

BRMC GUEST NEWS – April 2014

Local Ride Activities

British Columbia: Vancouver Island – Members and other riders meet Sundays at 10:30 at Moka House Coffee, Cook St. Village, 345 Cook Street, Victoria, BC

Seattle: April 6 – Day ride, local riders will get an email
April 16 – Meet and Greet, 7 PM Cuff

Portland: April 1 – Meet and Greet, 7 PM Portland Eagle, meeting and event planning
April 6 – Social event - information will be emailed to local riders

March Meeting Recap

Our March meeting was held in Vancouver, WA and hosted by member Scott H. We had good attendance and clear weather. Many people arrived about 3 PM to socialize and help with the set up.

It was particular great to see some members and guests ride their motorcycles to the event. A special recognition goes to Tom S who rode all the way down from BC and to Tom C from the Seattle area. Unfortunately I think they both got wet heading home on Sunday after breakfast.



The club meeting focused on planning for Victoria Day and a few other items of business. Members are reminded to read the meeting minutes posted on the website. Following the meeting everyone took their chair to the driveway where we were able to eat outside as a group.

Some of those that stayed in the area for the night came to breakfast in north Portland. These shared meals promote the overall brotherhood of the club and offer our new guests a chance to interact with members.

Our group photo shows a lot of happy faces.



From the handlebars of the President

Thanks to everyone that attended the march Meeting and big thanks to Scott H and the team that put it all together, it was great to sit outside and eat and the food was fantastic.

The March meeting had some interesting topics raised for the two sub-committees: Waiver and Membership; and moving along and I do encourage you to reach out to members of these committees to make sure that your views and opinions are heard. Thank you to the four candidates for the Treasurer position, Jeff C, Marc L, Richard A, and Dusty E. The results of the ballot will be announced at the end of the ballot period.

The event that is foremost in our planning is the Victoria Day Weekend May 16 – 19. Collin F has the sign-up sheets available and they will be available at the next meeting in Oakville WA on April 19. Sharing the workload across all the members removes the burden on the few dedicated volunteers, so make sure that you contribute and we will all have an awesome time. Uncle Roy and Randy have volunteered their time again this year and we are so appreciative of their continued support. While it is the Board's function to organize this event we do rely totally on the support of our members to make it a success.

When I started riding with the club back in 2006/07 there was a wonderful tradition where the guests did not assist with any set-up or chores and they always ate first, before the members. I would like to re-instate this tradition as I believe that our guests are very important to the future of the club.

We always welcome your feedback and will listen to your concerns. In some instances and cases, we as a Board are unable to act and we may call for feedback from the members. Should that be necessary, we can raise the issues at our public monthly meetings for discussion.

Let's join together and revitalize and re-energize everyone's interest in the club, bring back the fun, get out riding and camping together, sharing our stories and experiences in a safe and respectful environment.

Remember this is YOUR Club, run by the members for the members.

Cheers
Brian B
BRMC President 2014

Birthday Men

April is another popular month for our member's birthdays. Take a moment to wish them a great day. Jason H (April 3); Robert L (April 4); Mike S and Bill B (April 17); Paul P (April 20); Tom C (April 23); and Dale C (April 29)

Upcoming Schedule for 2014

April 19	Club meeting in Oakville, WA – Dan S
May 16-19	Victoria Day Camping Run, Ardenvoir, WA
June 20-22	Pearrygin Lake near Winthrop, WA – road captain buddy Richard A
July 18-20	Canal Creek near Waldport, OR - road captain buddy Scott H
August 15-17	Willows near Lillooet, BC – road captain buddy Brad S
Sept 19-21	Lewis and Clark State park, near Chehalis, WA - road captain buddy Dan S
October 18	Club meeting – TBD
November 15	Club meeting – TBD
December 13	Holiday Party - TBD

April Meeting Registration

The April meeting will be on Saturday the 15th and hosted by Dan S in Oakville, WA. The meal cost will be \$15. Guests are encouraged, but will need to have a sponsor to register them to attend this meeting.

Registration for Victoria Day

Registration is available for our May kickoff camping weekend. Guests will need to have a member sponsor and register them for this event. The cost for the weekend will be \$125 for guests until April 30. On May first the fees go to \$150 for guests.

Contributed Article

Luke Bryant is a BRMC honorary member living in Australia

MOTORCYCLISTS: IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH POLICE



In earlier days legalized injustice toward certain minority groups, was prevalent in Australia and I strongly disapproved of continuing irrational public outbursts against minority groups, including motorcyclists, the G/L community and later in 1996, by the Victorian Minister for Police condemning several sworn police officers for being gay or lesbian. This troubled me because of several years of previous connections to Law Enforcement - but of no significance here. I responded to the Ministers outburst by contacting the Secretary of their group, the Gay and Lesbian Police Employees Network (GALPEN (Vic) Inc.) and joined their ranks as an Associate and official photographer, to help confront persisting outmoded attitudes that continued following the introduction of the Equal Opportunity and Anti-discrimination Act in the early nineteen eighties. In 1997 GALPEN's Executive appointed me as Communications Officer.

In an earlier BRMC Newsletter, I published my account of becoming a "Motorcyclist". (Not Bkie) In 1997 I joined the Motorcycle Riders' Association. (MRA Victoria, Inc.) Our aims were to improve our road image and encourage Government to do more to protect motorcyclists. In 1978, the MRA elected me to their Committee as Road Safety Education Counsellor.

Sadly, the majority of law abiding motorcyclists on the road can - far too easily - be subjected to repeated license checks or suspected of being part of one of the nine or more Nation-wide outlaw biker gangs. These criminal groups have a collective membership of at least 3000 in Australia. Rivalry for control between two gangs resulted in a gun battle claiming seven lives and later in 2008 this was followed by a clash escalating into 13 shootings in the space of two weeks. Gang violence has now become high profile and State Governments are changing laws to focus on the problem, while police have set up forces against the threat. This includes Police Crime Gang Task Forces to tackle bkie gangs involved in drugs, murder, extortion and other forms of intimidation and violence. However, an increasing proportion of the crime is not necessarily committed by bikers; a good deal of crime is committed by non-riding members or associates of these gangs.

Despite the small percentage of gay and lesbian persons, including motorcyclists, reacting badly toward police who sometimes acted improperly, in a more enlightened community today, I try to update their view of modern police recruit training now in operation in Victoria.

Senior Sergeant Scott Davis, from the Centre for Ethics, Community Engagement and Communication initiated the program entitled, "Community Encounters" in 2009 at the Police Academy. Citizens from Victoria's diverse community were invited to support the program by volunteering their personal stories. I became aware of this program in 2011 and joined them at the Academy. At each session Scott (below left photo with me) informs the recruits they should not shy away from difficult questions in order to get a better understanding of the person, but they cannot ask what community, if any, we are from. He continues, "Do it professionally, do it with respect, do it



with dignity, but ask the question, it's better to make a mistake here in the classroom than out in the street."

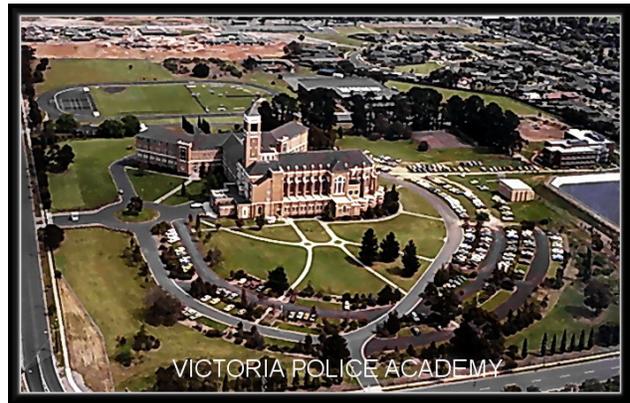
More than 3,000 Police and Protective Services Officers (PSOs) have undertaken the program since it was first introduced in 2009.

With increasing operational demands on police resources, the establishment of the Protective Services Division has allowed police to get on with "policing". Protective Services Officers provide specialist security services in areas where Victoria Police have previously undertaken duties. The PSO are deployed in many areas such as Melbourne's public transport system, Law and Suburban Courts, Parliament House, the Shrine of Remembrance, Police HQ and elsewhere.

These recruit "Encounters" occur every second Thursday across each year.

In 2011–12, our Team contributed to training 35 Squads containing on average 26 recruits each, 11 Squads containing on average 20 Public Service Officer (PSO) recruits each and 30 Community Encounters Sessions involve civilian volunteers representing multicultural, indigenous, GLBTI and mental health communities. To date many of these Officers have since graduated at the Academy.

This "Community Encounters" program gives recruits experience dealing with vulnerable people who have volunteered to speak about their lives. The fortnightly sessions, each with a new group of recruit Police and PSO works a bit like speed dating. Groups of 6 recruits meet people including Muslims, a Rabbi, Aboriginal community members, GLBTI persons, a prison senior officer, those with mental illness or HIV/AIDS and African migrants, volunteers rotate every 15 minutes following recruits politely questioning us to discover who is who and what is our life's experiences. This program allows recruits their first opportunity for detailed investigation of civilian citizen volunteers.



I continue to have input that assists future sworn Officers in their potential response to the many diverse community concerns, including gay and lesbian - and motorcyclist concerns in the general community. Following formal introductions, I declare, "I'm gay and have several different interests that in years past has included motorcycling. However, because of my limited time with each group, detailed investigation of my background can be further expanded by other means.

It should not be unexpected that 20% or more of the recruits identify as Motorcyclists and perhaps some will eventually be part of the Forces Motorcycle Squad.

Approximately 5 minutes into each session, I supply each recruit with a copy of my Curriculum Vitae, (CV) providing recruits with opportunities for further interrogation, then or later that I'm pleased to answer.

This provides my opportunity to present them with a complimentary copy of the recently published BRMC "Motorcycle Inspection Checklist" a gift from a gay motorcycle club that is genuinely appreciated and can only advance relationships between police and law abiding motorcyclists.



It is worth noting the Victorian Human Rights Education Program has also been nominated as a model of good practice, and is included in the United Nations Human Rights Education DVD, celebrating human rights education. Victoria Police is the only public authority presented in the DVD.

To continue, "In 1949/53 The Kinsey Reports, Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male and Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female, make it clear that a person's sexuality is the way they were born, not what they chose and it is known that at least 10% of the world's population is not heterosexual. There are 70 or more people in this room and more than 1500 persons on site - now. So who may be gay or lesbian?"

Over many weeks, the same reply from the majority of recruits occurs, "Who cares?" Surely, this is a good news response as questions continue, "What was it like being gay in your day when it was illegal before the Anti-Sex Discrimination Act 1984?"

I remind recruits, "Difficult, but as today, it was the duty of police to uphold the law, but a few did exceed their responsibility. However, it was and is the law making politicians that allowed their religious beliefs to determine laws in a culturally diverse democratic country. That was wrong and is today."

Interestingly enough, all recruits agreed. My reply usually results in their next question, "Do you believe there is a God?" I counter their question in two ways.

"The study of astronomy supplies evidence of our universe extending for billions of light years, so far we have not yet found any evidence of Gods, so the answer to your question is simple - there is no answer to the question." I continue, "You are free to believe what you choose, but remember, your belief is not fact and you cannot take it into a Law Court where evidence only is required."

Recruits agree with my reasoning before continuing with enquiries relative to my varied interests.

"Did you ever tell your parents that you were gay?"

"Yes! When I was 25, they had no problem with my sexuality

"But how did your straight close friends react."

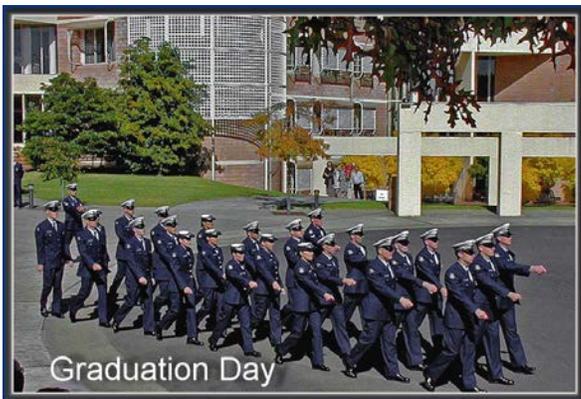
"Years earlier, I was the Best Man at the wedding of a friend in my RAAF Squadron. Today, one of his children is a helicopter pilot with the New South Police, to his family, being gay is not a problem."

Question: "Did you ever think of joining the police force?"

Reply: "With a long history of service in both parents familiars that goes back several generations, I guess I have the service gene in my makeup, so yes, I did consider joining, but there was two problems, being gay was one I could have hidden, the other, I could not, I was not tall enough! However, my desire to serve found other ways via the RAAF Reserve.

There is another occasional question of particular interest to all GLBTI persons. "Are gay adults in general sexually attracted to children".

The short answer is, "No. However, the increasing acceptance of gay and lesbian citizens by the heterosexual community requires our increased vigilance against possible criminality. With gay rights/marriage and more on our agenda, gay organizations need to be seen to be above reproach, perhaps need to update their Membership Application Rules."



The recruits had also been instructed to prepare a written biography of each of the community volunteers following their questioning and the volunteers receive extracts from these reports, I present one out of several dozen from recent "Encounters".

Police Recruit wrote, "...I have learnt that as police, we are also stereotyped as nasty and untruthful and our challenge as new members of Victoria Police is to break through these stereotypes (which have been as a result of the past behaviour of members) and show these communities that we respect them and are able to help them as we would any other person in Victoria."

Although Q & A above mainly relate to gay issues, recruits continue to be far more interested in my professional and community areas of interest and not in any way related to being gay. This is another good indication of changing attitudes toward homosexuality.

At the conclusion of the afternoons **Community Encounters Session**, it is self evident; Officers and Volunteers regarded their experience, valuable for future Officers working in a very diverse society, while Victoria Police provided voluntaries the opportunity to better know their Law Enforcement Officers, working in that varied and sometimes dangerous community.

Rider News



The regular monthly rides for March were rained out, but a few local Portland riders met for breakfast on March 23. Jeff B led the group part of the way and guest riders Brendan, Dave, Andrew, Rich and Larry continued on to Astoria on the back roads, had lunch and took the bridge to WA, back on the ferry across the Columbia and home on 30. It looked to be a great riding day.

Contributions

Trip plans, day rides, other member news?

When you get out riding send some photos and tell us about what you did. We would love to add it to the newsletter.

