

President report 21 January 2024

Our club continues to run successfully.

Daily rides and week-long tours remain popular and are well supported by members. Future tours are in advanced planning including the 50th Anniversary Tour from Albany to Perth in April and the On Your Bike Tour from Corrigin to Hopetown in spring.

My thanks to club members who have stood up to organise these tours including Trevor for the Anniversary Tour, and the continuing and new members of the OYB committee.

However nothing stays the same and changes are happening.

Very noticeable in touring is an increasing preference by many (aging) members for formal accommodation in hotels or caravan park chalets in preference to tenting. Nothing wrong with this but it is a change and tends to disperse riders from long periods of personal interaction over breakfast or dinner in the camp kitchen that is one of the attractions of group touring. Each to their own.

Electric bikes are also becoming more common on day rides and on tours. This has allowed more of our (aging) club members to continue riding with the club as their abilities fade a little. Electric bikes have not caused substantial problems so far but limits are being put on the number of electric bikes on some rides and tours for safety (EBs can be faster than pedal bikes in some situations), to accommodate charging (on tours) and to maintain the essential element of human-driven motion that is the core of bicycle riding.

Several challenges will entertain the committee in 2024 and beyond.

Rising costs, particularly for insurance, are an ongoing issue. While no resolution to this problem is visible, I note that more and more amateur and school sporting groups are becoming vocal about their ability to continue functioning under the present requirements to protect committee members and participants with increasingly expensive insurance. Government action to contain the costs is wanted by all but without any effective government response so far. We need to keep this issue on the government's policy radar.

Social trends away from formal club structures and annual memberships are another post-boomer issue. The CTAWA is run largely on membership fees which cover our standing costs for meeting venues, the aforementioned insurance, awards trophies and other expenses with special event costs covered by attendance fees. What appears to be a modern trend away from formally joining a formally-structured club on an annual basis in favour of 'turn-up-and-go' on an ad hoc basis will increasingly challenge the way the CTAWA operates as a club and runs the daily social rides and longer tours. Switching to more modern tech as a means of attracting members is a possibility. Anyone good at WhatsApp, TikTok or Meetup?

The CTAWA remains a successful and well-supported association though and I am confident that it will remain so for years to come. Your input through participation in rides and tours and even in putting your hand up for committee positions will ensure our continued success.

Thank you for being part of the CTAWA in 2023, and enjoy riding in 2024.

Stuart