

Dakar legend thrills Horizons Unlimited travellers

BY MARK HINCHLIFFE IN MOTORBIKE NEWS – 6 OCT 2



*Christophe at Horizons
Unlimited meeting*

The highlight of the first of four [Horizons Unlimited](#) meetings across Australia this year was the presentation by Dakar Rally rider [Christophe Barriere-Varju](#).



*Shane Kuhl and Susan
Johnson at Horizons
Unlimited meeting*

Christophe was one of several special guests to present lectures and workshops at the meeting which inspires and educates motorcycle travellers to explore the world around them. The

to explore the world around them. The first of the annual meetings was held at Beaudesert in Queensland at the weekend.

This year, Horizons Unlimited is expanding its horizons to a fourth state with the first meeting in Western Australia this weekend (Oct 10-12) at Fairbridge Village.

It will be followed by a meeting on October 24-26) at Cavendish, Victoria, then, Oct 31-Nov 2, at Riverwood Downs, NSW.

Horizons Unlimited founders Susan and Grant Johnson will attend all the meetings. She says they started the group in 1997 at the end of an around-the-world trip on a BMW R 80 GS for three reasons: "To inspire people to go a little further, to inform them about all the things to do and to make contact with other people who travel."

The Johnsons are from Canada and

The Johnsons are from Canada and have been living here five years. They are now naturalised Australians and will attend 10 of the 22 Horizons Unlimited events around the world this year, including all the Australian meetings.

She says the highlight of the weekend was the keynote address by Christophe who competed in the 2010 Dakar Rally and made a DVD of his exploits called Dream Racer. The emotive DVD has gone on to win film awards and Christophe has become a popular speaker at many motorcycle events. He says he is now raising money for a 2016 assault on the rally in a solo buggy.



*Grant Johnson workshops
tyres*

“His main theme was to follow your dreams,” says Susan. “Our whole motto is about achievable dreams. It’s about getting over the fear that the media and government instil in us that you can’t go anywhere or you will die. But if people meet others who have done it, then they overcome that fear. If I can do it, so can you.”

Horizons Unlimited organiser Shane Kuhl says they had about 150 people over the three-day weekend, attending workshops, lectures and visiting the various trade stalls. He says one woman flew from Melbourne just to deliver a first-aid address.

Brian and Shirley Rix of Victoria also attended to give a presentation about their 170,000km adventures on a 2008 BMW R 1200 GSA. They have also presented at meetings overseas.

“It’s a great way to meet people. This is our tribe.” Brian says

It's a great way to meet people. This is our tribe," Brian says.

The meeting attracted a lot of riders on adventure bikes, but also a wide range of other bikes from big tourers and trikes with trailers down to scooters and even a Monkey Bike.

The popular annual events not only offer travel advice for riders of all talent and experience levels but also mechanical training, rider tips and workshops such as changing flat tyres and picking up dropped bikes.



Brian and Shirley Rix

Shane gives a presentation on bike modifications and says the biggest failing is that riders spend money before they think it through. "They fret about it instead of just riding," he says. "Just get the bike you love, set a date and go."

The remaining