
Harley Owners Group (HOG) – New South Wales Chapter

HOGS – The Official riding club of Harley-Davidson

HOG Ride to Nan Tien Temple, Berkeley (near Wollongong)

Sunday 27 May, 2018

Today we visit something unique that is not too far from Sydney, the Nan Tien Buddhist Temple located in Berkeley on the southern outskirts of Wollongong which is about 100 kilometers south of Sydney. We also stop at Bald Hill along the way for a brief stopover and as usual we take the scenic route through the National Park along the way.

The Temple is one of Wollongong's major tourist attractions, and conducts regular weekend retreats for visitors interested in Buddhism and Chinese culture. There is a 100-room motel-style facility on-site to cater for this.

Also included with this newsletter are amusing images downloaded from Pinterest I'm sure all dog lovers will enjoy.

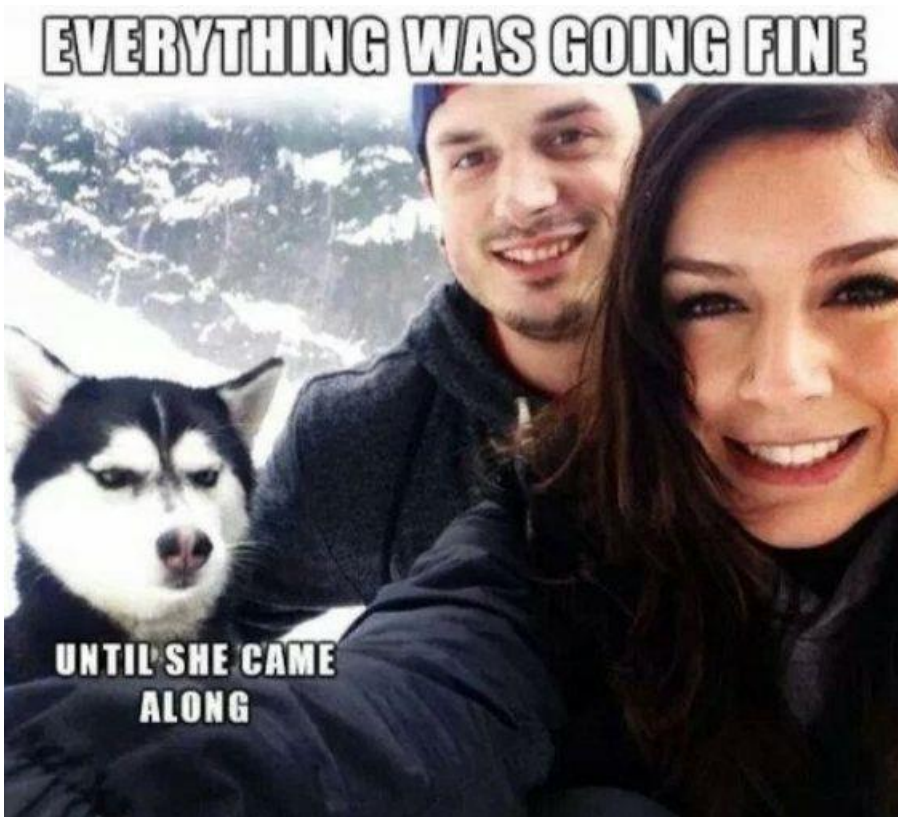


Ride Image 1 – Members start gathering from about 8.00 am for the ride to Wollongong and conditions are ideal with blue skies and temperatures in the low 20's (Celsius) predicted with very little wind. Departure is set for 9.00 am. Sleeping in today was not an option!





Ride Image 2 –
Having a catch-
up are from left
Zoran, Mick and
G-Force (Glenn).





Ride Image 3 – When HOGS meet it's always with a friendly smile and handshake. Here we see Paul at left shaking hands with Hammer (Don) with Dano smiling in the background.



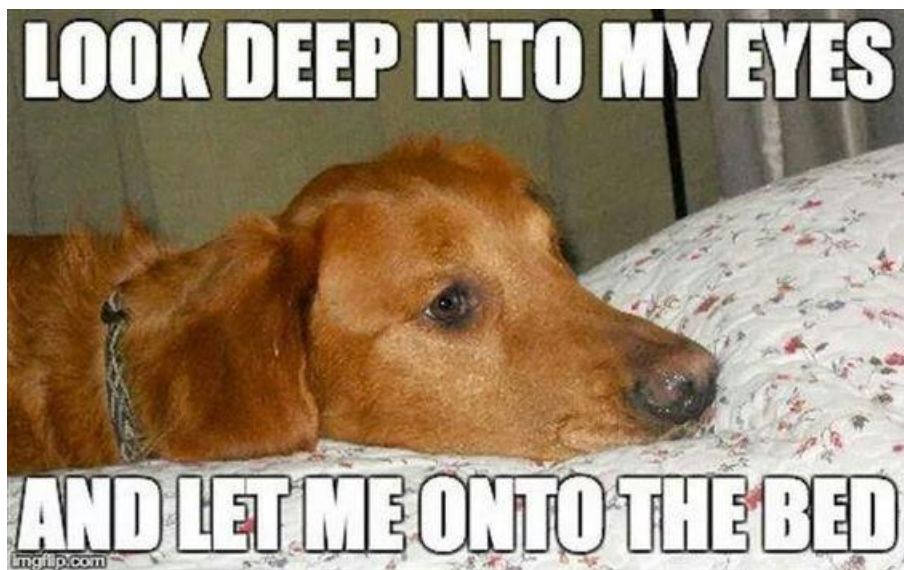


Ride Image 4 – In the foreground we see from left new member Con, Peter and Jubby (Mike).





Ride Image 5 – Here we see our Chapter Secretary Gypo (Rob) arriving on a push bike! Hey, only joking, these hire bikes can be found just about everywhere nowadays through Sydney. It was just parked right next to the café.





Ride Image 6 – Hey, let's meet some members! This is Peter and he rides a 2015 Ultra Limited Harley and has been a HOG member for 3 years.





Ride Image 7 – This is new member Con who has a 2012 Ultra, his first Harley but not his first bike. You see, they eventually come around!



more awesome pictures at THEMETAPICTURE.COM



Ride Image 8 – This is long serving HOG member Zoran who is also one of our Road Captains.





Ride Image 9 –
The numbers swell
as the departure
time approaches.
It's a good turnout
for the ride.



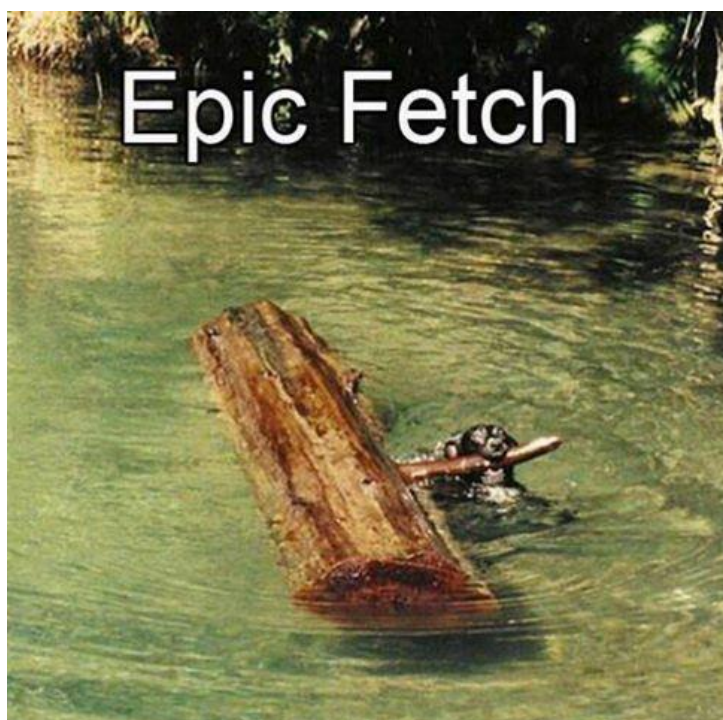


Ride Image 10 – And here are 2 happy pillion riders Marylou (left) and Velvet.





Ride Image 11 – Having a pre-ride chat is Mick (left) with Roundy (Stewart). Talking bikes of course!



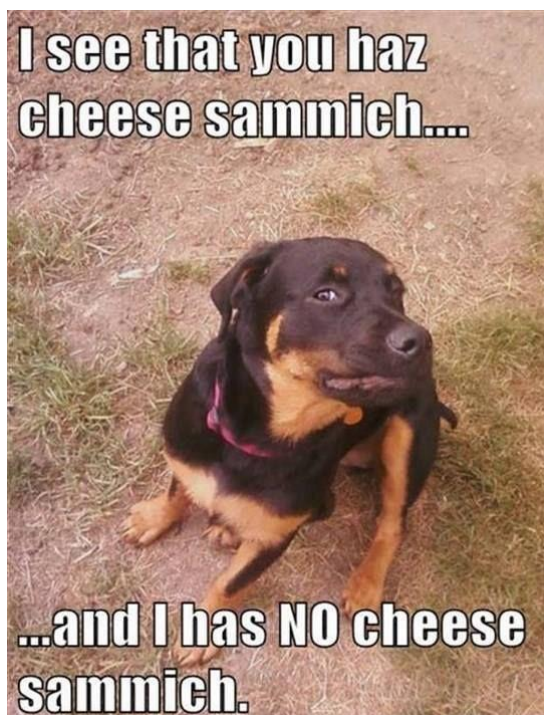


Ride Image 12 – The Road Captains meet to discuss ride strategies with safety at the forefront.





Ride Image 13 – Its 9.00 am and time to address the members on the ride. Here we see the Lead Road Captain for the ride today, Bollard (Dave) informing all on proceedings for the day.





Ride Image 14 – It's off to the carpark to start our engines. Here we see only part of today's group and as you can see, conditions are ideal.





Ride Image 15 – This is Con aboard his 2012 Ultra model with a very distinctive paint job on it. He loves it!





Ride Image 16 – U-Leak (Victor) and Velvet look terrific in their biker attire!





Ride Image 17 – Its just after 9.00 am as we depart and I have this lovely image in front of me to enjoy! Not to mention the sound!! There is no App for this!!!





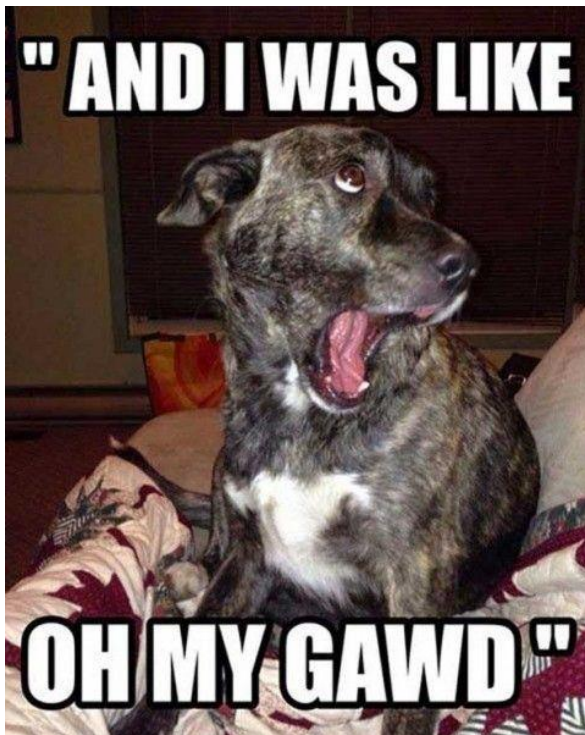
Ride Image 18 – Well it doesn't take long for the group to be split by red traffic lights. We will regroup later on and arrive at our destination in one happy and cohesive group.



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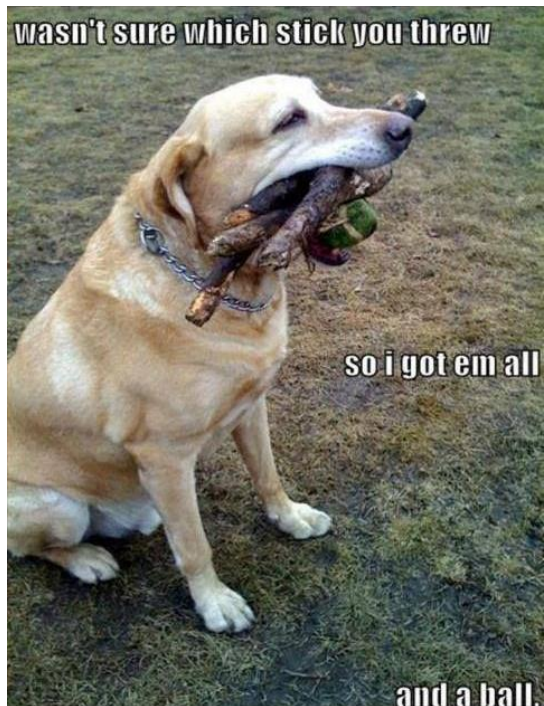


Ride Image 19 – On Heathcote Road we manage to catch up with most of the front runners. Pretty soon we will be riding through the National Park uninterrupted by heavy traffic or traffic lights.





Ride Image 20 – Stopped at a red light, Ashley quickly lights up a real old fashioned ciggy. The benefits of an open face helmet!





Ride Image 21 – On the way to the Nan Tien Temple we stop at Bald Hill for a short break, about 45 kms short of our final destination. Bald Hill, on the Illawarra Range has an elevation of approximately 300 metres and is one of the best known and most popular lookouts

in the region providing great panoramic vistas.

This view looking south shows Stanwell Park Beach and into the distance the Sea Cliff Bridge where we will travel on our way to Nan Tien Temple.

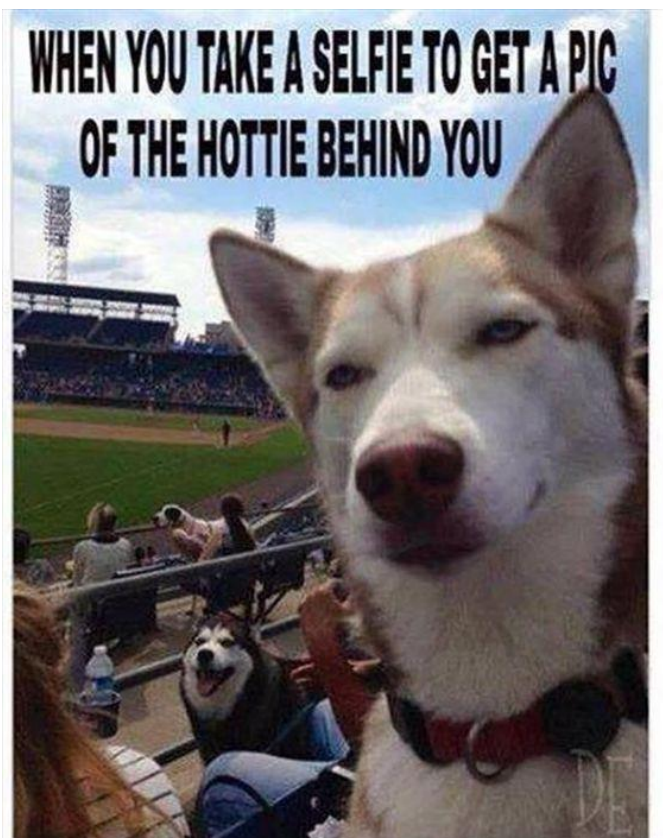
To arrive here we travelled through the National Park, the scenic route with plenty of twisties for us to enjoy. Due to the tall trees lining this roadway and the angle of the winter sun, it is mostly in shade causing a noticeable drop in temperature as you ride through it. The Harley engines love the cooler temperatures and seem to perform better in them.





Ride Image 22 –
The nature reserve on this hill is internationally renowned as a major hang-gliding and paragliding launch site. On windy days you will find many such aficionados here enjoying the wind updrafts for hours before landing on the nearby beach.

Today there is only a slight breeze, not conducive to hang-gliding.





Ride Image 23 – We arrive at Bald Hill at approximately 10.30 am. Here we see Ashley, sans ciggy with Gypo (Rob) armed with an e-cigarette. Smoking is not banned in the HOGS!





Ride Image 24 – Still at Bald Hill we queue up at the aptly named café for light refreshments. In the foreground we see at left, Zoran with Mick.





Ride Image 25 –
Enjoying the sun and
the view and the
refreshments and the
company are from left
Roundy (Stuart),
Marylou, Dionna and
Velvet.





Ride Image 26 –
Hoggies enjoying
Bald Hill and each
other's company. We
are a tight happy
group!





Ride Image 27 – To those members still at home probably having a late breakfast on a Sunday morning right about now, you missed out!





Ride Image 28 – Bald Hill is also very popular with motoring enthusiasts who meet here, particularly on weekends. Car Clubs and Bike Clubs are also regularly seen here. Here today we see a group of motorcycle enthusiasts gathering to show their bikes and enjoy the comradery of fellow bikers, not to mention the great ride on the way there. Seen here in the foreground is a Yamaha XS 1200 in-line 4 with shaft drive from the late 70's/early 80's and it's

in great shape. It's great to see these old bikes still on the road.



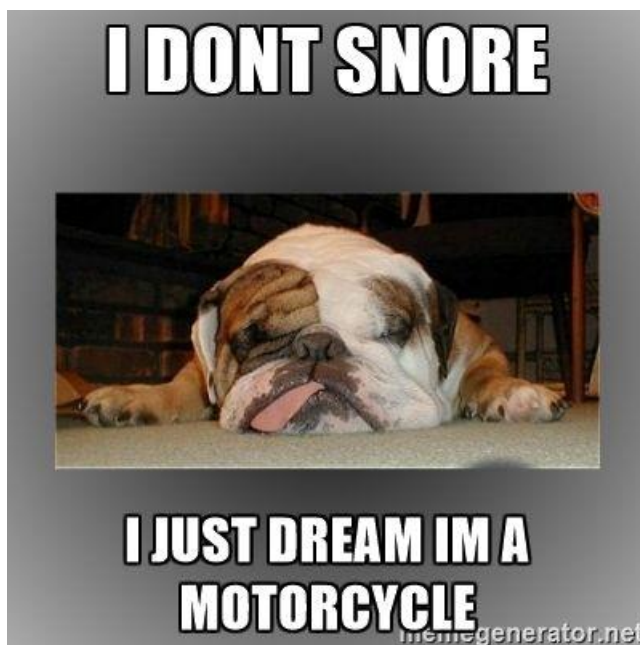


Ride Image 29 – Of course you will also see the latest bikes being showcased here. In the foreground we see a late model BMW R1200 RS sports touring bike. It has a 1200cc 2-cylinder boxer engine with shaft final drive.





Ride Image 30 – And here we meet Clifford proudly displaying his 1962 model Norton 650 SS Dominator motorcycle which he has owned for 40 years! There is many a *man & machine* story to be told here today.





Ride Image 31 – We depart Bald Hill at about 11.00 am and from here it's a sharp drop down to sea level.

That's Kelly on her Fat Boy model with the Tasman Sea in the background. Over the horizon and to the right is Tasmania!





Ride Image 32 –
Heading through
Wollongong on our
way to the Temple.





Ride Image 33 –
Stopped at a red light we see Mick on his new Fat Boy model. Well I'm pretty sure that is Mick!
Our next stop will be the Nan Tien Temple not too far away.





Ride Image 34 – A downloaded aerial image of the Nan Tien Temple (with orange colored roof tiles). It's quite a large establishment and this temple complex is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. The land upon which the Temple sits was donated by the Australian Government. Its located only about 10 minutes' drive south of the Wollongong CBD on Berkeley Road, Berkeley.

Nan Tien Temple translates to "Southern Heaven Temple" and is one of the branch temples of the Taiwanese Fo Guang Shan Buddhist order, founded in 1965. There are over 120 branches worldwide. Fo Guang Buddhism is an accessible version of Buddhism which is very much focused on people being able to see and witness the monks in daily life. It is termed Humanistic Buddhism.

Buddhism is the world's 4th largest religion with over 520 million followers or over 7% of the global population. It remains the dominant religion in the east.

That white building located on the other side of the Motorway and linked by an overhead bridge to the Nan Tien Temple is the Nan Tien Institute. It teaches subjects such as Buddhist Studies, Health and Social Well-being, Arts, Education, Human Welfare, Health and Religions, and English Language.





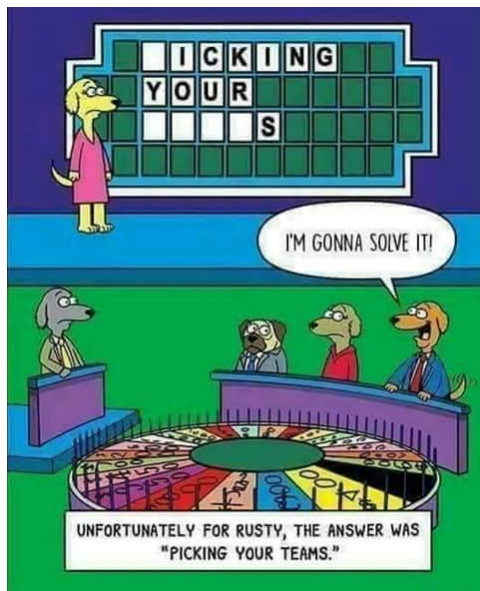
Ride Image 35 – Another downloaded image showing the Temple. It was completed in 1995. It occupies a semi-rural hillside several square kilometers in size, and is set amidst landscaped gardens.

That 8-level pagoda in the foreground is intended to house the cremated remains of 7,000 people.

This location between the mountains and the sea was considered perfect according to the rules of Feng Shui and is why this location was accepted for the Temple.

The Temple is a tourist drawcard for Wollongong but it also attracts tourists from all over the world.

The aim of the Nan Tien Temple is to share and promote Buddhism and to promote understanding between Western and Eastern Cultures.
















Ride Image 36 – We arrive at the Temple at about 11.45 am. This is the entrance to the Temple grounds off the main road. Visitors are always very welcome here. Local schools also visit the Temple as a way of promoting cultural understanding.

There are over 500 million Buddhists worldwide today. After China, where nearly half of the worldwide Buddhists live, the 10 countries with the largest

Buddhist population densities are: ^[497]

Buddhism by percentage as of 2010 ^[497]

Country	Estimated Buddhist population	Buddhists as % of total population
 Cambodia	13,701,660	96.90%
 Thailand	64,419,840	93.20%
 Burma	38,415,960	80.10%
 Bhutan	563,000	74.70%
 Sri Lanka	14,455,980	69.30%
 Laos	4,092,000	66.00%
 Mongolia	1,520,760	55.10%
 Japan	45,807,480 or 84,653,000	36.20% or 67% ^[500]
 Singapore	1,725,510	33.90%
 Taiwan	4,945,600 or 8,000,000	21.10% or 35% ^[501]
 China	185,000,000+	15.87%

China has nearly half of the world's Buddhists but they represent only 15.87% of China's population.



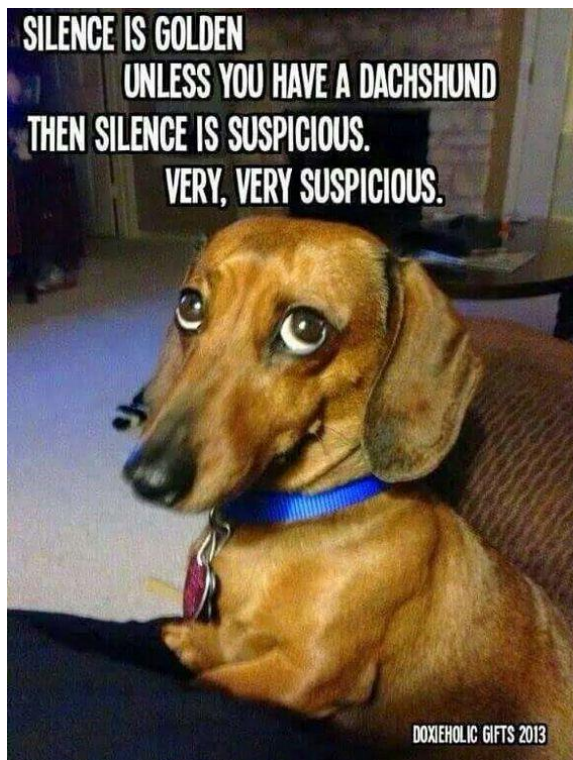


Ride Image 37 – Rocket (Rodney) with wife Dionna arrive at the Temple parking area. On-site parking is free on the Temple grounds.





Ride Image 38 – Also in the carpark we see from left Roundy (Stuart), Marylou, Dano (background) and Hammer (Don).



**SILENCE IS GOLDEN
UNLESS YOU HAVE A DACHSHUND
THEN SILENCE IS SUSPICIOUS.
VERY, VERY SUSPICIOUS.**

DOXIEHOLIC GIFTS 2013



Ride Image 39 – HOGS in the carpark. When you get off your bike there is always plenty to talk about!





Ride Image 40 – The Temple buildings incorporate the features of several styles of Buddhism and were designed by Australian architects and built by Australian construction workers. In addition to various meeting rooms, a museum, cultural, conference and accommodation facilities and a restaurant, the Temple complex includes two massive prayer halls.





Ride Image 41 – The courtyards feature Japanese-style gardens. Ahead is the Dew Drop Inn Tea House but we are headed for the Dining Hall Bistro above this.

No smoking, alcohol or meat of any kind is permitted on the Temple grounds.





Ride Image 42 – Here I stand in front of one of the prayer halls, the main entrance of which is right behind me.

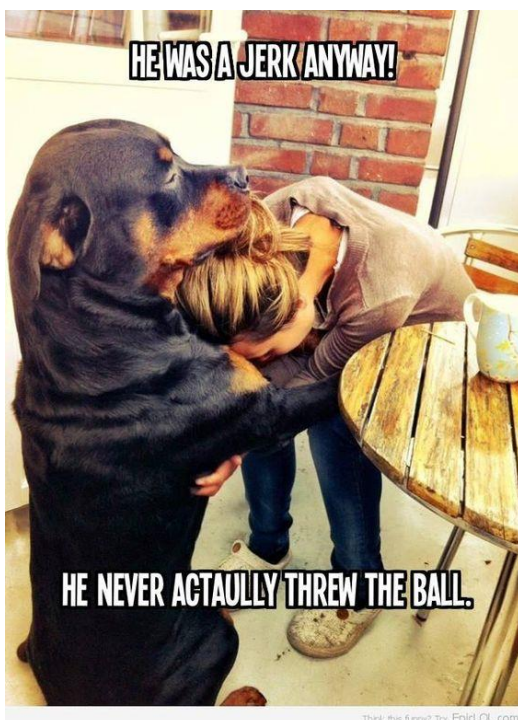




Ride Image 43 (Downloaded)
– Here we see 4 Buddhist monks posing in front of the prayer hall. Monks (male) and nuns (female) are considered to be responsible for the preservation and dissemination of the Buddha's teachings and the guidance of Buddhist lay people. Buddhist monks and nuns lead lives of total celibacy in which any kind of sexual behavior is forbidden.

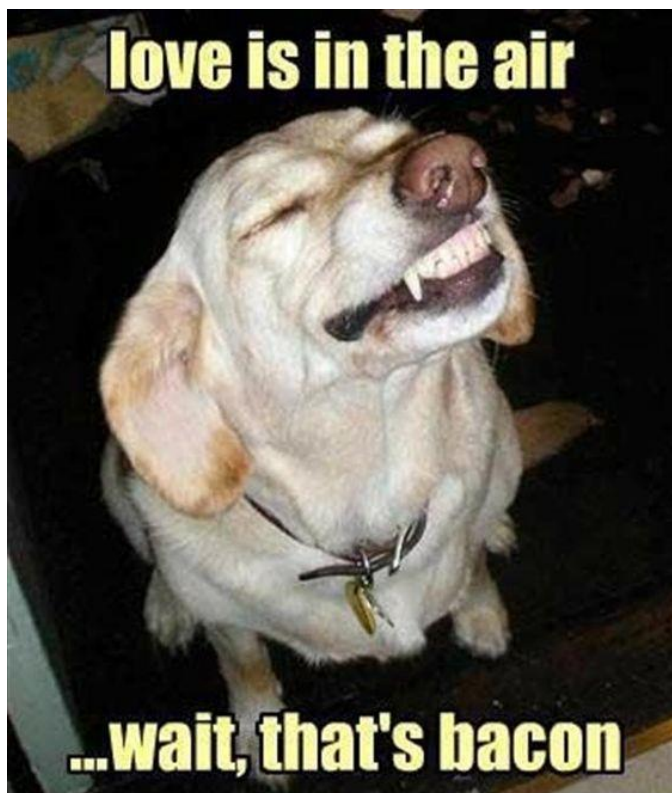
All Buddhists follow a set of guidelines for daily life called the Five Precepts. These are:

- 1. Do not harm or kill living things
- 2. Do not take things unless they are freely given
- 3. Lead a decent life free from sexual misconduct
- 4. Do not speak unkindly or tell lies
- 5. Do not abuse drugs or drink alcohol





Ride Image 44
(Downloaded) –
Festivals are
frequently
hosted here with
this one
celebrating the
Chinese New
Year. There are
many
ceremonies
associated with
the Buddhist
calendar that
take place here.





Ride Image 45 – Right in front of the prayer hall is this incense burner, very much a part of Buddhist life. Incense has been used since the beginning of human history in many different cultures and in Buddhism, it is a sacred offering with a spiritual aspect. Incense is thought to purify the space it is in, it can create a tranquil mood and assist in meditation. Further, its rising smoke symbolically carries your prayers up to the gods.

With the continual use of the burner it obviously needs to be situated outside the prayer hall. The burning incense gives off pleasant aromas and many fragrances are available from the Japanese, Tibetan and Indian incense sticks available.

I was told by a practicing Buddhist I met here that it is usual to offer 3 incense sticks to signify the 3 treasures, these being the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. Buddhists at home typically offer 1 stick per day per person. The aroma of incense, typically derived from herbs, flowers and other natural sources, purifies the atmosphere and inspires us to

develop a pure mind. Incense rises and dissolves into the air, subtly reminding the viewer of the transient nature of existence.



When your human says,
“Who’s a good boy?”

And you know you’re a good boy.



Ride Image 46 – Taking a closer look at the rim of the incense burner we see the use of the swastika. The swastika is an ancient symbol that has been found worldwide, but it is especially common in India. It can be seen in the art of the Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, Celts, Native Americans, and Persians as well as Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. Its name comes from the Sanskrit word *svasti* (sv = well; asti = is), meaning good fortune, luck and

well-being. Swastikas are most commonly used as charms to bring good fortune (in which case the arms are bent clockwise), but they have a variety of religious meanings as well. The auspicious symbol of the swastika is very commonly used in Hindu art, architecture and decoration. It can be seen on temples, houses, doorways, clothing, cars, and even cakes. It is usually a major part of the decoration for festivals and special ceremonies like weddings.

In Buddhism, the swastika signifies auspiciousness and good fortune as well as the Buddha's footprints and the Buddha's heart. The swastika is said to contain the whole mind of the Buddha and can often be found imprinted on the chest, feet or palms of Buddha images. The swastika has also often been used to mark the beginning of Buddhist texts. In China and Japan, the Buddhist swastika was seen as a symbol of plurality, eternity, abundance, prosperity and long life. The swastika is used as an auspicious mark on Buddhist temples and is especially common in Korea. It can often be seen on the decorative borders around paintings, altar cloths and banners. In Tibetan Buddhism, it is also used as a clothing decoration.

This original meaning of the swastika is a far cry from Western associations of the symbol, which are largely negative. The Nazis adopted the swastika as an emblem because it was understood as an Aryan symbol indicating racial purity and superiority.

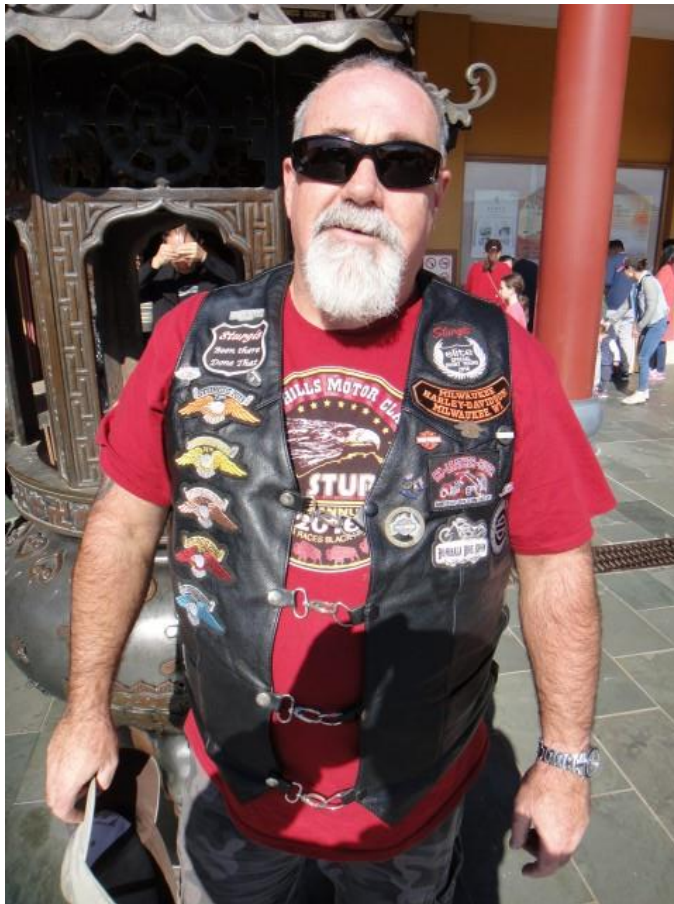




Ride Image 47 (Downloaded) – Inside of the prayer hall which houses the 5 Dhyani Buddhas. The walls are also embellished with thousands of tiny statues of Buddha.

Photography and the wearing of shoes or hats are forbidden inside the prayer hall. There is also a dress code requiring that your shoulders are covered, and no shorts, singlets or thongs are to be worn. If you arrive inappropriately dressed, sarongs can be borrowed from Temple staff.





Ride Image 48 - Now we meet HOG member Crossy (Brett). Crossy has been heavily involved with motorcycles basically his whole life and presently owns 2 Harleys, a 2017 CVO Ultra and a 2005 Fat Boy. He founded a completely electronic Australian motorcycle magazine known as "American Thunder Magazine" which is absolutely free to all. This is a magazine for enthusiasts of American motorcycles including Harley-Davidson, Indian, and Victory. His background with other magazines such as Performance Street Bike and Live to Ride led naturally to this role. He also leads motorcycle ride groups from Las Vegas to Sturgis. He has been a HOG member for 2 years.

To view the magazine, go to www.americanthunder.com.au



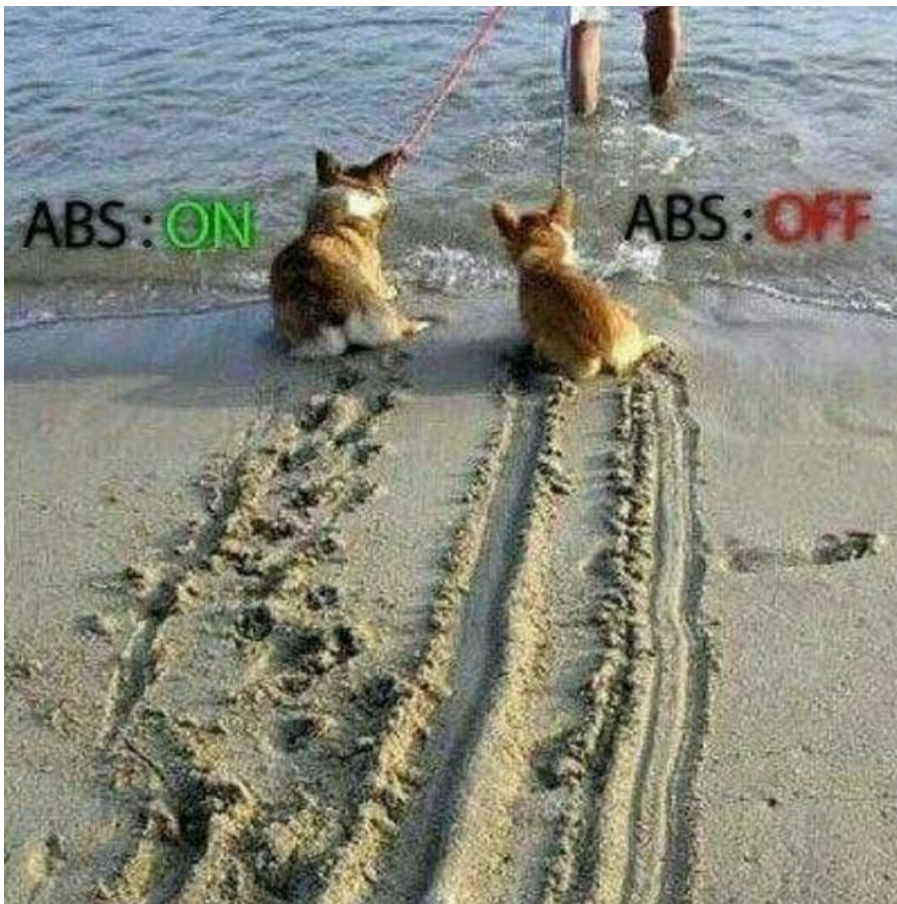


Ride Image 49 – Inside the dining hall bistro of the Temple, all meals are vegetarian.





Ride Image 50 – HOG members enjoying the vegetarian meals on offer.



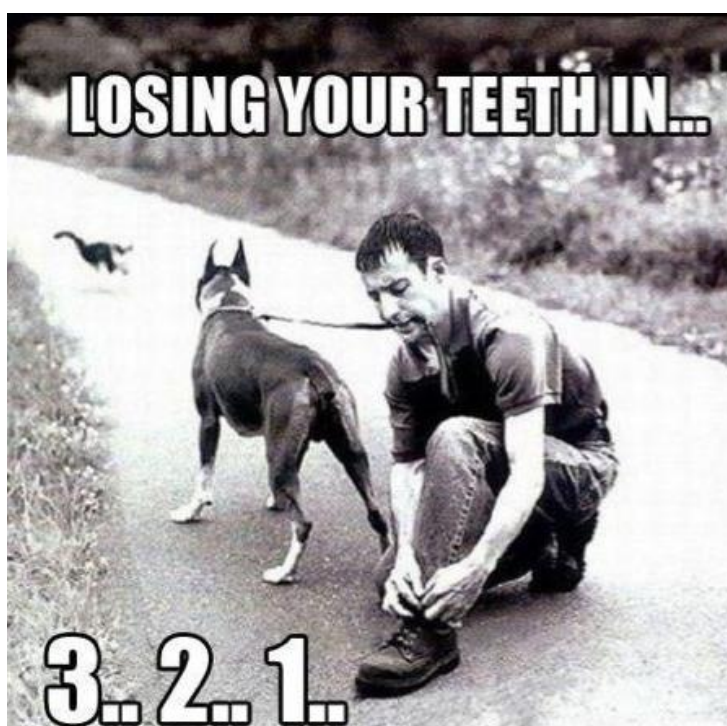


Ride Image 51 – Very often seen on HOG rides is Paul with wife Jean.





Ride Image 52 – This is Crossy with his 2017 CVO Ultra. He has owned many Honda motorcycles in the past but is now a Harley enthusiast. For 10 years he ran the NSW Chapter of the Honda Riders Club.





Ride Image 53 – It's about 1.00 pm as we head home. We notice that the carpark is full with vehicles (only a small part of the carpark is shown here). It's a very busy place on the weekends.

Well that was fun and interesting! HOG rides are never disappointing!

**Had to do a double take.
Thought my dog was a furry
bodybuilder for a second.**



See you on the next ride!

Ride Safe!
Sergio
Editor/Historian