

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

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Media Release

MRA Toy Run Future Assured

The Motorcycle Riders' Association's annual charity Toy Run, the future of which had been put in jeopardy when its traditional destination of Hahndorf Oval had become unavailable, has secured a new home at Callington, thanks to the support of the Mount Barker Council.

Mount Barker Council was keen to retain the Toy Run within the council's boundaries as it is considered one of the district's major events, and has offered significant logistical and infrastructural support for the move to the new location.

The MRA Toy Run will also have a new starting point at the Victoria Park Clipsal Track, a move also from its traditional starting point at Glenelg, where it has enjoyed the support of the Holdfast Bay Council since the inaugural Toy Run in 1979.

Since the commencement of the Toy Run, motorcyclists have gathered at the end of Anzac Highway, Glenelg, to ride to Hahndorf along Cross Road, the Freeway and the Old Mount Barker Road, but increasing traffic and residential development have caused safety problems in recent years.

MRA President, Peter Mount, said, "Ironically, we are a victim of our own success. Where once the Toy Run only took twenty minutes to pass through an intersection, it now takes over an hour, which means the Run has to be broken up into smaller sections, thereby diminishing the spectacular visual appeal of a huge number of motorcyclists in one massed ride.

"Safety of the participants has also become an issue on the ride into Hahndorf, with an increasing number of residential properties along the narrow Old Mount Barker Road into Hahndorf, and the increasing popularity of the area for tourists."

Mr Mount said the MRA was extremely pleased with the support of the Adelaide City Council and the SA Motor Sport Board for the event's starting point relocation to Victoria Park. "This is a more central place to gather, and with a relatively straightforward ride to the Freeway along Hutt Street and Glen Osmond Road, many of the problems of Cross Road will be overcome," he said. "Victoria Park will provide a significant degree of enhancement to the accessibility and public profile of what has become an important feature on South Australia's major events calendar."

Mr Mount said the MRA had received many offers of potential destinations for the Toy Run from individuals and organisations. “Although we had to reject these for route safety or size reasons, we are very appreciative of and encouraged by the amount of community support the Toy Run has engendered,” he said.

The MRA believes Callington is a developing area with many benefits that tie in with the Toy Run’s growing logistical requirements.

MRA Toy Run Coordinator, Harald Lindemann, said. “Although we already have the longest Toy Run in Australia, and Callington seems a long way out of town, in fact it is only eleven kilometres further. We also expect the new venue will attract more riders from the South-East, the Murraylands and the Riverland.

“We considered a variety of options for the destination, but ultimately it came down to the safety of the route, the motorcyclists’ enjoyment of the ride, and maintaining the purity of the Toy Run’s objective, which is to provide a means for the motorcycling community to show its support for children and families in need by donating toys through St Vincent de Paul at Christmastime.”

The SA Police have provided an assurance that there will be sufficient resources for the Toy Run, and endorsed Victoria Park and Callington, and the chosen route, as the safest options for the continuation of the event well into the future.

The MRA Toy Run will be held on December 11 this year. It is always held on the second Sunday in December.

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