



NEWSLETTER # 28, APRIL 2010

NEWS

For some years now, Victorian members of SolexOz have been riding their Solexes on roads and bike paths without any problems, although there has always been some question marks as to some areas of the law pertaining to powered bicycles.

Due to recent events, it was decided to clarify, beyond any doubt, our legal position so members can not only ride with confidence but also carry written evidence to show they are riding a bicycle as outlined under current Vicroads Rules and regulations and therefore riding within the law.

Over recent months Ern, Geoff and Frank have been talking to Vicroads management, carrying out testing of our Solexes and preparing paperwork to be carried by members. This process is now complete and at long last, we can ride our Solexes on roads and Bike Paths without any fear of being outside the law so long as we obey all road rules.

Each state has different Road Rules and any interstate members wishing to clarify their own local situation in regards to riding a Solex on public roads in their State are welcome to talk to either Ern or myself to clarify how we went about this process.

New members Phil and Jan of Mont Albert are keen to buy a Solex each and join our activities. Phil has recently retired from the RAAF and is looking for an interest, a warm welcome to Phil and Jan.

Frank has recently found two Solexes in Cheltenham. One is a very nice blue 4600 US model with the large headlight and other electrical fittings such as an ignition cut out and brake lights. The other is rare 1400 that has a sticker indicating that it was sold new in Argentina. Both Solexes were imported recently from America.

The Annual French Car festival was held at Balwyn on Sunday April 11. SolexOz was again invited to put on a display of Solexes and although the weather was not fantastic, we all had a great day.

Members were kept busy answering questions about our machines and special guest Gabriel Gate, dressed as a Gendarme told the onlookers of his experiences riding a Solex as a youth in France.

Members present on the day included: Ern, Graham, Frank, Neil, Glen, Dom, Geoff, Don S, Phil and Jan as well as David over from Adelaide. Solexes models on display included 330, 660, 1700, 2200, 3800 and 4600. Unfortunately, no photos were taken on the day so our photo page this month highlights some of our member's bikes and history.

Four Solexes have recently appeared on eBay in Melbourne and we are often contacted by email and phone by people wishing to buy Solexes. This healthy situation is very encouraging for our small group.

FUTURE EVENTS

SUNDAY APRIL 25.

Our next event is Don's Great South Gippsland challenge, this great event is a bit of a race along the very scenic and rugged coastal Bass Rail Trail. The start point is at the Anderson turn off Car Park adjacent to the Phillip Island Turn Off. After a lunch at the famous Anderson Hotel, we will ride the trail to Wonthaggi. A mail out this week will have final details and times.

SATURDAY MAY 8.

Neil's long awaited Bellarine Peninsula Run from Geelong to Queenscliff is upon us. This full day event will be a top ride and a chance to give the Solexes a decent bit of exercise. Details will be posted out 7 days prior or call Neil on 0415 242670.

THIS MONTHS FEATURE MODEL: SOLEX 4600



By the early 1970's The management of Solex in France were becoming concerned that export markets were diminishing because of new safety requirements being legislated in countries such as the UK, Germany and the USA. The top selling model of that period was the 3800 so an update of this model was produced that would legally comply with various export markets throughout the world.

In the USA and many other countries a minimum height limit were mandated for headlights, this meant that the headlight on the 3800 had to be raised and fitted to the handlebars. Each country had differing rules so various export models were designed for each of the markets.

The 4600 had a standard 3800 frame and 19" wheels but used the high-rise handlebars of the 5000 model. The headlight for the UK version was a standard 5000 whereas the German model used a larger light and the US model an even larger round sealed beam headlight with provision for high and low beam. The US model was also fitted with a larger taillight, turn trafficators and brake lights as well as side reflectors, a motor cut out switch and an electric horn. The standard 3800 motor had a third coil to operate the indicators and brake light.

We are lucky in having all of the different 4600 models here in Oz including Marc H and Nick's UK versions, Glen's German model and Frank and Don S fully fitted US 4600 models.

MEMBER'S BIKES.

All Solexes are unique, part of which is the history that comes with the bike. We mentioned in a previous article the importance of asking about the bikes background when purchasing. Quite often, there are surprises and amazing stories about previous owners and how they came to acquire and use their Solexes.

Over the years, our group has found some Solexes that have had little or no use, others have had a hard and fascinating existence. I personally have purchased bikes from well-known Australians such as the Packer Family, another that had hung on the wall of a business for over 40 years and others have been used by the Salvation Army.

In future newsletters, we will feature a few Solexes together with their interesting backgrounds. Please let us know a little about your favorite bike so we can share these often fascinating history and stories with others. This month we have selected two wonderful Solexes and a little about their backgrounds.

4600



Nick's Beautiful and little used 4600, complete with period accessories.

This 4600 spent over 30 years in a UK motorcycle museum from new, later it was passed to lady who only rode it once or twice before selling it to Nick to become part of his collection in Adelaide.

It is fitted with all of its original accessories including panniers, motor guard and jerry baby fuel tank. Every part of this 4600 is like new even though it is nearly 40 years old and not had any cosmetic work carried out on it.

2200



Ern's fully restored 1961 Solex 2200

This 2200 was purchased new from the Christchurch NZ agent in 1961. The Australian owner was attending an AG college and needed transport to attend lectures. After 29 years in New Zealand, he returned to Jindabyne in the Snowy Mountains with his faithful but well used 2200. He eventually sold it to his brother who is a welding contractor in the Snowy Mountains in 1997.

After another 10 years of hard work, Geoff purchased the now, tired Solex whilst in the Snowy's and bought it back to Melbourne. By then, 46 years of hard work with little or no maintenance were obvious. The roller had lost its coating and was shiny aluminum, the motor sounded like a long-term smoker but as with most Solexes, it was still running.

Last year after a bit of horse-trading, Ern became the new owner of this rare and desirable model and began a total refurbishment. The frame was stripped and powder-coated in the original black, all the chrome was re-done and the motor was fully rebuilt using a 6.5 cylinder.

Ern's 2200 now looks and goes beautifully and is a credit to his skill.

There are only five 2200's on our Australian register and is a very collectable model. The 2200 has the classic round frame of earlier models but was produced with an improved motor, which gave it performance similar to 3800, the best of both worlds.

SOLEXES FOR SALE

Graham has just finished a nut and bolt restoration of a spectacular White 5000, every part looks new and the motor has been fully rebuilt, he also has a rare 3300 in restored condition for sale, Contact Graham on 0419 009300.

Frank has a couple of Solexes from his collection for sale, both are really interesting models, details can be obtained by calling Frank on 0418 588625.

Glen has a very rare French 330 for sale, this early 1954 gooseneck model has 24-inch wheels and has had one German owner for 61 years. This very original Solex has its Red and White striping and paint still in very good order. One of only two in Australia it is a delight to ride and goes very well, call Glen for further particulars on 0413 028446.

Well that's all for now, see you on a run somewhere soon, au revoir, Geoff