

# RIDE ON TIME

Greetings, fellow adventurers! Following on from our 'Wild One' article in the Summer 08 edition, I thought I'd look into what clubs or associations there are for our members of the 'biker' persuasion. I didn't have to look very far when by chance I stumbled across 'Patriots Australia Inc.'. I'll clarify early that this is NOT a Motorcycle Club (MC). When people think of MCs, they often think of things like the 'Grave Diggers' in the 70s Aussie movie 'Stone', but this isn't what that's about. Luckily, to set us all straight, I talked to the National Secretary, Paul Deacon (AKA Deaks).



## *So Deaks, tell us about the Patriots.*

Three serving members of the Royal Australian Navy started the club in 1993. These serving members considered that there was a need for Military personnel with a common interest in motorcycles to have a contact point wherever they were posted. A place where they would be accepted, given accommodation and also share their passion for motorcycling. From these few original members, the club has grown to the stage where most Australian States and Territories now have a Chapter, and each Chapter is a recognised incorporated association within that State or Territory. In addition, there are now three Chapters in New Zealand and we also have Patriot friends in the United Kingdom who provide the same welcome to members worldwide.



**Princess & Sharpy**

***That would mean you were in the Service yourself. What did you do?***

I joined 'Pusses' in Jan 1973, served till July 1999, leaving at the rank of Leading Seaman Bosuns Mate (BM). I initially joined as an Ordinary Seaman, and, on completion of my Basic Training at HMAS Cerberus, was posted to HMAS Melbourne (R21) to commence Common Sea Training. I was posted back to Cerberus in July of that same year to complete an Electrical Technician Weapons course. I was then posted to HMAS Vampire in 1974, where I put in a transfer to become a Weapons Mechanic (WM). However, when that career path was phased out, I became a Quarter Master Gunner (QMG), and a BM when QMGs were phased out. I posted to HMAS Aware in 1978-80 and whilst onboard was involved in the interception of boat people from Vietnam. From then on, I served on various ships, including Destroyer Escorts, Frigates, Destroyers and Replenishment ships. I also served at various Naval Depots in the Sydney area. Actually, I was a member of the crew onboard HMAS Stalwart when the fatal hydrogen sulphide poisoning occurred, killing three sailors. My most exciting time was onboard HMAS Brisbane during the first Gulf War. I have to admit that your military training does work when that action alarm is pushed. It is definitely an adrenaline rush. I travelled as far north as Japan, as far south as Macquarie Island, as far east as Dubai and as far west as Pearl Harbour and most ports in between.



**Deaks and Davo spinning a yarn**

***Now that's quite a ride in itself. Whereabouts are the Patriots located?***

Patriots Australia Inc has Chapters within most States and Territories of Australia. In the near future we will be re-introducing Chapters back into South Australia and Tasmania. Currently there are 15 Chapters spread throughout Australia: seven Chapters in Queensland, from Townsville to Brisbane; two Chapters in New South Wales, with members living from Coffs Harbour to Bredbo; two Chapters in Victoria, with one in Melbourne and the other in the Gippsland area; and three Chapters in Western Australia, two in the Perth area, one in the south-west, and one in Darwin.

### ***Are you guys associated with the Vietnam Veterans Motor Cycle Club?***

We are associated with the Vietnam Veterans Motor Cycle Club (VVMC) in as much as we support their club by attending their various rallies. Patriots Australia participates at: Pearlbrook for the New South Wales VVMC Chapter at their Long Tan celebrations; Sydney Chapter VVMC at the ANZAC ceremonies; the Crookwell Show and Shine'; and the Canberra VVMC at their Tour of Duty Poker Run. All other Chapters in other States support the VVMC in their own ways. Our last National Annual General Meeting (NAGM) was held at the 'bunker' at the VVMC Club House in Brisbane.

### ***Do you have many full-time Service members in the club?***

As Patriots Australia is a club for serving and ex-serving members, we still have quite a few serving members all over Australia. Cairns is an example of this, as the majority of their members are still serving and deployed. When members transfer from their units, ships and establishments, their details are forwarded to the closest Chapter to their posting. Each year we have a NAGM in a different State, so members get to know each other, renew old friendships and make new ones. In that way the transferring members know the members of their new Chapter. Only just recently a member from the New South Wales Chapter was posted to RAAF Base Amberley as an instructor; and he was welcomed into the South Queensland Chapter.



***I guess the bike question should be next, mate.***

***What sort of bikes does someone need to have to join?***

The minimum requirement for a membership to join Patriots Australia is that you must have a road registered, road-worthy motorcycle of 250cc or greater. For the runs we do, it is preferable for it to be a road bike, not a trail bike. Some Chapters' by-laws require that the

Applicant's bike is a road bike, because trail bikes are not conducive to long distance riding. Because the minimum requirement is only 250cc, most members ride larger capacity bikes due to the fact that on many occasions we camp on our rides. So, once the bike is packed, you may be strangling the bike in order to keep up. Some of the bikes in the club are rather flash, and

that's not in appearance either. One member has just sold his Rocket 111 for something quicker and another member's Harley is not a stock item either. As it is a Military tradition, it doesn't matter what bike you ride, someone will bag you anyway!

***Now to set my mind at ease, this isn't an outlaw club or anything like that?***

We do **NOT** wear a back patch! We are purely an organisation that loves motorcycles, enjoys the camaraderie of other Service personnel and considers ourselves a Military motorcycle social and family club. We are not a paramilitary organisation. We have no political leanings. We are Patriots Australia.

Our breast patch is to denote our dedication to those who have served, and are still serving, in the three Services, and those who are fighting for our country. Our badge shows the Tri-Service logo, overlaid with a skull, which is for the members who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country. The colours are: red, denoting the blood spilt by members defending our country and its flag on foreign soils; black, denoting the black beret, a common colour for each Service and the colour of mourning for those members who have died; and white, denoting the peace members have fought for and won.

**Well there you have it folks. Everything you wanted to know about the Patriots and more. If you are interested in this kind of thing, check out their website and become part of the fun. Now...where did I put my Vespa, scarf and massive goggles?...Till next time friends.**

**Ciao for now.**

**Patriots Australia:** [www.patriots-australia.com](http://www.patriots-australia.com)