



DAILY DIARY FROM RIDE DIRECTOR GEOFF KENNEDY

Stage 1

March 21 - Day 1. Mornington to Melbourne .

Along Beach Road to the city with police and motor bike escort from Peter and John Jarvis. Various extra launch rides from different points to the Official Launch at Treasury Gardens. A political protest at Parliament House resulted in the Ride's Official Launch program remaining in Treasury Gardens. A further ride on to Preston where the 63 riders were then taken by bus to Melbourne airport on to a Virgin flight to Launceston and the 9 support vehicles and drivers returned to Port Melbourne for the crossing to Devonport on the Spirit of Tasmania.

March 22 - Day 2. Launceston to Devonport and then Burnie.

The support vehicles arrive from Devonport with local volunteer drivers Peter and Ros Chalk, taking our total numbers to 74. The ride was to Westbury but team 4 went straight to the bakery at Longford. Lunch in Devonport courtesy of Devonport City Council Mayor Lyn Laycock and Devonport North Rotary. Then a coastal ride through Ulverstone and Penguin to Burnie.

March 23 - Day 3. Burnie to Waratah and Queenstown.

At last...some hills, majestic mountains and lunch at Waratah overlooking waterfalls. Ride on to Zeehan and transport to Queenstown.

March 24 - Day 4. Queenstown to Strahan to Queenstown.

A free ride day with some gentle undulations to Strahan Golf Club for lunch. Then a fast run to Zeehan and transport again back to Queenstown. Dinner with Queenstown Rotary included some international visitors Ed and Elaine Thompson from the Rotary Club of Charleswood, Winnepeg.

March 25 - Day 5. Queenstown to Tarraleah.

Another day of majestic west coast scenery. A visit to Lake St Clair. Many riders excel and achieve 100 kilometres in a day. Amazing cottage accommodation at Tarraleah.

March 26 - Day 6. Tarraleah to Hobart.

Down into the Derwent Valley. A mishap on disused rail lines resulted in our oldest rider Geoffrey Hawkins sustaining a hairline hip fracture. Geoffrey was taken to Hobart Hospital for a pin to be inserted in the hip. He returned to his home near Bathurst (NSW) and hopes to rejoin the Ride. A police escort for our final ride to the Grand Chancellor Hotel in Hobart. 40 stayed in Hobart for the District 9810 Conference and 34 proceed onto Stage 2. Dinner with Glenorchy Rotary.

Stage 2

March 27 - Day 7. Glenorchy to Oatlands.

Great riding conditions through Ross to Richmond for lunch with the Red Cross then on to Oatlands for hosting by Oatlands Rotary in some amazing historic homes.

March 28 - Day 8. Oatlands to Launceston.

Fearsome headwinds all day. Lunch at Campbell Town with TV interviews. Joined by riders from Launceston Central Rotary for the ride through Perth into Launceston. Ferry crossings for the support team with the remaining riders flying to Melbourne on Sunday morning.

Stage 3

March 29 - Day 9. Tullamarine to Healesville .

Ride via Diamond Creek, Kangaroo Ground, Christmas Hills and Yarra Glen to Healesville with home hosting by Healesville Rotary. The support team now comprises a Winnebago, two 4WD's towing trailers, 3 commuter buses and a Toyota Rav 4.

March 30 - Day 10. Healesville to Alexandra.

Now 15 riders in the group and their first experience of the bushfire devastation in Chum Creek, Toolangi and Glenburn. Lunch with Yea Rotary but a bee sting on the tongue puts Brett Cottee into hospital for observation. An evening with Alexandra Rotary where accommodation is generously supplied.

March 31 - Day 11. Alexandra to Mansfield.

Perfect riding conditions through Yarck, Merton and Bonnie Doon. A precautionary welding job on our luggage trailer courtesy of Mansfield Rotary President Graham Irvin.

April 1 - Day 12. Mansfield to Benalla.

To the back roads and a punishing climb to Tolmie for lunch with the Recreation Reserve Committee. The riders were transported over the dirt roads and then there were undulations all the way to Benalla to visit an antique bicycle exhibition at the Museum. Some amazing hospitality with Benalla Rotary.

April 2 - Day 13. Benalla to Wangaratta.

The long way of course, via Yarrawonga for lunch with Yarrawonga Mulwala Rotary. A hot afternoon ride to Wangaratta for home hosting with Appin Park Rotary.

April 3 - Day 14. Wangaratta to Rutherglen.

Some flats but then a long climb into Beechworth where we had a spare hour for sightseeing in this historic town before lunch with Beechworth Rotary. Downhill again through Chiltern and on to Rutherglen just ahead of a huge electrical storm and torrential rain. Dinner with Rutherglen Rotary at the Golf Club which included the Friday night chook run.

April 4 - Day 15. Rutherglen.

Our first rest day and we are all fortified. Dinner with Rutherglen Rotary.

April 5 - Day 16. Rutherglen to Albury and Henty.

A great day for riding as we are refreshed and fit and there are perfect conditions into Wodonga and Albury. Lunch with Lavington Rotary and on to Henty for a meal at the Bowls Club and some great country hospitality with Henty Rotary.

April 6 - Day 17. Henty to Lockhart to Wagga Wagga:

Undulating terrain through dry sheep country and Pleasant Hills. A favourable tail wind into Lockhart for lunch at Rotary Park. Some bush poetry with lunch before the afternoon ride to Wagga and dinner with South Wagga Wagga Rotary Club. 116 kilometres yesterday, 119 km today.

April 7 - Day 18. Wagga Wagga to Junee to Cootamundra

Excellent riding conditions through sheep and cropping country. Favourable winds and weather, lunch with Junee Rotary Club with a group of cyclists meeting up at Beethungra for the last hills into Cootamundra.

April 8 – Day 19. Cootamundra to Harden to Boorowa

A visit to the Cricket Captains' Sculpture Walk and to the Sir Donald Bradman House Museum. Cootamundra Rotary riders with us as we head to Harden Rotary in pleasant conditions for lunch. Dinner with Boorowa Rotary. Strange occurrence - volunteer driver Denise Farrugia lands feet first in a drum of glue - - - don't ask.

April 9 - Day 20. Boorowa to Canberra

The bike riding Gods are still smiling. Fine weather, undulating terrain to Yass for lunch with the Rotary Club. Heave pre-Easter traffic but safely into Canberra for a welcome at the Legislative Assembly by Joy Burch MLA representing the Chief Minister.

April 10 - Day 21. Rest Day in Canberra**April 11 - Day 22. Canberra to Goulburn**

Marty Millwood the Shimano mechanic joins us. More perfect riding conditions on the wide shoulder of the Federal Highway. Picnic lunch at Lerida Estate Wines and on to Goulburn past a dry and parched Lake George. A Hot Rod Weekend is happening in Goulburn – heaven for old guys! Top accommodation at the Police Academy

April 12 - Day 23. Goulburn to Mittagong

More great riding conditions and the riders are racing the clock (obviously the effect of the Easter Bunny). Arrive early at lunch so move on to Bundanoon and also early into Mittagong. Great to see the Southern Highlands area around Bowral; so green and lush.

April 13 - Day 24. Berrima to Berry

A nice hill out of Berrima to Bowral. Cool morning but soon shrouded in fog – off the road by Avoca and then rain. Lions Club lunch at Kangaroo Valley. Able to ride Bomaderry to Shoalhaven Heads to Berry – distance covered 57km.

April 14 - Day 25. Berry to Wollongong

A truck accident and road closures severely restricts the days riding into Wollongong.

April 15 – Day 26. Wollongong to Liverpool 85km

Over Mt Keira and on to Campbelltown. Photos at Clintons Toyota in Campbelltown. Many other chores to be done, new tyres on a trailer, a tow bar on the RAV 4 and the Winnebago into Sydney for some tweaking. An evening at Wollondilly North Rotary with Brett Cottee who has been a great helpn Stages 1 to 3.

April 16 – Day 27. Campbelltown to Sydney 60km

Completed by lunchtime and met by ARH officials at Parramatta Park, dinner with Granville Rotary. More housekeeping...an extra van from Rotary Donations in Kind, a catering trailer for use in later stages and extra stores.

April 17 – Day 28.

A rest day at the end of Stage 3 but photos at Narrabeen RV Centre with the Winnebago (\$600,000.00 for the top of the range model) at Anaconda and then to bike rider heaven at the Trek warehouse.

April 18 – Day 29.

Sightseeing in Sydney led by Arthur Jerome.