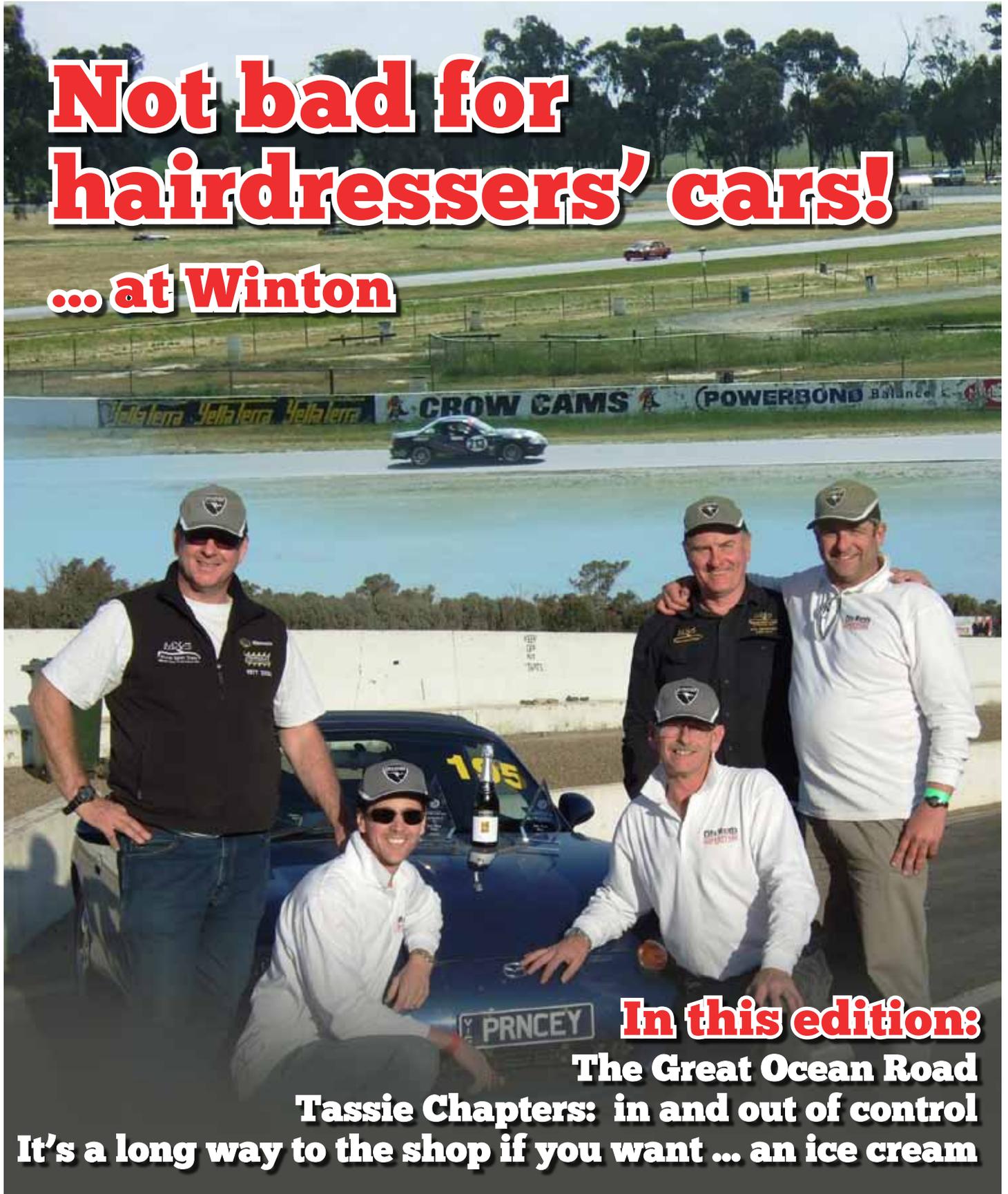


THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA INC.

Not bad for hairdressers' cars!

... at Winton



In this edition:

The Great Ocean Road

Tassie Chapters: in and out of control

It's a long way to the shop if you want ... an ice cream



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Cover image:

The Fly'n Miatas – Noel Heritage, Stephen Downes, Peter Phillips, Robert Downes and Teruo Delacroix – celebrate their second-place finish (of 41 teams) in the 2011 AROCA Winton 6-Hour. Photos: Joan Read



Find us at:
**MX-5 Club of
Victoria**

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Murray's Corner ...

■ Murray Finlay – President

G'day all!

You know what it's like ... lovely sunny Saturday, 30 degrees outside, so what do I do?

I go along to a CAMS "club development seminar" (held inside, of course) to see if I can pick up some tips on how we might do things better.

There were sessions on club management, grants and funding, communications and social marketing.

Apart from the social media side of things, which many of the over-50s in the room were obviously struggling with, it seems we're doing a lot right.

Some of the clubs represented complained of low numbers (like, 35), and were looking for ways to promote their club to attract new blood. Being small, however, tended to translate into homogeneity (yes, it's a word ... I looked it up!): everyone was interested in the same thing at the same time.

We tend to have the opposite issue: we have enviably high numbers but often we seem to have to "pull teeth" to get people to come along to things.

I'm sure part of that is due to the diverse range of interests and the broad age range of Club members; we're just not going to get everyone interested in everything.

It occurred to me as I listened that we almost have four clubs in one:

- » we have the predominant social side, including those in the "big smoke" and in the five Chapters
- » we have the motor sport team

- » we have a group who meet regularly outside of the structured club and organise their own informal runs, and
- » we have a great many "readers": members we never see, but who rejoin year after year ... we assume they just like getting the magazine and plan to get to something, someday.

And there's nothing wrong with any of that ... people join, get involved (or not) and stay involved for their own reasons, many and varied.

We try to offer a broad range of activities in the hope that everyone will find at least some events each year that appeal to them.

Our task as a committee is to try to refine our understanding of what our various "target markets" are looking for, and tailor our offerings to suit.

Social media will play an increasingly large role in that. From the facts and figures quoted to us at the CAMS seminar, even I have to admit that it's here, it's huge and we have to jump on or get left at the station. (*I'm even about to get my first iPhone!*)

Plans are already afoot to revamp the Club website to take advantage Facetube and You Book (as "Top Gear's" *Captain Slow* calls them) etc, so that our communication becomes even better. In the words of the shampoo commercial, it won't happen overnight, but it will happen!

Now we just need some clubrooms ...

Until next time, look up, stay back!

Murray

NatMeet 2012



The next national gathering of MX-5 Club members is in Canberra over Easter next year.

Anyone who has been to a NatMeet before knows how much fun it is and will be keen to get along to this one.

A truly memorable highlight will be a gala dinner *inside* the Australian War Memorial, under the wings of a giant Lancaster bomber.

If you haven't been to NatMeet before, please consider this one. NatMeet is five days of fun, and a perfect chance to spend time with like-minded enthusiasts who share your love of the wonderful Mazda MX-5. Being involved is an experience you will never forget.

Full details can be found via the NSW Club's website at www.mx5.com.au/nsw.

Registrations and deposits are due now!

Jinba Ittai award presented



The Northern Tasmanian Chapter was very pleased to witness the presentation of the *Jinba Ittai* award to our first Tasmanian recipient, Bruce Harvey.

Bruce received his award from Chapter Convenor Ken Beaton and member Keith Tillack.

Jinba Ittai is Mazda's term for "rider and horse as one", and this annual award goes to the person the President deems to be most "at one" with the Club. ■

~ photo: Sandra Tillack

For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

November

12-13 N-E Vic Chapter >

Snowy Mountains run

19-20 North Tassie Chapter >

East Coast trip

26 Hobart Chapter > Twilight run

27 Melbourne > Christmas party

December

4 Breakfast by the Bay

N-E Vic Chapter > Christmas run

11 Ballarat > Christmas party

Hobart > Christmas run

North Tassie > Christmas BBQ

2012

January

8 Twilight in the Trees, Dandenong Ranges

22 (TBC) Gippsland Chapter



Motor Sport Torque

■ Robert Downes – Club Captain - Motor Sport



October has been a tremendous month for motor sport in our Club with both the AROCA Winton 6-Hour and the MX-5 Club "Interstate Challenge" taking place.

MX-5 Club Victoria/NSW "Interstate Challenge" – Wakefield Park, NSW on 23 October

"WE WON" – 168 points to 143 points ... the first time that the visiting team has been successful in defending the Cup.

Craig Healy has prepared a separate report on this event which will appear in the December edition of *mxtra*.

It was a fabulous day with great weather, close competition and new Club lap records set. The NSW Club is to be complimented on the smooth running of the event with competitors getting in six runs and 35 laps.

The camaraderie in the Victoria motor sport team was highlighted when over 30 people attended the Team dinner on the Saturday night.

AROCA Winton 6 hour – 15-16 October

For the second year in a row we had two teams finish in the top 10 from a field of 41 teams.

The event was won by the Team E30 BMWs. Ken Read and Graham Wilson have prepared separate reports.

The *Fly'n Miatas* team of team manager Teruo Delacroix and drivers Stephen and Robert Downes, Noel Heritage and Peter Phillips finished second overall. Stephen put in an absolute standout drive in his first year of motor sport, driving for nearly two hours and achieving 34 laps in the "bonus zone" with only three "breakout" laps. Thank you to Teruo for his attention to detail and to Pam Phillips who was our official team volunteer.

Our *City Mazda Motorsport* team of manager Scott Gould and drivers Brendan Beavis, Kim Cole, Mike Kirby, Greg McPherson and Daniel White finished a very impressive sixth.

Our third team, the *Clean Sweeps*, finished 32nd but several drivers were undertaking this event for the first time.

"SPECIAL" Motor Sport Meeting

A meeting of the motor sport team is scheduled for the evening of Friday, 18 November at City Mazda in South Melbourne. It is to address some issues concerning driving standards, etiquette and behavior, in addition to planning for a "Driver Training Day" (not Racecraft), a DECA day in 2012, and a dyno day.

Club Christmas Function. Sunday, 27 November

Please take the opportunity to socialise with other Club members at this special event which is to be held at the Kingswood Golf Club, Centre Dandenong Road, Dingley. RSVP and payment is due by 13 November, and can be made through the Club website or by cheque/money order.

Phillip Island on 11 December

"Earlybird" entries are now being accepted and this event usually gets "booked out" – you have been warned!

2012 motor sport calendar

AROCA Victoria have given me the dates for their 2012 calendar. The dates for the remainder of our 2011-2012 Championship appear at right, and events up to December next year are now on the motor sport page of the Club website; **please put them in your diary now** to avoid clashes with other, *less important* functions!

Special thoughts!

Our best wishes to Max Lloyd and Lindy Anderson who are both in rehab following minor surgery and to Tony Harper who suffered a critical cardiac event immediately after the presentation at Wakefield Park on 23 October. Thankfully "Lucky Tony" is up and about at home again after surgery at Canberra Hospital.

Until next month ... "drive responsibly at all times"

Robert #26

Motor sport calendar

See the full calendar for details

December

11 Rd 5: Sprints, Phillip Island

2012

February

4 Rd 6: Sprints, Phillip Island

March

3 Racecraft/Driver training, Winton (motor sport participants only)

4 Rd 7: Sprints, Winton

April

27 Rd 8: Sprints, Sandown

May

TBC Rd 9: Event/venue TBC

2011 Motorkhana Championship

Rd 9: 27 November > Avalon

Rd 4: 11 December > Pakenham

Motorkhana update

Bob de Bont #632

Wet weather saw the cancellation of Round 8 on 23 October.

VMC Round 9 on 13 November, scheduled for Werribee, has been postponed as the area is unlikely to be usable. This event will now be held on 27 November (same day as our Club Christmas lunch) at Avalon.

The rescheduled VMC 4 is to be held on 11 December (same day as Phillip Island) at Pakenham.

We have also released a motorkhana promotional video which features a couple of our members and was filmed and edited by Club member and Committeeman Ben Sale (through his company *Other Side Productions*). Check it out here: <http://youtu.be/p8ORHxwCMyg>



Membership

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer

Current membership count:

456

G'day all ...

The surge continues with 11 new members this month, and on your behalf, I extend a hearty welcome to the following:

Jean-Paul Blaquiére	1999 Silver NB
Ross Crayford	1998 Blue NB
Giuliano Di Marco	1990 White NA
Christine Galbraith	2011 Aluminium NC
Gosia Glinka	1990 Neo Green NA
Karen Holland	2000 Classic Red NB
Paul, Margaret, David and Bonnie Koopmans	1993 Black NA
Bruce Marsh	1989 Classic Red NA

During my time as the Club's Membership Officer, the average attrition rate from one year to the next has been around 30%. This year, that figure is down to 16%.

It's very pleasing that more members continue with the Club, but it would appear that much of this improvement is coming from our Country Chapters.

The development of the Chapters is a priority for the committee, but much credit belongs to Chapter Convenors. Well done to them all!

See you out and about ...

Will

Mazda MX-5 Miata - The Essential Buyer's Guide

New from Veloce Publishing is a buyer's guide app for iPhone and iPad!



They say: "Having this app is just like having a *marque expert by your side. Benefit from the author's years of real ownership experience, learn how to spot a bad car quickly and how to assess a promising one like a true professional. Get the right car at the right price.*"

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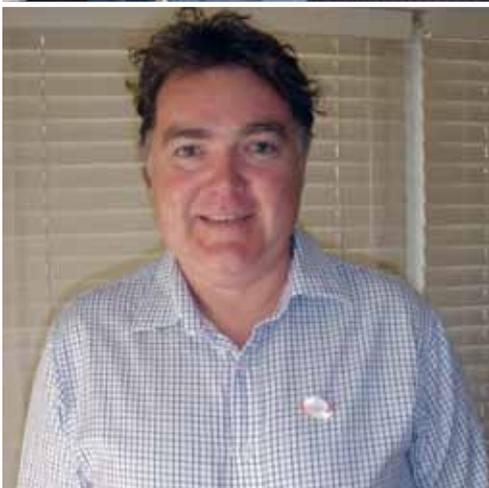
Scene about ...



■ Photos: Ron Macdonald, Brendan Beavis, Joan Read



Ian & Val Bruce (left) receive their 5-year badges from Ron Gillick



Above: former Club Treasurer Chris Biffin earned his 15-year badge

Man (or woman) and machine as one ...

This was a run that I had waited for since I joined the Club at the start of this year.

The Great Ocean Road is my favourite stretch of road and the MX-5 is now my favourite sports car. I could not wait to put the two together.

I had tried convincing my wife to join but had no luck. When I woke in the morning at 4.30, I asked my darling wife again, just to make sure. "Are you coming honey?" "I am not nuts," was the reply and she went back to sleep.

Filled with anticipation I left home at ten past five. I had the roof up because of a light drizzle and to allow the heater time to warm up. I know, I am such a wuss. Anyway, I always love early morning drives, the air is so fresh and there is a kind of hush around. It allows me to smell and hear my car better ... and the absence of traffic on the road means I don't need to keep on slowing for people who are either falling asleep behind the wheel or are not fit to be behind the wheel.

I made good progress and got to the meeting point with plenty of time to spare. Most people were already there. Obviously MX-5 owners and drivers are a keen bunch. We would later find out that, in total, 53 cars had joined the event. We had several interstate visitors and even one from as far away as Canada!

After a quick snack and a briefing we all set off. This time most of us, including yours truly, had the roof down.

As dawn broke we were on the Geelong bypass, which is actually quite a nice road, especially when it is free of traffic of the tin-roof variety. The sun was actually peeking through the cloud cover. The wind had died down and it appeared like it was beginning to warm up. Maybe despite the forecasts we might have a sunny run, after all. It seemed that maybe there was a God after all, possibly one that drove an MX-5.

As we took the turn off to Anglesea, a few drops came down but soon they went away. The roads were still largely empty of everything except for our convoy as we zoomed our way towards the start of one of the truly great roads in our corner of the galaxy, the Great Ocean Road.

This beautiful stretch of tarmac was built in the early part of the 20th Century by 3000 soldiers who had returned from the First World War. Over the years it has changed as traffic on it has increased. First speed limits were imposed. Then they gradually started creeping down. There was a time when all sports car drivers could enjoy this road. Speed limits and technologies, such as traction control and stability control and extra grippy tyres, means that this road has lost some of the fun factor for drivers of most modern cars. Sadly, safety and fun are increasingly becoming mutually exclusive. These days it takes an increasingly rare and unique vehicle to fully enjoy it. Thankfully, this morning we had brought just the cars for the job.

The going was good 'til we got to Aireys Inlet and then the rain started pelting down. Each drop was a bucketful. No amount of speed was going to keep us from getting soaked. Every car I saw stopped to put their roof up.

The next few kilometres it could have been the Wild Great Ocean Road, as the rain and the wind created an awe-inspiring weather system that our convoy of MX-5s drove through. While the drive became more challenging, it actually became more enjoyable. As the road became more slippery and covered in fallen twigs and leaves and the occasional debris from minor rock slides, the need to concentrate became greater and the athleticism and profound balance of the MX-5 came to the fore. *It was man (or woman) and machine as one.*

As we approached Lorne, the rain eased and then stopped. Many in the group had a quick pit stop and took photographs of the cars and the beautiful sunrise. I am mentioning the sun because it was now out again, at least a few rays of it were. Maybe the rain would stay away this time.

There was enough general optimism around for several tops to come down again, including mine. This time I switched on the \$10 Ebay video camera I had brought along and velcroed it to my roll bar.

We set off again but as soon as the first twisty bits started so did the rain. Thankfully it was lighter this time and with the

9/10/11



■ **Words:** Salman Shami ■ **Photos:** Salman Shami, Ron Macdonald, Wendy Clark
■ **Run organisers:** Joni & Chris Condos



The Wild Ocean Road (cont)



These days it takes an increasingly rare and unique vehicle to fully enjoy it.

Thankfully, this morning we had brought just the cars for the job.

higher speed I was able to keep the roof down almost until Apollo Bay. The wind had settled a bit, but the road was just as challenging and enjoyable. For passengers and those not paying attention to driving, there was the spectacle of the waves pounding the rocky coastline.

By the time we got to Apollo Bay I was extremely hungry. Obviously everyone else was as well. Everyone had made a beeline to one of the many nice bakeries or eateries that line the main road.

I decided to go simple and chose a croissant with coffee from a bakery. I was tempted with the bacon and egg sandwiches but I was looking forward to the drive home and did not want anything standing in the way of some inevitable G forces on the way home.

After a few pleasant conversations with other fellow Club members, I set off for home. Many people, it seems, did the same.

My route of choice was through the stunning road that goes inland over

the forested hills of the Otway Ranges National Park. This road starts about 500 meters outside Apollo Bay, on the way back to Lorne. For the keen driver, this road is in many ways a better drive than the Great Ocean Road. The speed limit is 100 and it has far less traffic.

That morning the drive was challenging to say the least because, apart from some strange camber changes, I had to contend with water on the road on a few corners and leaf and bark litter on others. This of course added to the fun.

As the forest gave way to lush green, grass-covered hills, the road straightened out. The MX-5 showed itself to be a very comfortable touring machine for B roads. Quite predictably, as the road straightened out the sun came out and it stayed that way all the way home. ■

Are we having fun yet?



AROCA Winton 6-Hour regularity 15-16/10/11

■ Words: Ken Read ■ Photos: Joan Read, Brendan Beavis, Murray Anderson

The Winton 6-Hour is a two-day meet that is a very different meet from the usual sprint days held throughout the year.

Firstly it is a team relay event, with up to six drivers in each team. Each driver is timed for laps but, unlike sprint events, not for quickest time but for *regularity*.

What does regularity mean? No, it is nothing to do with the competitors' digestive systems! The driver uses practice day to establish the target lap time (within defined limits) that he or she will be nominate for the event. Laps are then credited to the team for each lap each driver completes within their nominated time. A bonus lap is awarded if the timed lap is within 0.99 second over the nominated time. No lap is recorded if the lap is under the nominated time (ie, too fast). The winner is determined using a fairly complicated formula that rewards the team for the highest percentage of laps achieved from those possible, given the drivers' nominated times.

Sounds too easy, doesn't it?

However, another difference about this meet was the sheer number of competitors – around 200! There were 41 teams competing, so at any time there were 40 other cars on the track with you, all of different makes, models and capability. It is this amount of traffic that makes it difficult to achieve your nominated time on a consistent basis as you are constantly being held up on corners, overtaking, or being overtaken.

Our Club entered three teams and we shared a garage that usually houses only two teams. This made it a bit



squeezy, but the big bonus was the humour, support and camaraderie all drivers and assistants gave each other over the two days to overcome any disadvantage. We were provided with vests, coats, shirts and hats that helped us feel part of the event, and thanks go to our sponsors (*Elements, Peninsula Safety and Workwear, City Mazda*) who generously donated this apparel.

The Club did very well in the final rankings, remembering there were 41 teams:

Fly'n Miatas	2nd
City Mazda Motorsport	6th
The Clean Sweeps	32nd

Congratulations to everyone and a personal thank you to all that assisted me on the day. Thanks also to Christine Boak, Team Manager and other team members and assistants of *The Clean Sweeps*.

Finally, was it fun?

You bet! ■



Success at the Winton 6-Hour ...



Left: Waiting ... waiting ... for the results to be announced. Then, right, that glorious feeling! *Fly'n Miatas'* Robert Downes, Noel Heritage, Peter Phillips, Stephen Downes and Teruo Delacroix celebrate second place.



15-16/10/11



■ Words: Graham Wilson ■ "Shopping cart" photo: Owen Boak

What a fantastic weekend, having just competed in my first 6-hour.

For those who don't know me, I am Owen Boak's dad (*that's Owen pictured left, manning the lap board*) and he and Chris urged me to take part after one member of their team had to pull out.

So we roused the motorkhana Mazda 121 and fitted it with some R-spec tyres [thanks Trackside tyres] and headed off to Winton. I had never done a timed lap of the long circuit before, and then read in the Supp Regs that we had to at least get down to a 2min 10 sec lap.

Here I am in a bog-standard Mazda "bubble", albeit stripped out a bit and with nice tyres.

I must say I was treated so well by everybody from scrutineers to other competitors and all in between.

My heart was in my mouth a bit when I first went on to the track, knowing I might have a chance of driving reasonably, but having never driven with so many faster cars around me. However they all treated me with due respect (as only a Mazda 121 can command) and I had a ball, eventually getting down to a 1min 59 sec, which isn't too bad bearing in mind I was in a stock 1.3 litre shopping cart.

Apart from forgetting to nominate my target time, which Owen did for me, Sunday dawned bright and hopeful and eventually my turn came around and I was out there.

did find it quite difficult to pace myself with trying to be aware of all the faster cars, while trying to maintain a target time. I didn't do much for the team effort (sorry guys) but I did have one of the best weekends of my life. I'll have to get my mechanic to find an extra 500hp somewhere.

I think the highlight was when a car of sporting nature and Italian background, with a GTV badge on it, was given the blue light* when being approached from behind by a disability pensioner in a shopping cart. I had to look in my mirror to check if the light was also for me, but there was no-one behind me.

I did have enormous fun in that, although I was slow on the straights, I wasn't too bad in the bends, and had quite some fun giving others a bit of a hurry up through the twisty bits.

It was interesting to note that there were three MX-5 teams and they were the only ones to finish with all cars still working!!

I must thank our team for putting up with my amateur efforts and everyone else who took the time and effort to pass on encouraging remarks and good wishes.

Amazingly, I wasn't even the slowest one there either! Hopefully I can compete again next year and get the techniques right then. I would strongly encourage anyone who is thinking of taking part to have a go. The only painful part was the long wait for scrutineering, but once that was over all went OK.

I am not sure if the rumour is true that Owen is thinking of getting a "bubble" to replace his MX-5 turbo with the aim of getting more "speed thrills"... I'll have to make a phone call.

Finally, a great vote of thanks to all the other MX-5ers for the camaraderie shown to this Oldie who should know better than to play with motor sport. I really enjoyed getting to know more of the Club members and sharing the meal on Saturday night was a great bonus. Also a special thanks to the man who supplied the jackets; I haven't caught up with you yet but would like to express my appreciation.

Amazing what even these old Mazdas can do !! ■

[Ed ~ the blue light is shown to a driver who is about to be overtaken, or who is holding up the vehicle behind ...]*

I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice c

■ Words: Ron Macdonald ■ Photos: Ron Macdonald & Wendy Clark

■ Run organisers: Ian and Karen Bradshaw

Having the need for another MX-5 fix after the Great Ocean Road run, I contacted John Gleeson of the Ballarat Chapter regarding the opportunity to “play” with the country folk.

So it was on Sunday morning we rolled Gracie out of the garage and by 7:30 she was breathing the cool morning air on the freeway as we made the 160km journey from Frankston to the starting point at Sabastopol (very nearly a run in itself!).

We arrived at the meeting point a few minutes early to find Jeff Woolf already there and, after the obligatory introductions, we proceeded to “perve” at each other’s cars (both Grace Green NBs) and discuss all things MX-5.

John and Noellene Gleeson were the next to arrive, followed shortly after by the famous “Molly” (Lachlan Story). Those who are regular readers of this fine publication will know that “Molly” seems to be a bit of a Kangaroo magnet (having danced with four of the beasts). Lockie has decided to celebrate (or commiserate) this fact in a WWI fighter pilot style, with “Molly” now sporting four silhouettes on her driver’s side front guard.



By this time we had seven cars present and John announced that all he was expecting were now here so he proceeded with the run briefing. One major thing that did catch my ear during John’s talk was the fact that we were making our way to Port Campbell (some 244km away) to buy an ice cream (must be damn good ice cream down there)! A few minutes later 7 x 4 cyl engines sprang to life and we all followed John for the 47km journey to our second meeting point at the Wallinduc “Fire Shed”. This was a pleasant though uneventful run except for Jeff having to go back and pick up the cap that had gone flying off his head.





These country folk definitely know how to organise a civilised Club run. On arrival at the "Fire Shed" we found two cars already there, the kettle on and a selection of cakes and bikkies. A bit of chit chat and a refuel (of us, not the cars) followed, with of course the obligatory inspection of the cars lined up outside.

Now numbering nine MX-5s, we took off along a narrow road (with the odd pothole or 20) with Ian and Karen in the lead car on course for our number three pick-up point. Again a lovely drive with some fantastic scenery, especially through the lakes district with heaps of pelicans and those big black long-necked "ducks" enjoying the abundant water. Arriving at Birragurra we caught up with our final car for the "assault" on Port Campbell, so now there were 10. Having had another chat with a few of the Ballarat gang (oh and a puff), time came to head off towards our lunch stop. A line of multi coloured MX-5s followed Ian's black NB out on to the highway and into some quite different country than we had seen earlier. As we headed south the terrain changed from grasslands to woodlands, a nice contrast for the day.

Another 25km down the road, we turned in to the Barwon Reservoir (*Ed ~ not literally one hopes, could have been a bit wet*) and lined the "girls" up ready for us to put the feed bag on. Not long after we pulled up, a gaggle of motorcycles arrived all decked out in pink (some sporting pink bras across their fairings) ... one assumes in support of breast cancer awareness month. A very pleasant picnic lunch under the trees, then a walk across the dam wall completed the lunch break.

Oh, not to be forgotten: a peek at Gay's birthday gift picture book which features her blue beast competing in the Bathurst 1000!

After lunch the fun really began, noting that Ian didn't mind going for a "squirt", we positioned ourselves on his rear bumper for this stage (as per my article in the October *mxtra*). Leaving the reservoir we turned left and squeezed the loud pedal, that is until our progress was impeded by a slow-moving tradie's tray, well for a couple of kilometres anyway. Wasn't long before Ian saw his chance and we followed close behind. We then enjoyed some lovely 100kmh winding road, however (as I had been told earlier) the best was yet to come.

Turning right into Turtons Track we pulled up to wait for the others. For those who have not travelled this road before, imagine a couple of dozen w's all joined together, that would give you a pretty accurate map of this very narrow winding road. Soon after starting down the track we met our first slow driver, but to their credit (and the other three we met) they pulled over as soon as they could to let us past. This gave us the perfect opportunity to really enjoy what is definitely one of the top MX-5 roads in the state. I have noted in previous articles that a winding road and an MX-5 is the most fun you can have with your pants on, this road however is definitely in the top two, pants on or not! Ian built a fire under his NB and we stuck right on his rear bumper for the entire length of the track, sensational stuff. You would negotiate a right hand hairpin only to find a left hand hairpin on the other side (video on my site). I am told

the scenery, with its tall timbers and fern understory, is awesome, though I have to admit I was a tad too busy at the time to notice much of it.

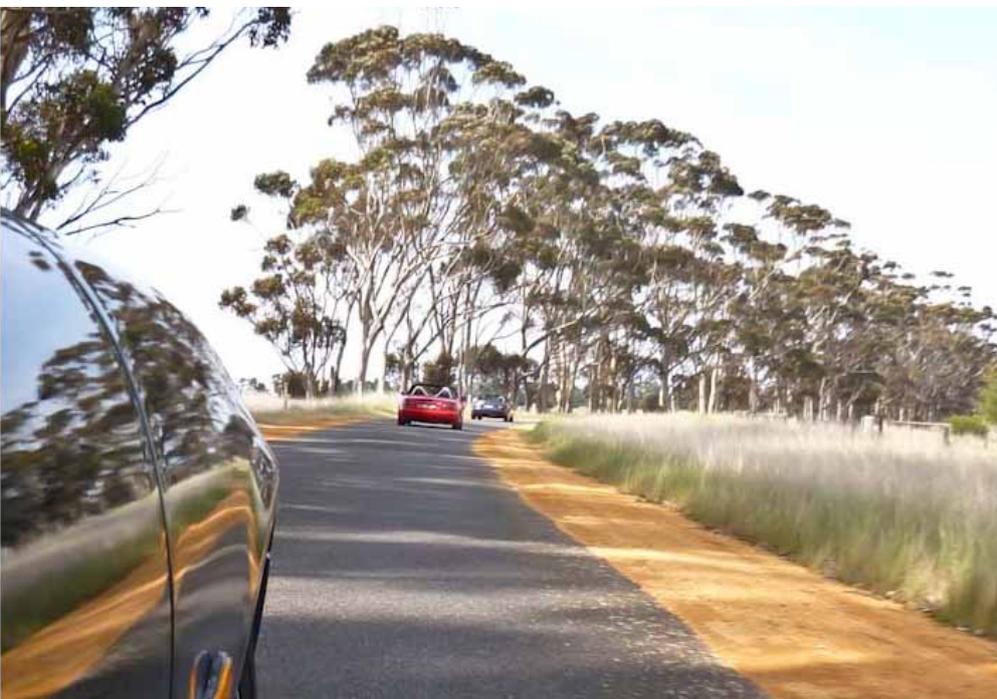
Still buzzing from our meeting with Turtons Track we followed Ian and Karen into the Beechforest picnic area to await the others. Three hands of cards later (not quite) we were joined by the other eight cars and, after a "rest stop", headed off towards the ice cream.

On to the Great Ocean Road (which I might add is nowhere near the ocean) and again we were slowed by those who feel the need to travel at half the speed limit (and have no interest in using the pull off zones). On that subject, it was strange but 90% of the very slow cars we encountered were white, must be something about white car drivers (sorry Don). Ian pulled over to let these cars get a bit ahead and allow our band to regroup. Off again and all good for the first three corners, just after the fourth corner I saw Ian's car jump, but it was too late, we fell into a pothole the size of the Grand Canyon and were airborne when we came out the other side. As they say in the classics: "stuff" happens. We wound our way down to Port Campbell (dodging the snail set) and pulled up in a side street. A short walk into town and it was ice creams all round (mmm, rum and raisin). Ice creams consumed, a walk down to the port completed our Port Campbell visit.

40-odd km later we were in Camperdown and time for us to radio our farewells and thanks for what had proven to be an excellent day. On the journey home we reflected on the day's events. It had been the biggest run we had been on by distance, but the smallest run by number of cars. The smaller number of cars plus the "country flavour" did make for a more intimate run and I was pleased to note they were not shy about making good use of the radios.

Gracie was finally returned to her garage at 7:30pm, a little over 12 hours and 705km (that's Melbourne to Adelaide!) later. We alighted from the car very tired but with that unmistakable MX-5 "glow". It had been a long but very pleasant day.

Many thanks go to Ian and Karen Bradshaw and all the Ballarat crew for a well-organised and very enjoyable run. I am sure we will cross paths again in the near future. ■



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The MX-5 Club Grill



Introducing ...

Christine Boak

Girl Racer

Name? Christine Boak

Age? 45

Born? Preston

Current abode? Langwarrin

Profession? Company director

Partner? Married to Owen

Pets? Penny, a Springer spaniel and Tina, a Greyhound (both spoilt)

Fave food? Home made gnocchi

Can you cook? Yes, but I'd rather eat out!

Favourite tippie? Merlot

First drive? About 10 years old, I drove a Suzuki 4WD into the dam to use as a diving board; I learnt young what these cars were good for!

First car? XB Falcon

First fender bender? In 2000 after nearly 20 years of driving, some wally in Ballarat made a right hand turn in to me

Everyday driver? FPV GTP

Current MX-5(s)?

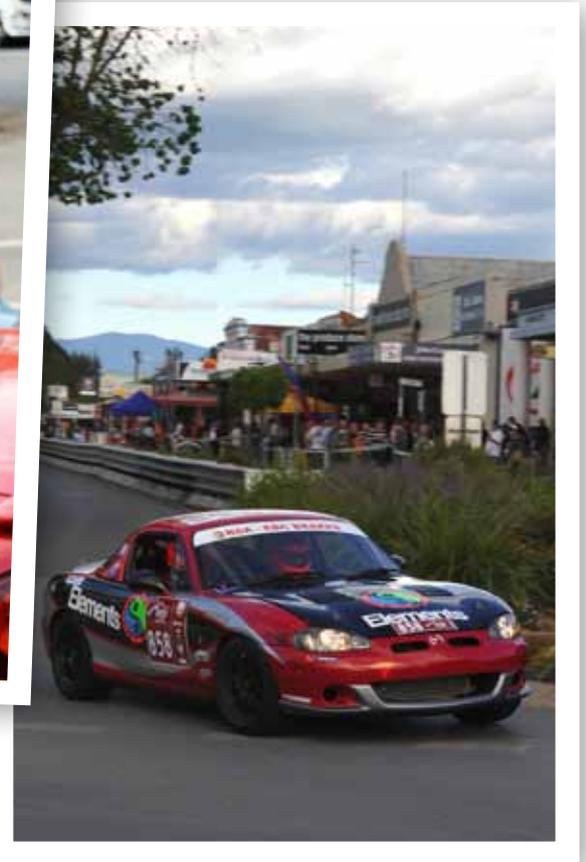
- » Classic Red NA6 – Hers
- » Supreme Blue SP – Hers
- » Velocity Red SE – His
- » SE Race car – Hers
- » SP Race car – His

MX-5 improvements? How much time have you got???

MX-5 dislikes? Nothing to dislike, I love them!

Why an MX-5? Vicky Butler Henderson told me I needed one ... I just couldn't stop there!

Fluffy dice? Does a lap timer count?



Passions besides the MX-5? My family and motor sport

Favourite book? "The Art of Racing in the Rain" – Garth Stein: a great story about a dog, a family and beating the odds!

Dream wheels (money no object)? More MX5s ... what else? I don't have an NC yet!

Would you drive a Daewoo or SSangYong? A what?

Favourite other Mazda? RX7 SP

If not a Mazda (gasp!) what? OK, I have to admit a Porsche GT3 would be cool

How long in the Club? three years

How many MX-5 Club runs? Just the one so far, though I do get to most of the motor sport rounds

Favourite Club run? Gippsland ... had a great day with great people!

Done DECA? Yes

If yes, how many times? Once

Ford vs Holden? 'Ford of course!!'

What's playing in your MX-5? Queen Live

Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)? Does that have wheels?

Final comments? "Believe You Can"



Chapter news ...

On the skids ... ~ 2/10/11 | Northern Tassie Chapter

■ Words & photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Run organiser: Bruce Harvey

Being a dawn raider isn't one of my characteristics.

A solid streak of friendly competitiveness is however! The temptation of doing controlled slides in our red NA, *Mixxie*, around a slippery, wet cement bowl was definitely worth getting up at 4am. Carl, the kids and I (in our Renault Megane Cup as well as *Mixxie*) joined the Launceston crew for the long drive down to Rokeby Police Academy in Hobart. The sun didn't even rise until we got to Perth and the temperature got as low as -2° in places, but it promised to be a nice sunny day.

We joined some of the Hobart Chapter as well as an assortment from the MG club and a few others. It was an interesting mix of cars, but of course our MX-5s looked the best – all lined up in their pretty colours, sparkling clean and shiny. Most of the ladies claimed the hill top with picnic blankets to watch the action while the blokes hovered around the start point talking shop.

The witches' hats were set up in a figure 8, the track sprinklers were on, vegetable oil was applied (all very environmentally friendly!) and everyone had signed their name on the dotted line ... first three-minute session ... ready ... set ... GO!

That was the pattern for the rest of the day, with brief pauses for a re-application of vegetable oil, or for a quick fix-up of the cones that had been knocked over (or stuck dragging under the front wheel arch!). It was as much fun watching as it was driving (well, nearly!) as nearly everyone took out a least one hat on their first go around. Some went flying, some just got bumped, and two or three actually got stuck and had to be pulled out. All the guys looked like they were having a great time and there were three of us girls out on the track too – Karen did a great job and I had massive fun.



Carl took our four-year-old daughter, Stasi, out as a passenger in our NA. She pretended to steer her own wheel and screamed with joy at each furious corner! Herby (Dennis Burgess) had organised an excellent day while also managing the stop watch, chequered flag and he even fed us snags for lunch. Over all, engines were thrashed, water was sprayed everywhere and tails were sliding sideways more often than not. It was a blast!!! :). Can't wait for another day just like it!

After having completed four days of defensive driving lessons years ago, I really enjoyed getting out on a tricky track again. Not only is it a real buzz to push myself and

Mixxie to the edge, recover and then maintain a controlled slide through the cones - its immensely important to have experience and thus know how to react, in that split second when something goes wrong on a real road, whether it is from black ice, bad roads or inattentive drivers.

That was why we took the Megane as well, since it is out everyday driver. The Megane wasn't anywhere near as fun on the course as *Mixxie* – too civilised, and front wheel drive just isn't the same. It was good to find that she has so much grip that I couldn't get her back out even when trying. That hands-on knowledge will come in handy one day!

Thanks to Bruce for organising our Chapter. Thanks to Herby for organising the specifics and running a great day. Thanks to Rokeby Police Academy for sharing their facilities and making it all happen! Much appreciated and looking forward to doing it all again! ■



Last-minute run ...

~ 23/10/11 | Northern Tassie Chapter

■ Words & photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Run organisers: Bruce Harvey & Kean Beaton



Bruce had ordered perfect weather for our last-minute run to George Town ... and it was delivered.

The Devonport crew met up in our usual car park then headed off to George Town via a very twisty back road behind the main highway. At one point it was a surprise to pop up next to the huge Nichols Farm wind turbine – that came out of nowhere! I love cutting through the patchwork countryside, seeing the perfectly ploughed dark fields next to a lush green paddock. All the dog legs between them just make it more fun, of course! A few more turns and we started up the old highway to Exeter, across the Batman Bridge and through wine country to George Town.

It was my first trip to George Town and I was surprised at how big it was, and how much industry is there. The first stop was at Bruce and Cheryl's new IGA (very impressive, and their coffee machine makes

excellent hazelnut coffee!) to pick up the rest of the chapter and then off to lunch at the Pier Hotel overlooking York Cove.

We had a yummy alfresco lunch – I had an excellent gourmet pizza – and a nice chat with the hotel owner, who has his own MX-5. The MX-5s also had a nice break - they had prime parking on the lawn overlooking the bay, and the NAs just HAD to pop their eyes up to enjoy the view :).

Off again after lunch for a fun spin back around, over the river via the Batman Bridge, and through Beaconsfield, ending up at the Blue Barn Cafe in Frankford. The sun was hot and I had to put a cap on – for all of two minutes as it turned out as I forgot to hold onto it while taking another pic! Swoosh! Just a flash of red shooting out the back! Sandra and Keith did a quick retrieval for me ... thanks guys!

The road from the Batman to Beaconsfield via the Kayena region is really excellent. Road in good condition, nice views, lots of turns and enough

hills and dips to make it fun. I tried taking some pics over my door, showing our wheel/nose and at least one car in front (think I freaked Sandra and Keith out a little a time or two!) and got a couple of nice pics of Ken and Ruth's NA. Through Beaconsfield and down the back roads. More curves and bush, and some steep hills with excellent views of little farm valleys.

Tassie really is an excellent place to have a convertible. We had another NA in Brisbane for years before we moved down and, from experience, I can say that I'd rather have the top up occasionally in winter when it rains here, than have to have it up all the time in summer – because driving without a roof for shade (or without aircon) in Brisbane really turns you into a puddle of yuck!

We all know, too, that if you drive fast enough in the rain, you don't even need the top up :).

The run finished with a good chat over coffee and cake at the Blue Barn before everyone broke up to head home. Thanks to everyone for a great run, good company and excellent conversation! Special thanks to Ken and Bruce for the great last-minute organisation! ■



Chapter news ...

Mazdas and mayhem in Maydena ...

~ 15/10/11 | Hobart Chapter

■ Words: Caz Timbrell ■ Photos: John Waldoock & Ross Crayford
■ Run organiser: John Waldoock

The Official Report

A convoy of nine MX-5s headed out of Hobart on the way to Strathgordon, which is situated 150km west of Hobart and is famous for its dam and the stunning scenery on the way.

Most of us had optimistically folded down our hoods. The weather forecast was promising and hardy souls tried to ignore the smattering of raindrops on the windscreen and the cold draughts round the back of the ears.

Lead driver John Waldoock took it easy to allow for the damp road conditions and to allow tail-end driver John Hadrill to catch up after a passenger pit stop. Finally past New Norfolk the road got curvy but the weather deteriorated so hoods had to go up. *It pelted down.*

It was a long day, so really there was no time for all these minor hold ups, but Maydena offered the last opportunity for toilets, coffee and fuel for the next however long. So we pulled in and chatted outside the café as we got to know new members Ross and Inger in their 1998 blue NB.

But, it's when you have your guard down that trouble raises its hand. A moment's inattention on the part of one passenger resulted in a couple of cars waiting behind as the rest of the convoy took off, (more of this later) for the picnic spot at the dam wall.

Surprisingly they were all swooping back into the car park of the Maydena Adventure Hub within 10 minutes. Snow drifts!! Five miles up the road they had encountered snow too deep to tackle unless you had a 4WD or no brains.

So the day was spent sitting around the log fire, munching chocolate or savouring the lunch menu. The hot chocolate is to be recommended, not only yummy but *hot too*. Plenty to talk about of course, but also to read the literature about the adventures to be had in the area. A long-established centre for forestry and logging, it has turned to tourism. We found out about bushwalks and gourmet lunches, various target sports, and the amazing Rail Rider which we plan to try out on a future run. Meanwhile outside the rain fell in sheets and torrents with only short sunny spells when we could see the mountain tops glistening with snow.

Gradually cars departed as people needed to get back home. Just a few hardy and kind souls remained to try and sort out the mess – which I really don't want to talk about but here it is ...

The Mayhem

- » No cars were damaged in this scenario (*though it was a close thing for a while*).
- » No people were harmed (*also a close thing*).

It could have happened in an isolated layby miles from help and phone coverage and not outside a cosy café.

It could have been much worse. But it *was* awful.

I had cadged a lift with John Waldoock in *Feisty*. I am having a garage built at my place (car cost \$11K, garage and subsequent alterations \$65K). *Lolita* (my 2000 Classic Red

Or: How we didn't make it to Strathgordon (subtitled "It wasn't all my fault")





NB with gold wheels) is a bit of a princess, so she's gone to stay with a friend until all the noise and mess and scary machinery has gone.

I was looking forward to watching a master at work (*don't know where Caz got that idea ~ John*) and discussing driving techniques. I'm stalling, not wanting to get to the fiasco I caused. But here it is.

When we stopped at Maydena I got my drink out of the boot. *Feisty*, being a lovely 1989 NA, has no internal boot latch and I got the keys, opened up, got my drink and wandered about chatting and sipping 'til it was time to move on. Put my drink in the boot and shut the lid.

Where was the key??? It soon dawned that the keys must be in the boot and there was no way to open it. Although John usually kept a spare in the centre console it wasn't there.

Nine drivers waited as flailing arms, foul language and howls of despair failed to solve the problem. Remember there wasn't a lot of time to spare on this drive, so it was agreed that John and I would wait for assistance or inspiration as the rest carried on. Allan stayed too for moral support and back up. John rang his wife to see if she could bring spare keys but she couldn't find them. The kind people in the café called the local police officer (it being judged that he might have an idea how to break into a locked boot). In the rain and wind he admitted to being baffled. By this time the rest of the cars were back from the snow fields and a party atmosphere developed. The RACT was called. It took an hour and half for the tow truck to arrive and still the boot stayed closed. Towing and simply bashing the lock in were both rejected.

In the end it was decided that John would get a lift home to Lauderdale (a mere 150km and two hours away) to find the spare key and come back. All the other cars had passengers, unusually, so I got a lift in the tow truck as far as New Norfolk (a mere 60km) to find my own way home by bus or to find a friend who could come and collect me.

So it was. I sat in the Bush Inn for 50 minutes 'til my lift arrived. John got back to *Feisty*, opened the boot and guess what! *No keys!*

He drove to my place so I could check my own bags, still in his boot but still no sign. At this point I started to get a glimmer of a memory of placing my drink on a wall while I poured it. *Could the keys be there, could they have been there on the wall all the time, was the whole drama pretty well unnecessary? Could the keys possibly still be there, on the main road in full view? Surely I would have noticed them? Surely I couldn't be so stupid?*

Oh yes ... I could!

A phone call next morning to the lovely people at the café and the keys were located, dried out and kept safe for return. Throughout John was patience and kindness itself. I didn't deserve it. He even bought my lunch.

I thought I might feel better after writing it all down ... hasn't happened yet. I'd love to hear other people's stories of embarrassing mistakes and so on.

Please! So I don't feel so alone. ■



Note from John W:

While Caz has been very honest in her story, the day was in no way a hassle or a disappointment. The party feeling of the afternoon, plus knowing that some way or another we would solve the problem, meant that no-one was annoyed at all about the "Key Incident". Allan Pryor and I had a great drive there and back to collect the spare key; we didn't miss out on Strathgordon as it was snowed out anyway.

I had the chance to hang out with the Chapter and have a joke around too. Caz generously had another spare key cut for me and gave me two bottles of wine, which will go into the wine kitty for our Chapter Christmas lunch. And it made for a day that was pretty memorable too!

Ed: For what it's worth, Caz, you can lock keys in the boot of an NC and be unable to retrieve them if the hood is up and the car is locked. Did it recently while on holiday in Queensland. You are not alone. But I am now an expert (= drip under pressure) at getting into a locked NC without damaging the car.

And at our Federation Square display in Melbourne last year, Ballarat Convenor John Gleeson slammed the boot of his NB on his keys, with no remote release. He was looking at a long walk home to Ballarat to get his spare while his car remained on show for the world to see on the Fed Square forecourt. Fortunately his clever wife, Noellene, had put the spare key in her handbag that morning and brought it with her ... the first time she had ever done that!

Chapter news ...

Gippsland Chapter kicks off ... ~ 30/10/11

■ Photo: Will Campbell



The Club's newest "offspring", the Gippsland Chapter, kicked off at Maffra on Sunday, 30 October.

The planned BBQ turned into a pub meal after the "Gippsland sunshine" (ie, rain) forced a change of plans.

But plans for the new Chapter are far from damp. Chapter Convenor Grant Butler (pictured at left with his wife Saeko) has many ideas up his sleeve, and Traralgon South member Alan Laine has already mapped out several runs on some of his favourite roads.

Grant, a Life Member and 10-year member of the Club, served on the Club's committee for seven years and was Chairman of the NatMeet 2008 planning committee. He's also an avid motor cycle rider, and he knows Gippsland like the back of his hand.

But your ideas are also welcome. Grant can be contacted via e-mail on <gippsland@mx5vic.org.au> or by phone on 5625 4718 (home) or 0403 929 315 (mobile). ■

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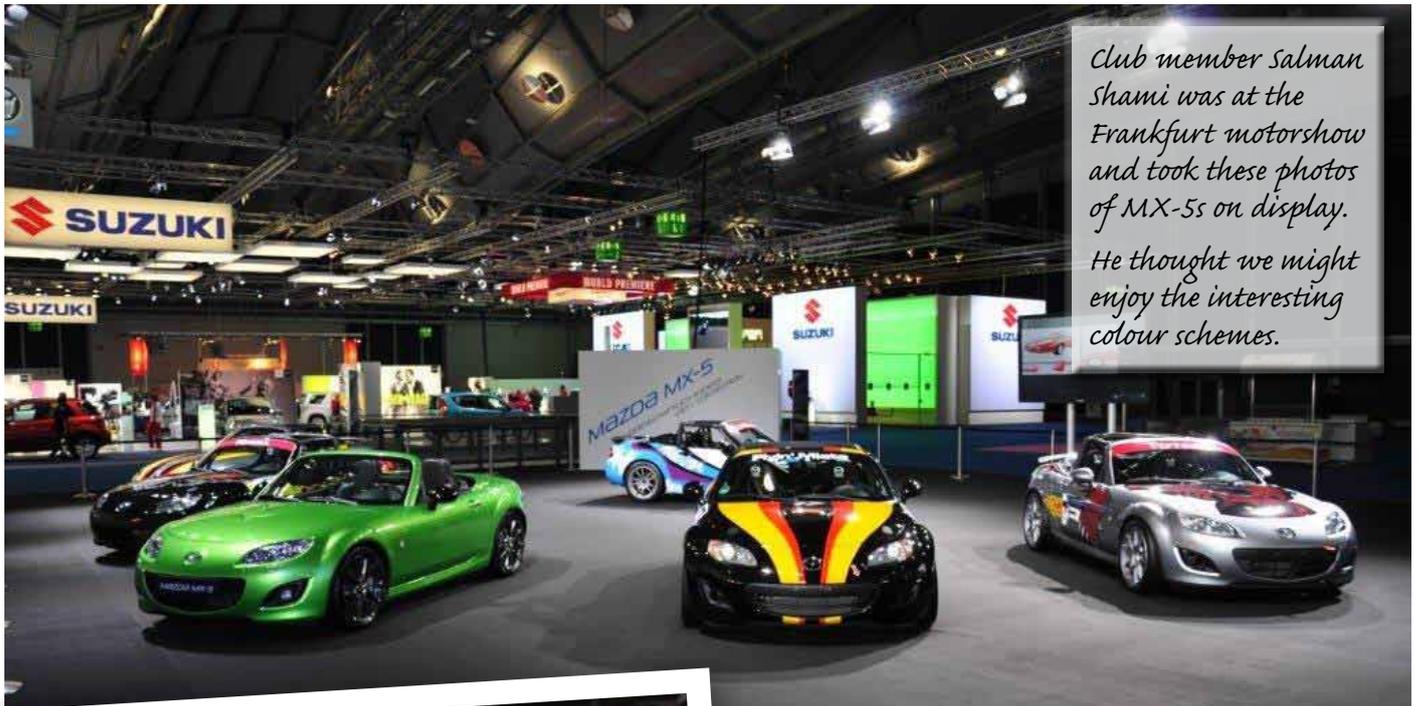
www.mx5centre.com.au



Scene about ... in Frankfurt



■ Photos: Salman Shami



Club member Salman Shami was at the Frankfurt motorshow and took these photos of MX-5s on display. He thought we might enjoy the interesting colour schemes.



MX-5's pre-war pedigree?

■ from Glenda Wise



1931 Inland 6 cylinder



1931 7.2 litre V12



Bugatti Tipo 57C Van Vooren Cabriolet



1939 Inland 8 cylinder



Mercedes-Benz 710 SSK Trossi Roadster



*Daimler Double-Six 50
Corsica Drophead Coupé*



*One-off 1933 Napier-Ralton ... 600HP, 24-litre, 12 cylinder
aircraft engine*



Napier-Ralton Special



Sitting pretty ...

Jenni, a non-Club member, e-mailed us many months ago about how to fit a baby car seat in an MX-5. We gave her some ideas, and now she's reported back:

... I wanted to let you know we did succeed in fitting a baby seat to my MX-5.

We got the car seat from the RACV, a GoSafe convertible child car seat for use 0 to 18kg. Cost \$219/\$199 member price.

We got it fitted by Nunawading Toyota Restraint Fitting Station, Station St, Nunawading at a cost of \$328. The work was stated as: Establish correct location for anchorage point, drill anchorage point, install anchor bolt, fit child car seat.

It took a long time, many phone calls and visits to various fitting stations before we got on to Nunawading who said they could do it.

Our baby Georgina was born on 11 July and as you can see is reasonably happy about driving around in an MX-5. Haven't had her out with the top down yet though!! ■

Embroidered logos

Here's a tip from Club member Perry Tountsios that might interest other owners the iconic "SP" edition MX-5.

Perry took a photo of the "SP" logo and sent it to an embroiderer who uploaded it on to his machine. Now that the "SP" logo base art has been set up, the cost to others is a lot cheaper at \$40 for two signs. This can be embroidered on to the car seats through an auto trimmer (at additional cost).

Contact Winson at Quality Embroidery Services in Thomastown on 9460 3077 or 0415 286 821. Perry dealt with auto trimmer Greg at Doyles in Thomastown and recommends him for all your repairs and re-upholstering – tel: 9460 5188. ■



Did you know ... ?

Words & research:

Ron Macdonald NB8A
ron@gracies-place.net /
www.gracies-place.net

Who's your Daddy?

The MX-5, or Lightweight Sports Car as it was first known during the development phase, caused a retro revolution in car manufacture, but, did you know that the man credited as the biological father of the MX-5 was not an employee of Mazda?

Bob Hall was a motoring writer who specialised in Japanese cars and had also been a sports car enthusiast since he first began to drive. On a visit to Mazda headquarters in the spring of 1979, Bob caught up with long-time friend Kenichi Yamamoto, then the head of R&D at Mazda. Yamamoto-san asked Bob "What kind of cars do you think Mazda should build in the future?" Bob Hall's reply was to change the world of motoring: "the simple, bugs-in-the-teeth, wind-in-the-hair, classically-British sports car doesn't exist anymore so somebody should build one". He also added, "The Mazda (Familia) 323 [at the time rear-wheel drive] would make the perfect platform for an inexpensive roadster".

The rest as they say is history. Bob was invited to join Mazda's product planning department where he worked on the development of the MX-5 [which had the catchy code-name P729], nurturing his "baby" until its world launch at the Chicago Motor Show.

Perhaps he was inspired in part by the magnificent convertibles and roadsters of the past, like those opposite. ■

* The Club owns the only authorised copy in existence of Bob Hall's original proposal to Mazda ... ask President Murray if you'd like to see it.

Cars

Those members who have children or grandchildren may know of the award-winning 2006 animated film *Cars*.

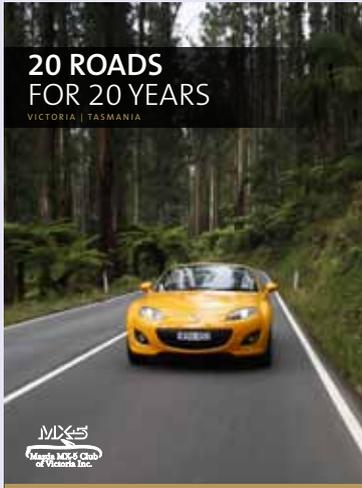


The plot of this movie centres around an obnoxious NASCAR called Lightning McQueen, but did you notice that his two biggest fans are MX-5s? The twins Mia (voiced by Lindsey Collins) and Tia (Elissa Knight) are red 1992 NA Miatas (MX-5s); the names were picked as a play on *Miata*. Like many films of this genre there is some subliminal "adult" content ... when the twins first meet Lightning they flash their pop-up headlights at him, said to be a take on groupies pulling up their shirts to flash celebrities their "headlights".

So if you happen to own a red NA, next time you watch *Cars* with the wee ones you can point out that grandpa's (or grandma's) car is in the movie. ■

Market place ...

Please note: notices in the Market Place section are presented as a service to members only. The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. has not tested the products, equipment or services listed and makes no warranties or representations about any of the products or their purported uses.



“20 Roads” book

Looking for the ideal birthday or Christmas gift for the MX-5 enthusiast in your life?

This is *the* perfect companion for the MX-5 glove box.

Put together by Club members for Club members to celebrate our 20th anniversary, this book profiles some great drivers' roads in Victoria and Tasmania.

» Cost is \$20 + postage. Contact Steve Dunlop, merchandise@mx5vic.org.au.

Club library ...

Books



Workshop Manuals:

» 1.6 NA » 1.8 NA » 1990-2009



Miata Mazda MX-5

» original 1989
2-book set

To arrange a short-term loan, please contact president@mx5vic.org.au

Club stickers



Help promote the Club with one of our new windscreen stickers.

- » 300mm wide x 15mm high
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- » Cost is \$2 + postage.

Contact Steve Dunlop, merchandise@mx5vic.org.au.

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Random orbital polisher, ideal for machine polishing your car. Consumables available (at your own cost) through the Club.

Contact merchandise@mx5vic.org.au



Bushing tool, for servicing or replacing your suspension bushes.

Contact president@mx5vic.org.au

Sew-on cloth patches



Winding roads make MX-5 drivers very happy.

We all know that, of course, but Gippsland Chapter member Alan Laine has come up with a great way to show it ... with a cloth badge to sew on your favourite MX-5 driving jacket.

The badges are 4cm x 11cm, 100% polyester fabric and threads, and commercially dry cleanable.

» The cost is \$15, including postage.

Contact Alan on 5195 5375 (ah) or via e-mail on oobah4@aussiebb.com.au.

Club number plate frames



- » 6-digit Slimline or Standard size
- » White text on black plastic

» Cost is \$10/pair (\$17.30 posted)

Ask at your next Club run or contact Murray Finlay, president@mx5vic.org.au.

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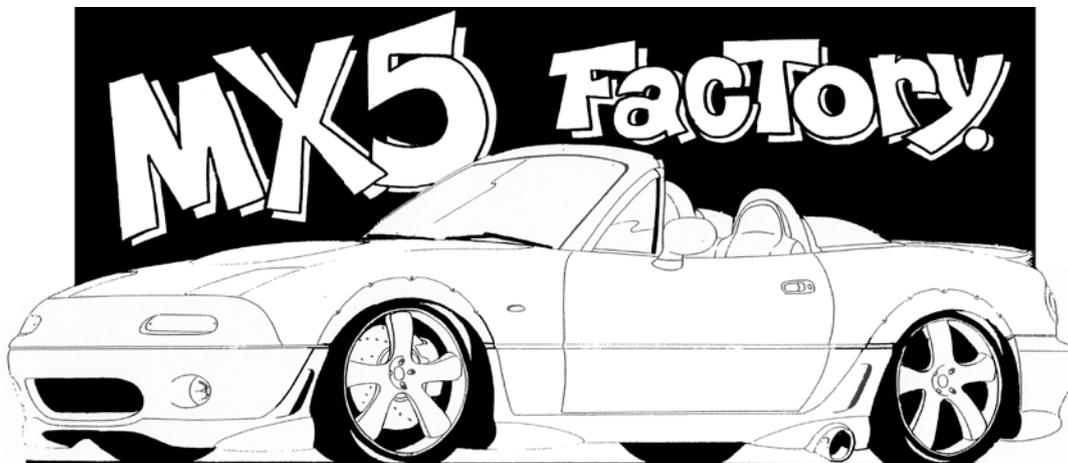
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