

IIRA April Ride to Creswick

Date – 2 April 2017

A great day out, ably lead by Ken Hager.

Thanks Ken for a really good day, one to remember!



This was a combined ride and history lesson carried out with flare by Ken Hager.

6 riders arrived at BP Calder at 9:30 for coffee and a chat. Ken Hager on Chief No.1, Mark Barthelmie on a brand spanking new Indian Black Bomber (26ks on the clock), Phil White on Chris Horners Scout, Phil Pilgrim on his Scout, Peter Kime on the Drifter, Russell Arthur on his 47 Chief. Russell could only come up to BP Calder as he was not feeling well enough to ride the distance (caught something in Singapore or on the flight home). But it was good to catch up with him and thanks to Russell for making the effort.

While the clouds looked a bit low it was an enthusiastic group that set off after Ken onto the Calder Highway. Plan was to go to Creswick for lunch but Ken had other plans. We left the Calder at Diggers Rest and Ken promptly pulled over into the railway station car park, dismounted and took off through the grass to a shelter area, waving at us to follow him. We entered the shed to see also sorts of history about Diggers Rest. What Ken wanted to show us was the Plague for the first airplane flight in Australia by Houdini. After much discussion about why he would bother with a god forsaken place like Diggers Rest, the cost to bring the aircraft to Australia and how Houdini died we returned back to our faithful bikes knowing full well we could never be men like those blokes in the early 1900s, although we feel like it when we are sweeping through curves pretending to be the Red Baron.

Ken promptly started off and we proceeded out of Diggers Rest thinking we would head off towards Gisborne. Ken had not finished his history lesson and instead of turning right turned left back towards Melbourne. We came up to Holden Rd and hung a left, about 1 k down the road Ken did another stop new another rock pile with a plaque on top. Again we were encouraged to go and have a look. Low and behold we were looking at the actual paddock that Houdini took his legendary flight from. It is amazing how much conversation a flat piece of land could generate, most of it was why?



No it is not a whistle stop, they are reading the Plaque to Houdini for the first flight in Australia.

Great view of a paddock!

Off again at a brisk pace Ken the led us down Holden Rd through Toolern Vale, along the Coimadai Rd to the Gisborne – Bacchus Marsh Rd. Great views along the way of Lake Merrimu and Lerderderg Gorge. (take this road back to Gisborne provides some great views as you travel along the top of the Gorge.)

We turned towards Bacchus Marsh, through Darley and past the Gorge road and turned onto the freeway. Did not get far on the freeway when we took the turn off to Pentland Hills Rd. (Missed the old Lion Park at this turn off, another history lesson?) The road through the Pentlands is a nice gentle slightly hilly road with some good curves. Went through the quant village of Myrniong (Great meal can be had at the pub there, worth a visit. We then got to the intersection of Grendale – Trentham Rd and headed of towards Greendale. Left at Greendale Pub (no motorbikes out the front this time of day) and of we went to Ballan. Another great road!

Bulled into Ballan for a whistle stop and cup of coffee. Had a good talk to some of the locals. Phillip White had spied a sign on the way in that he had to go back to make a suitable salute to. It was the local mechanic whose business was called “Springfield Motors”. Phillip used the photo opportunity to give it a suitable salute (can’t quite see in the photo if it was 1 finger) to the passing of his Indian Springfield.

After a bit of encouragement from Ken about not wanting to miss lunch we took of again towards Bungaree and onto the Bungaree – Creswick Rd. Ken led a cracking pace we all dawdled along behind like innocent school children. Another great set of roads with pleasant scenery.

Into Creswick we parked outside the American Hotel. Now this place has been given a good make over since my last visit 8 years ago. The interior had an old fashioned ambience, the service was well done by the young lady taking orders and the food was both satisfying and reasonably priced

Peter Kime.



Outside the American Hotel



We had good company at the Hotel

We all settled in for a good feed and a good range of banter around the table about the ride, what others a missing out on and how good is this day.

After filling up the stomachs it was off to let the bikes know they were still loved and we fed them to. Ken suggested we head off home via Daylesford and Woodend. More great roads with a surprise ending. The ride through Newlyn to Dalysesford is another country road that offers a great ride. We proceeded through Daylesford and headed of towards Trentham as we came out of Trentham heading towards Tylden we turned off onto the Woodend Rd, about 6k before Woodend Ken did a right hand turn down Chanters Lane then right again at Ashbourne Rd. Both narrow country roads, but great riding and good scenery. This allowed us to Bypass Woodend altogether and we came out on to the freeway just out of Woodend.

We all then proceeded towards Mount Macedon , then the Calder Freeway. I turned off at Gisborne to take the direct route home (via Holden Rd again) while the others followed Ken.

This was another ride I am glad I did not miss. The club always seems to pull one out of the hat whenever we go out. It was a day of good riding, excellent food and the company of people I would like to call great mates. Looking forward to the next run.



What would you choose?