

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT



From the editor.....

So here it is, the first newsletter from the office of Mid Life Adventurers. For some time now we have taken the approach of contacting you by ad hoc emails regarding our adventure rides. Then came along social media and the ability to instantly get the message across. Some have embraced the medium and some remain in the dark fearing to step in to the unknown for fear of what's going on behind 'the click'.

Email is good, as is Facebook, Instagram and Messenger but none can take the place of the humble telephone for an instant response. Sure, the computer will get the message to you with photos, text, tables, spreadsheets etc BUT with every email or social media post, one big thing is missing.....a response!

So I send an email asking for a response asap as I have a deadline to meet or a bargain which has an expiry date and then sit back waiting for the mobile to 'ding' with a notification of a message or email. Waiting, waiting, waiting 'Ding'. One of the regulars in a managerial role knows what ASAP means. He is used to deadlines, to

decision making on the hop, to quickly assessing the situation, considers the risk, the cost, the value, the experience and hits the 'send' button. He's committed.

And that's the thing with emails or posts. Once you press that button, it's out there for all to see....and judge!

No emotion, no tone, no ambiguity...it's there in black and white and you are held accountable.

Do you realise why people buy on line? No, it's not about the price or even the convenience...it's about the 'hit' you get every time you buy. Think about it for a moment and you will realise why there is such a proliferation of buying sites every time you open your emails.

Hit 1. You decide that you are going to buy an item so you go on line researching all available options, specifications, reviews, prices. You go through a process of analysing and the euphoria starts to build as you make your decision to commit

Hit 2. With the decision of *What*, now you enter the *How* phase. You open eBay for the first time, enter your item in the search, press the go button and watch with amazement at all the items matching your requirement. You are faced with another decision...Who do I buy from, what are the shipping cost, what if it's not quite right?

Hit 3. You have made your decision. Pressing that BUY NOW button is such a relief and you feel that warm flow pass through your body...Ahhh, it's done! Now the wait for the goods to arrive. You have entered the *When* stage.

Hit 4. You first get confirmation from Pay Pal that your order went through and then from the supplier that the goods have been shipped and you have a nominated

delivery date. Waiting, waiting, waiting!

Hit 5. The doorbell rings. You take a deep breath, open the door and here is your regular Star Track guy smiling at you knowing exactly the excitement and relief that you have gone through and are feeling right at this moment. After all he's seen it 10 times already this morning.

Hit 6. Remember when your kids ripped the paper off their Christmas gifts...that's you now...*it's your time to enjoy!*

So what has all this got to do with Mid Life Adventures?

Everything and in fact if you are a motorcyclist, these 'hits' happen every time you go on an adventure ride....you get wind that there is a trip being planned and you are curious to know where it will be to.

You then receive the teaser invitation and before long are finding ways to justify the cost. Over that hurdle, the emails start rolling in and the excitement builds as the departure date approaches. Then in what seems like days, you're packing



clothes and heading for the destination. It only gets better from there on.

We extensively research our destinations not on any magical formula but on a 'Where the hell would we like to go for our next ride?' This has been the standard number one criteria for the past 21 years and isn't about to change anytime soon. And that's all very well when there is only one common group to satisfy but then the word gets around of our adventures and a new group emerges wanting the same experience.

All of a sudden the seed is sown and Mid Life Adventures is born. The theory of Marketing 101 is put in to practice this time with the help of social media, modern technology and yes, the humble telephone to get the story spread to individuals like yourselves who have a passion like us to explore new lands on two wheels.

Why the name Mid Life Adventures? Simple really...you are the guys who have the time, the money, the

commitment and the passion to do something that you would never consider doing yourself. We are not about racing point to point...we are about the journey and providing unique life, culture, gastronomic and ride experiences which you will remember and talk about forever. We are not a commercial tour operator but rather a facilitator supported by our offshore affiliates who supply the best possible accommodation, machinery, nourishment and support to give you a unique experience at an affordable price.

As a facilitator with few operating costs nor capital required to maintain motorcycle fleets, we are unlimited in the adventures we offer and are continually seeking feedback on what we can do better to improve your experience.

To date, the tours we have run have been fully booked out 12 months in advance so for those who came on the rides to India 2015 and Thailand 2017, thanks for your support and feedback which was fantastic.

To recap...

Him -A- Layer Adventure Ride 2015

The idea of a ride to the Himalayas came close to 15 years ago when I read an article in Tony Kirby's Side Track magazine about a tour deep in to the Himalayas on Royal Enfield's offered by Ferris Wheels. Having conquered a rather insane tour on very well used XR 250's in Cambodia in 2013 with a number of the guys still



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joining most rides today, it seemed like a good time to tick this one off the list of 'must do sometime rides'. It didn't take a lot of encouraging to gather enough riders to meet the minimum 8 required to run a custom tour of the Himalayas and in a short time, 13 had deposits paid for what was to be an astounding tour. Fortunately a few of the Cambodian 2013 riders had trail blazed a new route with Motorcycle Expeditions in 2012 so this route was adopted with a few tweaks here and there to make it more interesting.

Our ages ranged from 31 to 69 with the average in the mid 50's. Some of the not so young chaps had not flung a leg over a motorbike since their teens so it was good that they came on the pre ride warmup rides over Victoria's High Country and the Strzelecki's.

As most of the posse had not ventured in to India before, it made sense to arrange a two day tour of Delhi and environs. Motorcycle Expeditions Neeraj, had all arrangements in place and everything ran to clockwork from the airport pickup, the Delhi two day tour and the transfer to the local train station for the transit to Shimla where the real journey started on 300 klm old Enfield's

Our host, and ME head honcho Buddhi and guide Moti were a joy to work with and from start to finish, the tour did not falter. If anything could be improved, it would be to provide earplugs to block out the horrific religious chanting which starts around 5am in the morning usually through village PA systems.

Gordon (67 y.o) summed up the trip beautifully...*"The motorcycle trip through the Himalayas was the highlight of my life and for me a great achievement personally. For someone who until April did not own a motorcycle licence, I think it was amazing. From a scenic point, the trip provided never ending unbelievable views many of which were not possible to capture in true perspective on a camera. There were many vista's that simply just had to be seen. From an endurance point of view, for an aged person such as myself, the trip certainly provided some physical challenges and at 67, to get to the end was a great personal achievement."*

"From a mateship point of view, the trip provided a closer bond to those I already knew, and the opportunity to meet a whole new group of friends with similar ideals and interests – that was the fantastic part for me."

"I gained so much riding experience from the trip itself and also from the hints from the other more experienced riders...thanks Mike, Tony and Bob."

"The memories will last forever, boosted by all the pictures I have taken"



Thai 2 Loop Adventure Ride 2017

Like the Himalayan Ride, the idea of a ride in Northern Thailand appealed but with the urge to get in to the forests like in Cambodia, we came up with the idea to bring two tour companies together and run 2 loops of 5-6 days out of Chiang Mai - the first loop on road ponies (650's) riding the Golden Triangle and the second loop on 250's running through National Parks west/nor west of Chiang Mai along the Myanmar Thailand border.

For those on the trip, who could forget the suspension bridge on the last day or Dan tearing the tread on his CBR 600 or Lars swan dive over the edge?



Kay and Noah of Big Bike Tours worked closely with Mid Life Adventures to pull the tour together and enlisted the help of Duncan and Jeff of Big Tony's Tours to cover the spec's of the off road leg. As you gather from the names, Big Bikes refers to the CC's whilst 'Big Tony' baffles me a bit as there is no Tony in the operation.

The concept of road/off road on one tour was new and 'A Few Doubting Thomas's' questioned whether their preferred genre would be adequately covered for the dollar spend.

I can assure you, once the off roaders got on to the CBR's, new 'beasts' emerged and more than one decided after 5 days of corner to corner racing that their next bike would not have knobbies!

This will be a tour we will run again and again as it caters for all types of riders giving the road riders the challenges of off road terrain and the dirt bikers the thrills of road riding on good bikes, perfectly formed roads and sensational après activity.

Mark (NZ) had the following to say....*"My feedback is simple BLOODY AWESOME!!!*

I have learnt that trips like this you just accept the flow and don't try to fight it. I really struggle to find anything at all that I find reason to comment about (bar one issue...) The trip was great. The accommodation was fine. The food was fantastic and where it wasn't so great that was fine also as that is part of the experience and I didn't go hungry. The organisation was superb, the itinerary was faultless, and the comradery was excellent!



And from Noah of Big Bike Tours.....*"From the first minute we started the tour until the last minute back to Chiang Mai city. Every single minutes we spend the times together was my truly pleasure. Thank you so much for MLA group shown us as you are all very experienced bikers. Everyone has their own pace, helped each other's, and made everything smooth and easy. We were really enjoyed every moment and everyone. It was such a memorable time that we shared together. Hopefully we*

MLA



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will have an adventure together again. In the end, many thanks to Michael Burton that make everything happened.

So what's on the board for 2018 and 2019?

Van Diemens Ride January 6th 2018

We start 2018 with a January six day ride around Tasmania aptly titled Van Diemen's Ride. This the first time where we will be having partners join in as pillions so they too will get to see why we enjoy these trips so much and I'm sure this will be the precedent for future 'couples' rides.

The accommodation is locked in at the overnight stays of Stockton, Strachan, Hobart, Bicheno, Launceston and veteran of many Targa Tasmania rally's, Tony Esplin is busy setting the route to make the ride 'special'.



Temijun Ride of Mongolia - July 2018

With Mongolia land locked between Russia and China, it won't be long until either 'creeps' into the mineral rich country so what could be more adventurous than to ride across one of the world's most sparsely populated countries. Over 12 days we'll cross the fringe of the Gobi desert, climb into Buddhist Villages, ride through the lakes districts, sleep in traditional canvas gurs and learn how the eagle tribes to the west hunt with these magnificent birds.

Mongolia is still relatively untouched by modern life and we will experience what life is like off the grid.

We arrive back in to Ulaanbaatar from the ride to the Western edge of Mongolia in time for the annual

Naadam Festival. Known as the world's second oldest Olympics it celebrates what defined civilisation in the steppes eight centuries ago: archery, wrestling and horse riding.




Before landing in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, we start the tour with 3 magical days in Beijing visiting local attractions including the historic Hutongs, Art district, Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and even partake in a Thi Chi class at the Temple of Heaven.

Our second day in Beijing is dedicated to a 6 hour hike starting at the 'untouched' section of the great wall and ending at Mutanyu to the east.

For 10 riders, this will be one of those rides which will be remembered and talked about forever.

Himalaya Ride September 2018



Himalayan Adventure Ride 2018


Travel with Mid Life Adventures to the hustle and bustle of vibrant Delhi where after an exciting two day tour including a rickshaw race through the spice markets, we travel through the lush plains of India on local train to the summer capital of Shimla where your journey begins. Fourteen days on Royal Enfield 'Himalayan' motorcycles through the astounding Himalayas staying in local accommodation, visiting 1000 year old temples and Tibetan monasteries. After reaching the peak of the highest motorable road in the world, we stay in magnificent royal houseboats in the ancient city of Srinagar before departing by air to Delhi for our final night together in the magnificent Leela Palace.

"It's now your time to enjoy"

Be part of this fascinating adventure back in time and through the most remote mountain range on the planet.

Tour date 29th August - 15th September 2018 (18 days). Cost US \$3480 (land content only)

For bookings contact Mike Burton: mike@midlifeadventures.com.au or call on 0409-512546



Following the successful Himalayan ride in 2015 and the interest it created, MLA has added the Himalaya adventure to our annual schedule of rides. There could not be a better introduction to adventure riding than experiencing the madness of 3 days in Delhi followed by a 14 day journey north through Shimla, known as the India's summer capital into the majestic Himalayas peaking at 5600 metres and ending your journey on the historic houseboats of Srinagar and walking through

once flooded alleyways lined with 1000 year old buildings. You will experience what it is like to wind back your chronographs centuries as you watch passing nomad herding yacks, visit ancient temples and sleeping in villages far removed from modern civilisation.

The visuals of the Himalayas are simply astounding and can never really be captured on SD cards. Every day you will enjoy the gentle thud of your Royal Enfield as it chugs along mountain cuttings, through snow melts and snow-capped peaks and into environs where westerners are rarely seen.



The invitation was launched a short while ago and the tour is fully booked with 19 adventurers but for those who missed out this time, it will be on again in 2019.

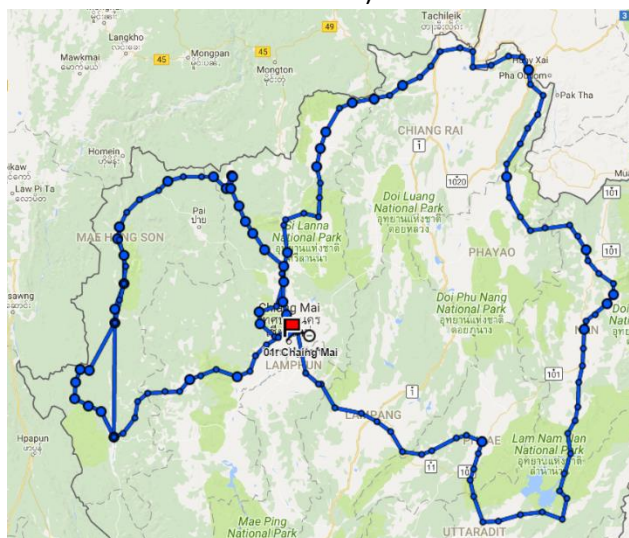
2019 and beyond.

With 2018 tours fully booked, in fact overbooked we head in to 2019 with a clean slate. The hard work on the itineraries and costings has been done on a number of tours including Sri Lanka – ideal as a 'couples' tour (12 days), Nepal - out of Kathmandu (12 days), Bhutan departing Delhi and running with the Himalayas and Nepal on the port side (14 days) and Vietnam South to North starting Ho Chi Minh City ending Hanoi zig-zagging beach to highlands – again an ideal couples tour of 14 days.

In addition to the above, MLA has touched base with a tour operators in Morocco who run a 10-14 day tour across Morocco on BMW's and Ecuador who have a fantastic 12 day tour covering the best of the country. Both tours are a little beyond our standard offering at the moment but are good to have in the kit for those who are happy to travel a little further, spend a few more dollars and combine their trips with post tour tours of surrounding countries.

At this early stage the plan for 2019 is:

- **Early March. Thai 2 Loop** (14 days) for the adventurer who want the thrill of road riding with the challenge of bush bashing (refer earlier comments from the 2017 ride)

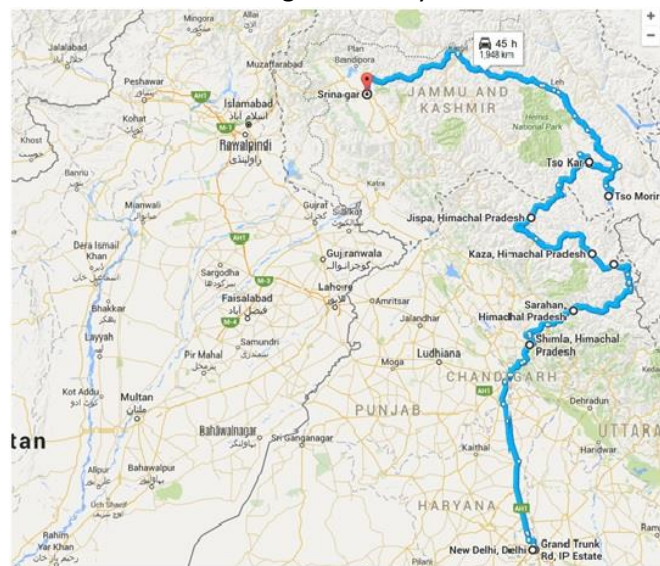


- **June/July. South to North Vietnam.** (14 days). MLA is in discussion with a number of reputable companies in Vietnam who are happy to work with us to give our riders (Couples) the ultimate experience. This is a more casual tour at a more casual pace than what some of our regular rider are used to but as we say, our tours are not a race point to point but rather an adventure with a team of like-minded individuals who are happy to share the experience.



- **September** – Himalayan or Nepal adventure Ride. It really is a flip of the coin which will offer the bigger adventure but really, it's hard to go past Delhi /Himalayas as a must do ride

especially on the new Enfield Himalaya Bikes which MLA will be using exclusively from 2018



Closing comments

Well that's it's for the first edition of MLA Newspaper. Being the first edition, there was a lot to cover and future editions (Seasonal) will focus on the events of the past 3 months. For anyone who has a flair for writing, you are welcome to contribute articles on any adventure riding related matter. Or if you have something 'special' that you would like to share with our community, please send your missive to mike@midlifeadventures.com.au

MLA is a not for profit business. Neither Bob nor I need to make a living from running tours. We do it for the love of riding and offering you the opportunity to share our passion.

We have both had life changing experiences and realise that life is short and guaranteed to throw a curve ball at you when least expected so don't waste time wondering what you could or should do. Get out and do it while you can.

As Bob keeps reminding me...he wants to be the one in the nursing home telling the stories not listening to them!

For details on any of our tours contact:

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Remember....

'It's now your time to enjoy'