

Rule 1: There shall be no rules.

Rule 2: See Rule 1.

wheezy Rider

Newsletter of the Fremantle group

August 2014
No 155

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

**Price
\$1.00**

It has been a baptism of fire for me as President but everything has settled down now, thank goodness.

It was good to see Wok at one of the Saturday morning coffees; it is amazing how quickly he was back on deck even though he is a bit limited.

It seems we have a Tag Team happening because then Simon ended up in RPH after his "off". The good news is that he has had his operations and has been transferred to Bentley Hospital. He is having a good hard think about how many lives he has left! We are looking forward to seeing him up and about again.

It is probably a good time to remind everyone that we should always ride within our limits. There are always those accidents that cannot be avoided and unfortunately that is just part of being a Biker. However I know we often have a bit of a play and sometimes that beautiful bit of road is just there inviting us to twist the throttle a little more than we should. It is a pity it takes something like a couple of "off's" to really bring it home to us how vulnerable we really are. I know my own riding is a little more conservative now than it was 2 weeks ago. We as a club owe it to each other to ride safely; as everyone is affected when something goes wrong.

Ok that is enough of my Soapbox!

The committee has booked the Captain Stirling again for this year's Christmas Party as we had a lot of positive feedback from last year's event and it is a good central location. We are yet to get the menu and pricing but they said it will be similar to last year. We will announce all those details in the next few months.

The Ride Calendar is looking good at the moment with only one weekend available in September if anyone wants to lead a ride. Maybe we can have a new ride leader now we have some ride buddies!

Speaking of Ride Buddies – Tony Collins, Dick Berry, Mick Katarski and I are the ones that will assist any new ride leader with organising a ride. We can eve ride with you on the day so you don't need to worry about getting lost. So if you have not yet led a ride, have a go! I bet you will enjoy it.

The Ride to Conquer Cancer is coming up on October 18-19. Tony Collins (after initial introductions from Ron Spencer) will be co-ordinating our role in this event. It is a remarkable weekend and I encourage you all to volunteer to be part of the Road Crew. We all had a great time last year. More details will follow.

The Annual Jurien Weekend (Saturday 8th November), we need one or more volunteers to organise it? Things need to get moving so we do not miss out on accommodation. Another great weekend in our Calendar!

The Odyssey is also coming up so you better hurry up and register if you have not done so already.

That is about all from me this month. The Wheezy is going to be shorter than usual as Mick is over in the Philippines.....and he handed it over to me to finish.....I have run out of time....

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

**Colin Booth (61215)
President, Fremantle Branch.**



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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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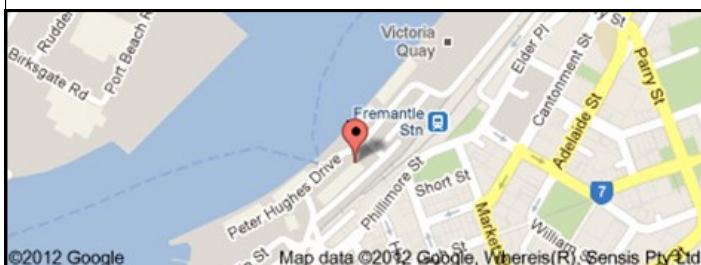
Fremantle Ulysses site:
www.ulyssesfremantle.com

**Note: Next meeting, Wed 10th
September 2014**

Plods and Saturday morning coffee

Wednesday morning Plods have reverted back to South Beach at 9:00am for a 9:30am start as previously however if you are an early riser members will still meet at the Victoria Café that is located at the eastern end of the Fremantle 'E' Shed Markets for breakfast. Great coffee. After breakfast members will migrate to the South Beach start point via Marine parade in order to meet the 9:00am start time.

For Plodders having breakfast at the Victoria Café, there is plenty of parking over near 'B' Shed outside the other cafe if the bays outside the Victoria Cafe are full.



Tradition and heritage in motorcycle history

Written by Phil Hall www.mcnews.com.au



Indian trades on their historical roots

Suzuki recently announced a 2015 version of the GSX-R that had a “heritage” colour scheme. Trouble was, the colours involved were mostly red. It seemed a little odd to me, since Suzuki’s corporate racing colour has always been blue, where the “heritage” bit came in and, at the same time, it prompted me to examine how the word and the word “tradition” are being somewhat misused in similar areas of motorcycling.

The 1970’s saw the effective end of the British motorcycle industry. A country that had, for many years, produced a bewildering array of brands, models and motorcycle types, surrendered its position as the world #1 to Japan and the great British brands disappeared, almost without a trace.

It is not the intention of this article to examine in detail the multitude of reasons for the demise of the British motorcycle industry, but I do want to touch on a few aspects that were contributory factors. Some of the reasons were economic. Union militancy and power meant that construction costs rose dramatically while production quality dropped accordingly. The great British brands were mired in the 1930’s way of doing things and were reluctant/unwilling to change in order to be able to compete with the flow of cheaper, better quality, Japanese machines. A slow parallel twin just didn’t cut it when you could have a 4 cylinder bike with a disk brake on the front and reliable electrics for a cheaper price.

There were design issues also that struck at the very core of why the British manufacturers couldn’t compete. British bikes, known for their propensity to leak oil, did so for two main reasons. Firstly, most designs featured a vertically-split crankcase. Consequently, the oil in the sump had a much easier time escaping than from the sump of most Japanese

bikes whose crankcases were split horizontally. And secondly, by the time the 70's rolled around, engine castings and casings were still being produced on antiquated machinery from pre-WWII and the machines themselves were worn out. If there are huge tolerances in the machines that are being used to machine the crankcases, those tolerances are going to inevitably be transferred to the casing that the machines make.

So most British bikes leaked from the moment they left the factory and no amount of gaskets and sealants were going to prevent that because the facings where the casings met were not exact.

British electrics were also suspect. It is not without reason that most owners of British cars and bikes know the joke that Joseph Lucas was the Prince of Darkness. One road test in the 70's remarked that the headlamp on a British bike was so weak that it repelled moths.

And the condition of British roads didn't help either. In poor condition for decades afterwards due to the depredations of war, slathered in salt to melt the inevitable winter ice and subject to awful rain and sleet for a large portion of the year, they pounded and rusted the bikes to bits, making them old well before their time.

In fact, it is probably fair to say that the British motorcycle industry survived for much longer than it had a right to do so given the combination of adverse circumstances that befell it in the 60's and 70's.

In racing it wasn't any better. Long the staple of the privateer, the Manx Norton survived the early onslaught of the Italian multis only to be dealt the hammer blow of the Japanese versions of the same thing that were even faster, produced in higher volumes and they soon relegated the Manx to a mere sideshow.

So the British motorcycle industry finished, not with a bang, to quote the poet, but with a whimper. The age of the UJM was ushered in and the antiquated British bikes ended up in scrap yards or museums.

But there were some who were not prepared to let it die. Several attempts were made to keep Triumph going, including the Meriden Co-Operative but it folded in the end as well.

The Norton name was sold to an American millionaire who produced an increased capacity Commando into the 80's before finding that owning a motorcycle name and actually doing something profitable with it, were two entirely different things.

And so passed Triumph, Norton, Ariel, BSA, Matchless and a host of other revered names. The carnage was most notable in Britain but it

had echoes elsewhere as well. The USA had once been a powerhouse of motorcycle production too, but, by the mid-70's even the greatest American company, Harley Davidson, was sold to an Italian firm for a ridiculously small amount and, for some time, they produced small two-stroke trail bikes, Aermacchis in their souls, but Harley Davidson on the tank. The great Italian rider, Walter Villa, won four World Championships on 250 and 350cc Harleys (there's a trivia question for the next night at the pub)

Motorcyclists who have grown up in the era since the 70's may not even know some of these names so completely did they disappear. But nostalgia isn't just a thing of the past and there were enough people who longed for a revival of the British industry to try and do something about it. Several attempts were made to revive the Triumph name, but all failed in the face of unspeakable costs that had not been factored in before the dive was taken.

Till finally we arrive at the latest attempt, funded by a man with incredibly deep pockets and a burning passion to revive the name. I don't know how many people had owned it in the intervening years but it ended up in John Bloor's top drawer. Bloor understood two things. Firstly, that, if you want to mass produce and build a bike that would sell, you had to build a bike that fitted the current market. Yes, there are still those who hanker for a simple parallel twin, but that's not where your profitability is going to lie. Bloor catered for that niche by producing the Thunderbird, and very successful it has been too. But he also produced a series of British Japanese bikes. Different enough to set them apart a little, but essentially built on the same template. While not built and sold in the numbers managed by the competition, modern Triumphs are doing quite well, thank you very much.

In similar fashion, there have been many attempts to revive the other famous British name, Norton. And today we have a small company bearing the name producing what are essentially 21st century versions of the Commando and its ilk. Still vertical twin and still with a similar look and feel but with oil-tight engines, reliable electrics and modern running gear. A much smaller company, Norton is struggling, with anecdotal evidence suggesting some less-than-savoury business practices and a lot of broken promises. However, it is still there and a local company has taken on the rights to distribute the brand here in Australia. They will sell in far smaller quantity than their British competition, being priced absurdly higher than what they should be, even for a "boutique" brand.

The car manufacturer, Ariel, who produce the bonkers range of Atom vehicles, has recently announced that they have purchased the long-

dead name of the motorcycle company and are planning on producing two motorcycles, both at the “crazy” end of the spectrum and both selling for what are predicted to be absurd prices.

On the other side of the pond, the on-going saga of the Indian name should be the subject of a book, if it hasn’t already been. I have no idea how many individuals and companies have owned the name over the years and the number of failed attempts to relaunch the brand has been high. But now that ownership of the name seems to have been settled we are seeing “new” Indians on the showroom floor. Based on the tried and true V-Twin formula, Indian is seeking to be the “other” motorcycle manufacturer after H-D. Another “boutique” brand, the market into which they are seeking to sell is far more tolerant of high prices being paid for exclusivity, and they seem to be managing OK at the moment, launching a brand new model over the weekend at the annual Sturgis motorcycle festival.

However, I must close with a warning, or perhaps a caution. Not one of these bikes has any historical connection with the brands they bear on their tanks. Owners of modern Triumphs can bang on about the Triumph “tradition” all they like but their bikes are simply not part of it. The great brands died and we mourn their passing. A modern Indian, Norton or Triumph has NO lineage stretching back to the bikes that bore the name back then. Even if they are built in the SPIRIT of those bikes, the lineage stopped when the factories closed. The present owners of the names own the name, that’s it. They didn’t purchase the heritage or the continuity from the original manufacturers. And, as I have mentioned, that name, no matter how hallowed we may regard it to be, has passed through many hands since back in the day and it was often sullied in the process by the questionable ethics of the people who owned it.



So, let’s enjoy and admire the varying interpretations of bikes produced by companies who have seen it as their duty to keep the great names alive. Let’s be grateful that modern companies produce good bikes, great bikes, with names that resonate of another wonderful era. But let’s not fall into the trap of believing that these bikes continue the “heritage” or “tradition” of the great names emblazoned on their tanks, because, sadly, they just don’t.

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SOME LIGHT HUMOUR

Did Prince Phillip fart?

..he probably does all the time. What the heck, he's almost ninety, and at that age you don't hold anything back, even if you want to.

The really important question..?

Did Prince Philip Fart ..?

What do you think?



Look at the Queen's face .. Prince Harry couldn't contain himself!
The expressions are priceless!



IRISH DIET

An **Irishman** was terribly overweight, so his doctor put him on a diet.

'I want you to eat regularly for 2 days, then skip a day, then eat regularly again for 2 days then skip a day And repeat this procedure for 2 weeks. The next time I see you, you should have lost at least 5 pounds.'

When the Irishman returned, he shocked the doctor by having lost nearly 60lbs !

'Why, that's amazing !' the doctor said, 'Did you follow my instructions ?'

The **Irishman** nodded ... 'I'll tell you though, by jaesuz, I t'aut I were going to drop dead on dat 3rd day.'

'From the hunger, you mean ?' asked the doctor.

'No, from the **f**kin**' skippin'
