

club

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF NSW

TORQUE



Brass Monkey | Phillip Island | Orange Weekend

WINTER 2018

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club TORQUE

Winter Cover Competition

Thank you to everyone who entered the Winter Club Torque Cover Competition and congratulations to our cover star Andrew Robertson. To submit an entry for the SPRING edition of Club Torque, email a single high resolution image as a .jpeg file to Mel Keller at publications@mx5.com.au. Please include your full name, membership number and contact number. When composing your image, remember the magazine is A4 size with portrait orientation. Deadline for entries is Thursday 25th October.



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GRAHAM WITHERS



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President's Report

Keith Monaghan

The Winter Season

What a time for going topless! What an event for going topless! The Brass Monkey Run.

The Brass Monkey Run is an annual charity run for all roadsters and is an event we run for all roadster clubs. The rules are simple. You start before Dawn, drive from the starting point to the end point, for breakfast, with your roof down.

This year the temperature was almost tropical being just above zero. Over 128 people attended and we raise \$1640 for the charity CareFlight. Well done to all who attended.

I attended a number of events including a couple of 2-day events. The 2-day events are great as it allows you to go further afield and try out some roads that you might not have driven before. You also get to enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow club members in a different environment.

After a break, driver training is back and on a revamped Pheasant Wood (Marulan) Motor circuit. The new layout proved interesting and challenging and I believe a good improvement over the original layout.

NatMeet 2020 Venue has been booked. It is to be held at the Cypress Lakes Resort in the Hunter Valley. This is going to be a great event. April 2020 is the date - lock it into your calendars.

We have 2 major annual events coming.

These are Presidents Picnic and Concours.

4 Club Torque

This is a great event held at the historic Ebenezer Church on Saturday 22 September. Let's see if we can break the 200 people attending mark.

The AGM is to be held on Friday 19 October. This is where you get to hear where the club is heading over the next 12 months. Also, there will be the presentation of the tenure awards.

On a sad note, we have had the passing of Guy Coles. Guy was a very active member of our club and to honour the work he did for the Concours we will be looking to set up an award in his name.

Late final extra.

The Phillip Island 6 Hour Relay Regularity has been run and won by one of the teams from the Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW. Well done to the Panorama Mountain Men for winning the event from 50 teams including 5 other teams from our Club.

Spring is coming and the weather is getting warmer! A great time to put the top down, go for a drive and just enjoy your MX-5 for what it was designed for.

See you on the road.

2018 COMMITTEE

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CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

AS AT 04 AUGUST 2018

TOTAL
1072

NEW
MEMBERS
64

NEW MEMBERS

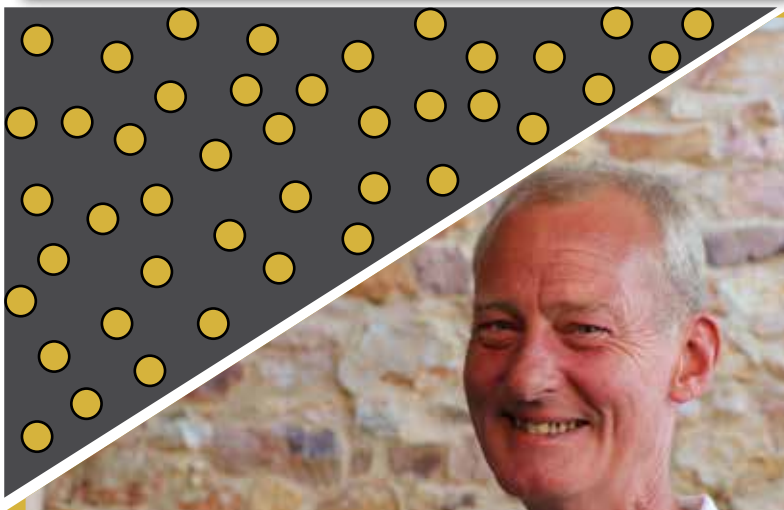
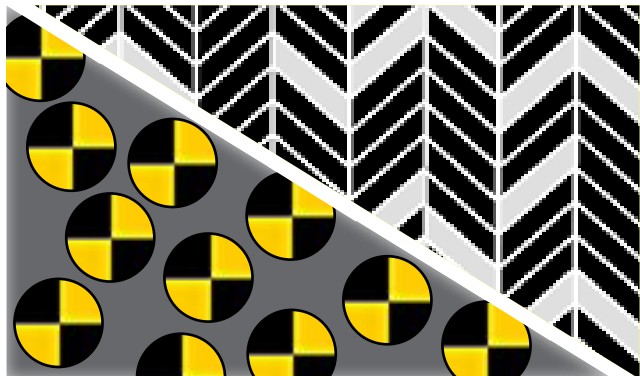
A warm welcome to the MX-5 Club of NSW.

New members are encouraged to contact their Chapter Convenor for local events and to visit our website - nsw.mx5.com.au for the full range of Club social, technical and sporting events.

Greg Ardill (Sydney)	Paul Guastini (Sydney)	Wendy Mulholland (Hunter)	Hans Soyke (Sydney)
Ross Barnwell (Hunter)	Anna Guastini (Sydney)	Michael Mullins (Illawarra)	Brendan Soyke (Sydney)
Sandra Brady (Hunter)	Ken Hardy (Sydney)	Jodie Mullins (Illawarra)	Yvonne Stokes (Hunter)
Cooper Bramston (Hunter)	Jason Harvey (Sydney)	Jake Murphy (Sydney)	Greg Tasker (Sydney)
Stuart Chia (Sydney)	Simon Ho (Sydney)	Steve Muscat (Hunter)	Ron Tollenaar (Canberra)
Michael Clarke (Canberra)	Rebecca Hughes (Canberra)	Barbara Muscat (Hunter)	Maree Tollenaar (Canberra)
Ross Cooper (Mid North Coast)	Stephanie Hyams (Sydney)	Kim Orchard (Illawarra)	Caleb Turner (Hunter)
Lyn Cooper (Mid North Coast)	Nigel Jones (Hunter)	Rhonda Partridge (Mid North Coast)	Steve van Waart (Sydney)
Jackson Copeman (Sydney)	David La (Sydney)	Les Paterson (Hunter)	Kirrily van Waart (Sydney)
Ash Cunningham (Hunter)	Jonathan Lagrange (Sydney)	Dean Sewell (Hunter)	Vanessa Whelan (Canberra)
David de Horne (Sydney)	Roerto Lagrange (Sydney)	Steve Shepherd (Illawarra)	Craig Whelan (Canberra)
Andrew Douglas (Sydney)	Nathan Martin (Sydney)	Janet Shepherd (Illawarra)	Andrew White (Sydney)
Jaxon Fraser (RPM)	Kerry Mcleish (Hunter)	Shahar Shmayovitch (Sydney)	Rob Withers (Canberra)
Trevor Gillett (Illawarra)	Paul Mills (Sydney)	Wendy Signorini (Canberra)	Graham Withers (Canberra)
Mary Gillett (Illawarra)	Ian Mudge (Hunter)	Basil Smith (Sydney)	Greg Workman (Hunter)
Ryan Gorton (Hunter)	Brian Mulholland (Hunter)	Kayla Smithers (Illawarra)	Simon Yoon (Sydney)

Vale

● GUY COLES



Guy joined the MX-5 Club of NSW in 2010. He served on the Committee as inaugural Convenor of Sydney Chapter from 2013 to 2015 and again from 2016 to 2017.

Guy played a major role in the annual President's Picnic - managing the Concours d'Elegance and developing software for judging and final tallying. He committed a great deal of time to assisting entrants not only to succeed in competition but to have fun on the day.

Guy was actively involved in many Club events and could always be relied upon to volunteer. He served as a scrutineer at Club motorkhanas and trackdays, contributed items for 'Club Torque' and hosted his famous Putty Road runs.

Guy was passionate about his MX-5 NC, 'Macey'. In Guy's style the car was always immaculate and regularly won show awards.

As Guy became more involved in Club motorsport, so too did 'Macey'. Progressive modifications not only enhanced her appearance but made her an outstanding track car. Driving 'Macey', he won 2nd place in his class in the 2017 CAMS NSW Supersprint Championship.

Guy was also enthusiastic about regularity relay competition and was the founder and manager of the Barge Racing Team. He was dedicated to advancing women in motorsport and was always on hand to offer advice and encouragement.

Guy passed away suddenly on 08 July. His friendly demeanour, generosity of spirit and sense of fun will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Rest In Peace

NEW MEMBERS

GRAHAM AND ROBERT WITHERS

Graham Withers and his son Robert have participated in some Targa events since acquiring an MX-5 SE. Graham and Robert participated in the Targa Tasmania saying, "As novices we had a fantastic & enjoyable event, 'punching above our weight on a beer budget', & gaining recognition from more experienced campaigners. We finished 6th overall in the



ANGRYMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

GT Sports Trophy Class which included two Lotus Exiges, an N1 R34 GTR, an Audi TTRS (APR), a Megane RS265, three WRX STIs and a 911 GT3. We were as high as 4th and had a best of 2nd on a single stage, being the fastest car on road tyres over 6 days & 2000 (600 competitive) kilometres. Megane RS265 WRX STI x 3 2015 911 GT3.

Our success was testament to six days of Rob's safe & sharp steering, clean lines, spot-on braking and his meticulous car preparation. All without time (and money) for a pre-event reconnaissance, a box (not a truck full) of spares, not to mention giving a 100 h.p. head start to the next least powerful car in Class". Welcome Graham and Robert.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The Illawarra Chapter celebrated it's 6th birthday with a cake at the monthly dinner meeting on June 9th. Pictured are past convenors Garry and Jan Gibson, Phil Reid and retiring convenor Kim Williams. PHOTO BRYAN SHEDDEN



Concours

MODI5D SHOW

People's Choice



Show & Shine

CHAPTER RUNS

BBQ LUNCH

MX-5 Club NSW

President's PICNIC

Join us for this year's largest gathering of MX-5s.

Saturday 22nd September 2018

Ebenezer Church

95 Coromandel Road, Ebenezer

MORNING TEA AND BBQ LUNCH FREE FOR

FINANCIAL MEMBERS

Visitors and Guests welcome \$10 entry fee or \$25 including lunch

Visit NSW.MX5.COM.AU/Events

to ● register for your free morning tea and lunch ● find
event maps and Chapter Run details ● enter your MX-5 for

Concours MODI5D SHOW Show & Shine

20
18

The MX-5
Club of NSW

ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING

Friday 19 October 2018
Willandra Room Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club
117 Ryedale Road, West Ryde
6.30pm

Visit nsw.mx5.com.au/events for further details.



— GREAT RENTAL RATES FOR MX-5 MATES —

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As a member of the MX-5 Club of NSW you will enjoy a discount of up to 30% on all rentals

Don't miss an opportunity to drive Melbourne and Victoria in an MX-5. To book your rental or to find out more information, visit our website

openroadroadsters.com.au

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CHASING THE *BRASS MONKEY*

The Brass Monkey may not be a race but
everyone who gives chase is a winner.

08 JULY WORDS MICHAEL SOULOS PHOTOS KEITH MONAGHAN

The alarm went off at 3.30am to remind me to get going for another Brass Monkey Run, having laid in bed for about half an hour with my eyes closed and mind in overdrive going over every conceivable scenario for the day. This year was my fifteenth chase after the Brass Monkey, my favourite one-day run in the Club's calendar, and I wanted everything to be perfect for the enjoyment of all.

I arrived at Eastern Creek Truck Lay-By in the dark at 5.25am after a necessary refuel and mandatory checking of tyre pressures before a run. A beautiful morning with no wind, a balmy 9° C temperature and overhead dark skies with the twinkle of stars penetrating the yellow glow of the lay-by lighting.

I was not the first to arrive at the M4 Service Centre this year having passed a dozen or so fives parked in McDonalds for an early heart starter. At the truck lay-by, a solitary bright & shiny grey NB was sitting adjacent to the traffic island before the exit road with a reflective yellow glow bouncing off its freshly polished paintwork. Graham & Julie Smith, rugged up in the cabin, were all smiles in anticipation of their fifth Chase of the Brass Monkey. I took some comfort in the fact that I would be first out onto the M4 on announcing the start of the chase.

Over the next half hour, MX-5s, a few Cobras, two MGAs, a yellow Fiat X1 and a black Ferrari 388 convertible arrived with people spending time chatting and watching the clock. The overhead lighting cast soft yellow tint over the truck lay-by as I mingled with the members all layered up with jackets, head coverings and scarves whilst those without gloves were regularly cupping their hands and bringing them to their mouths. I wondered what they be doing if the temperature was the usual 5°C boosted by a 2°C or 3°C wind chill blowing up from the south.

My phone alarm went off at 5.55am, I headed back to my car announcing that the start was imminent. Headlights were turning on and 60 or more engines burst into life. The ABC six o'clock news theme played on the radio, my left hand was raised to signal the start and as I looked back over my right shoulder to make sure that it was safe to go, the loud deep and throaty horn blast was heard above the sounds of the

exhausts.

I saw a late entry or start jumper, in the form of a big Mack truck and trailer, rolling down the far exit road sounding its horn, mount the traffic island separating the exit from the lay-by area and as calm as could be, take a wide left turn. Without care or conscience the truck proceeded over the island followed by the trailer with its tray getting ominously closer and closer to the side window and windscreen of a grey NB - with two occupants strapped in their safety belts unable to move as the truck and trailer rolled on.

The truck dragged the wheels of its trailer over the island in an ever decreasing arc causing its wheels to make contact with the front offside corner of the MX-5. The trailer wheels caught and dragged the MX-5 about two metres from where it was parked ripping off its front end and crushing the front quarter panel before reluctantly stopping with its trailer tray centimetres away from where Graham was buckled up for his safety and straining to put his head in Julie's lap. Happy to report the truck and the Smiths showed no sign of visible damage but not so for the once bright & shiny NB.

In a matter of seconds, the start went from an orderly procession of cars onto the M4 into pandemonium. Roadsters were backed up in 4 lines up to 20 cars deep between parked trucks as is the custom. Drivers at the back had no idea of what was going on at the head of the lay-by. As the clock passed the top of the hour, cars in three lines were underway and rolling forward causing those before them to move on towards the motorway. Cars in the fourth line where blocked by the grey NB and had nowhere to go.

I went over to the scene of the incident to see what I could do. I observed the damage up close, took some images and made sure Graham and Julie were uninjured. With cars on the move Robert Forsyth got the chase away to minimise the chaos developing at the start and any consequential damage to other cars and occupants. Not much I could in the aftermath of the incident, leaving that to Graham to look after, so I headed off on the M4 to chase the run more than the Brass Monkey that got underway 5 minutes earlier.

As I hit the M7 with a bunch of late starters I could see dozens of red MX-5

rear lights on the motorway ahead of me in chase of the Brass Monkey.

Dawn was breaking over the Hume Highway as I went past the M4/M7 Interchange with a line of MX-5s heading south. At the Frank Partridge Rest Stop the sound of my horn saw a familiar face behind the wheel of a grey NC enter the freeway, followed by a blue NB with racing stripes and driver wearing a beanie shaped like a red rooster. Accompanied by the grey NC and the rooster, I pushed on with a growing number of headlights in pursuit and a diminishing number of fellow enthusiasts in my group as we headed up towards the Southern Highlands. We caught Robert and other old hands from the Breakfast Club accompanied by a flash ND proudly sponsored by Blue Mountains Mazda and together we led the way to Goulburn.

We arrived at Goulburn at around 7.30am to find members from the Canberra Chapter waiting at the entry steps to the Goulburn Services Club. A quick phone call and shortly thereafter the doors opened to allow people to escape the chilly 10°C temperatures on the street. Over the next 20 minutes or more cars drove in to fill all the parking spaces in Market Street next to Belmore Park with cheery volunteers setting up the sign-in for breakfast and return runs upstairs.

The Club served up a hearty country breakfast for the 141 persons in attendance. We raised \$1,639.15 for our Club charity, CareFlight, from registration fees, cash donations and everyone's five dollar notes and coins on a round of heads and tails where the winner donated his \$25 reimbursement of his registration fee. As a Club we must always be thankful for the contributions of our volunteers and willingness of all to support its efforts and charity.

The Brass Monkey is once-a-year adventure in an MX-5. The event starts an hour before sunrise with the tops down under the stars to raise money for charity and more importantly to have some fun doing something out of the ordinary in the company of fellow enthusiasts with a good dose of the ridiculous.

Next year, the Brass Monkey rotation will take us to Bathurst with a drive over the Blue Mountains and across the Central Tablelands on the Great Western Highway.

MORE

MORE POWER, MORE TORQUE, MORE TECH



THE 2019 MX-5

The 2019 MX-5 features a more powerful SKYACTIV-G 2.0 litre petrol engine with improved output (from 118kW to 135kW at 7000rpm) and torque (up 5Nm to 205Nm). Driver comfort has been improved with the addition of a tilting and telescopic steering column. Technology upgrades include traffic sign recognition and low-speed automatic emergency braking system. Available as a Roadster or RF.

Orange Weekend

ALL CLUB

26 - 27 MAY WORDS AND PHOTOS **NORM BARKER**

A cold but clear day met us for the start of a run to Orange. With only two cars, it was an informal run and we decided on stops as a small group.

The route took us to the Hume Highway and then onto the Lachlan Valley Way to Boorowa. To our surprise it was market day so we had a wander around the markets and then coffee at the 'Superb Bakery'. On to Cowra Japanese Gardens and we had a good wander around these beautifully landscaped gardens. The decision was made to stop in Canowindra where we had a delightful lunch at "The Old Vic Inn".

Now refreshed, we continued on to Orange via Cargo, stopping at Lake Canobolas where we parked and crossed the dam wall (the lake was quite low indicating the lack of rain). At the other side of the lake we visited the old Pump House which had been restored by the local TAFE College Fitting and Machining apprentices. Back to the cars and into Orange via the Canobolas Rd and past Norm's parents' old house and the swimming pool.

We booked into the Mercure Motel behind the Ex-services Club. Very comfortable rooms and close to everything. The afternoon was free to walk around the city centre. The all chapters dinner at the Orange Ex-services Club was down on numbers from last year. However we enjoyed chatting and mixing with the other chapter members.

Sunday morning was another sunny start and after breakfast the two cars headed out of town. We drove past Bloomfield and the Base Hospital, out to Forest Reefs and across to Mandurama encountering a mob of cattle on the way. The roads were nice and windy and the scenery spectacular. At Mandurama we turned towards Cowra where we stopped for a coffee and watched the hologram exhibition telling the story of the Cowra Breakout. We fuelled the cars for the run home and turned towards Young. At Wombat we took the back road to Harden/Murrumburrah and stooped for lunch at the Terracotta Cafe (an Irish Cafe) for a very enjoyable lunch. All fed and watered we made our way back to Canberra having had a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.



NSW SuperSprint CHAMPIONSHIPS



Sydney Motorsport Park
North Circuit



ROUND 3
17 June

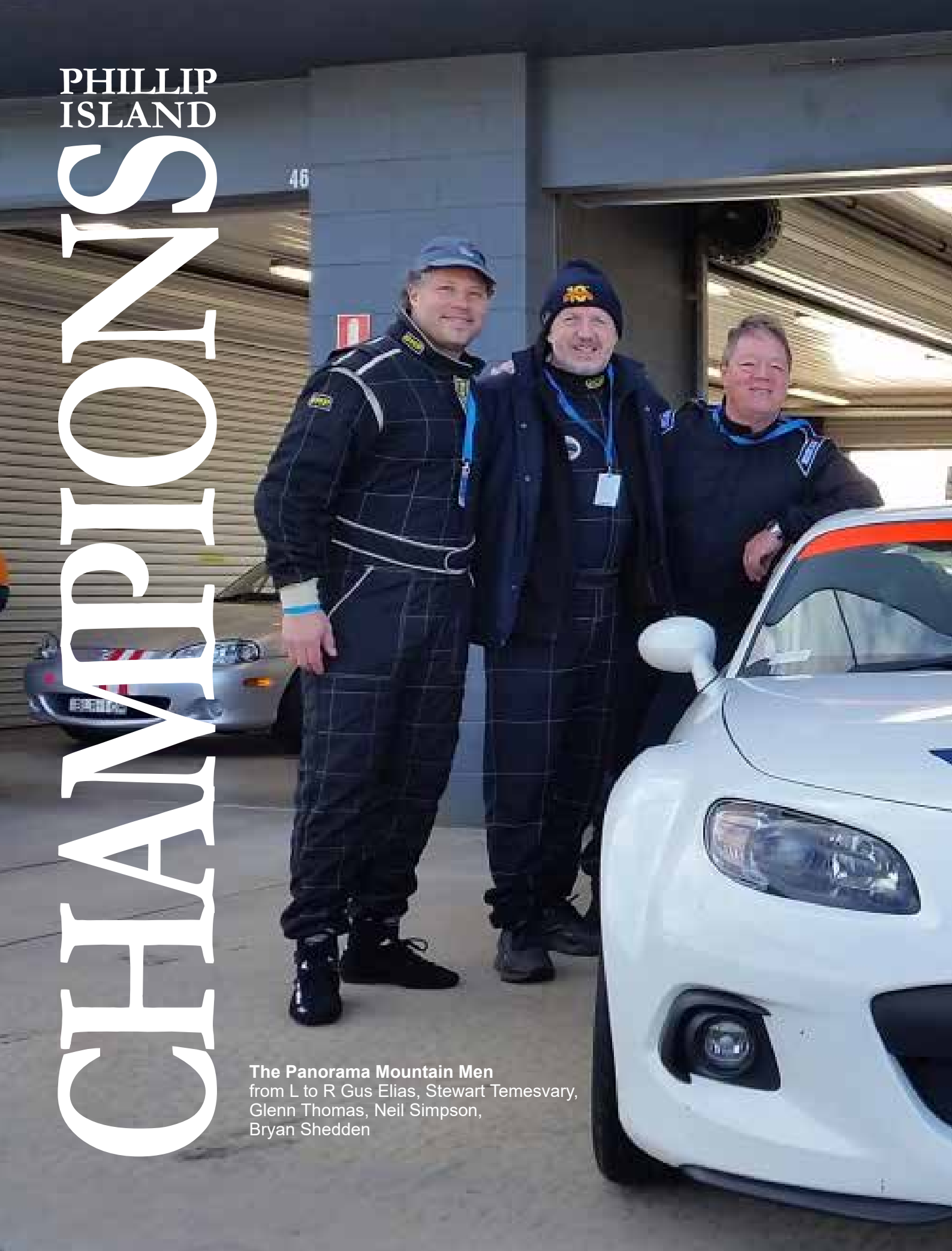


Photos by Rob Wilkins

PHILLIP
ISLAND

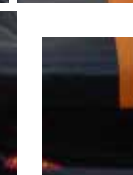
CHAMPIONS

The Panorama Mountain Men
from L to R Gus Elias, Stewart Temesvary,
Glenn Thomas, Neil Simpson,
Bryan Shedden



45







phillip island 6^{hour}

28-29 JULY WORDS **BRYAN SHEDDEN** PHOTOS **CATHERINE COMBES**
KEITH MONAGHAN GREG UNGER GUS ELIAS JOHN KARAYANNIS

It's been a very long time coming but we've finally done it: the Panorama Mountain Men claimed the win at the 2018 Phillip Island 6 Hour Regularity Relay. Since our club fielded it's first team at this prestigious L2S event in 2011, we've had three second places (2012, 2015, 2016). But never the top step.

Held over the weekend of 28/29 July 2018, the MX-5 Club of NSW maximised it's chances by entering a record six teams in the capacity of 50 teams. Stewart Temesvary coordinated all the entries as usual, and did a superb job. I was the Team Manager of the Panorama Mountain Men in addition to being the fourth driver so practice time was limited

to 30 minutes. Stewart, Gus and Glenn had all previously been on teams that had finished second at this event, and together, we won the 2017 Alfa 12 Hour at Winton. With a strong team and a desire to win, the guys spent countless hours debating strategies. However, we were also very short of pit crew support, and there was no rest while the event was underway.

Practice on Saturday was held in glorious weather, with clear blue skies and no wind to speak of. All four drivers in TEAMX5 NB had never driven at Phillip Island before. They took full advantage of the "newbies" session at the start, with our experienced drivers guiding them from the passenger seat.

Practice day went smoothly for all our teams with one notable exception. John Karayannis returned to the pits with a leaking power steering hose, which was quickly repaired with the help of a few MX-5ers. Our regularity times were nominated and we returned to our various lodgings for dinner and a night's rest. Evenings spent together with our teams is always a great highlight of these events.

The weather forecast for Sunday was terrible, with almost guaranteed rain and a thunderstorm. We were permitted to alter our nominated times, which prompted nervous conversations and heated debate. As regularity driving to a wet laptime is next to impossible, I *con't.*

decided that our team would stick with our nominated times for a dry track to ensure we'd not break out and ruin our chances. It worked in our favour as the rain didn't arrive until mid afternoon.

Three of our teams were effectively out of contention before the 6 Hour started: TEAMX5 NB, TEAMX5 Hunter and Grumpy Old Racers. They carried over penalties from the Saturday for flag infringements. One hour in, Just Regular Guys were in third place, Panorama Mountain Men were 9th and Barge Racing were 24th. By the two hour mark, Panorama Mountain Men had climbed to first thanks to a healthy haul of bonus laps, while Just Regular Guys were fourth. Barge Racing struggled to score bonuses and incurred a penalty lap, which left them 26th (finished 22nd).

At the half way point, Panorama Mountain Men were in a tight battle with a neighbouring team of Mustangs, and Just Regular Guys were third. Unfortunately, "The Guys" were soon after penalised for leaving a driver circulating one lap too many. It was a tiny mistake that ultimately and cruelly cost them second place - they were 5th at the end.

Meanwhile, luck was on the side of Panorama Mountain Men whose nearest rivals fell away as they received penalties. Our battle with the Mustangs ended at the 4 hour mark with them getting a penalty. Rain arrived at the 4.5 hour mark, and the PIARC-Scarcella team were knocked out by a few more penalties. With one hour left, we had an unassailable lead and only a mistake would lose it for us. Gus finished it off for us with an easy cruise to the end, keeping a very close eye out for yellow flags. Job done!

All that was left was the presentation and it was brilliant to receive the trophies from legendary driver John Bowe.

Team 41 – Grumpy Old Racers managed by Ed Cory. Drivers: Phil Ashton, Ian Combes, David Lawler, Keith Monaghan. Pit Crew: Gaynor Lawler, Roger Palfreyman

Team 42 – Barge Racing managed by Jean Cook. Drivers: David Johnson, Sean Byers, Greg Unger, Neil Tribe. Pit Crew: Ross Bridge, Phil Reid, Hannah

Team 43 – TEAMX5 Hunter managed by Graham Fletcher. Drivers Peter Barnwell, Kim Jacobs, Paul Nudd, James Burke. Pit Crew: Barbara Nudd

Team 44 – TEAMX5 NB managed by Mike Hicks. Drivers: Phil Donnelley, Alex Tribe, Jon Fox, Steph Katz. Pit Crew: Cathy Combes, Michael Tarrant

Team 45 – Panorama Mountain Men managed by Bryan Shedden. Drivers: Gus Elias, Stewart Temesvary, Glenn Thomas, Bryan Shedden. Pit Crew: Neil Simpson

Team 46 – Just Regular Guys managed by Heather Koorey. Drivers: Matt Tarrant, John Karayannis, Dan Szwaj, Peter Mohacsi. Pit Crew: Grant Knowles, Phillip Carey, Gai Tarrant

Bright Weekend

CANBERRA

04 MAY WORDS **KEN KEELING**
PHOTOS **KEN KEELING SHELLEY OWEN**

A dreary, drizzly morning greeted us as we headed toward the rendezvous, which did not bode well for the run to Bright. Fortunately, the rain eased as we ran south to through the Snowy Mountains. The coffee stop at Cabramurra saw our cars clustered together, as if for warmth, on the Bistro forecourt, in fog and a very cold breeze. One person remarked it was "Just like a Scottish summer's day" - and the reason he long ago migrated to Australia.

From Cabramurra, we dropped down to Tumut Pond then climbed over the ridges to again drop down into the Tooma Valley. This section provided the most interesting driving of the weekend - the curtain of tiny snowflakes turned into squishy "sago snow" and, as we rounded a bend, the road was covered in snow. This unexpected hazard provided some interesting moments, but fortunately no one came to grief.

With the snow behind us and rain abating, we had an enjoyable run through the high-country scenery to lunch at Corryong. The threat of further rain led us to drop the afternoon section through the Granya State Park. After Tallangatta, we travelled down the eastern side of the Kiewa Valley before cutting across to drive the very enjoyable Happy Valley Road to join the Great Alpine Road for the final run into Bright. Deletion of the Granya sector allowed us to arrive with time to spare to freshen up before heading to "the Brewery" - for food.

Saturday morning saw some enjoying the street markets while others joined me going via the interesting back road to Stanley and on to Beechworth for breakfast. Mid-morning we split up with half heading for Yackandandah and the rest heading back to Bright via some nice road to the Ovens Valley where glorious autumn colours demanded photos.

Everyone arrived back in Bright in time for the Autumn Festival Parade after which we individually explored open gardens and art galleries. The Star Hotel, within easy walking distance, proved to be a good venue for our evening gathering.

Sunday was a free morning before a run to lunch at the Red Stag Deer Farm. The menu of "fish, flesh and fowl" proved popular and of course included venison pie. After lunch, the group broke up for the return to Bright, some studying the fauna at the Red Stag with others exploring new roads and wineries on the way back to Bright.



Sunday dawned cool and misty for our home run and we departed Bright for a chilly drive over the Tawonga Gap to the Kiewa Valley and northwards to join the Hume Highway before coffee at Holbrook. Diverting to Rosewood, we took the interesting Green Hills forest roads to Wondalga and then on to Tumut for lunch. The afternoon's route was again via rural roads less-travelled from Tumut to Brungle and on

to cross the Murrumbidgee and re-join the Hume at Coolac before stopping at Jugiong.

At Jugiong we made our farewells and dispersed to independently make our way home. Notwithstanding two over 9-hour days (each 500+ kilometres) to and from Bright, this was another successful Canberra MX-5ers weekend away.



HUNTER

06 MAY PHOTOS ROB WILKINS

Gosford Classic Car Museum

After meeting up at Pie In The Sky, Brian Bracken from the Hunter Chapter, led our band of MX-5s along the scenic route to Gosford Classic Car Museum. The museum houses over 400 fabulous vehicles including many fine convertibles. Alas, there are no MX-5s in the collection so we created our own display with six beautiful, black MX-5s arranged side by side in the car park.



Caves Beach

RPM

06 MAY WORDS **STEVE ECCLESTON**
PHOTOS **GILLIAN FLETCHER VICKI LEGGE**

Sunday 06 May was a fantastic autumn day and just perfect for a run up the coast in the world's best and most popular sports car, the Mazda MX-5. Fifteen cars set off from Mt Colah's McDonalds for the day's run which was organised and led by Sandra, Graham, John and Sharon.

The group set off up the Old Pacific Highway for a coffee break at Yarramalong. On the way we passed about 20 or so Ferraris at the Old Berowra Weighbridge. Unfortunately they couldn't catch us so we missed out seeing and hearing some famous and expensive machinery. The drive through the country was notable for the number of motorbikes that passed us and the number of push bikes that we passed. A short break at Yarramalong then off to the Crackneck Lookout at Shelley Beach. The run through Yarramalong Valley was very scenic with some very impressive properties.

We arrived at the lookout via about 20 Central Coast roundabouts, these are fun in an MX-5 but after about 12 or so you are looking forward to something different. The Shelley Beach Lookout didn't disappoint, it has a sensational view north up the coastline. The day was perfect and the colour of the sea and the reefs at the bottom of the cliffs were stunning. The only disappointment was John's lame joke he told to a select few victims within ear shot about a loan shark. Don't ask him to repeat it.

After Shelley Beach we had a pleasant drive up Old Pacific Highway to Caves Beach for lunch at Caves Beach Hotel which was very impressive and has a great position overlooking the beach. The dining area is very tasteful with both indoor and outdoor seating. A noisy, pleasant lunch was enjoyed by all and was finished off by a very pleasant stroll along the beach to visit the caves as you would expect.

Another great RPM club run in several locations that the writer has not been to before. It never ceases to amaze me how many fantastic places there are to drive to and that someone in the Club knows about. Finally just a car thing. There were 15 cars today which included every model from the NA to the RF including a Fiat Abarth which didn't break down. How could it, as it is made by Mazda!

Thanks to Sharon and John, Sandra and Graham for organising such a great run.



Casino Hinterland Run

MID NORTH COAST

19 - 20 MAY WORDS WAYNE LANG PHOTOS WAYNE and CATHY LANG

On our 2nd annual Casino Hinterland Run, 8 cars and 13 members were initially led from Port Macquarie by Graham Rochester to the "Puma Service Centre" at Kempsey. We all said our hellos, checked out a couple of Bentleys that were parked nearby, and it was time to set off. We made our way up the Pacific Highway to the Bellingen turnoff and the Waterfall Way, and travelled to "The Old Butter Factory" at Bellingen where we were met by Coffs residents Rob and Rhonda Partridge. A nice breakfast was had, along with some chat before it was time to set off up to Dorrigo. From there, we headed east through North Dorrigo to the intersection on Armidale Road, then right through Tyngham, Dundurrabin, Billy's Creek via "The Corkscrew", Nymboida, Blaxlands Creek, Coutts Crossing and Grafton. Next stop was Lawrence Pub for lunch, a beer and some more chin wagging. After a rather tasty lunch, it was back to our cars for the final part of the trip for this particular day to Casino, where we could unpack, settle into our rooms and prepare for dinner at the "Casino RSM". I trust everyone else enjoyed their meals as much as we did.

The following morning after an in-house breakfast, which was a bit of a hit and miss affair, we made the first of our poker draws and then set off on the run proper, to take in the sights and smells of the beautiful hinterland. We made the short drive up the highway to Kyogle, then turning left toward Uki, where some slow drivers did their best to ruin the twisty section, so we stopped for our 2nd poker draw. Some roadworks separated some of our group between Uki and Tyalgum, and unfortunately we lost Peter and Jill along the way.

We phoned them and they said that they'd meet us at the "Hinze Dam" for lunch. In the meantime, the rest of us wandered up the main street of Tyalgum to the General Store for morning tea. We had a good look around the store while we waited for our beverages to arrive. I'd spoken to a couple of bikers earlier who told me that the boys in blue were doing random stops down the road at Chillingham.

So off we went. Crossing the bridge at Chillingham brought us face to face with the road block where I felt certain we'd



be pulled over. They did so with a chap in front of us and politely let our small group through. Once arriving at the complex, we were greeted by our lost friends in adventure, Peter and Jill.

Luckily, there was a break in the waiting list and we were invited to order our lunch straight away, when we initially thought we'd be waiting for an hour or more. Meanwhile, we did the 3rd of our poker draws, and waited patiently for our respective lunches to arrive. Our lunches were very well received, with everybody indicating they enjoyed them. Following lunch, we went for a short walk along the dam wall while we let our food settle.

We were then back on the road to the short drive to the "Beechmont" turn-off. A beautiful section of twisties, hampered slightly by some roadworks, but all in all, a great drive. Continuing on to Canungra and Beaudesert, we turned left onto the Mount Lindesay Highway for around 25kms to Innisplain Road, where we would turn off of our drive through "The Risk".

A great little drive even though some of it's very narrow. It has plenty of twists and turns and some stunning scenery. We called into "Andrew Drynan Park" for a break and our final poker draw. While we were gathered around taking in the views, Robert pulled a set of bagpipes out of his boot and started playing "Scotland The Brave". It was absolutely perfect. All of the cars lined up in a row, the rolling hills surrounding us and the pipes echoing through the valley, it was almost surreal. I didn't even know Rob played. It was definitely a highlight of the weekend.

We then continued through some more awesome twisty roads until finally reaching the highway again, then it was a nicely paced drive back to Kyogle and Casino about an hour before our scheduled dinner at the "Tatts Hotel".

At 7:00pm, we headed off for the block or so walk around to the pub, where we ordered some wine and found our reserved table for our dinner and presentation.

After dinner we said a few words about our late friend Mike Walkden-Brown as we had decided to dedicate the run to his memory.

Then it was time for our little presentation to the winners of the "Casino Hinterland Run and Poker Draw". Our winners this year, with a "7, 8, 9, 10, J Straight" were Coffs Harbour couple, Robert and his lovely wife Rhonda. We continued to get to know one another a little better over some alcoholic beverages and sharing some yarns and many laughs until the publican told us the pub was now closed, and politely asked us to leave. Seeing most of us were heading in different directions the next day, we decided to officially end the run before we left the pub.

The following morning some had left quite early as they had alternate destinations or plans having covered over 1100 kilometres over three days. Thank you to all who participated in our Casino hinterland poker run.



H.A.R.S. Aviation Museum

CANBERRA

23 MAY WORDS **WAL** and **JANE HICK**
PHOTOS **NORM BARKER**

On a beautiful, foggy Wednesday morning seven MX-5s from the Canberra chapter headed off from Queanbeyan for Bungendore where they were joined by another three cars, making a group of 10 cars and 16 people heading for the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society museum at Albion Park.

The fog cleared and a magnificent blue sky appeared for the rest of the day. As we made our way to Tarago, the autumn scenery was colourful and the road empty. On to Nerriga and the road turned into a perfect MX-5 trip to Nowra. Morning tea stop was at McDonalds South Nowra where the temperature was quite warm and it was time to dispense with our coats and scarves. As soon as coffee and eats were consumed, we continued up the Princes Highway, through Nowra, past Berry and Kiama, with spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean, and into the H.A.R.S. museum. Jane had organised lunch at the museum cafeteria and food was excellent, and with people's meals pre-ordered the service was very efficient.

Tour guides had been arranged and we broke into two groups, with our ninety minute tour taking two and a half hours but the guides were most knowledgeable and happy to answer many questions. There is an extensive range of aircraft, ranging from Tiger Moth to F1-11, a Qantas 747, Dakota, Catalina and lots more (even a impounded light plane which had belonged to drug couriers who landed illegally at the airport). The \$15 per head for the tour was certainly great value and all the whole organisation is run by volunteers.

We left later than planned and had a brisk trip up the Macquarie Pass and some of our number had coffee and pies at Robertson before heading home. A great mid- week outing. We can certainly recommend this as a good day out.



June Club Trackday

MOTORSPORT

03 JUNE PHOTOS ROB WILKINS



**GAYNOR
LAWLER**

Normally Aspirated
MX-5 Race Car 1998
1:14.497



**JENETTE
McNEILLY**

Normally Aspirated
MX-5 Race Car 1990
1:22.722



**AIMEE
KOVACIC**

KIA Procede GT
2015
1:17.252



**LESA
BUNN**

Road Registered
Modified NC 2006
1:12.912

**KIM
JACOBS**

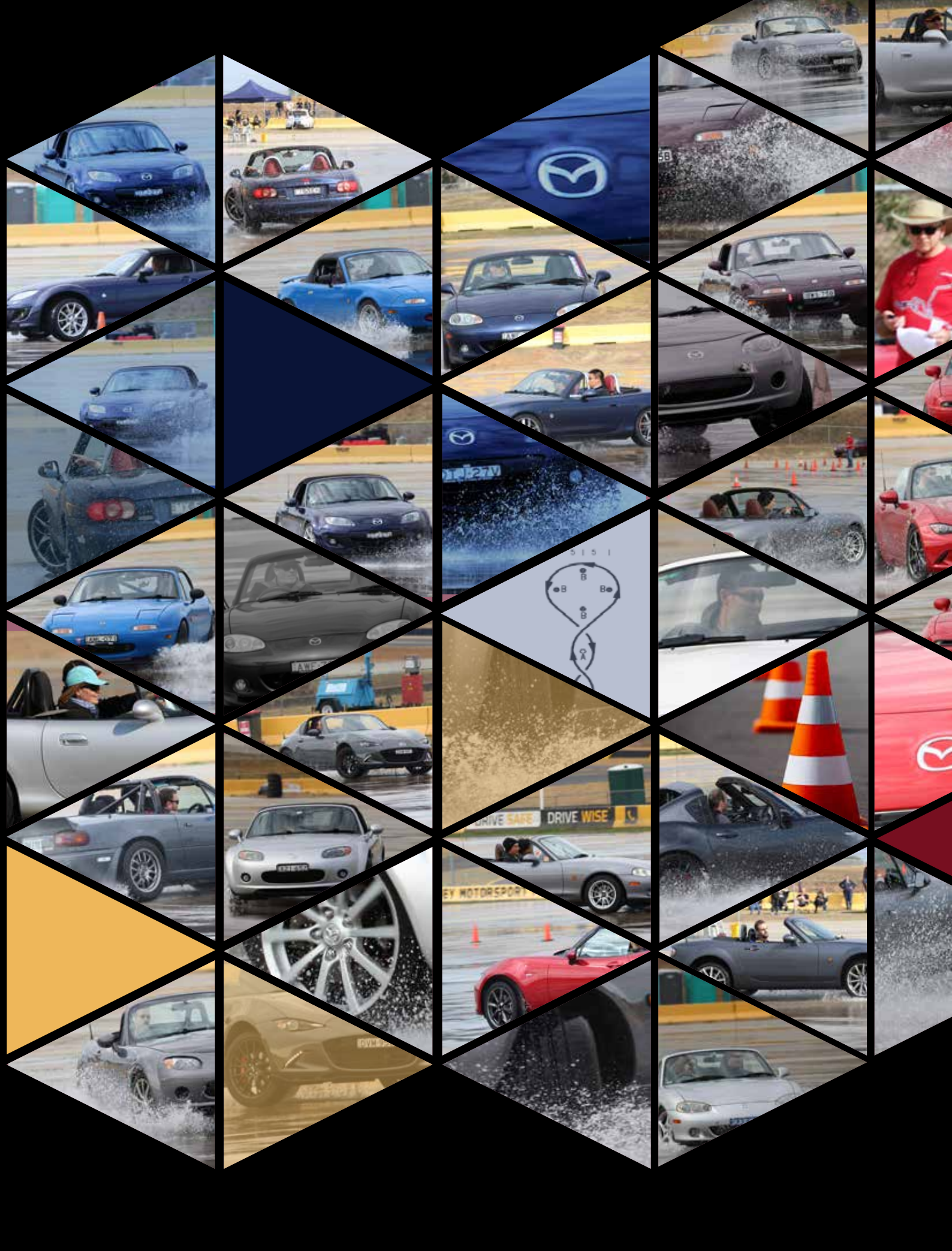
Road Registered
Modified NC 2005
1:16.392

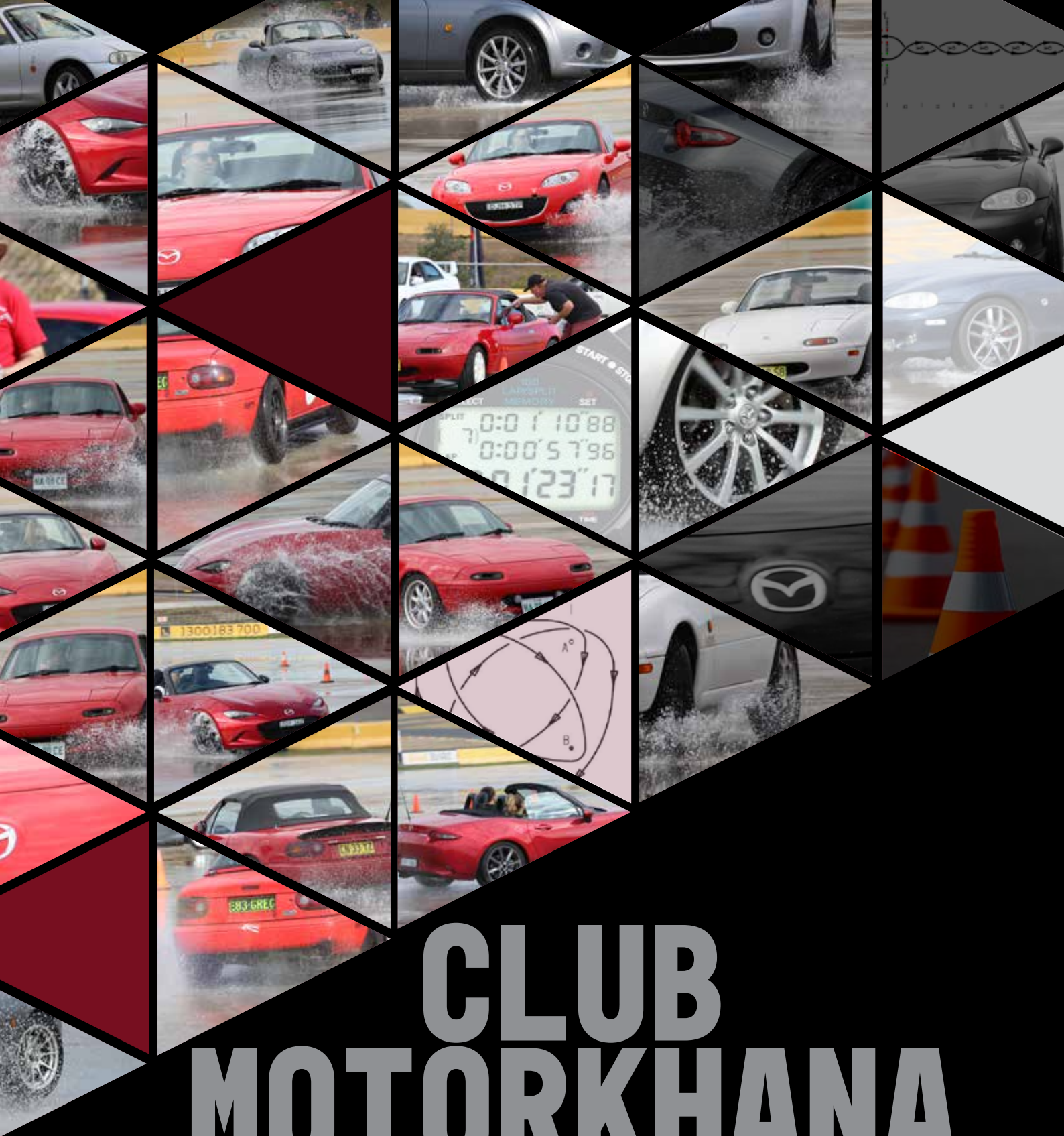


**MARIA
MARTIN**

Road Registered
MX-5 1999
1:26.585







CLUB MOTORKHANA

28 JULY

SYDNEY MOTORSPORT PARK SKID PAN

PHOTOS ROB WILKINS

Harrington Pub Run

MID NORTH COAST

5 JUNE WORDS JOHN HANSEN
PHOTOS GRAHAM ROCHESTER



The day started out with fine weather and a relatively clear sky. This was a pleasant surprise after the previous days of heavy rain. The weather forecast predicted a 90% chance of rain however there was no sign of it in the morning. Six of us gathered at the Donut for the midweek run. Peter with his trusty unwashed NB, Pam and Allan in their gleaming Red ND, Graham had avoided washing his car by acquiring a beautiful blue BMW MX-5, and Judith and John in their Galaxy Grey NC.

Peter was the run leader and we followed him down the highway to Coopernook with tops down and heaters turned up. At Coopernook we turned right onto the familiar Lansdowne Road to Taree. The road from Coopernook to Taree has been travelled many times on our runs going south and still evokes a smile, except when going over some of the potholes that we could almost give names to. Our run today took us through the middle of Taree so those of us who hadn't been down for a while could have a look at some of the revamped CBD area. After the township it was a leisurely run out to Wingham for morning tea at the 'Bent on Food Café' in the Main Street. The food was delicious and highly recommended to anyone contemplating a run to Wingham.

From Wingham, we made our way back to Taree to cross on the old road bridge over the Manning river and out to the Pacific Highway. For some us it had been years since traversing the bridge which was the route of the old highway before the by-pass. Back on the highway we turned north and drove to the turn off to Harrington. Each time we go to Harrington it appears that more building has taken place. The drive is still scenic as it winds its way between water inlets. At the Irish Pub two coaches had booked out the main restaurant. However the lounge area with fire was set aside for other lunches. We had a table which offered glimpses of the Manning River and with the sun streaming in plus a roaring fire meant that it was all very warm and cosy.

Lunch was tasty and we lingered and talked in the comfortable surroundings. Afterwards there was the obligatory photo opportunity before our group dispersed to make our own way home. All in all, a very leisurely and relaxing run. The weather was on the turn and the clouds gathered ominously on the way home. We were still traveling with the top down and just at the turn off to Port Macquarie started to see drops of rain on the windscreen. It is true that as long as the car travels more than 60 kph the rain doesn't enter. However, as we slowed for the roundabout at the donut the rain started to be felt. Fortunately there was ample opportunity to pull over and take advantage of just pressing a button whilst the roof unfolded over us whilst we smugly watched the rain become heavier from the comfort of our seats!

Thanks to Graham, Club convener, and Peter for being run leader for a most enjoyable day out in our MX-5s.

Binalong Car Museum

CANBERRA

12 NOVEMBER WORDS IAN BOTTCHER
PHOTOS PETER LE



Saturday 9 June saw 17 MX-5s loaded with 27 people leave the ACT heading for the Binalong Motor Museum. While the outside temperature was relatively mild, there had been overnight rain which persisted into the morning (albeit lightly), meaning roofs up unfortunately.

Morning tea stop was enjoyed at the very inviting Rollonin Café Bowning where many scones with the mandatory jam and cream fillings were devoured by members. The slab hut café was built to replicate local buildings of the 1800s. Hospitality plus can be assured at the Rollonin Café should you be travelling down the Hume Highway and looking for some respite.

Then on to historic Binalong where Gary Keyvar from the RPM Chapter (Bilpin) joined the party. In the 1860's Ben Hall's gang of bushrangers was active in the district. A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson attended school at Binalong, before leaving at the

age of 10 years for Sydney Grammar School. The railway arrived in 1876 after which Binalong became a departure point for gold shipments from Lambing Flat.

Binalong Motor Museum is a very interesting eclectic collection of motor vehicles of all shapes, sizes and sources. Members enjoyed seeing many vehicles from a Bugatti being restored, Ferraris, a Bolwell, Nortons, Ducatis, a London Cab through to a 1908 MAB chain driven roadster, now powered by a 27 litre 1918 Packard/Liberty V12 aero engine. Members could not help but imagine how this engine would look and go in their MX-5.

With the rain abated and the sun trying to peep through, members enjoyed a picnic lunch under the rustic veranda of the museum, with views over the scenic grounds. After many interesting conversations, everyone found their own way back home. A very relaxed and enjoyable day.

ILLAWARRA



Museum of Fire

16 JUNE WORDS **ROB WILKINS**
PHOTOS **ROB WILKINS** **MARIA BAGLEY**



There are more direct routes to get to the Museum of Fire in Penrith but it wouldn't have been as enjoyable as via Heathcote, Fairy Meadow and Mulgoa with fellow club members. It was perfect weather for top-down motoring. Kim and Tanya did an awesome job

organising, leading and directing us. Wally is great on the tongs too. The museum was brought to life as we were educated in the roles of firefighters and their ever-changing equipment. There was so much to learn and see.

Biplanes Beatty and Back

HUNTER

10 JUNE WORDS JOHN MORGAN
PHOTOS PETER HILKMANN

The heading for this trip, Biplanes, Beatty and Back to the Beginning, sounded quite intriguing and attracted a good turn-out of 25 people in 14 cars. The weather wasn't particularly great and we set off in light intermittent showers. All but one participant elected to go tops-up but David Ho had a theory that if you keep above about 60 kph you don't get all that wet.

Our journey took us through interesting back roads which were surprisingly free from long-weekend traffic and we arrived at our morning tea venue at Luskintyre Airfield pretty much on schedule. Here the hardworking volunteers who look after the place and maintain the aircraft provided us with warming cups of tea and coffee. A delicious variety of homemade slices and cookies were also provided by Jen Boyko and Wendy Parsonage.

After morning tea we were given a tour of two of the hangar buildings which housed a number of interesting historical airplanes. Our host regularly pilots some of the Tiger Moths and he had an incredible knowledge of not only these aeroplanes but also of other types that were stored there. His

presentation was quite unique and had many of us in stitches. Of course a photo shoot including one of the Tiger Moths and some of our cars in front of the main hangar was necessary and then it was time to move on.

From here, still in dismal wet conditions, we continued onto our lunch stop traversing roads that quite a few people, myself included, admitted to never having been on before. The Beatty Hotel at East Gresford welcomed us with its cosy fire and we all settled in for a well earned lunch and a great chance to have a chat.

After lunch it was time for goodbyes as some of the group needed to return home by diverse routes. Some of us completed the Back to the Beginning, passing our morning's starting point en-route to dessert at Cessnock Maccas. And just for the record, David admitted that he was just a bit soggy after going topless all day.

We defeated the weather yet again proving you don't necessarily need a sunny day to enjoy an MX-5 outing. Thanks Wendy, Jen and George for organising another fabulous Hunter Chapter day out.





Picton Go Karts

ILLAWARRA

23 JUNE WORDS **BRENDAN BARR**
PHOTOS **BRENDA SHEPPARD**

Over the past few years of karting events I have developed a scientific formula that enables the calculation of one's winning possibilities - not that anyone in the club would compete against each other, it's all about fun and posting a personal best.

My original formula on the day was 'driver weight times kart power times driver age, divided by driver ability times score out of 10 for pre-race sledging' equals the chance of first place.

Once on the track my formula appeared to be confirmed as Alex (my sledge of 'you're just a lightweight' appeared to have little effect) sailed by me up the back straight, however I felt that gravity would be to my advantage on the downhill to the first hairpin, so I stayed glued to his tail. Gravity certainly played its part as Alex found out that lesser weight may mean less down force when braking hard, and he executed a perfect 720 degree spin, and despite my desperate avoidance

manoeuvres, I managed to T – bone his kart rather forcefully, thereby re-arranging my teeth and spine.

To my dismay, Bryan Hicks, a man who may exceed my thrifty 50 kg, decided to trash my theory by lapping me a few times, whilst driving with one hand on the wheel and using the other to take photos with his camera. Perhaps it was the stinging sledges directed my way about leprechauns. I will have to refine my formula.

Really, it was a fabulous sunny day, reasonably warm, and even attracted a fair spectator field. There were spins a plenty and claims of underpowered karts that stymie lap times. Our wonderful organiser, Jeffrey Rowe presented trophies to Kristian for fastest average time (a young, fit man with a witty sledge, what more can I say!) and Mark for fastest average lap for over 55. (Must have had a powerful kart!) Jeffrey then ensured that an enjoyable race event was followed by a tasty meal at Picton Bowling Club.

Crescent Head to Arakoon

MID NORTH COAST

16 JUNE WORDS JUDITH and JOHN HANSEN
PHOTOS GRAHAM ROCHESTER



The 'Rivermark Cafe' on Hastings River Drive was the starting point for the Club's Saturday 16 car run to Trial Bay, with a stop at the famous Barnett's Bakery on the way. The weather was perfect tops-down MX-5 conditions, with brilliant sunlight cloudless skies and just enough chill in the air to make sure you knew you were alive.

The group was comprised of Graham, the convenor with his sparkling blue BMW-MX-5, Peter, Run Leader with his trusty NB, Pam and Allan in their gleaming red ND, Judith and John with their freshly washed NC and new members Susan and John from Forster Tuncurry in their newly acquired green NB.

Tops down and heaters up, we went along Hastings River drive to turn onto the Old Pacific Highway and onto the recently completed twin carriage way Pacific Highway up to the Kempsey turn off. Although this was the motorway, with a strict speed limit of 110 kph, the drive itself is quite scenic with plenty of greenery to be seen along the way.

It did not take long to arrive at the Kempsey turn off and then the right-hand turn onto the road to Crescent Head. Not much traffic on this road today, so it was a pleasant drive to Barnett's Bakery. As usual the choice of what to eat was difficult as this was supposed to be a morning tea stop and were booked in for lunch only about an hour away!

We then took the back road to Trial Bay. The drive along the river bank, although familiar, still looked magnificent with the sun reflecting off the river looking like sparkling diamonds. The road being relatively smooth has sections with considerable

potholes and dips in the surface. Pride certainly comes before a fall. No sooner had I congratulated myself on avoiding the large depressions in the road surface when "clang", I had hit the same pothole which had been hit on previous occasions! The noise with the roof down was considerable, but no damage done.

Graham took over run leader duties at Jerseyville to lead us on the road to Arakoon and eventually Trial Bay. We followed the headland through the caravan park and some of us discovered the limited ground clearance that the MX-5 has over the speed bumps. Away from the bumps, we turned onto a part of the road that took us to a magnificent view over the ocean. Graham told us that he had organized a surprise for us and to look out to sea. We wondered what it was; and then saw several whales in the middle-distance cavorting as whales do. Not only were the whales putting on a display; the local dolphins also came out to show off, rolling over and over through the small waves.

Once the show and obligatory photo op were over, it was time for lunch. Sally and Warren had driven their well-prepared NC down from Coffs Harbour to join us. We lingered over lunch at the Trial Bay Kiosk, in fact we had to be asked to leave. The talk continued in the car park and then it was time to say farewell and to make our separate ways home. Thanks once again to Peter, the run leader, and of course Graham the convenor for organizing the display of the whales and dolphins!



Midweek Picnic Run

MID NORTH COAST

20 JULY WORDS JUDITH HANSEN
PHOTOS GRAHAM ROCHESTER

The Mid North Coast Chapter's first picnic run took place on Tuesday 17 July, a beautiful winter's day. We assembled at the Donut/BP Service Centre, a place which has grown so much it is almost possible to miss each other. Perhaps we could designate Oliver's as our assembly point. Peter the run leader in his NB, Pam and Allen in their gleaming red ND, Greg with his immaculate still very new grey RF which attracted envious glances, Margaret and Murray with their Copper Red NC, Judith and John in their Galaxy Grey NC and Graham the convenor in his Blue BMW-MX-5.

We had a clear smooth run to the 'River Café' at Netherby B&B which had been opened especially for our visit. The grounds had been spruced up with interesting metal sculptures which enhanced the riverside setting. The scones were very popular and some of us enjoyed an unusual, but tasty, version of a bacon and egg muffin. Greg left the run here.

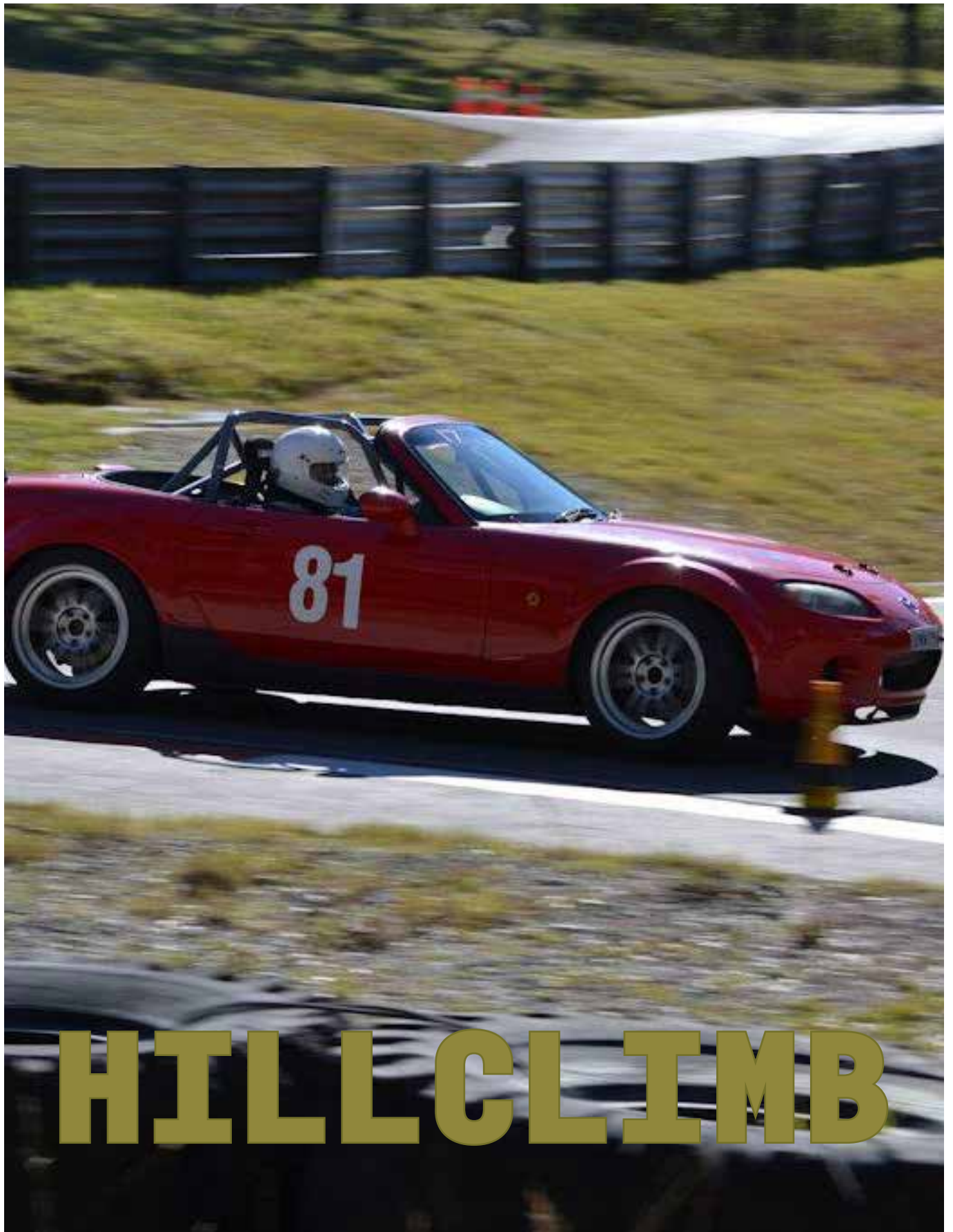
Then off to Bellbrook, the road was in good condition and there was little traffic. This allowed spirited driving and a chance to experience the true MX feeling. The road to Bellbrook consists in the main, of stretches of a straight road connected by sweeping high speed bends until a fairly twisty windy section as the road drops to the river, complete with a 35 kph corner to make things interesting! Although the road goes to Armadale, after Bellbrook the road turns to dirt and gravel which is unfriendly to an MX-5.

Peter led us down to the river and we began to unload our boots. What an experience! Watching Pam and Allen take from their boot, 1 folding table, 2 folding chairs, enough small cooler bags and other assorted bags, containing enough food for the whole group was a mind-boggling experience. (Pam has been feeding 3 growing young adults and was 'in the zone'). Just as entertaining was watching it all be reloaded. If the local Mazda dealer ever has enquiries about the boot capacity of the Mazda MX-5 ND they only need ask for a demonstration.

Our picnic spot was peaceful, and the river was calm and relaxing. It was fascinating to see how far the river had flooded. The tree trunks were covered with mud that resembled termites' nests.

We all dined well and had to be persuaded to eat some of the inaugural picnic gateau, provided by Graham. Reluctantly we left the peace and tranquility and returned to the real world.





Hillclimbing (or not as the case may be)

MOTORSPORT

14 JULY WORDS JON MILLARD
PHOTOS JASON GREGORY JON MILLARD

Well, it just had to happen did it not? Having corresponded with the delightful Chris Cameron regarding regalia to match my car (I think it's that way round) and getting insanely jealous of her and her partner John Purcell's skiing in the beautiful Italian Dolomites, we just had to meet did we not?

Well, meet we did. Besides, it was a great excuse to venture north from Canberra to the much-loved and hospitable Hunter. (And they vote like Canberrans too — just ask a certain previous Prime Miniature — sorry, I mean Prime Minister.)

The occasion in question was the weekend of the Club Hillclimb Round 2 at the MG Club's Ringwood Park, the event taking place on 14 July. I had planned to leave the National Capital early on the Friday morning, for a mid-afternoon arrival at Bishop's Bridge but, once again proving that Murphy was an incurable optimist, actually left at midday. (I cannot tell a lie, it was my wife's fault.)

Consequently, my Novocastrian navigational nightmare (as well as trying to get from the M7 to the M1 in Sydney) ended up being nocturnal as well, entailing John's having to retrieve and pilot me from Maitland. (How I got there is still beyond my comprehension!)

My late arrival precluded taking up John's generous offer to fit the fire

extinguisher to my sweet silver seraph to allow her to compete the next day. As it turned out however, this was fortuitous.

The Hillclimb day dawned cold but fine. A total of 29 cars took part, including 22 MX-5s. The rings-in included an extraordinarily quick Cobra and a Clubman, along with some high-performance sedans. Opportunities abounded for improved times (and more fun) with nine rounds taking place.

Unable to compete, I offered myself as an official and Andrew Digney, the Clerk of Course, along with Phil Mayo and Josh Allen, offered me the job of Starter. How's that for inter-Chapter hospitality? The Starter not only has a great view of the track, but gets to meet all of the competitors — on very favourable terms.

Other officials were just as welcoming. Jean Cook took me for a 'track inspection' run, to show me just how much my car and I will enjoy competing at the next one. Thank you also to Diann Miller for offering me her usual gig for the day as Starter.

Hanging around the Scrutineering Bay beforehand, not only allowed me the opportunity of watching Phil, Josh, Chris and John at work but gave me an insight as to what I can get away with next time. And they even turn on tucker for officials. What do you mean there is no such thing as a free lunch?

Turning to competitors, what a





pleasure it was to meet previously-formed friends and new ones. Hunter Convener Barry Luttrell had shown me his exquisitely restored and helluva quick NA at Marulan and it was a joy to see her in action. Meeting Helen Green was, again, an experience as unfortunately brief as it was a pleasure. She is certainly a very quick competitor around such a tortuous track as this, but remarkably self-deprecating of her own performance. I simply cannot imagine why! Speaking with Mike DeMaio was similarly pleasurable — see my piece on the Marulan Track Day — and only slightly diminished by the absence of his charming fiancé Magdalena.

Which brings me to the remainder of the weekend. Chris and John's giving me a berth, and allowing me the run of their kitchen, with its wonderful gas range — so that I could cook dinner for us as a very small 'thank you' — further added to the pleasure, as did the tour around Newcastle on Sunday.

Birds and dogs at their home and seeing hump-back whales near-inshore constituted a zoological buzz for this botanist! I love the Hunter estuary and adjacent coastline and have many fond memories of viewing them from both sides of the HW mark.

And wasn't it nice that the two NBs and the ND could have a nice little conversation in their garage. Just look at them, red white and blue. (The writer, being of Irish descent, might have preferred green, white and orange, but you can't have everything.)

Speaking of my hosts' cars, one is Chris's pretty ND and the other an NB, which will be John's introduction to the track. Regarding the latter, the Editor has kindly described my silver sweetheart as 'fastidiously finished'. Well, John's car is in the same boat.

She was indeed fastidiously finished, but fell upon hard times mechanically. Happily acquired by an engineer, John has been restoring her mechanical condition to that which she deserves. And it couldn't have happened to a nicer car (or a nicer owner). John's fire extinguisher and sorting out the fitting of the car's tonneau cover, before my departure south on Monday, further highlighted my admiration of the engineering skills which accompanied John and Chris's hospitality.

That departure was via a 'lovely' morning coffee meeting at Poppy's Nursery café (plants again thank Zark) at Gateshead. Barry was accompanied by his wife Jenny and I got to meet many other members of this warm and welcoming Chapter.

This included sharing a complementary kayak craze with Malcolm Lewis. And John's computer-driven cartography saved my getting as hopelessly lost heading home as I did arriving on Friday evening. I look forward to my next visit to the Hunter, when one of my loves (one of the automotive ones that is) can have a more participative role as well.



MX-5 CUP Report

Round 2 of the MX-5 Cup was the series first round at SMSP GP Circuit. Terry and the MRA team did their best to manage such a big event at a new track however a number of incidents meant we fell short of race time and ran late. I am sure they will work things out for the next GP round being round 6 of our series in September. Apologies that we had no presentation following the racing but given the late finish I thought we could deal with this later and I will have the trophies available at the next round.

Todd Herring won all three races taking out the Open Forced Induction Class and the overall round winner. In the process he set a new MX-5 Lap record with a blistering 1:39.8433. Awesome work Todd. We had no competitors in Open NA Class this round.

Ben Cathcart had a great meet finishing with a full swag of 24 points to take out Class A - finishing top of class in all three

races. Ben was 2nd outright for the round pipped after count back to qualifying times.

Class B was taken out buy Lou lezzi despite taking an early shower.

Paul Nudd took out Class C accumulating 22 points to finish 3rd outright. Great work Paul.

The results for the shortened 3 lap Trophy race were :

1st Todd Herring
2nd Verne Johnson
3rd Ian Caldwell

A big thank you to Cameron Macarthur and Blue Mountains Mazda for their continued support of our series.

MX5
CUP

POINT SCORE

Competitor		Car #	RND1	RND2	RND 3	RND 4	RND 5	RND 6	Total	Deduct Rnd	Overall Points	Place
Smith	Kerry	5	23	17	23	20			83	0	83	1
McFayden	Stuart	98	24	15	20	22			81	0	81	2
Cathcart	Ben	151	20	24	16	20			80	0	80	3
Nudd	Paul	15	19	22	10	23			74	0	74	4
Herring	Todd	77	21	24	0	24			69	0	69	5
Johnson	Verne	91	24	21	0	11			56	0	56	6
Johnson	Matthew	12	5	19	0	22			46	0	46	7
Deckers	Daniel	57	0	0	24	20			44	0	44	8
Lezzi	Lou	74	22	7	0	12			41	0	41	9
Tasker	Greg	14	0	0	17	23			40	0	40	10
Combes	Ian	171	19	19	0	0			38	0	38	11
Fowler	Richard	86	21	15	0	0			36	0	36	12
Caldwell	Ian	288	12	18	0	0			30	0	30	13
Herring	Tim	78	15	5	0	0			20	0	20	14
Halls	Neil	25	0	7	10	0			17	0	17	15
Gibbs	Scotty	55	16	0	0	0			16	0	16	16
Brennan	Curran	15	14	0	0	0			14	0	14	17
Hall	Michael	75	0	13	0	0			13	0	13	18
Elias	Gustavo	30	0	0	13	0			13	0	13	19
Johnson	David	48	0	10	0	0			10	0	10	20
Chiswick	Dennis	83	0	0	10	0			10	0	10	21
Stone	David	76	7	0	0	0			7	0	7	22

Sapphire Coast Weekend

ILLAWARRA

18 - 19 JULY WORDS AND PHOTOS
BOB AND LINDA DOWNING

On a beautiful Saturday morning we left home in Jervis Bay for a ride up through Kangaroo Valley to meet the rest of the group at Marulan Services. We had time to grab a coffee before the other 16 cars who had travelled up from Albion Park arrived. Very quickly, we were on the road again from Marulan through Bungonia and on to Goulburn, with a quick regroup before joining the Hume and then Federal Highways heading towards our morning tea stop at Lerida Winery in Collector. As it was the last weekend of the NSW school holidays and the snow was beckoning for many people the further we travelled the more the highway traffic increased.

Onwards towards Queanbeyan where we managed to navigate through the town, despite Saturday morning shoppers and traffic, only a couple of tail enders were separated from the main group for a short while. Soon after leaving Queanbeyan, we joined the Monaro Highway headed through very dry and brown countryside for Cooma. We were booked in for lunch at the Cooma Hotel, the meals were typical country fare – huge, in fact too big for some people.

After lunch we headed off to Bombala, where after a quick toilet stop it was off along the challenging Mount Darragh road to Wyndham and Pambula. Here, I found myself amongst

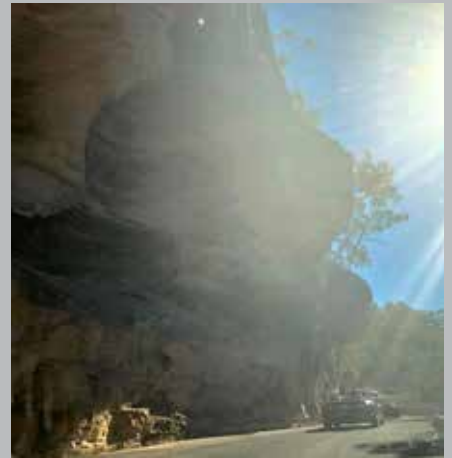
the pack leaders and it made for an exciting ride down the mountain, then into Merimbula for the night. A quick and at times controversial trivia game organised by trip leaders Peter and Jill along with drinks and nibbles before everyone headed for another big dinner at the RSL and then an early night for everyone.

Sunday morning saw the group photo and farewells to some members who ventured elsewhere for the day; before the main group headed off towards Tathra, Bermagui and Central Tilba for a morning tea stop. A final run up through Narooma, Moruya and Batemans Bay saw the finish of the run in Ulladulla where most joined together for a Thai lunch before departing for home.

This was our first trip with the Club in our newly acquired and first MX-5; after previously being used only for main road driving and country roads closer to home, it taught me a lot about the handling and limits of the car on other winding country roads. Would we go again on this sort of adventure – most definitely, it's only a pity that the next couple take place while we are away.

Thanks Peter and Jill Feutrill for organising this great weekend away and for the companionship of the occupants of the other 16 cars.







Thank you for your support

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