

# Solexoz

## NEWSLETTER # 21 AUGUST 2009

### NEWS

A warm welcome to all our Solex friends and enthusiasts, the past month has been a busy time that included our very first Swap Day. This event was a huge success, see details under “Recent Events”. I am sure this will be a regular annual event.

As mentioned last month the supply of barn and shed finds appears to be drying up. We have quite a few potential members keen to buy a Solex and join in on the fun we have enjoyed over the past few years. If you are thinking of selling one of your collection let us know and we will put you in touch these buyers. Graham, Ted and Marty have all imported Solexes recently and this maybe the way of the future if our group is to grow.

Frank has a very nice and original “1700” for sale at a reasonable price, this a sweet bike to ride and has a lot of patina. In addition, a Blue 3800 Luxe and another 1700 should be available for sale soon.

Joe is currently looking into the possibility of replicating a rare Solex Triporteur as pictured below. Ern and I have often talked about producing one and it would be great to see one of these fascinating models here in Australia. I am sure Joe can pull it off.



A 3800 Triporteur,

## **RECENT EVENTS**

On Saturday August 14, our inaugural SolexOz swap day took place At Frank's in the beautiful bayside suburb of Brighton. There was a great selection of items for sale and most things sold. Items included complete and running bikes, a very good selection of new and used parts, including some very rare items.

Joe also produced some great prints including copies of factory drawings and servicing diagrams, which he generously handed out free: thanks Joe.

Bryan demonstrated how to use a powered "off the shelf" timing light (with a 12-volt battery) to check the ignition timing on a Solex. I for one was fascinated how well this worked. Bryan also bought along his latest regalia item, our new SolexOz key ring. This has to be one of the best Solex key rings I have seen, with our unique logo on one side and a very sharp line image on the other: see photo page. Anyone wishing to purchase these, please contact Bryan via our web mailbox; [solexoz@gmail.com](mailto:solexoz@gmail.com) . Cost \$5 + P&p.

Because everyone was frantically buying bargains, no one thought about a photographic record of this momentous event, my apologies for this oversight.

Participants included. Joe, Tiby, Frank, Denise, Ern, Ted, Peter, Bryan, Don D and Geoff. Our sincere thanks to Frank and Denise for their wonderful hospitality.

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

### **SEPTEMBER**

Our next event will be another popular "Visite de Ville" run. This will take place on Saturday morning, September 19 and will be another tour through the back streets and lanes discovering the history and architecture of our beautiful city of Melbourne.

Frances, as always, will guide us past some of Melbourne's hidden treasures.

Ted recently discovered a great French Creperie in Scott lane off Flinders Lane, where we will finish our run on a very French note. The French owner will reserve parking out the front of the café, so mark your diaries for this always-popular run.

Details will be sent out a week prior to the event.

### **OCTOBER**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the "1700" model will be held on Sunday October 18. This is a week later than previously advertised. The change will allow us to share our celebrations with two other important dates during the Citroen Concourse at Como Park: the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Traction Avant and the 50<sup>th</sup> DS birthday.

The first 1700 was produced in October 1959 with over 500,000 being built, until June 1961. This was a landmark model, being the first Solex to have a compound clutch.

The 1700 is the most numerous model on our Australian register with over 30 either running or being rebuilt. So if you are close to completing your 1700 rebuild, this is a great excuse to finish it.

## *THE CLUTCHLESS MODELS*

Prior to the “1700” Solex, all previous models were produced without a “compound or centrifugal” clutch. These included the following;

45cc CM3, 650 (26” wheels) from May 1946 until June 1951, with 139,000 produced;  
45cc CM3, 600 (24” wheels) from June 1951 until October 1953, 185,000 produced;  
330 model. (24” wheels) from October 1953 until September 1955 328,000 produced;  
660 model (24” wheels) from September 1955 until April 1957 363,000 produced;  
1010 model (24” wheels) from April 1957 until September 1958, 378,000 produced;  
1400 model (23” wheels) from September 1958 until October 1959 307,500 produced.  
Total production of the non-clutched models was 1.75 million in just over 13 years.

It is interesting to note that production really took off with the next two models (1700 and 2200) with a total of 1.6 million being produced in just the next 5 years

\This is partly due to the introduction of the compound clutch which made the Solex easier to ride and therefore much more desirable to a larger group of people including women and children.

Today the early models without clutches are very collectable and quite different to ride, the most obvious difference being the necessity of having to stop the motor every time the bike was stopped. Despite this added problem, these models are a delight to ride: the motors feel more free and direct without the clutch slippage of the later models. The small weight saving of not having a clutch and drum as well as not having cooling fins on the heavier flywheel gives them a delightfully different feel.

I have four different clutchless models; a 45cc 650, a 330, a 660 and a 1400.

I enjoy riding them very much but of course, in heavy traffic or stop start city riding, they are not as convenient as the later models. But we do not ride Solexes for convenience - in fact they are a perfect excuse whenever I am late!



Geoff's 1953 model 330

## PHOTO PAGE



**Our new key ring...**



**...and the other side!**



**A previous "Visite de Ville outside the Mitre Tavern in the City of Melbourne**



**A previous Docklands Run**



**Geoff's 1949 45cc model 650**



**and his 1958 model 1400**