

HARLEY WLA ANNIVERSARY RIDE

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75th Anniversary of the 42 WLA Ride 27-28-29/11/2017

Article contributed by Kathy and Rodney Bredin

Earlier in the year on a visit to Phil's Garage, Will had mentioned an up coming ride to commemorate 75 years of 42WLA. How cool would that be, riding with other Walla's enmass!

On the Friday after lunch Katie and I trailered the Walla to Albury. We went to the cabin, unloaded then rode to Phil's. Some of the entrants had already ridden from Melbourne, Sydney and surrounds during the day, testament to how reliable these old warhorses are if maintained. The shop was abuzz with a some of the 70 odd bikes and riders entered as well as interested passer-bys. A couple of local WW2 Jeeps showed up as well. A great night of feasting, refreshing and meeting other riders was enjoyed by all. Thanks again to the crew at Phil's for hosting us all.

Saturday morning we assembled at Phil's again before departing on the ride. What a sight, wall-to-wall Walla's! At 9:00 we all left in a cloud of oil fumes and the unmistakable sound of Walla's! A Jeep led us out to Jindera then we made our way to Walla Walla (where else!) then Culcairn up to Uranquinty for fuel. Due to not squeezing every drop in the tank and a mongrel headwind I came up a couple of miles short. A quick roadside fuel can from Katie in the back up vehicle and I made it to Quinty. At Quinty we were met by family, Muz n Sal, Pymmie and Issac. Muz wanted to know if I'd gone for the Airhawk yet but I assured him I was OK at the moment, still in honeymoon phase! Pymmie and Issac then rode back to Wagga with me on his Shovel.

After Quinty it was on to the Air Museum at Temora for lunch. Here we were joined by Alan Gamble who Katie had picked up on the way through Wagga. After lunch we were invited to assemble on the

tarmac for a group photo with a Spitfire. Not every day you get this kind of invite! The 19 military Walla's on the ride took pride of place in the front row of the photo set up. After the photo session we fueled up and headed for Young. Halfway to Young, Al and I swapped over. It had been ages since I had spent any time in the sidecar, so I really enjoyed seeing and hearing the bike from that perspective. We also had a dump of rain just before Young, just enough to get wet! At the motel, the end of day maintenance was undertaken while riders refreshed and exaggerated the day's ride. Saturday evening was at the Young Services Club. A great meal was followed by a couple of prizes and some guest speakers plucked from the room. Each had a couple of minutes to talk about what made their bike 'special'. Some interesting yarns were told!

Sunday morning breakfast was supplied by local Lions Club, in the Service clubs carpark with bikes filling the street for public viewing. 8:30 am we left in a roaring mass heading for Yass then on to Canberra. At Yass we fueled up and Katie took to the sidecar for the final run to the War Memorial. I must say it was quite a challenge riding a Walla outfit in Sunday morning Canberra traffic! At the War memorial we were specially ushered up near the front entry steps to set up for another group photo. It was a special moment to have completed the ride to the War Memorial. After the photos the photographer asked if he could ride in the sidecar and take some action shots of one of the other bikes on the way to lunch. No worries, I've done that before. So there we were, riding through Canberra streets taking photos. The photographer was like a speedway passenger, hanging out of the chair at all sorts of angles!



Lunch was at the German club in Narrabundah. (No, we didn't mention the war!) After lunch we said our farewells to friends new and old, loaded the bike and headed home. Saturday run was 197 miles and Sunday 110miles for a total of 307miles over the two days. Lost 1 legshield bolt, added 100ml oil to tank and I think I picked up some junk in the carby. The bike coughed occasionally on the 'high speed jet'! A great ride! Can't wait for the 100th Walla's rule!

Cheers Rocket