

# TOPDOWN

2022

Issue 2

**LAST OF THE SUMMER SUN?**



**SHY MOUNTAINS, DRY BREWERIES,  
ICE CREAM DISTRESS, BILLION DOLLAR HIGHWAYS**

Official Magazine of  
**THE MX-5 CLUB  
OF NEW ZEALAND**  
[www.mx5carclub.co.nz](http://www.mx5carclub.co.nz)

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Membership subscriptions – \$70.00 per car, per year for full membership, including TopDown magazine. For membership application forms, visit our website or email the Membership Co-ordinator – Ron Bol, membership@mx5carclub.co.nz

## A warm welcome to our newest members

### Twin Coasts / Northland

David Clendon & Lindis Capper-Starr

### Northern / Auckland

Felicity & Verne Wilson

### Waikato / Hamilton

Daniel Thomas & Glenda Douglas  
Logan Fisher-Murray

### Bay of Plenty / Tauranga

Simone Kennedy  
Jules & Alan Watchorn  
Cris & Murray Robertson

### Hawkes Bay / Napier/Hastings

David & Julie Greenhill  
James & Julie Ludlam

### Kapiti Coast / Wellington

David & Marion Saunders  
Timir (Tim) Das  
David Etchells

### Marlborough

Rameez Khan  
Chris White

### Southland

Karen & Wayne Corbin

New members should start receiving emails from their regional co-ordinator regarding details of upcoming trips.

If you are new to the club and coming along for the first time, please make yourself known to the event organiser.

**MX-5 TOPDOWN MAGAZINE**  
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## Contributing Guidelines

Feel free to submit articles via email. Articles should be no longer than 900 words. Include your name (and the article author's name if different), contact details and use full names in text. If you submit an article, you agree to have it edited as the Editor sees fit. The NZ MX-5 Club does not pay for submissions. If the article has been published before in any form, please indicate. TopDown is read by all ages, so take this into account when considering subject material and language. No article which the Editor or the NZ MX-5 Club deems to encourage breaking the law, either directly or by inference, will be printed.

## Picture Guidelines

High resolution JPEGs are preferred. (300 dpi). The preferred method for submission of images is by email. No single image should exceed 8 MB. All photographs must be submitted with the permission of the photographer. Vehicle registration numbers will be shown unless removal is requested. **Please Note: The Editor cannot guarantee a date for publication. The above are guidelines only, and may be varied in exceptional circumstances. THE EDITOR'S DECISION IS FINAL.**

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## MX-5 Club of NZ Life Members

| Name                      | Region                   | Awarded Life Membership |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bob McCaulay (deceased)   | Northern                 |                         |
| Howard Fox                | Northern                 |                         |
| Larry Young               | Northern                 |                         |
| Lawrie Copp               | Kapiti Coast             |                         |
| Gary Wood & Alison Harold | Waikato                  | 2001                    |
| Willie & Anne Williamson  | Northern                 | 2007                    |
| Kevin & Glenys Everitt    | Hawkes Bay               | 2010                    |
| Nigel Every               | Waikato                  | 2009                    |
| Bronwyn Upfold            | Central Plateau/Manawatu | 2010                    |
| Peter Glover              | Southland                | 2019                    |
| Sharon Ewing              | Kapiti Coast             | 2019                    |
| Morrin Leyton             | Northern                 | 2019                    |
| Brenda & Martin White     | Northern                 | 2019                    |

# A MASSIVE THANKYOU

**The Executive and Committee members have found a way to say Thankyou to our loyal enthusiastic MX-5 Base.**

We recognise that over the past 2 years many events have had to be cancelled or indefinitely postponed and for many people the Covid environment has been tough.

We also wanted to provide some additional value back to members along with the recently introduced first aid and extinguisher kits for coordinators, \$40 for each area club per club run in fuel vouchers, and our offers to train up people in each region for roadside first aid.

So, in the interests of saying a MASSIVE thank you each current financial member will receive a premium quality aluminium drink bottle/flask via their local Regional Coordinator over the coming months. That's one per membership.

These are suitable for both hot and cold beverages, fit in MX-5 cup holders and are branded MX-5. They look sensational.

Funds have come solely from club reserves and with nearly 400 members that and delivery is a significant undertaking. For that reason, there's one per membership and if members request them to be posted then that cost is theirs.

Keep an eye out for more details soon and the

fastest way to get your flask is to participate in an MX-5 Club event and talk to your local Co-ordinator.

Thankyou for your loyalty to our great Club.

**Allan Boot, President  
and the Executive Team and Committee**



## What do you call a group of MX-5s?

While writing our article on the Billion Dollar Highway (see page 19), we wanted a collective noun to describe a group of MX-5s. A Google search turned up nothing.

So, borrowing inspiration from the animal kingdom, the brainstorming started:

*mob, meander, mangle, buzz, swarm, drove, speed, orchestra, richness, lightness, flash, family, romp, agility, liveliness, quickness, swiftness, deftness,*

*team, colony, bouquet, string, rhumba, crash, host, fever, gang, possie, ...*

I chose "A Buzz of MX-5" for a couple of reasons: When MX-5s race they sound like a swarm of angry bees when speeding around the track.

A definition of the word Buzz: "an atmosphere of excitement and activity". Something we all feel when our cars meet up for our Sunday runs.

But I also liked several other options. What would you have used?

– Barbara & Les Jones

The logo for Trotskies Auto Upholstery Ltd features a stylized red car silhouette above the company name in bold red letters. The phone number 'Ph: 021 365 116' is displayed in white on a black background to the right.

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## From the President

### Greetings to you all.

Well, we have at last been able to relax the need for vaccine passports and scanning in. That's in line with the latest government guidelines. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we try to work in the best interests of all our members.

Personally, I loathe wearing a mask therefore when we are out driving an MX-5 you won't see one on, instead you're more likely to see a big grin and a vigorous wave.

Reading coordinators reports there have been some interesting runs held around the country and whilst attendance at some have been understandably down due to the fear of Covid – and the pump prices – overall many are enjoying the camaraderie of a club event.

Here in the Northern Region, we have tried to mix up shorter and longer runs and café endings or

picnics.

One thing we must always be mindful of is the public's perception of our club when out and about and for that reason we have a code of conduct (reprinted here in this TopDown) which is important and I ask that you bear it in mind.

Recently you may recall an MX5 was spotted doing "donuts" inside a marae ground and that resulted in a flurry of phone calls and emails around "was it one of ours?" I fielded a number of calls from the press and indeed the Marae itself. Of course, it wasn't, which I was very pleased to advise and it's something most unlikely to ever occur from one of our club members.

On another note, a recent trip through the centre of the North Island – Central Plateau/Raurimu area (regrettably unable to fit everything into an MX-5 so it was the SUV) – reminds me just how lucky we are with roads and scenery away from the cities. Simply beautiful. How lucky are we!

Following on from Kapiti's awesome Coast to

Coast run earlier this year, we in the Northern region are also planning the same event, this time immediately before we have the National event in New Plymouth (October) and the interest level is high. If this sounds an event for you, drop me a note and we will see how the spaces are going.

Meantime, let's make the most of every opportunity to get out in our MX-5s. Hopefully we will see you at a club event or out and about, easily recognisable by a big grin and a friendly wave when you sight a likeminded MX-5 driver.

**Booty – zoom zoom**  
President



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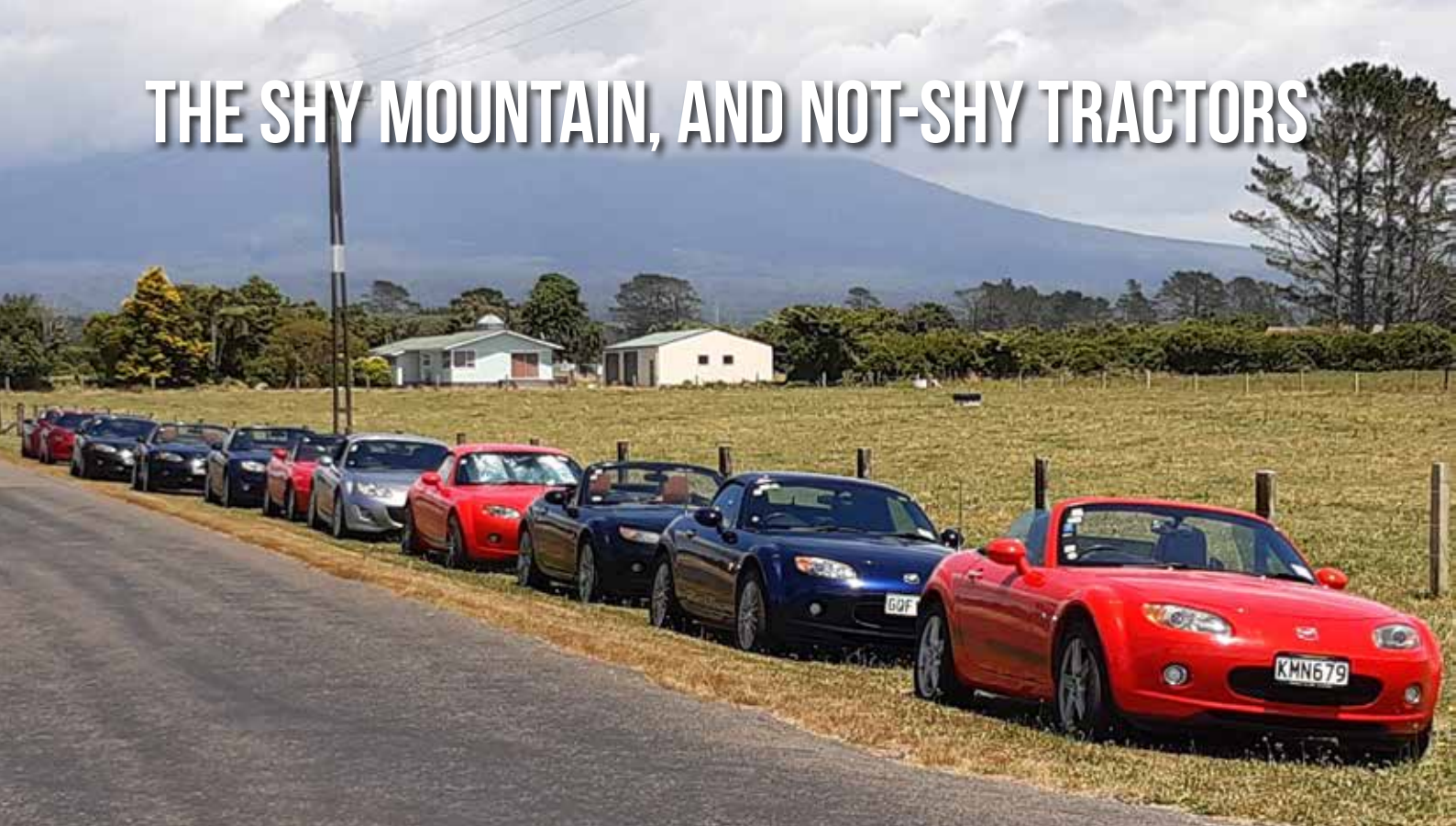
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# THE SHY MOUNTAIN, AND NOT-SHY TRACTORS



## BACKYARD BAR-B-QUE – 22 JANUARY 2022

Gorgeous sunny dawn in the sunshine capital of NZ (2021 anyway). Scheduled meet at the Backyard Café in Whalers Gate and a team of a dozen bright and shiny MX-5s grace the car park. Not bad considering the water restrictions in place. Attendees also look sharp, which is probably down to the coffee, and we bid welcome to new members, Angela and Chris getting their first taste of MX-5 camaraderie.

On time at 10.30am Tiny and Lyn, leaders for the day, deliver the travel advisory and we are off to HWY 45. A short stretch to Okato where we turned inland and headed towards the National Park, joining Carrington Rd and on to Pukeiti. A half hour stop for a quick look around main centre area. Not really the main rhododendron season, but a great lovely spot bathed in sunshine.

Back in the cars and its back on Carrington Rd and down the hill with the opportunity for a great view way up the coast. Back in New Plymouth, it

## Taranaki

Report by Jock Sutherland  
Photos by Lesley Sutherland

was down over the old one lane bridge and under and then onto the main southern route into town and out to Inglewood.

A brief stop in the railway station car park for a photo shoot before continuing south for a short distance and then turning right and parking up on the nicely mown long acre, outside Ray and Carol's Place.

While the mountain had decided to hide, spoiling the line-up backdrop, we headed for the bar-b-que shed venue. Given the now very warm conditions we were grateful to be undercover. After a very generous lunch, we ventured out to sheds 2, 3 & 4. Ray's collection of Massey Ferguson tractors was lined up for inspection, along with a diverse range of cars and a very nice old, real Land Rover. Boys and their sheds.

Ray also has the first Valiant he owned that he reacquired after many years under restoration. A work in progress but clearly sentiment is alive and well.

Thanks to Ray and Carol for their hospitality and to Tiny and Lyn for organizing the day's run. ●



# GRANT'S RUN WITH SPORTS CAR CLUB

Sunday 20 March dawned mostly clear but the forecast for wind and rain in the afternoon. Tops down and it's off to the meet point in Fitzroy.

Smaller numbers seem to be the case at the moment, so only 10 cars with a 50/50 split between the clubs (2 are members of both). Ford, Nissan, BMW etc representing the other marques.

Pre-start introductions and banter, before the briefing. A list of directions to follow, some cryptic, features to find, questions to answer and items to gather. A definite challenge ahead.

Setting off at 2 minute intervals, we meandered through the urban Fitzroy, heading north into the countryside. We soon found ourselves close behind the car that left ahead of us, and with the car behind checking out our tailpipe.

Taking the opportunity to let them by, we collected the first of our items to gather. Crossing HWY 3A into Lepperton we located the second item soon after (and we donated a bit to the solo participant, who was finding the multi-tasking difficult).

The meandering continued with a trip through Waitara before heading to a stop at the oil production site at Mangahewa, to gather some answers from the information board overlooking area, and we briefly, caught up to the faster cars.

## Taranaki

### Report & Photos by Jock and Lesley Sutherland

Back on the road and heading to Tarata through the tunnel and a straight run (a quite windy road actually) through the area and out over the Tarata Saddle and on to the Inglewood Daed Centre. A brief stop there, to count dead 'Johns' – quite common there it seems, before a brief stop in Inglewood (not at the car boot sale, just to use the facilities also conveniently located in the railway station car park) and then a fairly direct run to Grant and Annette's for a BBQ/Picnic lunch, depending on how you read the run notice.

Members only prize draw, thanks to the National Committee, duly completed. Thanks to Grant for organising and hosting (with Annette of course).

It has to be said that the Sports Car Club got to the finish earliest, but when the answers were checked, the items gathered verified and the mileage tallied, the MX-5s left them for dead. We always knew the discerning car buyers would drive MX-5s. ●



# DRY, EVEN FROM ONE BREWERY TO ANOTHER



**This time, the club opted for another long drive. This time, it was about 600km round trip from Wellington all the way to GodsOwn Brewery in Hawkes Bay.**

The start of the drive was unusually far away from Wellington. I left home at about 6:45am on Sunday morning, in the crisp, damp cold – still with the top down and the excellent heater warming me up. Two hours later, I arrived with others at the Tui Brewery in Mangatainoka, just north of Pahiatua. After a wonderful breakfast (without tasting the brewery's main product) and a good chat, Sharon ran a raffle for the two \$20 petrol vouchers courtesy of the National Club.

By this time, the sun was out and off we went in a perfect line of wonderful MX-5s, led by Sharon, who had organised the day. She helped us all by preparing the drive route on Google Maps and sharing it on Facebook. What a great tool, except for the fact that someone has to click "Continue" at the end of each section.

The back route past Woodville and Dannevirke was superb, made even more so by so many fantastic cars turning heads as we went through

## Kapiti Coast / Wellington

**Report by Charles Thompson**

**Photos by Sharon Ewing & Les Jones**

small villages and over many one-lane bridges.

Then we struck State Highway 2 north of Dannevirke where major roadworks are in progress. Slowly and gingerly we tried our best to avoid stone chips from the partially reconstructed road. Once through, it was back to the back roads and up State Highway 50. Passing the Tararuas on the left, through rolling farmlands and bags of sunshine, we finished up nearly at Hastings (or so it felt).

GodsOwn Brewery is a small place with a farm shed housing the brewing machinery, and a wonderful open garden to enjoy the excellent beers under hop vines. Relaxing and gorgeous. The lunch menu is small, centred around some amazing pizzas cooked fresh in two decent-sized pizza ovens. As usual with this group (and all MX-5 clubs), we spent a wonderful couple of hours







chatting, reminiscing and having a great time in the sun. I even managed to fly my kite for a few minutes in the light Hawkes Bay breeze.

For us that drove home on Sunday, it was clear and dry all the way back to Wellington. Some of the club members opted for an overnight stay in Napier or Hastings, but it turned out they were hit by the tail end of the cyclone that lashed Auckland and points north that weekend, with some heavy rain on the way home. ●





## SW OR NE? AND SCHOOL BUS TRACTORS

LET'S EXPLORE THE NORTH WEST WAIKATO

Sunday arrives with the weather forecast looking very gloomy for the afternoon.

22 Cars turn up for our run ... fingers crossed that we all make it to our lunch time destination at the Les Batkin Reserve, just north of the Tuakau Bridge. A really good choice for a lunch time spot with a toilet block in the middle of the reserve.

We have tried to no avail to find out why this reserve is called the Les Batkin Reserve but Google is not being our friend.

Our best effort is that this Reserve was set up to preserve archaeological sites. We did however see lots of fruit trees along the perimeter of the reserve which were obviously a planned plant. What we did find out was that the original way to get across the Waikato River was by punt and that the Road up to Oniwhero was once known as Punt Hill.

The roads in this area of the Waikato gives up magnificent views over the whole of that part of the country – and what you are about to read gives a

Waikato / Hamilton

Report and Photos by Gary Major

hint of how much view we were able to take in.

Now remember ... we have had some runs lately where cars get lost on our runs. Yes it happened.

The Vice President and the Waikato Regional Coordinator in the lead car stuffed up. Arriving at a T-intersection we turned left when we should have turned right and like good little ducklings 21 cars followed.

After about 15 kilometres and the scenery not looking like that when we scoped out the run the previous week, the on board GPS system told us we were heading in a South Westerly direction when it should have been a North Easterly direction. A big U-turn saved the day.

After a picnic run and the usual banter we headed off up to Oniwhero where there is a large





## MX-5 Club Code of Conduct / Health and Safety Policy

The MX5 Club of NZ encourages **SAFE & COURTEOUS DRIVING**

- Drivers must have a valid New Zealand Driver License.
- Vehicles must have appropriate current road registration and Warrant of Fitness.
- Observe the road rules and posted speed limits.
- Act in a courteous manner towards ALL other road users.
- Drive to the prevailing road conditions.
- Never overtake the run leader unless invited to do so.
- Always maintain a safe following and braking distance (2 second rule).
- Only overtake others when it's safe to do so.
- Always drive at a speed you're comfortable with.
- If cars are building up behind you, pull over to let them pass.
- If you fall back, there'll be an opportunity to regroup at the next break (if applicable).
- Careless or dangerous driving will not be tolerated – offenders may be asked to leave the run/club.
- A member who blatantly disregards a reasonable instruction from the run leader or a Club office bearer may, after due process, have their membership terminated.
- The MX5 Club of NZ Inc, its office bearers and representatives hold no responsibility for drivers' conduct on any organized run.
- All run participants accept full responsibility for their own actions. ●

area School and a resident population of about 300. When I was in the Police, at one time Oniwhero was once in my patch.

A funny story I can share about those times was one day witnessing a young boy of about 12 arriving at school on a Tractor.

I spoke to the School Principal about what I had seen and her response was really cool ... "Gary, please can we just let that go as at least we are getting him to come to School which is a huge plus for us."

Our trip to Oniwhero was great for two reasons. Member Jane Lorimer went to school there and a large line of about 15 Classic American cars had to give way to us at a T-intersection as we wound our way down to the Port Waikato road.

An uneventful trip home followed but we left our lunch spot with the unanimous agreement that while the weather is favourable, picnic runs are the way to go. ●





# RUN FOR GARY

Report by Jock Sutherland  
Photos by Lesley Sutherland

It's 10.00am on a lovely calm and sunny Saturday and 10 cars, with drivers and passengers (Nora being chauffeured by her grandson Josh), are gathered at Piko Piko café for coffee and chat before we head off on the day's run.

Owen and Judy have put this together, and they are getting a bit of a reputation for delivering magical mystery tours. So, with a mix of anticipation and trepidation we await our instructions. We learn that they have planned 3 stops with a wee brain-teaser for us at each. On the road and very soon a loop around the TSB Stadium car park.

Then a stop under some trees (is that a yellow no stopping line?) and the challenge is to find a Vitex Lucens Leaf (Puriri). Back in the cars and a meander down to Ngamotu Beach and challenge number 2. Find a Papniesaustralis shell (pipi). The sea inside the port breakwaters is dead calm, unlike during recent wild weather which saw surfies in action here. Unheard of!

Back on the road and on Surf HWY 45 and down the Timaru Rd and along the seashore to another stop, amongst the camper vans.

The final challenge for the day is to collect 23,584 grains of sand. Who's counting but it's a level teaspoonful apparently.

Back out to HWY 45 via Lower Pitone Rd. On





## Taranaki

towards Opunake before we turn down Bayly Rd towards the Cape Egmont Boat Club, and then follow the coast with a short gravel section along Coast Rd before heading back to HWY 45 at

Pungarehu, via Pungarehu Rd. From there it is on to Opunake and lunch at the Sugar Juice Café.

After a very nice meal we took a moment to reflect on the passing of long standing club member Gary Hunn. A ready contributor to club activities including helping with organising the National event hosted in Taranaki in 2015, Gary will be missed by us all. This run was for you. Rest easy Gary. ●

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# MISSED SIGNS & ICE CREAM DISTRESS

13 MARCH 2022

On yet another stunning Sunday morning the cars trickled into Hooton reserve, Albany, lining up in anticipation for our run out to Leigh Sawmill Café. Good to see some new members joining us.

Allan as usual gave an enthusiastic welcome to everyone and to give out general notes. Most of us had our run sheets that Hugh and Fiona had obviously put a lot of work into, as there were helpful directional arrows accompanying each instruction, red light camera warnings, and highlighted in bold lettering, "Zaberri World" that we have on good advice serve the best real fruit ice cream. A run doesn't get much better than that.

Our run started well, as we filed out of the park, winding through the back lanes of Albany and Coatesville.

As we neared Riverhead, I think our anticipation of a cold ice cream became just too consuming, as a result we, and several cars following us, managed to drive right past our ice cream stop.

Much consternation ensued in our car. Amongst some vigorous discussion the run sheet was tossed to the floor as Helen scanned the area looking for, but not finding, our much-anticipated ice cream.

Straining at her seatbelt like a startled meerkat, Helen scanned the passing hedge rows. Our little breakaway group continued along the Riverhead Road with the slow realization that for today, we were not going to enjoy the delights of real fruit ice cream.

We scrambled to find the run sheet again and to try and pick up our next instruction. Yep, we were for the moment driving blind, but our little band of none the wiser strays seemed happy to follow. By this time, we had missed the designated turn and were heading to Kumeu.

The complete absence of Kumeu being mentioned on the run sheet was slightly

Northern / Auckland

Reports by Paul & Helen Topliss  
and Hugh & Julie Briggs

disconcerting, and clearly was a dead giveaway that we were lost!

It was becoming very obvious that our breakaway group were on an unplanned detour. Before we hit the main road, we needed to decide – do we continue and pick up the route later or turn back. By waving my arms I used international semaphore to convey that message, although my semaphore looked more like a one-man Mexican wave. The ladies however, seemed to know exactly what I meant as several hands popped up pointing the way forward, although one hand had their fingers pointing upwards?

Our group of lost souls forged on into the Sunday traffic. So now instead of heading towards Helensville we were going through it. We managed to pick up the run again and a few more MX-5 cars on SH16 at Kaukapakapa. The drive along SH16 is always a great drive with lots to see. Such as the magnificent sculptures at Gibbs farm. Great monoliths dominating the skyline. As we continue on we started to join up with some stragglers. Seems our detour didn't take us too far out of our way after all.

At the end of SH16 it was a quick drive through Wellsford and a reminder why we don't drive the main roads. At the top of the hill in Wellsford we turned off the main road into Matheson Road and onto Whangaripo Valley road. These roads were meant for the MX-5 and are a joy to drive, with soft rolling farmland encapsulating rural driving. And credit must again be given to Hugh and Fiona, as at this stage of the run sheet we were given two options. Option one, would take a very scenic drive





but has a section of unsealed road or the slightly longer route but fully sealed roads. We, along with the group we were with, took this second option. We were not disappointed. The road had some slightly exciting bends and every now and then we were treated to some stunning views over Omaha Bay. I think this area offers some of the best rural driving. As we drive into Matakana and head towards Leigh, we are now on the home run and the thought of a cool drink and a bite to eat beckons.

The Leigh Sawmill is a striking rustic building with lovely outside eating areas and a large indoor bar/restaurant. Like many restaurants and café, the Leigh Sawmill has also suffered some consequences from COVID in that they were a little short of staff. However, we all got served a drink and, I can only speak for Helen and I, our meals were lovely and it's somewhere I would be happy to go back to again.

– Paul and Helen Topliss



**It was a beautifully sunny day, which drew out 20 cars, including 2 newbies! (Including us, Hugh and Julie in the bright yellow NA). We met at the Hooton Reserve car park, with the run instructions passed out!**

It was a long (126kms) and interesting run set by Hugh and Fiona – taking us out through Riverhead and along the Kaipara Harbour coastline, through Wellsford and back to Leigh via a choice of routes near Pakiri (a smooth or dirt road) back to the end at the Sawmill café in Leigh!

We the newbies really enjoyed the variety of landscapes – views over the countryside and the coast. Along that coastal section of SH16, we passed the very impressive Sculpture Park owned by Alan Gibbs, with some vast sculptures on the ridges, visible for a long way. We found the longer smooth route after Pakiri, a real MX-5 road, with its twists and turns. This is where Julie comes into her element!

People arrived at Sawmill Cafe at various times, having taken different routes for a variety of reasons: some missing the street sign near Riverhead, requiring them to stick to SH16 for longer than designed; taking the different options; getting lost; stopping for ice creams at Zaberri World!

The cold drinks went down well as it was still hot. Given that they were very short staffed, we had to order our food at the tables when the waitress turned up. It was a great session, enjoyed by all. We were very surprised to find that Julie won the petrol voucher draw!! Thanks all.

– Hugh and Julie Briggs, 5NFLWR Sunflower!

# MARCH MEANDER (FIRST TIME SETTING A RUN)

I took annual leave from work one Friday, but the reason for taking it fell through. So, instead of cancelling it, I decided to go and scout out an MX-5 run.

I had a great time tootling around the South Waikato countryside and found an awesome route that I thought would make a great run. Gary and Maureen said “great route – we’d love you to do it” (or words to that effect), so the date of 20 March was set.

A bit of anxiety later: will the weather be good, especially for a picnic (luckily it was ok); hope the run’s not too long and it’s a bit windy in places (especially for passengers); what if the picnic area is busy (it’s a boat landing – could be cars and boat trailers everywhere); what if we lose some of the cars (as it’s happened a couple of times recently); etcetera. But, the day had come.

Everyone met at the “Superloos” in Cambridge – I hadn’t heard them called that before, so I hoped I was going to the right start point (Cambridge isn’t that big though, so I was sure I’d find them). Parking under the trees with the top down wasn’t a flash idea, especially on a windy morning when the acorns were ready to fall.

Everyone on my list turned up (yay, let’s get going). Hang on, we need to do a briefing first, and prize draw for fuel vouchers and honey (congrats to the winners). Quick briefing by me (I talk a bit fast when I’m talking to a crowd – hope they all got it) and we hit the road.

Started off through the busy metropolis of Cambridge town centre – crikey! Two roundabouts and I’ve lost everyone behind me already! (Take a breath – pull-over and let them catch up). Right off again (ah, that’s better – they’re flowing nicely behind me now). We take a gentle stroll off towards Te Awamutu. Nearly to the first turn-off and wow! Some clown in a Nissan 350Z comes screaming down the outside passing the chain of MX-5s (well, if you want to go mate then you bloody go!), so we

## Waikato / Hamilton

### Report and Photos by Dougal Mair (plus special report by Sabrina)

slow and pull over a bit and let the idiot pass.

Turn down Long Road and now the good roads start. Nice, first GPS checkpoint comes up – gulp! Pressed the wrong button – now I’ve lost the GPS route (see, you should’ve done a paper copy back-up). Hang on, here’s a good spot to pull over and stop (and “regroup the convoy”). Oh, we had a few stragglers who needed to catch up already (so, just as well I pushed the wrong button). Everyone good (GPS reset), so we’re on our way again.

Down Long Road, left onto Puhue Road, right onto Parawera Road, left onto Arapuni Road. Those were good MX-5 roads. Right onto Melstop Road, left onto Owairaka Valley Road (wait for it) and right onto Bayley Road. Bayley Road, then left along Ngaroma and onto Wairehi Road to Waipapa Road was absolutely awesome! Off Waipapa Road onto Pukewhau Road – whew, time for a breather at Arohena School (yay, everyone made it!).

Next up is a short, but MX-5 perfect, run to Arapuni Landing via Pukewhau and Mangere roads. A Kiwi tanker goes past just as we’re about to pull out. A few kms later he pulls into a farm. Right, time for more fun. 15 minutes later and we arrived at Arapuni Landing (no worries, plenty of room!).

After a lovely picnic lunch beside the river, it was time to head for home. I’d set an optional return home route, but luckily one of our group had been that way recently and advised there was a large stretch of new (very new) seal. Ok, can that option – across Arapuni Dam (this dam’s quite interesting – two one-way sections), through the settlement of Arapuni and a left onto Horahora Road. A gentle







meander alongside the Waikato River and we end up at State Highway 1 just south of the Tauranga turn-off. A quick good-bye and “thanks for coming” (and not getting lost) to all and everyone makes their own way home.

So, would I set a run again? Hell yeah! Great fun scouting it out beforehand and I thoroughly enjoyed the day (awesome being up front). I encourage everyone to have a turn at giving it a go! ●

**Hello MX5ers!! It's Sabrina here. Just to let you know I have recovered from the indignity which occurred at the AGM when I was told I was no longer a member of the MX5 Club of NZ. I am no longer sulking either.**

So as an outsider I am speaking to you from my safe little nest at Buckingham P(a)lace looking out the back door at the rain.

How lucky we were with the weather on Sunday 20 March for Dougal's run to Arapuni Landing. Fifteen of my friends and I had such a good day on the Waikato country roads, some of which my feet had never touched before. Who was that said

something about low flying? Wonderful countryside to enjoy while my mother driver took care of the cornering. Yes I have learned to live with it.

Sometimes I had to take over while she's behind the wheel taking frequent looks at the written instructions to make sure she was on the right road. But I have good mates who always stop at corners for old girls to catch up.

The lunch venue was perfect for all the drivers to congregate in a circle. A cool wind did not deter the appetites or the view. Several jetski operators on the lake below us provoked a lot of discussion, some of which was nearly complimentary. A good choice, Dougal, for us to have our picnic.

A choice of a homeward bound route was offered, with some of us taking the French Pass direction, and others taking the option of breaking the speed limit on SH1. Now, I didn't say that, did I? Without a doubt a lovely day out. Salutations to all my brother (and sister) MX-5ers until the next rally. Can't wait!! (Hope I'm invited!)

PS: I, Sabrina, now understand that it is the driver who is the member. ●



# MARCH RUN TO BEAUTIFUL ONEMANA

Our March MX-5 run was another picnic due to the beautiful weather and the uncertainty of covid within the group.

We had eight cars turn up at the Nourish Café in Te Puna.

I left my phone at home. Which had my covid pass and I thought I was going to have to sit on the footpath while the others enjoyed morning tea, but fortunately I had my appointment card in my purse and begged the waiter to let me in lol.

Leaving Nourish at 10.15 our destination Onemana. Ken's dog Sophie came for the ride and tail-end Charlie comprised Jo and Steve in the Hyundai van as they were going to pick up a washing machine at Whiritoa on the way back.

We stopped at Whangamata for a regroup. Unfortunately we had lost a couple of cars, possibly for a pit stop for Sophie. But all caught up by the time we were ready to turn into Onemana.

## Bay of Plenty / Tauranga

### Report and Photos by Karen Struiksma

A great time catching up for a natter at lunch. We met some folks from Auckland who were admiring the cars and were keen to purchase one. Hope we sold the club to them.

Before we headed home we went for a drive to the top of the hill at Onemana to look at the views out to sea.

Heading home everyone made their own way, Theo and I stopped at Bowentown and finished our thermos as well as doing a rekki for our ebike ride the following weekend. ●



# A BILLION DOLLAR HIGHWAY, A BUZZ OF MX-5S, AND A DOG NAMED OLLIE



Sunday 10th April, we gathered for a 10:00 am start from Manor Park at the bottom of “Haywards Hill”. The weather gods had played their part and the day was overcast calm and dry.

April’s drive was a week early because of Easter but emails indicated we could get a reasonable turnout. When we arrived however, we were greeted with the sight of a carpark absolutely bursting with MX-5s, 32 in total.

After a quick briefing, engines roared, and the roadsters with their tops down departed. We headed south on SH2 towards Wellington to the bottom of Ngauranga Gorge where the MX-5s joined Centennial Highway and headed north. We had planned to travel together in convoy, but 4 sets of traffic lights separated us into smaller groups and in those groups, we arrived at the start of the newest addition to State Highway 1.

First proposed over a century ago, decades in the planning and 7.5 years in construction, this section of motorway opened to the public 10 days ago. Originally scheduled for completion in April 2020, the opening had been postponed six times. Construction had been slowed or halted by one disaster after another. Finally, the new billion-dollar 27-kilometre length of highway known as “Transmission Gully” was open and 32 cars from the Kapiti Region MX5 Car Club were about to test it out.

Now on the Gully we travelled up behind Porirua to the Belmont Regional

## Kapiti Coast / Wellington

Report and Photos by  
Barbara and Les Jones

Park, passing the northern end of Takapu Road. Then we followed Duck Creek valley behind Cannons Creek to the back of Waitangirua before





of the crew couldn't get their NB started when it was time to leave. A few minutes of head scratching with occasional glances under the bonnet failed to resolve the problem. Finally, a bit of push and an expertly executed crash-start and the engine burst into life.

We were off heading north again. This time abandoning SH1 to meander along the backroads to Paraparaumu and Waikanae. Then a bit more SH1 interspersed with more back roads until we found ourselves on SH 57. Passing through Shannon, we were joined by Stan and Kate from Feilding in their shiny red NA.

### ***The Pauatahanui interchange.***

heading slightly to the right to pass behind the eastern end of Whitby. Here we descended steeply down to the Pauatahanui interchange before once again climbing.

Passing through the Battle Hill Park, then alongside Akatarawa Forest Park we sped, enjoying the open country, the hills, the farmland and forests before descending one last time just north of Paekakariki.

We pulled off SH1 for a brief stop at QE II Park to regroup. Well, it was meant to be a short, but one

From Shannon it was left, right, left, left and the MX-5s emerged onto SH1 again. A short trip south through Foxton, across the Whirokino Trestle and Manawatū River Bridge to Waitare Beach a small settlement on the coast just north of Levin. Here we found our destination for the day, "Ollies Bar and Eatery".

Named after the family dog, Ollies opened in December 2020. It replaced the Pipi Point establishment which had closed during the first lockdown. The new owners wanted to give the locals a "city quality bar and food with a rustic beach vibe". Ollies menu took inspiration from a



survey of residents and contains a delicious selection of items prepared from ingredients sourced locally.

Here we spent an hour or two enjoying Ollies' hospitality, and each other's company. Then as the afternoon began to slip by, we reluctantly drifted off to head home, everyone looking forward to the next drive in May. ●



Stan and Kate.



You can read more about Ollies in this article from the Horowhenua Chronicle written by Jennie Gutry and published in Nov 2020:

<https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/horowhenua-chronicle/20201119/281702617257193>

# EXPENSIVE HOUSES & EXPENSIVE MUSCLE CARS

## Mid-Week March North Shore Ramble

In the spirit of trying different things we put on a brief 55km run on a Wednesday night ahead of meeting up at a local pub. We have had a few longer runs of late and with petrol the price it is, here was another opportunity to have fun.

22 people and 12 cars turned up for what was a pleasant little jaunt – mostly at slow speeds – where we took participants down roads that they were hopefully not that familiar and with an idea to show some seriously nice real estate.

As ever we had my instruction sheets which I nowadays refer to as “just a guide” as there always seem to be a little surprise/mistake in there somewhere and our little convoy set off trying to play follow the leader (me).

Traffic was alright at 4pm by Auckland standards – only waited 4 phases to get through one set of lights – so where possible we pulled over and regrouped quite regularly. It doesn't take long for a group to spread out and that was the case for us.

We headed up some lovely roads marked “private” and in particular a beautiful road that heads to a new beachside estate called Weiti views. Basic sections here start at \$2m+ in this gated community and this is all owned by one wealthy Singaporean who built the 6km beautiful road into it. That road would be a fantastic place for a time trial and judging from the burnt rubber many spots have been used for late night drifting.

We called into Aeropark Drive next to North Shore airport where a number of homes have been built to accommodate the owners' planes/helicopters. Imagine that!

After cruising a couple more semi-gated communities which one also needs a lotto win to enter. There's a fantastic regional park and beach at Long Bay but we of course bypassed it and went to the pub. Looking out over a cold beverage at the 8k houses built there so far in the past 4 years – with 10k more to follow – it's easy to see why we have a building supplies crisis and that the roads will be more seriously clogged in the near future.

That aside the recipe seemed to work and we will try a few others around Auckland and see who's interested. It was great to see Danny and Grace travel over from Papakura and Grant and Leigh from the west to join in. Thanks for coming along everyone.

**Booty, Regional Coordinator**

## Northern Hampton Downs Run

We thought we would be smart and pull out one of our previous run notes for our Sunday run to Hampton Downs.

Luckily, after reading the sent out run notes, Murray Lee contacted us on the Friday night and advised there were road closures near Drury and our instructions would be incorrect. Leon and I decided to do the run the day before and indeed found road closures. The run notes were amended and ready to hand out on the Sunday.

There was a lot of activity at the BP Drury meet point. On arrival we found the Porsche Club had beaten us to our usual car park meeting point. The main car park was pretty tight with a lot of American muscle cars and we waited until their noisy departure before getting down to business.

We had 15 cars on the start line and we made short time of the safety brief. Amongst the usual line up was a red NA with a 5L V8 Falcon engine installed. I must get a ride in that someday. Brenda White won the \$40 fuel voucher draw.

We had nice weather and quickly exited the motorway out into the Drury rural roads, bypassed the road closures and out towards Ararimu and Miranda. We have travelled these roads many times before and it's always a nice drive. Across State Highway 2 up into the hills and out towards Mercer, again good winding roads for the MX-5s, then back on the motorway to the Hampton Downs turnoff.

We had advised Café Aoraki that we would be arriving with around 30 people for lunch, but unfortunately other groups who hadn't booked had arrived before us. The food cabinets were bare and the pickings slim. However, it was a good 123 km run and it was good to socialise with club members after the lockdowns. I noticed that the food cabinets had just been filled with freshly cooked pies as we were leaving. We stopped off at the Pokeno Bacon Shop on the way home and replenished our freezer with some goodies.

**Barry & Sue Potenger**



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10 APRIL 2022

Our Regional Coordinator had escaped. We needed a plan. Someone was going to have to step in and organise a run, but who?

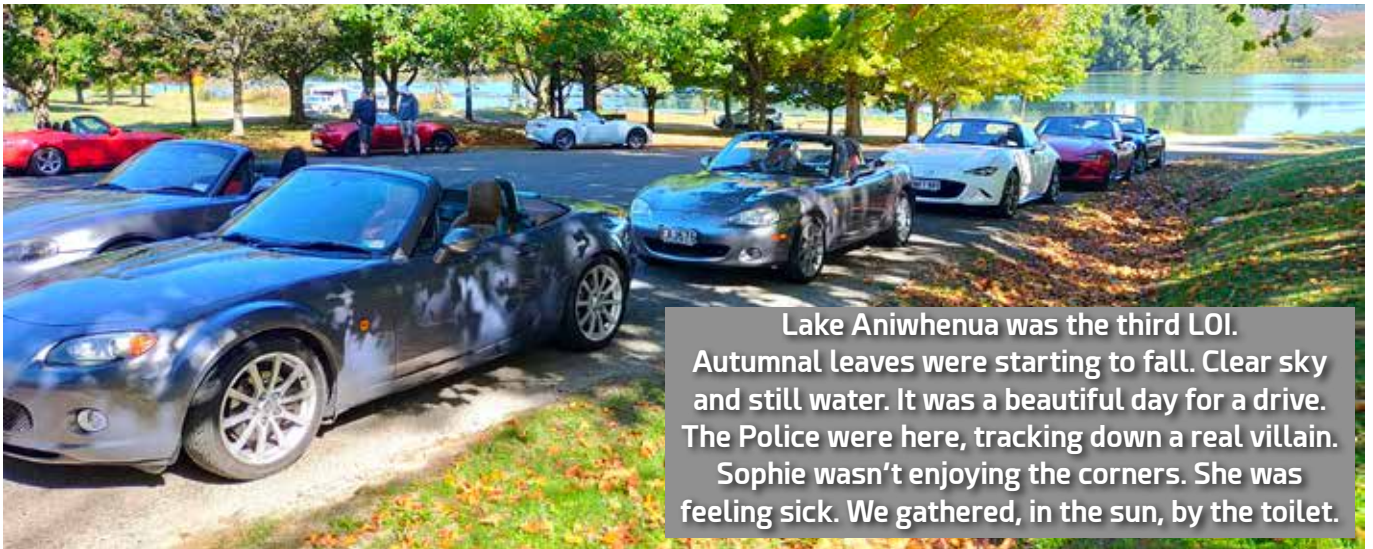
The suspects arrived at 'The Hub' Whakatane. This was the first Location of Interest (LOI). Ken

## Bay of Plenty / Tauranga

Blackman brought his lovely dog Sophie. This could prove useful for tracking duties, should we need them later. A toilet was nearby.



Matahina Dam was the second LOI. The sun was shining, but there was a chilly breeze from across the water. Down a gravel road, beside the lake, there was a grey corrugated iron shed. It looked cold and uninviting. It was another toilet.



Lake Aniwhenua was the third LOI. Autumnal leaves were starting to fall. Clear sky and still water. It was a beautiful day for a drive. The Police were here, tracking down a real villain. Sophie wasn't enjoying the corners. She was feeling sick. We gathered, in the sun, by the toilet.



Lake Ohakuri was the fourth LOI. It was nearly midday. The suspects were hungry. We unpacked our folding chairs and ate lunch by the lake, in the sun, and contemplated life. Sophie ate someone's sausage. In the distance, was another toilet.

Who put this run together? Why so many toilets? What's with the dog?

Last year, on an MX-5 run I organised, I merrily drove past toilets and DID NOT STOP. I was blissfully unaware occupants in following cars had crossed legs, toes, fingers, and eyes. I thought I'd

fix that problem with four toilet stops in three hours. So, it was me, with the cast iron bladder, I was the run organiser today. Mystery, a.k.a Tour de Toilet, solved. Sophie was only here to misdirect you, she's too lovely to be a villain. ●

Report and Photos by Ross Hollman