

# Bush Chatter

Summer 2017



## We're on a war footing



The Harley Davidson WLA was the centre of attention on the weekend of July 14 to 16 at the WLA 75th Anniversary Rally with Sunraysia being represented by Allen Ball, Brendan Jess and Jack McCarthy.

The trio travelled to Albury on the Friday for registration, an event briefing, evening meal and some serious socialising.

80 riders in all attended. Story and more photographs  
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PO Box 2071 Mildura 3500

# We're on a war footing



This event was restricted to WLA (World War 2) Harley Davidson machines.

It was a 9am start Saturday and head to Young NSW about 320km and an overnight stay. Lunch was at Temora Airfield where the only two remaining operational WW2 Spitfire fighters are based. Pretty hilly country really tested the bikes followed again by an evening meal and social evening.

Departure 9am Sunday for Canberra. The hills continued for the 150km or so into the city where the bikes were displayed outside the Australian War Memorial.

This was a great event with about 30 of the 80 WLA's in military trim.

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## CHATTER EDITOR

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• Well summer has arrived...and it is common to hear some of the more experienced riders amongst us saying the best time for a head-clearing ride, and to beat the heat, is early morning, or the evening as the sun goes down.

Of course keep an eye out for the 'kangaroosters' at either of these times and ride safe. And, ...this edition leads us into Christmas, so have a happy and safe one, and we'll reconvene in the New Year. Cheers



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# We're on a war footing here...

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We all had a great weekend on these old bikes that have survived despite not being well thought of in our earlier years. The event was extremely well run with everything planned and well executed.

I guess if they have a 100th Anniversary ride I will only be 94, so I had better keep the sidecar I have behind my shed!

...and maybe also get a few tips from Doug! – Jack



# Some interesting WLA facts & figures

Harley-Davidson produced about 70,000 WLA and WLC military motorcycles for the US Army and their Allies during WW2. Spare parts for an additional 30,000 bikes were also produced.

WLAs were used extensively by US troops for messenger and Military Police duties, and thousands were supplied to other countries through Lend Lease Agreements.

These bikes were nicknamed 'Liberators' in Europe since they were ridden by troops liberating their towns and countries from German occupation. The name has stuck ever since....

Harley-Davidson introduced the W-series models fitted with a 45 cubic inch engine in 1937. The bike's most notable feature was the recirculating oil system, which greatly reduced maintenance. Earlier motorcycles had been equipped with a total-loss oil system which made the rider responsible for checking the oil, adjusting the oil pump

or even using the hand oil pump to properly lubricate the engine while riding. The US Army ordered the 1937 WL Model to replace the Model RL Motorcycle then in use...

In 1939 the US Army purchased the 39W model. And in August 1939 two prototype 39WL(A) Models were shipped to the Mechanized Cavalry Board at Fort Knox,

Kentucky. These were the first true 'WLA' Models having the typical military look. The engine may have been numbered 39WLAxxxx, but this is not sure.

The 39WL(A) was a straight adaption of the civilian Model, still retaining the I-beam type front forks.

When war broke out in Europe in September 1939, Fort Knox began an extensive testing program on motorcycles from different manufacturers, amongst which the two prototype 'WLA' Models, competing with Indian and Delco. The Harleys came thru these tests with flying colors.

Between January and March 1940, the US Army ordered more than 400 40WLA Models. The 40WLA Model was the first type of which it is certain that it was delivered with the term 'WLA' in the Engine Number. This makes it the 'Father' of the 41WLA and the 'Grandfather' of the Model 42WLA. These 40WLA and 41WLA served alongside UA, ELA, Indians, etc.

By the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, 41WLAs were a common sight in the Armed Forces. With the outbreak of war, Harley Davidson rapidly geared up for war production as the US Army required a rugged mass-produced model. The 41WLA would soon evolve into the 42WLA of which thousands were manufactured between September 1941 and August 1945.



Throughout its history, Harley-Davidson has been using a combination of letters to designate the different models it manufactures. The Model WLA is no exception.

The 'W' shows that the motorcycle is equipped with a 45 cubic inch, side valve engine, introduced in 1937 and first used on the Model W bikes.

The letter 'L' stands for High Compression. It is however not indicative of compression on current models.

And finally 'A' indicates a model developed for Army use.

One could argue that the 'A' indicates 'American' because the 'C' in WLC stands for 'Canadian', but when the term WLA was introduced, no-one could predict that Harley-Davidson would be making motorcycles for the Canadian Government a couple of years later....

The WLA motorcycle was soon recognised as a sturdy and reliable vehicle and for their Excellence in Production, the Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Company received the Army-Navy "E" Award on May 12th, 1943. Only industries that participated in wartime production were eligible to receive this award. The award ceremony was elaborate, with high-level officers present and airforce fly-overs.

William H Davidson received the banner from Colonel Otjen, who called the Harley Davidson workers: "Soldiers of the Production Line". Employees of the company that received the award were entitled to wear an 'E' Pin on the lapel of their jackets.

The award would be mentioned in all future advertising as a sign of support to the War Effort.....

## 42WLA

- Type I
- Type II
- Type III
- Type IV
- Type V
- Type VI
- Type VII

## Date of Manufacture

- September 1st 1941-December 10th 1941
- December 10th 1941-February 15th 1942
- May 8th 1942-April 1943
- April 1943-August 1943
- September 1943-May 1944
- June 1944-August 1944
- September 1944-August 16th 1945

## Engine Numbers (VIN)

- 42WLA1000-42WLA7000
- 42WLA7001-42WLA13650
- 42WLA16001-42WLA39229
- 42WLA39230-42WLA50829
- 42WLA50830-42WLA60000
- 42WLA60001-42WLA62480
- 42WLA62481-42WLA70681

# BSA owners rally for a great time

As several members of the SA BSA club attended our Meander this year, several of our members attended their major rally on the weekend of November 3rd to 5th. The only rule is that British bikes only may participate with BSA's being most popular of course.

Our group comprised Chris Sibley (1948 BSA 500 A7 ), Doug Laird (1948 500 Ariel single), Jeff McCarthy (1954 Matchless 500 single), Danny Curran (1951 Triumph 500 Speed Twin), Jim Fox (1968 BSA Lightning 650) and Jack McCarthy (1973 Triumph Tiger 750).

We travelled over Friday and registered at the caravan park which was rally HQ, and had the evening meal



and socialising with the other 80 or so entrants.

A good night was followed by a cooked breakfast at 7am and start riding by 9am.

The route was contained with the Barossa Valley area which is beautiful at this time of year.

Morning tea was at the old Sedan Hotel and lunch at Lyndoch Football clubroom.

On Sunday the route took us through the palm tree lined road to Seppeltsfield Winery and vineyards, and then onto Nitschke's Aviation Museum for morning tea. Lunch was at Kapunda and marked the end of the rally.

The event was well planned and executed, all corners were marshalled and the rides all weekend ran smoothly – approx 250km Saturday, and 150km Sunday...with quite a few hills.

Again another very enjoyable weekend with like-minded people.



# It was all happening at the Junction

We had a really good turn up with a display of 21 bikes for this year's Junction Rally in July at Wentworth. This was the best display ever for this event. All that attended had plenty of things to see including paddleboats, stationary engines, cars, tractors and trucks. This remains an excellent event which our club has a long history of supporting. Thanks to those who took bikes out there.



## Wanted to Sell

• NORTON Model 7 Dominator crankshaft and conrods. Fully reconditioned. Complete Norton Dominator gearbox minus clutch. Serial #GB8 2418. Will listen to realistic offers. Call Adam on 5023 0977.

• 1987 Harley Sportster XLH 883 DLX. \$7000. Red plate eligible. Ring Danny Curran 0418 303 964.

• 1984 Suzuki GSX250S. Reg 4386H. \$2000 ono. Roger Moser 0428 413 323. See RIGHT.

• 1962 (approx) Yamaha YDS 2 or 3 250 road bike. Almost complete. Make a good restoration project. \$1500 ono. Ring Trev on 0439 654 539 for details.

1993 CB250N Honda, 24,000 km, good original bike with roadworthy. Ideal commuter or learner bike. Just serviced. Club rego eligible 9/2018. Jack 0408 528 091.

SWAP! 11/1992 BMW K1100LT – all it needs is some Ken Chapple magic to get rid of the ABS lights, and a new correct battery, to be a good bike. I spent about \$3000

at PITSTOP getting the engine going properly. She is almost roadworthy, and is now eligible for Club plates. SWAP for a good 250cc four-stroke dirt bike – XL, XR, XT, DR, KLX or similar. Year not so important, but not PE, CZ, Husky or similar two-stroke. Would consider other similar bikes, but swap bike must be clean and neat, good goer, and in good nick, easily able to get Rec Rego. Contact John – 0411 349 290.



## Wanted to Buy

• SUNBEAM S7 1950 gearbox to tailshaft coupling or bushes. Also gear indicator bezel that goes between gearbox and gear lever. Please contact Paul Dunn 0408 999 120.

• CB450 HONDA Twin Leading shoe front drum and backing plate and linkage. Complete. 0407 364 692 or email dougo294@hotmail.com.

• MOTORBIKE trailer. Call Nicky on 0417 629 875

• MOTORBIKE trailer. Two or three bikes for club runs. Phone Ian on 0428 242 613.

## Services

• Can do small panel beating jobs on motorcycle metal body parts. Geoff Needham 0437 006 882.

## Regular events

### Regular Club Runs

- **Monthly meeting rides leave from Hudaks on 15<sup>th</sup> Street opposite Centro at 10am. The run finishes at the Mildura Scout Hall in 12th Street, Mildura.**
- **The mid-month ride leaves from Hudaks on 15<sup>th</sup> Street opposite Centro at 10am on the second Sunday of the month. Turn up with a full tank. Many more events listed on our website at [www.shmc.org.au](http://www.shmc.org.au)**

# Catering and lead rider roster for 2018

	Catering	Lead Rider	
December 31	Ian Kinleyside	Andrew Thornton	* Our meetings are always the last Sunday of every month.
January 28	Gordon Gunther & Ray Woods	Jack McCarthy	
February 25	Adam & May	James Taylor	* Mid-month rides are the 2nd Sunday of every month.
March 25	Baden Millward	Jim Cracknel	
April 29	Graeme & Rhonda Brown	Al Tarr	
May 27	Trevor Scholar	Frank Piscoineri	
June 24	Peter Hammond	Allen Ball	
July 29 AGM	The Master Chefs	Peter Christian	
Emergencies:	Cyndie Kempton	Member of Events Committee TBA	

\*Please advise unavailability as early as practicable for a replacement to be organised.

## Other events of interest 2018

11 February	All British Day Echunga SA
23-24 February	Ballarat Swap meet.
2-4 March	York Peninsula Rally
19-20 May	Mildura Meander
May	Lutheran School Fete Display
9 June	Display at Wentworth Airport fly-in.
10 June	Display at Ulysses Rally
July	Hattah Scrutineering Display
September	Visit to Swan Hill
October	Visit to Broken Hill
17-18 November	Bendigo Swap Meet.



## This is a good deal...

Graham Burton-Clay at Sunraysia Bearings, 34 Orange Avenue, Mildura, telephone 5023 4337, is offering all SHMC members trade prices on a wide range of items including those featured below... All you have to do is flash your membership card to get one of the best deals going around. The Sunraysia Bearings team have 50 years experience in the industry, and the business is locally owned and operated by people that live and work in our community. Thanks Graham! Let's support the bloke who supports us. The good stuff!