

# BMW TOURING CLUB OF NSW



**BMW Touring Club  
of New South Wales**



**Member of the International Council of BMW Clubs**

**April 2015  
NEWSLETTER**

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### Club Website:

[www.bmwtcnsw.org.au](http://www.bmwtcnsw.org.au)

### Club Yahoo Email site

(members mailing list - voluntary):  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bmwtcnsw>



[www.bmwclubs.asn.au](http://www.bmwclubs.asn.au)  
[www.bmw-clubs-international.com](http://www.bmw-clubs-international.com)

## Regional Ride Co-ordinators

<b>ACT</b>	Dave Ramsay	02 6278 3895 <a href="mailto:actcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au">actcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Hunter</b>	Rob Tiedeman	0425 777 461 <a href="mailto:huntercoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au">huntercoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Mid North Coast</b>	Lin van Copenhagen	0417 098 255 <a href="mailto:midnthcoastcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au">midnthcoastcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>South Coast</b>	Tony Schmidt	0407 494 229 <a href="mailto:sthcoastcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au">sthcoastcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Central West</b>	No current officer	<a href="mailto:centralwestcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au">centralwestcoordinator@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>

<b>South Coast</b>	No Current Officer	
<b>North Coast</b>	Damien O'Toole	0419 296 939 <a href="mailto:nthcoastregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au">nthcoastregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Central West</b>	No Current Officer	
<b>Sydney North</b>	Craig Hancock	0419 557 014 <a href="mailto:sydneythregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au">sydneythregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Sydney South</b>	Graham Johns	0419 281 875 <a href="mailto:sydneysthregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au">sydneysthregister@bmwtcnsw.org.au</a>
<b>Sydney West</b>	Andrew Watson	0419 225 290

Monthly Club Meetings	Held at 7:30pm at the Andrew Cook Hall, Toongabbie (corner Targo and Toongabbie Roads) on the last Wednesday of each month (except for December)
Sydney Social Sip	Held at 6:00pm on the last Wednesday of each month. Members gather at the Toongabbie Hotel for a chat and something to eat before crossing the road to attend the club meeting.
South Coast Social Sip	Held anytime after 6.30pm on the 2nd Friday of the month. Members gather at the Great Southern Hotel, 95 Queen St, Berry, for a chat and something to eat.
Newcastle Social Sip	Members gather anytime after 6pm on the last Friday of the month. At the Hexham Bowling Club for a chat and something to eat.
North Coast Breakfast & Social Sip	PORT MACQUARIE BREAKFAST Last Saturday of the month, 8:30 at The Sandbar Café, Camden Haven, The after "breakfast ride" determined over breakfast. SOCIAL SIP Second Sunday 4.30pm Quay Lime Café and Bar, Port Marina, 18 Park St., Port Macquarie.

Organise a Ride or Event	2
Attend a Social Sip	2
Attend a Social night (Restaurant night, party, etc)	3
Attend a Maintenance Day	2
Attend a Day Ride	6
Attend a Weekend Run or Rally	10
Attend a Long Weekend Run or Rally	12
Self written Newsletter article	4
Attend a Club Meeting – City Member	4
Attend a Club Meeting – Country Member	6
Attend a Night Run	6

## President's Report

March draws to a close without me having swung a leg over a bike in a serious fashion since the KRR. I suppose in the old days when everyone had motorcycles that were as much lifestyle as well as daily transport I would have been excommunicated for this admission. During our travels through Victoria by car, Shirley and I met a young bloke named Phil in Bright. He was travelling solo through the high country aboard an F650 with only a years riding experience looking for old steam engines to photograph. He'd had a minor off in a rocky creek crossing earlier that day but seemed undeterred. Shame we only had 10 minutes in a cafe carpark to chat instead of an evening around a



campfire. Anyway I gave him a club card and told him to contact me because I'd love to see the results of his efforts. Is it just me, or does everyone else seem to gravitate to riders even when they are out and about without their own bike? Is it desperation that you miss your own bike (yeah I have blah blah blah at home) or that you finally get to talk to someone who knows what level you are on? Anyway Phil, if you ever read this, we found a steam traction engine in a paddock down the road, near

Glenrowan, that afternoon. This pic is for Phil, and I have to say I admire the young bloke's attitude.

Trevor Hooke and the Newcastle gang have stuck their hands up to host the Christmas party this year. The date is TBC at this stage and the venue is likely to be in Cassilis. Recon is underway as I write so it's great to see there is a plan in motion early.

Last November we had a little celebration at the meeting for Rob Edgar and Hans Bielaczek who have reached 40 years of membership. Congratulations!!! They were given a cupcake with a candle to blow out and a party hat each. Sadly the pictures taken of this auspicious occasion have not surfaced and therefore they guys failed to get true recognition of their achievement publicly. If you were present on the night and took happy snaps, please submit them to the editor so everyone can enjoy the event.

Safe riding folks, Alan Peters

### **Notice: Life Membership Nomination**

Rob Lovett has been nominated for life membership of the BMW Touring Club of NSW for his exceptional long-term service to the Club by Warren Buffet.

The existing life members have been polled and the nomination has their unanimous support. A voting members will be taken at the regular meeting of 29 April 2015 to ratify the nomination.

If you are unable attend the meeting any vote of negative should be submitted in writing to :

[president@bmwtc.org.au](mailto:president@bmwtc.org.au)

or the club's mail address:

PO BOX 549

Rydalmere NSW 1701

## Meeting Minutes

### 25 February 2015

**Chairperson** – Al Pennykid

**Meeting Opened** – 7.50 PM

**Apologies** – Al Peters, Dave Beers, Andrew Watson, John Visser, Bruce Campbell.,

**Visitors** – Bing.

**New Member** – Gary Powrie (1200GS).

**Previous Minutes** – The Minutes of January 2015 Meeting were tabled.

- Acc- Paul Evans.
- Sec-Dave Povey.

#### **Correspondence** –

- Magazines from BMW Club: NZ, VIC, and QLD.
- Westpac statements x 2.
- New member applications x 1.
- Invoice for beanies and hats.
- 50th birthday card from BMW Owners Club of SA.
- Receipts from Roger Martyn for Christmas Party.
- Emails from Holroyd Council regarding the use of the hall. A reminder to put the furniture away at the end of each meeting. Notification that the hall is to be fumigated during March. Any foodstuffs in the cupboard to be removed.

#### **President's Report** –

- No report.

#### **Vice President's Report** –

- A few events were run during the last month and the VP has lists of attendees.

#### **Secretary's Report** –

- See minutes in the Newsletter.

#### **Treasurer's Report** –

- The MYOB online features expire during February. Treasurer advised that unless otherwise requested that they would not be renewed.
- Treasurer reported KRR revenue of \$8,792.55 with net profit of \$4,221.38.
- Bank accounts have been reconciled to end January.
- Bank account balances stand as follows: Cheque account \$12,966.16 and reserve account \$31,027.71.
- PayPal formalities are done and the forms are to be added to the website. Al Pennykid agreed to talk to a work colleague who may be able to help.

#### **Membership Secretary** –

- 4 new members this month.

#### **Editor** –

- No report.

#### **Regalia** –

- Marie Pennykid has beanies, hats, and stubby holders.

#### **Assets & Archives** –

- New fridges for trailer required.

#### **Clubs Australia** –

- BMWTCNSW and the Karuah River Rally Committee would like to acknowledge and thank BMWCA and BMW Group Australia for the donation of motorcyclist apparel for the KRR raffle prizes.
- BMWCA Nationals – similar to the BMW Motorrad rally run by the BMWMC Canberra at Easter from 3 to 6 April.

#### **Webmaster** –

- No report.

#### **MCC** –

- No report.

#### **Past Events** –

- KRR very successful weekend. Great wether, good firewood. Great time had by all (except donate the Furchert family).
- Ron Durkin advised that he wants to donate ROK straps for prizes at rallies.
- South Coast Social Sip. Good turnout reported By Warren Buffet (new country member).
- Five Ferries Ride. Al Pennykid reported rained out, but attended by Gary Powrie who reported only slight rain and generally dry.

#### **Coming Events** –

- German Day 1 March at Gough Whitlam Park, Earlwood put on by Mercedes Benz.
- Day Ride Meeting 8 March.
- Club Movie Night 18 April. Venues being considered are Spencer, Kangaroo Valley or Burruga.
- Wollombi Pub Run 15 March.
- Capital Rally 21 March.
- Coolah Camping Weekend 21 March.

#### **General Business** –

- Al Pennykid advised that he has researched projectors. Best option to date is an Epsom projector for \$660. For speakers suggest use good quality computer speakers. Screen also sourced. Agreed to proceed to purchase.
- Committee for Far Cairn Rally required. All those interested contact Paul Evans. So far Paul, Al Pennykid and John Rayner are on the list.

**Meeting Closed:** 8.45 PM.

# *Ride Calendar*

APRIL			
Fri 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>South Coast Social</b> Sip Great Southern Hotel 95 Queen St, Berry (6:30 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month)	Tony Schmidt 0407 494 229	2
Sun 12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Monthly "Social Sip"</b> . Meet at 4.30pm at the Quay Lime Café and Bar, Port Marina, 18 Park st., Port Macquarie. (Second Sunday of the month)	Lin van Copenhagen 0417 098 255	2
	<b>Coffee and day ride meeting</b> 22 Patterson Road, Bolwarra. 9.00 Am for coffee. Possible ride afterwards to be decided on the day.	Cheryl 0408 074 214	2
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> – Sun 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Inaugural 250cc Tiddlers Rally.</b> The Inaugural Tiddler Rally at Windeyer, NSW, (near Kandos), some food and grog available but byo everything (there may be catering available as the date gets closer), accom/camping at Bushlands Tourist park in Windeyer, pub next door. There is a big camp kitchen at the camping grounds (see their website), so you can do all your own catering. All bikes welcome but a "tiddler" is 250cc and under, drag it out and use it!	Damien <b>O'Toole (DOT)</b> 0419 296 939	10
	<b>Club Movie Night.</b> Under the stars at Spencer caravan park. Camping or bunkhouse at the caravan park as usual. Malaluka Caravan Park 4377 1405. More info to come	Marie Pennykid 0428 393 093	
Sat 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Breakfast</b> at 8.30 Sandbar café, North Haven. <b>The "after breakfast ride" to be determined over breakfast</b>	Lin van Copenhagen 0417 098 255	2
Sat 25 <sup>th</sup> – Sun 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Autumn Leaf Rally.</b> Tumoramama Hall. Tumut Valley Riders		10
Wed 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Club Meeting</b> 7:30pm. Please join us for dinner before the meeting at Toongabbie Hotel from 6:00pm	Alan Peters 0414 660 890	4/6*
Thurs 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Hunter Social Sip:</b> Hexham Bowling club 6.00 PM for Drinks and Chinese dinner from around 6pm (last Thurs of the month)	Rob Tiedeman 0427 777 461	2
MAY			
Tues 5 <sup>th</sup> – Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Ulysses Adventure Group annual gathering,</b> Trilby Station LOUTH NSW.	Paul Evans 0411 738 267	
Fri 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>South Coast Social</b> Sip Great Southern Hotel 95 Queen St, Berry (6:30 2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month)	Tony Schmidt 0407 494 229	2
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> – Sun 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Loaded Dog Rally.</b> Tarago Showgrounds, some catering, live band.		10
Sun 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Monthly "Social Sip"</b> . Meet at 4.30pm at the Quay Lime Café and Bar, Port Marina, 18 Park st., Port Macquarie. (Second Sunday of the month)	Lin van Copenhagen 0417 098 255	2
	<b>Coffee and day ride meeting</b> 22 Patterson Road, Bolwarra. 9.00 Am for coffee. Possible ride afterwards to be decided on the day.	Cheryl 0408 074 214	2
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Dayride:</b> South of Sydney, TBA	Alan Pennykid	
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Breakfast</b> at 8.30 Sandbar café, North Haven. <b>The "after breakfast ride" to be determined over breakfast</b>	Lin van Copenhagen 0417 098 255	2
Wed 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Club Meeting</b> 7:30pm. Please join us for dinner before the meeting at Toongabbie Hotel from 6:00pm	Alan Peters 0414 660 890	4/6*
Thurs 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Hunter Social Sip:</b> Hexham Bowling club 6.00 PM for Drinks and Chinese dinner from around 6pm (last Thurs of the month)	Rob Tiedeman 0427 777 461	2
<b>4/6*</b> City members attending a club meeting receive 4 points, country members receive 6 points			

## Bike story

I've always wanted to ride the mountain passes in Europe and when the prospect of a trip to Italy came up it was an easy decision to include a week of riding around the Alps and Dolomites. The plan was to attend a wedding in Tuscany, get a train to Venice and pick up a rental bike that we had pre-arranged on line. Venice is quite close to the Alps and Dolomites (by Australian standards) and we thought it would be easy to experience lots of mountain passes and see some great scenery in 5 riding days and then return to Venice. The bike rental plan was to use an R1200gs water-cooled and in effect we would also have a 5 day long test ride, with a view to possibly upgrading my mid mileage 2004 model 1200GS.

From Australia we contacted Adriatic Moto Tours who do all formats of bike hire and tours. We liked their hire and self-guided option because it included a GPS with pre-programmed routes (based on our vague requirements), some background documentation and advice on riding in the Dolomites and Alps and they also make the hotel bookings for each days route. We completed a questionnaire and returned it to Adriatic, and they did the rest. It was very easy. Martej is the proprietor and speaks excellent English, and later told us that they had been doing this type of thing for 10 years. We found it to be a very slick operation and everything had been thought of. A point to note is that Adriatic are based in **Ljubljana** in Slovenia but they will deliver the bike the 130 kms to Venice (for a fee).

We arrived in Italy about a week before the ride began and like on previous visits we found it to be disorganised and "stuff doesn't work", but it doesn't seem to matter and overall we loved it. Who could



dislike a place where life is all about food and drink, every village or town has a social hub at the local bar/cafe, an excellent quality Sangiovese can be found in the supermarket for around \$3 per bottle, and superior Cappuccinos are around \$1.80. I forgot to mention that a very potent Grappa can be served gratis after a restaurant meal if you get chatting to the waiter.

Our hotel in Venice was actually located in Mestre which is the industrial/commercial/residential part of Venice on the mainland. The hotel was well placed being only 100 metres from the autostrada that we were due to ride on next day.

Friends had warned me that Italian drivers and suburban traffic were scary and I hoped that quickly getting on to the autostrada would help me get used to riding in Italy without having to navigate through the suburbs. Leading up to the ride week we noted that the weather forecast for this end of Europe was for rain for most days including storms in Austria. This was confirmed at the start of the first ride day when we woke to rain but this had cleared by the time we covered the 100 kms to the Slovenian border. Thankfully that was the last serious rain that we encountered. As we entered Slovenia the GPS lead us to an off ramp but there had been some recent road changes that it didn't show and we ended up riding in circles in the border truck stop. There didn't appear to be any way out but eventually we asked someone who pointed to a well hidden exit road for bikes.

On through the Slovenian countryside we found great bendy bike roads, idyllic mountain streams by the roadside, beautiful green forests, and little traffic. This part of the country seems to be relatively undeveloped compared to Italy. Martej's team obviously know this part of Europe well and suggested regular café bar stops via the GPS. We stopped at some of these and they were all good.

On the first day we went back and forth a few times through 3 countries, all with similar Austrian style architecture and it was a bit confusing as to what language we should be speaking when we stopped. After a while we found that the easiest way to work this out was to check out the pastry shops (there are plenty of these) – each has their specialty - Tiramisu for Italy, Apple-strudel for Austria and Bled cake for Slovenia.

The first day also included 4 passes with heaps of hairpins. All up it was a fairly long day of about 400 kms. The hotel that Martej and the team had booked us into for the first night was in Lienz in Austria. The hotel building itself looked new on the outside but everything in it was like a museum. It had secure parking for the bike although this was a bit hard to find.

The highlight of the next day would be the Grossglockner Pass which is about 70 kms from Lienz. The Grossglockner is the highest mountain in the Austrian Alps and is surrounded by a national park which has a hefty (EUR 24 for bikes) entry fee. The road has a reputation as one of the best bike rides in Europe with good fast sweepers in the lower section and then about 30 hairpins going up to the pass at about 2500 metres and another 35 hairpins on the other side going down. For tourists (like us) there is a branch off near the top to the Visitors Centre which overlooks Grossglockner mountain (about 3800 mts) and what's left of a glacier. The booklet from Adriatic warned us not to ride the pass if the weather was bad as the scenery would be obscured.

Next day started with fine weather and on the way up the road wound through some quaint Austrian villages, surrounded by fantastic mountain scenery - lots of snowy peaks, pine forests, and clear air. There were heaps of bikes on the road, and most waved with their left hands at handle bar height. It was difficult not to stop every km or so and marvel at the view, or stop at some of the many bars (with the usual "bykers welcome" sign), or a café or just soak up the festive atmosphere along the road. As we climbed the mountain the weather became cloudy and there were a few spots of rain every now and then. Little did we realise what this



would turn into further up the mountain.

We had also noticed an unusually large number of bicycles on the road, and this made sense when we came across various support vehicles with signs of a bicycle ultra-marathon on that day. The bicycles and tour buses actually became a bit of a hazard as the buses completely blocked some of the hairpins as they tried to get around (sometimes having to make 2 or more attempts because they were so sharp). The result of all this was that we could not go too fast, but this was no problem as there was so much to take in.



Near the top of Grossglockner we took the spur road to the Visitors Centre where there was a lot of snow on the ground and it was 2 degrees. We found a large car park, a good heated restaurant and bar, and a small car and bike museum (with a restored Jawa and pre-war BMW twin). Outside there were lots of strange little furry wild animals about the size of a cat called Marmots who seemed to be waiting around for visitors to throw them a chip.

On the way down the GPS took us onto the other road that formed the "pass" and headed us towards

Salzburg. We only went down for about a km, and then started climbing again and the road took us round to the other side of the mountain. Unbelievably within a few hundred metres a thick fog had enveloped us, and a few hundred metres further on it started to snow heavily. The temperature dropped to -1 deg, the fog became thicker and very quickly the visibility was down to about 5 metres. We kept going because we hoped that the blizzard would disappear as quickly as it had arrived, Instead it got worse - my visor and the bike windscreen iced up and I couldn't remove the ice. The only way I could see was open my visor but then ice particles were getting into my helmet and stinging my eyes and face. Jane's heated vest stopped working and she was freezing. The road had become slippery with ice and so I slowed to a crawl. In one place there was a tunnel about ½ km long and inside there was a covering of ice all over the walls, the ceiling and some of the roadway. Ice stalagmites were growing up from the roadway in places. I was worried that if we pulled to the side that someone would run into us because visibility was so poor, although there were very few vehicles or people on this part of the mountain. Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse 2 bicycle riders (presumably ultra-marathoners) came out of the fog ahead of us at about 60 kph and wooshed past going back down the hill from where we had just come. We felt like whimps after that.

We continued for about 10 kms through the fog and snow down the hairpins on other side of the mountain but the blizzard conditions continued and so we stopped to assess our situation. We did not know how far in front of us the bad conditions would continue, we could not see any scenery, we weren't enjoying the bends and it was getting late. We decided that the best option, out of the bad ones available, was go back the way



we had just come to the other side of the mountain, hoping that the blizzard had not moved around there as well. However, this would mean going through the worst of the blizzard again. On the way back we found that the snow had started to build up on the roadway, there were no tyre tracks and in places it was difficult to make out where the road went, as well as making the road even more slippery. However, we did manage to get over the pass again to the other side of the mountain where the blizzard abruptly stopped. 15 minutes further down the mountain we were in full sunshine and had to stop to take some bike gear off because we were too hot! We had just experienced the "very changeable mountain weather" that we'd heard about previously.

Martej and his team actually provide lots of flexibility with the routes pre-programmed into the GPS. Each day there was a short and long route to choose from, and on some days 3 or more choices. A booklet was provided (tailored to our routes) with a description of the areas that we rode through, points of

interest, and the best bars and cafes to stop at. This made it easy to decide on the long or short routes for the day's riding. After the Grossglockner the GPS took us back to Lienz but we managed to arrive in their afternoon peak hour traffic. On the other side of town the road opened out and we headed towards Corvara via a few more passes.

The most memorable of these was Passo Stalle which began with us doing 20 hairpin bends up to the pass only to be confronted at the top by a red traffic light seemingly in the middle of nowhere. The traffic light is in place because the road is too narrow going down the other side for 2 way traffic. The traffic lights (one at the bottom as well) provide a timing arrangement so that the road becomes one way down for 15 minutes then ½ hour later 15 minutes one way the other way. We found the road to be extremely narrow and in places was no wider than the bike. As we got close to Corvara we became surrounded on all sides by fantastic Dolomite cliffs. Corvara is a ski village in Winter, but in summer it's supported by motorcyclists, bicyclists and mountain climbers. The only way to get into or out of the village seems to be via one of 4 mountain passes (what a pity!!!). Here we were scheduled to have a "rest day" but that really meant that we'd stay in the same hotel for 2 nights and ride as many Dolomite Mountain passes as possible the following day.

Corvara is in the Lindan region of Italy, where they speak a different language (Lindano) although English and Italian are also widely spoken. The buildings here have an Austrian look, mostly painted white, with red and white flowers on the balconies and wood piles stacked at the side in preparation for winter. Corvara is a tourist town so prices were back to the high Aussie standards and fuel was \$2.20 pl for RON 95.

The 4 passes we did around Corvara were Gardena (which starts in the next village), Passo Sella, Passo Pordoi, and Passo Campolunglo. Near the top of Passo Gardena was a big open area next to a bar where lots of vehicles were parked so we pulled in to admire the hairpins and the view. We stopped next to a row of about 15 bikes only to be immediately accosted by an enthusiastic parking attendant. He wanted to charge us a few Euro for stopping but in addition wanted us to pay for the parking for all of the 15 bikes that we'd just



parked alongside because he thought we were part of their group. We graciously declined, jumped back on the bike and headed back down the pass to get our photos. The next 3 passes had heaps of bikes, mostly with German numberplates.

In general the hairpin corners we encountered were a lot sharper than what I'm used to, say compared to those on Macquarie Pass. The road width was narrower, the bends were sharper and the mountainside was much steeper. We found a few bends temporarily blocked with tour buses while they manoeuvred around, and on others bicyclists went around 2 abreast and took up most of the road. The right hand, uphill hairpins were the hardest because the roads are so narrow, and slope so steep that I couldn't see what, if anything, was coming down to the corner from above, even when going over to the wrong side of the road (the left) to look upwards.



Out of the 25 or so passes that we did I rate the Stelvio as my favourite, even though when we got to the top there was a serious fog, and a heap of souvenir shops. It was longer than most and had everything - fast corners on the bottom sections (on both sides) 37 or so hairpins on each side, a big variety of vegetation, fantastic mountain scenery and a few coffee shops on the way up

and down to stop and take it all in. I know the Grossglockner was good but it didn't seem to have as big a variety of corners.

After the Stelvio we arrived at Livigno which is sort of a duty free haven and stocked up on shoes and perfume. On the last day we got up early and headed south back towards Venice. This included a short excursion into Switzerland and then back to Italy for some open roads, a few autostradas, and 5 long tunnels. Most Italian car drivers are courteous and skilful but we did see a few crazies doing unbelievable things, including a car passing trucks inside one of the tunnels over unbroken lines and forcing oncoming cars off the road.

After lunch we got onto roads that had wide open sweeping bends, but speed limit was nominally 90 kph, like all country roads in Italy that are not autostradas. There were many small villages along this road and the rule is that as soon as you see the village name sign the speed limit becomes 50 kph, and its back to 90 when you see a sign with the village name and a red diagonal bar through it. There are also a few places where the limit is 70 but there are signs for this. We found that most villages in this part of Italy have speed cameras close to the town limit.

Near the end of the day the GPS advised us that we had reached our hotel and directed us off the highway and into a vineyard, with no road to be seen. At this stage we were still 70 kms out of Venice. It was the first

real issue that we'd had with the device or routes but it was easy to get around by programming in our own route back to the hotel. A minor problem for us was that there was no close autostrada and the ride from here to our hotel took another 1.5 hours.

Overall I felt that the R12 "wasser boxer" is not a massive improvement over my aged R12 gs. The wasser definitely has a smoother and more powerful motor that has magical throttle response which at times felt like a 250 but with 5 times the horsepower. It also has less slack in the drive system, and better seats. However I

felt that my 2004 model feels lighter, is more manoeuvrable and is easier to handle on the road, especially on tight corners. The wasser front suspension does not give as good feedback about what the front wheel is doing (but I do have a Wilbers upgrade). However the wasser's rear suspension is better at soaking up bumps and keeping connection to the road. I feel that I have more control over my 2004 on bendy roads, whereas the wasser feels more like a big and heavy bike with or without pillion and luggage. The bottom line is my 2004 model is more fun to ride and I'll be keeping it for a while yet.

As for the riding experience we found it to be a lot different to Australia (or NZ for that matter). The distances were much shorter, and that meant lots less high speed bends, and much shorter times between stops at interesting points. Sure there were some challenging high speed sections but we had to contend with bicycles, hikers, buses, and sports cars and there were lots of built up areas to slow for. On the passes the roads and hairpins were narrow and with the high volume of traffic it was too dangerous to go fast. However, the amazing scenery, quaint villages, party atmosphere, fantastic culture and sharing with lots of like-minded bike riders is what its all about. We're ready to go back and do it all again.

### Sun 12/102014

Today a free day, as explained, went for a walk through town, cleaned the air filters of the BMW's and spent the rest of the time catching up and reading. An early night due to an early start in the morning.



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## Mon 13/10/2014

Up this morning at 5.30am for 6.00am breakfast and a 6.30am start.

Set off for the salt flats, first 25Ks were very challenging, lots of loose sand, bulldust and corrugations, but once on the salt it was way out of the ordinary. With an area of over 12,000 square kilometres, this is the largest salt pan on Earth and the centre of a salt extraction industry which produces 20,000 tons of salt annually for domestic consumption. It is a bizarre motorcycling experience to be cruising along in the middle of absolutely zilch but a white expanse from horizon to horizon. Mike explained the trick is, if you're game, to ride with your eyes closed for 30 seconds! – we didn't! We crossed the *salar* for about 100km to Fish Island an interesting place covered with amazing cacti, had a cup of coffee before heading back to Uyuni and retracing the 200k to Potosi - arrived there at 2.00pm so did pretty good time for the day.



Peter had got a flat tyre and Mike gave him his bike to ride which meant we were left to our own devices to find the hotel,

what a shambles - after a lot of asking/explaining to various locals and with the bike on the verge of overheating we finally made it.

Potosi, whose main claim to fame these days is being the highest city in the world, at 4,200 metres above sea level. We really felt it as we struggled to carry our bags up to our room; there's not much oxygen in the atmosphere. Spent the rest of the afternoon resting, socialising and imbibing.

Just for the record; Potosi was the largest and wealthiest city in all of Latin America by the late 1700's (and bigger than either Paris or London!) thanks to the discovery of huge quantities of silver and the subsequent establishment of what quickly became the most prolific mines in the world. The entire Spanish economy for more than two hundred years was underwritten by the vast fortune dug from the slopes around Potosi. It was said that a bridge of pure silver could have been built from Potosi to Madrid.

Dinner was at a very nice restaurant - meal was huge but I wasn't overly hungry and couldn't do it justice.

## Tues 14/10/2014

After breakfast we were picked up for the mine tour, we were first introduced to what the miners require, i.e. coca leaves, dried potatoes, some other stuff, dynamite and whiskey that smelled awfully much like metho - we all bought a bag of various goodies and a bottle of Fanta for the miners as a real treat. We had the opportunity purchase some sticks of dynamite for a few cents at the corner store which the locals can do while they pick up their daily bread and milk - as we were somewhat pressed for time we didn't do!



Then onto another place, where we were fitted out in orange pants, jacket and gum boots. Then back onto the bus for the trip to the mine, passed where the miners lived - pretty basic and primitive conditions and which afforded us a glimpse of how tough a slave's life would have been here 200 years ago. We were given a very elementary rundown on what goes on, how the ore is

processed, where it is sent to and how the miners are paid - not very much!!

Then into the mine, made for Bolivians and not Australians, which meant we duck-walked for most of it, went in for half an hour, probably well over a kilometre, everything was pretty basic. We went to the mine face, which had a couple of sticks of dynamite placed into the wall ready to blow. However, we left well before this occurred and made our way out much as we had come in. Regrettably when we got out there was a union (?) meeting in progress and we weren't able to let of any sticks of dynamite.



Back to the hotel packed the bikes and did 300 odd Ks to Oruro, where we had to, again, negotiate horrendous traffic, plus ride through a large open air market to our Hotel.

NB: I might note here that so far while we were in Bolivia we were never below 4,000+Ms.

Dinner was another shambles, Mike again took us to the best pizza restaurant in Oruro, again it was closed - we then went to a place next door which would have made McDonalds look 4 star - I wanted some wine and on my search for a bottle or two found a better restaurant and we all trooped there – need I say it, the food and wine were excellent.

### Wed 15/10/2014

We proceeded north across the cold and barren altiplano to La Paz. Often mistaken for the capital (which is actually Sucre), this is a fascinating city for its location alone, at an altitude of almost 4000m but in a huge bowl of a valley 400m below the lip of the surrounding *altiplano*, and more than 5km from rim to rim. The name *La Paz* means 'the peace' and despite modern-day hustle and bustle, there is still a peaceful *olde worlde* air to the place. Again road and traffic

An advertisement for City Coast Motorcycles. The background is a landscape with a lake and hills. A person is sitting on a BMW motorcycle. The text includes the City Coast Motorcycles logo, the BMW logo, and the slogan 'The Ultimate Riding Machine'. Contact information for City Coast Motorcycles is provided at the bottom left.

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Here is part 1 of 2,

Departed Albury thursdee 10th July for Steve's 60th w/e via Caffine fix at Vivian & Bruce's in Wagga Wagga. With burn blister in left palm all was in hand to battle the mid winter cold, arriving Ryde @ 8.30pm & settled in to some nibbles & red & verbal dioreah after the well earned hot shower!!!!

For a few days did se chores, Steve's 60th, serviced bike with new \$40 2nd rear tyre fitted at Joy & Adrian's, visited olde friends Di & Ian then set sail wednesdee for another older mate, Ray in Wauchope via Nabiac M/C museum.

Still bloody cold en route Margaret's for arvo tea in Lismore to arrive Anne & Tom's near Canboolture for cuppla nights. Was given a guided fang in them there fantastic hills.

Then Tom escorted me, to make sure I left c/w with packed lunch in my baggage, to Towoomba to arrive at St George show ground at the end of a folk & poetry w/e. \$10 for a camp oven dinner & breaky & slept on the stage. \$85-\$140 for single accommodation in either hotels or caravan parks made this a good decision. The camp oven chef, a quiet country lad, said that his mate n him hold the record for most sheep shorn by a team of 2 shearers in one 8 hours day which is 709 sheeps. I think that's 58 seconds each @ about 32 blows per sheep. Good effort eh!!

Rise, shine & after in the library & posting excess baggage to Darwin, the 11am departure got me to Thargamindah & tent erected by 5pm next to 4 yuppie GS1200s & 2 Nippon bikes & fully loaded supported 4WD + trailer.

Also here is Australia's first steam powered street lights.

Well you wouldn't believe it, just after my 3am wee break, one of the gents started screaming & shouting as if having a heart attack moment. I waited for a bit & heard his mates voices- so all was in hand, mmmmmmm.

Upon rising in the a.m. I was informed that the said dyeing gent nearly did!!!! Having a 1 foot thick air bed, sleeping bag type doona but there was still a need to have a heat from the gas stove on all night!!! Would you believe it, the poor bugger nearly died. He had been to the Pearly Gates but found his way back, a very close one indeed. 4 hours in the hospital & he was set free. OH! I failed to mention a hot water bottle as well. We meet up again in the Innamincka common that night.

On arrival I was greeted by Geoff, Tony & Lloyd who had kindly cooked me dinner. Foresight, surely not!!

So far the ground dwelling fauna has been sheeps, cattle, road kill & Wedgey's, dead pigs, emu's, cats, no reptiles except for 4 lizards, dingo's, goats, only a few police, horses, Brolga's, roos but no camels ..... yet!! Aerial fauna has been plentiful.

Well who would believe that at my age I've finally bought mini gas cooker for travelling!! Hot porridge & coffee for breaky - luxury.

Generally the land scape has benefited from recent rains.

A rest day Innamincka & enjoyed some good fellow happy campers.

Also the excess fuel consumption, down by ~20% ish, was a result of wholly carby diaphragms which I replaced my spare not so wholly ones which helped a good bit.

Thursdee 24th was to be the 480 kms dreaded olde/new Strezlecki Tracks combo. Reports ranged from good to shitfull to bulldust to 100 miles of stony roads.

Well 8 hours later after about 80 kms of intermittent bulldust ( yep a few sphincter moments without a dump ) & about 30 miles stony/gravel saw me in Lyndhurst. I wish that I could ride the BMW to its full capacity.

Then on to Historic Farina for a quiet evenink. This was a bustling town in the early 90s.

Now that the Oodnadatta Track is 2kms away it's just the sandstone remains, which are well worth a look of what once was. The campsite is well worth a sleep!!

I slept in the open without tent, an omen.

After rising @ 8am, porridge with coffee I noticed a broken tube in the L/H pannier rack.  
A job for \$30 at Maree. Also lunched & wifi'd - as you do.  
5 months to Xmas & the \$40 tyre is still going strong!!

All fixed & fuelled Coward Springs was the go, 130kms via a few olde Ghan bridges & the arty works of metal!!!!

As always the bore here is worth the dip & camp but have a soapy shower afterwards as the mozzies can smell you, even through jeans & jumper. I was gunna sleep (omen) out but the mozzies made me erect the fly in haste.

No moon means looking at the exceptional star display, with binoculars that increases 100 fold!!

Both Farina & Coward Springs are worth a 2 night stay cos one could/should ponder the past along with the wonderful nothingness here, along with great facilities.

An observation that I've shared in the past without reply is this!!

When us humans watch something pass by us we anticipate & our head follows smoothly, eg. a race motorbike.

However, if you watch a cow as you ride past it's head mooves to where you are but when it gets there you've mooved on. Then repeats that in continuous moovements. Got it??

Please comment. Humour me!!

Now back the ride at hand.

Shared a fire with fellow bikers travelling with family & friends in 4 wheel thingies, great company.

It is a bit lonely one my own but meeting fellow happy campers daily & at day stops is a fair trade off.

Breakied & packed got me to WC 10am. Refuelled for security.

What great roads - 203kms from William Ck to Oodnadatta. In 2.5 hours. Lunched & fueled then travelled through the Painted Sands. Great new road & a must do.

Now camped by the railway about 520kms south of Alice.

The 1200kms of dirt roads were unhappy event free with plenty happy ones. Tyre pressures @ 15 & 25 psi made for the great handling.

It's that quiet & flat here that when I yelled out 'Good Morning' there was no echo & no answer.

Travelling to Alice Springs was event free but slow cos if fuel consumption & tyre preservation concerns. The weather got warmer once into Northern Territory with some great landscape.

Now camped with Tony, John, John, Anthony, Lloyd & Geoff & we are all getting ready for the roads to Drysdale Station.

My \$40 Sydaney rear tyre barely made it & hopefully diaphragms & tyres today.

After wednesdee I'll be out of phone service till 11th August.

Thanks to all the above mentioned for their hospitality etc, it's made this adventure just so!!!!

cheers Henning



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"Have you arrested the woman?"

"No sir.

Why?"

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