

Central North Island Newsletter – Sept 2017 (Issue 7)

Mentoring progress

Warmest congratulations to both Chris Smith (Bombay country area) and Lawrence (Goose) Gosnell (Cambridge) who passed their Advanced Tests. Well done gentlemen and we look forward to seeing you both on an Observer training course in the coming months.



Chris Smith



Lawrence (Goose) Gosnell

At the time of writing, two Associates are awaiting dates to take their Advanced Tests and others are closing in on it. This rate of progress is very satisfying for a region which hasn't been in existence for very long. Special thanks go to Observers Rob Van Proemerren and Lloyd Hollis for giving up so much of their precious time in the last 12 months to ensure that our Associates received regular formal coaching to push them along. Also to the Auckland Observing team for helping with cross-checks. We are also delighted that Chris McKinnon wishes to pick up his Observer training again – great news!

These successes actually pose a problem, albeit in a good way! With more qualified riders about to enter Observer training, there's a small bottleneck in immediate allocation of everyone to current Observers for training. Also, we will have openings for a small number of new Associates to keep the cycle going. A number of initiatives are being put in place to attract new members to the region but if you know riders in the CNI who may be interested, don't hesitate to mention IAM. We have promotional material for potential new members and an initial assessment is obligation-free.

IAM has been invited to give a presentation to the Ulysses Hamilton chapter in early October via Ulysses members Chris McKinnon and Goose Gosnell. Ulysses has been nationally active in promoting Roadcraft as the basis for their own mentoring programme. It's highly possible that we can increase membership in the region from additional Ulysses members and fill the forthcoming vacancies for additional Associates in that manner.

New Associates

A very warm welcome to Henry Van Proemerren (yep, Rob's Dad) from Waihi. Henry is a lifelong bike enthusiast and as a retired professional truck driver, he'll be soaking up Roadcraft in no time!



Henry Van Proemerren (right) with Tony Knight

Observer Training Courses

The CNI and Auckland will continue to co-run training courses as there are many advantages to mixing and mingling. The excellent Advanced Test pass rate means that there will be two courses before year end. They will be held at Franklin A&P show HQ, Pukekohe. Great facilities and a perfect location for the course observer practice rides. Planned dates are October 21/22 and November 25/26.

CNI strategy for 2017/18

As already reported, the main focus is to ensure that we can deliver high quality regular mentoring at all levels to achieve a *sustainable* growth in the CNI.

The large geographic spread of the Central North Island can often involve significant travel which takes time and costs money. Consequently, members of the observing team and potential members will, where possible, be in relatively close proximity of each other. This will allow resources to be used productively with greater flexibility with respect to when rides are scheduled. For example, evening rides in the lighter months. However, there will still be sufficient flexibility for different Observers to cover for each other if there's an advantage in doing so. This is what enabled the rapid growth of CNI in the last year.

Membership info summary (Waikato/BOP)

Active Observers: 4 (3 Waikato, 1 BOP)

Active Full Members/Trainee Observers: 4

Active Associates: 8

Currently inactive Associates: 4

Other items of note

2017/8 Annual Conference

IAM Facebook page members will have seen that that the AGM and Conference will be held at Taupo on 24-25 February 2018. For members who haven't previously been to the annual conference, forget about it being a boring talkfest – it's an outstanding occasion! The AGM itself is normally completed pretty quickly, but all sorts of social events take place over a weekend for members from all regions to meet each other and have fun, whether it's on bikes or in the car. A perfect time to bring your partners along too. There will also be a trackday at the Taupo circuit on Friday 23rd as part of the festivities for those who fancy a play in a safe environment. No previous experience needed. Too good to miss and hope to see you there! More information to come in due course via the IAM Facebook page and emails.

Fantastic CNI back roads

The CNI is blessed with some wonderful motorcycling roads with minimal traffic. On a recent initial assessment ride for a potential new member in the northern Waikato, we discovered these gems: Google Maps <https://goo.gl/maps/nNpQ4woNwtE2>. They are technical with multiple elevation changes and have spectacular views of the Firth of Thames along the ridge tops. If you're in the area, give 'em a try!

Fuel card deal for IAM members

Members might remember an IAM Facebook post related to Wellington member Paul Kane organising a discount fuel card scheme for cars and bike members with Far North Fuels. I joined principally because of the high cost of gas on my local patch, the Coromandel Peninsula. Having recently received the first statement, it's most certainly worth it!

I'm saving about 12c/lt compared with Peninsula prices and about 6c/lt for a fill in south Auckland. If anyone wants to follow up the offer, details are contained in the Facebook post made on 29th June.

Awesome work thanks Paul!

Meet the Team

We continue the profiling of active motorcycle members within the Central North Island, especially as it's such a geographically large area. This time, it's the turn of Chris Nielsen from Hamilton.



Introducing Chris!

Hi all

My name is Chris Nielsen and I'm currently training with Lloyd Hollis in Hamilton. Previously I had Geoff James mentoring me for the first ride or two. A little back-story about myself for your reading (dis)pleasure....

I started riding in 2004 when I worked near Hamilton Airport where many of my workmates also rode bikes to work, I'm a bigger chap so the little 125 just didn't cut it, I upgraded to a '95 ZZR600 which absolutely terrified me. After I changed jobs and after being rear ended at a stop sign by a car, I lost the will to ride but couldn't bear to part with the Kwaka. There was always some excuse why I couldn't ride it, no WOF, pants didn't fit, etc, and before I knew it, I'd had the thing sitting there for nearly 10 years. I then forgot to renew the exemption and it was a matter of selling

it for nothing or fixing it up and riding it, which I chose to do. And it still terrified me.

About that time I discovered the wonders of the motovlog on YouTube, and before you know it, I had a GoPro strapped to my helmet and I had my own channel with some terrible examples of my riding skills uploaded for all the world to see. The Kwaka started to die on me late in 2015 and I ended up buying a new Suzuki GSX-S1000 (often pronounced 'Gixxus') and almost immediately dropped it. Sad I know. I got to know Geoff on the Gixxus forum about that time as he's friendly and has a grey one. (I still say my red and black one is sexier!)



Chris and his GSX-S 1000 with Lloyd Hollis

I'd heard of the Ride Forever courses and one day at a cafe, bumped into Chris Smith who encouraged me to take a course. His first comment on seeing me ride was 'well that was untidy' and he was quite right, but I learned so much on the first course I couldn't wait for the next one. I've now completed several courses with Passmasters which I loved every second of, although by the last course that I felt I was repeating the same material on each course, so it was time to tackle IAM.

I've had a number of rides now, I've found it very challenging but I do think I'm learning each time, and having the same observer each time is amazing, although it means I can't get away with anything. I recently had some personal issues that have made it hard to focus on my training but I'm through that now and keen to improve until I'm ready for my test. Looking forward to inspiring my fellow riders through demonstrating a safe riding standard, instead of nagging them like I'm totally not prone to doing at all!

Equipment Corner

Gerbing G3 heated gloves – Geoff James



It's becoming increasingly common for bikes to have heated grips as standard and if they don't, many riders fit them as an accessory pretty quickly. They definitely make a ride in cold conditions far more pleasant but I always found that on a longer haul in frosty conditions, the tips of my fingers and back of hands still suffered.

Two winters ago, I bit the bullet and bought a pair of Gerbing electrically heated gloves. Mine plug into the electrical circuit of the bike (direct battery take-off) and I ran the cabling on the inside of my Gore-Tex jacket between the shell and the liner, leaving it there all winter. It only takes a minute to connect everything up which is no big deal. Temperature is adjusted by a small controller which hooks onto the belt of my jacket for easy access.



So what's the verdict? Well, riding in early morning central north island frosts is an absolute breeze and I wish I'd bought a pair years ago! They also have the softest leather of any glove I've owned. The variable position controller makes for perfect temperature adjustment for whatever

elements are encountered. They heat the whole hand too, a big bonus. Warm hands are not only pleasurable, they significantly contribute to overall body warmth, which in turn greatly assists bike control in cold conditions – a real safety bonus. However, I often carry a spare pair of conventional gloves in the panniers for when it's warmed up later in the day.

For the shorter travel distances, cordless rechargeable battery-powered gloves are available. They give a useful life between charges of around 3 hours depending on the brand which is perfectly adequate for a 2-way commute. Spare batteries are also available.

When I bought the gloves from Revzilla in the U.S, they were approximately US\$140, with another US\$50 for the controller. A quick check of the Revzilla website shows a range of gloves from about US\$120 to US\$220.

So there we are - an effective option to heated grips and the price is not unreasonable for something which offers so much benefit in cold weather. If you're interested, check out the options and reviews on the Revzilla website and get sorted before next winter!

Plexus plastic cleaner



I hate riding in rain with poor vision though the visor and over the years, have tried various products with varying degrees of success to disperse rain droplets. Rain-X was one of the better ones but the performance has noticeably dropped in the last couple of years. Perhaps the formulation has been altered. A change to Plexus this year has impressed me no end. Developed for the aviation industry, moisture on the visor beads off brilliantly and is quite long-lasting too. A side benefit is that bugs are easier to clean off and I also use it on the helmet shell, screen and

headlight. Apparently, it also has anti-mist and anti-static properties but I have no experience with those aspects.

Prices vary considerably between suppliers. Currently, a large spray can from Motomail is \$49. I bought the same item on line from the Downunder Pilot Shop in Napier for just under \$40. A little goes a long way however.

Central North Island contact email

As CNI Co-ordinator, I now have an IAM email address to separate official IAM business from my personal Gmail account. It is: cni.iamnz@gmail.com .

As always, we're looking for suggestions, reviews, questions, or contributions to the newsletter so we'd love to hear from you

Best regards,

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Senior Observer, CNI
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CNI Observer and Trainee Observer social run - showing no restraint when it comes to food!