



NEWSLETTER #37, JANUARY 2011

Welcome to *SolexOz 2011*. As in previous years our group has continued to improve and mature, just like a good bourgalais. We have had many new and wonderful people join our group in the past year adding to the rich diversity and camaraderie of *SolexOz*. More Solexes have turned up in sheds and barns including several more of the very rare Pli Solexes. Our runs just get better and more interesting and the number of participants keeps on increasing. And most importantly we have a wonderful bunch of members who pitch in with help and support keeping our bikes on the road as well as organising wonderful events and runs. 2011 promises to be yet another vintage year for our small and enthusiastic group.

In this Newsletter, we have some details about the upcoming changes to petroleum supplies and how this will impact on our aging two stroke motors. We will also have reports on our most recent events and news about our upcoming runs.

RECENT EVENTS

Frances has again waived her magic wand and produced another great run on Saturday January 22. Starting from Andrew's "SHED" we enjoyed a run along the trails and boulevards adjacent to the Yarra River, this run was one of the most enjoyable in recent times.

Thirteen riders enjoyed the perfect weather, scenic bush trails and spectacular views in and around the Yarra Bend National Park. A stop at the Fairfield Boathouse to top up the levels of caffeine and sugar was a great bonus. This recently renovated historic building is situated high up overlooking the River amongst a beautiful natural bush setting, hard to believe we were less than 4 kilometres from the City.

We then meandered our way back to Andrew's for a fascinating display of Veteran and Vintage Cars and Bikes many of which were fired up expertly by the Master of Noise and exhaust fumes, just wonderful. Peter's wife Hazel had her first ride with our group on Peter's MBK 3800 and judging by her broad smile, we are sure to see her on many future rides. Libby was on her second ride, handling the Solex like an expert and having a ball.

A big thank you to Frances and Andrew from all of the participants, we have received many emails and calls from members telling how much they enjoyed this top day.

Participants included; Joe on the wonderful old Rex, John and Neil on 1700's, Frances on the 5000, Peter on his Pli, Frank on the 4600 and riding 3800's were Ern, Mark, Andrew, Libby, Hazel, Ted and Geoff. Glen started out from home on the trusty 330 but suffered a puncture and missed the start. Bob was busy with the start of the Scotch College rowing season. Bryan called from Bendigo and apologized for not being able to make the run and Tiby also sent his apologies as he was pre-occupied with the impending arrival of his third child.

Not only did Frances put together this top run but also took some great photos which can be viewed on our photo page.

BIO-FUELS AND THE VELOSOLEX

During 2011, most States will be phasing out Regular Un-leaded Fuel (91 RON) in favour of Ethanol Blend E10 Bio-Fuel. Most motor vehicles built prior to 1986 are recommended not to use Ethanol Based Fuels and are now most likely to be using premium un-leaded.

Two Stroke motors will not run well on these Sugar Cane based Fuels and worse they may cause damage to various components of two stroke motors.

Most two Stroke motors were initially designed to run on the old Super 97 Octane Fuel, the equivalent today is the premium un-leaded brands that are approx. 95 to 98 RON or Octane.

Most of our friends in Europe have been running their Solexes on premium un-leaded for many years without a problem and we will have no alternative but to do the same.

Some of the possible side effects of using 10% Ethanol Fuel in 2 Stroke motors are as follows;

- a. Ethanol is an alcohol based fuel that can absorb large amounts of water which is insoluble in fuel and is separated to the bottom of the tank where the intake pipe is located. This water in the motor leans the mixture and causes rough running and poor performance. Water also causes phase separation that can affect the fuel / oil mix in 2-stroke tanks. Water in the oil mix can cause the lubricating to be less effective and increase the chance of engine overheating and possible seizure.
- b. As our Solexes are not used often, large amounts of water can be ingested into the Tank over time given the long periods of non-use.
- c. The alcohol in ethanol mix can cause long term deterioration of rubber, plastic, aluminium and can even cause corrosion of steel components. Our European brethren have noticed in particular that the plastic tank caps on later models swell up faster than the filler neck of the plastic tanks – in some cases making it almost impossible to remove the tank cap without tools and significant force!

We would recommend the use of Premium Unleaded fuels but please check carefully what you are using as branding can be somewhat misleading. The following should be used as a guide:

Mobil.....Premium Unleaded 95 or Premium Unleaded 98.
BP.....Unleaded 95 or BP Ultimate 98.
Shell / Coles.....Premium 95 or V Power 98.
Caltex / Woolworths.....Vortex 95 or Vortex 98.
United.....Plus 95 or Premium 98.

The above fuels mixed with a good quality 2-stroke oil such as semi synthetic or fully synthetic should ensure we are free from any of the problems associated with E10 fuels.

An interesting footnote is that research by the CSIRO indicates that E10 fuel will decrease emissions by 3% but vehicles will use 3.5% more fuel for the same output?



Oh, for the good old days when do-gooders did good?

BIKES AND PEOPLE

Shayne has increased his Perth stable of Solexes to six with the acquisition of a 1400 and a fully restored Pli-Solex. Both of these bikes were from Frank's collection in Melbourne. This gives Shayne a diverse and interesting collection that also includes a 45cc 600, 1010, 1700 and of course the famous 'Nullarbor 3800'.

Phil H. has acquired a fully restored 2200 from Ern, this will be a stable mate for Phil's 3800.

Down at Geelong, John has finished his immaculate restoration of the ex Peter H. 1700. This looks superb and has had its first run in January, well done John. Neil has purchased an ex NZ 5000 from Graham and is well into a Nut and Bolt restoration in orange. After rebuilding three 1700's this will be a complete change of pace for Neil.

Geoff has turned up yet another Pli Solex in Bayswater. This makes eight now in Australia. Considering only 2500 Pli's were originally built, we must have one of the highest numbers per capita left in the world of this rare and prized model. A question often raised is the derivation of the name "PLI" In French this loosely translates to Pliable or bending which describes this folding bike very well.

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY: Our next event will be on Sunday 20th Feb. This Run is still in the planning stages and details will be emailed out in the week prior, please pencil this date into your diary.

MARCH: Don S. is organizing the Gippsland Rail Trail Challenge from Anderson to Wonthaggi. Two dates are proposed to allow for weather. The initial date will be Saturday March 5th with the alternate on the 19th if the weather is not suitable on the 5th. Don has also offered accommodation at his holiday house at Venus Bay overnight Saturday if there is interest from more than 3 members. Further details will be advised as we get closer to the day.

APRIL: Neil is putting together another Geelong to Queenscliff Run in mid-April, everyone that went on this Run last year have been looking forward to a repeat of this top run. The actual date is yet to be decided and will be advised in the February newsletter.

SOLEXES FOR SALE

We know of several Solexes available for sale at present including two very good 3800's, two 5000's, one fully restored and another in very good running condition, as well as a very nice rare 3300 that was restored some years ago and has just come onto the market. Anyone wanting further details and contact with owners please call Geoff on 0403 359876.

That's all for this month, we look forward to seeing you all on a run very soon,
Geoff.



