

## **CAPTAINS 2023 AGM REPORT**

This year is a good opportunity to record and reflect on my 12 years as Club Captain and 3 years before that as the founder and first co-ordinator of the BreakFast Club. A lot has changed, might I add for the better, since I first joined the club in 2004 with most of those changes taking place in the first years of my terms as Club Captain. I am pleased that I joined a Committee with 3 other BreakFast Club associates to support the changes that have helped to make our Club what it is today under the presidency of Bryan Sheddon and then succeeding Presidents.

The management and functions of the Club are always under review. During my term, the members have all given their time and effort on the Committee to continually improve what we do for the benefit of the general membership. I have no doubt that going forward the committees will continue to improve what our Club provides.

Our membership has remained constant through the COVID experience with 1,101 members at September 2023 compared to around 450 members in 2 chapters when I joined. We now have 7 chapters, and two special interest groups, Motorsport and the BreakFast Club. The Chapters are the heart and soul of our Club and in the past 12 months they have conducted 176 social runs, 116 social and 2 technical events. In addition, there was 4 All Club events, namely Australia Day, the Brass Monkey, NotMeet and the Presidents Picnic, which were all well supported and raised money for our Club's charity, CareFlight.

The Breakfast Club conducted 9 runs; our Canberra Chapter had 20 runs, 16 social and 2 technical events; Hunter Chapter had 25 runs and 16 social events; Illawarra Chapter lead the way with 34 runs and also had 16 social events; Mid North Coast had 6 runs; RPM had 29 runs and 15 social events. The South Coast Chapter had 21 runs and 10 social events being the highest number of events in proportion to its membership. Sydney our largest chapter had 30 runs and the head of the pack with 41 social events divided between their northern and southern regions.

Since 2019, when 842 members attended at least one event, our participation rate has been falling, firstly due to COVID and more recently a national cost of living crisis, to 734 taking part in Club events in the past year. As Club Captain I see the growth in multi day events with 24 interesting and bespoke multi day events taking place in addition to our monthly runs that included 3 overseas runs to Tasmania!. Canberra was the most prolific having organised 6 multi day events; and closely followed by South Coast with 5; Hunter, Illawarra and RPM each having 3 whilst Sydney had 2 with one BreakFast Club and All Club multi day event.

The event with the biggest attendance in 2023 has been the President's Picnic an event close to my heart as the organiser and having developed the concept of fusing the then President's Picnic and Concours, that had small attendances when compared to what it has now become. This year saw 210 attend on yet another beautiful sunny Sydney spring day at Ebenezer Church Grounds to enjoy each others company and conduct a Show "N" Shine with 118 MX-5 spread out over 4 classes plus the People Choice, Best Ladies entry and Best in Show. On the day 38 members gave up part of their time to volunteer for the numerous roles that must be undertaken if the event is

to be successful. I take another opportunity of thanking all those who volunteered for their support on the day.

In 2023 we did not conduct any competition for Modified MX-5s at the Presidents Picnic due to the lack of registrations before the cut off date as what happened with Concours. This is the first year that we not hold Concours which is personally disappointing for me though I have not competed in that event. Concours requires experienced judges, a set of rules for awarding points and a way of recording and allocating points to each participant. Hopefully those members with a passion for Concours can, before next September next year, set up a committee to organise Concours going forward. It remains my hope that we have the numbers in 2024 to conduct one or more competitions in Modified MX-5s that has seen a drop in participation over the past 5 years.

We are the biggest MX-5 Club and more than likely largest single marque car club in Australia. The secret of our Club's success over a long period of time is that we offer a wide range of activities to suit the social and driving expectations of MX-5 owners through our seven chapters and two special interest groups. We have not as yet found the way to accommodate young MX-5 enthusiasts to join the Club. Our activities are supported by the contributions of our Committee of 12 with 7 Convenors and numerous volunteers willing to participate and assist.

This year Bryan Hicks and Andy Bottomly step down as the Convenors of Sydney Chapter after 8 and 5 years respectively with Stephen and Maree Eccleston taking on the role. Christine Cameron and John Purcell, our new Club Captain, stepped down last month after 5 years handing over to David and Elaine Gazzard as the Convenors of Hunter Chapter. After 5 years Chris Wyatt has finished his term as a Convenor of RPM chapter with Bob Gaurson making way to allow Ann Hicks to join Senia Gaunson as the Convenors of Illawarra Chapter. This year the founding. Convenors of South Coast Chapter since its inception in 2019, Brian and Anda Clayton, have handed over to Geoff & Rose Smith. Rod and Maryanne Nicholas continue as the Convenors of Canberra Chapter as the Club searches for a Convenor of the North Coast Chapter.

On behalf of the membership, I extend to the Convenors and their volunteers who enable the Chapters to conduct their events year on year, the deserving appreciation that their contribution and service to the Club for which they are entitled. To those members in the Chapters continuing on or newly elevated to their important roles as convenors or as volunteers providing services to their chapters, I extend my appreciation on behalf of the Club for their time and willingness to serve.

As my last Captains AGM Report I congratulate John Purcell accepting the appointment as Club Capetian and must say that it has been an honour to be a Committee member having the opportunity to work with numerous Committee Members and the general membership in overseeing my areas of responsibility and doing my utmost to improve the Club over a 12 year term. I end my last annual report with the same plagiarism of a well known statement of JFK, namely :-

***“Don't ask what the Club can do for you, ask what you can do for the Club”.***