

## LAKES AND CRATERS RUN 18<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY

*By Phillip White*

The inauguration of a new rally is always a bit special. This event was dreamt up by Club Captain Ian Rhook who was born and raised in this general area. Most folk whiz on down the Great Ocean road and don't venture inland which is a shame because this region has a lot to offer.

First let's look at the really big, big picture. Around 30,000 years ago this was an active volcanic plain complete with Hot Steam Geysers, boiling mud pools and of course, Volcanoes. There would have been Mega fauna here too including thirteen foot Kangaroos and Wombats the size of Delivery Vans however the only ancient creatures on this weekend were various old Motorbikes. Today riding up the top of Mt. Leura gives a panoramic view over this geologically interesting area with the very Symmetrical Cones of the extinct Volcanoes Interspersed with picturesque lakes that regularly yield trophy fish.

The Rally was based in the town of Camperdown. A few of us hit the camp ground a few of us lodged at the Manifold Motor Inn run by a very pleasant lady called Rosie who whips up a mean plate of Bacon and Eggs for a very reasonable price, a good place to stay. We ran into a very nice American couple called Steve and Marsha who were approaching the end of a tour of Oz on a rented Bike. They run an Antique bike biz back in Illinois which is Dorothy's home state. John and I scored free T shirts with the shop logo. They took up my invitation and came and stayed with Dorothy and I for a few days before they flew out. And very interesting folk they were. Steve is an old racer from way back. He has road raced at Daytona, Done Enduro racing in the desert and is an accomplished Hot Shoe [Flat Track racer] on both the half mile and mile circuits as well. Marsha survived a plane wreck in Alaska whilst doing nursing in Remote Inuit villages. All in all just another quiet middle age couple.

Friday night turned into a bit of a piss up. I recall my toothpaste tasting a little odd that night and I discovered the next day that I had grabbed some foot fungus cream by mistake.

Nine A.M saw great weather and a gathering of the tribe at the impressive Clock tower that dominated the main street. Actually the architecture in this town is worth commenting on being very ornate and well preserved, this must have been a wealthy burg back in the day but a local lady said that industries have been leaving for years and there is not much to hold young folk here. However this is such a pretty spot that I reckon retiring boomers are going to come here in big numbers and that should kick on the local economy.

So back to the bikes. Our lead rider was Peter Welding from the Bendigo club riding a tasty T150 Trident and Tail end Charley duties were handled by Ken Pike and Ms Chris Cross piloting a big Kwacker 1400 GTR. Back up was by Peters Fiancé Jenny with friends Sue and Craig Todman along for the ride. Craig is nursing a torn shoulder courtesy of an encounter with some loose gravel whilst out on his Commando, Well, it could be any of us. Sammy Vella was giving his new Sport Scout its first outing and he kindly offered me a test ride. I have never sampled one of these machines and what a pleasant bike it is, Very smooth, revvy and nimble. Nice one Sammy.

We set off via Cobden and Simpson to Port Campbell for the obligatory look at the Twelve apostles. [There is only about 3 left!] We then proceeded on excellent dry roads to The Boggy Creek pub where we took a long and pleasant lunch break. We ran into a honeymooning couple who were

touring Oz in their 68 Corvette! The driver claimed that traction control is provided by going easy on the go pedal feeding gas to the 427 cube engine. As we set off after lunch our first serious mechanical mishap occurred, the cable that engages the Siren on CHIPS broke, this was pretty serious. I tie wrapped up the pedal and managed to limp back to base but clearly the bike was no longer rideable without a siren but fortunately I had loaded my trusty 57 BSA Road Rocket on the Ute and that would save the day for the Sunday ride

The Arvo ride was a pleasant meander through quiet roads via various points of interest including A tour of local IIRA Club member Ian Wallace's Big Shed which is chockers with interesting cars and Bikes. We also visited the town of Allansford where they make a really tasty Cheddar cheese which has won numerous awards. They do a mean homemade Ice cream as well which did not go astray in the afternoon heat, there is also a large shed with a great collection of stationary engines with a truly bewildering array of manufacturers including lots made in Oz, I bet we can't do that now. The local caravan park, which is situated on a hill right at the edge of Lake Bulmere is the proposed venue for next year because it is anticipated that there will be a much larger turn out of Association members. We did not hit town until 6 ish . My old mate John got lost and he had the room key, leaving yours truly on the wrong side of the door in the blazing sun and my traditional Esky full of icy cold Coopers out of reach. Very character building.

Saturday night saw us up at one of the fine local pubs with transport to and from provided for a lucky few by our abstemious Web Master Mr Pilgrim.

Sunday morning brought yet more fine cool weather with a slight overcast, perfect bike climate. This time Peter our tour leader was mounted on a real nice 57' Thunderbird Which he calls " Lady Penelope" From the "Thunderbirds" Puppet show of our distant childhoods. We rode Through Cobden to Timboon where we had our morning tea stop. Someone mentioned that they had seen an old Microwave Oven nailed to a post as a Mail box. One of the local ladies said this is quite common, must be a local version of Hotmail.

So back to base and farewell. We all Thanked Ian for the effort he put in on this one and Mr Pilgrim reckons this new rally should be subtitled the "Eat your heart out" Rally for all those who by choice or circumstance missed it. So folks, pencil this one in for next year.