

wheezy Rider

Newsletter of the Fremantle group

Jan 2014
No 148

Newsletter of the Fremantle Branch of the Ulysses Club of Australia Inc.

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\$1.00

Well Folks – if you haven't noticed, Christmas has been, 2013 is done and 2014 has arrived!! Last year was tumultuous for many of us. It saw us lose some friends and gain some new ones. It saw us almost lose others but they rallied and returned.

We saw Sunday rides diminish to almost non-existence but, due to the care and diligence of some members, recover to be as popular as ever. It saw rides where Leaders got lost, followers got very low on fuel, corners got marked, corners were not marked, corners were marked for some but not others, others ignored corner markers and turned in opposite directions!

It saw us play a significant role in the raising of \$5.2M on the Conquer Cancer Ride. We also participated in a fund raising ride for PMH and, whilst on the subject of our Lycra clad friends, it saw us shepherd some of them around the Hills at break-neck speeds for the local stage of a global event. It saw us enjoy overnight rides away in Margaret River, Jurien Bay, Koorda, Merredin, Border Village, Yanchep, Denmark & Manjimup. It saw us gain our first Telemachus medallists. It saw us 'out-source' our annual Christmas function to Captain Stirling, Nedlands and from those of you (there were 56 on the night) that attended the feedback was very positive with a good night being had by all. Apologies if I've forgotten something that should be listed above!

2014, no doubt, will see more of the same. We are a diverse and dynamic bunch of people and with that comes lots of challenges as we try to keep a blend of friendship and camaraderie amongst us all the while keeping our branch motto in mind (see below) – "We Don't Care – We Ride There"! Looking forward:

I have already been asked to Captain a Moto Crew on March 15th & 16th for "The Weekend to End Women's Cancers" 60k walking event. This will be similar to the 2013 Conquer Cancer Ride duties but at a slower pace! If you can participate please pencil the week-end in your diaries ahead of me sharing more details and asking for volunteers in the coming weeks.

After 13 years "The Plod" will move to a new Start Point (see Calendar).

We will celebrate Bruce Springsteen being in town on Feb 8th (see Calendar) with the "Not The Bruce Springsteen Party" party that will also kick off a major, ongoing, fund-raising effort by Eileen for PMH. The Ride Calendar is well populated until end of March (so make sure you come along) and see Steve to nominate your ride for any free dates after that – remember the Ride Leader Competition is on again to culminate at the AGM.

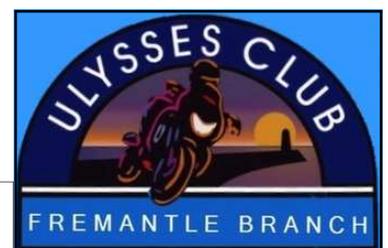
In May our Telemachus TECs will take us to Toodyay for the Moondyne Joe Festival.

Catch you out there and remember "Paint UP – Rubber DOWN!!"

Cheers
Ron Spencer (53780)
President (Fremantle Branch)



We don't care....We ride there



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FREMANTLE BRANCH MEETING
2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT SWAN YACHT
CLUB.

The committee is the servant of the Group, not the Master

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Fremantle Ulysses site: www.ulyssesfremantle.com

Note: Next meeting, Wed 8th
January 2014

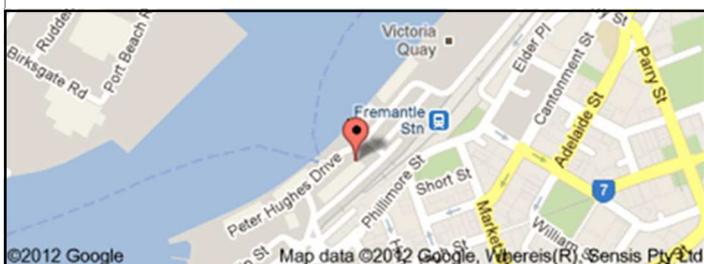
Plods and Saturday morning coffee

Wednesday morning Plods will now assemble at 9:00am for a 9:30am start from the Victoria Café that is located at the eastern end of the Fremantle 'E' Shed Markets. Great coffee. If you're an early riser, some members meet for breakfast at 8:00am before the Plod. Location as per the map below.

There is plenty of parking over near 'B' Shed outside the other cafe if the bays outside Victoria Cafe are full.

The plod departure route will be along the wharf and out under the rail bridge at the eastern end. Turning left we will skirt the river past the Swan Yacht Club onto Preston Point Road and turn right at the roundabout onto Stock Road. The first lights will be at the intersection of Stock Road and Canning Highway and then we are free away.

The Saturday morning coffee get togethers will also continue to take place at the Victoria Café, however commencement will be from 10.00am.



The happy throng at the Victoria Cafe



Message from Mike Smith

PAULINE UPDATE

It is time to bring you all up to date with the situation with reference Pauline's battle with Alzheimer's disease.

The inevitable advance of the disease has sped up over the last few weeks and she has now lost all mobility and needs to be transported in a wheelchair. She has also been declared "non-cognitive" and can no longer follow instructions and has to be totally nursed including feeding. She no longer knows her children, although still seems to know that they are important in some way. She still knows me however this is not unusual in many cases.

This all indicates that she is now in the final stage of Alzheimer's and that the care is now shifting from trying to manage the disease to palliative care and keeping her rested and comfortable. She is quite content and happy and seems to be in a parallel universe. Where that is must be a good place as she is calm, rested and happy to be left in peace. She also looks many years younger although of course that is purely physical as there is no apparent recognition of anyone or her surroundings.

I would like to thank all my friends and family for the wonderful support I have been getting over the whole of this sad journey. There is no way we can say when this all will come to its inevitable ending however we can all be reassured that the standard of care and love that she is getting is top class and that she is rested comfortable and safe.

I will not be sending out any more notices as we are now in the end game and we just wait for the end to come. It may be anything up to a year however I get the feeling that it will be earlier than that. Essentially if you have not heard anything then there is nothing new to tell.

Thank you all for thinking of us at this time.

Kind regards
Mike

Words & Photos: Pete Callaghan

Rocker Classic Motorcycles

THE ROCK-A-RAMA

In an otherwise nondescript street off Sandgate Road in the northern Brisbane suburb of Nundah lies a little oasis of old-school cool known as Rocker Classic Motorcycles. The electric line-up of British and Japanese bikes out front, with hardly a fairing among them, is a strong clue to what lies within. Head up a couple of steps and through the wide entrance of the green weatherboard shed and all becomes clear.



This is a motorcycle workshop straight out of your old man's nostalgic reminiscences. The timber floorboards wear their dark patina of grease, oil and tyre rubber like a badge of honour. The wavy ceiling is spliced by chunky beams, spidered by cables and cords and studded with utilitarian, naked fluoro tubes, while age-worn walls with just the right amount of grime sport old bike photos and posters.

In the workshop proper, motorcycles take up almost every square metre of floor space. Up front, near the accessory racks, a neat blue Triumph Thruxton holds pole position. Behind it, on a work stand, sits a Yamaha SR500, its absent fuel tank and seat to signify a work in progress. Behind that are parked a variety of bikes in various states of completion, from an Indian and a Panther Sloper to a CX500, more SRs and a CB750.



Around and among the bikes are the accoutrements of the two-wheeled trade: workbenches groaning with parts, tool chests, a press, filing cabinets and computers – all artfully crammed wherever space permits.

A tour around the workshop reveals the broad variety of jobs that roll in and out of the Rocker shed. Matt gestures to the Indian which is in for repair. "It's a 40-grand bike, the starter motor was shot and he can't get one from here so we get it in from the States."

COFFEE AT THE CAFE

On the opposite side of the shed's portal there's the Ton Up Cafe – a long counter dominated by a massive coffee machine. It backstops a more social patch of floor open to the sunny Saturday morning outside, with a kitschy-cool '60s kitchen table and odd chairs, a comfy brown couch and shelves holding loaner jackets, helmets and old bike mags.



You'd be forgiven for thinking the shop has been around for decades but Rocker Classic Motorcycles first opened its doors in January 2012. It's the brainchild of Matt Jones, the tall, Mohawk-sporting dude who welcomes me with a wide smile and firm handshake.

In just over 18 months, Rocker's has become a haven for Brisbane's cafe racer crew: a place to meet and mingle, get your ride fixed and fettled and to finish that dream project. Matt and his team do everything from general servicing and repairs to frame-up full custom builds but you won't find many plastic fantastic crotch rockets – the focus is firmly on retro muscle.



“Predominantly it's British and Japanese for us,” Matt says. “We do SR500s and 400s, Kawasaki W650s, early CBs – all of those kind of main staples. But we don't mind modern stuff – we did a Suzuki GS500 cafe racer and we are always up for a bit of a project.”

“And we get all sorts of stuff, like the Panther and the Indian there, AJSs, early Nortons and Beezas – a lot of that stuff comes to us because, basically, there are not many places to go to. Particularly for early Japanese bikes – they get turned away by the chain dealers. There are only a few guys that can do it and there is only so much capacity, so we do end up with a number of older bikes that are difficult to get parts for.”

SR500 HEAVEN

Our attention turns to the semi-stripped SR on the work stand. “We’ve always got a few builds on the go. I originally bought this one from the US. I sold it to one of my mates and my mate then sold it to one of my customers who brought it in.

“We stripped it, powder-coated the frame a different colour, bored out the engine to 535cc, changed the indicators and other stuff, just tidied it up so it’s not so ’70s chunky.

“These ones are not as popular because they are the Australian/US release models from 1978-’81 so they’ve only got the mag wheels but they do have disc brakes. In the case of this one, it’s got dual discs and it’s a cracking bike – goes like the clappers.”

In a corner sits a freshly coated candy-apple frame – another SR, but a 400 this time. It’s a full-custom cafe racer job in mid-build, with original frame gussets removed and replaced by new ones bearing the Rocker logo. Matt reaches up to a shelf and peels away an old sheet to reveal the 400’s fuel tank, gorgeously glossy in candy-apple with white pin-stripe flames.



“There’s a bit of a signature thing we do with the tanks on full custom builds – we fill in the original fuel cap and drop in the Harley pop-up cap, which really gives it that line,” Matt explains.

“The pin-striping has been done by a California-based guy named Von Hotrod, so that’s put the value of that bike through the roof. By the time the build is done, including the purchase value of the base bike, it’s roughly a \$20,000 price tag.”

Rocker’s keen feel for more modern machinery is displayed by Angry Bird, a butch-looking flat tracker take on a Hinckley Triumph Thunderbird. Purchased by Matt as a \$2000 repairable write-off, the previously staid Trumpy has been reborn as a snarling raptor, complete with custom pipes, a “big-ass” headlight, LED lighting and a hand-painted, Angry Bird tank graphic. Matt testifies that it goes as hard as it looks.

Rocker’s expansive approach extends to accessories, with a select range on show in store and the ability to source plenty more as the customer demands. One of Matt’s mechanics, Jun Mihashi, owned a custom bike shop in Japan for 10 years and his mates run some of that country’s leading accessory firms. This gives Rocker an inside line to cherry-pick the best cafe racer bits available.

YOUNG RIDERS WELCOME

The shop is also an agent for Australian cafe cult giants Deus – “we’re probably like their grubby younger brother,” Matt says.

“We try to cater to the emerging cafe racer market, and that’s probably the 18-24 and 24-35 age brackets, young guys with disposable income, hipsters in the mix there – they love it,” he says. “For me, it’s about finding the right gear for them. For example, they are all wearing skinny jeans, so I searched high and low to find kevlar in skinnies. And now we’ve got them in full-length kevlar for 150 bucks.”

“We’re happy to be as involved or uninvolved as people want us to be,” he says. “If customers come to us and say ‘I want a cafe racer and I’ve got \$20,000 to spend. Make me one’, well, that’s fine – we can do that. Or they might come in and say, ‘I’ve just bought a \$1000 CB250 which is a mess, and I need this, this, this and this – and can you give me an idea what to do with it?’, we’re happy to do that as well.

If you want to go home and do all the work yourself, then come in and get some advice if you’re stuck, that’s fine, too.”

SHORT BACK AND SIDES WITH DRINKS

An in-house cafe isn’t a unique idea for a bike shop, but having a barber shop on site isn’t something you see every day.

Hero Cuts occupies a small, discrete space in the Rocker shed and it’s proving to be very popular – on the Saturday I visited, barber Brett had his scissors and clippers working over-time.



There’s even more to the burgeoning Rocker Classic Motorcycles empire with a bar nearing completion between the cafe and Hero Cuts and new bikes soon to be added to the shop’s offerings.

On the new bike front, Rocker is now a dealer for US firm Cleveland Cycle Werks, which designs custom-styled 250cc machines that are built in China. Rocker’s first model on offer is ‘Tha Heist’, a very retro, hard-tail cruiser with peanut tank and sprung seat that retails for \$4500 ride away. Matt believes it will particularly appeal to the new rider who’s looking for something a little bit different.

The bar is set to be a new social hub, with about 25 craft beers on the menu, old-school arcade and pinball machines, live music, movie nights and even stand-up comedy.

“I want the bar to have that old-school, speakeasy kind of feel, so people will come in. They don’t need to be riders but they can be part of that whole atmosphere,” Matt said.

“The idea is to have live music on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays – mostly afternoon stuff because we think it will actually work better as a kick-off venue – people can come here, have a few drinks and get ready for a night out.”

“We’re also building a deck out front to accommodate more people and, ultimately, there’s another 150 square metres out the back here that we can move into later.”



JOIN THE CLUB

Matt has also launched a membership drive with the creation of the Rocker Classic Motorcycle TT Club. Customers can join the club for \$20 which gives them a membership card and discounts throughout the store, including the bar and barber shop.

And there’s an internet TV show called *Clutch* in the works which will showcase the local cafe racer culture. Look for it on Video soon.

“For us, it’s all about getting that community spirit up and running and making this a place that people want to come to because it’s familiar and easy”, Matt says.

“I just dig the culture: the people are awesome, everybody’s got a shared passion and I love the fact that you’ll see young guys cruise in here with older guys.

“Sometimes you’ll see an old guy on a Matchless out the front parked next to an SR400 that some kid’s bought a few months ago and he’s still putting bits on. And they’re talking – and where would you see that unless it was a family thing?

“It’s been a good journey. There have been a few bumps along the way, and we’ve still got a long way to go, but we have great support. It’s a work in progress, but we love it.”

Rocker Classic Motorcycles can be found at 130 Ryans Road, Nundah. Phone (07) 3161 9231, visit RockerClassicMotorcycles.com.au or follow them on Facebook at: Facebook.com/RockerClassicMotorcycles

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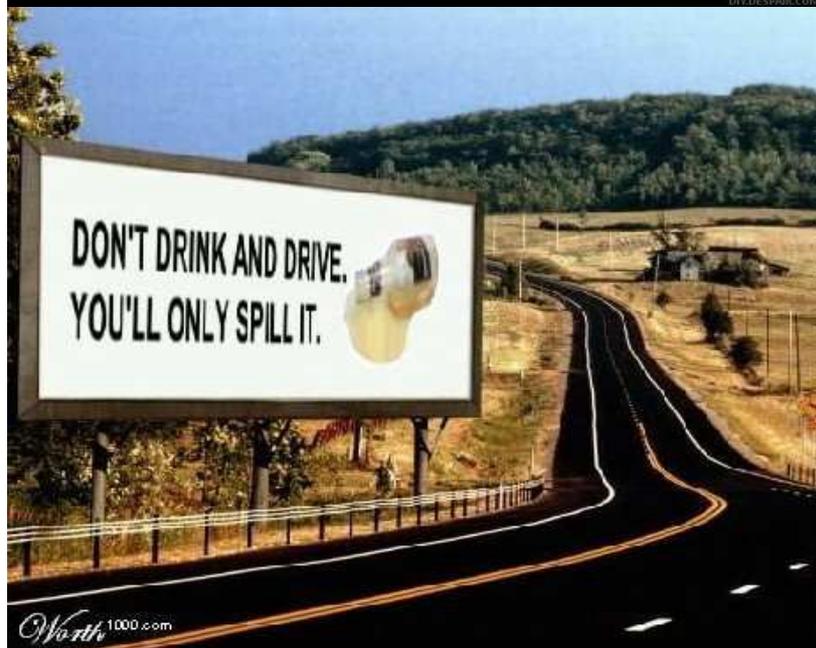
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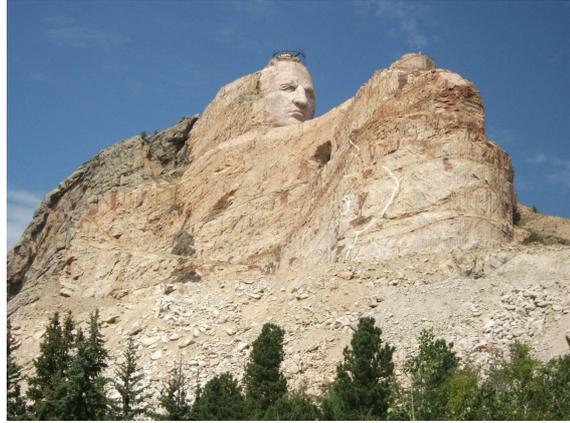
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More shots of the US trip



Buffalo Bill's Grave (Denver Colorado)



Crazy Horse Sculpture (South Dakota)



A Typical Highway (Arizona)



Monument Valley (Arizona)



Hoover Dam (Nevada)



Route 66 (Williams Arizona)

Shots of US Trip (cont.)



Clint Eastwood's handprints Hollywood



Pamper your pooch Hollywood



Rodeo Drive Beverley Hills



Police Headquarters Los Angeles



Bugatti Veyron in Rodeo Drive



The Hollywood sign Hollywood

SOME LIGHT HUMOUR

A couple were Christmas shopping. The shopping centre was packed. As the wife walked through one of the malls she was surprised when she looked around to find that her husband was nowhere to be seen.

She was quite upset because they had a lot to do. She became so worried that she called him on her mobile phone to ask him where he was. In a quiet voice he said, "Do you remember the jewellers we went into about five years ago where you fell in love with that diamond necklace that we couldn't afford, and I told you that I would get it for you one day?"

The wife choked up and started to cry and said, "Yes, I do remember that shop."

He replied, "Well, I'm in the pub next door."

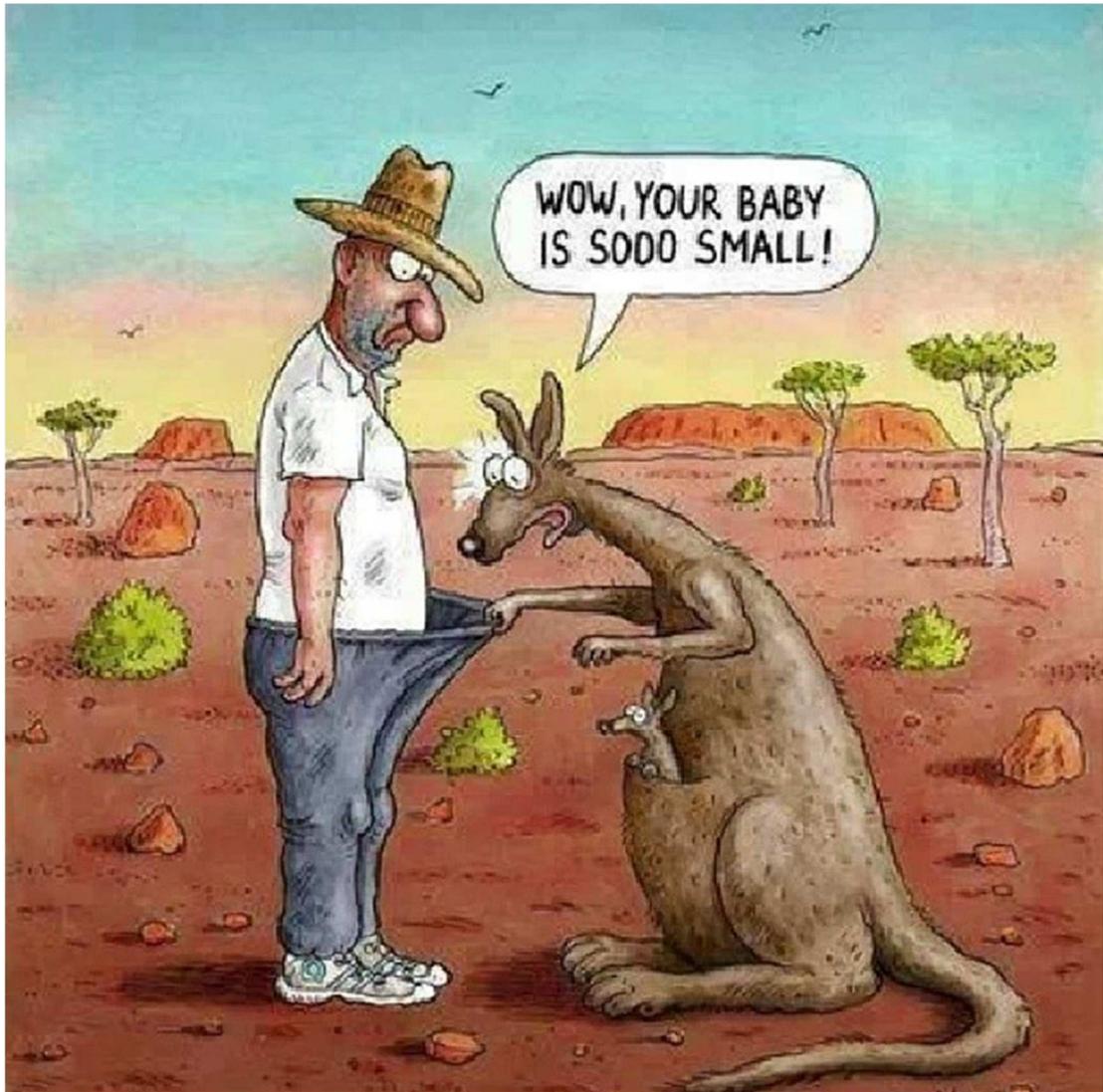
A little old lady answered a knock on the door one day, to be confronted by a well-dressed young man carrying a vacuum cleaner.

'Good morning,' said the young man. 'If I could take a couple minutes of your time, I would like to demonstrate the very latest in high-powered vacuum cleaners.' 'Go away!' said the old lady. 'I'm broke and haven't got any money!' and as she proceeded to close the door quick as a flash, the young man wedged his foot in the door and pushed it wide open...

'Don't be too hasty!' he said. 'Not until you have at least seen my demonstration.'

And with that, he emptied a bucket of horse manure onto her hallway carpet and said; 'Now if this vacuum does not clean all traces of this horse manure from your carpet, Madam, I will personally eat the remainder.'

The old lady stepped back and said, 'Well let me get you a fork, because they cut off my electricity this morning.'



Life just gets better as you get older doesn't it. I was in a Starbucks Coffee recently when my stomach started rumbling and I realised that I desperately needed to fart.

The place was packed but the music was really loud so to get relief and reduce embarrassment I timed my farts to the beat of the music. After a couple of songs I started to feel much better. I finished my coffee and noticed that everyone was staring at me. I suddenly remembered that I was listening to my iPod.

This is what happens when old people start using technology.