

club

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

TORQUE



NATMEET XIII | Easter 6 Hour | Alpine 5 Star

AUTUMN 2018

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club TORQUE

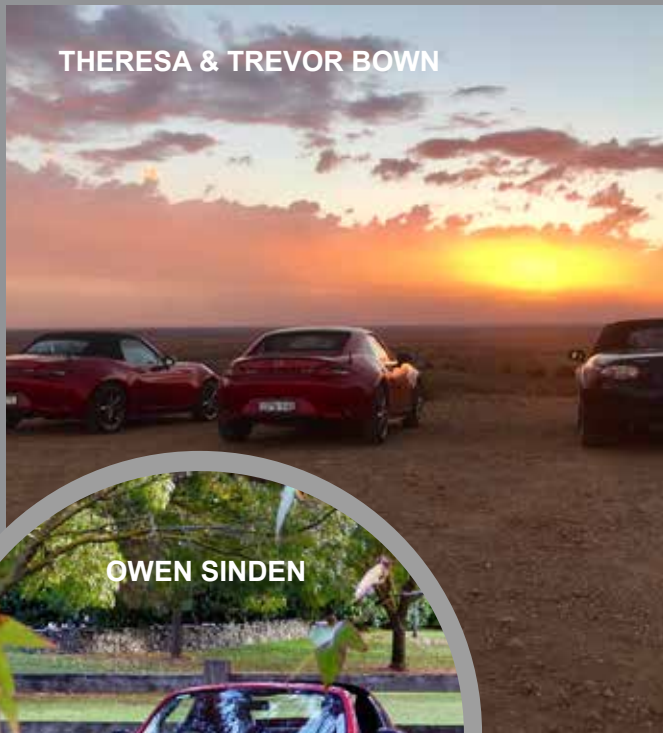
Autumn Cover Competition

Thank you to everyone who entered the third Club Torque Cover Competition and congratulations to our cover star Owen Sinden. To submit an entry for the WINTER 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, 19 July 2018.

GRAHAM FLETCHER



THERESA & TREVOR BOWN



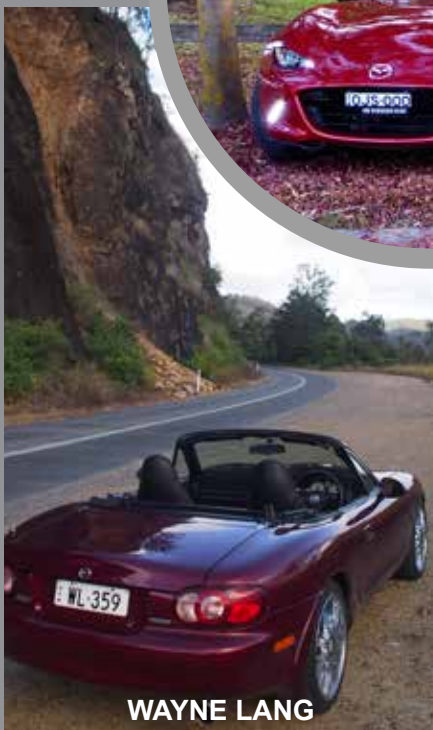
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President's Report

Keith Monaghan

It has been NatMeet time. NatMeet 2018 has just been run. Unfortunately I was unable to attend but I have been told it was a very enjoyable event. Congratulations to the South Australia Club for their hard work in hosting this great event.

NatMeet 2020 is coming. This is to be hosted by the NSW club. I would like to thank Bryan & Fiona Shedden for volunteering to take the lead in setting up this event. Helping them will be Jill & Peter Feutrill, who were involved with committee for the Canberra NatMeet, George & Jen Boyko and Elaine & David Gazzard. The Hunter has been decided on for the area to hold the event. Accommodation and dates have been short listed. The team have started to work on details for this major event. As they move forward they will be asking for volunteers to help with the various planned events. If you can help it would be greatly appreciated.

The interstate challenge was run at Winton this year and was hosted by the Victorian club. The weather played a major part in the day, at one point you could have competed in a boat. I would like to congratulate the Victorians on their win and thank them for their hospitality. We will see what we can do next year.

As always, the club is very active in motorsport with us competing in a number of state events. Good luck to all that compete. As a club we had 9 teams compete in the NSWRR 6 Hour Relay Regularity and finishing as high as 5th and Kim Jacobs taking out an individual Trophy. Well done to all that competed and helped.

The club is investigating what is needed to set up the club plate system as the 1989 NA becomes eligible in 2019. Andrew Digney put his hand up to investigate this.

Glenn Thomas has announced he will be retiring from the position of Vice President and the board at the AGM this year. We are looking for a person that would be interested in filling this position and become a part of the team that directs this club and keeps it going forward. Please contact me for further information.

I am pleased to see the club running a large number of events across all the chapters. I attended a number of these and as always had a great time. Well done to all the volunteers that organise and run these events. If it wasn't for our volunteers this club would not exist. If you have any ideas for a run or event, please contact your chapter convenor and work with them to get the event up and running.

It might be Winter coming, but it is a great time to get the car out, lower the roof and go for a run in the crisp Winter sun. Going topless in Winter is a bit chilly but great. See you on the road.

2018 COMMITTEE

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PO Box 402, Beecroft NSW 2119
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CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

AS AT 07 MAY 2018

TOTAL
1042

NEW
MEMBERS
52

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.

Jarrold Adam (Sydney)
Rosemary Aldred (Illawarra)
Tony Aldred (Illawarra)
Tony Arundell (Sydney)
Jesse Attwell (Sydney)
John Baillie (Hunter)
Andrew Ballard (RPM)
Merla Bramston (Hunter)
Helen Breitsameter (Illawarra)
Matthew Byrnes (Hunter)
Anthony Carter (Sydney)
Paul Ciacchi (Sydney)
Tonia Ciacchi (Sydney)
Steve Connolly (Sydney)
Joseph Dannaher (Sydney)
Natalie Davies (Sydney)
Steven Davis (Canberra)

Bob Downing (Illawarra)
Linda Downing (Illawarra)
Ethan Edwards (Hunter)
Ben Fulwood (Sydney)
Matthew Fulwood (Sydney)
Sylvia Goverd (RPM)
Adam Grono (RPM)
Janine Hannan (Sydney)
Will Harris (Sydney)
Stephen Kay (RPM)
Csaba Kollanyi (RPM)
Rachel Kollanyi (RPM)
John Little (Mid North Coast)
Susan Little (Mid North Coast)
Christopher Lowry (Sydney)
Eusen Lu (Sydney)
Sarah Lugay (Sydney)

Karen Lynch (Hunter)
Phillip McFarlane (Canberra)
Yannick Merlet (Canberra)
Maryanne Nicholas (Canberra)
Rod Nicholas (Canberra)
Rochelle Prattley (Canberra)
David Raghavan (Sydney)
Stephanie Raghavan (Sydney)
Ada Risi-Organ (Illawarra)
Kadir Sarun (Sydney)
Sam Todorovic (Illawarra)
Carlos Van Den Braak (Sydney)
Inma Vassar (RPM)
James Vassar (RPM)
Brendan Walker (Hunter)
Alexander Webber (Hunter)
Graeme White (Canberra)
Megan White (Canberra)

MEMBER NEWS



An MX-5 Spring Wedding

An MX-5 Wedding in Canberra. It was a Friday afternoon 17 November 2017 and a special day for Phil and Lauren. The Canberra Chapter provided 6 MX-5s to join Phil in his red NA to take the Bridal party from the Canberra Hyatt to the National Gallery for photos. It had been a wet afternoon but the rain had stopped and the road cleared by the time the wedding party emerged from the Hotel. So it was tops down and a convoy for the short trip to the National Gallery. The seven cars looked great against the Lake and everyone enjoyed the trip. After the photos the convoy returned everyone to the Hotel. Phil and Lauren were very happy and pleased with the cars as part of their day. We all wish them a very enjoyable and happy life together. NORM BARKER



A Personnel Question

Glenn Thomas, our current Vice President, has tendered his resignation from the role and the committee. Glenn joined the committee in 2010 and held a number of roles, including President, and we thank Glenn for his support of the club.

We are looking for a new Vice President. *If you would like to:*

- Assist the President generally and assume the duties of the President or other officers if they are not available or unable to perform any or all of their duties,
- Facilitate venue bookings for Committee Meetings, Annual General Meetings, Special General Meetings and promote and manage attendance for meetings,
- Seek out sponsors for the Club and/or Chapters, and liaise with individual sponsors for the arrangement of renewals and other correspondence. Liaise with Convenors regarding Chapter Sponsors. Ensure that sponsor logos are featured on the Club website and in Club Torque magazine,
- Seek out discount offers from vendors, with the aim of improving the benefits offered to Club members. Ensure that discounts are promoted to members via the Club website, Club emails and Club Torque magazine,
- Act as the liaison between the Club and our chosen charity with the aim of identifying opportunities for collaboration and to personally deliver donations collected on behalf of the Club,

please contact

Keith Monaghan
President MX-5 Club of NSW
at president@mx5.com.au or (M) 0418 976 279



Stuart Daly, now of Mercedes-Benz Sydney, ran a wheel alignment day for members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of NSW. Stuart is an expert on wheel alignments and can set up your car for any type of driving you do. 15 of our members had their wheels aligned to suit their driving style and the feedback was very positive. Stuart also discussed how the camber of the road can affect how a car tracks and what he does to counteract this. For track cars he discussed the affect that camber, castor and toe in, as set on the wheels has when pushing hard into and out of corners. Plenty of questions were asked and answered. KEITH MONAGHAN



ZOOMEN

Mates Across the Miles

Like many NSW MX-5 Club members, Brian and Lilo Bonus (Hunter Chapter) love sharing the fun of their MX-5 with friends. For Brian and Lilo, this includes two special buddies on the other side of the world in Essen, Germany.

Andreas Meyer, a policeman, and his wife Christa have a manual NC series 2 soft top MX-5. Thanks to the generosity of their Aussie friends, Andreas now sports a NSW MX-5 club chambray shirt and both wear a Hunter Chapter cap on their outings. Andreas loves reading the stories on our NSW Club web page and has told Brian it is inspiring him to look at joining an MX-5 club in Wuppertal, near Essen.



ROAD RULES

Mind the Gap

Following a two year trial, the Minimum Passing Distance Rule has now been adopted as a permanent NSW road rule.

Drivers must now leave a minimum gap of one metre when passing a cyclist at 60km/h or less and one and a half metres when passing at speeds higher than 60km/h.

Since 2000 there have been 158 cyclist deaths on NSW roads (when a vehicle was involved). The Minimum Passing Distance rule has already led to an estimated 15% reduction in bicycle-to-vehicle crashes. Drivers who break the new law risk a penalty of \$330 and two demerit points. The Minimum Passing Rule is also in effect on ACT roads with fines of up to \$400 for non-compliance.

AQUAPLANING



In The Driving Rain

After enduring months of dry weather we know that when the rain does come, there's usually plenty of it. Wet weather presents many challenges on the road from reduced visibility to flash flooding. Here are some tips for minimising your risk when the heavens open.

Aquaplaning occurs when the water in front of your tyres gathers faster than the weight of your car can push it away. The pressure of the water forces the car up, allowing a thin layer of water to get between all four tyres and the road. Without traction, the car will slide into understeer (car continues in a straight line through a corner) or oversteer (car will slide into a spin). Symptoms of aquaplaning include loose or unresponsive steering, increased engine noise and at times, an unpleasant, spinning sensation.

If you find yourself aquaplaning, do not attempt to steer your way clear but do ease gently off the accelerator and if you need to brake, do so smoothly and gently. Look to where you want the car to go and avoid jerky or sudden steering.

Aquaplaning can happen at any speed but you can reduce the risk by:

- Slowing down, give yourself more travel time and a greater braking distance (at least 3-5 car lengths) in wet weather.
- Avoiding standing water on the road. Where possible, travel in the centre of the lane and avoid the edge of the tarmac where water can accumulate. On the freeway, travel in the tyre tracks of the car in front. Be careful of moving water which may conceal a washout or debris.
- Regularly check the tread depth and air pressure in your tyres.
- Using cruise control in the wet will not cause aquaplaning but should be used with care as it can delay a driver's response to changing conditions. If the weather is causing the traffic to slow or visibility to worsen, it is always best to be in complete command of your steering, braking and acceleration.
- Take corners at two thirds of your normal speed and always look ahead.

When you're out and about in the wet, also make sure your wiper blades are in good working condition, your headlights likewise and you are more aware of cyclists, pedestrians and motorbikes.

MX-5 RF

For the true enthusiast, Mazda offers an update on our favourite car.

TRANSMISSION

SKYACTIV-MT-G 2L petrol engine and a six-speed SKYACTIV-MT manual transmission

POWERTRAIN

Fuel Electronic Direct Injection
Capacity 45L
Max Power
118kW (155hp) @ 6000rpm
Max Torque
200Nm @ 4,600rpm

EXTRA FEATURES

Bilstein shock absorbers
Custom strut bar
Brembo brake callipers
17" BBS alloy wheels
Recaro sports seats
Aerodynamic body kit
from the Kuroi Sports Pack



Limited



Edition



— GREAT RENTAL **RATES** FOR MX-5 MATES —

Travelling to Melbourne and want to retain the enjoyment and excitement you get from driving your MX-5, then why not rent a late model MX-5 from Open Road Roadsters?

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

or call Peter Dannock on 0409 518 795



Wave Winter Goodbye.



QMeet18

Gympie to Rockhampton
19 - 23 August 2018

LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE

Registration for QMeet18 is \$270 per person - includes event regalia, welcome dinner and Mt Morgan mine tour.

To find further event information, visit

www.mx5clubqld.com.au/qmeet

and complete the online form to register.

Join the MX5 Club of Queensland for 5 days of good times, great roads and special events in Queensland's beautiful Capricornia region.

PHOTO CREDIT WAYNE LANG

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The Best of **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



MX-5 NATMEET XIII

"NatMeets are special, they are not just an extended run weekend, but a great event which you will never forget."

PHIL MAYO



BAROSSA VALLEY SA 08
13
APRIL 2018

The Barossa Valley was always going to be a great location for our NatMeet and it didn't disappoint. 138 enthusiasts in 79 MX-5s convened for a week of drive days, motorsport and special events. There was plenty of world class food and wine, spectacular scenery and just the right amount of Oompah.

Thank you to PETER HILKMANN PHIL MAYO
ELAINE CALDWELL ROB WILKINS and AMY PERIN for
contributing their NatMeet photos and stories.

NATMEET XIV will be hosted by the MX-5 Club of NSW in the
Hunter Valley in 2020.



"Picturesque countryside,
amazing MX-5 roads and
friendships made and
rekindled - that's what
NatMeet is!"
ELAINE CALDWELL





MX-5 DRIVE DAYS



On day two of NatMeet, drivers were organised into groups for a Barossa Drive Day. The predicted temperature of 35 degrees arrived with dry winds and dust storms so it was definitely a good idea to keep the roof up and the air conditioner on. The Barossa Valley Run was the shortest of all the runs to leave more time to prepare the cars for Concours the following day. After a day of driving in very windy and dusty conditions the car was the dustiest it had ever been.

Our drive took us to the Barossa Valley Cheese Factory for some local cheese tasting. We weren't game to purchase any of the lovely cheeses, as we had no way of keeping it cool for

the day in that 35 degree heat.

Onto our Morning Tea stop at Maggie Beer's Farm, (BTW that is not a Beer Farm) for a nice morning tea and a chance to have a chat and get to know our fellow MX-5ers in our group. This was followed by a visit to Wolf Blass Wines for a bit of wine tasting, before we headed off again to our lunch destination at the South Australian Company Store.

Days four and five were similarly well organised runs to Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills and the Clare Valley. The countryside was picturesque with many rows of vines and fruit trees lining the amazing MX-5 roads. **PETER HILKMANN**

MOTOR SPORT



This year the motorsport event was a hillclimb, held at Collingrove Hillclimb near Angaston, hosted by the Sporting Car Club of SA on Sunday (also NatMeet registration day). My Concours detailing efforts were negated on the dry dirt

road leading to the track as well as the strong 34C winds that blew dust all over the cars all day. The track is a 750m challenge climbing 70m, it includes an uphill launch off the line, a blind left hand crest, a 130kph dip then a right crest in to a banked "wall" then a series of 2nd gear esses finishing with a 1st gear right hand then a chicane leading up over the finish. The day was fun as well as challenging with the usual great camaraderie amongst the MX-5 owners - I was the 2nd fastest Natmeet competitor behind Kim Cole's (Vic) supercharged NB, but fast enough to win the fastest naturally aspirated Natmeet car. **PHIL MAYO**

FOOD AND WINE



The Valley is famed for pickling, smoking and preserving - not it's visitors but a wide range of gourmet foods. The German smallgoods and cakes of Hahndorf, Maggie Beer's Farm produce, cheeses and chocolates - all were all thoroughly sampled. Our NatMeeters balanced their diets with fine wines from Wolf Blass, O'Leary Walker and Seppeltsfield.

We had a police escorted convoy to Tanunda Oval for the concourse, all the cars were assembled in models and a separate group for modified cars. Judges were briefed while everyone had morning tea. Judging only took about an hour as about 40% of cars did not want their cars judged, that allowed time for group photos wearing our NSW Carbon T-shirts.

The other competitive events were – People's Choice of "the MX-5 I would most like to take home" (won by Dave Speedy Perin), best dressed Male and Female at the hilarious German night, and the "Me and My MX-5" photo competition also won by Dave Perin with a photo of his car with the defect notice he got from the police at the SA border for being too low!



The SA NatMeet Committee changed the point scoring method from previous NatMeets following suggestions I made after a study of NatMeet scoring systems. The car mileage and age multiplier has been removed making it fairer for all models. NSW winners were: Peter Hilkman – Best NB, Paul Beerworth – Best ND, I won Best NA and Fastest Non Turbo at the hillclimb. I also had equal total points with the National Champion Trophy going to Lyall Tilson from WA whose enthusiasm really showed what NatMeet is all about – lots of fun with friends.

The Daisy Wheel Champion State trophy went to SA, probably by weight of number of participants, but well deserved for delivering such a memorable NatMeet. **PHIL MAYO**



OOMPAAH

The German themed night was hilarious and everyone entered into the spirit with an Oompah Master of Ceremonies and lots of audience participation. It was a fun night to remember. Roman Perin nabbed a Meguiar's prize for collecting the most wine corks. He achieved this by visiting the surrounding tables and stealing *their* corks. Who says thieves never prosper?
ELAINE CALDWELL AMY PERIN

LEADING LADY KIM JACOBS



Pink Ladies team member Kim Jacobs achieved the accolade of most consistent female driver in the event with a score of 2.28 points per lap. Kim prepared her car for the event by changing the brake pads and checking the suspension and fluids and herself by adding hot cross buns to her fitness regime.

BEST IN SHOW PETER MOHACSI



Driving for the Illawarra Team, Peter was crowned 'Best MX-5 Driver' on the day (based on points/laps divided by total laps). Peter is like a metronome in his approach to regularity driving and scored an incredible 2.85 points to finish 5th overall. The Illawarra Team finished in 18th place.

BEST PERFORMER THE MX-5

There were up to 45 cars on track at any given time including a Nissan GTR Nismo, a Mustang Coupe, V8 Commodores, Evos, WRXs, Meganes, BMWs, and of course masses of MX-5s. MX-5 teams far outnumbered any other single marque in the event with six NAs, nineteen NBs, ten NCs



and one ND, all serving underline the capability of the cars we drive and love.

Stars of the EASTER 6 HOUR

To be successful at regularity relay, drivers need consistency, strategy and teamwork. It also helps to have some of that famous MX-5 Club camaraderie and lashings of Easter Eggs.

BEST DIRECTOR STEWART TEMESVARY



For many years, Stewart has worked to develop and promote regularity relay within the MX-5 Club. This year he applied his award-winning organisational skills and enthusiasm to conducting driver classrooms, lodging team entries and assisting the team managers. Despite an errant wheel, Stewart and the Panorama Mountain Men finished 7th overall.

Team Managers

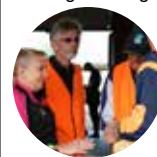
The team managers undertook months of preparation to formulate strategy, train their drivers and submit a mountain of paperwork. On the day, they wrangled four cars and up to five drivers.



Guy Coles
Barge Racing



Pam Estreich
Pink Ladies



Gillian Fletcher
Team MX5



Lesia Bunn
Blue Mountains Mazda

Dodged the camera: Mark Sando (PISSErs Racing) Dan Szwarz (Just Regular Guys) and Brett Manewell (Panorama Mountain Men)

BLOCKBUSTER EFFORT EVAN HOTZ

Nine year old Evan's school teacher passed away after a battle with cancer only weeks before the 6-Hour. Evan suggested The Pink Ladies dedicate their drive to Do It For Cancer and helped raise \$2517 for cancer research.



BEST SUPPORTING CAST

Pit Crews; Ross Bridge •James Mate •Paula Mohacsi •Grant Knowles •Jill Feutrell •Stephen Fisher •Roger Palfreyman •Wesley Hill •Josh Fitzgerald •Wulff Breitsameter •Diann Miller •James Burke •Gary Nobrega •Magdalena Wilczynska •Varvara Efremova •Fiona Shedden •Alex Shedden •Grant Bunn •Tony Lee •Craig Bridges •Greg Bridges •Heather Koorey •Brett Manewell •David Temesvary •Adam Temesvary •Jamie Stammers •Mark Isichei



LEGENDS OF THE WALL

I have a great desire to drive the Phillip Island track and the best way to do that is in a Club regularity team, so I needed some experience at this type of event and jumped in quickly to sign up for the Easter 6 Hour at SMSP.

I had some idea of what was involved, keeping to a set time, dealing with more traffic than a super sprint, passing and being passed while trying to maintain your time. Not to mention driving for 30 minutes at a time, not the usual 10 minutes of a sprint event.

As usual with any event organised by this Club, it came together seamlessly thanks to the efforts of all team managers and the chief organiser, Stewart Temesvary.

We all came together Good Friday afternoon at SMSP for document checks and scrutineering. Saturday was a full day of practice sessions and fine tuning each team's own organisation of timing, change overs and food and drink breaks. Important for a first timer to keep the day running smoothly. After all this it felt like the biggest event on the planet.

Our Club had 9 teams entered and as usual the co operation between everyone was outstanding.

I was in Team MX5, capably managed by the very experienced Gillian Fletcher. My teammates were the experienced Peter Barnwell and fellow first timers at regularity, Jim Glissan and Paul Nudd. 3 black NC's and my SE. We had 3 volunteer assistants who did the pit wall timing and tag change overs all day Sunday which was a huge help for the drivers.

I Slept like a log Saturday night due to exhaustion, didn't even drive the 45 minutes home and stayed in the Hotel next to the track. At the track early Sunday morning, you could feel the expected hot day coming even at 7am. Sunday actually passed in a blur of activity, our team ran seamlessly all day with no major problems, so my main impressions as a first timer were:

- Driving a 30 minute run was much easier than I expected, the time flew by so fast, I was called in before I knew it.

- The traffic on track was, as I expected, the hardest part. I was very keen to let faster cars through quickly which I managed OK, especially when my rear view mirror was full of a Nissan GTR Nismo. Passing the slower cars was more difficult. My second run was a disaster as I came out on track behind a

conga line of cars being held up by one car. It didn't help throwing myself off the track after passing that slow car and running off line into turn 4.

- There was a fantastic mix of cars, 45 teams, so 45 cars on track at any one time. Apart from the Nismo, there was a superb Mustang Coupe, V8 Commodores, HQ Holdens, really fast Datsun 1600's, Evo's, WRX, Meganes, BMW's, and of course masses of MX5s.

- The hardest part was having to wait in the car ready to go out at short notice if your team car on track had a problem. 30 minutes sitting in the car on a hot day with helmet and gloves on was not nice. But it's part of the experience of team regularity.

So in a 4 car team we ran 3 x 30 minute stints over the day, I went through 2 large bottles of water in that time, we had about 90 minutes between drives which was helpful on such a hot day.

- Even getting out onto the track was tricky as you come out past turn 1 where cars are doing 150kms/hour plus. Fortunately there is a flag marshal there to indicate if cars are coming but care is needed to keep out of the way as you get up to speed without blocking anyone at turn 2.

- Keeping an eye on the flag points was another very important factor to adjust to also, as there were many yellow flag periods where you can't overtake, and it's easy to miss them if your running close to other cars. The Safety Car was deployed a few times too, though not while I was on track. The results of the competition really don't matter that much as we know, we do this for fun, not tin cups. I managed 16 laps where I scored bonus points, out of 39 laps total, so I'm happy with that, but look forward to improving. At the end of the event I felt like I had really achieved something a little special, with much personal satisfaction about getting through my first regularity with no dramas apart from my car consuming half a litre of engine oil each run.

As usual being part of any Club event was the best part of the whole experience, the friendship, assistance given, co operation and fun was evident again. Overall, it was an outstanding 2 days, can't wait for Phillip Island in July. If you're thinking about doing a regularity for the first time, go for it.

PHILLIP DONNELLY

BEST ENSEMBLE OUR TEAMS



PISSers RACING

Starring KEITH MONAGHAN as "KEEF" PHIL ASHTON as "FILL" PETER FEUTRILL as "PEAT" and PAUL BYERS as "PORL"

TEAM MX5

JAMES GLISSAN
PAUL NUDD
PHILLIP DONNELLY
PETER BARNWELL



BARGE RACING

IAN COMBES MICHAEL DEMAIO SEAN BYERS DAVID JOHNSON

BLUE MOUNTAINS MAZDA

BRYAN SHEDDEN GREG BUNN WARREN HOTZ RAY ESTREICH

JUST REGULAR GUYS

DAN SZWAJ
JOHN KARYANNIS
MATT TARRANT
TERRY JOHNSON
MATT JOHNSON



THE PINK LADIES

TAMMIE HOTZ KIM JACOBS LINDSAY GREEN ALEX BREITSAMETER

PANORAMA MOUNTAIN MEN

STEWART TEMESVARY GLENN THOMAS RUSS MAXWELL GRAHAM FLETCHER



ILLAWARRA TEAMX5

GREG UNGER ALEX TRIBE NEIL TRIBE PHIL REID PETER MOHACSI

TEAM NA

JON FOX PHIL CHAPMAN MARTY VOORMEULEN



18 Club Torque



BEST COSTUMES THE PINK LADIES



Tammie Hotz coordinated a fashion statement for the Pink Ladies that included hats, team shirts and a stand out lipstick livery. The pink theme was so hard to resist that drivers from other teams couldn't help but join in.



INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

Drivers took their turn as pit crew and managers stepped in as mechanics. Everyone played their part and a great day was had by all. Cheers and congratulations to the NSWRRRC for a successful and enjoyable event.



CREDITS

WRITERS

PETER BARNWELL
PAM ESTREICH
KEITH MONAGHAN
PHILLIP DONNELLY
KIM JACOBS
LINDSAY GREEN
ALEX BREITSAMETER
TAMMIE HOTZ
MEL KELLER

PHOTOGRAPHY

ROB WILKINS
MEL KELLER

PRODUCTION

MEL KELLER
MINUTEMAN PRESS BROOKVALE

South West Rocks Run

MID NORTH COAST

6 FEBRUARY WORDS **JOHN HANSEN**
PHOTOS **GRAHAM ROCHESTER WAYNE LANG**

The first mid-week run of the MX-5 Club's Mid North Coast Chapter was held on Tuesday 6 February starting at the River Mark Café in Port Macquarie. The run was organised by Convenor Graham and led by Peter. Initially the sky was a checker board of differing greys with a few patches of blue with a mild sprinkling of very light rain. This was soon to be replaced with brilliant sunshine and soaring temperatures. Our group for the day included Graham Convenor, Peter run leader, new members Pam & Allen with their new red ND, Keiran and Peter with their beautifully turned out Heritage MX-5 NB, Jenny and Barry, Judith and John and Cathy and Wayne.

Peter led our group off to Kempsey to pick up Cathy and Wayne. The Pacific Highway to Kempsey has undergone major improvements and eliminated the always rather difficult turn from the end of Hastings River Drive onto the Pacific Highway. Now it is an easy right hand turn up to a new roundabout onto the highway. Usually the road to Crescent Head is quite sparsely populated and is a spirited drive, within posted limits of course, however today we were able to observe extensive grass cutting and electrical work all from the comfort of the stop-go signs.

The wait was worth it as we trooped into the Crescent Head Bakery. For those not familiar with this bakery it has an extensive range of delectable, tasty treats which have been renowned for bringing diets undone. After an enjoyable social chat and of course sampling the wares there was some serious motoring to be done on the way to the Smokey Cape Lighthouse.

The road from Crescent Head and then along the river bank through towns such as Gladstone and Jerseyville must be one of the most enjoyable tourist roads in the district.

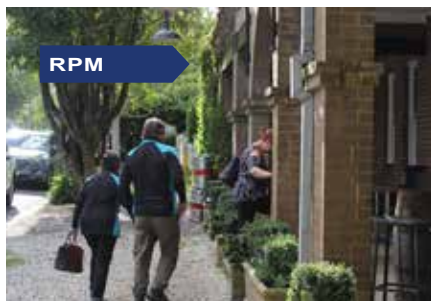
The sun was well out now and the lush smell of the countryside and the sparkling river waters on our left with the roaring of the MX-5's exhausts really made it worth while to be alive. Far too soon we were at the turn off to the lighthouse. The road now wound its way through lush vegetation until the climb to the lighthouse car park. We took advantage of the extensive views of the coast line from short walks from the car park.

Then with trepidation we faced the steps to the stairway to heaven and the Smokey Cape Lighthouse. It was generally agreed that we should all complete the trek to get ready for lunch. However; in the end only three intrepid members undertook the climb, a walk really, up the steps. The view at the top was worth the effort as extensive views could be seen over the sea and along what appears to be endless beaches to the hinterland looking south. Back to the carpark and the group photograph before making our way into South West Rocks for lunch.

We lunched at the aptly named 'Sea Breeze Hotel' overlooking the ocean. We almost had the dining area venue to ourselves to spread out eat and chat in comfortable surroundings. Our run officially ended after lunch and after saying good byes we were free to make our own way home or visit the shops, scenic sights and local museum. All in all a very pleasant way to spend a Tuesday.



Twilight to Burrawang Pub



The start to this wonderful twilight run we met at Mulgoa and then headed down to Picton to add to our fleet of MX-5's.

The weather didn't let us down nor did the wonderful scenery as we meandered our way down to the Southern Highlands our destination Burrawang Pub. The hotel is famous for its beautiful gardens, spectacular scenery and tasty food and it didn't disappoint.



Thank you Brigid and Ron for yet another wonderful journey and thank you to our Illawarra friends who joined us.



03 FEBRUARY WORDS **SANDRA DURIC** PHOTOS **ROB WILKINS JASON BROWN VICKI LEGGE GODWIN CAMILLERI**

Goulburn Sights

CANBERRA

17 FEBRUARY WORDS AND PHOTOS **NORM BARKER**

Twenty-six of us in sixteen cars assembled at Russell Square on a warm sunny morning and after the signing in formalities we departed north, joining the highway briefly before turning off towards Sutton. From here the convoy followed an uncrowded back road through Gundaroo to Gunning. The gently rolling hills on each side of the road formed a great backdrop for the line of many-coloured MX-5s.

Morning tea in Gunning was enjoyed at the Merino Café. After rounding up the stragglers we set off along more pleasant country roads towards Goulburn until a brief stretch of Hume Highway saw us arrive at the turnoff to Goulburn. We traversed the traffic lights of Goulburn, ducked under the railway lines and ascended to the Rocky Hill War Memorial, parking in a cleared area

near the entrance gates. This 20 metre high square tower of stone and concrete was built in 1925 and offers great views over Goulburn. Many said they had the memorial on their lists of places to visit and were pleased to at last have the opportunity to do so.

There were two ways to reach the memorial tower from our car park; the main bitumen road or a bush track that appeared to offer a short cut. The bush track was actually slower and a bit rough in parts, causing some to retrace their steps and take the road. Returning to the City Centre we settled in to the Roses Café to relax over lunch and coffee. This café is long established in Goulburn and looked after us well. Ample refreshed and relaxed we made our own way home.



SYDNEY

Glow Worm Run



17 FEBRUARY PHOTOS **ROB WILKINS**

February Club Trackday

MOTORSPORT

11 FEBRUARY WORDS JAMIE MARTIN PHOTOS ROB WILKINS



After travelling to Broadford in Victoria during January to get my eye in, I was champing at the bit to resume hostilities at Wakefield Park for Round 4 of the 2017/2018 MX-5 Club championship. I had a lot of ground to make up.

Deciding to stay somewhere different the night before I was pleasantly surprised to bump into, and have dinner with, David Johnson as well as David & Gaynor Lawler. What better way to begin a track day than to share stories and soak up any advice.

Leaving early because, unlike the Victorians, if you arrive after the gates open there aren't a lot of carports left. First lesson for anyone competing at Wakefield. Get there early!

Gates open and a mad scramble for carports. I decided to go for it and try the

first row. You beauty. Carport #1. Score!

Now for the worst part of the day. Scrutineering. Don't know why, it always makes me nervous. Graham Fletcher doesn't help things when he jokingly asks the scrutineers to go over my car with a fine-tooth comb.

Car prep, drivers briefing, and we are almost there. Set up my coffee machine. A great addition to my track day gear. I'm at the front of my group, rather than the back. I prefer the latter. The Toyota A86 is blisteringly quick. So he is providing a great hare for me. However, with a few first timers in our group, things get interesting with traffic towards the end of our session.

Sharing space with Bryan Shedden today. I reckon the only time someone isn't chatting to him about various things is when he is in the car. And even then

they are looking for him. Busy man. We have Class Eligibility checks today. It's a great initiative.

OK - it's after lunch. Time to get my head into Championship land. Haven't got anywhere near my PB yet. Traffic hasn't helped. Such is the nature of the beast. Need to work with it. A quick chat to Sean Byers before our next run and I decide, with his help, to give myself space on the warm up lap. It works. With enough consecutive laps I set a reasonable time. In the end I was lucky as times didn't get any quicker after that. With that I begin the Tetris packing of all my track gear into my small NA MX-5. Each item has its own space so it all fits! Number plates back on and it's a long trip home to Sydney. Plenty of time to debrief and look ahead to the next round.



FEBRUARY TRACKDAY

THANK YOU OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS



Jenny Luttrell ● Marilyn Bridgement ● Ian Combes ●
Barry Luttrell ● Stephen Brennan ● Gerardo Martin ●
Graham Fletcher ● Warren Hotz ● Blake Hotz ●
Mark Kavanagh ● Russ Maxwell ● Glenn Thomas ●
Rohan Matthews ● Phil Donnelly ● David Lawler ●
Pam Estreich ● Gillian Fletcher ● Jean Cook ●
Michelle Matthews ● Joe Kovacic ● Evan Hotz ●



Forster via the Nurbushring

MID NORTH COAST

17 FEBRUARY WORDS AND PHOTOS JOHN HANSEN



Saturday 17 February saw a small enthusiastic group of Mid North Coast Chapter members gather at the Port Macquarie Services Centre a.k.a "The Donut" for a run to Forster. Keiran and Peter were the run leaders. The day was slightly overcast no rain expected with temperatures forecast to climb well into the 30s.

Run leaders Peter and Keiran outlined the route, maps were given out and we set out for our first stop at the Flow Bar in Old Bar for morning tea. Peter and Keiran in their Heritage NB, led the way followed by Pam and Allen enjoying their new ND, Judith and John in their freshly washed NB, followed by Peter and sweeper Graham.

The first part of the run was through familiar territory and soon we were turning off the Pacific Highway through the small town of Coopernook to pick up the Landsdowne Road to Taree. This road is becoming a well-known route south as it avoids the Pacific Highway and is a good way of entering into the spirit of the day. The road twists and turns across the main railway line south as it meanders on its way to Taree. The 25 km/hr corners to the level crossing approaches seem to come up very quickly and certainly test one's reflexes, especially when coupled with a fairly hefty dips in the road on some of the exits.

Across the river we bypassed the main part of Taree to join

the road to Wingham and then onto the Gloucester Road. Coming out of Wingham the Gloucester Road provides a very enjoyable MX-5 experience with many fast-flowing corners and very little traffic. Outside temperatures also had started to climb and even with the roof down we had the air-con on full. Eventually we reached the Buckets Way and turned left to make our way cross country to Old Bar for morning tea. On the way we were treated to a worm's eye view of a large number of roadworks complete with a short gravel section. Thanks to Kieran's radio announcements regarding which lanes we should be in we all made the exit to Old Bar, a wrong turning could have lead to a long trip down the Pacific Highway before finding a spot to turn around!

The morning tea stop at the "Flow Bar" was greatly appreciated by all. One of the great pleasures of driving the MX-5 on the Mid-North Coast is the plethora of fine eating places to feed the inner person. I'm convinced that our not so secret agenda on our car runs is to actually compile a list of great cafes! After an excellent morning tea it was time to tackle the "Nurbushring" a.k.a the old Wootton Way to Bulahdelah. After a general briefing about driving at your own pace and a warning about the amount of leaf litter on many of the corners especially when banked up by the immovable concrete barriers that separate the two lanes ... *Continued*

Yet another MX-5 run with good food, great driving and interesting companions what more could one ask?

”

... we set off. The road surface in fact is surprisingly good and with very little traffic the road is a joy to drive especially with the roof down with the sound of the exhaust competing with bird calls whilst the scenery flashes past. At the Pacific Highway turn off we turned north to then took the turn off to Forster along the north shores of Wallis Lakes. This is an interesting drive with enticing glimpses of the lakes through the trees.

Forster finally appeared, and it was a short run to our lunch stop The Paradise Marina on the waterfront. At least it was a short run for most of the group your scribe lost sight of the others and was soon merrily crossing the bridge to Tuncurry. We were not lost, just temporarily misplaced, however with the aid of radio, sat-nav and mobile phone we were soon heading back into Forster to the luncheon spot all the more ready for a fine lunch. The Paradise Marina lived up to its name and we enjoyed a leisurely and tasteful lunch. Good food and conversation in beautiful surroundings it was tempting to stay at the lunch spot all day.

Thanks to Keiran and Peter run leaders and Graham our Convenor.



Shannons Wheels

CANBERRA

04 MARCH WORDS BOB JUDD PHOTOS ROB WILKINS



Shannon's Wheels Exhibition on Sunday, 4 March 2018, was organised by the Council of ACT Motor Clubs and sponsored by Shannons with most makes and club types represented. This year it was held at the Queanbeyan showground and the Queanbeyan Council was most helpful and keen to have the exhibition. It was a sunny and warm day and we were glad we had the trailer which has the club gazebo, providing much needed shade. There was a good range of car makes set out across the showground and a couple of our club members provided volunteer duties on the main gate.

The MX5s were a little crowded with our 22 cars trailer and gazebo. All models were represented, with the front row displaying an example of each model. The BBQ trailer was on show but unable to be used due to a

rule of the exhibition. People came and asked about the different models and we may see some new members when they purchase their own car. The trailer experienced an electrical issue with the plug connection and Dave Battisson from MX5 Solutions rectified that the following week.

We took it in turns to visit the other groups and many interesting conversations were had with proud owners of other make of car. Owners are always more than happy to discuss their cars and this creates a very good community atmosphere. The Queanbeyan Mayor and his wife came in an open top Rolls Royce and the whole day took on a very relaxed and festive atmosphere.

As the day progress to the afternoon the displays started to pack up and the cars left the arena to their home garages.



BREAKFAST CLUB

18 FEBRUARY WORDS **ANDREW LORD** PHOTOS **JASON BROWN**

Did you hear the one about the court jester and fireman? What about the cyclist and the guy that adorns the gate at Luna Park? Maybe you've heard about the Rastafarian and the legionnaire hat wearing angel from Canberra? Think this is some kind of joke or perhaps an advertisement for some kind of depraved, late night party? No chance. All these characters and more were on show at the BreakFast Club's WTFRUW2B!

A BreakFast Club run with a difference, this run concentrated more on sweeping four lane highways and less on tight twisty back lanes (although Mt Keira, Saddleback and Broughton Pass were a welcome return to typical Breakfast Club fare). All participants were encouraged to wear some elaborate headgear for the run to Berry, and didn't the masses heed the message! There were enough crazy hats on show to put a milliner to shame, with every hat remaining fixed on heads throughout the journey (for the

first time in many years!) Perhaps one of the more peculiar attendees were the two participants that joined us on Picton Road. Although they were wearing elaborate headgear, they also had full uniform and an accompanying matching car! They even performed a roadside breath test on the run leader and club captain – in full character! They clearly didn't get the memo about the event being fancy hats only this year.

The gentle curves of the Old Princes Highway were a good warm up for the more challenging Broughton Pass and Mt Keira Road. The snaking blacktop down into Cordeaux Heights is an excellent test of nerve early on a Sunday morning due to the abundance of blind corners and cyclists. Life member Bryan Shedden joined us for this trip and led us through the picturesque dairies of Jamberoo and across Saddleback Mountain to enjoy the glorious vistas eastward over Kiama and beyond. What a gorgeous addition to the route this

was, the morning sunlight shimmering off the ocean provided a spectacular contrast to the lush pastures and country cottages.

Finally the 13 MX-5s rolled into Berry and stopped to breakfast at an old favourite, The Bookshop Café. Alison and her team have improved the menu whilst the service was warm and friendly. The scrambled eggs with trout looked to be the star whilst the author's benedict was sublime. This is a café well worth your consideration next time you stop in the south coast's craft shop mecca! As is customary, breakfast was accompanied with much conversation and good humour for which the BreakFast Club is famous. As much as this group loves a tight 15km/h hairpin followed by a 200m straightaway, it's the camaraderie and friendships that keep us coming back for more. And maybe the sound of a sports exhaust reverberating through a valley early on a Sunday morning.

MX-5S TO MOTORFEST

HUNTER

10 MARCH

WORDS **JEN BOYKO JOHN PURCELL**

PHOTOS **DIANNE HENDERSON**

Southern Meander

RPM

10 - 11 MARCH WORDS **AMANDA JEFFREY JASON BROWN**
PHOTOS **JASON BROWN GILLIAN FLETCHER**



After an informative briefing by George, 16 MX-5's, 24 members and 5 visitors in tow, we set off on our first autumn run for 2018 from Thornton Supa Centre at 9:00am.

The sky was overcast but not threatening and we had a promise of blue skies ahead. So with tops down we set off on our way through picturesque green countryside after recent much needed rainfalls which brought the Hunter Valley back to life. Our picture perfect day was enhanced by driving over several narrow historic bridges.

Jubilee Park was the setting for our shared morning tea stop in Dungog with a few members keen to try out the exercise equipment. The Bucketts Way was next on our bucket list for the day as we headed for our destination detouring through the quaint township of Karuah.

Midday saw us arrive at Benchmark on Booner for lunch before viewing the hundreds of cars and motorbike on display at Hawks Nest Annual Motorfest.

Members and visitors all contributed to making the day a fun run.

RPM weekends away are always an adventure and the 2018 Southern Meander was no different. With the Fletchers showing off their new RF and Jason showing off his incredibly loud new exhaust, an enjoyable weekend was had by all. We left from Panthers McDonalds on Saturday 10 March. It was an early start to a hectic 48 hours of around 800 kilometres of travel and a lot of laughs.

We travelled from Panthers to Lake Alexandra Reserve in Mittagong for morning tea. There was an abundance of wildlife in, on, and around the lake (including a few RPMers!). We jumped back on the freeway for a while to then end up at Marulan then we took the back roads through Suttons Forest, Exeter and Bundanoon.

During our jaunt through the town of Bundanoon, a local was heard to comment that the "MX 6 Club" were in town. We don't know who those guys are but I bet they're not as fun as us! Lunch was at the pub in Bungendore. It's not the first time we have eaten there, and it certainly won't be the last.

After arriving in Braidwood, an optional side trip was on offer out to the small village of Araluen. With some electing to rest, a small group broke off for a drive to the pub for an afternoon drink; and to tackle the twisty road between the two towns which is well worth a look if you're ever in the area.

Those who went participated in a trivia

game organised by Julie Sando.

Once they all returned it was off to the Braidwood Hotel for dinner. It was a lovely meal and a lot of laughs. Julie announced the winners of the trivia earlier in the afternoon. The very aptly named, Misfits, took out the title of "Most Trivial Team". Congratulations Misfits!

After dinner most of the crew went to bed; after such a busy day they were obviously tucked out. Amanda, Jason, Jackie and Grant had other ideas though and we enjoyed a game of Heads Up back at the motel that not only entertained us but kept a few others awake. Good thing RPM took up most of the motel!

The next day some went off to do their own thing and the rest headed off to Mogo Zoo. It was another stunning morning, quite cool but that didn't last long. The sun came out in full force and so did the wildlife. There was a particularly interesting Silvery Gibbon called Greg. There was giraffe and deer feedings and fun with all kinds of monkeys, including Garry, Jason, and Graham!

Always on the lookout for future runs, the ladies spotted some lovely shops on the main street of Mogo. They will have to be a different run since we didn't have time to stop. The trip home involved a stop at World Famous Fish n Chips in Huskisson and a little bit of shopping before a great drive through Kangaroo Valley. Thank you to Lesa and Greg for organising such an involved run.

Hillclimb Round 1

MOTORSPORT

11 MARCH WORDS **ANDREW DIGNEY**
PHOTOS **ANDREW DIGNEY ROB WILKINS**



It's the faces that make Hillclimbs such a fun day. Of the 26 drivers, most completed the course in 62 to 70 seconds and those that chose to drive all rounds were treated to 9 runs each. Volunteers make the world go round, thanks to you all.

1st Outright Christian Thompson	JB Clubman	213	59.72	
2nd Outright Greg Smith	MX-5	13	61.23	
3rd Outright Blake Rochford-Cole	MX-5	69	63.77	
Stock under 1900cc				New Record
Gregor Lochtie	MX-5	6	67.47	
Stewart Temesvary	MX-5	34	67.67	
David Temesvary	MX-5	23	68.59	
Stock over 1900cc				New Record
Rod Berwick	MX-5	37	69.79	
Modified under 1900cc				New Record
Daniel MacKay	MX-5	777	64.76	
Ben Kent	MX-5	21	65.83	
David Kent	MX-5	2	69.87	
Modified under 2100cc				New Record
Blake Rochford-Cole	MX-5	69	63.77	
Stephanie Goddard	MX-5	696	66.85	
Charlie Simon	MX-5	7	68.02	
Forced Induction Over 2100CC				New Record
Greg Smith	MX-5	13	61.23	
Ray Estreich	MX-5	44	67.985	
Richard Chuck	MX-5	99	71.48	
Non-MX-5				New Record
Christian Thompson	JB Clubman	213	59.72	
Mark Granger	Falcon	841	62.32	
Nathaniel Vickery	Toyota 86	186	64.19	



South Coast Rendezvous

CANBERRA

24 - 26 MARCH WORDS **JULIE AUSTIN** PHOTOS **PETER LE**

All tops were down for a perfect drive from Canberra to Tathra for a long weekend. The owners of the Big 4 caravan park at Tathra had assured us we were welcome, despite the disastrous bush fires that had swept through the town the weekend before leaving many people without homes.

The Canberra MX-5 Club has a reputation for indulging in fine food and wine, but fine coffee is the highest priority for most members. So our first stop was the Albion Cafe in the main street of Braidwood and it didn't disappoint. The Moruya markets, held every Saturday, are legendary so we enjoyed a quick wander through the stalls. It is a shame the MX-5 has limited carrying capacity for shopping. Soon we were ready for our lunch at the Narooma Golf Club. Finding fine food at a club is unexpected but my kingfish was superb. Those with big appetites indulged in the seafood platter, while the rest of us watched as they struggle to eat it all.

The plan that evening was to have a take-away pizza dinner but, surprisingly, no-one was particularly hungry. Nevertheless, out of our MX-5s came vast quantities of wine, cheese and assorted nibbles which soon vanished. We all slept well that night, listening to the rain on our cabin roofs.

On Sunday, with our tops down again, Peter and Jen led us south to Merimbula and inland to Candelo and Wyndham

through very pretty scenery and great roads. It was market day at Wyndham and, while nothing like the Moruya market, we gave the town a financial boost and enjoyed the best coffee of the whole trip.

The next stop was lunch at the Pambula Golf Club overlooking a beautiful course, golfers being drenched in a downpour of rain and dozens of kangaroos looking on. Needless to say, the food here was good too and our light lunch turned into a substantial meal.

Dinner that evening was at the Tathra pub. The fires of the previous weekend had come perilously close to this beautiful old two story sandstone building situated on the headland overlooking the ocean but fortunately left it unharmed. With a big crowd and live music pumping the atmosphere was great. There was also a great menu and the sticky pork ribs did look good, but my duck curry was fine. Some of our group managed to fit in the locally made ice cream too, which should be good judging by all the happy cows we saw on our drives.

On Monday morning, congratulating ourselves on not having to go to work on such a beautiful day, we headed south again to Merimbula, then Eden wharf for coffee and a two course lunch at the beautiful Seahorse Inn at Twofold Bay. After the photo shoot we zoom zoomed back to Canberra for a very light dinner at home.



A Taste of the Past

HUNTER

16 - 23 MARCH WORDS AND PHOTOS **CHRIS CAMERON**

As part of the Hunter Chapter's Sea to Sky run in February, twenty-three MX-5 club members and friends enjoyed touring the NSW south-east coast and the alpine region of NSW and Victoria. The daily lunch stops were a welcome break to stretch muscles and refuel both people and cars, as well as offering opportunities to explore some out-of-the-way places.

One gem stands out as a truly special experience – the tiny hamlet of Tintaldra on the banks of the Murray River, right on the Victoria - NSW border.

The farming community of Tintaldra centres on the pub and what was once the general store, now a tea room and museum. We were welcomed on the veranda by the owner, 91-year-old Betty Walton, then shown around the museum before sitting down to a true bushie's lunch of Aussie Stew, Drover's Damper, Tankwater Tea and delicious cornflake cookies.

While we ate Betty told us the story of the general store and her part in restoring it before turning it into a tea room and museum. A tiny nook in one corner also still operates as the Tintaldra post office. It was built in 1864 from river red gum and stringy bark slabs and as the only store in the Upper Murray, served an area from the Snowy Mountains to Albury / Wodonga. Today the building is listed on the Historic Buildings Register.

After a sing-along accompanied on the pianola it was time to leave for our drive on to Bright, but not before Eileen Gazzard took Betty for a run in their MX-5 to experience the feel of open-top touring. Waiting on the footpath for them to return, I wasn't sure they were actually going to come back!

Betty also offers B&B accommodation and details can be found by Googling 'Tintaldra Tea Rooms' for this and for bookings for the tea rooms. Pre-booking offers the bonus option to have a bush poet entertain during your meal, but my money's on Betty. To listen to her stories and poems over a delicious homemade stew was a wonderful experience and a true privilege. Be sure to call in if you find yourself alongside that beautiful part of the Murray River.



Sea To Sky

HUNTER

16 - 23 MARCH WORDS JOHN PURCELL CHRIS CAMERON
PHOTOS JOHN PURCELL LYN DAVIS IAN NUNN DAVID GAZZARD

8 cars and their intrepid occupants joined Chris and myself at the twin servos on the M1 for our epic journey south. Leaving the M1 the group turned onto the old Pacific Highway to warm up on the curves heading to Sydney. Meeting up with Rob we continued to Berowra, re-joining the M1 to traverse Sydney to Heathcote McDonald's where we were joined by Bruce & Natalie (Sydney) and Ben & Paula (RPM).

After a morning tea stop our now 12-car convoy headed to the Royal National Park for a run through Audley and Stanwell Tops to the Sea Cliff Bridge, only to be redirected up to Waterfall due to a motorcycle accident blocking our road. Diverting via Waterfall we re-joined our route at Stanwell Park to carry on down the coast for lunch at the Albion Park Hotel. Jamberoo Mountain Road was next on our list, winding through lush forest and countryside before turning off past Fitzroy Falls Lake to Kangaroo Valley for our afternoon tea stop. A diversion onto Kangaroo Valley Road to Berry was a must before stopping for the night at Nowra.

Saturday was St Patrick's Day, so out with the shamrock necklaces and buttons saying how we love to be Irish? After a carpark reel by Eileen, Jenny and Max we started south, but wait there's more - did I mention today was also Co-pilots Day? With the promise of a nice easy highway drive to Merimbula, those that usually sit in the left-hand seat were encouraged to be the driver for the day. Kind of forgot to mention the nice windy sections on the Bermagui-Tathra road, but secretly I believe they enjoyed having a go at the bendy bits. A stop at Batemans Bay for lunch and a visit to the ice cream and coffee shops, then on to Bermagui for a delicious afternoon tea of Orange and Green Cakes. Following the coast road through Tathra, we arrived at Merimbula for our 2nd night.

Day 3 we left the sea and headed to the sky. With a clear sky and calm wind, we headed to Candelo to tackle Myrtle Mountain Road before joining the Mt Darragh road at Wyndham. Much fun was had by all taking the forest curves with aplomb until cresting the top of the mountain only to be hit by a force 7 gale. Then it wasn't just looking for the next curve or road kill but also flying debris from trees. Leaving the mountain it was into sheep country, with the almost treeless paddocks subjecting us to the full force of the side winds while negotiating the twists and turns of the Snowy River Way into Jindabyne.

Monday was the day for rest and relaxation. Options

were taken up by some - to visit Thredbo and try the trek to Kosciuszko, a visit the Distillery (always popular), Charlottes Pass or Cabramurra. The evening meal was the BBQ you have when not having a BBQ. Alas fire bans prevented us from lighting up the wood for the barbie, so all cooking was done in the kitchen. And very successfully so!

With two cars leaving us after the weekend, the remaining 10 cars had an early start to a very long day. Following the Snowy Mountains Hwy through Adaminaby and onto Link and Goat Ridge roads for a morning tea stop at Cabramurra. The excellent Snow Ridge and Tooma roads gave us some great driving with nary another car to be seen. With lunch beckoning we headed north to Tintaldra General Store & Post Office, where Betty, our 91-year-old host, regaled us with anecdotes of the early history of the area (see story page 29). Then it was back onto the Murray River Road to follow the course of the Murray river to Tallangatta for afternoon tea. The day ended with a run on Tawonga Gap road to Bright for the evening.

Our 2nd day in Victoria and a morning optional tour to Mount Buffalo and back. With some deciding to sightsee in Bright, the rest of the group proceeded to Mount Buffalo for a run up the mountain, only to be stymied by a V8 Commodore crawling up the hill. Finally, clear road ahead allowed everyone to pass and complete the run to the top. Heading back down the mountain, we turned off for a stop at Mt Buffalo Lookout for the magnificent views. And that was where Rob mentioned a noise from the front wheel of his NC. Barry soon had the car jacked up to discover the drivers' side wheel bearing was failing. A slow but safe trip down the mountain got Rob and his car back to Bright and a helpful mechanic. Rob, David and Elaine stayed an extra night to wait for a replacement bearing to be fitted while the rest of the group headed down the Great Alpine road to Omeo. Crossing the range through Mt Hotham became an interesting challenge as low cloud and fog cut visibility to 2 car lengths.

Overnight in Omeo at the Golden Age Hotel, now this place has character with a capital C. An excellent dinner and a good night's sleep bought us a 6-degree morning so the hot buffet breakfast was a perfect start. Taking the Mitta Mitta road (Omeo Hwy) we enjoyed 2 hours of great twisting, winding roads with no cars in front and only 4 oncoming. After a much-appreciated stop at the park at Mitta Mitta for morning tea to re-energise, we headed back via the Alpine Way to Jindabyne to regroup with Rob, David and Elaine for our final night.



“

I would like to thank all those who attended the trip. It's the people who do a long run like this that make it a success. Everyone got on famously, even putting up with my cajoling and threatening to get out a cattle prod to get them moving at the breaks.



Dorriggo Weekend

MID NORTH COAST

24 - 26 MARCH WORDS JILL McDONNELL
PHOTOS GRAHAM ROCHESTER WAYNE LANG

Woke up to a dreary cloudy Saturday morning after a week of drenching rain and some of us thinking that the weekend trip would be cancelled. However, as we all gathered at "the Donut" blue skies appeared at last and we all agreed to set off. WE set off with Peter and Jill in the lead heading west on the Oxley Highway to regroup in Wauchope. Out of Wauchope heading along the highway as the weather kept improving

and coming up to our first slow down, horse trailer heading into Long Flat. After all the rain the hills are beautiful and green, with some low cloud cover but so picturesque. It was a great drive up the mountain and we didn't get stuck behind any slow vehicles all the way up. We also noticed during the climb is that a number of new "Help phones" have been installed - a much appreciated safety feature for drivers as well as cyclists. Soon it was time for morning

tea at Ginger's. The sunshine broke through at last as we all enjoyed coffee, tea and ANZAC biscuits

We continued on through beautiful countryside to the Apsley Falls. There hadn't been as much rain here as near the coast but the falls were still looking spectacular. A few of us descended the steep stairs for the lower down view, but it's the climb back up that stops some of us. Worth doing though.

As we drove through Walcha happy



happy memories of previous trips here came back to us. Particularly Mike Walkden-Brown's Valentine's Day trip a couple of years ago. Past Walcha and driving on to Uralla the countryside became very dry in comparison. When we arrived at Uralla they were holding a Food Festival. The pubs and cafes were full and the streets were crowded. Instead of being all together for lunch some of us went to "The Alternate Root" café and some of us went to Subway. We met Kevin and Jenny here, regrouped and set off down Kleindienst Road to take the back roads that Kevin is familiar with. Just a few of the roads we took included the intersection of Pinegrove, Bundarra & Dumaresq Roads, Old Inverell Road and Boorolong Road.

We stopped at Armidale so that Peter could take the lead again and headed up the New England Highway towards Guyra. Along the way we left the sunshine behind and came upon dark black rain clouds which forced some of us to stop and put our roofs up. After a long stretch of road and the end of the rain shower also glimpsed a sign to "Wongwibinda" an Aboriginal word meaning "stay a long time", if only we could. We regrouped at the Ebor Falls which were flowing magnificently both at the lower and upper falls. We caught a glimpse of a beautiful rainbow effect on the spray at the lower falls and the views across the to the hills and mountains from the upper falls. We then set off on the scenic drive to Dorrigo.

We all booked in to our rooms at the Heritage Hotel Motel upstairs in the old hotel. Built in 1925 by Michael Feros, this grand hotel is heritage listed and is still owned by the Feros family. It is a classic example of Australian hotel architecture of the 1920s. Well, time now for relaxation, a few drinks, dinner and convivial conversation – don't know what happened to the promised ukulele performance by Wayne, though. Next morning we were all up bright and early for breakfast. Congratulations all round to Wayne and Cathy for their 40th wedding anniversary. Graham met up with us on this crisp, sunny morning and we said good-bye to Wayne and Cathy, going to Coffs for a prawns and champagne celebration. Graham drove us to the Dorrigo Sky Walk which has magnificent views over the valley and to the coast. We then took the scenic drive from Dorrigo to Bellinger As we crossed over the river bridge wondered why it is called the Bellinger River. Apparently, the Gumbaynggir Aboriginal name for river, "Bellinger" means "clean water", "winding river", "quoll" and "cheeky fellow". The story goes that a draughtsman who was compiling the Colony map from original documents misread the final handwritten "n" as an "r"; meaning that the Bellinger River officially became the "Bellinger", while the town retained the correct name of "Bellinger".

The rest of us – Graham, Pam and Allen, Kevin and Jenny and Jill and Peter, (car still a bit smelly) stopped at the "Old Butter Factory" for morning tea. The place was unexpectedly full of people but we managed to get a table and enjoyed coffees and baked delights before farewelling each other and looking forward to our next Mid North Coast trip.



Hills of Gold

HUNTER

30 MARCH - 02 APRIL WORDS **STEPHEN CARTER**
PHOTOS **STEPHEN CARTER KIM RANGER**

On a Good Friday morning that began foggy and cloudy, ten MX-5s gathered at Thornton to begin the Easter Hills of Gold run. Although only a small group, three chapters were represented and there was at least one example each of NA, NB, NC, ND and ND RF. Setting off to our morning tea stop at Dungog, it wasn't long before the skies cleared. The beautiful weather continued for the whole weekend, even though a little too warm at times. Being Good Friday we were resigned to the fact that we would be held up in traffic. This resulted in a leisurely run up Bucketts Way to Gloucester for our lunch break. Most chose to take advantage of the glorious day and dine in the park.

As we continued our journey, we made the customary stop at Carson's Pioneer Lookout before venturing down Port Stephens Cutting and winding our way into Tamworth. The majority of the group were staying at the Mercure, where after checking in, happy hour and dinner followed in the adjoining Wests Club. Saturday morning we were joined by local Aaron Lewis, though he was driving his Fiesta as his normally reliable NB SE was having some issue. The group set off to Quirindi with a visit to the interestingly named Who'd A Thought It Lookout. At our morning tea stop in town we met up with Quirindi resident Bruce who owns an NA, NB and NC. He is relocating to Newcastle soon and after seeing how much fun we are he will be joining the club.

Back on the road we headed to Nundle for the annual Go For Gold Festival. The village, with a population of around three hundred, was swelled for the day by a reported eight thousand visitors.

We spent a few hours checking out attractions including Mount Misery Mine, Gold Panning, Nundle Woollen Mill, Chinese Dragon, market stalls and street entertainment. With most suffering a little heat exhaustion, we cruised back to Tamworth via Chaffey Dam and the Loomberah district. That evening we dined at The Southgate Inn, a short walk from the Mercure. Members were amazed at how huge the meals were. There are some big appetites in the country.

A bit of a theme was developing for the weekend – lookouts. After a little car swapping on Sunday morning Aaron lead the group away in Stephen's NC with the first destination being Tamworth Lookout. We then headed north to Manilla, visiting their lookout before calling into Molly May's. This quirky café certainly looked after us serving us morning tea in the shade of the garden. As if we hadn't eaten enough already over the weekend, it was back in the cars for a run to Gunnedah for lunch. Upon arriving in town we ascended Porcupine Lookout to get a great view of the unfortunately very dry countryside. On the way to the lookout we made our only U-turn of the weekend – I suppose every run has to have one. For the afternoon we headed across the Breeza Plains to Werris Creek to visit the rail museum at the historic railway station. A thirty minute drive back to Tamworth was followed by dinner at the club, winding up the formal part of the weekend.

Monday morning the "visitors" began their journeys home while the "locals" enjoyed a sleep in. In typical MX-5 Club fashion it was a great weekend with great cars, great roads, great food, great fun and most importantly, great people.





Myall Lakes Run

07 APRIL WORDS **JOHN HANSEN**
PHOTOS **GRAHAM ROCHESTER JOHN HANSEN**

MID NORTH COAST



An enthusiastic group assembled at 'The Donut' for the Mid North Coast Myall Lakes National Park run. The day was what I would call a typical Mid North Coast beautiful day with a clear blue sky, scattered high white clouds and a slight breeze all promising to unfold for a great day of driving.

At the briefing, Graham emphasized that the day was about enjoyment and travelling at one's own pace especially as the run was going to incorporate the Wootton Way. The presence of not 1, or 2 or even 3 but 5 highway patrol cars adjacent to the briefing area helped reinforce the safety message. Finally, we set off down the Pacific Highway for our first destination morning tea at the Flow Bar in Old Bar.

We reached the Flow Bar without incident. I wondered why our NC would not raise its roof and after a seemingly endless session of pushing various panels found that the boot had not been fully latched. Greg the previous owner, gave a quick 101 course on raising and lowering the roof, pointing out that unless the boot is fully latched the safety mechanism prevents roof movements.

The refreshments at the Flow Bar lived up to their reputation and after a relaxing morning tea we were ready to tackle the infamous 'Nurbushring' a.k.a the old Wootton Way to Bulahdelah before rejoining the Pacific Highway. The 'Nurbushring' had accumulated considerably more dry leaves on its surface since our last run and coupled with a couple of cars coming the other way reminded us to take care and to enjoy ourselves safely.

We regrouped before turning right onto the Pacific Highway for the next

part of the run to Tea Gardens and the Myall Lakes National Park. The highway bypasses Bulahdelah and certainly cuts down the travel time as it is a posted 110 kph until just before the Tea Gardens turn off. The new highway is certainly faster and safer. The road into Tea Gardens and Hawkes Nest highlighted the juxtaposition of scenic countryside punctuated with pockets of new development.

We followed a road the Myall Lakes National Park through the quintessential coastal forest and dune systems with glimpses of sparkling water until it ended at a punt service. We retraced our steps along the fairly narrow road to Tea Gardens. Its worth noting that the road has a posted 80 Kph limit and has no centre line marking and in parts is a shared pedestrian and vehicle roadway. The luncheon spot was the Boatshed also called The Cricketers Arms for a reason that escaped most of us. This was a popular eating spot right on the waters edge with Pelicans flying over and alighting on the canvas roof to give us a shadow show. A pleasant and relaxing lunch was had while we watched the procession of many different types of boats motoring along the waters and the nearby wharf. Saying farewell is always hard after such a pleasant day and the goodbyes sometimes appear to be a marathon event; such is the camaraderie that develops during a good day of driving, eating and sightseeing. The sun had been turned up to full and so we pressed the button, put our roof up, turned the air-con on and had a most relaxing journey back to Port Macquarie. Many thanks to Greg our run.

Donkey Day

RPM

08 APRIL WORDS **GRAHAM FLETCHER**
PHOTOS **GILLIAN FLETCHER JASON BROWN**

After meeting up at McGraths Hill for a cuppa before heading out, the RPM members had a relatively short run up the Bells Line of Road for a relaxed day with hosts Garry and Robyn Keyvar, at their gorgeous property at Berambing. Many police vehicles manned the roads looking for another car club that headed up that way at speed, never a wise thing to do on a Sunday.

Upon arrival at our destination we put the cars out to graze in the car park and settled in for morning tea, while catching up on the latest news.

Concerns about the weather were not warranted as the sun began to shine through the morning cloud cover to create a splendid day of around 25 degrees.

Robyn and Garry are breeders of Irish donkeys and Robyn introduced us to her latest Jenny's and the children who are only a few months and days old, all while giving a very interesting talk on these lovely, warm, little-known animals. Newcomers to the RPM Chapter and even Sydney members were welcomed on the day as always from our members who delight in the chance to make new

and interesting friends. Gary cooked the sausages on the BBQ while other members provided bits and pieces as prearranged. Although the cakes and biscuits were wonderful, I think the winner on the day went to Gina who produced the cheesecake of the century.

Thank you to Brigid and Ron for organising and leading the run. RPMers would also like to extend a huge thank you to Garry & Robyn for their warm, hospitality and organising a day that was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Interstate Challenge

MOTORSPORT

14 APRIL WORDS IAN COMBES
PHOTOS ROB WILKINS

On 14th April, the 2018 Interclub Challenge took place at Winton Raceway, hosted by the AROCA Club of Victoria. The weather forecast leading up to the weekend was a bit of a worry, with some rain forecast for Saturday.

29 NSW MX-5 Club members made the trek down to Winton, with a number of keen souls going down a day early to have some early practice on the Friday. Most found that practice day useful, particularly those that hadn't seen the Winton track before. The practice day ended in disaster for Mike Kelsey though, who had a catastrophic brake failure at the end of the straight coming back onto the short track, resulting in a high-speed off-track excursion into the in-field, causing extensive damage to the underside of the car. Unfortunately, that was the end of Mike's weekend. Phil Donnelly had mechanical issues which also saw him as a non-starter on Saturday, leaving 27 NSW cars to line up on Saturday to do battle.

The track day on Saturday was organised by AROCA, which meant that competitors from AROCA and some other clubs were invited. As a result, a total of 120 cars were entered for the event, about half of which were MX-5s which in turn were pretty evenly split between NSW and Victoria/Tasmania. Whilst the numbers were pretty even, unfortunately, the classes didn't work out very well, with 'match-ups' not possible in some classes. Whilst this affected both clubs, it was a particular problem for the NSW Club. In a similar way to last year at SMSP, our southern friends didn't front anyone in their 'Open' class (roughly our class 9 and 10), which meant that a fair number of our

competitors couldn't make a contribution to the Interclub Challenge. Conversely, NSW had no-one in the Restricted Open Class. That didn't stop the opposition from posting some pretty rapid times though, with one of the super-modified cars posting a 1:36 on the long track. Saturday started off well, with good conditions for motorsport. The morning was on the long track, switching to the short track in the afternoon. With a big field, sessions had around 20 cars in them. The short track would have been more interesting, but as it happens, the heavens opened before we could enjoy the short track. I believe everyone got two dry sessions on the long circuit – not quite enough to really get into it. Most of us sat out the (damp) 3rd run on the long circuit. Based on the forecast, we were hoping for a light shower or two, but Victoria didn't disappoint – it then bucketed down and didn't dry out for the rest of the day. Some the earlier groups (which included the Vic/Tas cars) got a moderately dry run, but the rain really set in before the first NSW group (4th group) went out. The session was delayed in the hope that conditions would improve (they didn't). To say that the rain caused havoc would be the under-statement. Two NSW drivers (Luke Kovacic and Phil Ashton) unfortunately came to grief in the same spot – coming onto pit straight on the short circuit. Luke made heavy contact (twice) with the concrete wall on the outside, while Phil was a bit more fortunate finding the tyre wall on the inside. Both cars suffered a lot of damage, but are both repairable thankfully.

In the dry (long circuit) David Lawler had a good run in the new NC *continued...*



setting the fastest NSW time with a 1:38.9, just pipping Russ, with Ralph third. In the wet, Dennis Cheswick was the best with a 1:19.9 lap. Michael DeMaio and Jamie Martin also deserve a mention, beating the Victorians in the wet, but unfortunately hadn't done quite so well in the dry on the long circuit, so didn't manage to win their classes overall.

Luke Kovacic won the Standard ND class (fortunately posting a time on the short circuit before his accident). Joe failed to post a time in the afternoon however, which affected our points in that class. Gus Elias upheld our honour in the modified NA/NB class, winning that class. Phil Ashton unfortunately didn't complete a flying lap (and hence no time, and no points) in the wet before his off...

The Victorians won in standard NA/NB, Modified NC/ND and Super Modified. There was no match-up for Standard NA, NC, Restricted Open or Open classes. It is always hard to beat the Victorian/Tasmanian club on their home track, but the weather conditions definitely disadvantaged the NSW club, even they some of the result in the wet went our way. Not surprisingly, the Victorian/Tasmanian Club won the day : 970 vs 740, but the result could easily have been a lot closer.

There are many lessons to be learned from that weekend, and much thinking to be done before the 2019 Interclub Challenge. It has been recognised that the NSW and Vic/Tas class structures may need to be rearranged. Very much a mixed bag that weekend.



Land and Sea Run

ILLAWARRA

12 APRIL WORDS **KIM RANGER**
PHOTOS **KIM RANGER VICKI BOTTOMLEY**

What a fantastic autumn day for a tops down MX5 run for those that didn't have to work. We started out from McDonalds at Heathcote with 4 cars venturing down the Old Highway with the sound of nature all around us before meeting up with the main road until turning off at Albion Park where we collected Barry in his MX-5 for the next part of our journey up Macquarie Pass when someone said "where's Wally" and low and behold there he was at the bottom of the pass on his phone taking snap shots as we gave a wave and ventured up the pass only to be confronted by a cycle convoy. We were ushered past the first group then the second and finally the third before getting a nice run through the rest of the pass then onto Jamberoo Mountain Road where we met the other two wheel variety of motor bikes but they caused us no concern. We arrived at Kevin Walsh Oval Jamberoo for our stop where we picked up Viv and Brian had a chat and coffee before we continued through Jamberoo, onto Swamp Road then along the coastal road before ending up at Gerroa Fishermans Club where we were joined by Brendan for a lovely lunch with spectacular views. Thanks to all that come along for our midweek run.



Taralga Run

CANBERRA

29 APRIL WORDS **KERRY EVANS**
PHOTOS **ROB WILKINS**



Block and Tackle Blast

HUNTER

15 APRIL WORDS FELICITY HARNDEN
PHOTOS IAN NUNN JOHN PURCELL

With the promise of a beautiful morning, 19 cars met at Warners Bay McDonalds for a quick coffee and pre-run talk before heading off around the Lake to Teralba and up to Freeman's Waterhole and Cooranbong. Unfortunately, a minor accident in Teralba caused a slight disruption of the group for a short time. Luckily, no-one appeared injured, and a thank you to tail end Mark who remained for a short period of time at the accident to ensure appropriate

assistance was on it's way.

From there it was an enjoyable drive to through Cooranbong, where John and Gaye joined the run, taking our numbers to 20 cars. We then headed up the Yarramalong Valley, where other car clubs, including Porsche and BMW, were enjoying the drive also.

The morning tea stop at Jerry's Cafe at Kulnura was particularly busy with an enormous array of motorbikes, and after a brief stop, the consensus was to continue to our lunch destination, but not

before visitors Greg and Yvonne joined the group with their new RF just picked up from Newcastle Mazda and already on it's first outing!

We then all headed down through Gosford and out to Kincumber, reaching our lunch destination at Block N Tackle Brewery, where we filled the place to capacity. Paddles of beer, cider and food were enjoyed before everyone parted ways for their various return trips. A big thank you to John and Chris for another successful run.



On 29 April 2018, on a cloudy and cool Canberra morning, we met at McDonalds at Epic. We started with 18 vehicles in two groups. We proceeded to Bungendore and picked up another two vehicles. The scenery from Canberra was beautiful with many trees in their autumn hues. At Goulburn we split into two groups for coffee at The Roses café and Goulburn Services Club.

Our lunch stop was the Taralga Hotel; a picturesque old building in a small town which was a busy historical site and very busy centre in the rich wool days. The staff at the pub were excellent providing first class meals for 42 people. After lunch and photos outside the pub our large group travelled via Laggan, Crookwell, Gunning, Gundaroo, Sutton and finally home. As always we had a great day with like-minded people and fantastic little cars, many thanks to everyone for a most enjoyable day.

All Kinds of Everything Run

ILLAWARRA

21 APRIL WORDS LENA HILL PHOTOS ANN HICKS

The title of this run certainly lived up to its name as you will see when reading through this report. There were 13 cars plus a guest in another car (not an MX-5) meeting in Haywards Bay for a 9.00am start. The day looked a bit grey – a sure promise of rain. This promised was fulfilled as we travelled along the M1 towards Wollongong.

How lucky for those who could put their roofs up quickly, unlike one or two (included us) who couldn't and got a bit wet. From Wollongong, we travelled along the Princes Highway, passing some picturesque towns like Coledale, Thirroul, Corrimal, Austinmere and Bulli. Yes, the run was a bit slow as the speed limit through these towns was 50kph. Despite the relatively heavy traffic there were many lovely views of the ocean all along the coastal route.

Our journey took us over the Seacliff Bridge with the most beautiful view of the coast, towards Stanwell Park where we stopped for morning tea. This is a lovely big park and very popular as it is also adjacent to the beach. We think this park could be a place for a "MX-5 Picnic in the Park". By the time we left

for Bundeena, the rain had stopped and needless to say, all the roofs went down. The weather turned quite nice after that with the sun making a welcome appearance.

We followed our run through the Royal National Park, which early in the morning over the weekend, can be busy with motorbikes and cyclists. Fortunately for us, by the time we went through the Park, there were only a few. The road meandered through the park with trees making a natural canopy across the road for us to travel through. We were able to go a bit faster here but mindful of the 80kph speed limit and wary of motorbikes and cyclists.

Arriving in Bundeena, after parking the cars, we had some time to walk around the shops, buy an ice cream or just sit in the park taking in the beautiful scenery. Our ferry to Cronulla arrived at 12.00pm and it took us along the Port Hacking River passing some big waterfront houses, boats, houseboats and all other types of water craft, arriving in Cronulla at 12.30pm. It was a short walk to Gunnamatta Bay where our picnic lunch was waiting for us. We sat down to a

lunch of chicken and salads and rolls. A big thank you to Julie Sando and Dianne Carey for organising and setting-up the lunch as well as Kim and Peter Ranger for supplying the esky and Mark Sando for bringing the ice. You can't have lunch and not top it off with something sweet, slices made by Julie and Lena and watermelon. Yum!

After lunch the choice was there to walk up to the Cronulla Mall which some did but most of us preferred to stay back and have a good chinwag and the opportunity of catching-up with everyone. As we gave each car a Ferry timetable, they could choose what time they wanted to return to Bundeena. Most of us decided on the 2.30pm ferry to go back to collect their cars parked in Bundeena.

All Kinds of Everything Run? Yes indeed – the rain, the coastal towns and views of the ocean, morning tea at Stanwell Park, Royal National Park, visit to Bundeena, the return ferry ride to Cronulla and picnic at Gunnamatta Park but most of all just enjoying the company of other MX-5ers.



April Trackday

MOTORSPORT

22 APRIL WORDS LINDSAY GREEN PHOTOS ROB WILKINS

Having not felt like I or Josh were in our groove with Motorsport for the last year, we were hoping for a much improved 2018. We were looking forward to the April trackday (at Sydney Motorsport Park's South Circuit) but due to heavy personal schedule we'd decided 4 runs each was the max we would do.

Loading the car with the little light left on the Saturday afternoon, we aimed for an early night to be on the road at 5:15am. An uneventful 2 hour trip down from Newcastle and ease of unloading, registering and scrutineering was a breeze thanks to the team of happy volunteers keeping all the entrants in check. Group 1 went out, to be back in under red flag as the Cobra was towed back in with day ending steering issues. My group was also called back (the MX-5 in front of me got caught in the kitty litter) but by the end of round 1, I'd already broken my best time. I didn't end there - round after round we got faster. I'd taken 1.349 seconds off to get into the 1:09's and Josh even bested his time with just under 0.2 seconds shaved off.

The conditions for the day were perfect, cool and sunny with plenty of opportunity to have a great time behind the wheel with the plus-side of besting your times. It was a shame to pack up early as for many these extra rounds usually assist to wipe more time off before heading home. On reflection of these days, I always know where I can improve and we'll be focused on future track days to achieve the mind and body balance that is required to create PBs.

Big shout out to the ladies. There were fewer of us there on that day but not one of us was frowning. Yuki Yu shaved over 4 seconds off her previous time to achieve in the 1:14's and Stephanie Rochford-Cole achieved 1:09's on her first time at SMSP South Circuit. Keiran Taylor wiped off huge time later in the day to achieve 1:14s in the Director. Of course, the men had their share of awesome results. Fastest time of the day went to Curran Brennan with a 1.02.591, then Russ Maxwell with 1.02.934 followed by Blake Rochford-Cole with a 1.03.708. Bryan Shedden cracked the 1.05s after the last 3 SMSP days in the 1.06s. Charlie Simon (junior

participant) achieved 1.07s (beating his Dad in 1.08s in the same car).

Even with the hold ups of the occasional vehicle recovery, the whole day was run very smoothly from start to finish thanks to the efforts of all the volunteers. From the organisers behind the scenes to the army of flaggies, scrutineers, registration, control tower and dummy grid, without them we would not be enjoying spectacular events like these.

This is where we encourage many others to volunteer, you may be local to the area and have some free time, if so we encourage you to give back to the club that provides so much for it's members. The old adage of many hands makes light work is very true and it's a great opportunity to meet new people and make friends as well as having a terrific time!

On a personal note, I feel honoured to participate in this club's motorsports events.... even better when you improve on your own times and have great camaraderie with fellow participants!



MX-5 ★★★★★ Alpine Run

BREAKFAST CLUB

27 - 29 APRIL WORDS STEVE CONNOLLY PHOTO PETER BATTISSON

After weeks of anticipation the day finally arrived; we detailed our 2008 NC while waiting for the rush hour traffic to dissipate. When the time came we fueled her and headed South for our first meeting of the MX-5 Club and the 5 Star Alpine Run!

After a long and arduous journey with heavy traffic and resurfacing to contend with, we approached the city lights of Canberra and were very happy to see the neon Ibis sign, right next to the freeway. No more thinking required tonight, seems the organisers of this rendezvous know what they are doing! We were even happier when we pulled up in the car park and saw 6 other tricked up MX-5s, with big smiles and some nervous excitement, it was time to get some sleep, we have a 6am start.

We arrived at the designated meeting point and were warmly welcomed by the other club members. Despite the early hour there was a buzz in the air and people were busily readying their cars for the 2000km of cruising that lay before us. Peter introduced himself, got us to sign in and provided us with a list of the GPS waypoints, the excitement was building.

"What's ya tyre pressure at?" Peter asked. David and I looked at each other blankly; we had no idea. "Ummm, we just had them nitrogen

filled", David replied, "they should be right." "Bull****," said Peter, "the drive we are doing, you need to drop them to 24 or 26 PSI Max"! We were quickly starting to learn the benefits of being "part of the club"

Start Your Engines

At 7am sharp, Peter led the pack out of the car park and we headed south to our 1st waypoint in Cooma. We were in awe of the spectacular sight in front of us; a dozen shiny, loved & unique MX-5s. This was the first time we had been a part of something like this and already we felt the camaraderie and couldn't wait for the weekend to unfold.

Our first stop was Cooma to top off the fuel and do some final checks before hitting the Snowy Regions. We chatted with some of the other drivers and admired each other's pride and joy. Some of the group had known each other for years and others as green as us. No matter, we all had a common love for the MX-5 and the excitement continued to build.

One more stop to fuel the drivers at the Delegate café before we headed to the Victorian border and down the Bonang Highway. I'd heard the others talking about this section which has spectacular scenery, sweeping corners and a quality road surface; the person that designed this road was most definitely a driving enthusiast!

We finished our feasts and Peter gave a driver's briefing. This helped calm our nerves and simultaneously

stirred our excitement. He reinforced the importance of driving safely, being mindful of other road uses AND having fun. I was sharing a car with a mate so was relieved when he told us there'd be an opportunity to do a second run along the top section of the Bonang Highway for those who wanted!

The Bonang Highway

The road was amazing, beautiful sweeping bends left and right, my first run as a co-driver was exhilarating. I took over the wheel and headed back up the 15km hill, I was not disappointed! The beauty of this road is there's no need to speed to enjoy it; there's plenty of fun to be had well under the speed limit as you take on corner after corner, turn after turn.

The second run took its toll and nausea had kicked in for some, the lefts and rights, ups and downs meant we had to take some time out by the side of the road. A perfect opportunity to appreciate the countryside, the smell of the trees and reflect on the fun just had (oh, and some might need another breakfast).

We all took off towards the next waypoint in Orbost Victoria, we were lagging through the next section and had to take some breaks. We tried to text Peter but were deep in the bush and had no service. We figured they'd carry on regardless; we bumbled along as quickly as we could, stopping here and there to manage the motion sickness... we were wrong!

With the next waypoint still over 10 clicks away, we rounded a corner and saw the whole team on the side of the road waiting our arrival. Some were tapping their watches (understandably, we must have been 30 minutes behind them), but no matter they were all pleased to see us and glad we were OK. We apologised and said they should have carried on, they shunned this and assured us we were 'part of the club' and everyone looked out for each other. We decided to call it a day and told the others we'd see them at dinner. We wanted to take it slow for the run home, after all it was our first BreakFast Club event and according to Google maps by the time we arrived at our accommodation we would have done almost 700km on day 1! Little did we know the best was yet to come!

That night we met at a restaurant for a very pleasant meal (an Indian / Italian combo Peter had organized for all the drivers), we shared stories and reflected on the day; some had a few quiet beers and a few not so quiet; most people retired early in preparation for Day 2 of action.

The Alpine National Park

We were scheduled to depart the Bright Velo Hotel at 7am, we all woke early, excited for another day of driving and exploring the Southern Alps. At 6:30am the action started in the car park as drivers readied their cars for the day, we rushed down to warm the car up and check things over.

As the sun began to rise, we took off in Convoy taking things nice and easy to give the car, drivers and roads a chance to warm up. Bright is only 319m above sea level, but it lies in the valley between Mount Hotham & Mount Kosciusko so not much sun gets in to the valley until much later. Nobody wanted to get caught out on a slippery road.

The first waypoint of the day was Tawonga South followed by Twinkles of Omeo, the other side of Mount Hotham; Tawonga is deep in the forest and the morning fog swept eerily across the road as the cars flew by. We turned around at the bottom, regrouped and started the climb up the Great Alpine Road to the

summit of Mount Hotham.

The beauty of getting out so early is we had beat most of the other road users and could enjoy the almost deserted roads. As the roads warmed up, so did the drivers. We snaked our way up the mountain basking in incredible scenery, some tight bends and some enormous drop-offs – this road is not for the faint hearted! The driving was exhilarating and at times a little nerve racking!

We met at the summit and looked out in wonder at the spectacular scenery that lay before us. Mount Hotham has an elevation 1861m, as the adrenalin dissipated from the run up the hill we felt on top of the world!

We spent some time at the top comparing cars, mods and tyres (another valuable lesson!), I was amazed that 3 cars had different types of tyres and they were all the best - according to the owners.)

The Washing Machine

I was doing the next section solo as my co-driver was trying out another members ND to compare it to our NC. There are definitely pros and cons to flying solo but I was glad for this section as it's an unforgiving 100km run with literally 1000's of corners and very few straights. I don't think it would have been much fun in the passenger seat. It reminded me of a Bond movie where they race along the side of a cliff in the French Riviera with sheer drop offs and tight blind bends to tackle. Again, this drive wasn't about speed but about finding the line, pushing the car around the corners smoothly and safely.

I was drafting 2 other cars in front and alternating from trying to keep up to maintaining a 4 second gap in case anything unexpected happened. I was glad there was a procession of us; it gave me more confidence as we were miles from anywhere, it also meant there were other people to look out for us if we took a wrong turn or something went wrong.

As the odometer ticked on, I was grinning from ear to ear. I wish I'd brought my Go Pro. The warning signs on the side of the road were useful to gauge the corner coming up and gave

us a guide on what speed and what gear were needed to arrive at the apex before powering out. It was usually second or third; though a few hairpins required first gear, especially if we were climbing. The roads were relatively quiet though a few times a car or bike came the other way, one bike was flying, his rubber was on his side of the road but his head on mine, he was really surprised to see me and probably needed to change his suit shortly after.

This section was without a doubt the drive of my life, so much fun, I couldn't believe this was legal OR, why I hadn't discovered it before. I've done a lot of motorcycle riding on the track and through national parks, but this was a whole other world and so much safer.

We arrived in Mitta Mitta for a much-needed rest and lunch-break before heading back to Bright for a few social beers at the Bright Brewery followed by a top Thai dinner that Peter had organized.

The Long Road Home

We had another early start the next day, the car park was buzzing by 6:30, there was still 6 waypoints to tick off before this Alpine Run was over. Sadly, we were heading directly back to Sydney which was a 7-hour drive away. Oh to take on another few hundred more Corners. However, I was exhausted from the previous 2 days, and looking forward to switching on the cruise control; then settling into the comfortable MX-5 seats and reminiscing about the last couple of days of driving and getting to know my ride inside and out.

It was sad to say goodbye and leave our new friends and a part of me wanted to tick off the next 6 waypoints too. Everybody had been so warm and welcoming, sharing stories, suggestions and knowledge about the MX-5 world, I had learned so much. I was looking forward to the next run already, in fact when I took my turn in the passenger seat I was already on the Club website checking out the events calendar and learning how to get my racing license (first up a CAMS PCC). There's an MX-5 Cup on next weekend, that's where I'll start!



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