



# wheezy Rider

*Newsletter of the Fremantle group*

Jan 2016  
No 170

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

Price  
\$1.00

Hi Everyone,

Happy 2016 to you all! I hope you had a Happy Christmas break with family and friends.

The rides have started for 2016. I have just got back from a great day to Jarrahdale for morning tea & Beverly for lunch on today's ride. It was a lot cooler than forecasted and everyone had a great time. We also had 3 new riders join us.

I have had 3 new membership enquiries this month too, which is great. We need a few more Sunday riders so we can match the numbers that the Plodders get on their rides.

While I mention Plodders, I have contacted Gary Philips about doing a Plod Report at the social meetings and he has agreed. I think it will be beneficial to the branch if the non- Plodders get to know what you get up to. I am getting concerned there is a chance of the branch becoming disjointed if we do not keep all sections of the branch "in the Loop".

The Committee also think there should be a Plodder on next year's Committee as it is a large section of the branch and therefore they should have input into decisions that are made ect, so please start thinking about who would be suitable.

It is very sad about the recent fires in Yarloop. It felt closer to home due to the fact we visited the Yarloop Steam Workshops and have had lunch at the Yarloop Pub on a couple of occasions on rides last year. All of the historical artefacts in the workshops and people's homes are now gone forever.

There is a "**Ride for South West Fire Relief**" that has been organised by "On Two Wheels TV" leaving from Mean Machines, 33 Rudloc Rd, Morley on Sunday, January 17 at 9 AM finishing up in Mandurah Comfort Inn. They have a Facebook page with more details. If anyone is interested we could meet at Gateways and join the ride somewhere.

**Australia Day** is on a Tuesday this year. Tony Collins has kindly offered to have a BBQ at his house ( the same as last year) if anyone is interested. We will be asking an idea of numbers at Tuesdays meeting. If you can't attend and are interested can you email [president@ulyssesfremantle.com](mailto:president@ulyssesfremantle.com) to let me know.

### March Long Weekend Ride – Albany & Manjimup 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> March.

We already have 10 people booked in (that I know of) and I have not yet sent it to other branches. All the details are on the website. So those of you not going to the AGM please book ASAP if you are interested.

The **2017 Odyssey Committee** has been set up. Congratulations to Tony Collins who was appointed the task of organising and coordinating the Odyssey Committee.

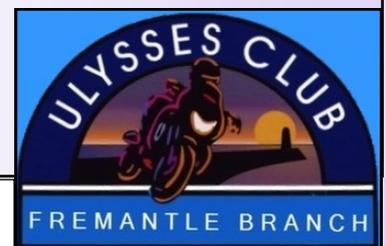
The people who have indicated they wish to be on the committee or assist so far are:

Pippa & Alan Leahy, Eric Ilett, Allison Booth, Ron Spencer, Annie & Alan Collins, Ian & Sandra Dix, Jeff Bloomfield, Jerry Fleming, Mick Katarski, Paul Turner, Steve Zaretsky. I would like to thank them all for coming forward and for their contributions to help make the Fremantle 2017 Odyssey run smoothly and be remembered as a good one. I am sure there will be more people required to help out at various stages as the committee move forward and would appreciate club members getting behind the committee and assisting where and when you can.

That's all for now.

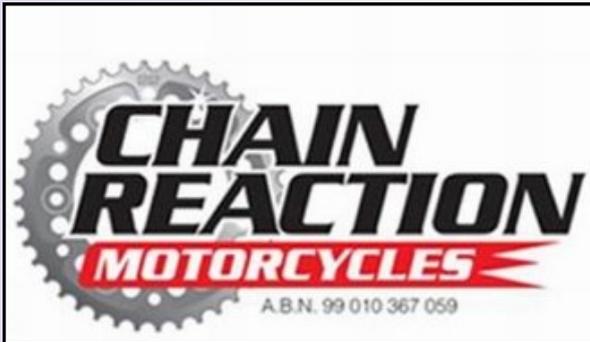
**Remember— It's not what you ride, it's your attitude that counts!**

**Colin Booth 61215  
President Ulysses Fremantle Branch**



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

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Photos from Saturday  
2nd January at the  
Victoria Cafe



**FREMANTLE BRANCH MEETING**  
**2ND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT THE**  
**LEOPOLD HOTEL 326 CANNING HWY BICTON WA.**

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

**2015/2016 COMMITTEE:**

**President** Colin Booth Member 61215  
President@ulyssesfremantle.com

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National Ulysses site: [www.ulyssesclub.org](http://www.ulyssesclub.org)

Fremantle Ulysses site: [www.ulyssesfremantle.com](http://www.ulyssesfremantle.com)

**Note: Next meeting, Tues 12th**  
**January 2016**

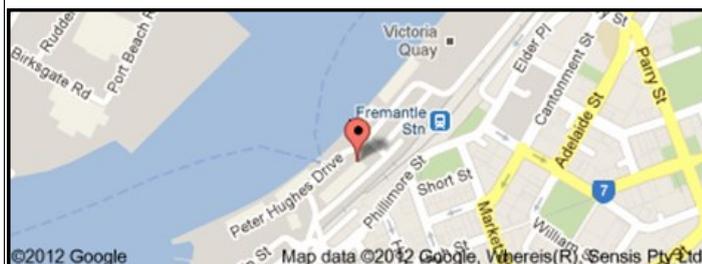
**Plods and Saturday morning coffee**

Wednesday morning Plods have reverted back to South Beach for a 9:30am start as previously.

Any enquiries regarding plods can be directed to Gary Phillips on 0415 568 089



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



## Photos From The 2015 Christmas Party



**Message for those intending to attend the Ulysses Club 2016 AGM in Launceston Tasmania.**



Thank you for registering your interest to travel with Spirit of Tasmania to the Ulysses Club 2016 AGM in Launceston.

Spirit of Tasmania departs from Port Melbourne, Victoria arriving in Devonport, Tasmania a short 50 minutes from Launceston.

Our inventory is now open to book your travel to and from Tasmania for travel dates between 15 January 2015 and 31 March 2015 inclusive.

We anticipate strong demand for travel to this event during February, March and April of 2016 and encourage you to make your booking as early as possible. It is recommended to book both your forward and return journey.

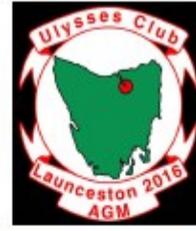
Tips for booking:

- Special Event discounted fares available to book via the internet. Accessible by following this link: [www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/ulysses](http://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/ulysses)
- Bookings can be made with our Group and Special Events Team by calling [1800 635 877](tel:1800635877) or email [groups@spiritoftasmania.com.au](mailto:groups@spiritoftasmania.com.au)
- Book both your forward and return journey
- Trikes and Spyders are classified as a 'trike or motorbike with sidecar' when choosing vehicle type
- Motorcycles, Trikes or Spyders towing a trailer should be booked as 'motorbike with trailer'
- Refer to our FAQs page for important information relating to the carriage of gas cylinders, gas canisters, firearms, fishing gear and Tasmanian Quarantine regulations.
- Be sure to book over-height space if your vehicle is over 2.1m high
- For general questions please call our Customer Contact Centre [13 20 10](tel:132010)

**We thank you for choosing to travel with us and we look forward to welcoming Ulyssians, their friends and family on board Spirit of Tasmania.**



Ulysses Club AGM Event  
29<sup>th</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> March  
2016



**TUESDAY NIGHT - welcome to the Event Virgins (first timers)**

**Gourmet Tasmanian BBQ**

Bread Rolls & butter

Locally made Thick Chicken & Chive Sausage

Tassie Beef Burger

Kassler (smoked loin of pork)

German Potato Salad

Garden Salad sourced with local vegetables

Condiments: tomato & red pepper chutney, seeded mustard and  
tomato sauce - *portion controlled packs*

**Cost \$26.00 per person GST inclusive**

**SATURDAY NIGHT - formal Event dinner & New NatCom introduction**

Dinner Roll & Butter

Braised Flinders Island hindquarter Lamb Shank &  
vegetables in a red wine jus  
Served over Ashgrove Parmesan Mash

Dessert: Tasting platter with a sweet profiterole,  
a lemon and lime slice and a chocolate éclair, all  
served with Tasmanian Berry Sauce and double  
cream

**Cost \$35 per person GST inclusive**

## Retrospective: Ducati 860 GT and GTE: 1974-1975

Clement Salvadori January 7, 2016



Year/Model: 1975 Ducati 860GTE; Owner: John Laughney, Templeton, California.

When descriptions of a motorcycle run like this: “exceedingly ugly,” “slab-sided ugly duckling,” “Stateside reception...barely rose to lukewarm,” “judged a disaster,” it might well be expected that this was a sales flop. Which the Ducati GT, and the electric-start GTE version, were. As one current observer notes, not many stock GTs are around, because the original was just too unattractive and changes were often made.

Back in '74, its new engine cases had hard, straight lines, while the gas tank complied with the design by having flat sides. And the dual saddle just sort of ended, sticking up in the sky. And rather high bars were mounted, which some testing types thought made the bike wobble a bit at high speeds.



1975 Ducati 860GTE.

In the early '70s, ownership of the Ducati firm was in the hands of the Italian government, and Italian bureaucrats have their own way of doing business. One being that when a state-owned company runs into financial problems, the government likes to send in someone to fix the situation...whether or not that person has any familiarity with the business. In 1972, an engineer named Cristiano de Eccher was made general manager to remedy the cash-flow problem that this middling-sized motorcycle company had, and he decided that the solution was to cut costs and increase production.

Unfortunately, de Eccher was not a motorcycle enthusiast, and had absolutely no aesthetic nor emotional attachment to the sport. He was strictly numbers. To cut costs, he severely curtailed the racing schedule, and for 1973 the factory showed

up only for the Imola 200 and the Bol d'Or 24-hour in France. Not wise, as the racing successes of the marque were a major factor in its appeal to buyers.

He planned to expand sales by greatly increasing production to 15,000 units and aiming mainly for the American market. By boring out the popular 750 engine 6mm he could have an 864, which could be sold to the bigger-is-better U.S. consumer as an 860. The GT stood for Grand Touring, so this was to be advertised as a comfortable street bike, ignoring the racing success of the desmo 750SS. To compound his mistake, de Eccher decided to hire an automotive designer to style this new bike, and went to the ItalDesign Studio, where Giorgio Giugiaro was well known for turning out some good-looking cars like the Maserati Ghibli and VW Golf. But he had never done a motorcycle.



So Giugiaro decided to give the 860 a “folded-paper look,” an angular design that most motorcyclists found singularly unattractive.

1975 Ducati 860GTE.

When the GT first appeared at the Milan show in November 1973, it was up against its own stunning sibling, the 750SS, as well as Laverda’s 750 SFC and Moto Guzzi’s 750S. The peculiar lines of the 860 stuck out like a sore thumb...or perhaps better said, like the box the 750SS came in.

At the factory, most, if not all, of the staff did not like de Eccher’s approach, especially Fabio Taglioni, the man responsible for Ducati’s racing successes. Taglioni had been working on a 500cc L-twin, but de Eccher nixed that and told R&D to come up with a parallel twin, very much in the Japanese style, in 350 and 500 sizes—because a parallel twin was cheaper to build than an L-twin.



Year/Model: 1975 Ducati 860GTE; Owner: John Laughney, Templeton, California.

The 860 was not a bad machine, and the boring-out made the engine majorly oversquare, which is useful in slow riding around town. Power was around 60 horses at 6,900 rpm. It did not have the technical romance nor the headaches of the desmodromic heads, but instead used the simpler bevel-driven overhead camshafts where the valve clearances were adjusted with screws and locknuts. Bearings were improved, and the new Elettrotecnica CD ignition was an improvement, with the spark advance done electronically. And the new disposable oil filter was certainly a plus.

The frame had been slightly altered from the 750 bikes to accommodate the newly designed engine cases. Wheelbase was a tight five feet, with a 38mm Ceriani fork at the front, a pair of Marzocchi shocks at the back. GT weight was 500 pounds at the curb, and the addition of the electric starter and bigger battery would add another 22 pounds to the GTE.



1975 Ducati 860GTE.

The production of the 860GT began in September of 1974, and the electric-start GTE started the next January. The total production of these two models was a modest 2,987. Of which at least a third remained unsold by the end of 1975.

Admittedly, the world economy was in a bit of a slump, but instead of the 15,000 sales de Eccher had boasted about, Ducati didn't get even 6,000. The four-stroke singles had been dropped from the line, the limited-edition 750SS sold out, the 125cc dual-purpose, two-stroke Regularita was OK, but sales of the 350/500 GTL parallel twins were terrible, as were those of the 860GT.

De Eccher was out as of December 1975. As was Giugiaro. A new manager well acquainted with the moto-world was brought in. Factory folk redesigned the GT's tank and seat, and put those on the

unsold 850s, calling it the GTS. Taglioni was invited back into the fold, and his 500cc Pantah L-twin showed up in 1978.

A touch of history here. The current owner, John Laughney, an aesthetically minded restoration fellow, bought this piece from long-time speed-record holder Marty Dickerson, who had owned it since new. John found the Giugiaro-look not to his liking, and knew where to get a GTS tank. He also dressed up the back of the saddle with a small curved cover, giving it an entirely new look. But John's keeping the original tank up in the rafters of his workshop, just in case.



1975 Ducati 860GTE.

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## SOME LIGHT HUMOUR



*'I have to admit, Catwoman — you are not as I expected.'*



**"The doctor will be with you in a few minutes. He's trying to figure out what disease goes with your insurance."**

