

# *Iron Indian Riders Association*

## **IRA 1<sup>st</sup> SEPT 2019 RIDE to FIRE ENGINE SHEDS at NEWPORT.**

There are not many of us who wanted to be a Policeman, Pilot or Fireman when we grew up. Being a Policeman is no fun anymore as it is frowned upon if phone books are used during interviews, Ambulance drivers?, who wants the hazard of getting beat up when you are doing some one a favour by trying to save their life. Now a Fireman is still cool, the trucks are still red, their bells and sirens still scare the crap out of car drivers and you get to go to bonfires with you mates.

When I found out that I could arrange a tour of the Restoration and Maintenance Sheds for the Fire Museum I could not think of a better place to take the Iron Indian Riders. After all the trucks are red like and Indian, they look awesome like an Indian and they have the massive engines that take a 17 t truck faster than a speeding Indian. What better place to take a lot of blokes who are still enjoying a belated child hood than to see over 62 Fire Engines either restored or in line for restoration.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Sept ride was scheduled to be a short run as there was still a chance of rain in the afternoon and for most it was good to be able to head for home at 12:00pm to have a Father's Day lunch with their family. It had been arranged with George, one of the senior volunteers in charge of these beauties, to be at the storage sheds at about 10:20.

We had 7 riders plus 1 sidecar passenger and 3 people in cars. We headed the short route down Melbourne Rd, Mason St Market St and onto Champion Rd. The Fire Engines are stored in old Victorian Railways Workshop sheds and if you did not know where it was you would not find it. There are no signs on the gates and tours have to be organised through Eastern Hill Fire Museum.

We all arrived at the same time and the car drivers were waiting for us. This place is a functioning workshop so don't expect to be able to buy a cup of coffee or a pie. George was waiting for us and gave us an introduction to what they were doing, after that it was hard to keep the kids together, they went in all directions to look at what was in the workshop. George was very patient (he deals with schools kids a lot) and was more than happy to answer all questions as well as lift the bonnets to show us petrol heads what the engines looked like. George took us through all the storage sheds as well where they have numerous Fire Engines and memorabilia waiting to be restored. The age of Fire trucks ranged from 1800 for Horse Drawn Pumps, a 1916 Hotchkiss to a 1999 Scania. The tour took about 2 hours and I think every member was more than happy to have come on this ride to view these treasures. Every one thanked George for his time and I think the \$5.00 a head entry fee was a small price to pay for something as interesting as this.

After everyone left I spent some time having a coffee with George and talking about what he is up to and the adventures he has had taking fire engines to various displays around the state. He thanked me for bringing the Iron Indian Riders along and he openly stated that he thought you were a nice bunch of blokes and it was a pleasure to talk to all the members who showed interest in his babies.

During coffee I offered to help with restorations and was promptly given an enrolment form. Must get my Heavy Rigid so that I can drive a Fire Truck.

The Railway Museum is about 1 km east of the Fire Engines; maybe we should organize a run to there soon, a look around the Steam Trains and Diesels they have there could take up to 4 hrs.

Thanks to those that turned up –

Phil Pilgrim – 741 Scout, Chris Knoop & Friend on 44 Chief outfit, Ken Hager on No.1 111 Chief, George Fitzpatrick- Drifter, Owen Jones – Moto Guzzi, David Kimpton – Triumph Triple, Peter Kime 61 Triumph Bonneville. Roger Duncan – HD-HR Club (Friend of PK), Neil Summers – Friend of PK (Boeing).

