

# HOG

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For Harley® enthusiasts of Australia & New Zealand

**MATT LEVATIC**

New Harley CEO drops  
in on New Zealand

**CRACKLING MA**

Hardcore HOG features  
a man they call Pig!

**END OF ANARCHY**

Son's of Anarchy stars  
speak to HOG magazine

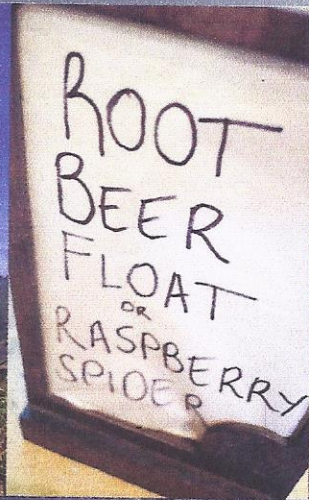
## SOUTH ISLAND SPECIAL

Soaking up the New Zealand  
scenery on the 2015 Low Rider  
and Street Glide Special



ROAD GLIDE CUSTOM | KNUCKLEHEAD RESTORATION | RIDING U.S. ROUTE 50

The **BIG** ride

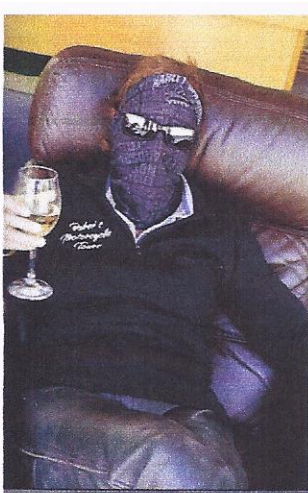


# SOUTH ISLAND SPECIAL

**New Zealand's South Island once again reveals its true beauty - the whole area is an adventure-lover's nirvana**

Words **Sam Maclachlan** Photos **Mark Watson/Incite Images**





**It's not like I hadn't been to the South Island**

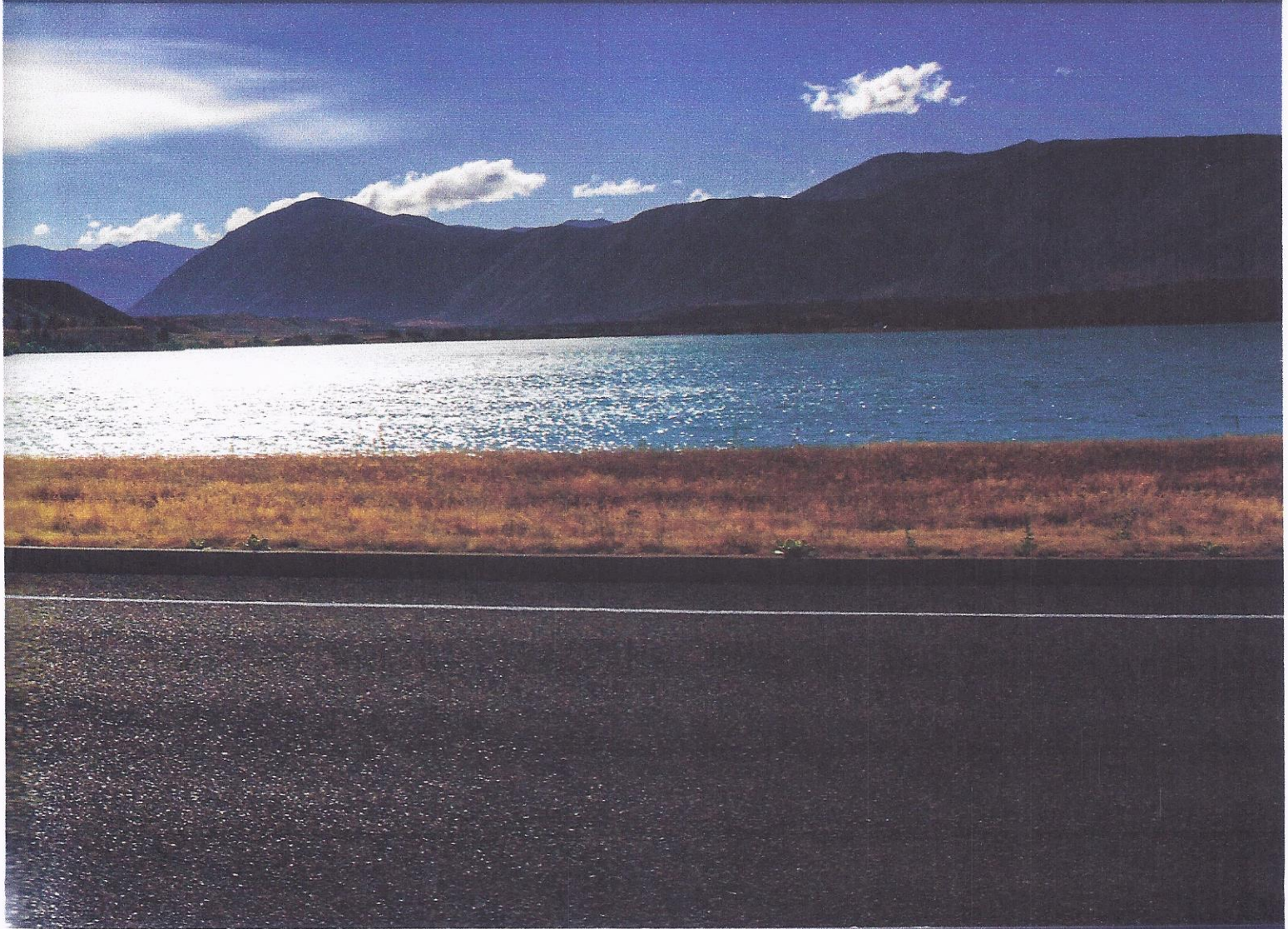
before – but once again I was in a state of serendipitous wonder. A group of Kiwi kids were leaping into Lake Wanaka straight off the jetty. Admittedly, they were wearing wetsuits during a brief respite in the 30-plus temperatures the area had enjoyed recently, but the cold wasn't bothering them – the massive fish were.

Casually swimming among the piers were large salmon and almost as large eels. We had just arrived via the magnificent Lindis Pass, and were within reach of Queenstown and the end of our journey, which had begun there two days before. The cheery scene of laughing kids, mixed with the intoxication South Island touring roads serve up to motorcycle riders, was a great time to reflect on the past two days.

My usual riding mate Mark Watson and I had hit the roads around Queenstown before, making our way to this adventureland from Dunedin, and back. The difference this time was the addition to our touring party of two true H.O.G. riders and quality tour guides, Graham and Donna Beker.

If you have travelled in organised tours in Europe or America, or have been to big H.O.G. gatherings in the past 32 years, there's a chance you have met them. This dynamic duo first joined H.O.G. in 1983 and have a long history of piloting Harley-Davidson motorcycles around the world. They are also the pair behind Authorized Harley-Davidson Tour operation Beker's Motorcycle Tours and had volunteered to come along for the ride and show a pair of Aussies some hard-to-find corners of the South Island. >

*NZ's South Island encapsulates the wacky, the wild and the wonderful world of motorcycle touring - all in one place!*





**"TO OUR NOSE WAS GOOD WEATHER, WHICH MEANT DRY, SPECTACULAR AND ALMOST EMPTY ROADS"**

By the time we had spent a night in All Black captain Richie McCaw's former schoolhouse, seen the largest ever piece of New Zealand roadkill, found the splendid canal roads linked to the local hydro-electric set-up and managed to ride around the edge of a massive storm for two days, yet not get caught in it, we were safe to call it mission accomplished!

It had all begun at Graham and Donna's house in Queenstown. We had initially been eyeing up the road leading to Milford Sound, but local knowledge had that idea gazumped.

"It will be spectacular there, with waterfalls off the cliffs in this weather," explained Graham, "but it will be a nightmare with slow traffic and you really want to enjoy some dry roads."

I'm not made of sugar, so don't mind getting wet, but the alternative seemed better. We set off for Tarras and a massive breakfast – just how we like to start a Big Ride. In our mirrors, the direction to the Sound, it was black, angry and very, very wet. To our nose was good weather, which meant dry, spectacular and almost empty roads.

Graham and Donna swept us past the usual tourist haunts and kept a good pace until a break at Omarama to re-group. That had included our first run through the incredible Lindis Pass – it's a great road, with even better scenery. There were plenty of tourists stopping to sniff the air at Lindis Pass and the police had interrupted one trailer-pulling fella's trip, looking to be in the process of dragging away his vehicle, trailer and all. "He probably exceeded the 110km/h limit for towing a trailer," mused Graham, "so he is losing the lot for a bit." They don't muck around here with that stuff.

For the first time in my many visits to New Zealand, I saw

***ABOVE It's hard to find a bad road around here - and Highway 8 beyond Tarras isn't one of them!***

a lot of brown earth. The place was in drought, and I also spotted three fire danger signs set on extreme – another first.

From Omarama, it was a relatively sedate run to Twizel, but then it got really interesting. We hooked west onto one of the canal roads to find ourselves travelling alongside a deep, vibrant blue river, stuffed full of huge fish and without a soul to be seen. The road is narrow, with a steep drop off one side and the fast flowing river on the other, so we chose to stop for a good look at the scenery, rather than end up a part of it. >

## Arrowtown or bust

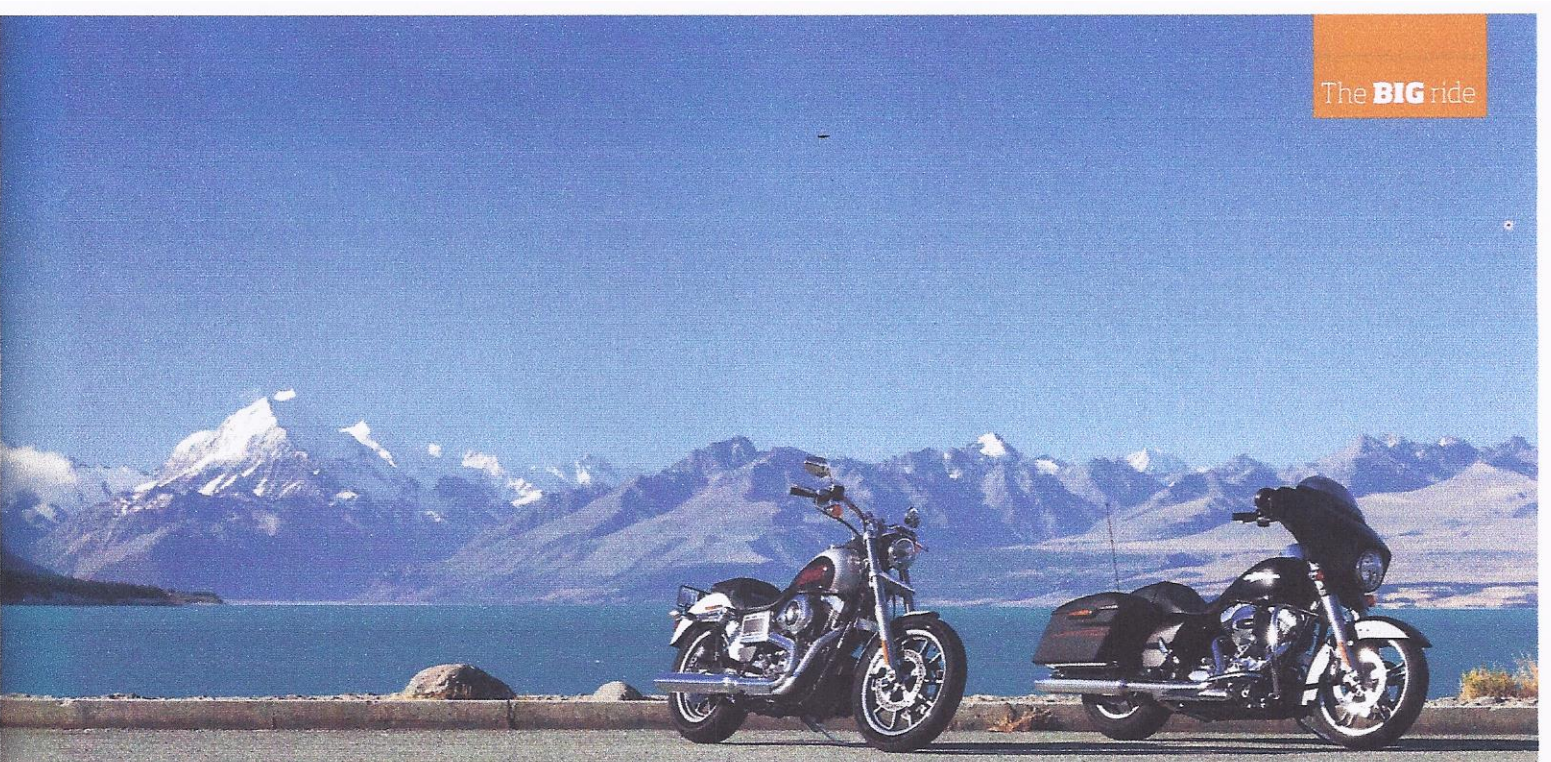
THIS YEAR SEES THE INAUGURAL IRON RUN set to replace the traditional NZ National Rally. Given what we've seen on this ride it's hardly surprising that Queenstown has been selected as the spectacular first venue for the event.

The event runs over the 20-21 March weekend, and while the ride from Queenstown to Arrowtown on the Saturday is reason enough to go, there's plenty more excuses to get involved.

The ride leaves Queenstown at 10am sharp, with Harley-Davidson-specific parking in an otherwise closed-off Buckingham Street, with three hours designated to explore the town, listen to the band and fill up with coffee.

Then it's time to head back to Queenstown for the bike show, then leap aboard the Gibbstown Wine and Food Festival. Better lay off the wine until after you have test ridden a 2015 model Harley-Davidson, available on the Friday and Saturday.

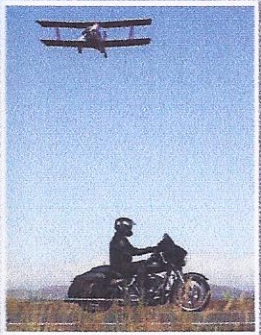
Then head home Sunday – or not. There's a heap of things to do and explore in the region, as this story proves, so maybe take Monday off work as well. Or even the rest of the month.



ABOVE Mount Cook is just one of the many amazing bits of scenery you need to stop at and take in



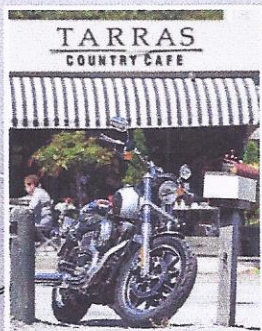
The Collie dog gets respect for its help with the settlers



Beware the low flying bi-planes off to view Mt Cook



Lindis Pass is a true bucket list kind of a place on a bike



Tarras is a popular biker stop for a cheeky coffee



Dinner in Richie Macaw's home town is a good call



The **BIG** ride



## "IT'S A CONSTANT BATTLE IN NEW ZEALAND - WATCH THE ROAD OR WATCH THE SCENERY"



It's a constant battle in New Zealand - watch the road or watch the scenery. Road, scenery, road, scenery. It's hard to choose, but even harder to do both at the same time.

Not surprisingly, the canals are home to various salmon farms, and we ventured upon one during feeding time. Snapping salmon writhed in their netted cage, while their wild friends nibbled on the leftovers from their places of freedom, just a few net strands between them. Smart arses.

I couldn't help but notice we had passed the odd road closed sign as we approached the salmon farm, but Donna and Graham looked sparkly-eyed when I questioned it. "We want to continue on the road - it says its open to walkers and bicycle riders, so we'll see if that Street Glide fits," Donna smirked.

Unfortunately, the only way the Street Glide would have made it past the barrier which presented itself not long afterwards was to build a ramp and jump it. Spectacular, but ultimately illegal and potentially a crash waiting to happen, so we turned on our disgruntled heels and detoured slightly en route to our stay for the night, Lake Tekapo.

It is still a good run into Tekapo, made all the more amazing by the spectacular sight that greets you as you crest the first hill leading into the town. Lake Tekapo is an astounding shade of turquoise and, as magnificent as Watto's photos are, the lake is simply gob-smacking in the flesh.

Before bunking down for the night, we headed for the summit of Mt John. It's capped with a group of observatories, >

**ABOVE** Water below but not above, thanks to some handy local knowledge; **MAIN** It's easy to see how you could lose yourself in the Lindis Pass

## The Welfare State

WHILE KUROW IS the birthplace of All Black captain Richie McCaw, a man who is treated to almost deity-status in New Zealand, he isn't the most famous Kurow resident - or even the second or third! As unlikely as it seems, that small, sleepy town on the banks of a fish-filled river in the Waikato Valley was also the birthplace of New Zealand's Welfare System.

Kurow's three wise men - Arnold Nordmeyer, the local Presbyterian minister; Gervan McMillan, the local GP; and schoolmaster Andrew Davidson - not only came up with the ingenious idea of helping to protect Depression-shocked New Zealanders in their time of need, but then took the whole thing through to provide the structure of the Labour Party's

1935 manifesto promise to develop New Zealand's welfare state.

In 1938, the six key policy points conceived from many conversations at McMillan's dining room table, became the basis of the First Labour Government's Social Security Act.

So, what were you talking about at dinner last night? Makes you think, doesn't it?

**“LAKE TEKAPO IS AN ASTOUNDING SHADE OF TURQUOISE AND, AS MAGNIFICENT AS WATTO’S PHOTOS ARE, THE LAKE IS SIMPLY GOB SMACKING IN THE FLESH.”**



**ABOVE** Can there be a better back-drop for a ride than this anywhere in the world?

accessed by a cool ribbon of tar spoilt only by the presence of tourists and a 30km/h speed limit.

From the top, Lake Tekapo shimmers in the near distance, while the ranges containing the famous Mt Cook are the opposite direction. As beautiful as that mountain is, we knew there was an Aussie and two other tourists still missing up there somewhere, which makes it more than a little morbid. They hadn't been spotted for a month. Beautiful, but cruel, too.

We reluctantly descended Mt John to make for Tekapo and our overnight stay. Tekapo has some hot springs, though not of the usual variety found in NZ. These ones are indeed fed by spring water, however look like a swimming pool, so not the most natural setting. They are relaxing, though.

It continuously amazes me the Lake and others like it are devoid of people enjoying it, and Donna and Graham answer truthfully: "There's just no one here. The population of the

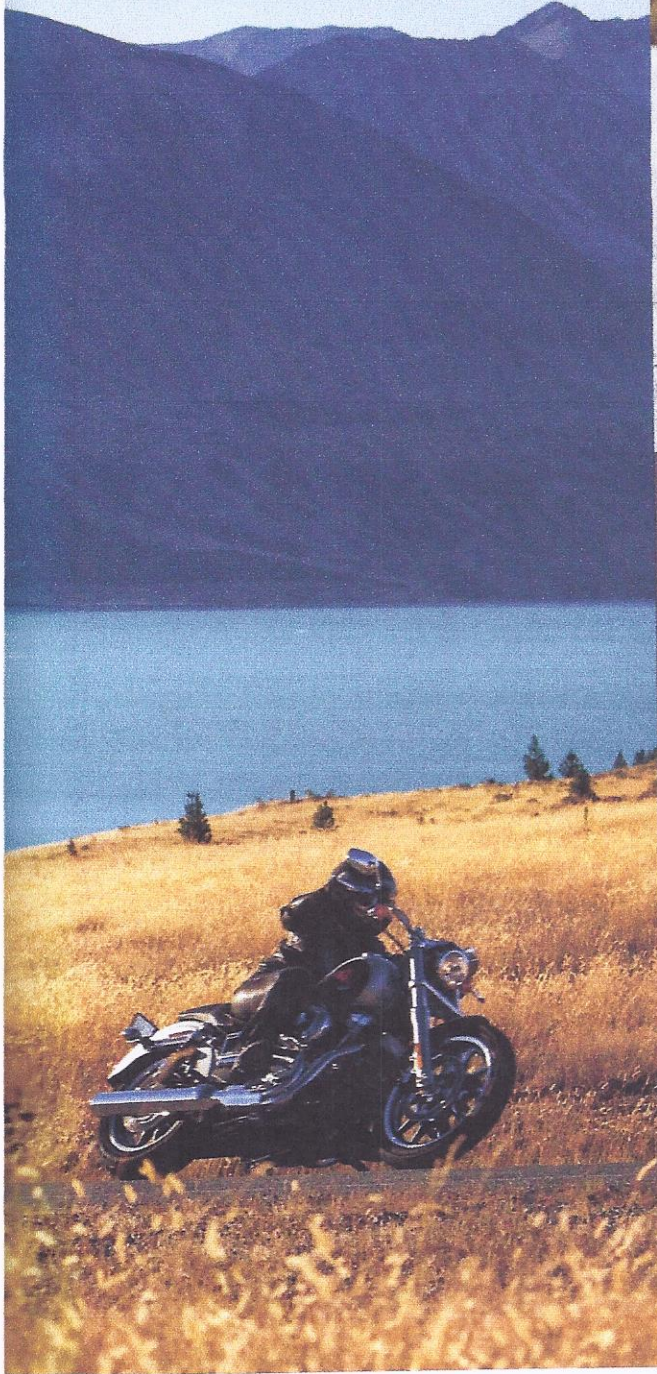
entire South Island is around one million and they are spread far and wide."

And that's the appeal. There are plenty of times you have a perfectly surfaced twist-a-thon of a road in front of you, all to yourself and to your riding mates. It's like someone built it just for you. Just watch out for the odd international tourist who has forgotten which side of the road they should be on – it happens in scenic tourist spots. Rider beware.

The following day was more cruisey, making our way back to Omarama, then to Kurow via the magnificent Benmore and Aviemore Dams – and New Zealand's largest recorded road kill.

It was early morning and – there being just one road around Lake Aviemore, lined with sparse clumps of campers and waterskiers – I was offered the lead. I took it, but was cruising along gently, thinking I was in Australia and that it was kangaroo hour. Then I remembered I had none of the furry bouncers to

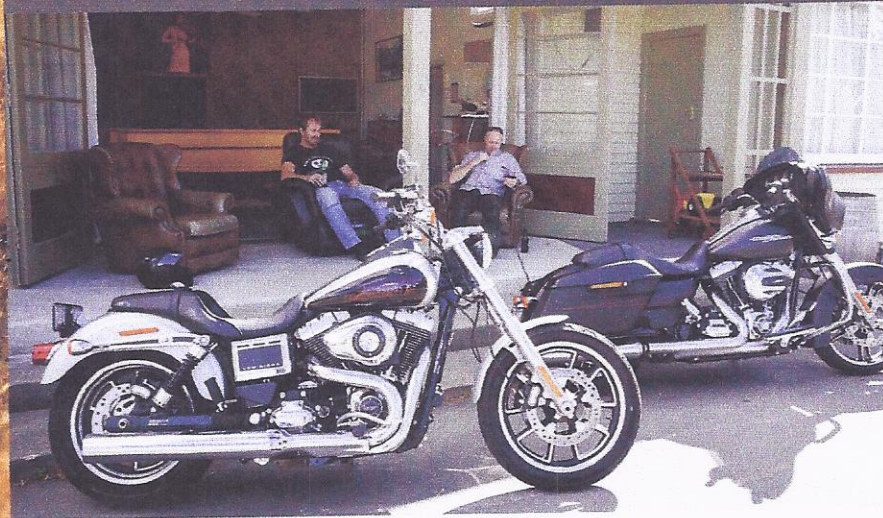




## Loading it up!

I HOPPED ON THE STREET GLIDE [above] with only minimal gear in the panniers, so I was surprised it didn't steer quite as well as I remembered it to. I knew this model had a new steering head and fork since I last rode one, but it wasn't as sharp as I thought it should be. A quick look at the remote hydraulic pre-load adjuster [behind the left-side pannier] revealed it was wound right off.

So, I removed the pannier with the two Dzus clips, turned the adjuster to half way to suit my weight and the mild load in the panniers [full hard is great for heavy panniers and a pillion] and it was a different bike! It was straight back to being a machine whose front wheel would go exactly where I put it and even slow speed manoeuvring was easier. It's a great feature to have for a touring bike!



worry about here, so stepped up the pace to a good touring speed, but one I wouldn't feel comfortable doing in Oz at that time of day. But here in Otago country, what did I have to be worried about?

No more than five minutes after that ill-placed feeling of security, I rounded (yet another) corner to spot a large wallaby lying dead in the middle of the road. Ummm, what? I pulled up, a little stunned. Where had that buggger come from?

Graham and Donna were equally excited, but for different reasons. "In 45 years of riding in New Zealand, I have never seen that," said Graham excitedly. He even went back for photos.

When he returned, we moved off again. Cautiously.

It turns out the government had released a selection of wallabies into this area some years back, I assume to fray the nerves of unsuspecting motorcycle tourists. Well played.

Not long afterwards, I was dodging rocks the size of a football

as the Te Akatarawa Road aligned itself with a shaley cliff. I have seen plenty of falling rocks signs in my time, but none that are made of tar and backed up with smatterings of rock strewn across the road as proof. Unable to ride from the safety of the Street Glide's pannier, I continued on as did Watto, ignoring the rocks as Graham and Donna were.

The Bekers had somewhere special for us to stay that night – the converted schoolhouse that All Black captain Richie McCaw grew up in. For those unfamiliar with New Zealand's national religion (or sport, depending on whether you're a Kiwi or not), the position of captain of the national rugby union team, the All Blacks, carries more weight than being prime minister.

The school itself looks, for all intents and purposes, like just that until you walk inside and spot the well-stocked beer fridge and comfortable bunk beds.

It's now the headquarters of the Off Road Adventures outfit, >

**ABOVE Kicking back at All Black legend Richie Macaw's old school**

**“THE HARLEY ROADS, THE HARLEY PEOPLE, THE FOOD AND THE SHEER BREADTH OF AWESOME THINGS TO LOOK AT, DO, SEE AND EAT ARE QUITE SIMPLY MIND BLOWING.”**



**3 BEST BITS** 1 The roads – all of them 2 The fresh smell of the air – even the airport smells great! 3 The distinct lack of people – except Queenstown



which specialises in dirtbike tours and frightening the pants off tourists with ATVs and high-powered buggies. It's run by the Columb family, one talented group of off-road riders and very generous with their bunkhouse, too, as it turns out.

“One of the Columb sons, Lachie, knows Richie well. Richie still flies gliders in the area.”

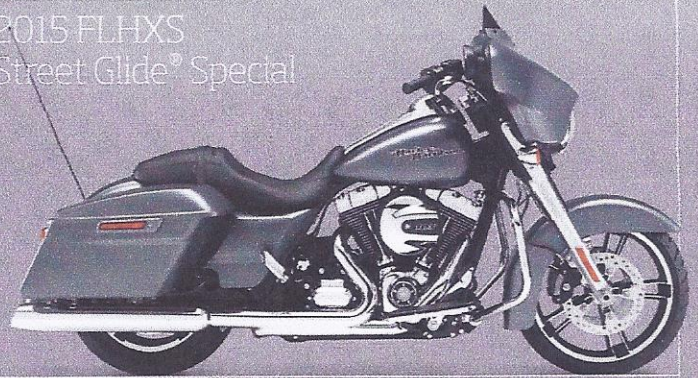
That night we sleep like logs – there is not a sound, though I swear I heard someone kicking a footy during the night.

Another big breakfast at Kurow and we are heading for Queenstown just a few hours away. We head in via Wanaka, where I have the delight of watching the local kids accidentally kicking fish as they land in the pristine waters of Lake Wanaka.

The run from Wanaka to Queenstown via Crown Range Road we have covered before in *H.O.G. Magazine*, but it's worth saying this – it's a must-do road before you depart this world. Just respect its blind corners and tourist traffic and make the decision of road or scenery well, because both are incredible.

We arrive in Queenstown, which is far from the population

## 2015 FLHXS Street Glide® Special



### Dimensions

LENGTH	2450mm
SEAT HEIGHT	695mm
RAKE/TRAIL	26° / 170mm
FUEL CAPACITY	22.7 litres
DRY WEIGHT	356kg

### Powertrain

ENGINE	Air-cooled, Twin Cam 103
DISPLACEMENT	1690cc
BORE X STROKE	98.4/111.1mm
ENGINE TORQUE	138Nm @ 3500rpm

### Wheels/Tyres

WHEELS	Enforcer Cast Aluminium
FRONT TYRE 19"	130/60B19 61H
REAR TYRE 16"	180/65B16 81H

### Exhaust System

Chrome 2-1-2 dual exhaust with tapered mufflers.

### Colour Options

Vivid Black, Brilliant Silver Pearl, Amber Whiskey, Charcoal Pearl, Morocco Gold Pearl, Black Denim, Deep Jade Pearl.

### Model Features

A product of the Project Rushmore makeover, the 103-engined Street Glide boasts Reflex Linked Brakes with ABS, a new steering head and front forks and a smart security system. There's also a hydraulic pre-load adjuster for the rear to finetune the bike depending on the load.

## 2015 FXDL Low Rider®



### Dimensions

LENGTH	2345mm
SEAT HEIGHT	680mm
RAKE/TRAIL	30.5° / 128mm
FUEL CAPACITY	17.8 litres
DRY WEIGHT	292kg

### Powertrain

ENGINE	Air-cooled, Twin Cam 103
DISPLACEMENT	1690cc
BORE X STROKE	98.4/111.1 mm
ENGINE TORQUE	126Nm @ 3500rpm

### Wheels/Tyres

WHEELS	Black Split Five-spoke Aluminium
FRONT TYRE 19"	100/90B19 57H
REAR TYRE 17"	160/70B17 73V

### Exhaust System

Chrome, 2-into-1

### Colour Options

Black Magic, White Hot Pearl/Blue Hot Pearl, Brilliant Silver Pearl/Vivid Black; Deep Jade Pearl, Amber Whiskey, Vivid Black.

### Model Features

From the '70s inspired seat, to the Split 5-Spoke Cast Aluminium wheels, to the true, sculpted beauty and finish on its 103 cubic inch V-Twin engine, this is premium Harley custom style. Two-tone paint is an added option.

*With roads like this  
why would you ever  
want to leave?*

sparseness of our previous few days. Fully kitted mountain bikers roll through the main street, fresh from the trails that drop you right in the town centre.

Two shark boats splash their way over and below the Lake's waters in a frenzy of activity and the good ship *TSS Earnslaw* begins its lazy pilgrimage to the Lake Wakatipu centre with a bevy of well-fed tourists aboard. And a group of friendly Kiwis slowly forms around our happy group as friends of Graham and Donna congregate at one of the lakeside hotels for a beer and a feed, now that the bikes are away.

Watto and I are desperately searching house prices and the job ads in the paper (people still read newspapers there – it's nice) before we fly out – this place does that to you. Like every other time I turn up in the lap of NZ's hospitality, I want to stay.

The Harley roads, the Harley people, the food and the sheer breadth of awesome things to look at, do, see and eat are quite simply mind-blowing.

I can almost guarantee you will feel the same. ☺