

Samrats ride report for Sun 28 June 2014

Ride leader Marcus / Tail end Charlie Ken

A nice mostly sunny day with no wind and quite warm for the middle of winter helped bring out 30 riders on this day ride. It was scheduled to be Jim's ride to Mannum but as Jim had other commitments on the day Marcus agreed to lead the ride from BP Glen Osmond to Mannum. There were about 5 new riders so the safety talk was a bit longer than usual. As the day progressed it became apparent that I needed to talk more about defensive riding more than anything else. Most new riders seem to be discovering the Samrats ride group by word of mouth personal contact with our regular riders. We seem to have a growing number of Harleys along with our usual cruisers, sports bikes, tourers and naked bikes as any one riding anything from 250cc and up do well on our rides.

We took off from Glen Osmond Rd and zipped up the first side street onto Portrush Rd then to Greenhill Rd and we were out of the city. We had a good run up Greenhill with very few cars to get in the way and then took a left into Deviation Rd to reach and transverse along most of Lobethal Rd to complete our dose of early morning twisties. We skirted around the town centre by taking Neudorf Rd and then Post Office Rd to meet back up with Mount Torrens Rd which we followed out to Palmer and then a left and a right turn into Mount Pleasant for a rest stop and morning tea at about 11.15am. On this last section when we were on the straighter roads the ride group of 30 bikes was spread out in front of me and I became aware that an older model commodore had been following the ride from the start point. Any car that comes with us must drive at the back of the ride behind tail end Charlie to keep the ride group safer. This driver was acting erratically and moving in and out of the ride group apparently tailing a particular 250cc bike and rider. On the straight section just past where Onkaparinga Valley Way meets Mount Torrens Rd this driver began overtaking part of the ride group and at one point ran 2 oncoming cars off the road. The car pulled in to the Mount Pleasant car park and stopped and 3 of us confronted the driver who said he was lost and didn't know why he was following us or why he had driven to Mount Pleasant. The bike he had been stalking had understandably turned off and left the ride after telling us that he had no idea who this guy was. We had very strong and stern words with the driver and made it very clear his driving was dangerous to us and the general road user and his behaviour was unacceptable. We then had a discussion as to whether to call the police but decided to warn him that if he followed us again when we took off on the next leg we would immediately call the police. He agreed to stop following us and my assessment was that he had mental health problems and this was a random event. The rest of the ride was as per usual with no more stalking cars although a couple of riders mentioned that different cars and especially large four wheel drives had suddenly pulled out in front of them in a dangerous manner on a couple of different occasions.

Just north of Mount Pleasant we turned east onto Angus Valley Way and enjoyed the sunny day and scenery as we dropped down in altitude to the Murray River at Walkers Flat. This road is not as twisty as the Sedan Hill but still a great ride. This time of the year there is a lot of deep green grass and a lot of new lambs who run away from the fence as the roar of 30 motor cycles goes by. At Walkers Flat we usually cross the Murray and ride to Mannum on the east side but on this day Marcus took us down the west side of the river to Mannum via Pellaring Flat and the Mannum Purlong Rd. Two riders had to depart early and our friend on the 250 had felt the need to escape the random stalker leaving 27 of us arriving in Mannum for lunch about 1pm. We parked down by the river in the same place that former ride captain the late Jock Rogan always used to pull into. About half of us took up a large table at the Pretoria Hotel and the rest went to cafes and take away in the main street. We organised to meet up after 1 hour and we then fuelled up at the BP at the other end of town. A few riders headed back towards Mount Pleasant and home but most of us continued on

turning left onto the Murray Bridge Rd then right onto the Monarto Rd and then to the Old Princes Highway through Callington then Winchester and to end the ride at Mount Barker. Most riders had peeled off at different spots along the way to the Free Way to make a run for home so we didn't stop for our usual afternoon tea at Mount Barker. We would have all been home by 3.30 pm or 4pm leaving a bit of the day left to get some rest or complete some domestic tasks to keep the family happy. A great ride day was had by all with the exception of the unwanted attention. Many thanks to Marcus for planning out and leading an excellent and varied route and to all the riders who turn up on the day and support the ride group. See you next ride.

Ken King Samrats Coordinator