



THE BIKERS FROM BIBLIO REV INTO CANBERRA

Five years ago Alan Flores, the City Librarian at Gosford, created Biblio Turismo, a annual pilgrimage to public libraries by motor cycle-riding librarians. To round out 2010 the Biblio Gang - better known as the Mild Ones - invaded the nation's capital.

Thursday And so we left Campbelltown for Mittagong, bypassing the Hume and hugging the old rail line past cute villages and old trains. Up the road and to the right they said and there was Mittagong library, well-hidden in an 1860 sandstone building that has been renovated with exacting perfection. The children's room was alive with story time and the staff offered us tea and cake on the lawns out front. This is what Biblio is all about.

We then moved further south, getting closer to the Alps, Again following the rail line through Bowral, Moss Vale and Bundanoon, the Irish-green landscape a blur as we enjoyed the windy road through the small railroad towns. From Marulan, a quick fang down the Freeway to Goulburn and we arrived at their Taj Mahal.

"We're the Biblio gang on our way to Kosciuszko's side," I said.

The blank stare convinced me that our intricate and detailed plans had not penetrated as far as Goulburn and it was only day one. Nevertheless, we had a long discussion with the staff and a photo shoot, followed by a sumptuous lunch and then hit the back road to Braidwood.

Friday Friday saw us gather for breakfast and then on the Queanbeyan City library for more coffee and croissants.

We arrived at Civic library at 10am (on time for once). We parked in the ACT Chief Minister's parking spot. We did not think he would mind. Our 10am appointment was closed so we moved on to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's Library - which was not in Belconnen where I took the guys but by the lake back in the city. It was a nice ride and we did get to see more of the ACT, though unfortunately we lost Leon on the way. We met the Library Director and were immediately ejected from the library as they had a fire evacuation drill which was organised to coincide with our visit, to give them more time to talk with us outside.

The National Library was amazing and after lots of photos and an interview by another gorgeous journo, a local lady librarian on a fast bike led us out of town to a place that tracked out of space.

This was Tidbinbilla, where we enjoyed a great tour led by an incredibly knowledgeable host. In one hour he took us to Mars to travel overland on a rover to the outermost limits of space, and to the planets in between.

It was then on to Parliament House.

Afternoon tea in the staff room with Library staff and Senator Gary Humphries was a highlight.

I returned to Civic Library to find the male contingent being surrounded by beautiful women telling them how nice Leon was and asking where was he. "Disappeared," I said. "Last seen on Commonwealth Avenue Bridge." They were disappointed.

Saturday Saturday saw us head for Cooma, the Snowy Mountain Scheme town. A nice ride, testing the reins of my beast past the 160 mark and overtaking every car in sight...

Cooma's Library was in a temporary building while they renovate but all the bosses came to say G'day. Much cake, talking about the job and, in Pam's case, meeting old friends.

There was rain - it was a Biblio at last. We made the decision to climb the mountain, donned our wet gear and followed Pam to Jindabyne and on to Thredbo.

The Mild Ones are: Ross Balharrie, Pam Young, Alan Arnold, Alan Walker, Brian Young, Leon Alavoine, Ian McCallum, Sherrey Quinn, Roger Clark, and Alan Flores.

Please check out our blog at biblio-turismo.blogspot.com/

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The Mild Ones at Parliament House with Dr Andrew Leigh (Member for Fraser) and Parliamentary Librarian Roxanne Missingham: Alan Flores (Gosford), Brian Young (Griffith), Pam Young (Griffith), Roger Clark (Ballarat), Alan Arnold (Campbelltown), Alan Walker (Lake Macquarie), Ross Balharrie (Sydney)

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