

Garden Route Toy Run® in a nutshell.

A synopsis of the Toy Run® history and this year's joint venture between the Garden Route Moths and the Garden Route Chapter of the MOTH Motorcycle Association, who are jointly hosting this prestigious event on the 23 November this year.



The first Toy Run was held by the San Fernando Valley Charter of the Hells Angels in America 1973. That first run, 200 bikes escorted two truckloads of toys from Griffith Park to Los Angeles city hall. A week after the first toy run in El Lay, a couple of clubs in Bergen, New Jersey named the Skyway Riders and the Travelers held their own Toy Run. *"A number of residents here were terrified"* the New York Times reported, *"But the worst never came. There were no gang fights...or the assorted other crimes depicted on television."* Suddenly, people liked us. They really, really liked us. And, if you listened hard enough you could hear bikers all over America thinking, *"What a great idea!"* Toy Runs popped up like mushrooms. The next year, 1974, there wasn't a biker's rights organization or an outlaw club in America that didn't sponsor a Toy Run. By the time Harley-Davidson invented its own club, the Harley Owners Group (HOG), in 1983 the toy run had become an institution.

By the mid-80s the Toy Run concept had reached South African shores, the Italian Motorcycle Club (IMOC) embraced the idea from the start and have succeeded in transforming the Toy Run into what we now know as a structured and much appreciated national event. The initial goal was for everyone to simply have fun and somehow try to remove the negative public perception of motorcyclists, that was evident in those days. The idea of motorcyclists coming together in harmony with the public and sharing with those less fortunate, especially the most vulnerable in society, the children, was born.

As the event grew in stature and part of the structuring process, the Toy Run® was registered as an official Non-Profit charity, together with its now official logo. Since becoming a national event, bidders are licensed to host the event and under strict terms and conditions allowed to use the Toy Run® logo.

In what now has become tradition, on the last Sunday of November each year, most towns and cities host their own Toy Run®. Everything about this event is voluntary and no organiser or helper is compensated for their work, time or effort.

A positive spinoff is that, the Toy Run® not only embodies the spirit of generosity, but has become a noteworthy and iconic South African charity event that unifies bikers and our community. There are countless examples of individuals going over and above what is required to ensure that the children receive toys and support.

A special thank you goes out to Outeniqua Shellhole, MESCA, the MMA GR Chapter and the George Service Clubs for paving the way to a successful 2025 Garden Route Toy Run®.

The generosity of our Garden Route folk is never in doubt as we turn our attention towards the festive season and what should be a special time for children. With this year's Toy Run® almost on us, it is our sincere hope that we can not only fulfill our commitment to the underprivileged children of our area, but also showcase the MOTH to the general public, thereby enhancing the Ideals of the Order.

Signed:

Moth Anthony v Tonder

MMA Chairman & Toy Run® coordinator