even take a seat and enjoy in sweet comfort.

Macleay explained that he started restoring in 1982 and hasn't stopped since, initially he housed the display in his home garage but it became obvious that he needed to expand into a more commercial arrangement so that a greater number of the motorcycling fraternity and public could enjoy the machines and associated items.





1939 Triumph Speed Twin Outfit

498cc, 27hp @ 6300, 4 speed, weight 179kg without sidecar

Built with heavy duty frame lugs specific for sidecar usage, sidecars were custom painted to match.

Visit the Website: <https://www.macleays-museum.com.au/>

The Museum is only open on Fridays 10.00 am to 2.00 pm and Saturdays 10.00am to 3.00pm, however you can book a private group visit (6-12 people) outside those hours, call Mac on 02 6655 1253 to make a booking. Entry is \$15.00 for adults but he has special rates for groups.

Club Website

goulburnclassicriders.com

Facebook

Classic Riders Club of Goulburn

Instagram

Classicridersgoulburn

Email

info@goulburnclassicriders.com

Postal Address

PO Box 415, Goulburn NSW 2580

Club Phone Number

044 838 6362

Club Meetings

The Classic Riders Club of Goulburn meets on the second Tuesday evening of every month at the Goulburn Workers Club at 6.30 PM. We have post meeting drinks in the back bar of the club.

2026 AGM

11 August 2025, 6.30, Goulburn Workers Club



Committee Classic Riders Club

President:	Brad Nichol	041 969 2451
Vice President	Colin Jewell.	0418 482 630
Secretary	Cherrie Thrower	0427 431919
Assistant Secretary	Julie Kneebone	0412 684 548
Treasurer	Don Baxter	0424 081 938
Public Officer	Ross Gilchrist	0403 475 258
Magazine Editor	Brad Nichol	041 969 2451
Events Director	Chris Thrower	0404 049 081
Club Captain	Peter Grady	0422 292 406
Regalia Officer	Laurie Jones	0416 270 852
Equipment Officer:	Colin Jewell.	0418 482 630
Club Patron	Paul Fitzgibbon	0419 262 261
Publicity Officer	Julie Kneebone	0412 684 548
Monument Warden	John Zyla	0498 118 734
Assistant Monument Warden	Howard Kneebone	0414 590 754
Annual Ride Director	Chris Thrower	0404 049 081
Web Master	Wendy Nichol.	0407 663 078

MACHINE EXAMINERS

Goulburn	William Irvine:	0411 287 145
	Richard Corbett:	0401 807 973
	Chris Parlett:	0409 811 680
	Howard Kneebone:	0414 590 754
	Rick Harrison:	0438 212 520
Gunning	William Irvine:	0411 287 145
	Craig Southwell	0414 451 486
Yass	Ron Barton.	0428 624 079
Crookwell	Ray Croker	0418 239 669

Club Phone For Rally and Swap Meet and Other Major Events

Current Life Members

**Richard Corbet, Ross Gilchrist, Howard Kneebone, Michelle Lees,
Charles Hillier (2025)**

2026 Tuesday Rides

January	6th Crookwell- Gunning	20th Kangaroo Valley/Nowra
February	3rd Bungendore	17th Robertson
March	3rd Bungonia/Windellama/Loaded Dog	17th Taralaga to Crookwell
April	14th Tuena.	28th Highlands Way to Exeter
May	12th Jamberoo Pub	26th Komungla to Bungendore
June	9th Gurrundah to Crookwell	23rd Decide on Day
July	7th Grabben Gullen/Crookwell	21st Crookwell to Taralga
August	4th Sutton Pie Shop	18th Tuena
September	1st Yass 15th Batemans Bay	29th Boorawa
October	13th Bathurst	27th Robertson
November	10th Gunning - Murrumbateman	24th Highlands Way Berrima
December	8th Bungonia via Windellama	22nd Decide on the Day

2026 Sunday Rides

January	11th Collector	25th Laggan Pub
February	8th Memorial Day Ride	22nd Bungendore
March	8th Crookwell to Gunning	22nd Swap Meet
April	5th Berrima	19th Robertson
May	3rd Boorawa	31st Black n Dirty
June	14th Bungendore	28th Bundanoon
July	12th Grabben Gullen/Crookwell	21st Grabby Pub
August	9th Sutton	23rd Decide on Day
September	6th Oberon	20th Majors Creek
October	4th Albion Park	16-18th CRCG Annual Ride
November	1st Murrumbateman	15th Robertson
November	25th Old Highway Gunning	
December	13th Presidents Christmas Ride and BBQ	

Seen At The Shows



For Sale

2004 Honda ST 1300

ABS version

Custom MJM Seat

28,000 KM

Great Condition

Unregistered

\$6500 ONO

Phone: Brad on 041 969 2451

Note: Original top box is missing but I have one that is red, you will need to source a key for this.

