



## LEGACY 'DOWNUNDER RUN 2014'

### Daily BLOG

#### **16 Feb - Day 1 - NATHQ to Moree, NSW - 473km**

Trip members: HARVO, MUCHO, JASE and ZULU.

A big hello to all who are reading this. Big apologies for any typo's but we are 'on the run'. The start went amazingly well with many members and friends turning up to see us off -then the gear stick in my trike parted company with the gear box. No problems, quick fix and finally off, but 1.5 hrs later. The escort party followed us as far as Aratula where we said our final farewells, and started this great event. The route from Warwick to Moree was a little daunting, with heat that can't be described; like sticking your head inside a fan-forced oven. Our stops saw kind hearted people coming up and talking, asking, and finally donating (see opposite column for each days donations). Small incident which had us ready to kill Zulu, who left the donations bucket on the back of the trailer only to have Jase stop and try and pick up the floating notes and rolling coins while traffic diverted around him. All went well until 15 kilometers outside Moree, when a mini tornado nearly upset the apple cart (our trailer). Impossible to describe how quick it came up, and how just as quickly it disappeared. Finally got into our motel room at the Alexander Motel (many many thanks to Stockie, Ian and the girls). Dinner then at the Moree Services Club where more donations were forthcoming. A pretty interesting day. Weather currently is threatening - only way to put it - but we'll play tomorrow 'by ear'. Oh, saw two cops, both waved, concentrating more on chasing the P plater in the canary yellow Torana.

#### **17 Feb - Day 2 - Moree, NSW to Nyngan, NSW - 479km**

Probably the worst road in Australia; at least we thought so. No mishaps until arrival in Gilgandra where we stopped for a coffee and a chat with two Comonchero bikers. Good conversation over coffee, the Qld bikie laws etc etc. Left Gilgandra for Nyngan along a road which bares no resemblance to any other road. Stopped at 2pm sharp and took part in a on-air-by-mobile radio interview with ABC Regional NSW radio about this event (big thanks to DOC, Perth Sub Branch). Good going right up to the entry to Nyngan until Jase's muffler flew off and got run over by a kind gentlemen who returned it to him with a "Is this yours?" comment. Best part of that was when another guy pulled over and said to Jase that he would fix the problem. We followed this guy to his place and the fixing started. While they were busy we got involved with the six dogs, five goats and numerous ducks that inhabited his place. But to be fair his wife was an animal lover and looked after strays. Good woman. Interestingly it came up in conversation that the guy (no names) knew Kasper, having served with him in the Army. Bloody small world! After many thanks to him we headed to the RSL around the corner. They had a park next door and with a little thought we approached the RSL

staff for permission to camp there for the night. Not only did they agree, but the Manager advised that beers were on them, and a meal each. Not that we asked, but the surprise was accepted readily. A very kind gesture indeed. Add to that that we collected a good deal of donations and the day was a success.

### **18 Feb - Day 3 - Nyngan, NSW to Broken Hill, NSW - 587km**

Very early start to a long day - around 600 kilometers - in heat that is sapping. Had to be an early start given that we were woken by everyone and his dog at the RSL from about 2.30am. No problems given that last night was a great surprise and well received. A coffee around 6am and we were off. The road to Broken Hill was very good compared to what we had been over. A couple of incidents which included a fight between Zulu and an Emu had us all in stitches. A very quick stopover in Wilcannia where the whole town was run by Aboriginals, including the pub. Amazing, but a short stop. Arrived Broken Hill about 5pm and could not connect with the RSL contact. Found a caravan park and bedded down. The longest trip so far proved to be the most uneventful. Tomorrow is our trip to Port Augusta, SA.

### **19 Feb - Day 4 - Broken Hill, NSW to Peterborough, SA - 420km?**

Actually, Broken Hill to Peterborough. Never reached Port Augusta due to mechanical problems with both trikes, and a lost wallet. Where do I start. Well, all good out of Broken Hill. Road wasn't too bad, and the weather started to change to cool breezes. Now, the reader has to follow me as I outline the commencement of the fiasco we found confronting us, and nearly driving each of us mad! First indication was when Harvo started complaining about the idle on his trike: the engine was cutting out as he throttled down. Jase said we'll look at it at the next stop, which happened to be a small dead town called Olary, with one pub and about 4 inhabitants. Great couple run the pub, Jan and Sam. Very hospitable, free coffee, and free accommodation for us on our way back. Anyway, while we were in the pub, Harvo decides to adjust his carburetor - on his own. We soon found that he needed help as the trike would now not start. The next hour saw the focus of the problem change to the distributor, which as it happened, was found to be defective and affecting the engine. Solution - take the distributor to the fifth inhabitant of the town and see if he can shave a few millimeters off the distributor clamping bracket. He couldn't do it but we thought about this later regarding Harvo's lost wallet. More on that shortly. Anyway Jase and Mucho agreed that an angle grinder would do the job. It did, and the engine started, and with pats on the back and fond farewells, we left Olary. A quick stop at the tick gate some 80 kilometers later and we were now just 30 kilometers from Peterborough, the turnoff to Port Augusta. But now Mucho's troubles started. The trike suddenly stopped running and gradually found itself on the side of the road. Wouldn't start. Jase had gone ahead as he was doing and didn't know we had stopped. Harvo stopped behind me. Mucho got the spare fuel can and emptied it into the trike thinking it has simply run out of fuel. Still wouldn't start. A quick thinking Zulu - standing near the trike - said the electric fuel pump was not making the same noise it always did on start up. Harvo said "use the spare fuel pump (he had brought along). Harvo

then said he would also go ahead and get more fuel in Peterborough. OK. Off he went, leaving Mucho and Zulu to fit the spare fuel pump. Hey old come off and spare went on in a breeze. Started!! Fantastic, but just for a minute. Wouldn't start again. Fuses, must be fuses. The trike came apart to get to the fuses. Hell!!! Fuses OK. "Try it again" said Zulu. Won't start. "Hey" said Zulu, I can't hear the fuel pump working. "It should be making a noise". Weeellll. Sure enough no noise, and a second fuel pump stuffed. Jase then turns up. Mucho has no reception (Optus) to call RACQ. Jase says use mine (Telstra). Done, after some arguing with them. Then Jase gets a call from Harvo in Peterborough. He'd lost his back seat when he left for Peterborough, and also cannot find his wallet. Harvo's at the petrol station having filled up both his trike and the spare fuel can, but had no money. Money given to Jase to go back to Peterborough but says he needs to go back to the tick gate in case Harvo left his wallet there. Came back, wallet not found. Mucho advises that Jase should go to Peterborough with the money to pay for the fuel and let Harvo then return to pick up his back seat (on the side of the road) and go back the way we came to see if he could find his wallet. Off he went, and here comes the pickup truck for Mucho's trike. After relating our story to him he said he had a brand new electric fuel pump which he would sell to us. Fantastic!! Mucho's trike was dropped off at the local Caravan Park (our stay for the night now, as it was now well past 6pm and no chance of going on to Port Augusta. Oh, and the stay was free). A lift was provided by good people to the local pub where we met up with Jase. But no Harvo. Calls to him went unanswered: must be still on the road. About 9pm he finally arrived. No wallet. We had a late dinner, the new fuel pump was delivered and paid for, and we got another lift back to the Caravan Park, where we consoled ourselves over a bourbon or two. Be finally.

### **20 Feb - Day 5 - Peterborough, SA to Kimba, SA - - 400km?**

A good nights sleep by all and then watched the sun rise, before fitting the new fuel pump and adjusting a few bits and pieces of our kit. A very warm farewell from the Caravan Park owners and we were off to the Police Station to report the lost wallet, then Port Augusta for a break, before continuing to Kimba where we would spend the night. All up, an uneventful day and arrived in Kimba to a very friendly place, great pub (donations) and camping in the showgrounds free of charge. The pub there was good, nothing special, a wake being run for a local who had passed on. The locals were great and donated and offered a few bits and pieces. The camping at the show grounds was top class, with really good amenities. A simple country town, with a really good cenatouph depicting all operations, not just W1 and WW2. But no RSL connection for us. Ceduna tomorrow, hopefully.

### **21 Feb - Day 6 - Kimba, SA to Ceduna, SA - - 475km?**

Well, left Kimba behind us with a promise to a number of helpful locals that we would return. In fact one local (the Butcher) promised he would cook us the very best steaks available. Can't wait. Anyway the trip to Ceduna was uneventful, thank God! However, the stops in little towns that are slowly dying out continued. Amazing to see such infrastructure as stone Memorial Halls, huge Community Halls, empty Council Chambers etc, just empty and deteriorating. But - as one local we spoke to -

that's progress. In one small town we saw a Memorial Hall (ex-RSL) with a full size statue of a WW1 Digger above the entrance way, along with a WW2 25pounder gun and a Boffors Anti Aircraft gun, all in place, but the place had been closed years before. If you the reader have not been aware of this situation with Regional Australia, here was the evidence, all the way from Moree to here, and we expect to see more along the way. Anyway, we were kept in contact with the Exec of the Ceduna RSL who met us outside of Ceduna and led us in to where the RSL was located. Wonderful pair of WW2 Veterans. Made us so welcome, and left us with the Hall for the night. Laundromat next and then more hustling for donations. Interesting observation here in Ceduna: it appears that the town tolerates our indigenous people much better than in other places I've seen. The best hotel in town - right on the broadwater and ultra modern - has no quams about letting the Aborigines into the hotel, to be served and sit and drink. No trouble from them, and if so then they are asked to leave, and do so politely. Amazing! The hotel proved to be a great place to get donations. Both Harvo and Jase put in a stirling effort and raised a good deal of money. Also, a few Police were at the hotel and advised that when we were 3 days out from Ceduna, on our way back, to call them and they would put on an escort and BBQ to help us raise more money. Wonderful guys, even for coppers. Tomorrows stop is Eucla, WA.

### **22 Feb - Day 7 - Ceduna, SA to Eucla WA - - 485km?**

BORING!!! This road is flat, long, long, long. No sooner did we leave Ceduna, then the country side changed. I'm being kind here. I have never seen such a flat and wind swept plain. For miles in any direction there is nothing more than 60cm high shrubs. No trees, just weird coloured shrubs. One shrub I finally named the 'cauliflour bush'. That's exactly what it looked like, but a slate green colour. It was everywhere. And many stretches of the road are dead straight for miles and miles. This was in fact the start of the Nullabor, and it would continue until Noresman. Riding along this road was interesting, because you start to think about wierd stuff, and you long to see something different. I recall the song "Road to No Where" for some strange reason, and kept humming this over and over, until I remembered the "Road to Mandalay", then "Little Green Bush", then "Are you Lonesome Tonight". Excitingly, the only diversions were when something showed up on the road way ahead, like a crow. Even saw a Blue tongue once. At one of our stops a local warned us to keep a watch for Camels crossing the road. Heh!!!! Anyway, we finally arrived at Eucla where we were given free accommodation at the local camping ground.

### **23 Feb - Day 8 - Eucla, WA to Norseman, WA - - 780km**

This day should have seen us leave Eucla and stay in Balladonia. However, for those of you who understand the road from Eucla to Balladonia, you will appreciate our venom and frustration. No, no breakdowns or incidents or anything of the sort. The country along this route is absolutely breathtaking. The road is superb. But it is a road that broke our hearts for the simple reason that everything, EVERYTHING we payed for was twice the price if not more. And given that the four stops were run by people who didn't blink an eye when asking for \$6 for a small coffee: nearly a "I don't

care" attitude on their part. Eucla was the first time we saw fuel at \$2.05. It was the first time we saw coffee at \$4.50. The dinner at Eucla was twice the price normally paid for a \$14 meal. The bottle of wine we treated ourselves to was three times the price then in Brisbane, or probably anywhere else for that fact. And the bar did not open till 4.30pm! But it got worse as we travelled toward Balladonia. Each truck stop got progressively higher in price with everything. Sausage roll \$5. So by the time we got to Balladonia and found the fuel at \$2.20, and coffee at \$6, and were warned that no one was to touch a tap as they were in a drought situation, but we could buy bottled water at \$6 a bottle, we had had enough. And the bar here didn't open until 5.30pm!!! What was going on??? We made the decision to head for Norseman, which was another 180 kilometers (nearly 650 kilometers all up). Didn't phase us. When we got there, well!!!! Fuel back to \$1.65, etc etc. Pub open normal hours, and prices as in Brisbane. But guess what? We have to go back that way!!!! Oh, as a result of that trip we have come up with a term for the Nullabor - Nasty Old Nullabor, or NON. While at a truck stop we bumped into a guy from the UK who was riding a bicycle. He had left Perth some weeks before and was riding to Melbourne. We thought wow, until he told us he had already ridden through 28 countries, to complete his objective of bicycling around the world. His next stop after Australia is South America. Takes all kinds. Finally arrived in Norseman, a couple of drinks in the pub, and off to the caravan park for a good nights sleep. Tomorrow Esperance.

#### **24 Feb - Day 9 - Norseman, WA to Esperance, WA - 200km**

Road a little worse for wear but we needed to cover just 200 kilometers. Did it in a breeze with just one stop at the Salmon Gums Roadhouse where we were treated to free coffee (stuff the NON) and to take the stitches out of Jases cancer surgery. Arrived in Esperance with a view that you would die for. An absolutely beautiful place. Right on the water with numerous islands just out to sea. Here we conducted another live radio interview with ABC Kalgoorlie. We quickly found the local RSL right in the middle of the town, but it was shut. However, while browsing through the Camping store next to the RSL a gentleman and his wife introduced themselves. He turned out to be the Junior Vice President of the RSL, had seen our bikes and sign, and immediately had the RSL opened for us for the night. That is exactly where we currently are as we blog this. It is 1.15pm local time, a little lie down and then we will go out on the town and see who donates.

#### **25 Feb - Day 10 - Esperance, WA to Albany, WA - 481km**

Good ride, but the roads were very average. Wonderful country but very cold. The ride into Albany was spectacular with the water, inlet and coastline opening up. This is the place where the First and Second Australian and New Zealand Expeditionary forces left for the Western Front and Gallipoli in 1914. Albany is bigger than you think, spreading out right across the land and bay. We went directly to the Albany RSL where the Vice President (Roger) met us. Also took two calls earlier from ABC Albany and GWN7 for interviews. Both met us at the RSL where filming, interviews and general chit chat took place. Roger then took us for a tour of their RSL precinct which had some of the best photographs and memorabilia of the ships leaving for the Western Front. Pure history. Our next stop

was the Caravan Park for our digs for the night. A small effort in the CBD took place at getting donations, then trying to get a feed (4 pizzas at Tuesday prices), and a six pak (for Jase), two cabs, 2km walk, and finally our day was over. A great sit down with a few drinks (female back packers everywhere), Harvo lying in his swag with a bad arm, Jase, Mucho and Zulu sitting at the common table drinking and ruminating about the day. We went to bed. Would have been great to see more of Albany, but we are not tourists. Cuballing is waiting for us, our half way point of this run.

### **26 Feb - Day 11 - Albany, WA to Cuballing, WA - 293km**

Sun rise and our last day to reach our half-way point, Cuballing. Took a half hour to check emails, about 50 to be answered. Closed the email system quickly. We have just 200 km only to complete today so the pressure is off. Contact with Big Rig OK. All in place for our meeting with Perth Sub Branch at the Kiwi Club on Friday night. A number of the Perth Sub Branch members will meet us at Cuballing on Thursday, then escort us to the Kiwi Club on Friday. Contact with Dagwood who has arrived in Perth from Brisbane, and will ride in with us to the Kiwi Club. Talked to Lees who was with Dagwood, she still has a smile and good spirits. Riding, riding, riding. Just goes on. Pulled over for a route appreciation, and a car pulled over, a woman jumped out and gave Mucho \$20 for the donation tin. They said they saw us in Albany and finally caught us outside the town. Hell!!!! Got to the town of Narrigan where we met up with Harvo's brother Brian, who then led us to Cuballing, and his hotel. Very good hospitality. Each of us has a room, and a big dinner tonight. We need it!!! We have now done 4600 km. Trikes and bike are doing well. Harvo, Mucho, Jase and Zulu are feeling it. Got a text about Wazza (Brother in Arms) who was hit by a truck and is now in the PA Hospital on an induced coma. Our hearts go out to the man, a wonderful guy. We are being updated continually with his condition. But we are only half-way on this run. We now know what is ahead of us on the way back, where before we could only imagine. We have'nt seen a TV or newspaper in over ten days, and are not sure what news is out there, or if the world is in another World War. Hey! No one has said we are in trouble (Australia) , so that's good. Tomorrow we have a 'day off', but Harvo is keen to get back to Narrigan to collect more money (13km from here). Hey, go mate. But Mucho has a head cold, Zulu has a birthday, and Jase is .... just Jase. We are all over-awed with the fact that we have reached Perth. A wonderful achievement while keeping in mind that we must turn around and head back to Brisbane, another 4600 km. Someone once said that 'good leadership means you start a job, and you finish it". This trip is not a DIY! It is a team effort, and our team (Mucho, Harvo, Jase and Zulu) have been tested. You cannot understand someone until you have lived with them, daily. This trip has launched four people out there to complete a job. We have kept faith in each other, and it has paid off as we are now stronger. And to date we have collected over \$3000 for Legacy. Tomorrow a sleep-in, and then more efforts at collecting donations.

### **27 Feb - Day 12 - Cuballing, WA**

Next day was superb with a fantastic morning as we sat on the hotel verandah and began to appreciate what we had so far achieved. Cuballing was actually half way, not Perth. We took advantage of the few hours we had to relax, cleanup, relax and have a quiet drink before the Perth boys arrived. Brian's hospitality was perfect. The man couldn't do enough. After 3pm the first of the

Perth Sub Branch members arrived. It was great to finally meet so many members whose names and faces I remembered from the many application forms processed at NATHQ. And here they were face to face. What a head spin to see and feel the enthusiasm they felt for their Club. Drinks began all around, and continued to a very decent hour. Although each of the Perth lads were great, it was OXO who first stood out from the crowd. First thing you notice is the Indian motorcycle he rides, decked out in everything leather, tassles, chrome conches, exhaust pipes that flare out and go another foot passed the rear mud guard, 12" Bowie knife strapped to his seat, bull whip tied to the handle bars, a set of spurs attached to the gear pedal through shaft. I could go on, but when you see his vest and appreciate the stabble belt sewn to the bottom of his vest, the personal patches and encoutrments, his cowboy hat with a feather in the pugary, camouflaged pants, heavy boots, belt with ammo studs and ... on and on and on. You can only applaud such individualism and pride in how he represents himself. And the man has been to places you can only imagine. SPOOK (V/Pres) then became the focus with a smile and manner only a true bloody hero could demonstrate. Nothing fazed him, and everyone got on with him. And the bastard has a MBMMC rego plate on his well oiled Harley!!! It was a pleasure to sit and talk with the man, appreciating his character, and his enthusiasm. FISH (Sec) faced up. Hey, he's ex-Airforce. But well done to him and the work for the Club. Just fitted in so well. SARGE, WHALER, PAUL, NICK, KNUCKLES, and ANNIE (if I have missed someone then our final story will pick up on that). So many members to get to know. But this was a start, and we had a good night before bed. Tommorrow we will se a few more Club members turning up to escort us into Perth. (Have to change that 'X' to a tick on the Checklist).

### **28 Feb - Day 13 - Cuballing, WA to Perth, WA - 200km**

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, bloody more! We all stood there and counted in the other members who came to welcome us to Perth. Finally caught up with TK (last time was in Bris). One can only appreciate the look and 'feel' of someone who has been there and done that: TK! So many with so much experience, I could only stand back and watch as they greeted each other, and then I said hello. I am sure that Harvo, Jase and Zulu felt the same. Here were nearly 20 members of our Club who we had never met, but showed the same enthusiasm and pride that we have nurtured in the last five years on the East side. I am sure GADGET in Sydney aqnd ARNIE in Darwin, and FANG in Fraser Coast and ... and ... and I could go on. They would all have been impressed with these West Side boys. Our ride from Cuballing was a masterpiece. TK (Road Captain) briefed all, mount up, (my Go Pro is switc hed on) Trikes to the rear, and off we go. 75 metres down the road, ready to turn left as the bikes have done, when the hand of fact unfolds its fingers, points to my trike, sweeps across to JASES bike in front of me, keeps sweeping to point at the B'Double not 15 metres away on our right, sweeps back to JASE, stops him while the finger sweeps to me looking at the B'Double, and sweeping back to me as I smash into the rear of JASES bike, mount the kerb on the left with attached trailer bouncing like a stung Rodeo rider and screaming engine, only to settle, switch off, and hear JASE exclaim "F\$#@!!!! (Go Pro video to follow, no communications will be enetered into, WAITOUT!). Only 10 minutes lost to pickup baby formula (sic), running shoes, and everything you can fit in a bike pannier (JASES). Back on the road with 80% of the Perth boys unaware. Rode onto the Kiwi Club, with thoughts about embarrassment and retaliation from JASE, but all good. However, I do remember - at the crash scene - SARGE picking up a Tupperware lid and a running shoe and handing it to me to place in the trunk on the trailer. I detected some consternation

from SARGE as he looked at the lid, like, "Who has Tupperware these days Bros?" and "Who wears KT26's these days Bros". I said nothing to JASE. The speech given by BIG RIG to all who attended the Endorsement meeting was superb. Would not have expected anything less. And he was still smiling when we met for the first time, was enthusiastic after six months of pulling members together, and raising the Sub Branch, and was the same BIG RIG that I spoke with on the phone, talked to via Skype, exchanged hundreds of emails with, and felt manno manno with (5000km away) as together with the NAT EXEC, we raised something special. Here he was, and he looked exactly as his photograoh showed. Man never aged!!!! Jesus!!!! The meeting comprised the majority of Perth Sub Branch members, many family members and many community members. Our Endorsement was confirmed via the Constitutional Checklist as required and the Perth Sub Branch came into existence on 28 February 2014. The rest of the night was art Club business, talks, congratulations, 'be awares', drinks, wonderful food, a bloody good Legacy donation from the Kiwi Club (bless thier souls) and finally, Karaoke" with TK hogging the mike, singing in Maori, laughing as he pushed everyone aside, wrestled the mike from someone with a bad leg, played his guitar louder than the Karaoke, and, shit, but what a great bloody night. JASE and I slept outside in our swags under a beautiful sky, and HARVO found a broom closet somewhere in the Club. DAGWOOD and ZULU left early for DAGWOOD'S place. Many thanks to NICK and his partner and family for giving DAGWOOD et al a lift home.

As a post script, there were so many photographers and others who recorded what had happened that the history of the Club, and in this instance, the Perth Sub Branch, will never be forgotten. We will ensure that 'Live to Ride' and "Oz Bike" magazines are provided with the story of the raising of the Perth Sub Branch when we get back to Brisbane. The Sub Branch deserves it.

### **01 Mar - Day 14 - Perth, WA**

Saturday saw us finally having a day on our own at DAGWOODS premises. We were aware that BIG RIG had organised a morning tea with various community personalities in attendance on Sunday, but today we were supporting HARVO and the wedding he was going to for his niece (Brian's daughter). So we (MUCHO, JASE and ZULU) lay back and watched HARVO sweating and swearing, trying to squeeze a size 40 body into a size 36 pair of pants. Nearly, but when JASE pointed out that the fly still hadn't been secured and grey bulges were apparent, HARVO had had enough and disappeared into a room. More adjustments to both trikes before the last move from Perth to Brisbane. At some stage HARVO was picked up by family for the wedding, but most of us missed it, being under one trike or the other. Hope he has a great time. ZULU cooked this great meal, noddles and mince, which he said was a South Affrican delicacy but less the Biltong, salt, source, and the secret 15 spices etc: the Biltong couldn't be found in Mannington. Anyway, we (MUCHO, JASE and ZULU) gorged ourselves on ..... but good!! And then we washed up. Memorable. More news came in of accommodation in Kalgoolie for Monday and Tuesday nights. Should be two great nights with plenty of donations. Awaited HARVO'S return but gave up around midnight. All slept but were woken by an elephant moving from the front door, through the lounge and disappearing out the back door. HARVO was back. We stared, and then went back to sleep. Last word from DAGWOOD : "What the f\$#@ was that?".

## **02 Mar - Day 15 - Perth, WA**

Early morning start, and waking up. Normal, as our routine has not changed. Over the last twelve days we have woken around 0530am. Sit watching the sun rise, smoke, coffee, small talk. Schedule is in place and has been working well. A few more adjustments to the trikes, then ready for a move to Quinns Rocks RSL for the morning tea organised by BIG RIG. Arrived finally at Quinns Rocks after a long trip along numerous motorways. Seems Perth is surrounded by motorways which go each and every way. Got there. Wonderful reception for the Club. A number of dignitaries who were seen as important to helping our Club and the RSL in general. And the media. A few journos and Channel 9. Community members also. Good group. All helpful. The morning progressed very well with many interviews. All about the Club, the Legacy Run and our association with the RSL in general.

Back to DAGWOODS and an early morning move to Kalgoorlie. Some of the Perth boys are going to ride a small distance with us as a farewell. Cant disagree, but they have done so much.

## **03 Mar - Day 16 - Perth, WA to Kalgoorlie, WA - 592km**

Another uneventful day, as we left Perth behind - NOT!!!! This day will be one we will remember and talk about for some time. The best part of course was the show up of some 15 Perth members who took the public holiday to escort us a hundred kilometres out of Perth. Can still see OXO as we passed him on the road, doing the HA KA. Could not ask for a better departure. Well done. No sooner had the guys and girls ridden off with plenty of arm waving when my trike suddenly refused to start. And a very strange noise came from the vicinity of my starter motor. No amount of funny cranking could get the motor ticking over. Plan B - Harvo would tow me, and the trailer to effect a jump start. Problem occurred that once my motor jump started, I couldn't get Harvo to hear me screaming STOP! With my trike and trailer (pushing its bloody weight around, I slid around the dirt truck stop sideways, nearly backwards and then swinging around trying to apply brakes that took no notice of the dirt road. Eventually stopped to hear Harvo say "What happened?" Anyway, we left. All OK until our next stop. Another tow and jump start to get going. Again, because of the dirt road we effected a swaying drunk routine, while attached by the tow rope. Off again. All the while though Harvo noticed a great deal of oil leaking out of his motor, from somewhere. Not good. The road in places was not the best either, but the small towns slipped by as we progressed towards Kalgoorlie. Next stop we met the local copper, who came over and donated some money and had a chat. Nice guy. Wished us the best and he left, before we attempted our next towing episode. This one was better and I thought we had it by the balls. Next stop would have made the Three Stooges look good. We had pulled over on the side of the road for a break, as no truck stops existed until Kalgoorlie. Wide shoulders and shade. Heat was now around 40. We hooked up again, and off we went. Too fast!! Screams from me which Harvo couldn't hear. My trike was now swinging side ways and Harvo kept going. The white post at the side of the road disappeared under my trike while the tow rope twisted itself around Harvo's rear wheel. Now he was dragging me, as best as I can put it. Still going, and Jase now, on his motorcycle screaming up to get Harvo to stop. This he did when my trike - sideways - slammed into the front of his trike. His expression you would not believe. We both ended up - locked together - on the highway. Jase waving trucks and caravans to go around, Zulu

sitting on the back of Harvo's trike, looking like Hannibal Hector with his face mask on, saying nothing, just staring and holding on for dear life. Both trikes now off, not a sound anywhere, each of us looking at each other. We soon got moving, removed the tow rope and hooked up again. Steady Eddie this time. My trike started, tow rope off and next stop Kalgoorlie. Arrive at my mates place and parked the trikes and bike, and sat down with a welcome beer. That night we conducted an AAR and laughed with some relief. But the two trikes were now off the road until repairs could be effected. To date we have completed some 5500km. Looking forward to a great nights sleep.

#### **04 Mar - Day 17 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Awoke to a brand new day, and plenty of work fixing the trikes. But hey, we were not stranded out on the road, and my mate gave us complete run of his home and workshop. Harvo and Jase commenced the necessary repairs to Harvos oil leaks which entailed taking the body off the trike and virtually dismantling the motor. The oil leak was a major concern but where it was, was the thousand dollar question. I took the morning in removing my starter motor to determine why it failed. After some time taking it apart it soon became apparent that it was cactus - bearings or armature or something was very broken. A quick trip into town found Peter and I hopping from olne auto electrician or auto shop to another. Finally we found a place that said they could fly one in from the East. I asked the obvious question, "Where in the East?" From BRISBANE!!!! Peter and I looked at each other and laughed. Anyway, it would take two days. They gave us a very good discount, and we returned to Peters place where repairs on Harvo's trike were still ongoing. With the delay in getting a new starter motor it meant we were now two days behind our schedule. No problem, as we were heading home with no need to rush. End of day saw us sitting around with a few drinks, pizzas for tea, and an early night.

#### **05Mar - Day 18 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

By lunchtime today saw Harvo's trike fixed. A quick run to determine its state and all OK. No news about my starter motor. Peter took us for a tourist run around Kalgoorlie, including the Superpit. Absolutely amazing!! The Pit was some 850 metres deep and covered many square kilometers. It was huge!!! Looking down into it from the Lookout was spellbinding. The huge shovels (excavators) and dump trucks looked like Matchbox toys. The 'tailings' -leftover dirt after the gold has been extracted - stretched for kilometers to the south. On average one ton of dirt yields just .5 grams of gold. But plenty of gold there is. Peter then took us for a tour of the last old time housing left in Kalgoorlie. Shanty town is what it should be called, extremely small houses, ready to colapse in many cases, but still lived in. Should call it 'Deadwood". We returned to Peters place and did little until about 5pm when we headed into town to collect donations. I came home early with a worst back then the previous days and went to bed. The others would be back eventually.

### **06Mar - Day 19 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Its 0630am here and awaiting a call about my starter motor. Fingers crossed it gets here today, which will allow us to continue our trip tomorrow.

### **07Mar - Day 20 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Its 0630am here and still awaiting a call about my starter motor. Small issue sorted with his tike.

Its 0930am here and still awaiting a call about my starter motor.

Its 1230am here and still awaiting a call about my starter motor.

Its 1530am here and still awaiting a call about my starter motor.

### **08Mar - Day 21 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Its 0630am here and still awaiting a call about my starter motor. Have called the girls at Ashmold Ingram and they reckon it should be here between 0730 and 0800. Called the girls at 0900 and they had bad news, I couldn't call every two minutes as the part had arrived. SHIT!!!!!!

Part picked up with much flourish, many thank yous and go!!!!!! Part installed. Motor started, and ..... shit, whats that noise? Vibrations, crunching, bumping, nothing. Part installed correctly? YES. Motor starting? NO. Try something!!!! Tinker tinker, YES, motor has started, lets go. Packed like a Bouduin caravan. Headed out from Pete's like we were going to conquer the world. Sat back like outlaws, riding, looking the normal folk in the eye, and pulled up at the local IGA for food to sustain us across the NON. Hey, donations coming left right and centre from local folk. Got everything. Lets ride. Trike wouldn't start, won't start, refuses to start. A couple of locals look in, hey, sorry. Another young guy looks in, "Hey I can get a mechanic to help you". Call put in, and an hour later a mechanic pulls in and starts to assess the problem. An hour later we need a new distributor. Electronic egnition burnt out. I'm off with a local as driver, picking up points and condensers. Lets go back to the old days just to get the trike moving. Came back to IGA and with luck Julia (Petes wife) turns up, advises Pete of our situation, he turns up. I'm again out trying to source a new distributor, and eventually we end up at Pete's place from where we left. Now, this is where it gets really interesting. Sat around and discussed the problem. What was it? Hey, the new starter motor wasn't acting as it should. Rip it out. As such, a small brass piece (mangled) fell out. Where was the other half? it was the brass bearing that held the end of the starter motor in balance. SHIT!! It will be like trying to create a new brass bearing .... from what? Night, go to sleep, sort it out tomorrow.

### **09Mar - Day 22 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Woke, and straight to Supercheap, or Repco, or whatever. Picked up all sorts of parts including a small brass gas plug which Jase said he could turn into a bearing. Hey, do what you have to do. No one in Kalgoorlie can help us today (Sunday) so we have to help our selves. While Jase was engineering the small brass bearing, we were ripping down the carby, cleaning everything that needed it, adjusting, adapting, creating ..... hey, whatever. Finally we had all we needed and put all together. The trike started, no rattle from the starter motor, but the trike ran like a cow with a nervous disease. Popping, coughing, cracking, surging, SHIT!!! We kept at it, adjusting, adjusting, adjusting. Still rough as a rodeo rider. Where to now? Can't go on like this so Monday (tomorrow) we will get my trike into a carby shop and get it looked at. That puts us in Kalgoorlie now for a week, about five days longer than we thought. Hey, what can you do?? But for the grace of Peter and Julia, where would we be? Our ever lasting thanks to the these two people who opened their home to us, and didn't really know when we were leaving. Ha!!! Anyway, we are siting here having spag/bol and talking, a few drinks and ready for bed.

PS: Spirits amongst the guys, OK! Getting on with our mission, OK. Are we late getting back to Brisbane, YES. Do we care?? .....

### **10Mar - Day 23 - Kalgoorlie, WA**

Woke. Started the trike ... nothing!. Headed to a mehanic who knows everything about VW engines. Steve of Kennedy's Towing and Mechanics. Took him 15 minutes to identify a stuffed head on the right hand side. Removed head - valves gone, and the head turned out to be none repairable. After a few hours and consultations with distributors, found we could get a new head from Perth. Further discussions with Steve found that the same deterioration was happening with the other head. Idea!!! Get two brand new heads. Ordered two brand new heads at \$350 each. I guess I would have replaced them at some stage after 10,000 km. Pay now or later. Also identified a small crack in the main sub frame. Steve called a mate and a MIG turned up, turned on and fixed the crack. Also identified a missing resistor for the new coil, which Supercheap did not tell us about. Anyway, one little bolt and some leads, all done. Steve advised that the new heads would be here from Perth by 8am tomorrow, and the trike would be ready to travel by 12 midday. Call made tp Peter and advised that we would be one more night at his place. No problems. Will miss Kalgoorlie after 7 days.

### **11Mar - Day 24 - Kalgoorlie, WA to Baladonia, WA - km?? or to Ceduna, SA - km?? - We'll see**

Did not make it out of Kalgoorlie today as expected. But I have my trike back and it is the best it has ever been thanks to the absolutely great work from Steve. Take note of what has been done to get it working after the gruelling 5,500 kilometer trip over here:

Anyway, \$1500 later, I have my beauty back, and tomorrow morning we are off and running for Queensland - finally!!!!

#### **12Mar - Day 25 - Kalgoorlie, WA to Caguina, WA - km??**

Left Kalgoorlie and snapped a mudguard strut and sheared a bolt on another strut. Hobbled into Norseman where Wilsons Auto Repairs welded the snapped strut and replaced the sheared bolt, free of charge. Well done Wilsons. Headed out towards Caguina with Harvo nursing a leaking main seal. Oil being replaced regularly. Back onto the NON and the same conditions as previous, but we are now carrying an esky with food and drinks etc. Arrived Caguina without any incidents and booked into the local caravan park, free of charge.

#### **13Mar - Day 26 - Caguina, WA to camp area passed Border Town, SA**

Set up camp right on a lookout overlooking the famous cliffs of the Bight. We could see for bloody miles and miles. Amazing coastline, and country. Slept a windswept night but no rain. Cold morning and freezing run as we continued across the NON.

#### **14Mar - Day 27 - Border Town, SA to Ceduna, SA**

Ride was cold, COLD!!!! Continued our normal routine of 100 km hops, with ten minute stretches. Arrived Ceduna with oil being replaced in Harvos trike regularly. Hopefully he can pickup a main seal in Port Augusta. Arrangements have been made to purchase one and possibly repair the leak in Wilmington where we have a good contact and workshop. Night in Ceduna went quick.

#### **15Mar - Day 28 - Ceduna, SA to Port Augusta, SA**

Arrived late afternoon and Harvo went to pickup the main oil seal. Not where he was advised it would be. Booked into a caravan park - had to pay! Set up camp next to a couple who had six children and were on their way to the sunshine coast in Queensland. Harvo took the kids for a quick ride and they got a buzz out of it. Interestingly, talking to the parents they mentioned that their kids were being 'home schooled'. Wonderful stuff. Slept well.

#### **16Mar - Day 29 - Port Augusta, SA to Broken Hill, NSW**

Stopped at the Olary Hotel in Olary, a town with 4 people. Two great people welcomed us and advised that if we were going to Broken Hill, then we should visit Silverton, a small town running a horse race and 'recovery day'. Should be hundreds of people there willing to give donations to Legacy. So off we went, and as we got into the outskirts of Broken Hill, there was the sign for Silverton: 27 km. Oh, Silverton is the place where they made Mad Max series and a hundred other

movies or commercials. Wonderful place, and a great atmosphere. The owner put us up on the verandah, and fed us fish and chips (at \$10 per meal) Hey, all OK. Glad to be there.

### **17Mar - Day 30 - Broken Hill, NSW to Nyngan, NSW**

Long ride to Nyngan. No problems except the need to keep the oil upon Harvo's and my trike. Nyngan caravan park was simple - free. We slept, left and did the run to Tamworth, and finally Armidale.

### **18Mar - Day 31 - Nyngan, NSW to Armidale, NSW**

1Gilgandra, Gayndah and finally the outskirts of Tamworth, where, shit, Spider was waiting for us. Fantastic!!! "Mate, get on the tail end as we have a TV crew filming us coming into Tamworth". Done! As we rode through town and up onto the Armidale road, the film crew were there. Done!! Armidale and the local caravan park: had to pay. Hey!! Next morning we were off before the sun came up.

### **19Mar - Day 32 - Armidale, NSW to NATHQ, QLD**

Left Armidale early. Good ride through many small towns, Tenterfield and then .... Harvo snaps a mudguard strut and shears a mudguard bolt. Same as happened to me in Norseman. Quick wire fix to keep the mudguard attached to the trike. We pulled over in Wollongarra, and got off to have a break and get a coffee. Next thing we know is this guy comes out of his house and asks what is the problem. Explain. He says "drive your trike into my workshop and I will fix it". Unbelievable, but through talk his brother was a Vietnam Vet: died from cancer, but belonged to the VVMC down at the Bunker (ten minutes from the VAC). More talk and fixing the trike. Wonderful couple, Gary and Wendy. Finally got Harvo's trike on the road, and we are off. One hour from home. Keep going. Two more stops and finally .... we drive into the driveway at the VAC. Great reception, families and members there to welcome us back. Parked our trikes and bike and just kicked back for an hour. Then Harvo and Jase said their good byes and went to their homes. RUN OVER!!

### **Summary -**

10,000 kms ridden,

32 days to cover that distance,

went through 4 States, twice,

collected over \$8,600 in donations (shit loads of coins, heavy – both physically and online)

met thousands of wonderful people,

counted 4, 832 dead kangaroos, but only saw two hop away,  
saw two emus, one damaged by a truck,  
saw over 2 million goats,  
talked to dozens of truckies who told us about hundreds of Camels of which we saw none.  
slowed for a wedge tailed eagle eating road kill, whose wings covered two lanes as it took off,  
magnificent.  
saw one blue tongue lizard, on the NON. who moved slowly across the road, we slowed, and it finally  
got across in one piece. Go QLD'ers,  
went through hundreds of towns that were shut down. No work, everything still there, no  
occupants, Councils or State facilities abandoned. Dying. Dead!  
saw RSL Memorial Halls and Cenotaphs, lying foal, no one to look after them, no members, no one.  
To stand forever, alone, a bygone age, no carers.  
got fleeced by half a dozen fuel stations (NON) who went from \$1.56 to \$2.27 cents per litre because  
they could,  
at one place we couldn't have a drink of water unless you paid for a \$6 bottle,  
had dozens of people help fix our trikes but didn't want money,  
had many caravan parks who charged us for a camping site and didn't care about Legacy,  
had more caravan parks that gave us free camp sites that did care about Legacy,  
changed our clocks a dozen times moving from east to west,  
changed our clocks a dozen times moving from west to east,  
met dozens of police, who wished us well,  
had over 14 radio interviews about our run. Had three TV interviews about our run. Had many more  
calls about radio interviews which came through in 'black spots'(no coverage) and couldn't take  
them,  
met with many RSL Executives who helped, and couldn't touch base with a few who may not have  
cared,  
met the man we past going to Perth, who was riding a 4 wheeled buggy with two horses and a dog  
to raise money for cancer, and past him as we headed back to Brisbane and he'd done just 50 km in  
two weeks,  
never again saw the cyclist who was peddling around Australia after having peddled around 26 other  
countries. Must be in Eaglebie!  
saw no TV news or anything on TV during the 5 weeks,

slept in a swag every day for five weeks,

we spent over \$2000 (own money) to keep our trikes and bikes running,

we are thankful to those organisations and individuals who gave money for us to conduct the run, and raise the money for Legacy,

us four who conducted the run are forever grateful to our Club brothers - DOC and SPIDER in particular - for helping us with their time in organising the media and RSL branches in advising our movements.

cannot thank Australians around the country enough for their hospitality and good grace. We would never have finished the run without them. OZZY, OZZY, OZZY!!!!

We are now back home from where we started. Our last words are for our families that we left behind, but who supported us every day. Thank you. God bless you.

***Nostrum Est***