

Gladstone Anzac Weekend 2016 Getaway

Late afternoon on Friday a group of about 25 SARCC cyclists gathered at the Gladstone Caravan Park keenly anticipating a wonderful weekend of cycling.

We were staying in a variety of accommodation around Gladstone including the Pub, tents, cabins, camper trailers caravans and even in a house with a friend. To begin the weekend, we were very spoiled to have Marilyn and David Partington cook up a delicious barbequed chicken, salad, and pumpkin gnocchi meal for tea. We took over the very well-appointed Camp Kitchen for all our gatherings making quite a racket at times.



We set off on Saturday to ride on bitumen through town for about half an hour towards Crystal Brook before turning onto a quiet dirt road which was to be the style for most of the weekend.



The country side was still brown with a few tinges of green beginning to appear. Beautiful rolling hills with gums but mainly paddocks. David had planned the perfect morning tea spot where we could sit on the concrete water pipe for a rest. We headed up a hill towards Beetaloo Reservoir and when it came time for lunch another part of the pipeline appeared.

The roads were quite rough and stony in places which some didn't appreciate but the route after lunch included a very pleasant descent. In the end we'd ridden a scenic loop of about 40kms and thoroughly enjoyed it.

On Sunday David led us on a ride in a different direction towards the Bundaleer Forest and this was almost totally on dirt roads including some along the Mawson Trail. Most of us reached the high point at the edge of the Forest where we had a much deserved lunch before zooming back a long hill.

While we were regrouping at a road junction, literally in “the middle of nowhere” a farmer pulled up in his ute and got out just to say hello I guess. Then he and Rick looked at each other and loudly recognised each other as mates from football days when Rick used to go up to the mid north to umpire. The farmer had been a very good SANFL footballer when younger. What a coincidence!



On Anzac Day a few of our group rose early to attend the local Dawn Service which they said was very moving and quite well attended. The ride for that day was to be about 25kms to Laura and back on flat well graded dirt roads and track. That was a very pleasant little trip and everyone enjoyed morning tea at the cafe. I don't think the shop selling the Golden North ice-cream was open.

After that ride we all dispersed for the drive back home.

On the social side one afternoon we were entertained by a rousing sing-a-long with Carmen and Carolyn on their ukuleles. In fact, this group loved to sing which was lots of fun. It is surprising how many members we have, who can sing very well and are indeed in choirs. Also a big thank you to John and his wife Chris who ran a quiz night (the questions were not so easy either) but lots of fun and laughs.



All in all a thoroughly enjoyable weekend with well thought out rides, perfect weather and shared amongst great people at an ideal venue.

Thanks to David and Marilyn.

