

gatangi Rd, Miranda to the intersection of the SH25 where we all stopped for a 5 minute break and took helmets off. Having ridden with the TOMCC only once I knew only very few faces and I didn't see one of them. Hey not a problem, it was a beautiful day and about 60 odd bikes - who cares, right! So maybe the TOMCC members I had met were down toward the back of the ride or carried on to the next destination. The lead bike was a Triumph.... So back on the road, very cruisy the fog had lifted (thankfully).

From there it was off to Coromandel, so I found out, and lunch at Tairua. What an awesome ride through the Kopu gorge, although being very careful as the road on the shady bits was quite slippery. The Ducati was just purring along. It's such an oxymoron riding in a group for the company and in your own world - the solitude of being a rider. This is one of the biggest attractions of the sport I believe, being able to chew over lots of stuff and focus only on one thing, 'riding'. The other attraction is meeting people from all walks of life away from their everyday lives as you are from yours, so there are fewer hoops to jump through, from a society point of view. I certainly didn't expect to see so many new faces! And over lunch I discovered that it was the Auckland fraternity that I was riding with. So that explained it then. So back on the road, destination Whangamata.

Now if you have never been through this stretch, put it on your to do list. What a great piece of road, great corners, excellent road surface condition and wonderful scenery. This would have to be my highlight of the ride and no matter what you ride, or drive for that matter, it's simply a stunning piece of the world. Straight through to Waihi. Not for the faint hearted. This is a very windy stretch and no fun if you get behind a truck that is wider than the lane! No place to pass or to stop, no café or watering hole. On to Paeroa through the Karangahake Gorge for a petrol stop and coffee break. One could not but spare a thought for our early settlers gold mining in this area. What a job that would have been getting in and out of there. It must have taken weeks and is now achievable in 30min.

Stopping for coffee was well received and it was at this point in a group of about 30 I asked, 'so how come so many of the owners are not riding Triumphs? - The reply I got was 'well, that's coz we are riders not owners! So what Ulysses Club member are you?' Then the penny dropped! ummmmm. So I guess this is not the Triumph Club then! A good old heckling followed with a good belt of laughter by all who thoroughly enjoyed the moment at my expense! Still the comment was passed that I was too young to join and if I did I would be fined! Ha! I dare not tell them that I am an editor and I was covering a Franklin Triumph Club Story. . . However all aside, a great ride, a really friendly bunch and I certainly have given them something to laugh about at their next club meeting. So guys from the TOMC, sorry about that, but I hope that answers any questions as to why I didn't turn up. No doubt I'm in for a heckling and a shout next time we ride together. Happy riding.

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