

Retreads Motorcycle Club Christchurch

www.retreads.co.nz



Newsletter # 52 November 2021

Kai ora,

Our enthusiastic rider group took advantage of the good riding weather this second year spent living with the Covid-19 pandemic. As we look forward to Christmas and the end of our current ride and event calendar it has been a pleasure to look back on what we were able to achieve since our June ride to Hawarden and The Hogget Bar and Grill for lunch. We are looking forward to revisiting The Old Vicarage in Halswell for Christmas lunch on Saturday 11 December and of course our favourite picnic spot at the Lake Coleridge Domain the Sunday prior.

Next task is to formulate a New Year calendar for January through June 2022. We have had an offer or two from our rider group to organize and lead a ride next year. Many have asked what plans we have for overnight trips away. Please firm up on your ideas (and plans) and forward them on to me so that I can draft up the New Year calendar.

I am pleased to report that the long-awaited book on the first 25 years of our club entitled 'Retreads on the Road' is in print and available for sale to members. The 132-page book is going to be sold at cost (\$20). To secure your copy please contact me or Alan Forgie (027 310 2322).

Regards,

Brian Neill (Organizer) Ph 960 8302(H), 021 613 726(M)

Continuing our series of ride reports:

40th Brass Monkey Rally (4 - 6 June 2021): As promised we received reports from some of our Retreads riders about their experience of the 'last ever' rally. Barry and Leslie Cook enjoyed their trip staying at Oamaru on Friday, then riding through to the rally site on Saturday via Macrae's Flat. They snared a good tent spot away from the main crowd but were still able to enjoy the band and spectacular fireworks. Early night though due to light rain and a long ride home Sunday with occasional drizzle.

Wednesday 9 June 2021 ride to The Hogget Bar and Grill for lunch: A beautiful day, great company, and a much-anticipated Retread's ride to the Hogget. 13 people, 12 bikes. We left Woodend a little after 11am and rode the usual back roads to arrive at our destination about an hour and a quarter later. Welcomed as always by our host and were in no hurry to leave. Much to talk about with rider experiences from the recent Brass Monkey Rally top of the list. Most of us took the long way home through Waikari Valley and Scargill with smiles on our faces reveling in the deserted road conditions and the clear blue sky ...

Tuesday 15 June 2021: The traditional ride day for the 'Geriatrics' leaving from Woodend. Retreads' members are now the only riders turning up at 10 am to use this, the 3rd Tuesday each month, as a ride day. On this foggy June day 5 riders arrived at the rendezvous and unanimously decided it was too cold, too early for even the youngest of us. Other Retreads rides during the winter have been switched to a 11 am start and are shorter than during the rest of the year. So ... the ride programme has been changed to reflect the norm for this time of the year – an 11 am start every 3rd Tuesday of the month. The hardy 5 decided to ride SH1 to Fossil Point Café for lunch. We soon left the fog behind and enjoyed a pleasant ride arriving well before 'lunchtime' but stayed chatting for a long time before returning home via Scargill and the Waikari Valley Road.

Sunday 27 June 2021 ride to The White Rabbit Garden Café for lunch: A foggy day for the 12 people who turned out for the ride. No grumbles and a tribute to the organizing ability of our lead rider, Barry Cook, who took us on a tiki tour through Lincoln, Burnham, a stop to regroup at Dunsandel, then through Leeston, and roads off the beaten track back to SH75 and our lunch stop at Motukarara. Along Telegraph Road we stopped near the 3m + realignment of what was a straight section of road following the September 2010 earthquake. There was a house located right on the Faultline at this point – the people have since shifted! The massive flooding that occurred from an out-of-control Selwyn River earlier in the month put paid to the river road ride through Coe's Ford ... Everything looked rather soggy on the farmlands either side of this part of mid-Canterbury. Felt sorry for many of the farm animals. Cattle were floundering in mud on some farms and sheep winter coats were not looking white anymore.

Saturday 10 July 2021 mid-winter lunch at Under the Red Veranda: 20 people booked for this year's mid-winter lunch. Two tables and not too crowded in 'The Cottage'. Everyone enjoyed themselves in what was another great experience at Under the Red Veranda.

A bit of congestion at the 'check out' though with everyone attempting to pay for their meals all at the same time. A problem that is hard to avoid as space inside the main building is limited especially as late dinners had to join the queue as well. A popular venue!

Wednesday 14 July 2021 ride to Staveley for lunch: Cold but sunny day for 15 hardy Retreads. The outside seating at the Staveley Café was the place to be though after our riders, led by Alan Forgie, traversed the scenic route from Darfield and the Rakia Gorge bypassing Methven but taking in the magnificent view of Mt Hutt that was teeming with early season skiers. Mt Hutt apparently was the only NZ skifield operating that day. After lunch (many of us thought that the menu choice was extremely limited this time round), most of our group headed up the Duke Knob Road as far as the popular family skating rink. The track to the rink car park and pedestrian only swing bridge was rather slippery with a little bit of snow and a lot of mud that was a challenge to most of us. Coincidentally, a couple of evenings later, TV1's Seven Sharp screened a feature on the Staveley Ice Skating Rink that has been lovingly cared for by a couple of caretakers since the establishment of the rink in the mid-1950's. They indicated that this winter has been the best in 6 years and that the sport of curling will once again be held on the ice. The ice is checked each day to ensure that a minimum depth of 100mm is obtained so that skaters can safely use the facility.

Tuesday 20 July 2021 ride to Lou's cropping & livestock farm: Well, what an interesting day this turned out to be. Lou and Lesley McAlister's cropping farm out at Cust is massive and so is Lou's collection of treasures. An aviator as well as a collector of all sorts of 'things', vehicles, stationary engines, and a mint Pianola piano that he had great pleasure in playing for us just after we arrived. His vintage ex-military Chipmunk low wing monoplane with sliding canopy and tailwheel was the highlight of the day for me. Originally owned by the British Navy, it inspired Lou's 'quote of the day' "*never buy green bananas*". The plane is called 'Paper Plus' after the amount/weight of paperwork required to get the aircraft registered and airworthy here in New Zealand. After lunch Lou just could not resist trotting it out on to his 'airfield' and up, up, and away to demonstrate the plane's capabilities.

He beat up the airstrip several times before making an awesomely smooth landing in front of the assembled group of 20+ Retreads and a couple of his flying mates who had turned up on their own classic motorcycles – a Norton and a Triumph. Gary Cottrell races in Classic events at Ruapuna on his Immaculate Manx Norton (I'm told that he wins most races he enters) and, along with his mate, Ivan Campbell, is the builder of the replica Spitfires and Mustangs that beat up the city from time to time. Gary is apparently on his 10th and maybe last build – a Spitfire for his son in Auckland.

When we returned to the 'shed' Lou started up his vintage John Deere tractor that he had recently restored. The last of the two-pot diesel tractors made by the company and shipped out to Lou from the USA. Quite a rigmarole – first Lou had to prime and start a large V4 petrol motor that in turn cranked the diesel into life. This took over 5 minutes and had us all choking on the fumes ... Lou is proud of his oil burning past (included in his stable is a 7 litre V8 Chevrolet Corvette C6 Z06) and was involved in the previous week's farmers' parade through the town about the pending demise of the diesel engine and other government farming 'initiatives'. His protest sign has already taken pride of place amongst other memorabilia on his garage wall.

Thanks, Jack, for arranging this trip to Lou and Lesley's farm. A clear blue sky greeted us for the ride and stayed with us the whole day. It was a pleasure to meet Lou and Lesley. We enjoyed their company for the day and appreciated their hospitality. Lesley put on a magnificent spread for lunch that included homemade soup. Our contribution was a donation to the McAlister's charity of choice – their grandson's home care, the Champion Centre, where he is in full time care.

Sunday 25 July 2021 ride to lunch at the Historic Hurunui Hotel for lunch: A fine Sunday dawned and by 10:30 am SH1 north of Christchurch was chocka with traffic heading north. MG Car Club Day, many groups of motorcyclists and a four-wheel drive 'mud plug' event all trundled past us as we 8 Retreads gathered at Canterbury Honda in Woodend. By 11:10 am though traffic had thinned, and we were underway up SH1 to Fossil Point, through Scargill and the Waikari Valley Road to Waikari. After a brief stop, we rode through to our lunch venue at the historic Hurunui Hotel. Busy, busy by 12:40pm when we arrived. We were well looked after by our hosts though and an hour later retired to an outdoor spot for a coffee then home bound without detours to catch Olympic activity from Tokyo on TV.

Wednesday 11 August 2021 ride to Akaroa for fish 'n' chips: 11 riders and an Indian Chieftain complete with beard gathered at Tai Tapu for the ride in ideal conditions. The Indian and Harley pilots had a 10am coffee fix at The Store. Most of the other riders turned up nearer the rendezvous time of 11am along with Ulrike in her Subaru. Leigh Richardson led us on a relaxed ride over the Peninsula and Summit Road with plenty of scenic stops along the way. At the Hilltop we turned left onto the Summit Road, left again down into Little Akalola, then the narrow, mountainous road to Okains Bay. We then climbed out of Okains Bay and choose to ride directly over the hill and onto SH75 near Robinsons Bay. Late lunch but it was worth it – the fish 'n' chips were great.

Tuesday ride 17 August 2021: Barry Cook reports that a group of 4 riders enjoyed their day out. Led by Paul Taylor and accompanied by Richard, Ross, and Barry they rode through Rangiora to West Belt, turned left to the end of that road, then left and back to the motorway, QEII Drive, across the ponds, through Sumner to Evan's Pass. They then headed out to Godly Head and back down through Lyttelton and Tunnel Road for lunch at the Valley Inn. Very nice! All new after earthquake. Good food and good service.

Saturday ride 11 September 2021: Yep, another Lockdown. Level 2 in Christchurch though that meant that we could mask up and shop so Lesley and Barry organised us to meet at Rivertown Café in Kaiapoi for coffee and a ride to a 'mystery' pub for lunch. The 10am meet for a coffee was popular and only a few people didn't join Lesley's ride through the eastern suburbs, Sumner and Lyttelton for lunch at the Valley Inn Hotel in Heathcote. Our hosts looked after our every need at both venues and allowed us to enjoy ourselves. 9 around the table at the Valley Inn was somehow special after the self-isolation bubbles of the weeks preceding this Retreads group gathering.

Tuesday 21 September 2021 ride to Fossil Point Café for lunch: Lead rider Ulrike reported that the weather was promising enough with a forecast of 21 degrees. A group of 11 riders (Brian, Barry, Alan Rigg, Brent, Paul and Rosie, Ross, Jack, Richard, Dennis, and yours truly) met in Woodend despite high winds. These winds battered us a bit on the way through the Rangiora golf course road and over the Ashley bridge onto Sefton Road, until we gathered as usual 'under the trees' near SH1.

Alan came on his new bike, a Honda CBX 500, but despite it being a dual-purpose bike he does not intend to go onto dirt anywhere. Normally lolly man Alan makes Werther's appear out of nowhere and, as his new bike did not yet have a saddle bag, we didn't hold out much hope of this treat on this occasion. Alan came prepared though, and we were delighted that he had hidden them somewhere in his pockets. Richard's liquorish all sorts were appreciated too! Barry rode straight on to Fossil Point on his Indian Chieftain. After a comfort stop in Waikari (handy for Paul as he needed petrol) we took the fun road from Waikari to Scargill to meet up with Barry at the Fossil Point Cafe for coffees and snacks.

After a bit of banter and chatting, Jack took off to retrieve some important items from his Bach at Motunau and a few others made their way back separately. Though we normally return to Christchurch individually, Alan, Ross, Paul and Rosie, Richard and myself stayed together to finish the day with coffee, tea, and snacks at my place – and of course with much more chatting! All in all, a very enjoyable day.

Sunday 26 September (daylight saving day) ride to Arthur's Pass: Lead rider Rob Newton reports that Twelve bikes, twelve riders met at the Yaldhurst Mobil rendezvous point in what was a partly overcast and pleasant morning. Our first stop was in Springfield, mainly for those with small fuel tanks, and/or bladders, to have a top up, or comfort stop before continuing to Arthur's Pass. This is where two riders, Ulrike and Ross, left us and rode back home via the inland road. They had previously decided that this is what they were going to do.

The rest of the group departed Springfield for what was a very pleasant ride through to Arthur's Pass, where we found the weather sunny and much warmer than back on the plains. Some of the group sat at a table inside and some outside for lunch at the Arthur's Pass Store. After lunch a few riders from our group decided to ride through to the Otira gorge lookout, while others left to ride back in a rather fragmented manner. For some there was an ice cream stop in Springfield on the way home. A thoroughly enjoyable day out.

Friday 15 October ride to Lake Hood: This ride had been postponed from the previous Wednesday. A wise move for the 6 people who joined Lesley and Barry on Lesley's Trike for a tour through Coe's Ford, Leeston, and the mouth of the Ashburton River before turning back onto SH1 and the road to Lake Hood and The Lakehouse Restaurant & Bar for lunch. The end of the road at the lower Hakatere Huts on the northern side of the river is high above the beach and offered superb views of the rather rugged coastal environment. The track up to the best viewing platform had been closed off due to serious coastal erosion but didn't deter our riders eager to look at the scenery south of the river.

Thanks, Lesley, for leading the ride and to Barry for his commentary at the lower Hakatere huts where we regrouped before setting off on the last leg of the journey to Lake Hood. The Friday afternoon traffic along SH1 surprised us all and made for long delays for our riders who thought that during a pandemic and even on the last day of the school holidays most people would be tucked up at home by mid-afternoon.

Tuesday 19 October ride: Ulrike put her hand up to lead a ride through the Sefton and Balcairn back road to regroup and then rejoin SH1 at Waipara. We followed the highway all the way to Domett, turned right and rode along the Port Robinson Road to Gore Bay. After a leisurely chat in the sun, we headed to Cheviot and had lunch at the Number 8 café. Another pleasant day on our bikes, great company, and a thumbs up for low traffic volumes thanks to these Covid-19 times ... A tad windy on the way back to Christchurch though. We should be used to Canterbury gusty nor-westers that require some special riding techniques for motorcyclists – still haven't worked out what they are though!

Sunday 31 October ride to Kaikoura: Eight riders, nine people gathered at Woodend for a great day of riding through, for the most part, deserted North Canterbury roads. Paul Tayler led us along SH1 to Cheviot where we regrouped before tackling the most scenic part of the trip through the Hundalees and the rugged Kaikoura coastline to Kaikoura. A quick peak of the bustling town of Kaikoura was included in our ride to a Caltex fuel stop on SH1 and then onto Donegal House for lunch. From the rider's seat the town appeared very busy. At our destination we chose to sit inside rather than face the burning sun outside ...

Apart from the noise – continuing loud Irish music played via a video recording controlled, we reckon, by a deaf publican; we took the opportunity to chew the fat and enjoy a laugh or three. All opted for an inland road return home except for Nigel who had pre-arranged to return home from Fossil Point. It was Johnny Hasson's second ride with our group and, like the rest of us enjoyed the often-challenging riding sections of the inland route. Back in the day the road was maintained by the local farmers, long stretches of shingle, no bend warning signs etc. Pleased to say that there are now few surprises for motorists with good road delineation, signs, and markings. Got to watch for oncoming traffic though on some bends that tighten up as you enter them... Our traditional icecream stop at Waiau then the trip home through Culverden and Waipara. We finished an enjoyable ride with most of us having ridden over 400 km door to door.

Wednesday 10 November ride to Waiau: 10 riders including Ross and Bev on their immaculate Harley trike turned up for this mid-week ride. We set out along the Woodend golf course road to emerge onto SH1 at the Ashley River bridge, then regrouped at Cheviot before tackling the Leader Valley Road. A pleasant ride through the valley to our 12:15 pm lunch stop at the Waiau Tavern. After a pleasant lunch under the trees and a bit of banter between us and the proprietors, the group decided to stick together for the ride home through Culverden. I am sure that everyone enjoyed themselves and relish the opportunity to get out and about during these uncertain times. This rider though is getting a bit sick of the rather tiring part of SH1 from Waipara through Woodend to Christchurch! The contrast is of course the pleasure of riding back roads and overlooking views such as the one presented to us of Waiau from the Leader Valley Road before dropping down into the township.

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Arthur's Pass group ride briefing at Mobil Yaldhurst 26/09/21



Gore Bay regroup 19/10/21 enroute to No8 Café in Cheviot