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Welcome back: 25 years since Mad Max in Clunes

Reporter: Jarrod Watt

Monday, 22 November 2004

Hear from two locals as their town is invaded by more than 1,500 motorbike riders for the 25th anniversary of the release of the film Mad Max.

What possesses a man to invite a thousand motorcycle riders to his town to celebrate the movie that featured bloodthirsty bikers rampaging through said town?

"Somewhere close to stupidity, probably - especially when there's close to 1,500 of them turn up," chuckles local Clunes tourism chief Graham Johnstone, "But it's just been fantastic - just the noise of that many bikes, the number of people who've come to sight-see, the fact we've got a whole range of Z bikes, replica cars, it's a beaut day and it's all friendly and polite."

Twenty-five years ago moviegoers attending the debut of the movie Mad Max watched as the Toecutter and his gang rolled into the town of Clunes and caused havoc while waiting to claim the body of their colleague the Nighrider from the local train station.

In 2004 more than two thousand people turned out to see the anniversary get-together lead by the Z Owners Club of Victoria, who gathered at the base of West Gate to ride en masse to Clunes, just north of Ballarat.

The response from the actors, stunt people and fans alike to Clunes was one of stunned realisation that

 The Goose & the Toecutter together at last

Two replicas of the 'Kwokka 9' motorcycles ridden by 'Goose' and 'the Toecutter' were the pride of the 2004 Z Owners Club Mad Max Ride, while the 'Big Bopper's XB interceptor helped created high-octane heaven on the main street of Clunes.

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this main street looked almost exactly as it did 26 years ago when George Miller and Byron Kennedy filmed here - something Clunes residents are very proud of.

"That's one of the things we endeavour to do - maintain this block of shops here in its original condition so we can use any period drama we want here. You can go from 1850s through to now if you want to... we still maintain the heritage of our buildings," says Graham.

Fellow local Sharon Swanson was a teenage girl when the Mad Max crew came to her town to film: the return of the bikes brought back many memories.

"They used to get up of a morning and come across to my mum and dad's milk bar; they'd all have a milkshake and then they'd go over to Collins Place to roll in the dirt and get all grubby-looking, and then they'd start shooting for the day; it was fantastic," she says.

"Cameron, my son, loves it - in the shot before they do the big doughnut you can see the milk bar and someone moving in the window - Cam thinks it's his Nan, and now thinks she's a movie star too."

Click on the audio link below to hear some of the action, or [check out the pictures](#) of the 25th anniversary Mad Max ride to Clunes.

Graham Johnston & Sharon Swanson; Clunes residents

([Audio](#) in RealMedia format) | [Requires RealPlayer](#)

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[Mad Max homepage](#)
<http://www.back2themax.com>

An Australian based website tracking all things related to the Mad Max trilogy of movies

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