

IRON INDIAN RIDERS CHIEF RAIN IN THE FACE RALLY

1 to 3 June 2018

WALWA Victoria



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A bloody good weekend

Another great rally put together by Gary Hogg. Starting a rally on the first day of winter could always turn into a wet weekend, The IIRA did not mind as this was a rally that had everyone on side. If it was good weather we rode, if it was wet it would have been a fire in the beer garden and sit around and reminisce over a bottle of wine. Plan B was not required; the weather was perfect even though it got down to -2 degrees overnight. The mornings started up with thick fog covering the country side but the sun soon came out to burn the fog off and set the day for about 14 degrees, perfect for riding.

Noel Thornby, Phillip White, John Fontenalla George Fitzpatrick, Alastair Piercy and Gary Hogg arrived in Walwa on Thursday and had a short ride on Friday. They settled into the Walwa Caravan Park which had very neat cabins that were even heated. It wasn't long before they decided that this was a cosier venue than the pub and opted to

stay at the caravan park. The Friday arrivals stayed at the pub, which was OK if you were just using it to have a sleep and did not mind a communal toilet and showers.

Owen Jones, Brett Buckland and Peter Kime arrived Friday afternoon, just in time to head down to the Walwa Caravan Park to have pre-dinner drinks with the others. The Caravan Park looked like a good option and Phil, John and Gary were well set up to be self-sustainable with drinks. After drinks we staggered up to the pub for dinner. As we have found before the pub did not let us down with the quality and quantity of food and all enjoyed a fine meal washed down with significant quantities of wine. Heads up for the meal went to the lamb shanks which Gary gave a tick of approval on and it was on everyone's list for Saturday night.

After dinner we migrated to the bar and continued to enjoy drinks and great company close to a glowing log fire. Some got onto the pool table and ended up being challenged by some of the ladies in the pub for a game. Eventually we all moved off to our rooms or to the caravan park. Luckily the taxi to the caravan park only had to go in a straight line to get there.

Saturday morning was 3 degrees and a bit foggy but did not deter anyone, especially when the General Store across the road had just opened its doors and had the best bacon and egg rolls this side of the roadhouse in Geelong. After a decent breakfast and enough coffee to get everybody kick started we were pleasantly surprised to step out on to sunshine and blue sky.

With everyone rugged up with suitable gear for a cold day we warmed the bikes up ready to go. We headed off towards Jinjelic past the Mannus Prison Farm and along the pleasantly winding roads to Tumbarumba for fuel. As we approached the servo a little old lady shot out of the car park directly into the path of John Fontenalla, she then did not know what to do and slowed down to a crawl preventing John from entering the servo unless he stopped. By the look of the back of her car she had significant damage at the back where she had been run into before. More fun was then had in the servo, they had a sign on the pump informing anyone using the pump to take note of the litres taken and inform the attendant. Of course being blokes most mixed up what was required or forgot what they had put in and I think by the end of the day when they added up their pump takings they would have had a bonus courtesy of the IIRA Riders.

Back on the road again we headed towards Paddy River and then turned onto the Elliot Way towards Cabramurra. Elliot way climbs gently up to Cabramurra and is a great road, in good condition with gentle curves and little traffic. The only disconcerting thing about the ride were the regular droppings of horse poo along the middle of the road which had everyone moving around them and keeping an eye out for whatever dropped it. It was as we approached O'Hares campground that Gary and John spotted a couple of brumbies sunning themselves in a clearing just off the road; luckily they decided not to challenge us in possession of the road.

Gary decided to take us into the camp ground for a whistle stop. Luckily someone had left a fire going in a fireplace that gave us an opportunity to warm our hands before going for a pee. Once all relieved and bottoms warmed we headed off to Cabramurra. As we approached the resort we could see ice and snow along the side of the road. Everyone kept an eye out for black ice but we had no reason to worry at this stage. Once stopped at the resort and had our helmets off you could feel the wind chill factor and all hurried into the café for a coffee and to warm up, except for George, his tail light had decided to separate itself from his mudguard and was hanging by the wires. Duct tape was sufficient

to make it roadworthy again. This part of the ride had us cover 120km along roads with beautiful scenic views.

We again saddled up and headed south east down the mountain for 58 km of steeply descending windy road with a bit of ice on the side of the road and in some places over the road. Suitable caution was taken and with the leisurely pace we were riding it was not a problem. I normally hate riding on roads with a lot of right angle bends and steep descents but with the pace of the ride being at a reasonable speed it was a great ride. We stopped at Tooma dam for a regroup and photo shoot then turned left onto the Alpine way to Khancoban for a fuel stop. We were going to have lunch but we could see dark skies gathering over the mountain and thought we should keep in front of it and decided to continue along the Alpine Way, onto the Tooma Rd and back towards Tintaldra for the 75 k run back to Walwa. Gary again lead a great ride through the hills with George on his 42 Chief, John on his 84cu Chief and myself on the 35 Chief keeping in line with the moderns behind us getting a taste of old bike fumes and the gentle rumble of 3 old chiefs in full song.

Back at the pub it was into the bar for drinks and wait for the dining room to open. Again the meals were wholesome, the wine just the right temperature and the company great. All agreed that the loop we road on saturday was the best ride we have had yet. No one was fussed about the gentle speed (90 to 95, occasionally 100kmh)we travelled as it gave us an opportunity to see the scenery and enjoy the ride without getting white knuckles. We would have maintained an average speed of 90 to 95 k allowing us all to keep together and the old bikes to enjoy the ride without rattling themselves to bits (other than Georges taillight trying to escape and me losing my reserve tank petrol cap before the Khancoban fuel stop. Everyone has requested it again for next year and hopefully it is a rally that will be enjoyed by all.

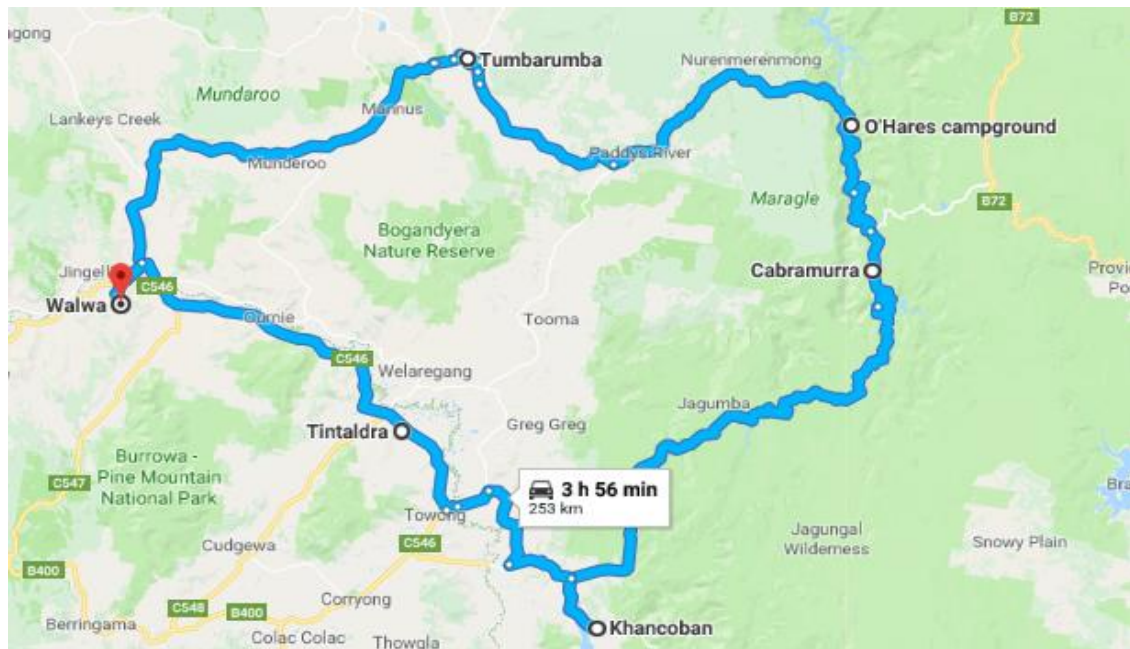
It was 254 km of perfect riding in winter weather that was perfect, ably led by Gary Hogg.

Gary, once again thanks from everyone for organising this rally, could not ask for anything better.

Ride was attended by – Gary Hogg – Trident, George Fitzpatrick – 42 Chief, John Fontenalla – 84 cu in Chief, Peter Kime – 35 Chief, Noel Thornby Polaris Chief, Alastair Piercy – Polaris Chief, Brett Buckland – Kings Mountain Indian, Owen Jones – Moto Guzzi, Phillip White - Drifter

Attached are the route we followed and some photos.





1. Tucked up ready for the night

2. Early morning fog.



3. Fog gone, brilliant day for a ride.

4. O'Hares Campground. Fire going to warm our Bums.



5. Car park to ourselves at Cabramurra.



6. Site seeing at Tumut Dam.



7. You can't hide General Custard in the snow.



8. Foggy start for those riding home on Sunday.



10. This black bull and his brother paced on the left for a while, let the bikes pass then ran in front of the ute.

