

Retreads Motorcycle Club Christchurch

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Newsletter # 47 March 2020

Greetings all,

I trust that everyone is coping the best they can during the lock-down period. This newsletter is being sent earlier than envisaged. However, a miserable, damp day here in Christchurch has inspired me to sign off on our official interaction with members until the Covid-19 crisis is over and we can meet face to face again.

Although our last ride together was the one to Okains Bay on the 11th of March I can report that a small group of four riders did indulge in some riding therapy by travelling over to the West Coast for a two-night stopover at the Carters Beach Top 10 Campground. Me, Jeff Bannister, Alan Rigg and Paul Tayler left Woodend around 10:15am on Friday 20 March for what was an eventful and enjoyable weekend away. Eventful in that we did our best to dodge the rain that forced us to rethink our route on numerous occasions. Enjoyable due to the usual Retreads banter and jolly good company both on the road and back at our 2-bedroom motel at the campground.

Donaloe's restaurant just down the road from the Top10 Campground was a welcome oasis for us. The hosts do a great job in interacting with their clientele and always go out of their way to please. The restaurant was full on Friday evening (whitebait anyone?). However, on Saturday evening only a select few, us included, were allowed in due to the Covid-19 rules that had been imposed that day. Rained hard that evening but we were picked up by Brian, a friend of Paul's and a Westport local, in his car for the short trip down to Donaloe's.

Saturday morning saw us riding up to Karamea for the day. Low cloud cover and light rain at times encouraged us to keep on the move and, unfortunately, put paid to sightseeing other than from the saddle. We didn't make it to the start of the Heapy Track nor the climb up to the Dennison mine and other points of interest. Next year maybe?

Lots of motorcyclists were stopping over for lunch at Karamea which was surprisingly busy. It was here that we learn't of the restrictions on eating out that Jacinda had announced that day. When we got back to the Top 10 staff were doing the rounds informing guests of the situation and to gather information on peoples' planned movements the next day. Sunday saw us on the coastal road to Greymouth as planned. We were endeavoring to dodge the heavy rain forecast but failed during a short downpour south of Punakaiki. Greymouth fill-up and search for a cup of coffee. \$5.90 cup at Robert Harris was the best we could do and our first chance to sign a 'tracking' register! Along the Blackball road to Ikamatua and Reefton for lunch (and another register to sign) was the order of the day. From there the skies started to clear before we reached Culverden to face a sweltering, 23-degree Canterbury day.

Doom and gloom back in Christchurch though and not looking forward to the pending lock-down. Noeline and I shifted into Summerset on Cavendish late January. Great move and all good up until they closed the just opened village center that had been celebrated with great fanfare only a couple of weeks or so before... If anyone had told me a month or so ago that we would be living in a gated community village in March with a guard on the gate I would have laughed ...

Keep safe.
Regards,

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

Continuing our series of ride reports:

Wednesday ride to Hanmer 8 January 2020: Large turnout for this 'early in the New Year' picnic at the DOC domain at Hanmer. A short but popular ride on a very hot Summer day. We scattered ourselves around an otherwise empty picnic area with most seeking shade from the mid-day sun. Our group of 14 took the opportunity to catch up on what happened over the Christmas break and discussed plans for the rest of the holiday period.

Sunday ride to Lake Tekapo 26 January 2020: Traffic on the mostly boring mid-Canterbury roads aided by a desire to not get mixed up with too much tourist traffic saw our group halt our ride and settled instead for lunch at Fairlie before turning back home.

Wednesday ride to Staverley Store 12 February 2020: Always a popular spot for riders on a sparsely trafficked tourist route. A relatively short ride for our group out to enjoy the countryside in the company of friends.

Sunday ride to Blackball 23 February 2020: A great ride. Brilliant riding conditions enjoyed by 7 riders. 5 riders met at Mobil Yaldhurst at 9:30 before setting out on the trek over to the West Coast via Arthur's Pass and Greymouth to arrive at Formally the Blackball Hilton at around 1:30pm. Barry caught up with us at Springfield as did Scott. Jeff called it quits at Arthurs Pass and returned home early. Along the way Brian just about ran out of duct tape having delved into his tool kit on no fewer than 4 occasions to assist other riders in the group having trouble with their gear. No one ran out of fuel this time though ... Mine hosts at the Blackball hotel were up to their very best and mixing banter with the locals was a highlight of this stopover. Late though before we set off home added to by a long coffee stop at Maruia Springs. I racked up 550 km on the wee-Strom for the day and arrived home around 7:45pm.

Wednesday ride to Okains Bay 11 March 2020: The picture says it all! Another pleasant ride on the peninsular.

The Okains Bay ride followed on from a full turnout of members for coffee and scones at The Store, Tia Tapu on Saturday March 7.

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 these two events were our last gatherings of members due to the country-wide lockdown. Your committee decided to cancel the Sunday March 29 ride to Kaikoura (which was subsequently ruled out by the movement restrictions anyway) and all programmed events for April and May; we intend to review the situation in June ...

Photo Gallery:



Alan, Paul, Brian and Jeff at Karamea for lunch.



Busy campers at the Carters Beach Top10 Motel.



January 2020 picnic at Hanmer – Leslie and Barry carried the kitchen sink with them.



Happy Retreads at Okains Bay picnic in March.