

# MX-5 TRAIL

The monthly magazine of the  
Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc.

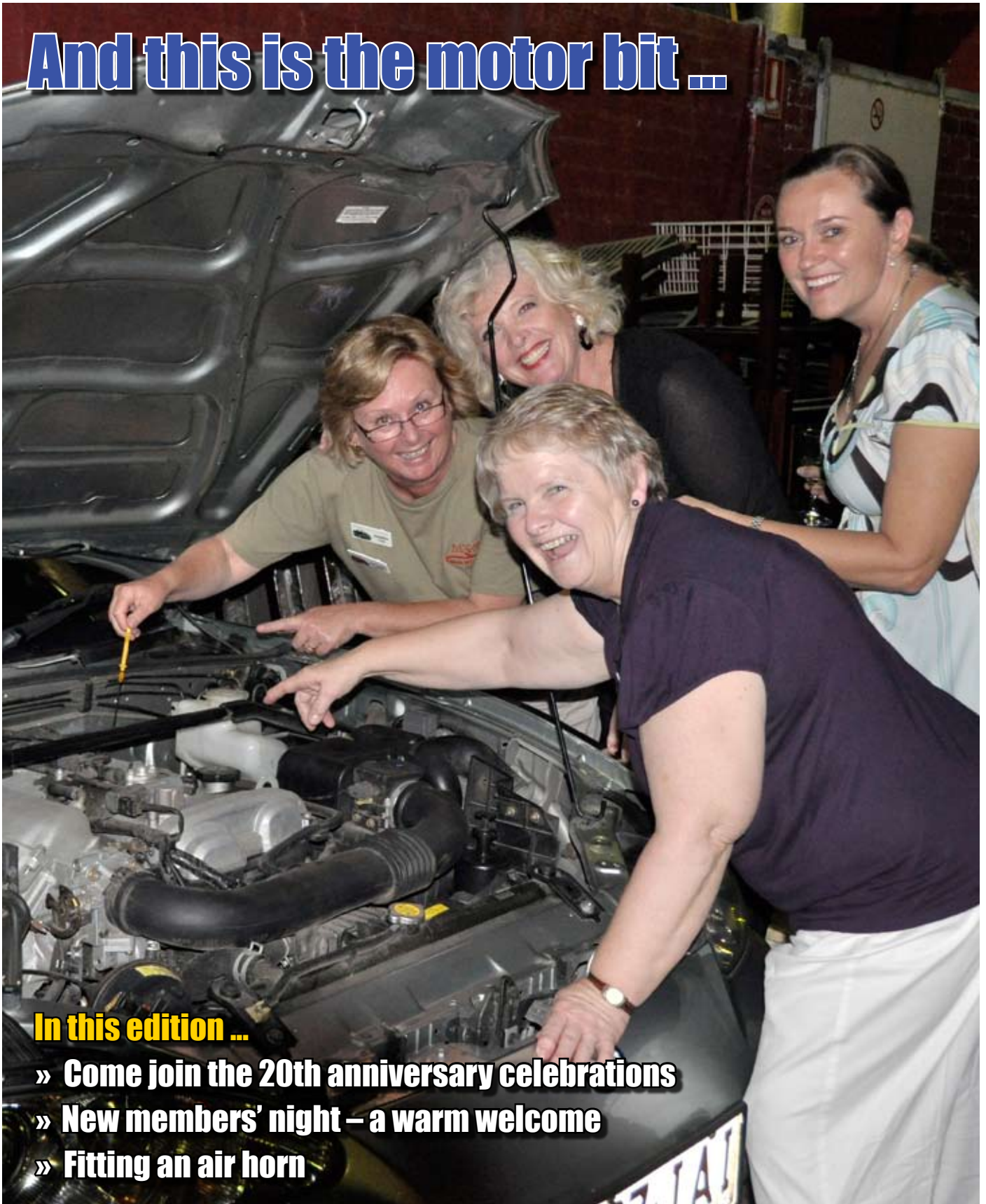
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[www.mx5vic.org.au](http://www.mx5vic.org.au)



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## And this is the motor bit ...



### In this edition ...

- » Come join the 20th anniversary celebrations
- » New members' night – a warm welcome
- » Fitting an air horn



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Cover  
image:

"We need a longer dipstick - this one won't reach the oil!"  
*Janette Todd, Lindy Anderson, Joan Read and Deb Galtry prove that "goils ain't oils" at the new members' night.*  
Photo: Rodney Laitt

See MX-TRA on-screen: go to < [www.mx5vic.org.au/mx-tra\\_2010april.asp](http://www.mx5vic.org.au/mx-tra_2010april.asp) >

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# Murray's Corner ...

■ Murray Finlay – President

*Where would we be without our fantastic Mazda MX-5 club?*

The cars are sensational, of course, but sharing the experience with like-minded owners more than doubles the fun!

For me, what started with the purchase of my first MX-5 could have just been a passing phase ... an early mid-life crisis that would have given way eventually to the family wagon or the 4WD.

But, through the friendship and common interest discovered with others through the Mazda MX-5 Club, it's turned into 20 years of continuous ownership and what feels like a life-long bond with the car and many other Club members.

*And now the Club itself is approaching its 20th birthday.*



Janette, in her Social-lights column on page 6, gives a comprehensive rundown of what we are planning to commemorate and celebrate the event.

The highlight will be the 20th anniversary

celebration at the Westpac (formerly Lexus) Centre on Saturday night, 14 August ... your invitation is in the centre spread of this MX-TRA.

It promises to be a special night, and it would be great to see as many members there as possible.

### *Speaking of great events ...*

Twenty-nine members from Victoria and Tasmania headed off to McLaren Vale just south of Adelaide for **NatMeet IX**, the ninth biennial gathering of MX-5 enthusiasts.

With 140 participants it was the biggest yet (just shading our event at Beechworth in 2008), and it was a very enjoyable event (made all the more enjoyable by not being on the organising committee!).

Our report on the event will appear in the May edition of MX-TRA, but I can give some details away now ...

While Queensland won both the Champion State (again!) and the individual champion awards, we did have some success:

- » Kim Cole and Peter Phillips took out their classes in the Willunga hillclimb

- » Grant Butler & Saeko Fujiki, Jenny & Bruce Gray and Rob & Ros Eastwood won their classes in the concours d'elegance
- » Bruce Harvey & Cheryl Murray took home the "people's choice" award at the concours
- » Don & Linda Nicoll were runners-up in the funkhana
- » and our own MX-TRA and website carried off the award for the best Club member communications

Among the many highlights was the talk at the final presentation dinner by Mike Quist, who was Mazda Australia's national PR manager for 20-odd years. He masterminded the public launch of the MX-5 into Australia, and hatched the plan to form the state MX-5 Clubs.

His talk on the behind-the-scenes goings-on with the development and launch of the car held everyone spellbound; he spoke for 45 minutes and you could have heard a pin drop!

And when someone mentioned that there were some 400 cars at the MG natmeet up the road in Adelaide (compared to our 80), he quipped: "Yes, but 300 of them are for spare parts!"



Closer to home, last weekend saw the first anniversary of the formation of the Club's Ballarat area group, with a run of 18 cars around some great MX-5 roads. Again, there will be a report on that in the next edition.

It was a shame the weather was not as bright as the cars, but the company and the good ol' pub lunch at Smythesdale more than made up for that.

On behalf of the Club I congratulate John and Noellene Gleeson for all their hard and consistent work in building that group up to what it has become in just 12 short months. But of course we must also congratulate the existing and the many new members who have made this the vibrant group what it is now.

And the Club committee has rewarded that growth with a new recognition ... see page 9 for details on that.

**Until next time, look up, stay back!**

*Murray*

## For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

### April

- 18 NE Vic – Yackandandah run
- 18 North Tas – Rob's Runaround

### May

- 2 Founders' run
- 9 Mother's Day
- 30 09/10 Championship Rd 8: Sprints, Sandown

### June

- 6 Pam & Tyrone's Petanque run

### July

- 3 09/10 Championship Rd 9: Sprints, Phillip Island
- 4 Dannock's Drive

### August

- 8 10/11 Championship Rd 1: Sprints, Winton
- 14 20th Anniversary celebrations – Westpac [Lexus] Centre
- 22 10/11 Championship Rd 2: Hillclimb, Haunted Hills
- 29 Fed Square display

### September

- TBC 10/11 Championship Rd 3: Sprints, Sandown
- 12 Great Ocean Road run

### October

- 23-24 Winton 6-Hour
- 31 Cars of the World display - 40+ MX-5s needed, please!

### November

- TBC 10/11 Championship Rd 4 [event TBC]

### December

- 12 10/11 Championship Rd 5: Sprints, Phillip Island



# Motor Sport

■ James Saunders – Club Captain - Motor Sport



Well, Calder is done and dusted. It was another great turn out by the MX-5 Club and I rather enjoyed driving the circuit – a bit more than I thought I would, actually.

The track was in good condition and it was a really unique experience to be driving on the track at night. Lindy has written an article about the event, which you'll find later in this magazine.

The next event was at Phillip Island on 11 April (as this month's MX-TRA was being printed), and then we're at Sandown on 30 May. Entry forms for Sandown are on our website.

I'm really looking forward to the Island as we always have a great time there and, of course, I'm looking forward to my stay at Silverwater Resort as mentioned in last month's column.

On to other business. We have our annual motor sport meeting scheduled for Friday 28 May, early evening. Along with a discussion on rules, events and ideas, we'll have a BBQ and a bit of a social catch up. So please put your thinking caps on and if there's anything you'd like to discuss please email me at [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)

## 2009 -2010 Calendar

May 30	Rd 8	Sandown
July 3	Rd 9	Phillip Island

## 2010 -2011 Calendar

Aug 8	Rd 1	Winton
22	Rd 2	Haunted Hills
Sept TBC	Rd 3	Sandown
Oct 23-24	2010 AROCA Winton 6-Hour regularity ...	
Non-Championship Club event <i>Spectators and helpers welcome</i>		
Nov TBC	Rd 4	[event TBC]
Dec 12	Rd 5	Phillip Island

[mx5vic.org.au](http://mx5vic.org.au) so we can formulate a bit of an agenda of topics for everyone to have a think about prior to the meeting.

Robert has kindly offered to host the event at his home in Glen Waverley, so please RSVP to Robert on [captain2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain2@mx5vic.org.au). Further details will be forthcoming closer to the event.

In relation to Club motor sport equipment, we now have a "quarter master" system that Robert has set up and is co-ordinating.

This means that you can borrow a helmet and a few other things for our Club activities. This is a good way for members to dip their toe into the water without too much expense. We've actually been offering this service for years, however the new system will give us a bit more control over things, as you'll need to sign items in and out of the register. If you're interested, feel free to contact myself or Robert.

We have a few Club members heading up to Bathurst over Easter to compete in the FOSC 6-hour event. I'd like to wish all involved the best of luck and I'm looking forward to hearing about the event from Randy, who has promised an article for the magazine upon his return. I'm sure you'll all have a great time ... do us proud!

Finally, I mentioned last month that we're looking for feedback on the 20th Anniversary apparel range for motor sport. Are you interested in long sleeve t-shirts, collared shirts, caps ... that sort of thing? I haven't had any responses!! Please let myself or Steve (our Merchandise Officer) know what you'd like to see in the range.

Cheers ...

*James*



*You never know when owning an MX-5 will come in handy! The Sunday evening of the long weekend just past, Irish and I decided to do a drive-past of the vineyard where Tom Jones was performing.*

*Well, you wouldn't think that at that time there was a car spot on the verge right in front of Josef Chrony's vineyard where there was a three-metre gap through the trees giving us a great view of the stage and screen.*

*So with the top down and being fairly low to the ground, in fact almost stealth like, we sat there for over an hour in the comfort of our little car without anyone hassling us and heard all of his great hits!! Not having paper wasted to produce a ticket for us was also a big tick for the environment! All the best.*

*~ Rob Bryan, Tassie*

*PS: I didn't see the no parking sign until after I had the photo developed!*



# Social-lights

■ Janette Todd – Club Captain - Social

*It's me again, just to keep you all informed as to how we are progressing with our 20th Celebrations.*

The 20th Sub-Committee has been meeting regularly since the beginning of this year to put together what we hope you will find to be some spectacular events.

The biggest event, by far, will be a dinner dance at the Westpac Centre (formerly known as the Lexus Centre) in Melbourne on Saturday, 14 August 2010. We would normally hold our Annual General Meeting around this time, but the decision was taken to keep the formality of the AGM totally separate from the "celebration" of our birthday (we'll still have the awards presentations, though!).

Please have a read of my invitation in this month's centre spread – I encourage as many members (from near and far) as possible to come and join in the night. Bookings are open now – but I advise you to get in early as seating is limited!

The Sub-Committee considered quite a few venues, short listing and visiting the final contenders before booking the Lexus Centre (as it was then!). We are very excited about this as the venue will give us space and opportunity to enjoy a wonderful evening – good food, live music with the band "Jon Dory", our annual social and motor sport awards, some great raffle prizes, a huge birthday cake and of course, we hope, your company.

Murray, with special help from his very clever wife, Alyssa, has designed a truly elegant logo – which you would have seen on



the cover of every edition of MX-TRA since August 2009 (the beginning of our 20th year). This logo will appear on a series of special Club items – such as membership cards and key rings which ALL new and renewing Club members will receive in July.

Steve, our merchandise man, has been working furiously on a range of special apparel, which will be released at the Founders' Run on 2 May. You will be able to choose from black, **black** or **black** – but it will bear distinctive and stylish gold anniversary embroidery. Thanks to Steve, we have the opportunity to look

even better in our MX-5s!

Speaking of the Founders' Run – a flyer was included in March MX-TRA. It sounds like "Nanna" and "Pa" Cemm have a real treat in store for us on this run, so we hope you can join Margaret and Michael as they host a day of zoom zoom 1990-style!

You would have read a comment in "Murray's Corner" (March 2010) that we will soon be publishing our first Club book – its



# Membership

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

And still they come! More new members this month take us to yet another record.

**Current membership count:**

**458**

On behalf of our fine Club, I extend a warm welcome to:

» Kevin Brown	2001 Red NB
» Steve Cleve	1990 White NA
» Marilyn Clues	2001 Blue NB
» Colin Denman-Jones	2010 Stormy Blue NC
» Tuo Dong	1998 Evolution Gold
» Eric Field	1993 Classic Red NA
» Peter Hannah	1997 Neo Green NA
» Andrew Martin	1994 Classic Red NA
» Ken Morrissey	1999 Blue NB
» Nick Papadopoulos	1999 Silver NB
» Keith Salter	2009 Aluminium NC

**See you out and about ...**

*Will*

working title is "20 Roads for 20 years". This will be released in August at a special cost of – you guessed it – \$20. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this tome ... it is a big task that you have undertaken but one which I am sure will be appreciated and enjoyed by the wider membership.

We are currently considering some commemorative pieces that will be available only to those attending the dinner dance (either as giveaways or for sale) – so if you want to know more about that, you know what you have to do ... These items are yet to be finalised, but there are suggestions of lapel pins, wine and inscribed glass presentation packs, ceramic port decanters.

Other events in the pipeline are a display of MX-5s at Federation Square toward the end of August and our participation in late October at the prestigious "Cars of the World" display. We will be one of three marques being honoured there, along with Alfa Romeo and Bugatti, and we will need at least 40 MX-5s there to make our presence felt. More details will be given closer to the time, but certainly for now you can put a few notes in your diaries.

So, there you are: all up to date for the moment. A lot of work has been done and there is a lot more ahead of us – but we are excited that our 20th birthday celebrations are taking such wonderful shape and hope that you will share that feeling with us when you come along and join in the events.

*Janette*

# Scene about ...



## New Members' night : Formula Won

■ Words: Janette Todd ■ Photos: Rodney Laitt

Have to be honest here – when last year's New Members' Night became an absolute fizzer the Committee thought long and hard before scheduling the event in 2010.

Apart from the work involved, there are the financial costs and we are loathe to spend Club monies on events that potentially will lose more than we have invested.

Still, we went ahead with our planning and decided on a low-key night rather than the "semi-formal" affairs of previous years. Brilliant idea!

We headed to the "Garage Café" in Carlton – the Club has been there before for the same event, and a group of MX-5 owners (not necessarily Club members) meets there on a weekly basis. It was a great night – no need for speeches, everyone just got straight into car talk – even the ladies had their heads under bonnets ... and I don't mean hats!

I had already met a couple of the newer members to our Club on previous social runs so it was great to catch up with them again; and there were a few more very new faces to meet and greet. All up there were about 45 people sharing stories, tips and experiences – there was never a lull in conversation. But, isn't that always the way of it with our get-togethers – be it social or motor sport – the little car brings out the passion in all of us and long may she do so.

There were suggestions for *zoom zoom* roads (some that even Alistair wasn't aware of!), ideas for future articles in MX-TRA, plans to involve more ladies in the motor sport action – it is great to get this feedback because, after all, it is YOUR Club.

I know of at least two people who took home a member application form – I hope there may be more ... we may look like a "cardigan brigade" at times, but we are far from being ready for knee rugs and hot cocoa! There is so much to be gained from being a part of an energetic and vibrant club such as ours, so please come join us.

Thank you to all of you who attended – the new members and the not-so-new. I hope that we see you all again soon.

And remember.....

*It's a date – ink it in!*

*Janette*



■ Words: Judy Searl ■ Photo: Joan Read

■ Run organisers: Jacqui Sanderson & Joan Read

Welcome to the report on the Ladies' Day run for the Mazda MX-5 Club – attempt #2.

No, this is not my second attempt at writing this report but our second attempt at actually having the run. Last September a few brave women met at the café at Elwood Beach to participate in the Ladies' Day run. Can I just say that there were white caps on the bay, the wind was howling and it was very cold!!! A decision was made at that stage to postpone the run to a more auspicious date as, not only were we concerned about our safety on some parts of the run due to the high wind, but we also decided that this was supposed to be a fun day and the conditions were definitely not conducive to that.

Anyway, on 21 February we again met – and what a difference! The sun was shining, people were swimming and we all looked forward to a very pleasant day in the company of some friendly women. This is not my first report on a Ladies' Day run and, in my time in the Club, I have only missed one of these due to my being overseas. I find them to be a very enjoyable experience as they are always a relaxed and sometimes hilarious occasion.

Unfortunately this year there was a smaller turnout but that did not affect the enjoyment. I took along my sister-in-law as it is a great chance for other women not associated with the Club to experience the fun and camaraderie of our runs. Of course this did lead to a bit of confusion *as she is also called Judy Searl!!* So the initial run consisted of three MX-5s driven by Joan, Coral and yours truly x2 (remember the other Judy). We were gallantly led by Jacqui Sanderson, who was also navigating for Alyssa Finlay in Mazda3.

Before we even started a change was made to the running sheet as Beach Road was closed in part. Fortunately Alyssa knew the area so told us to follow she and Jacqui on a short cut to Black Rock. After turning off Beach Road, all of us except for Alyssa and Jacqui were stopped at a red light. From this moment on I began to wonder if I had an electronic device in my car that caused every light to turn red. We couldn't see Alyssa's car and couldn't raise them on the radio. At one stage I thought I saw them parked on the side of the road but ... right colour, wrong car!! Eventually we caught up with them and Coral reminded them of the convoy rules about *checking that the car behind you was still there* ... Alyssa apologised; they had been talking and not realised we'd fallen behind. *What would be the odds of two women chatting and losing track of their surroundings!?!* If I hear one word from the male fraternity I will be **very** annoyed.

The rest of this part of the run continued without incident (unless you regard some of the interesting comments from Joan on the cyclists in lycra in front of her car). It was beautiful driving along Beach Road in such lovely weather and seeing all the other people out enjoying our beautiful bay. All right, so I did notice the male joggers without their shirts on!

We eventually arrived at our first stop – the McClelland Gallery in Langwarrin. We met up with Shirley Hartnett there who joined in our run. First order of the day was of course coffee and a biscuit. After a great chat in the café we wandered around the gallery. There were some very interesting paintings there although I couldn't help but comment that if I had found some



of them in my garage I would have probably given them to the Salvos. I have never said I had a great appreciation of art!!

The next part of the run took us further out into the country. I was having a lovely time driving along chatting to my sister-in-law when for some reason I looked at my dashboard and realised this was something I should have done when we left home – I was nearly out of petrol and my yellow warning light was on. I told the others over the radio and Joan assured me there was a petrol station at one of the turns we had to make. I had an anxious few minutes then as I was already over the limit of what my car had done on a tank of petrol in the past. Fortunately we arrived at a petrol station in time and I filled up. The other ladies were kind enough not to stir me about my “female” moment; I wonder if the men would have been so kind if they had been there?

The run continued through some lovely countryside and then it was time for the exhilarating drive down from Arthur's Seat. Apart from this being such a great road to drive on in an MX-5 the conditions meant the scenery was breathtaking. It was hard to decide where the water stopped and the sky started. At the bottom of Arthur's Seat the instructions were to turn right towards Mornington but Jacqui and Alyssa turned left on to the freeway and – naturally – we all followed. On questioning them they admitted that, once again, they had been chatting! Fortunately we were able to get off the freeway and were soon back on the beach road heading to Mornington.

Our day ended at the lovely Lintons nursery in Mt Eliza. There is a great café in the grounds of the nursery where we were to have lunch. Having been there not so long ago I mentioned a lovely smoked salmon bagel I had enjoyed. I must have done a good job of selling it as five of us ordered it. Once again we settled down to having a great chat as only women can. After lunch some of us started for home whilst a few others had a wander round the nursery.

I can only hope that in future more of the women in the Club will keep this day in mind when it is organised. They are relaxed, enjoyable days and we usually go places that women would be interested in. You can bring a friend with you and you don't have to bring an MX-5 if you are more comfortable in your own car. I would like to thank Jacqui and Joan for organising the run and for persevering to reschedule it when the weather was so bad on the first attempt.





## New Chapter for western Victoria

The Club committee is very pleased to announce that the membership group based in Ballarat has been given formal status as a Chapter of the Club.

To coincide with the group's first anniversary, it is now the "Ballarat & Western Victoria" Chapter. It covers Ballarat and all districts west.

When it was formed 12 months ago the committee agreed only to informal status as it was felt the group was close enough to Ballarat to take part in the activities of the "main"

membership in Melbourne.

However, under the leadership of John and Noellene Gleeson, the group has gone "gangbusters". Even their first gathering attracted 18 cars, and since then they have attracted another 31 new members/22 cars to the Club!

And on the President's run in February, the Ballarat group attracted as many cars as came from Melbourne.

Congratulations to John and Noellene, not only for taking the initiative to set the Ballarat ball rolling but for instilling in their group the sense of fun and camaraderie for which the rest of the Club is well known and of which we are justly proud.



I've only been doing this "editoring" stuff for a couple of months but I have

to say that I am mighty impressed with the supply of material we get to publish. So, a big thanks to all of you who have contributed articles and reports over the last few months.

This April edition of our Club magazine was a particular challenge as both Murray and I, plus our better halves, were off to NatMeet which meant an early call in for the regular articles. The response was fantastic; my grateful thanks to all who reacted so quickly.

This month we have a "My Ride" from John Jardine which gives another interpretation of this newly introduced segment. If there is something special about your car, or something you have done to it which makes you particularly proud, please pen a few words for us and include some photos.

Last month, Al's uglies caused a stir. We have a few members who were quite upset to see the Citroen in the list. It probably says as much about the judges as it does about the cars! However we received no complaints about the listing of the Daihatsu Copen and the SsangYongs, so I guess the judges got something right.

All of which brings me to a small request. If you do have something for the magazine that you would like published, please email it to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au) and, if it arrives before the end of the month and if space permits, we'll publish it in the following month's magazine. I'd recommend against sending it directly to Murray. Our fearless leader has a lot on his plate with his presidential duties, as well as getting the magazine articles into a format ready for Alyssa to weave her magic.

If you do send material to Murray, you let me off the hook when something goes wrong, as occurred last month when we managed to repeat the comments on the TR7 against our second place getter in Al's uglies, the Ford Taurus. Murray can take the hit for that one, I'll just own up to a couple of typos!!

*Happy emexing.*

*Don*

## Now we're finally getting some rain ...

### *How to achieve*

### *Good vision in a downpour*

We haven't tried this yet, but apparently it is useful ... even driving at night.

In heavy rain most drivers would turn their wipers on to **high** or **fastest speed**, yet the visibility in front of the windscreen is still bad ...

In the event you face such a situation, just try your **sunglasses** (any model will do), and ... all of a sudden, your visibility in front of your windscreen is perfectly clear, as if there is no rain.

Make sure you always have a pair of sunglasses in your car, as you are not only helping yourself to drive safely with good vision, but you also might save a friend's life by giving them this idea ...

Try it yourself and, if you reckon it works, share it with your friends.

Apparently:

- » you still see the drops on the windscreen, but not the sheet of falling rain
- » you can see where the rain bounces off the road
- » it works to eliminate the "blindness" from passing trucks spraying you too.

### *The dangers of*

### *Aquaplaning in cruise control*

*From the USA ...*

A 36-year-old woman in Texas wrote off her car in a recent accident. She was travelling in heavy, though not excessive, rain when her car suddenly began to aquaplane.

She was not seriously injured but very stunned at the sudden occurrence!

When she explained to the highway patrolman what had happened he told her something that every driver should know: **never drive in the rain with your cruise control on.**

The driver thought she was doing the right thing by setting the cruise control and maintaining a safe, consistent speed in the rain ...

But the policeman told her that if the cruise control is on when the car begins to aquaplane and the tyres lose contact with the road surface, the car will accelerate to a higher speed and make it take off like an hovercraft.

# Motor sport – a female perspective

■ Words: Lindy Anderson ■ Photos:

## If you love driving your car – try the track!!

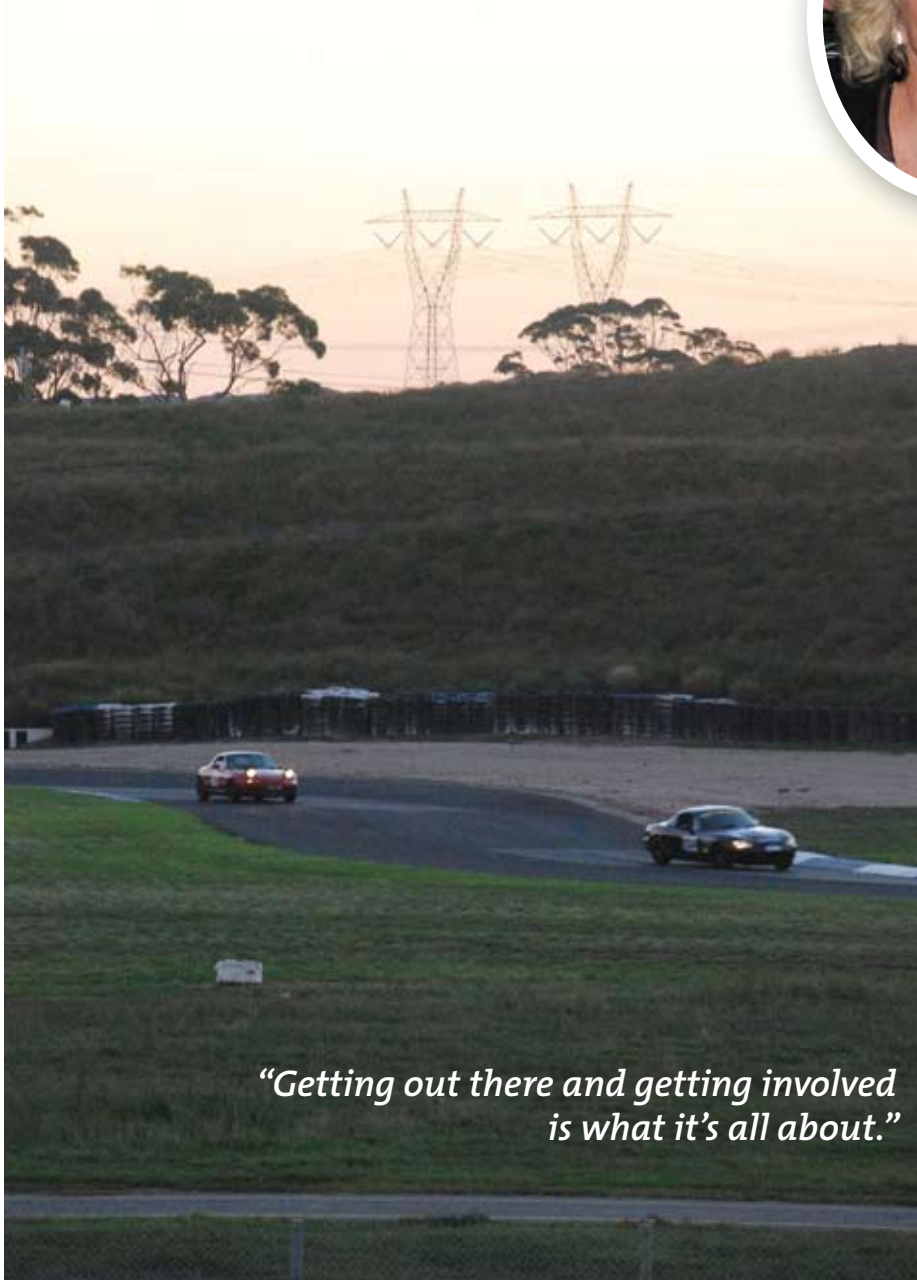


My name is Lindy Anderson and I'm a "newbie" to the Mazda MX-5 Club.

I bought my True Red MX-5 three years ago but only joined the Club this year. As owners of these great little cars know, the MX-5 is designed to take corners, straight roads, chicanes and most driving conditions with ease at domestic pace and, as I read the 2010 Club calendar, I honed in on the motor sport section. I was curious and tempted to see how my car and I would handle time on the track.

I booked in to attend the Winton weekend in February, with the day of training on the Saturday (lectures, guidance and pure fun) and was gobsmacked when my trainer showed me just what the MX-5 can really do! I enjoyed this day-long "hand-holding" and felt my confidence grow rapidly. On the Sunday, I was on my own and tried to put all that I had learnt into practice. I was warned beforehand that once I took the car onto the track I would not be able to wipe the smile off my face. Well, *how true!!*

It was exhilarating! The freedom to maximise my relationship with the car was wonderful and I improved as the day progressed. Sprints allow you to compete against your previous times around the track and as the cars in my class were let onto the track one at a time, the worry of sharing the track with more experienced drivers dissipated. It was great to meet so many others from our club and the Alpha Romeo club with both genders sharing the track. The Club's motor sport aspect is not at all biased against having females involved. On the contrary, I have never felt so warmly welcomed, assisted and enthusiastically included.



*"Getting out there and getting involved is what it's all about."*

Results - Round 6	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 1:17.538 <sup>1</sup>	Noel Heritage » 1:18.532	Brendan Beavis » 1:18.765
Standard NB	John Downes » 1:19.513		
Standard NC	Lindy Anderson » 1:27.357		
Clubman	Ray Monik » 1:15.300 <sup>1</sup>	Peter Phillips » 1:16.691	Damon Ethakada » 1:17.050
Modified	Russell Garner » 1:13.531 <sup>1</sup>	James Saunders » 1:15.620	Bruce Phillips » 1:17.657
Restricted Open	Randy Stagno Navarra » 1:12.530 <sup>1</sup>		
Open	Hamish Hardeman » 1:07.658 <sup>1</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> New Club motor sport group lap record



After such a weekend my driving habits have altered on the road and for the better! I have now been touched by the lure of the track and decided to continue to put all that I have learnt so far onto other tracks around Melbourne. Last weekend, it was Calder's turn to woo me and the twilight format had me interested.

Unlike the Winton track (technically challenging and a delight to drive), Calder has a reputation as a fast and open circuit. The track gates opened at 2pm and after settling in, scrutineering (by the officials to ensure the car's track readiness) and the drivers' briefing session (for track etiquette and rules), my doubts began to increase. I wondered whether I could take my car on to a track that was so new to me or whether I would make a fool of myself by driving too slowly.

*Boy, I couldn't have been more wrong!*

Driving into the pit area at Calder, I was met with friendly faces from our Club. I knew that this sprint afternoon and evening would be shared with the Subaru WRX Club and it was great to see that our club had a predominant presence, 23 cars in all. I stuck the given numbers on to my car door, taped on the Dorian box (given to each participant for lap timing) and waited my turn. Again, it was wonderful to have our club members sharing tips, hints and preferences.

Once out on the track the real fun began. Sprints were held from late afternoon, through dusk and into the night. There was heaps of time between sprints to enjoy dinner, to socialise and to hear the experiences of others. My car was out there stretching her muscles and, as before at Winton, I began to decrease my times each lap. Driving under lights was

a new and interesting challenge and I certainly gave it all my best shot.

Yes, I was nervous. Yes, I doubted my abilities. Yes, I nearly talked myself out of driving on to the track at all! However, motor sport is the drawcard which tempts us to have fun whilst manoeuvring the small and clever MX-5 around tracks designed for just that purpose. *Getting out there and getting involved is what it's all about.* The next sprint meeting on our Club calendar is on 11 April at Phillip Island. I hear it's a track that everyone loves to drive. Yep, I'll be there to give it a red hot go!!

So come on girls, let's increase the number of females so we can have a little section of the sprints to ourselves!! It's not about proving anything –it's just to gain the very best you can from the marvellous MX-5.



**Championship standings after Round 6 - Twilight Sprints, Calder, 13 March 2010**

	1st		2nd		3rd	
Overall Champion	Russell Garner	» 60	Peter Phillips	» 51	Ray Monik	» 46
Standard NA	Brendan Beavis	» 46	Robert Downes	» 39	Teruo Delacroix	» 38
Standard NB	John McGregor	» 44	John Downes	» 29	Max Lloyd	» 24
Standard NC	Lindy Anderson	» 20				
Clubman	Peter Phillips	» 51	Ray Monik	» 46	Damon Ethakada	» 22
Modified	Russell Garner	» 60	Craig Healy	» 27	Mike Kirby	» 18
Restricted Open	Randy Stagno Navarra	» 60	Marcus Stacey	» 14	Andrew Shenouda	» 13
Open	Darrin Morice	» 34	David Wilken	» 20	Michael Ruck	» 12

# My Ride ...

Words & photos: John Jardine

When I purchased my 1992 NA MX-5 in February 2009, it had just 5200km on the clock. It now has 13,000.

Since joining the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria in early 2009, several members have made comments about my car – all good I must add. But first I would like to share with you how I actually came to purchase this beautiful car as it was not my first choice. It was in fact my *third* choice.

In 1994 I purchase a 1967 four-door pillarless Pontiac Parisienne: silver mink in colour with a white roof, deep red interior, chrome spoked wheels and white wall tyres. Natalie and I spent another \$10,000 putting finishing touches to this car and it was, as they say in the classics, “a real head turner”. A beautiful motor car that just glided along. We used to take it to car shows everywhere in Victoria and we have trophies for “Best Car in Show”.

When we first purchased the Ponty, fuel was about 50c per litre. In 2008 I thought we should sell the car as fuel was \$1.50 per litre and it doesn't take rocket science to work out that a car as big as the Ponty, powered by a thumping 327 Chevy V8, gets thirsty and very costly to run.

We sold the Pontiac, after 14 years of fun, to a farmer who lives nearby. He made an offer we could not refuse and swore on a stack of bibles that he would look after the car the same way we did. Natalie and I still miss the car and the beautiful sound of that thumping V8 engine out of the twin exhausts.

I got an idea in my head that I would buy a Morris Minor 1000, preferably a convertible. Natalie asked me why I would want one of these and my answer was that they had a very strong club and seemed to go on a lot of trips ... eg, Darwin!!!!

Where we live in Yandoit (between Castlemaine and Daylesford) we basically have to make our own fun because nothing much happens here, unless of course you count the annual bonfire. We can hardly contain ourselves waiting for the bonfire, so being in the Morris Minor Club seemed like a good idea. I rang up all the Morris Minor car clubs in Victoria, SA and NSW and must have had a dozen people looking for a car for me. I was not



worried about the price as long as it was in excellent condition.

A fellow from the Bendigo club rang me and told me about two cars, one was a Minor 1000 two-door, the other a '49 Lowlight convertible. I rang the owner and could not get to his property quickly enough. I test drove both vehicles and can honestly say that I have never driven anything so bad. Gutless, noisy, horrible little cars. *My tractor is more fun to drive.*

That was the end of the Morris Car Club idea and the bonfire was starting to look good again. *[Back in the UK as a kid we removed the bodywork from a Morris Minor and used the chassis for a dirt track racer. Perhaps it was the best use for this vehicle? – Ed.]*

A lot of car clubs and motorcycle clubs travel past our property on weekends and several times the MG club have passed by. *DING!* Maybe we should buy an MGB. Same thing: rang the MG club, spoke to members and finally got a call to say there was a nice one for sale in Clunes. Luckily it was a NICE ONE because there was not a panel on it that fitted: doors, bonnet and boot all out of alignment. It looked like two giants had wrung it like you would a towel. Against my better judgement, we took it for a drive, 35° with the roof down. We had travelled about four kilometres when it decided to have an accident in its undies.

No Morris Minor, no MGB ... what am I going to buy??? I had to get something ... *anything.*

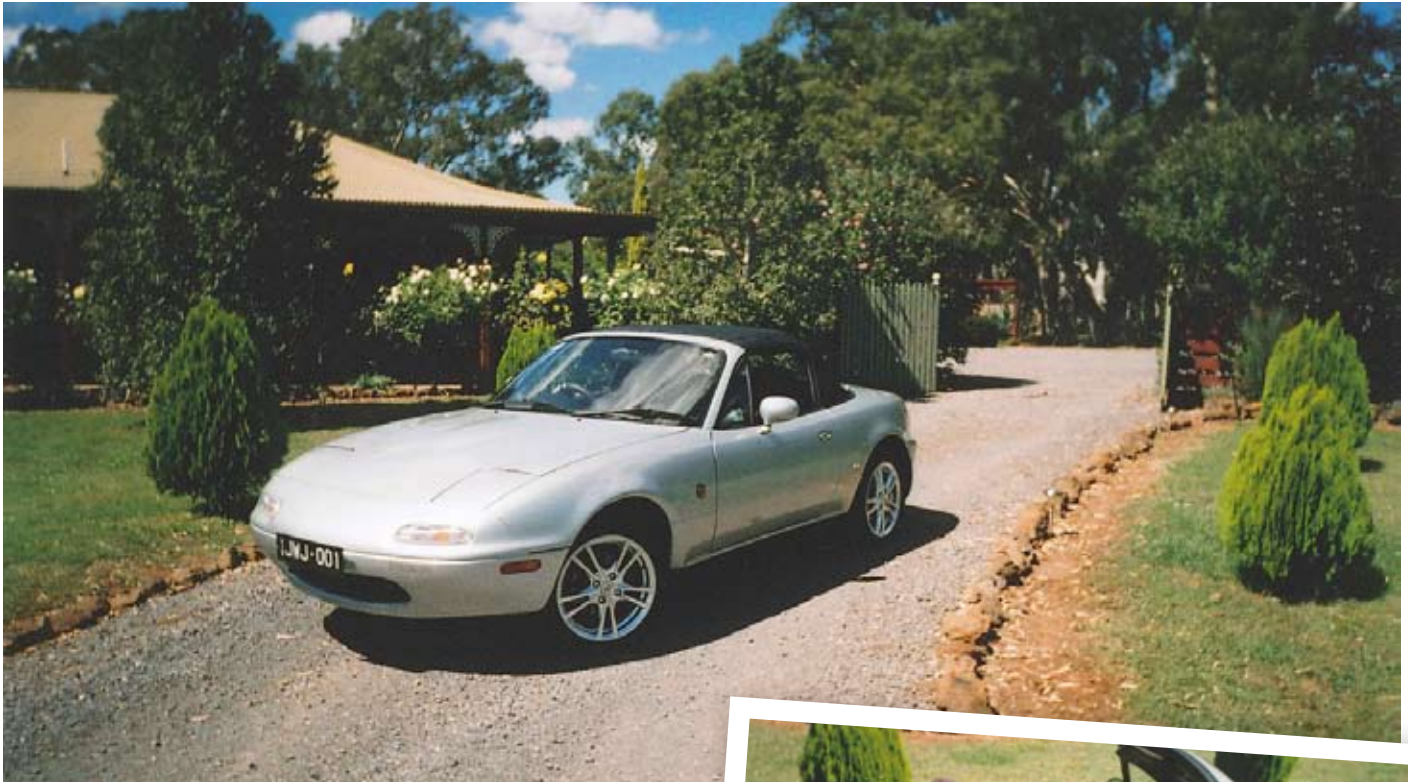
By this time we knew we wanted a sports car, but what type of sports car? Anyway, I was reading *Unique Cars* magazine, February 2009 edition, and I read an article by Captain Conrod. Someone had written in and wanted to know if he should buy an MG Midget or a Mazda MX-5. The short answer was: do yourself a favour, buy a photo of an MG Midget

and put it on your wall, then go and buy an MX-5 because there is absolutely no comparison. The MX-5 has everything in it: modern technology, electric windows, air conditioning and superb handling.

When I read this I wondered why I hadn't thought of the MX-5 before. I'd seen plenty on the road and always admired them. Maybe we should look for a nice one. I turned over a few more pages of *Unique Cars* and here was a quarter page photo of a silver 1992 MX-5. Genuine 5,200km, FSH showroom condition etc ... in SA. Seventeen years old with 5,200km on the clock? Give me a break, must be a misprint and if it had only travelled 5,200km it would either be sold or a LEMON.

I rang the owner that evening and he confirmed that, yes it had actually travelled only 5,150km. No, it was not a lemon. “The reason I do not drive it is because I find it does not have enough power.” When he purchased the car from Paradise Motors in Adelaide, he and his brother went together to purchase a car each. There were two MX-5s for sale, one a soft top, the other a hard top with a turbocharger and I think a bigger engine, 1800? David bought the soft top and Darren purchased the turbocharged hard top. When David had a drive of his brother's turbocharged MX-5 he lost interest in his and basically put it in the garage with a sheet over it. Not enough power.

Before I actually decided to buy the car, David provided me with the name and phone number of the dealership where he bought the car. I phoned them the next day and spoke to the principal and to the service manager and they both said “Buy it, it's the best one in Australia.” The car had been serviced every six months from new.



We arranged to pick up the car the following Saturday. When we first saw it, we could not believe the condition of the car. Seventeen years old, but it looked and smelled like a brand new car. After a short test drive we signed the paper work, paid for the car and left before David could change his mind.

When I got the car back home, I thought it needed something and it was a while before I realised that it was the original wheels I didn't like. So I put on new 15-inch alloys and new tyres and they have really given the car a lift.

I have been asked several times if the car was a special order because they were not available in silver in 1992. The car was not a special order from David, the original owner, because he and his brother both bought silver cars off the showroom floor on the same day. Maybe both cars were a special order for the dealership?

Because the car is silver and it has now travelled a mere 13,000km, we have been told many times that it is probably the rarest NA in Australia. I can't answer that.

Another question I am asked all the time is, "Would you sell it?" We have been offered substantially more than we paid for the car but nobody has made an offer that we could not refuse. The car has all the service books, owner's manual, all service receipts and even the original purchase receipt for \$39,900 on the road (including an alarm). The tonneau cover was still in a sealed plastic bag and an MX-5 overnight bag still wrapped in plastic.

**If somebody did make us an offer and we did sell the car, I would be at a dealership the next day to buy another one because we enjoy being in the Club, going on runs, but most of all the wonderful company of all the beautiful MX-5 Club members.**





# Come join the party!

## 20th anniversary celebrations

Hi everyone

The signature sign off at the end of my Social-lights articles is always:  
"It's a date – ink it in!"

Well, if you ink just one date into your diary this year it should be

**Saturday, 14th August 2010**

(cue the party whistles, streamers and confetti drop)

It's our birthday – and what better way to celebrate than with a party?

The 20th Anniversary Sub-Committee (Joan, Murray, John, Steve, Ken and myself), on behalf of the Club Committee, invite you to what promises be the best event ever – a Dinner Dance at the Westpac Centre (formerly Lexus Centre) in Melbourne.

With the presentation of our annual motor sport and social awards, a major prize raffle, commemorative giveaways for all attendees and live entertainment by "Jon Dory", this evening will be one to remember.

Our special guest on the night will be Mike Quist who, as Mazda's national public relations manager in 1989, orchestrated the launch of the Mazda MX-5 into Australia and set the ball rolling for all the state MX-5 Clubs.

Seating will be limited so make your reservation now – payments can be made online for either a Single or Double Reservation by following the link on the Club website. (If you prefer to send a cheque or money order it may be posted to: Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria, PO Box 7438 Beaumaris 3193. Please include a note with your details.)

**Cost: \$55 pp (\$110 double)**  
**~ 3-course meal with drinks at bar prices**

**\*\* A strict no cancellations/no refunds policy applies to this function \*\***

**MX-5**  
Mazda MX-5 Club  
of Victoria Inc.  
20th Anniversary  
1990 - 2010

Contact: Janette – Club Captain (Social) [social@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:social@mx5vic.org.au)  
RSVP: (and final payment) no later than 30 June 2010  
– book online via the Club website: [www.mx5vic.org.au](http://www.mx5vic.org.au)  
Dress Code: Smart casual or lounge suit – please, no denim

**I'm looking forward to adding your name(s) to the RSVP list.**  
**It's a date – ink it in!**

*Janette*

# Cruising and revelling in Jinba Ittai!

■ Words: George Tsigounis ■ Photos: Rodney Laitt, George Tsigounis

■ Run organisers: Alistair Dennis & Rodney Laitt

With a forecast for 27 degrees and sunshine, about 30 MX-5s (and one Merc SLK200) met at the Pines Shopping Centre in Doncaster East, bright and early on Sunday, 14 March.

After waiting for the last few sleepyheads to arrive the group headed off to the starting point for the run at the local oval in Warburton. Running through the Yarra Valley on that beautiful, early autumn day we were met by fog and mist rolling over the gentle, green pastures while the sun lazily made its way up into the sky.

Our little group of three NCs (Phil, Brett and myself) went via Chirnside Park north before heading back to the Warburton Hwy. We somehow managed to arrive marginally ahead of the main group, so much so we went ahead as no-one was there, then turned around once we realised we'd gone too far and ended up being the last to arrive!

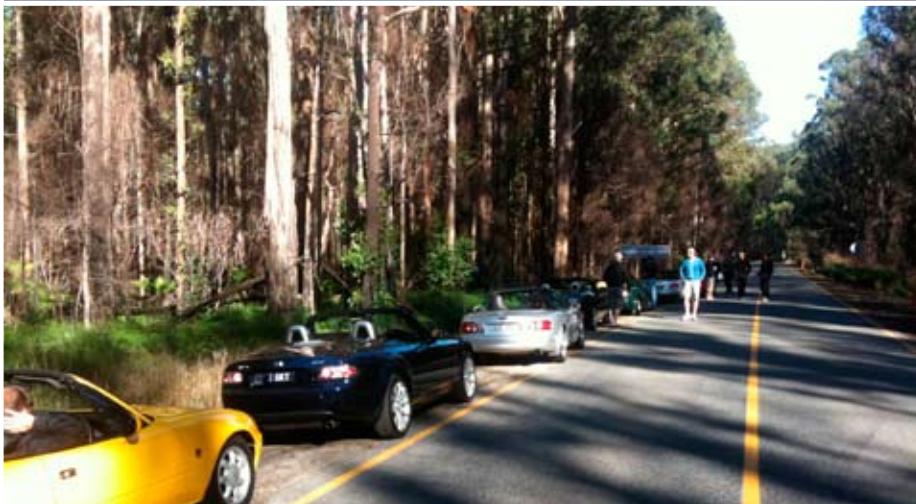
After a quick briefing from our VP Alistair, reminding us of the convoy rules and the general approach – we'd pause half way, then meet up again at Marysville – the driver of a Stormy Blue NC was volunteered for the trip report. Turns out I was the only driver of a Stormy Blue NC that day. While I've been with the Club just over a year now (about as long as I've had my MX-5) and been on several Club runs, this was my first volunteering.

We weren't the only ones out on such a glorious morning. Several new and old Porsches, MGs, Jaguars and other various makes of car with and without roofs were also making their way through the valley and hills to Melbourne's east. At a suitable break in the traffic we headed off.

Convoy rules always require a strict adherence to the speed limit. Our control was to be tested on this run as Reefton Spur had acquired a new limit of 80kmh, 20 less than the old one, ostensibly to help protect the many motorcyclists who seem to enjoy pushing this limit. Luckily for us the Spur seemed free for our enjoyment that morning.

By about 9am we were well and truly climbing through forested curves up towards Lake Mountain. I found myself in what I came to call Group C – quick yet relaxed and fun. I kept moving between 3rd and 4th gears rarely using the brakes despite what the tail-lights of the cars in front suggested. As the opportunity for overtaking is nigh impossible on the Spur, I occasionally backed off and took a more spirited drive, and started exploring 2nd gear, then realised why the Silver NB in front was using his brakes more often!





After the first stop Alistair suggested I move up to what I termed Group B and follow one of the white MX-5s. I didn't quite slot in behind our resident daredevils in Group A but ended up following Ben Sale's pristine white NA. Now this was something! Holding 2nd for longer the MX-5 felt much more urgent through the corners as I let the revs climb above 5000 and 6000 rpm, pushing through one tight bend to the next. I could feel the car twitching ever so slightly and marvelled at the beautiful balance of the MX-5 – I can now say I really felt what the Mazda engineers were aiming for – *Jinba Ittai* – the feeling of "horse and rider as one".

It's certainly easy to push this balance though. As we approached one particular corner I spotted Craig's little red NA in my mirror managing to get seriously sideways! This of course reminded me that the traction control in my NC had been re-enabled after the last restart!

At the next pitstop in Marysville you couldn't wipe the smiles away. Several first-time Reefton runners commented on the beauty of the run and a renewed satisfaction at enjoying the roads both at a fast or a cruising pace.

The return leg was via the Black Spur to Healesville. It's one of the most naturally beautiful forest roads in the country but, as such, attracts many more sightseers and is definitely more for cruising, especially with the proliferation of bikes and the boys in blue that day. I ended up following a bike sitting at 15 under the limit who insisted on warning every approaching motorcyclist with hand motions to slow down or be caught ahead!

With the traffic in Healesville the group naturally split up and I found myself heading up a small group of seven along the Chum Creek Road through Toolangi and Castella to King Lake. Another beautiful twisty bit of black top that we ended up cruising as we followed a rather sedate motorcyclist.

Thanks go again to Al and Rodney for showing us Reefton Spur – it truly is one of the best roads in Australia where you can really enjoy and savour "*the MX-5 experience*".

# Tassie news ...

## South to Southport ~ 14.3.2010 | Hobart Chapter

■ Words & photos: John Waldock  
■ Event organiser: John Waldock

Again the Hobart Chapter was blessed with lovely mild weather for our run down to Southport.

It's the first time the Chapter has been this far south and so many of us were looking forward to the new experience. It was also a noteworthy day as it was the last run for regular chapter member John Box, who will soon be off interstate. More of him later!

As usual we met at Salamanca, but we didn't have coffee or breakfast as we were all keen to get on to the road and feel the breeze in our hair.

The start of the journey took us up past Mt Wellington, Ferntree and via some back roads to Huonville. The roads were lovely and grippy, it having been fairly dry of late. We didn't see any autumn colours as it's still quite green and summery here at the moment.

The Chapter stopped off in Franklin, just south of Huonville, for morning tea. Perhaps we should be called the MX-5 roving feast, as we do seem to eat a lot on our travels. It was lucky that we started out early, as we dallied at Franklin, enjoying the conversation and treats on offer. John Hadrill was almost left behind, as he was trying to sign up a curious bystander! That's got to be worth some points in the Club championship?!

The drive took us through Geeveston (gateway to the southwest!) and past Dover (another gateway to the southwest) and on to Southport.

Southport is fairly isolated in Tasmanian terms, but can boast a public toilet, which was thoroughly inspected by some members of the Chapter on our arrival. We then made our way to our picnic spot, on the beach with views of the bay and South Bruny Island. We had decided to have a picnic and it was impressive to see all the various sets and food that were displayed as we set up our roving feasts.

I was happy to draw some attention, as I had bought along my great-mother-in-law's (is there such a thing?) early '60s picnic set, with burnt orange case. As the wine flowed, we made a small presentation to John Box, and told embarrassing stories about him, which didn't seem to deter him at all. I suppose some people enjoy any attention they can get!

We returned via the same route, with the sun still shining strongly as we arrived in Hobart. Thanks to all who attended, particularly John Box, who was kind enough to accept our jokes and ribbing with good grace. John has been a very strong and active member of the Chapter, and his leaving will be a great loss to the group.





## Ken Dunham's West Coast Wanderings

~ 21.3.2010 | Northern Tassie Chapter

■ Words: Lyn Dunham ■ Photos: Ruth Beaton  
■ Event organiser: Ken Dunham



On Sunday 23 March 13 cars from as far away as Beauty Point, Georgetown, Launceston, Mole Creek and Devonport gathered at Sheffield, the "Town of Murals", to commence the Ken Dunham Run.

We left about 10:30 from the car park behind the historic Don Store. The weather was quite changeable and showery, but a few brave souls decided to travel with their tops down. Others not so hardy or more conservative left theirs up.

We travelled along Claude Road towards beautiful Mt Roland, Mt Vandyke, and Mt Claude then down plenty of windy road towards Cethana Dam and on to Moina where we had our first stop to check on everyone. By this time tops were nearly all up as threatening weather was ahead with very dark skies.

We arrived at the Cradle Mountain rangers' station where we were able to partake of our morning tea under cover as heavy showers bucketed down. We also had a surprise visit by a small wallaby. Our view of Cradle Mountain was non-existent as the mountain was hidden by low cloud. We were fortunate that the sun was shining as we left the beautiful National Park to continue our journey south. The weather would continue to be very changeable all day.

Our convoy set off along the Link Road through wonderful alpine country and native button grass plains then arrived at the Murchison Highway junction which took us on into Waratah a small tin mining town. We had planned having lunch at the Waratah Hotel which has a reputation for a great pub style meal. By this time we were feeling cold, however, mein host provided warmth and, together with the great food, everyone was soon feeling on top of the world. After all appetites were satisfied we again set off.

Leaving Waratah, we travelled through beautiful temperate rainforests over great windy roads which all the drivers enjoyed and into the famous Hellyer Gorge. At the bottom of the gorge we had a pit stop and another photo shoot. Once again the sun came out and it was warm and shining so everyone was able to chat and drop the hoods once again before moving on.

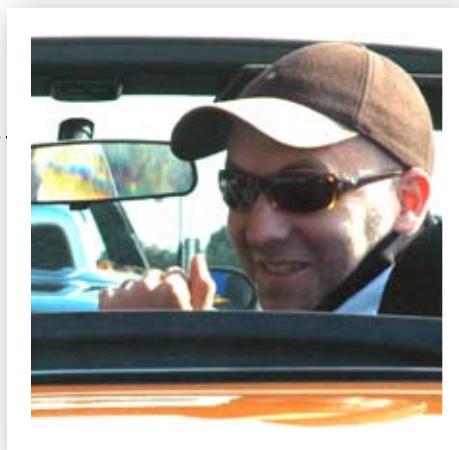
We then travelled through gum plantations, some old growth forests then onto pastoral lands. Small towns of Yolla and Elliott were travelled through until we arrived at the Bass Highway at Somerset.

The convoy travelled via the highway on to Burnie, then through to Penguin via the old scenic coastal Bass Highway to Ulverstone and then it was back Devonport for a much needed break and coffee at Keith and Sandra's place where we were able to sit and relax.

The day was enjoyed by 25 MX-5 enthusiasts who all agreed that, despite the weather, it had been a wonderful day.



# The MX-5 Club Grill



## Mat Boek

**Full name (including any embarrassing middle names)?** Mathew John Boek (no, nothing embarrassing there, sorry)

**Age (in years thanks)?** 42 – supposed to have something to do with the meaning of life, but doesn't feel like it ...

**Born where?** Ballarat

**Where do you live?** Right now, Rosanna. By the time you read this, Amsterdam!

**Profession?** IT Architect

**Married/single?** Married to Renia (7 years today), who is also a Club member

**Pets?** Two cats

**Cats or dogs (choose one)?** Well, I have to say cats now don't I?

**Fave food?** Renia's Polish cooking (well today is our wedding anniversary so I need to be nice!)

**Can you cook?** I used to think so, but after watching all those cooking shows, now I'm not so sure. Can someone tell me what a confit is?

**Favourite tippie?** This is a hard one. Torn between an Islay single malt, or a good, big McLaren Vale Shiraz

**What age did you learn to drive?** First drove at age 15, at my cousin's place in outback WA. Not too many cops!

**What did you learn to drive in ... or on?** My Dad's poo-brown '72 Kingswood station wagon. I call it poo brown because it was the biggest pile of crap on the road.

**What was your first ever car (make/model/colour)?** Um, now this is embarrassing. A lemon-yellow Datsun 200B. But it felt like a Rolls-Royce after the Kingswood. It had a working heater and radio ...

**What was your first car's name?** "Start ya bastard". No, not really, it was actually a very reliable little car. Unlike my second car, a Lancia Beta coupe (don't get me started on Italian cars) ...

**Where was your first fender bender, and in what car?** I hit a downed tram power line support cable, in the Lancia. The end got lodged under my front wheel, picked up the front of the car and spun me 90°. Just glad I wasn't electrocuted!

**What is your current car/s (ie, everyday driver if not the MX-5)?** Happy to say that the MX-5 is my current daily driver.

**What's your current MX-5 (colour, options, name)?** 1999 NB, Evo gold, stock except for custom leather seats

**What have you done to improve your MX-5?** Drive it as much as possible!

**What don't you like about your MX-5?** Is this a trick question? Not being able to drive it all the time

**Why an MX-5?** Just wanted to have one the first time I sat in my friend's NA. He'd had it since new and I was thinking of buying it, but it had been rotting under a cover in his backyard for years and was a little too far gone. I couldn't even drive it, but from that moment I was in love

**Fluffy dice (yes/no)?** They're about my era ('80s) but no. I have thought about an Elvis though

**Southpark or The Simpsons?** Family Guy. Time you updated this question

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** This is really hard. The sheer omnipotence of a Veyron appeals if money is absolutely no object, but I have always loved Porsche 911s. A 993 turbo would do me nicely. Or an Audi R8.

**Would you ever be seen driving a Daewoo or Hyundai?** Only as a rental ... and even then incognito ...

**Favourite other Mazda vehicle in current line up (ie, RX-8, 6 etc)?** Wouldn't mind a go in a 3MPS. But all that power through the front hoops would probably leave skid marks in all the wrong places

**What other car would you buy if not a Mazda (gasp!)?** Well have to confess to already having a Subaru WRX in our stables. That's Renia's "practical" car. It's got four doors and a decent size turbo, sorry, boot ...

**How long in the Club?** Since 2006

**Have you been on many MX-5 Club runs?** Too many to count!

**Favourite Club run location?** We love the runs in the St Andrews/Kinglake/Hurstbridge area. The fact they're close to home has nothing whatsoever to do with it ...

**Funniest thing seen on a Club run?** When Tyrone accidentally drove into a ditch when parking outside the lunch stop. About 10 of us had to help lift the car out. Actually the funniest moment was when Pam found out and delivered a punch Ali would have been proud of! Fortunately there was no damage. To the car at least ...

**Have you been to DECA?** Yes, but I'm ashamed to say not in the Mazda (yet)

**If yes, how many times?** Twice (in a WRX). Somehow managed to win two motorkhanas on the skid pan. Must be something to do with all-wheel-drive and sheer luck

**Ford vs Holden?** When I was a kid I always cheered for Peter Brock at Bathurst. Alan Moffat was the devil incarnate. These days I'm not a particular fan of either

**What is playing in your car at present?** 774 ABC. Does that make me sound old?

**Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)?** At the risk of alienating probably most Club members, I've always supported Collingwood. Please don't hold it against me

**Anything else you would like to say?** Both Renia and I have thoroughly enjoyed the years we've been members of the Club. We have explored many exciting roads and met many great people.

I am about to be posted overseas for an extended time and will (gasp) need to sell the beloved Mazda ... but we hope to be back and enjoying your company again in the not-too-distant future



# Tech talk ...

## How to shave your head ...

■ Words: John Todd ■ Photos: Janette Todd

When I was a mad teenager with my first car it was my pride and joy and like most of my mates I was always looking for ways to improve our cars, both aesthetically and performance wise.

For many years it was suggested by those “in the know” that shaving your head would provide a performance boost so I decided to try to find out if the old principles still applied to modern situations.

Having shopped around and spoken to several people it seems that shaving your head is still an option, although with today’s technology there are certainly many other options available.

Now, as with all things it is vital to get the “specs” accurate otherwise it is all too easy to end up with a result that is nowhere near what you expected.

Unfortunately I am a victim of less-than-perfect specs and whilst I expected a completely different outcome from my “head shave” I think I will still achieve my desired outcome of a faster car.

As you can see from the photo it wasn’t the engine head that was shaved ... it was mine!

*So all the above is just a “teaser” to get you read this article.*

I decided to shave my head from a two-pronged perspective. I currently have a friend who is undergoing breast cancer treatment and the first objective was to show her some support and perhaps give her something to laugh at; the second objective was to raise funds for the Jane McGrath Foundation.

I hope that you see the funny side of this article, and of course my re-configured head, and if anyone has had a laugh at my expense perhaps you too could make a donation to the Jane McGrath Foundation, or any other cancer-related charity. **(I raised just over \$700.)**



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# Tech talk ...

## Fitting an air horn

■ Words & photos: James Saunders, Club Captain - Motor Sport

We all love our little cars, but let's face it, they are not the easiest thing to spot on the road.

The MX-5 sits very low, and is tiny compared to many of the other vehicles that we share the roads with. My car has been reversed into, TWICE, by large four-wheel drives ... both times my car was stationary in a car park. The problem is that the top of an MX-5 is lower than their rear window, so when they look in their mirror they simply don't see us.

I guess I was "lucky" that my two incidents occurred at low (no) speed, in a car park, and thus nobody was injured. But imagine if this had occurred on a highway ... well you don't have to look too far to find stories of this occurring. One of our Club members was the victim of an inattentive truckie a couple of years ago, who merged into his lane. Said Club member had nowhere to go, and despite furiously leaning on his horn, the truckie simply did not hear him. I guess the roar of a massive diesel engine with 70 kajillion kilowatts, and the Jimmy Barnes "Working Class Man" CD blaring out of the truckie's stereo simply drowned out the wimpy "beep beep" of the standard MX-5 horn.

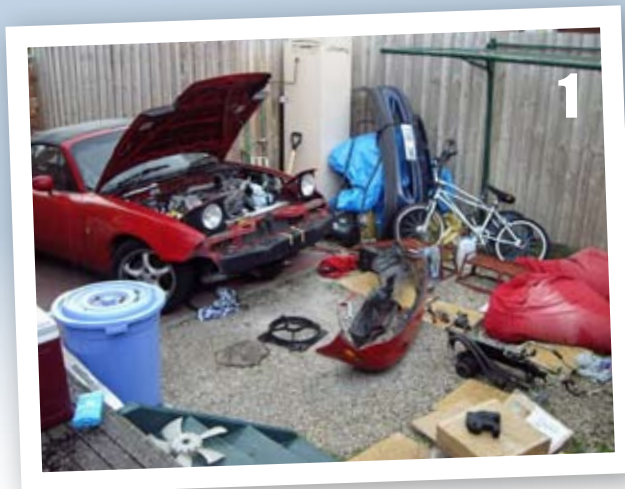
Needless to say the MX-5 came off second-best and the repair bill was nothing to be sneezed at, and the Club member was very lucky to walk away unscathed.

So after that lengthy preamble, I suppose I should get to the point of this article. There is not much we can do to be "seen" on the road (headlights on during the day is a good start), but there is plenty we can do to be "heard". So I present... the Stebel Nautilus Compact Dual-Tone 12 volt airhorn!

The Stebel is made in Italy, however it is widely available and a quick Google search will find many local suppliers. For those readers without internet access, "let your fingers do the walking" or just visit your local auto parts store.

Fitting the horn is fairly simple. These instructions are specific to my 1989 1.6 litre NA (NA6) however I know that this same horn has been successfully fitted to later models including SEs, SPs and NCs.

On the NA6, the first step is to remove the nose off the car, completely dismantle and remove the air conditioning system, and remove the fans from the radiator, as in the picture at right:



**OK so many of you have probably just had a heart attack.** But never fear, I'm only joking. The horn can be easily fitted without resorting to such drastic measures. The removal of these parts was only necessary as I chose to remove the aircon at the same time as fitting the horn, as the aircon was no longer functional. However, it made the job of photographing the horn installation a lot easier so my loss is your gain. At most, you may have to remove a cover that sits on the metal in front of the radiator. Some cars have this cover, others don't. Or you can reach in through the "mouth", or reach up from under the car (never get under a car that is only supported by a jack, though).

So why would I remove the aircon? At this time, my car was fitted with an AVO turbo kit (which has since been removed). This meant that before any air entered the radiator, it had to flow through an intercooler, and then the aircon condenser. I was suffering from overheating at the track, so it just made sense to remove the aircon as it didn't work anyway. Removing the aircon solved the problem and the car hasn't overheated since.

So now that I've explained why the nose is off the car, I suppose I should actually return to the point of the article, which is fitting an air horn. No more diversions or tangents, I promise!

The horn comes with fitting instructions. These are generic instructions that contain a lot of general information relating to various cars. This article is

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to be used in addition to the supplied instructions as it contains more specific details relating to the MX-5, however I strongly recommend that you read and understand the supplied instructions before commencing this project!

In fitting the horn, you have at least three options that I am aware of. The first, and easiest option is to just unplug the standard horn and plug in the Stebel in its place. I know of people that have done this, however the Stebel draws A LOT more current than the standard horn, so it's likely to eventually result in a blown fuse, or worse.

The second option is to wire in a completely new circuit for the horn. This is probably the safest and best option. The Stebel kit comes with a relay, and a wiring diagram explaining how to hook up the relay to be triggered from the standard horn wire. There is a constant 12V source in the engine bay, in the main fuse block next to the brake master cylinder, as in **picture #2**:



Running a wire from here, with an inline fuse of an appropriate rating (as described in the Stebel literature) would be your best bet.

The third option is to use an existing power source, along with the relay which will be triggered from the existing horn wiring. This is the option I chose, however if you choose the superior method described in the previous paragraph, most of the following will still apply. The existing power source is shown in photo #3. To find this power source, look for a square blue plug in the middle of the photo. It is located just behind the passenger side headlight. In their infinite wisdom, the gurus at Mazda put this auxiliary 12V source in the engine bay to allow you to power test equipment, such as a timing light. *Thanks Mazda.*



Please ignore the non-standard wiring in **photo #3** ... my car is somewhat of a science project and certain things won't look the same as your car. Actually it's pretty neat here, some of the following photos are a lot worse and can only be described as a "dog's breakfast"!

It is important to note that this power source is only active when the ignition is on, so if you use this power source, your horn will not work unless you have your keys in the car, switched on. There is also some conjecture as to what circuit this

plug is connected to, but the consensus on the internet seems to be that it's part of the heater circuit. The heater circuit has a 30 amp capacity, plenty enough for our purposes. However, I suppose if you were driving along on a freezing winters night with your heater on full blast, and decide to blast the horn for an extended period of time ... you could trip the circuit breaker on the heater. I've yet to hear of this happening but if you're concerned about it, I refer you back to option two.

Okay, so with the power options covered, let's have a look at fitting the horn. First up, the following picture (#4) is the standard horn, before I have touched anything. The horn is the round thing on the left, in front of the radiator. It's possible that some cars may have two horns as there is an unused horn plug on the right hand side of my car ... *maybe that is why my standard horn sounds so weak!*

In **photo #4** you can see the green/red horn wire (circled) attached to the horn, which then runs across the front of the car, held in place by a few plastic clips. Pull the plug off the horn, unclip the wire across the front of the car, and unbolt and remove the old horn.

Feed all the wire back through the opening under the headlight. Just follow it back from where it came and pull all the wire back into the engine bay just behind the passenger side headlight.

Now, the lucky thing for us is that the clip on the end of the wire that you have



# Tech Talk ... fitting an air horn (continued)

just removed from the standard horn, matches up perfectly with the supplied relay. There are four terminals on the relay, and each terminal is numbered. Clip the wire on to terminal 86, as shown in photo #5. You will also notice that the blue plug power source is located very close to where the wire comes back into the engine bay ... how convenient!



At this point we need to start making our own wiring. If you visit your local Dick Smith, Jaycar, or even a \$2 shop, you should be able to find a wire crimping / terminal kit, and some suitable automotive grade wire. You will notice in the photo below that I also have a fancy wire stripping tool, but this is not strictly necessary. A Stanley knife would suffice.



Using your terminal kit, make yourself a wire to run from the 12V source to terminal 30 on the relay. Your terminal kit will have different sized connectors; make

sure you use the right sized ones (hint - they're usually blue). Your wire should look something like this ...



... and then when you connect it to the relay and the blue plug, it looks like this:



Then make another wire for the earth/ chassis connection at the relay.



You'll notice I've followed convention and used red wire for the 12V, so I'll use black for the earth (#8). Again, make a wire with a terminal clip and attach it to terminal 85 on the relay. The other end of the wire will have a spade connector from your terminal kit, and this can be attached to

any old earth point (usually a screw or a bolt) on the chassis. The photo below shows where I've mounted this wire, but I'm using an old earth point from a defunct car alarm which you won't have. But just go ahead and use any old earth that's convenient, it really shouldn't matter.

Now you need to start thinking about where you are going to mount the horn ... again this is up to you. The horn is supplied with a long bolt, however most people seem to have trouble finding a suitable place to attach that bolt directly to the car, as the horn fouls on the surrounding metal, or is not in an ideal position. The solution is simple, once you've decided where to mount it, you just need to make a bracket of some sort, to attach the bolt to, and then attach the bracket to the car.



My bracket (#9) is just a piece of bent metal but it does the job. If you have a hammer, vice and drill you can knock something up in a couple of minutes. Obviously the length and shape of the bracket will vary, depending on where you've chosen to mount it. I also took an angle grinder to the bolt supplied with the horn, as I found it was too long.

The bracket attaches to the horn like so:







When mounting the horn, you might need to jiggle and manoeuvre the bracket and horn around a bit to get it into perfect position, so don't do any of the bolts up super tight just yet.

You'll notice (#10) that I have also attached the final two wires (power and earth) to the horn. Keep the wires nice and long and then you can neaten them up at the other end, once the horn is in place.

Now we're getting to the important part: it's time to mount the horn securely in place. You will see in photo #11 that the horn is tucked up under the radiator support panel, as I chose to secure it to one of the now unused mounting points, and bolts, for the aircon. The earth wire from the horn has now been cut to the right length and attached to the mounting point for the old horn (this acted as an earth for the old horn, so at least I know it is a reliable earth connection). Come to think of it, this probably would have been a good spot to mount the bracket, too. The red power wire needs to run back to the relay, and you can see how I have run it back using the same path as the original horn wire that we moved earlier. I even used the same plastic clips. Not strictly necessary but at least it looks neat.

And then, cut the red wire to length and add a terminal clip, attach it to the relay at terminal 87 (#12), and secure the relay to the car somewhere (#13).



You'll notice that again I've used a mounting point that you won't have on your car. But just find a suitable place for it. You may even decide to mount it on a small bracket.



All that's left to do now is cross your fingers and give it a test beep! Remember that the car ignition will need to be switched to the on position when you do this, as the blue plug is not constantly live. Hopefully when you hit the horn button you'll be greeted with a healthy blast of noise. It's not ear-splittingly loud, but it is certainly a vast improvement on the standard item.

So that's it. It really is fairly simple. If you're keen to perform this upgrade, but are too daunted to tackle the project on your own, I'm sure a local auto electrician or maybe one of our Club sponsors would be able to help for a small fee.

*If you have a handy hint to pass on to your fellow MX-5ers, or are doing some modifications to your car that others might find interesting, please send your report and photographs to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au) and share it with the rest of us through MX-TRA.*

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## For sale

### 1998 Grace Green NB

- » 117,000km
- » Serviced regularly
- » Always garaged and well looked after
- » Only being sold because we have bought another MX-5
- » Rego plates not included

**Asking price: \$13,800**

**Contact John: 0419 872 961**  
(Club member, Sunbury)



## For sale 1995 Classic Red NA

- » Original owner
- » 92,600km
- » Rego until Nov 2010
- » Full service history (with Mazda dealer)
- » Never been in a car accident
- » Non-smoker (the driver!)

The car is very much in original spec other the following:

- » Central locking added
- » Car alarm with proximity sensor for cabin protection when roof is down

- » The rear plastic window has been replaced with a genuine Mazda glass version from a later model.

The car has been extremely reliable and has been very well looked after. Always used car mats and the driver seat was protected by a cover. As such I think the condition is excellent for its age.

**Asking price: \$14,500**

**Contact Danny: 0419 389 255** (Elwood)



## For sale

### MX-5 "Heritage" jacket

- » MX-5 Heritage Series jacket
- » burgandy with beige sleeves
- » size: medium
- » excellent condition (I don't think it's ever been worn)

**Asking price: \$200 ono**

**Contact Randy: 0409 210 872**  
(Club member, Craigieburn)



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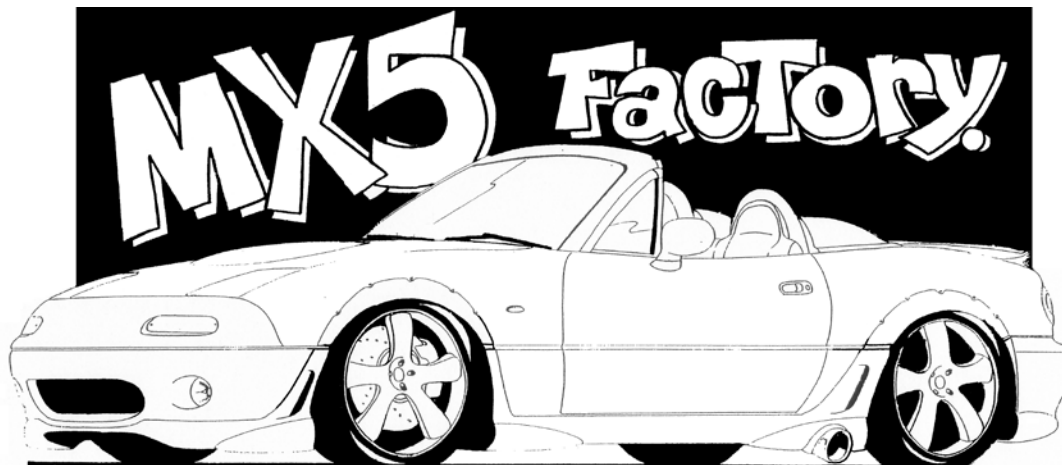
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