

## **TMRA RALLY REPORT: BATHURST 2019.**

**13-15 September: by Lorraine Litster**

As I did in 2018; I rode up to Bathurst on my T100 Bonneville. Thursday 12 September was forecast to be a warm pleasant day, however it dawned in Canberra grey, chilly & windy, not a nice prospect at all. I left my departure until 11am but there was no improvement so I set off suitably rugged, as I had a runny cold. I stopped in Gunning for lunch when the sun did appear, watery but warmer. I arrived in Bathurst none the worse for my trip a little after 3:30pm to find most of the Sydney riders already there & Peter Ellwood & Nigel (of Norton Fame) already in the bar.

There were 10 of us there for dinner at the Panorama including Danny & Helen Ryan. We had a very pleasant & companionable evening together in such a small group.

Saturday dawned chilly but sunny; there was ice on the saddle of my bike so it had been pretty cold during the night. The Friday ride was not due to leave until 12pm so we had a relaxed morning, several of us going up into Bathurst for various errands or just to look around.

10 of us set off for the Tandarra Lodge via the Hill End road. Our group included Peter Gallagher who was on a lovely 1950 Speed Twin, once Vance's. This is a lovely road & keeping the speed down to 90Km in deference to the Speed Twin I was able to take a look at the magnificent scenery. The Rally had visited Tandarra on the Sunday of the previous two rallies but this year the owners were persuaded to open on the Friday just for us. The pizzas were as lovely as we all remembered & we all ate well on the magnificent deck with its views. Peter Ellwood is still unable to ride due to a medical issue so came in a car with Helen Ryan.

After lunch we returned to Bathurst via Sofala, but did not stop there. When we arrived back at the Panorama most of the Rally-goers had arrived & the usual jolly time ensued. The Panorama has seemingly become the 'in' place to be in Bathurst & the dinner crowd was almost overwhelming. Luckily Jeff Skillen had reserved tables for us all: good thinking Jeff. We all enjoyed the dinner together before people began to wander off to bed. Jeff I should thank too for the four awards he had made.

Saturday dawned as sunny & pleasant as the Friday had been, with more icy saddles. After breakfast, which is included in the room rate, a wonderful benefit for us all, we prepared for the big ride. I believe we had 32 entrants & a fine sight we made riding out of the Panorama. Unfortunately I lost concentration & missed Brilliant St requiring an embarrassing U turn.

We arrived in Millthorpe to find Steve Lord's T150 on the trailer; he apparently did not get far. Col & Nancy Mc Andrew didn't even leave the Panorama with misfiring apparent. Phil Bryant too failed to start with a broken chain on the way to the Panorama woops! Millthorpe is a delight of a village & we were all happy to stop for coffee & a look around.

From here things could have got difficult for me as the Rally Leader as I did not know the back roads to Mandurama. The owner of the café came to my rescue, a local & a rider himself. He coached me regarding the route via Forest Reefs & as a result I made no embarrassing mistakes. This route was utterly lovely & everyone agreed it was indeed. The country was green & lush, & quite unlike most of the other drought affected parts of NSW.

When we eventually arrived at Mandurama I decided to pull everyone over so that we could relish the last section. Here our President & Vice President concluded that this was the lunch stop & dashed into the Royal Hotel to order lunch, only to dash out again when they heard the call to mount up again! Also Phil Bryant, of the broken chain, had dashed home & pulled out his T150 & was waiting for us at Mandurama. We were now on the Eastern side of the Mid Western Hwy passing through Neville & Barry en route to Newbridge, the actual lunch stop: the Gladstone Hotel. Here the staff were prepared & we were all served a timely lunch.

After lunch & suitable group photographs we rode the relatively short distance back to Bathurst & judging at the Motor Museum. Sadly Attilios Rob North failed to get back there due to some electrical malfunction. Col & Nancy picked him up from where they were taking action shots..

Then back to the Panorama for the AGM, which was quite lively. Shirley Wishart arrived with her usual spread of nibbles for after the AGM. This was well received by all & was indeed such a feast that I didn't order dinner. Then after dinner we had the Awards. The King of the Rally was given to Nigel who had been riding a beautifully prepared T140, all his own work apparently a worthy winner we all agreed. The President's award went to Danny Ryan for his lovely 1963 Bathtub Thunderbird. The Furthest Travelled was Col & Nancy from Ballina & the Furthest Ridden was Ted , who had ridden his Harley from the Murray River. The oldest Bike award (Peter Gallagher had disqualified himself) was Brian Weelands on his '58 Trophy. Phil Bryant was given the hard luck award, not for breaking down but for his effort to overcome the problem & catch us up! To my surprise I was awarded the Clubman Trophy for my efforts, this was an unexpected delight for me.

Sunday dawned again sunny & pleasant for our ride to Trunkey Creek. I had expected 10 for this ride but sadly there were only 8 of us, 4 of whom were in cars. We arrived in Trunkey which sadly has not progressed since the road to Goulburn was tarred two years ago. Anyway we had lunch at the Black Stump which was peaceful before a bunch of obnoxious sports bike types rode in. None of them order meals or drinks from the pub. We then rode south into the hilly section leading down to the Abercrombie River. I was following a learner on double white lines when "ROAR" past came the 'Obnoxious' overtaking the poor nervous learner on blind bends the lot. Talk about giving a bad name.

We arrived in Boorowa where this same crew was gathered at the petrol station. More haste less speed it seems. We decided to ride on to Gunning for fuel & coffee both of which were appreciated as I had gone on to reserve a few miles from town. It was a pleasant afternoon in Gunning before our last leg back to Canberra. The weather was lovely all weekend, the TMRA Rally was in luck again as we have never had a wet Rally in Bathurst! However the weather had something in store for us: on the Monday clouds rolled in & heavy rain came soon afterwards. This turned to snow overnight all over the Canberra Region, causing mayhem. I shudder to think what we would have done if that same system had hit our Rally!

Lorraine Litster

17 September 2019