



Scarsdale to Skipton rail trail run.

ATTENDEES: Don B (4600), Peter, Andrew, Frances (3800's), Don S (3300), Bernard (1700), Neil (NSU Quickly), John (Spartamet) and Rick (Victoria).

As I am writing this, our last run for 2016, I wonder at how fast the year seems to have gone. We've had some terrific runs in the past year. I think my favourite was the ride Don and Dee organised during their Venus Bay weekend. This was on The Great Southern Rail Trail between Koonwarra and Toora. Varying from undulating farm lands through to semi rain forest with many great views including the sea. The track was in terrific condition and very free flowing. We did 110 kilometres that day. The Scarsdale to Skipton trail, however is also worthy of mention. It does not have any rainforest but has many of the same attributes with the added attraction that we were travelling through 1850's gold rush country. Throw in some derelict trestle bridges and some low lying wetlands and we get a very interesting track. The track was a little different this year. The wet Winter had caused some minor washouts and a bit more vegetation to contend with but here was a lot less dust and pine cones on the ground. This year's run also saw three non Solex bikes. Neil had taken his NSU Quickly, John had taken his Spartamet – both bikes we had seen before. But Bernard and Rick had taken a 1950 Victoria. Many in the club had not even heard of this make of bike, let alone seen one. The Victoria is a very stylish bike and this one was in exceptionally good original condition with loads of character and patina. Even the fish tailed exhaust added a lot of charm. It went quite well too- about the same speed as a Solex in good condition..

After leaving Scarsdale, Neil shot off on the Quickly and by the time the rest of us reached Linton he was already enjoying breakfast in the local café. We all stopped here for a chat and some café produce. The bikes had also attracted some interested passers by. We took to the track again about an hour later. I swapped bikes with Neil for a while. The Quickly is a very fast bike compared to a Solex or Spartamet. Much more motorcycle than bicycle. The track between Linton and Skipton is quite lengthy and it took us more than an hour to get there. We dined at the local roadhouse. Here, we presented our perpetual trophy for worthy deeds done by Solex or for our non club. Our worthy winner this year is Frances. Frances and her "well married" husband, Andrew, were two of the original founding members of our non club. Frances is a well liked member who has contributed much to the photographic archives of our club newsletter. She is a keen and talented photographer. The montage in this newsletter is her creation. Congratulations and well done Frances.

Not long after the presentation, we all took the return journey back to Scarsdale. Neil decided to leave everyone in his dust again but a while later we found him beside the track with a puncture. We did consider the “Top Gear” tradition of leaving him behind to his own devices but in the end pity reigned and after everyone gave a different version of advice, we soon had him on the road again where he was once again overcome by his lust for speed.

The run was a very fitting conclusion to 2016’s events. We had all assembled around 9.30am and finally got back to base around 4.00pm. quite a long day. Most enjoyable.



Rear engine, air cooled----- it’s gotta be German.





Due to an important family commitment, Geoff was unable to attend our Skipton event. But he did wish to add some words :

SOLEX NEWS FROM THE CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSE

A SOLEX 1700 RETURNS TO VICTORIA

Recent member Leon Sims has purchased a beautifully restored Solex 1700 (see picture below) from long time SolexOz member Martin Whitehead of Ballina NSW. Martin had purchased three 1700's in pieces from Bryan Lewis of Bendigo over 15 years ago. Martin set about meticulously restoring a couple of them to a very original and high standard.

Leon recently retired to Trentham and is a long time friend of mine (over 35 years) as well a former fellow MG Car Club committee member has been riding road and race bicycles since he was 18, after riding several of my Solexes became instantly addicted and is now looking forward to riding with our group, after riding his road bike on our recent Trentham Run.



A SOLES RIDE AROUND EUROPE

A close friend of mine here in Trentham, John Fitzgerald, met a former German fellow now living in Castlemaine and mentioned to John that he had recently decided, with two friends, to head off on an adventure to Europe. Upon arrival they purchased three Solexes and set off on a 3 month ride throughout Europe. They had a few teething problems in the first week but after that the Solexes performed faultlessly.

Neil and I have often talked about taking off for a week or two on our Solexes but never dreamed of something as adventures as this?? Who knows, you are never too old to ride a Solex. I have asked John to get them to contact us and let us know about this great trip.

FRANCES

I was extremely disappointed not to have been present on the December Skipton Run and be part of the much deserved presentation of the "Outstanding SolexOz Person Award" to Frances. She was there on day one in 2007 to record our very first SolexOz ride. Over the years Frances took many great photos, rode on many runs on her trusty 5000 and organised many rides including the great "Historic Buildings of Melbourne Tours". Best wishes Frances.



France's first SolexOz Photo of the first ever SolexOz Run,
Geoff, Mark and Andrew taking off on the first SolexOz run around Albert Park in 2007

Cheers from your cadet reporter, Geoff

OUR NEXT RUN

Our next run will be held in February. Details have not been finalised as yet. We have, however, decided on our March run and it will be Don and Dee's Venus Bay run. We are giving plenty of notice for this on as it involves a weekend. Don has kindly put in some words about this run and also included a very good link to potential other runs :

Dear Solexers,

March 17th -19th is the date for our camping weekend at Venus Bay. For those who have never joined us before there is plenty of room for caravans, camper trailers etc. and some available space in the house.

There are lots of things to do if you are not into Solexing. A beautiful beach and lovely scenic walks and drives.

If you are an electric bike person let us know so we can fit you into the rail trails.

The hard core Solexers will want to do the Koonwarra to Welshpool run (Great Southern Rail Trail)

If you google www.bigyak.net.au you will find a very good site for bike tracks and rail trails.

Don Buckhurst is talking of organising a Solex run in the high country sometime 2017 and that sounds like a great idea.

Looking forward to chatting about the weekend when we meet up next.

Don Scutt.



I hope you all have a great Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.