

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT



Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Mid Life Adventures Newspaper and as we come out of balmy mid 30 days when the cool blue waters and white sands of your nearest beach take preference, it's time to pack the budgie smugglers (yep, that's right, the great Aussie icon is back in fashion) into the bottom drawer and blow the dust off the gear sack and bike cause its riding time again.

For us at MLA we are busy tying up loose ends for the upcoming Temujin Trans Mongolian Adventure Ride in 6 weeks, directing our third (!) provider on how our web site should look, sorting out hiccups with our ISP providers, taking aboard feedback from our recent survey (thanks for those who responded), confirming tours pre and post August Himalayan ride and setting and resetting our 2019 ride calendar to tie in with our overseas suppliers. I'm not sure where the hours come from to do all this as both Bob and I have other business to manage but it all seems to fit.

In this edition, the theme continues with 2018 tour overviews, our 2019 tours which are now locked in....mostly, and 'Product Stuff' reviewing items of

interest to our adventure rider demographic. A new 'Sponsor', **Contrast Signs** has jumped on board wanting to be part of our growth and again we feature one of our offshore partners, this time being Kay Kaesler co-owner of Big Bike Tours in Northern Thailand.

Allow me to introduce this season's editorial with a quote from Gregory David Roberts latest novel, *The Mountain Shadow*...

"Riding a motorcycle is velocity in motion. The fine balance between elegant agility and fatal fall is a kind of truth and like all truths, it carries a heartbeat with it into the sky. Eternal moments in the saddle escape the stuttering flow of time and space and purpose..."

This is a magnificent summary only appreciated by those who participate. It made me think back to when the journey started for me and more particularly when the weekends around Narbethong and Bunyip State Forest on my trusty TS400 morphed in what seemed like no time, to kitting up the XR600 for adventure riding. Back then in 1996 the mag of the day was Tony Kirby's *Sidetrack* and I still retain I believe every copy from the first publication to the end when Tony's life unfortunately ended.



The August/September Himalayan Ride starting with a three day tour of Delhi and environs then heading to the highest motorable road in the world is fully booked with 20 adventurers all keen to try out the Royal Enfield Himalaya and experience the wonder and serenity of the magnificent Himalayan mountain range.

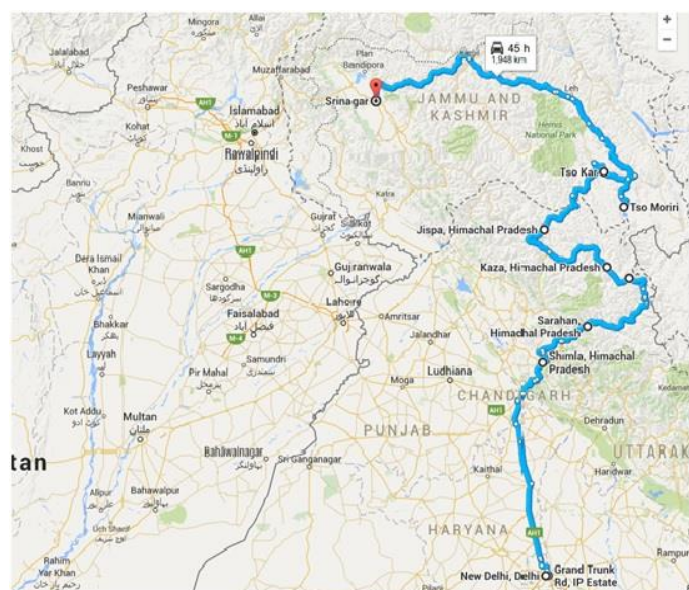
It's likely that depending on demand, this will be the last ride to the Himalayas from the southern side for a couple of years as Mid Life Adventures explores the globe looking for equally amazing unique destinations to invite you to.

For those wanting to ride the Himalayas with MLA, you will be pleased to know we will venture into the mountains from a different direction in 2019...read on!

So for the 20 riders who will experience the amazing journey back in to 1000 year old history, who will sleep and eat with the nomads of the high plains and who will ride the highly documented worst roads in the world, congratulations on committing to the adventure.

Bob, I and our team at Motorcycle Expeditions are really looking forward to creating these lifetime memories for you.

As mentioned in the Spring Newspaper, if this tour is on your bucket list, email either Bob or myself mike@midlifeadventures.com.au for information.



2019 and beyond

The Ride Calendar:

- **Feb 24th-7th March: King of the Mekong Tour (12 days)**
- **August 9th-23rd: Vietnam Discovery Ride (14 days)**
- **November 1st – 10th: Nepal Upper Mustang ride (10 days)**

King Of The Mekong Tour. Thailand and Laos 12 day 24th Feb 2019 – 7th March 2019

Even for the most hardened dirt bike riders amongst our group on the 2017 Thai 2 Loop Ride, the 5 day 'road' loop was what was talked about then and still now as the best riding they had done for years. Sure, all us dirt bike riders love nothing better than a dirty gnarly steep mountain or a deep river crossing to keep the heart racing but, riding Thailand 's northern perfectly formed roads, rolling edge to edge on new tyres on latest model machinery and staying in single room resort accommodation eating sumptuous Thai banquets was absolutely enough to exceed my tour expectation and I would have been happy to go home after 6 days before I even swung my Tech 8's over the CRF for the 5 days in the jungle.

So for 2019, Loop 2 has been replaced with an extended ride through the best of the Golden Triangle and then deep in to Laos. The tour starts and ends in the beautiful area of Chiang Mai 800 Kms north of Bangkok then heading north on the infamous Highway 1155 along the border with Laos. This route provides riding at its best. Day 3 we cross into Laos and ride the stunning new road through Laos's highest mountains. The next 4 days are filled with discovering Laos, environs, architecture culinary offering, villages, historical hot spots and even the purpose built Casino Town in the Chinese border at Boten. Never far from the Mekong which is the lifeline of both travel and trade from Cambodia to Myanmar, the tour is aptly named, The King of the Mekong Tour.



January to March is the ideal time to ride this area so if you have on your list to do an adventure without the Tech 8's, this is as good as it gets.

The tour is limited to 10 riders.....8 spots remaining!

Contact Mike or bob@midlifeadventures.com for further details or to reserve your spot on the ride.

Nepal - Upper Mustang Ride November 2019

This 10 day adventure is a definite but I can't give you a lot of detail just yet as our 'scout' has only just returned from his recon and is still sourcing the best accommodation that is available in these remote areas. This ride on Royal Enfield Himalayan adventure bikes (see photo) will be for experienced riders who really have a desire to ride back in time in to the ever-changing unknown of the Himalayan Mountains. [**This is a ride for adventurous adventurers!**](#)



It will be off road riding departing from the trekking capital Kathmandu in to the most remote and isolated region of the Nepalese Himalayas known as Upper Mustang and finishing at Pokhara. Cut off from the world on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau, Mustang has been part of Nepal since the 18th century but its traditional Tibetan culture has survived in isolation. The ride will weave through implausible gorges, high passes and enormous vistas as we venture through ancient colourful Tibetan Villages, along barren ridges, eroded cliffs and moraine valleys. We will visit 1000 year old manmade caves and Buddhist monasteries. The landscape is unrivalled anywhere in the world. This tour is not

available on other tour operator's menus as it is specifically routed for MLA.



We will have full detail of the tour including pricing in the winter edition of MLA Newspaper but if this ride appeals to you, let us know your interest as we again are **limited to 10-12 riders**. Our pricing will include the USD\$500 Tourist fee charged to all who enter this Kingdom.

Vietnam South to North August 2019

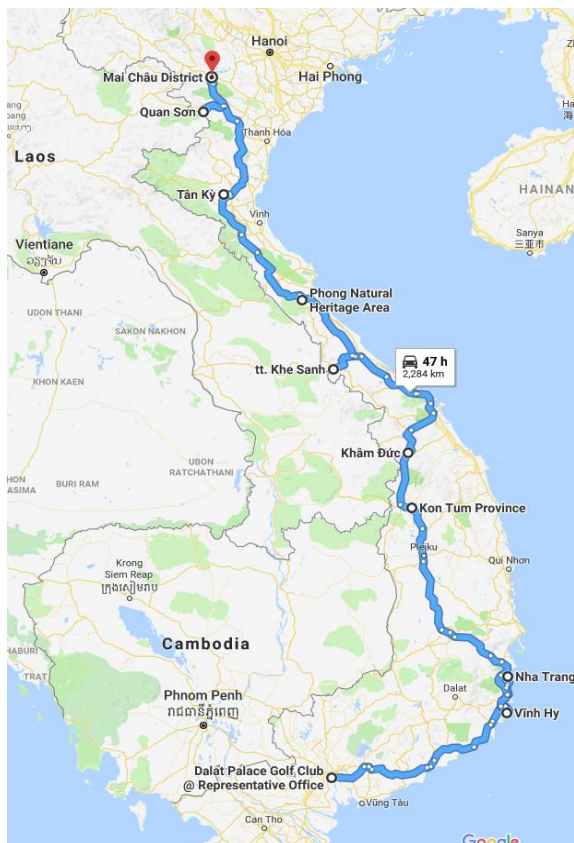
In the Summer edition of MLA Newspaper, we indicated that September would be the scheduled date for the South to North Vietnam Discovery Ride but have decided to move this tour forward a month to August to fit in better with our Vietnamese partners and our own ride schedule. It will also provide a better ride temperature as we weave along the Ho Chi Minh trail in the central highlands heading north to Hanoi which is several degrees cooler than the coast.

Due to time constraints, we will have an overnight stay in Ho Chi Minh City then fly to Nha Trang rather than ride as the traffic for a good part of the road HCM to Nha Trang is insane and to ride the coast road adds an additional two days.

The tour is all inclusive including all meals while on tour, flights Ho Chi Minh City to Nha Trang, quality support staff and vehicle, motorcycle damage cover and non-alcoholic drinks whilst riding. MLA does not enter into any agreement where there are 'hidden' expenses so rest assured, you will be well cared for and will absolutely will be treated to the 'real' Vietnam not a tourist handpicked offering.

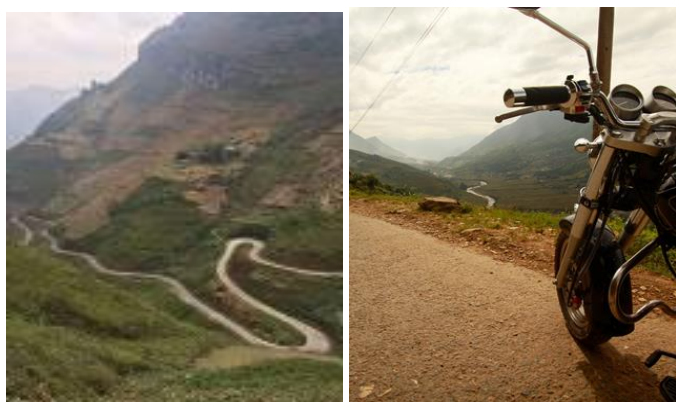


This will not be an enduro on KTM's or CRF's. It will be an adventure of a different kind and pace open to riders and pillioners who you want to share the experience with.



(Vietnam Discovery Ride Draft Route)

The tour will be 14 days Nha Trang to Hanoi plus the overnight stay in HCM City. I expect that some riders particularly those with pillion partners with time permitting in their diaries will consider supplementary tours to Heritage listed Halong Bay or the historic village of Hoa An on the central coast. MLA can arrange these tours on request.



(Typical roads in Vietnam's central highlands)

For further information on the Vietnam Discovery Ride contact mike or bob@midlifeadventures.com.au and we will email you full tour details.

Wadd'ya Got for Sale'

In this edition one of our regular riders has decided to unclutter his shed and concentrate on one genre of riding....Adventure. Now these days there are so many options available that fit this category ranging in capacity from 250cc (at a stretch) to 1200cc monsters weighing in at 250 kgs plus....certainly in the heavy division! Prices range from a little over \$6K to over \$30K and can carry the flag of any number of nations. But once a BMW lover, always a BMW lover and fortunately they have a bike to fit any requirement.

So wadd'ya got for sale Lars?

2012 BMW G650GS Sertao

Seller's comments: I purchased the bike with the idea that it would allow me to go places where the 800R wouldn't and this bike would certainly do that. I'm the obstacle holding it back as I live in the CBD and have no means of transport to get it and myself to the starting gates. So, it has to go as does the 800R (next edition) to make way for something more practical to my needs.

Price: \$7400 ONO

Odometer: 6909km

History / Ownership

1. Previous owner middle-aged male using bike only for city commuting. Did about 5000km.
2. Myself, done about a total of 5-6 long rides totalling about 1900KM. Has never been off road!

Modifications:

Engine Crash bars (By SW-Motech)

Specs:

652 cc, 4 stroke

1 cyl, Vertical

35 kW / 60 Nm

177 kg

Rego: 1F5IV

Excellent condition and immaculate presentation.

Fairly new battery (about 7 month).

Registration valid until Feb 2019. RWC Supplied.

Call me if you are interested in a great mid capacity touring bike which will easily take you off road to those hard to get to destinations.

Call Lars on 0404-245-292



Product Stuff

We are always interested in products which make life that much better or safer for our riders. As we get that little bit older, we don't react quite as fast as a younger brain and that can lead to consequences....which hurt! We also can never find our reading glasses when we need them and the printing on the maps seems to be getting smaller and smaller, so in this season's edition we review two products guaranteed to help us on our discoveries....safely.

EVS R4 Race Collar (special MLA Offer)

Riding around in what looked like a cart horse collar never looked that comfortable to me, but a wheelchair must be worse. Even a garden-variety crook neck can be debilitating, I saw so many cases in the ED that I've always had neck protection on my mind.

After trying a couple of types on the only way to find out was trial one.



The EVS R4 looked different, more of a compromise than the full Leatt neck brace in my shed a relic from my daughter's motocross days. Adventure gear is all about finding the compromise that suits the rider.

Neck protection collars look more like instruments of torture than real-world riding gear. My quest has been to find a practical and comfortable option. After a rigorous test, I think the EVS R4 fits the bill.

To my amazement, once on, I hardly knew the EVS R4 Race Collar was there. The collar never impinged on my hydration pack. What struck me was that I had all the head movement I needed to ride and could put the pack on even after I'd got the collar in place.

Although it's another bit of kit to deal with while getting ready, it was quick and simple. I doubt I'll wear it on the road but when the dust rises I'll be collared.

As I say in my ride briefs, it's your body, so protect it as best you can'. I'm seeing more and more riders using neck support and it's not for fashion...it's for protection of your cerebral structure!

RRP \$190 but for the first 10 buyers who quote the discount code MLAEVS18 the EVS R4 is yours for the special cost of \$165.....don't miss out!

Call Andy at Andy Strapz on 03 9786 3445 or visit his store at 1/95 Brunel Rd, Seaford Vic

Garmin InReach Explorer +

I've lost count after 21 years of adventure riding the amount of times we have pulled off the track, dragged out a map and often confirmed that yup, we were heading the wrong way! ...and this decision was seconded by any other rider who could get within view of the map spread out across a bike seat or farm fence often puffing their chest out bleating 'I told you so'. Well those days are over!



Introducing the InReach Explorer by Garmin. Being Garmin, you know its quality and it works.

And why would I want one?

It's one of the few hybrid devices on the market that offers both SOS, Tracking, Send / Receive SMS & Emails while outside of Mobile coverage. A potential life saver.

Summary of device functionality:

- * Can trigger an interactive SOS 24/7 search and rescue event. Works like a proper EPIRB device.
- * Communicate directly with other InReach devices.
- * Send and receive text messages to SMS & email.
- * Send and receive messages with other InReach users + exchange locations.
- * Pair with your iPhone / Android for ease of use.
- * Track / plan your routes + share them with friends / family on easy to use Web page.

* Request weather forecasts for current location and planned destination:

* Build in: Digital Compass / Barometer / GPS unit

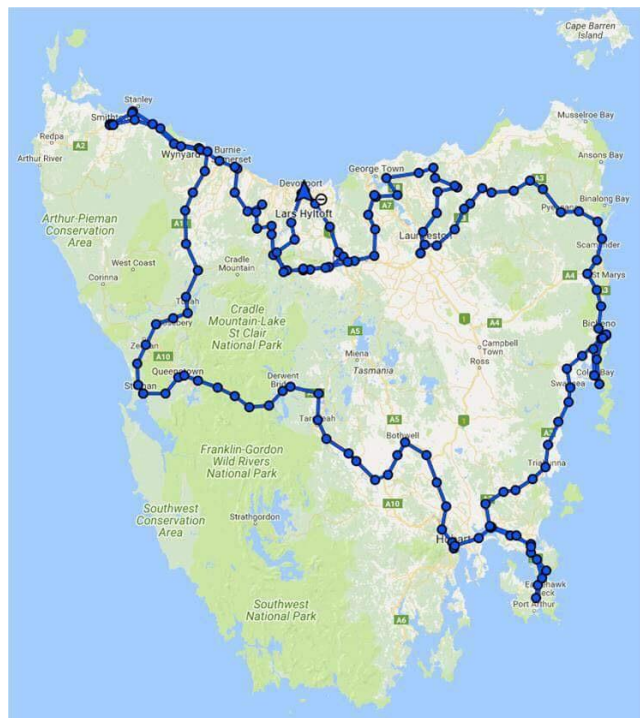
Network Coverage

Work purely of the Iridium satellite system, which has worldwide cover (almost).

Battery Life:

Up to 100 hours at 10-minute tracking mode (default); up to 75 hours at 10-minute tracking with 1-second logging; up to 30 days at the 30-minute interval power save mode; and up to 3 years when powered off.

We have been using the Garmin on our latest trips to Thailand and Tasmania and the tracker is a 'gem' and should be included in every adventure rider's kit. Just have a look at the following map for tracking ability....



The cost of the unit itself is RRP \$699 from Garmin or less if you shop around (Amazon USD \$449) and then you purchase a plan which suits your requirements.

Reviews

<https://www.outdoorgearlab.com/reviews/camping-and-hiking/personal-locator-beacon/garmin-inreach-explorer-plus>

New MLA 'Sponsor'



As noted in the MLA Newspaper Summer edition we are on the search for individuals or companies who are interested in supporting MLA's growth and also promoting their own product or service to our readers. Our latest 'partner' to come on board is Contrast Signs

Owner and Director Rod McPherson who is new to motorcycling recently moved into my neighbourhood and has recently produced exceptional UV protected hi stick labels for MLA in various sizes and colour schemes for displaying our corporate logo on shrouds, helmets, bags etc.



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1800 00 87 87

6 Elsie Grove Chelsea
Signage All Areas

www.contrastsigns.com.au
[E: rodcontrastsigns@bigpond.com.au](mailto:rodcontrastsigns@bigpond.com.au)

For all your printing needs please contact Rod for a quote. He's a great guy to deal with and you will be very happy with the results.



Contact: Michael Burton 0409 512546 email: mike@midlifeadventures.com.au
 Bob Moffett 0408 118184 email: bob@maxipak.com.au
www.midlifeadventures.com.au

Survey Results

As you are aware we issued a survey to our readers in April requesting your feedback on rides/destinations which might be of interest and also whether your family, friends or partners would join your motorcycling adventure if MLA sourced an appropriate vehicle for them to follow your journey. A big thank you for those who participated in the survey.

The results:

- Most were happy to introduce/offer/refer tours to friends, family partners provided the vehicle was comfortable and accommodation/meals adequate.
- Preferred destinations were Mongolia and Nepal due to their remoteness.
- The Himalayas was on most readers 'bucket list' to ride sometime in their lives.
- Bhutan and Sri Lanka were not on readers radars
- Vietnam and Thailand were preferred for more relaxed rides where pillions are welcomed.

So armed with this information, we have set the ride timetable for 2019 as previously listed and will consider a rerun of Trans Mongolia in 2020 if the demand is there.

If you have a destination on 'your' list that is of interest, please let us know as we have contacts in many countries and are always on the lookout for new ride destinations.

Photo repository

MLA really appreciates those supporters who roll their sleeves up to assist us develop the MLA offering and the 'Diamond Award' this season goes to one of our regular riders - Lars who has given up his precious time to develop an on line site for all our riders to post their photos and have access to a 'full album' of photos by year by trip destination. Access to the site is controlled by Lars through the website www.midlifeadventures.com (still under

development) or through our Facebook account www.facebook.com/motorcyclingTours/

Who we partner with....

Mid Life Adventures would not be in operation without our overseas affiliates who provide the logistics for our tours.

In this edition we feature our Thai partner - Big Bike Tours co-owner Kay Kaesler.



Kay Kaesler

Nirin Chaiyapan 'Noah'

What is it you love about motorcycling Kay?

Touring on a big bike not only takes riders to interesting destinations but provides a genuine touch of natural beauty and fresh clean air that can add to the excitement of freedom, agility and comfort on two secure wheels.

Why do you love about riding in Northern Thailand?

Northern Thailand offers some of the best riding in the world and our neighbouring countries Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar have warmly opened their borders to us to assist promote their tourist trade. BBT has 15 years in researching the best routes available to give our clients the best ride and cultural experience available.



Contact: Michael Burton 0409 512546 email : mike@midlifeadventures.com.au

Bob Moffett 0408 118184 email : bob@maxipak.com.au

www.midlifeadventures.com.au

When did you establish Big Bike Tours?

BBT began business as a group of big bike owners riding for fun and then expanded in to a bike tour business in 2009 in Chiang Mai. The owners of BBT are myself and brother in law Nirin Chaiyapan (Noah). Noah had been a tour guide for many years and it was over a drink that we decided to pull our interests together and set up BBT.

Tell us a little about your operation.

We currently run around 100 tours per year with most tours within 500 kilometres of Chiang Mai but over the last few years we have added Pattaya, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and more recently Northern India to our destination offering. All BBT tours are all inclusive and we ensure that riders have single rooms. We limit our tours to 10 riders to keep the group 'friendly' and safe.

How did your association with MLA form?



(Mike and Bob with Co Founder Noah in 2017)

Mike approached BBT and a number of bike tour companies in 2016 with the idea of running a tour of two loops in the Golden Triangle of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos, the first being on road bikes and the second on dirt bikes running along the Thai/Myanmar border to the west and north west of Chiang Mai through the national parks. Noah and I like that these guys think outside the square when it comes to creating unique tours as it takes us back to our roots and what we were and still are all about...giving our customers unique lifetime memories. We have a close working relationship with MLA and are really pleased to be supporting them as their business develops.

Closing comments

As we head in to winter, our ride schedule really kicks in and we can't wait to get on the Dreamliner's for our Mongolia and Himalaya rides.

Last week I received a short email from a rider who has been on a number of MLA adventures and it really confirms to Bob and I that we are on the right path in developing MLA and providing fantastic rides.

It went like this.....' *Hi Mike and Bob, I was just today reliving my trip with you guys as I read through the trip photobook (for the fourth time!) which you provide all participants following the ride into the Himalayas and I can say honestly that I have absolute confidence that you will continue to over deliver on your promise to create lifetime memories for me and others on future rides. I've ridden with a number of tour companies over the years and have never got the personal service, support and continual contact pre trip than I have from MLA. Can't wait for 2019....Nepal and Vietnam... I'm there!*

I look forward in the MLA Newspaper Winter Edition to giving you an overview of the Trans Mongolian tour from the rider's perspective... surely one of the ten adventurers will be able to string a few words together as well as Diana did for the Van Diemens Ride in January!

We hope that you have enjoyed the read and we love feedback which helps us improve what we do, so good or bad, give it to us so that we can improve what we do.

My closing comment and one that we live by ... ***'there is always a better way to do things tomorrow than what you do really well today!'***

For details on any of our tours contact:

mike@midlifeadventures.com.au or
bob@maxipak.com.au

Remember....

'It's now your time to enjoy'

