

ONE SUMMER'S RIDE



Travel Blog

Jane Laws

Nullarbor Ride December 2018



Coolgardie

The caravan park at Norseman was a welcome place to pitch our tent and rest our heads after 780km in the saddle. When I returned to the tent after a midnight toilet run I said to Steve "is that a giant moth sitting on my sleeping bag?" I found my glasses and it turned out to be only a manufacturers tag. All Steve could say was "Jesus Christ," then it fell silent inside our tent until morning.

With the hustle of the last minute things to check before leaving home on a long ride, both Steve and I were pleased when our earplugs were firmly seated and we could no longer communicate. Bakers Hill Bakery provided our 8am refreshments and then it was onwards and eastwards in the cool morning air on the 1st of December, the first day of summer. The cops were waiting for us in the 80km hour zone at the Great Eastern Highway, Great Southern Highway junction, but we were waiting for them and we cruised through, the cops not even bothering to point the gun at us. I enjoyed some bike to car PR and warned a few punters. This favour was returned when I was alerted to a speed camera at the end of an overtaking lane; now that is unquestionably revenue raising.



Eucla

We were back on the road by 6am and the cool weather window we had found for our Nullarbor crossing provided sheer riding pleasure. The sun rose quickly and by 8am we stopped worrying about stray kangaroos and we enjoyed the delights of this wonderful outback ride. The bush looked lush and green and even a few wildflowers reminded us of the season that had just come to an end. At Cocklebiddy Roadhouse we sat on the veranda, eating ice-creams and watching the road trains westward bound. The Eyre Highway was having a quiet day and we only had to overtake one wobblebox (caravan) all day long.

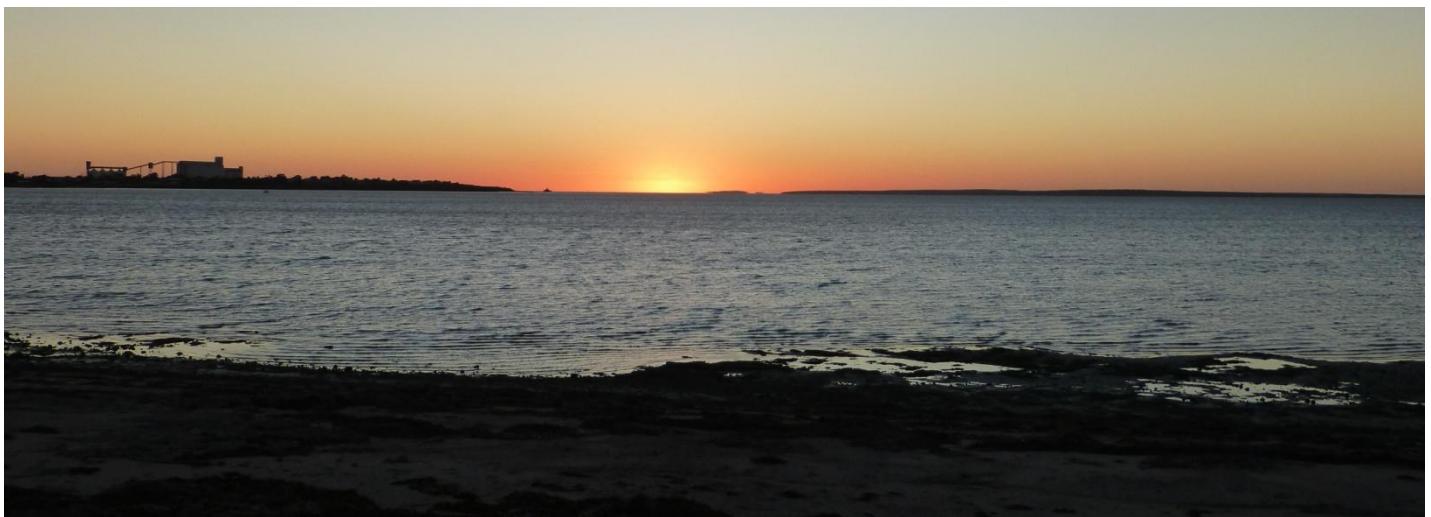
On the third day we were up with the birds for the run from Eucla to Ceduna. Even on a cool day you can feel the potential in the desert sun. In places there is barely a tree in sight and this landscape will be unforgiving to anyone who breaks down or has an accident on a hot day. Just to remind us that all Nullarbor crossings must be earned, we copped a strong cross wind along the plains around Penong. Still we concluded, when we arrived in Ceduna, that our December 2018 Nullarbor crossing had been the easiest one of all.



Nullarbor Roadhouse



Who would have expected grass like this at Ceduna?



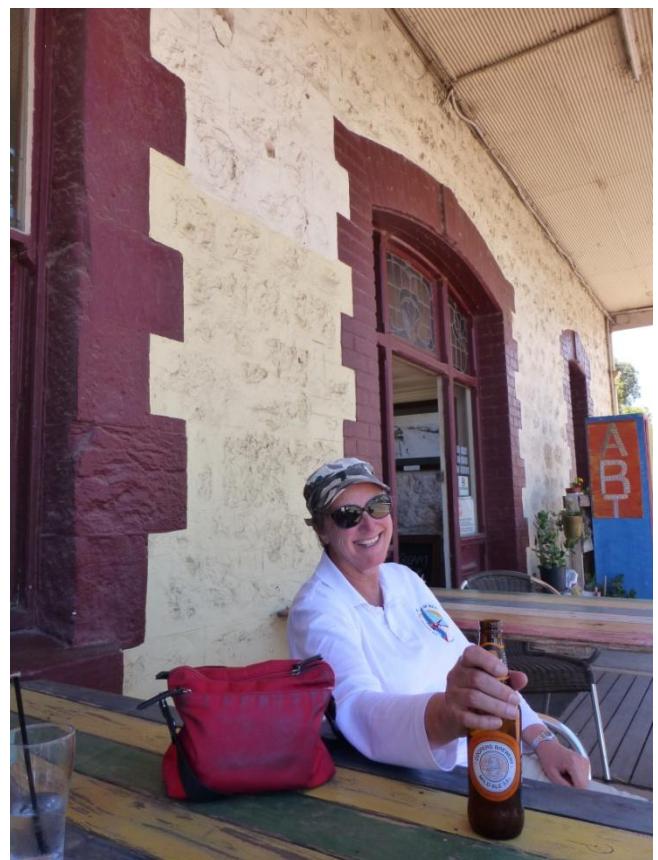
The sun goes down on another successful Nullarbor crossing.

Ceduna to Sydney



Plenty of grain trucks at the intersection of the Birdseye & Tod Highways (in Lock, Eyre Peninsula)

We took the scenic road from Ceduna to Whyalla, riding south to Elliston and then eastwards once more. We stopped for a refreshing ale at the pub in Cowell, then in the late afternoon we pitched our tent in Whyalla. We enjoyed a delicious Indian meal, soured slightly by the \$12.90 corkage on our \$5 cleanskin and then we were on our way to enjoy the Yorke Peninsula.



Franklin Harbour Hotel



Moonta, Yorke Peninsula

The cool days of our Nullarbor crossing were a distant memory when we rode away from Whyalla, and we watched to temperature rise to an uncomfortable 30 degrees by 8am. We holed up in Moonta for a couple of 40 degree days, hiding in the pub, and under the shade of a tree, until sunset allowed us to enjoy a walk along the town jetty.



Lunch stop, Yorke Peninsula

Determined to ride some new roads, we criss-crossed our way down the Yorke Peninsula on our way to Stansbury. The 42 degrees felt like riding into the breath of a dragon so we retired to the pub at St Vincent for some instant relief. The forecast SW change arrived in time for us to set up our tent in a beach caravan park and then it rained and blew a gale for two days. Being early risers, and the campers kitchen not opening until 7:30am, we found ourselves bunkering down under the primitive shelter of an outside bbq area at breakfast time.

The locals ran on "Yorke time" and finding fuel on a Sunday was a challenge we didn't expect. The beautiful Innes National Park showed a more temperate mood, only for us to arrive back in Stansbury to find our little tent standing its own against the howling wind.



Innes National Park, great roads but 40 & 60 kph limits.

We were both pleased to ride away from Stansbury and we were rewarded with a delightful ride through Port Wakefield, Balaklava, Nuriootpa in the Barossa, and then on to our destination, Hahndorf, in the Adelaide Hills. After a couple of days of sightseeing, and riding the Adelaide Hills, we were ready to be on our way again but cyclone Owen had other ideas, and we were holed up in drizzly conditions for three more days before good riding weather returned.



**Enjoying the great camp kitchen at
Hahndorf Resort (and caravan park)**



Drying out at Swan Hill

The next day we set off fully kitted out for wet weather riding. The frequent showers cleaned the bugs from our bikes and we smiled all the while we looked out for kangaroos, some still lingering at 10am. We rode onwards and eastwards through Deniliquin, Finley, and Berrigan. At the little town of Howlong we both had to put up with a number of corny puns, around the town's name, as we amused ourselves. Albury provided a navigation challenge after we refused to accept where the signposts to the B58 were taking us. Google maps was our best line of defence to find our way, and before long we were enjoying the curves as we followed the Murray River to the picturesque caravan park at Walwa.



High up on the Hume Dam



Dawn on the Murray River, Walwa Caravan Park

We awoke to a fine day and took the opportunity to enjoy riding the high country. Timing is everything, and while trundling along Jingellic Rd, on our way to Tumbarumba, we arrived just after the local farmer had let a herd of cows and calves out onto the road. There was a guy on horseback, one on a motorbike and a cattle dog but they didn't try to help us find our way through. They stood on the side of the road; watching, waiting. We eased our way through the herd, pressing the freshly laid cow pats firmly into the tread of our tyres. I had to stop a couple of times when the beasts were awkward at getting out of the way. The farmer gave a subtle acknowledgement when I made it safely to the other side; I think he was hoping for more entertainment.



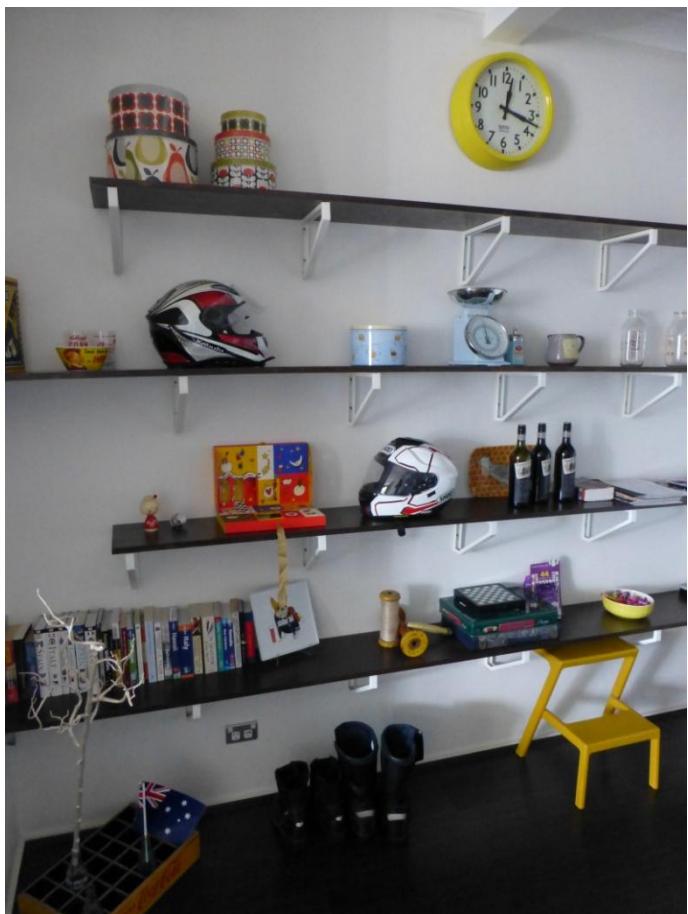
Lake Jindabyne

Riding through the lanes of the Kosciuszko National Park is simply wonderful. We must have cruised around at least 1000 bends as the road winds its way up and down the mountain passes. We only rode 300km that day but it was late in the afternoon when we arrived in Jindabyne.

We were back on the road by 8am the following day, taking advantage of a fine day to make our way to Batemans Bay. It was easy to occupy ourselves in this town by the sea, catching up on travellers administration and enjoying excellent fish and chips by the wharf.



A game of hide & seek in Batemans Bay



We thought that the riding boots, helmets and wine added to the apartments decorations

2018 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race

We began our Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race spectator experience at the home of the great race, the CYCA (Cruising Yacht Club of Australia), for the crew party on Saturday 22nd December. The club was welcoming, and with a little assistance we were soon registered as members for a day and free to cruise along the jetties.

We caught up with Enterprise, our Fremantle Sailing Club entrant, and soaked up the atmosphere; race flags a flying, it was magic. We were surprised that the headline acts, the five maxi yachts (Wild Oats XI, Comanche, Black Jack, InfoTrack and Scallywag) were not moored at CYCA and were not part of the festival village. There was no encouragement to check them out at their various berthing locations either.



Crew party, CYCA



Me and Wild Oats XI

After the 2017 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, which saw Wild Oats XI stripped of her record breaking line honours because of an infringement with Comanche just after race start, I wrote the song "The Ghost of Wild Oats XI." To me it seemed important for folks to know how the yacht, Wild Oats XI, felt about the race result. I knew I had to track her down and on Christmas Eve we found her hiding at Woolwich Dock, with InfoTrack and Wild Oats X. I shared a moment with her; Steve and I were the only ones there.



Scallywag takes the sterns of Comanche and InfoTrack

We contemplated our options for race day, Boxing Day, and decided that the vantage point on South Head would do very nicely. Early Boxing Day morning we were at CYCA to wish everyone well and watch the yachts depart. Then we walked up to Edgecliff Station from where we were delivered to Watsons Bay by express bus. We trudged along Camp Cove's very narrow beach before making our way slowly up to South Head along the well defined trail. By now it was 11:30am, 90minutes before race start, shade was at a premium but it didn't matter. The five super maxis were beginning to parade up and down the harbour. They were simply magnificent, larger than life even against the TP52's.

There is no doubt there is pride at stake to be the first yacht out of the heads, and it was as exciting as a Formula 1 race watching the five maxis tack their way out of the harbour. Some found holes in the wind and others found unfavourable shifts in the winds direction. Black Jack won the battle and was the first to poke her nose out into the Tasman Sea.

We stayed a while on South Head until the last yacht, Gun Runner, a Jarkan 9.3m sloop, had made her way around the turning mark outside Sydney Heads and was on her way south.

We kept a close eye on the tracker and the race for line honours seemed like Comanche's to lose. Then under the cover of darkness, on Friday 28th December, Wild Oats XI found her way into the lead and at 8:07am she took line honours for the 9th time in her chequered career.



South Head



Black Jack in Sydney Harbour

No sooner had Mark Richards filled the line honours cup with champagne, Second over the line, Black Jack, cast an element of doubt over the win when he reported that Wild Oats XI's AIS (automatic identification system) was not switched on all the time in the closing stages of the race. He said they felt disadvantaged as, at times, they didn't know where she was, the direction she was heading, and how fast she was going.

Black Jack did not lodge a protest. Several hours later the race committee decided to lodge a protest against Wild Oats XI based on information reported by Black Jack's owner, Peter Harburg. This protest was dismissed by the jury who said for the protest to be valid it must be lodged by a competitor with information about the potential rule breach. Wild Oats XI got to keep her line honours victory and the media focus turned to the important task of reporting on the other competitors still to finish the race.

Tasmanian yacht, Alive, was declared the overall winner of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race; the Reichel Pugh 66 is only the third Tasmanian yacht to win this most famous ocean race.

Watching the start of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race was not the only reason we came to Sydney for Christmas and New Year, but it was one of the reasons, and was it worth it? Yes



Race winner, Alive



[Jane Laws - The Ghost of Wild Oats XI - Video](#)

Sydney to Tamworth

It wasn't that we had run out of things to do in Sydney, we had just run out of things we wanted to do and when we rode away from Surry Hills on Friday 4th January we were smiling from ear to ear.

We weren't going far on our first day back with the bikes. We'd booked Devil (F650GS) and Dwarfie (R1200GS) in for a service at Gee Tee Motorcycles at Berowra only 45km away. The guys were waiting for us and well before lunch time the service was complete and we spent the afternoon cruising the crests and curves along the Pacific Highway.



Bye bye Sydney, bye bye



Berowra Waters ferry



Wollombi Tavern

We were on our way early the following day, with 40 degrees forecast we were determined to get a couple of hours under the wheel before the conditions reached “uncomfortable.” We descended quickly down Berowra Waters Road to our first ferry crossing over Berowra Creek. On the other side we found The Old Northern Road and then the famous Wiseman Ferry took us across The Hawkesbury River. We trundled along, acknowledging the local bikers enjoying their Saturday run, and smiling all the while we were hanging out with the bikes again. Two hours into a 300km ride and we hadn't made 100km.

The temperature soared and we stopped for a coldie, and lots of water, at Wollombi Tavern. The air conditioned tea rooms of Icki Sticky turned up just in time for us to cool down once more. We were encouraged onwards by the number of local bikers on the road and we arrived at Wangi Wangi mid afternoon.

We pitched the tent in the shade of a towering eucalypt and patiently waited for the cool change to arrive. The southerly swooped in at about 5pm with the onset of thunderstorm activity but we remained on the fringes of the severe weather system and only a few drops fell on our humble tent. We looked out over the beautiful Lake Macquarie and felt happy to be back with our tin mugs and plastic plates; Airbnb provides great comfort but it does not come without responsibility.



Wangi Wangi Point, Lake Macquarie



Hawkes Nest Koala Reserve,

Don't stop there!

I knew the patchwork roads of NSW would turn up somewhere and sure enough, on the road between Wangi and Port Stephens, they arrived; roads full of patched up pot holes, and pot holes waiting to be patched up. We stopped for lunch at Hawkes Nest but not before the local ranger caught us trying to catch a glimpse of a koala in a no standing zone; Steve says it was the most expensive photo of a koala ever taken.



Forster - Tuncurry from Cape Hawke lookout

We camped at Forster for four nights, with the sand flies and the humidity and hundreds of kids. The visit to The National Motorcycle Museum was well worthwhile. I looked eagerly through the collection for an example of my Yamaha DT100 road trail, which I bought new in 1979, and for my Honda 250T (1981). I found the Honda, it was outback waiting for space inside the museum.



National Motorcycle Museum at Nabiac

In Wangi another traveller asked me “Where are your favourite places?” to which I answered “We don’t have favourite places, only favourite roads.” The New England High Country is home to a great set of roads, from the Thunderbolts Way to the Oxley, Gwydir, Bucketts, and Bruxner Highways. We rode them all, some in both directions, and enjoyed the cooler nights in the high country at Walcha and Tenterfield.



Great bike road



Tenterfield Saddlery Very inspirational

Tenterfield marked a turning point on our summer's ride as it was as far north as we were going; next stop Tamworth Country Music Festival.



New England High Country

2019 Tamworth Country Music Festival



Toyota Park Stage (Bicentennial Park)



Slim Dusty, me & Joy McKean

As first timers at the [Tamworth Country Music Festival](#) it's difficult to get your head around Australia's biggest music festival. At most festivals we have attended, you purchase a festival ticket and then you are free to roam between the venues. Most performances, regardless of the venue, are about forty minutes long and therefore your festival planning is quite simple. At Tamworth there is no festival ticket. Instead there are some fifty venues. Some are free, some you have to pay to see an artist, and some venues are free for some gigs and you have to pay for others. The cost of a gig ranges from a gold coin donation to \$50. Artists may be on stage from anywhere between ten minutes and three hours; at Tamworth your festival planning is much more difficult.

I called Steve and I drifters at this year's festival. We drifted from one venue to another and discovered some great music along the way. Of course some acts were too loud, some played for too long and others didn't play for long enough. We particularly enjoyed swamp blues guy, [8 Ball Aitken](#). 8 Ball has great songs and his between song patter is some of the best I have ever heard; it seemed to me that 8 Ball Aitken is on his way to the big time.



8 Ball Aitken

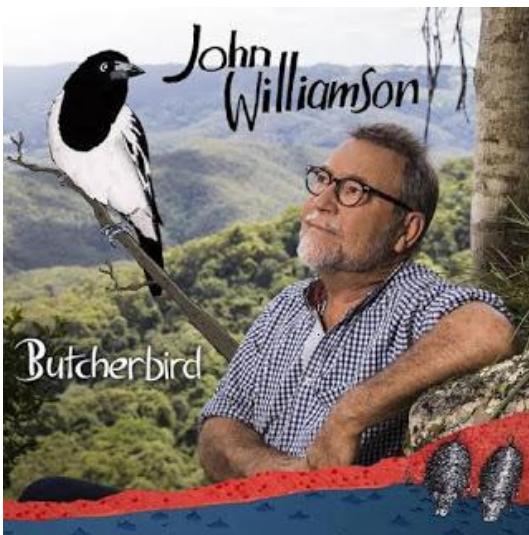
Writers In The Round was on most mornings at the [Tamworth Services Club](#). This was a very enjoyable session where three songwriters sang their original songs and spoke of their inspiration. The songs the teenagers and young adults were writing certainly gave an insight into the personal struggles of this generation.



Dana Hassall, Hayley Marsten & Roger Corbett



Me at the Atrium Festival Stage



John was promoting his 52nd album, Butcherbird

Timing is everything and I happened to be in conversation with Bob Kirchner, station manager at [Capital Country Radio](#), when String Loaded cancelled their Sunday gig on the Atrium Festival Stage and I scored the gig. After eight weeks travelling on my motorcycle without my guitar, I had a bit of work to do to prepare a few tunes, but all's well that ends well, and I get to say I sang at Tamworth.

By day six of the festival we bought tickets to see [John Williamson](#) in the Tamworth Town Hall, principally to get away from the number of break-up songs we were listening to. John pleased the audience by playing his old favourites including True Blue. At the end of the two hour gig, John asked the audience to stand and sing Waltzing Matilda; this was a memorable festival moment.

Busking in the street is a big part of the festival but surely buskers should be restricted on the power of their amplification. The allocated busking locations were so close together, and some had the capability to be so loud, at times we had to move on for fear that our brains could not process the combined mashed sound.



Toni & The Rhythm Cats



Just about to start the cavalcade

It was with a smile that at 7am on the 27th January, with the sun just lifting above the horizon and with the thermometer already reading a warm 29 degrees Celsius, we shot through. It felt good to leave behind the festival of awards and allegedly charting songs. We stayed for the whole ten days because after all, we were in the home town of Australian Country Music and we weren't sure we would ever pass this way again.

On Australia Day, Steve and I were very grateful for the opportunity to join the [Tamworth Ulysses Branch](#) in the cavalcade. Riding through the streets of Tamworth in 40 degrees, at walking pace, was a challenge on a heavy bike, but well worth it for the memory bank.

The festival was excellent but it was a tough ten days living in a tent, with very little shade. The relentless extreme heat by day, and sleeping under a wet T shirt by night, nearly sent me troppo and I noticed myself sighing a lot and "for f... sake" was never far from my breath.



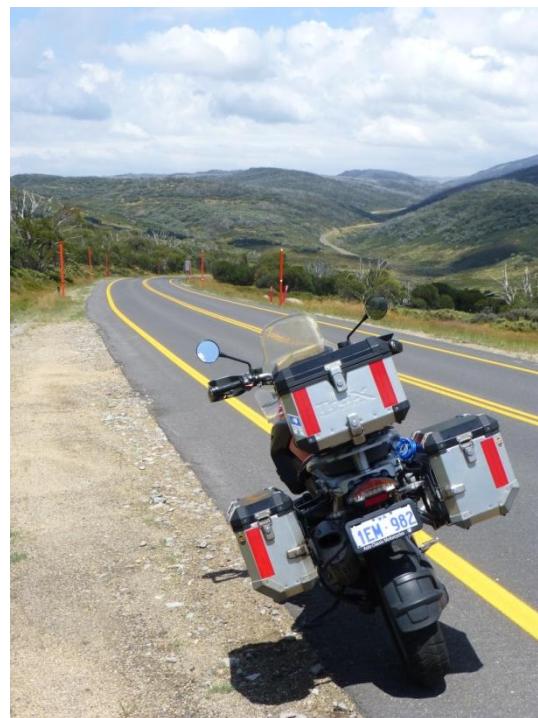
Toyota Fan Zone

Tamworth to Tasmania

It was with gratefulness and contemplation that we rode away from Tamworth at first light on that warm Sunday morning. The dawn light shone like gold on the silent hay bales and me and Devil (F650GS) were enjoying the open road once more.

We fancied our chances of a Devonshire Tea in Scone, but the Scone townsfolk were still in bed when we rode through the main street and we had to wait until Merriwa before we could sink our teeth into a fresh scone topped with a generous serving of cream.

We turned off at Sandy Hollow for a run along the Bylong Valley and we were safely camped at Bathurst in time for happy hour and before a good drenching, from a thunderstorm, cleaned the heat from the air.



Kosciuszko Road, Kosciuszko National Park



Crossing Abercrombie River; Great road.

From Bathurst the road led us southward through Crookwell. We skirted Queanbeyan amidst a threatening sky but refused to done our wet weather gear until it actually started to rain. We were wearing full wets as we rode through Cooma, pleased to be riding against the traffic heading home after the Australia Day long weekend. Lake Jindabyne was a welcome sight and provided a place to rest our weary heads amidst the more temperate climate of this beautiful Lake.



Half way down the Alpine Way, Geehi camp ground.

The caravan park in Yackandandah became our home for the night before an early start for the final days run to the ferry. We trundled along the back roads through Ned Kelly country and down King Valley to Mansfield. At times The Alps peeped out at us and made us smile as we clocked the miles away towards Melbourne. A long and uneventful day saw the bikes safely tied down on Spirit of Tasmania by 8:30pm with Steve and I enjoying a glass of white on the upper deck before pizza fair for dinner.



On the ramp onto the Spirit of Tasmania ferry.

Tassie here we come.

By Thursday it was time to get a wriggle on as our Bass Straight ferry crossing was scheduled for Friday night. We rode The Alpine Way one more time. This technically difficult road was made all the more menacing by the number of small rocks, that had been loosened by the strong wind and rain from the day before, and lay waiting on the riding line for the next unsuspecting motorcyclist; I was pleased to arrive in Khancoban and leave The Alpine Way behind me.

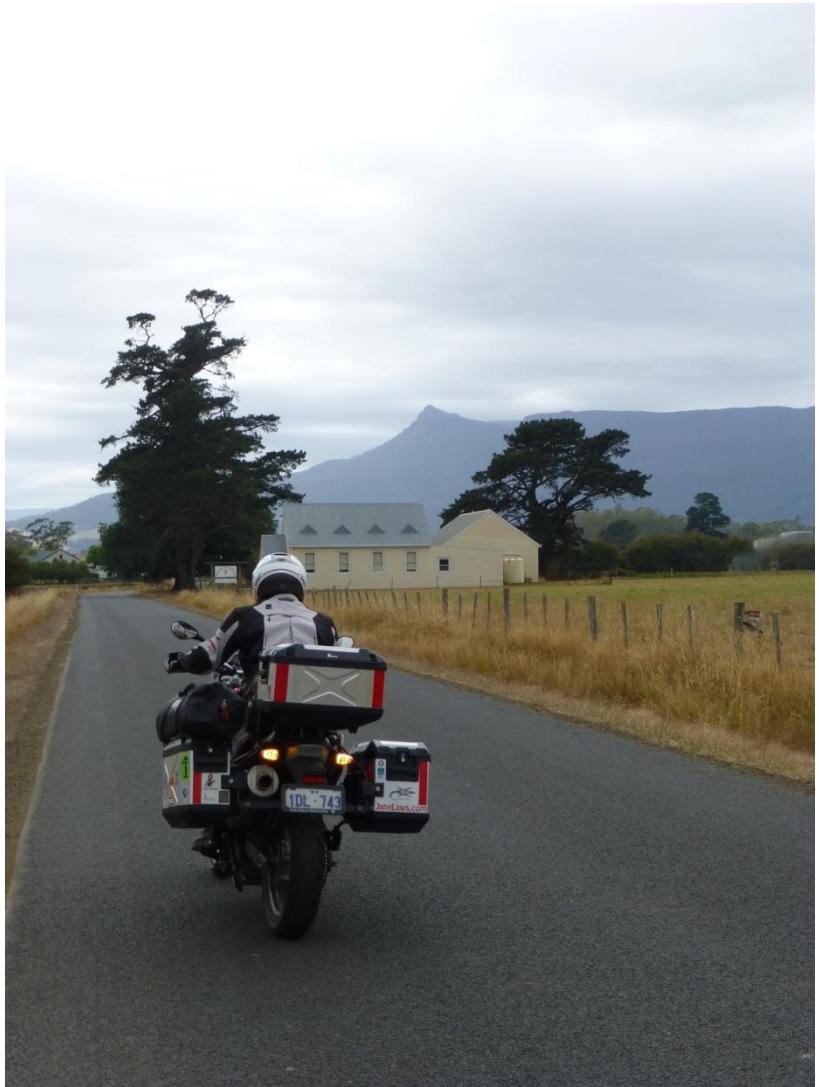
Ride Tasmania



What's not to love about riding in Tasmania?

Arriving in Tasmania was a chance to hit the reset button and enjoy the crests and curves of a new land. An hour after riding away from Spirit of Tasmania we were in Sheffield, the billy was on and we were topping up on cups of tea before taking a myriad of back roads on our way to Longford. Without a GPS we found ourselves making U turns in the most awkward of places, still the roads were quiet and we were able to do so. The amount of road kill was alarming. Apparently the dwindling numbers of Tasmanian Devils can be blamed for this as they used to keep the roads clean.

Steve keeps a road atlas, and the **new** roads we ride on each road trip are marked in a different colour. This summer's ride colour is purple, and we often say we are in search of "purple" roads, roads we haven't ridden before. Our first day in Tassie took us through the little towns of Mole Creek and Bracknell to our camp in Longford; all purple roads.



Back road after leaving Mole Creek, Great Western Tiers in the distance.



First night in Tassie, camped beside the Maquarie River, Longford.

On day two we could have saved ourselves a lot of bother, left the tent in Longford and enjoyed a very nice circuit ride. We don't always see the wood through the trees and we upped camp on a warm Tasmanian day. We were headed for Bicheno and enjoyed a side trip along the B42 to Rossarden. I almost thought I could hear the sound of banjos but the tinkling was soon carried away by the wind. We enjoyed lunch in St Marys while the temperature climbed even higher and we were delighted when we arrived on the coast and the temperature dropped ten degrees. This sudden drop in temperature seemed to flip our brains into neutral and instead of setting up camp in Bicheno, as planned, we decided to ride on to Ross. We took the Lake Leake Road inland and within minutes we were riding in 35 degrees again.



Convict built bridge (1836), Ross.

Smoke from the Western Tiers fires.

Steve found more purple roads for us to ride on our way to Port Arthur and a day around the convict ruins is always educational, even if you have been there before. In Hobart we took residence in an 1890's whalers cottage for the Australian Wooden Boat Festival and enjoyed the spoils of inner city living for a week.



Port Arthur convict settlement.



Australian Wooden Boat Festival - sail pass.

The AWBF is a full on celebration of Tasmania's rich wooden boat heritage and Steve says, "anywhere that declares Regatta Day a public holiday must be alright."



Having a quick pint in the Shipwrights Arms at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival



Just some of the view from Mount Wellington.

If you are on a motorcycle, check the weather before heading up Mt Wellington. We found a light sprinkling of snow, 30 knot winds and 1.5 degrees when we arrived at the top. We were inappropriately dressed and the lookout shelter was the only thing that saved us from ourselves. Note to self, don't do that again.



Looking across Great Oyster Bay to Freycinet National Park from Swansea.

We stopped for a while at The Gulch, in Bicheno, to take in this remarkable anchorage, and then we were on our way to St Marys, along St Marys Pass, to the Chinese restaurant we had found two weeks before. It felt like coming home as we tucked into a delicious plate of Satay Chicken and a pot of steaming Chinese tea. St Helens became home for a couple of days and I was pleased to find Binalong Bay again, busy with divers harvesting sea urchins, the roe sold overseas to China.



Bay of Fires, The Garden



Purple roads.

Our week of comparative luxury in Old Hobart Town was soon behind us and we trundled over to Freycinet National Park for some walking and some good views. The number of folks at the Wineglass Bay lookout was beyond anything Steve and I could enjoy. Apparently some of Tasmania's best kept secrets have turned up on a "must see" website and it seems to be working.

A trip to Launceston became a necessity to replace my failed self inflating mattress. Then we rode south to the little town of Bothwell. Fifty kilometres into the ride, high up on The Great Western Tiers, we were stopped on the side of the road kitting up with wet weather gear and winter gloves; it was 7.5 degrees.

The musings of another traveller overinflated our expectations of Bothwell and despite the weather closing in we decided to ride on to Lake St Clair. The misty rain closed in as we rode through Tarraleaf to Derwent Bridge. "It's going to be muddy down at the lake" said Steve. We deliberated for some time while we watched the rain spitting in the puddles and we made the decision to ride on to Queenstown, 86km away. On we went, navigating the twisty mountain passes with caution. The delightful views were hidden in the mist, I didn't dare to peep as the next bend was only meters away. It was still drizzling when we arrived in Queenstown and when the caravan park manager informed us that Queenstown's annual rainfall is 3000mm we decided to take a cabin; that was a good decision.



Queenstown is central to everywhere, Which way next?



Mt Murchison

While other campers soldiered on and took an umbrella on a trip to the toilet, we nested in our little cabin for a couple of days. We still had one week left to ride the Apple Isle when the weather cleared and we made the most of it, basing ourselves in Rosebery, and later, Stanley. We cruised circuit routes in glorious sunshine and clean crisp air. On one occasion we found ourselves back in Queenstown for Tassies national dish – the scallop pie. The Tarkine Drive was thoroughly enjoyable but be aware, the speed limit was down to 50km for a good chunk of it and this greatly affected ride times.



Trowutta Arch, Tarkine Drive

And so we ended our Tasmania sojourn, riding for the love of riding, until it was time to go home.



Having fun in Stanley - #visitstanleytas

Ride Melbourne to Perth

Last of the Summer Ride



Spirit of Tasmania, arriving Devonport, to take us back to the big island.



Traffic wasn't too bad for a Sunday,
most we had enjoyed the Great Ocean Road for a while

The ride up and over Lavers Hill was fun in the dry conditions. Six years ago we had picked our way up and over this pass in the pouring rain, with a bunch of locals hot on our heels, and had not enjoyed the ride at all. We called Portland home on the second night and were delighted to make the acquaintance of a resident Koala. He sat high in his gum tree and his poop only missed Steve's bike by inches.

A light drizzle set in as we rode into Port Nelson and stayed with us nearly all the way to Tailem Bend, so we kept riding, until the cheap Tuesday all-you-can-eat buffet at The Old Mill Hotel in Hahndorf tempted us to pause for the night.

We chose a Saturday night ferry from Tasmania, so we would have quiet Sunday morning traffic for our early departure from Melbourne. As it turned out it was the Sunday of the Avalon Air Show and so we were bumper to bumper for the first fifty kilometres along the M1, towards The Great Ocean Road.

The Great Ocean Road is a thoroughly enjoyable ride, with enough opportunities to move slow vehicles out of the way and keep you cruising along nicely. We stopped for a refreshing fruit juice in Lorne and set up camp in Apollo Bay.



Port Campbell



Camped at Spear Creek Station

Steve and I usually ride Port Augusta to Perth in four days stopping at Ceduna (470km), Eucla (500km) and Norseman (710km) then home (770km). We choose to stop in these places as they are our preferred places to pitch a tent; although there are many other opportunities to stop along the way. Many years ago an around the world rider shared a thought of wisdom and he said "if you want to keep it enjoyable do less miles." I often remind myself of this, especially when I'm nearing the end of a long day in the saddle. You could certainly relax more if you made the crossing in five days instead of four.

We took the opportunity to enjoy the ride through the Barossa and Clare Valleys on our way to Spear Creek Station in the Flinders Ranges. The station is three kilometres along a good gravel road and well worth your while for a comfortable outback experience and a stunning sunset across the desert plains.



Are we nearly there? Kimba, South Australia.

This Nullarbor crossing was comfortable enough, by late morning we were riding in 30+ degrees but the wind direction and strength were kind to us and the conditions were as good as you could expect for early March. The views are so vast and wide for so many a mile that The Eyre Highway really is one of Australia's great outback rides; it is a privilege to have had the opportunity to ride this highway once more.



Love the truck stops, Caiguna

We were making good time on the last day's ride from Norseman to Perth and were enjoying an early lunch in Southern Cross by ten thirty. Then we hit a succession of road works and the next 110km took nearly two hours to complete; stopped in the blazing sun is unpleasant and tiring and reminds you that it's not over until the fat lady sings.

Fortunately the Great Eastern Highway was pretty quiet until we were on the outskirts of Perth, then wham, we were full on mixing it with workers on their way home. Within moments our summer's ride disappeared in the rear view mirror as if it had never happened and our attention turned to commissioning the house when we arrived home after 15 weeks of travelling on our trusty Beemers.



Sunset at Spear Creek Station, Flinders Range

[Jane Laws Webpage](#)