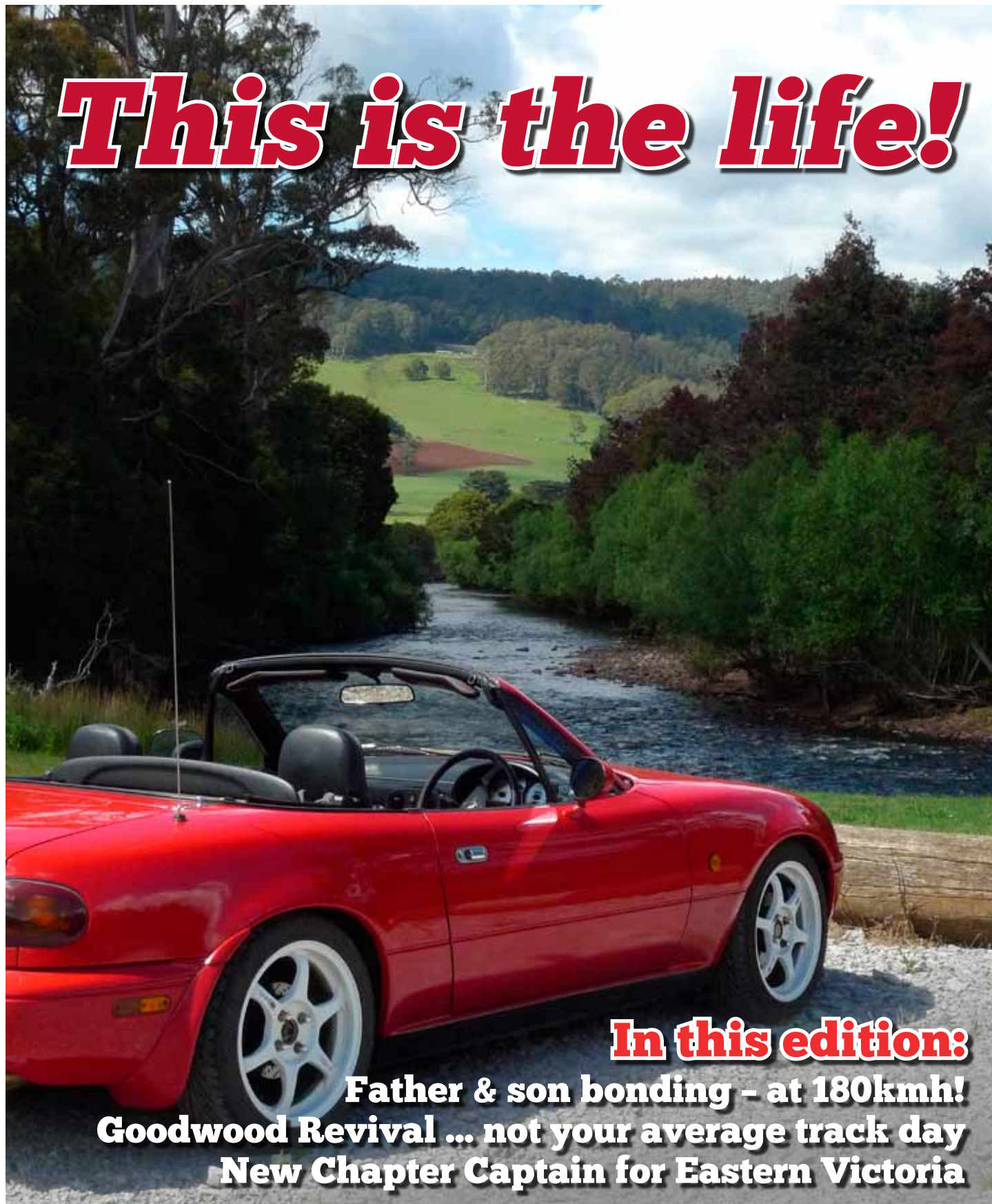




THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA & TASMANIA

This is the life!



In this edition:

**Father & son bonding - at 180kmh!
Goodwood Revival ... not your average track day
New Chapter Captain for Eastern Victoria**



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12/2012

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Cover image: Kelly & Carl Berggren's NA, Mixie, overlooking the Leven River in the Wings Wildlife Park in Gunns Plains.
 Photo: Kelly Berggren



Find us at:
MX-5 Club of Victoria

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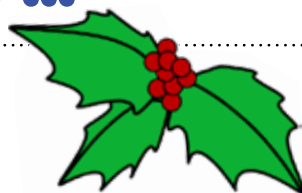
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Don's Drive(l) ...

■ Don Nicoll – President president@mx5vic.org.au



Hi everyone!

Welcome to our last edition of *mxtra* for the year. At the risk of sounding ancient, can someone please tell me where the other 11 months went?

At the November Committee meeting we reluctantly accepted Janette Todd's decision to step down as the Assistant Club Captain – Social at the next Committee meeting. In both this role and her previous role as the Club Captain – Social we have been very fortunate to have Janette's enthusiastic contributions to the Club's social calendar. I know that Murray, who was President during a large part of Janette's term on the Committee, will join me in thanking Janette for her tireless efforts. We know that you are not leaving the Club, Janette, but your presence at the monthly meetings will be missed.

Dave Collins, our Club Captain – Social, has volunteered to take up the activities that Janette was managing until we can find a new Assistant. If anyone would like to assist Dave on the Committee please let me know. This is a perfect time to join our happy crew as there are several activities already planned, which means that there is an opportunity to ease into the role.

Also at the November Committee meeting, Rhys Jewell – one of our members and a legal eagle, took us through the issues which confront the Committee following the introduction of the Victorian Government's new Incorporated Associations Act. It is a credit to the founders of this Club that our Statement of Purposes and Rules (SPR) do not require a great deal of modification. However, we have a formed a sub-Committee comprising Murray Finlay, Dave Collins, Peter Dannock and myself, to have a look at what other things could be updated in the SPR at the same time as we make changes to comply with the new Act. Rhys has very kindly offered to look over our shoulders to ensure we stay within the intentions of the Act, however we will need someone to vet the final product. If any Club members are or know of a legal person who could offer such a service, but at rates which would not empty the piggy bank, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Enough of the business stuff. Since last month we have closed off the Club survey and Tim Emery will present the Committee with a summary of the results at our December meeting. I hope this means that we can put the information in the January *mxtra*. We have mentioned before that we would also like to conduct a second survey in which we address much more of the "touchy feely" things that attracted you to the Club in the first place – and what it is that we do which keeps you renewing your membership. We also want to know what you would like to see organised by way of events. We have some volunteers to help design the survey so we should be ready to ask you to contribute your answers early in 2013.

As I write this *Drive(l)*, we have just returned from a meeting with the company who supply Mazda with their merchandise. I have to say that the meeting was really exciting and, if the Committee agree, I think we will be able to present you with a completely new way of sourcing your Club merchandise. *Stay tuned!*

Thanks to the support of Club member Gary O'Dwyer, who works with *Burson Auto Parts*, we have an offer of trade prices to financial Club members for parts bought at any *Burson* outlets (see page 30). You will note that this issue of our magazine now has a "Trading Post" rather than a "Market Place" to reflect the increasing number of businesses which are prepared to offer Club members a discount on their products. So, if you need some spares, or a workshop manual, check out the *Trading Post* before looking elsewhere.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee I would like to wish you and your families a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year. If you drink please don't drive and, for those on P-plates, remember that it can take well over 12 hours for even one standard drink to give you a nil breathalyser reading (ask my daughter).

Must go ... the driver's seat is getting cold.

Remember ... Safety ~~fast~~ first!

Don



For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

January 2013

- 19 Central: *Twilight in the Trees*
- 19 South Tassie: *Twilight run*
- 20 North Tassie: *post-Christmas blow-out*
- 20 Western Vic: *Backroads run*

February

- 2 South Tassie: *Twilight run*
- 3 Eastern Vic: *Leongatha lunch run*
- 16-17 NE Vic: *Snowy Mountains run*
- 24 North Tassie: *A day at the beach*
- 24 South Tassie: *Southport run*
- TBA Central: *Kinglake run*

March

- 8-11 Club: *Vic/SA weekend, Halls Gap*
- 17 Eastern Vic: *Licola run*
- 17 North Tassie: *St Patrick's Targa*
- TBA Central: *Todds' Tour*

April

- 16-24 Club: *Tassie Tour*
- TBA Central: *Anzac run*



Add our Club calendar to your Smartphone

The smartphone version of the Club's events calendar is at www.mx5vic.org.au/smartphone/events.html

You can type this URL directly into your device, or you can visit the events calendar page on the Club website and click on the small icon at the top of the page. Once there you can add the above icon to your home screen. Label it something appropriate ...

Just as with the website and the printed calendar, the events are listed month-by-month. Just tap the month you want and the events will cascade down your screen. Tap the month again to close it.



Membership

Current
membership
count:

483

■ Will Campbell – Membership Officer membership@mx5vic.org.au

Hello everyone ...

This month, I would like to welcome 12 new members to our ranks and to wish them all the best for a long and happy association with the Club. They are:

Central Chapter

Jason & Lisa Hutchins	2002 Titanium Grey NB
Philip Maxwell	1997 Neo Green NA
Jeffrey Wilson	2007 Black NC

Northern Tasmania Chapter

Peter & Lynn Mathew	2003 Maroon NB
---------------------	----------------

Southern Tasmania Chapter

Lloyd & Mahdi Chandler	2012 Aluminium NC
Royce & Gaye Darling	2005 Silver NC
Rose & Michael Grubits	2003 Silver NB

I would also like to wish the Great Ocean Road a Happy 80th Birthday!

Without a doubt, and notwithstanding an 80kmh speed limit and lots of tourists, this is one of the best driving roads in Australia, if not the world.

It's easy to take this iconic stretch of highway for granted, but its construction took some 3,000 returned soldiers approximately 14 years to build. Initially, the use of the road attracted tolls of two shillings and sixpence (25 cents) for drivers and one shilling and sixpence (15 cent) for passengers, but these were abolished in 1936 when the Trust handed over the road to the Victorian State Government. It continues to manage the road today, although it was not until 1984 that the last stretch near Hordenvale was finally sealed!

To all I have met, and to all those I am still to meet, have a safe and happy festive season.

See you out and about ...

Will



Alan Bennett's MX-5 crossword #5

November 2012 – answers

A	M	B	E	R		R	A	D	I	O
J		A		A		A		I		P
A		K	A	R	T	I	N	G		E
R	U	E		E		N		S	U	N
		R		S						
C	R	Y	S	T	A	L	L	I	S	E
O						A		N		I
N	I	P		E		U		J	A	G
V		A	D	V	A	N	C	E		H
O		P		E		C		C		T
Y	E	A	R	N		H	A	T	C	H

New Chapter Captain for Eastern Victoria

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Alan Laine as the new Chapter Captain for the Eastern Victoria Chapter.

Alan, from Traralgon South, takes over from the inaugural Chapter Captain, Life Member **Grant Butler**, who has relinquished the post due to time pressure.

Alan knows the Gippsland roads like the back of his hand. He has many ideas for future runs, so watch the calendar!

He can be contacted on (03) 5195 5375 (ah) or via e-mail on eastern@mx5vic.org.au





Full Throttle!

■ Daniel White – Club Captain - Motor Sport captain@mx5vic.org.au



Phillip Island Sprints – Round 4: two new lap records!



Round 4 was at Phillip Island, run by the WRX Club. There were 96 entries – 37 MX-5s and 31 Subarus with the balance made up of other marques. The weather conditions were great; it was good to be back on track after the two-month break, and terrific to see so many MX-5s and new MX-5 Club members taking to the track.

Once again drivers achieved new Club motor sport group lap records. Congratulations to Steven Downes (Standard NB – 2:03.370) and Robert Hart (Standard NC – 1:59.193).

See Russell Garner's table below for the results of the round.

Thank you to Dirk Van Heer and Daniel Sedgman, from the WRX Club, and to all of the associated event organisers and officials, for a great and safe day on track. Your cooperation and the planning efforts you put in to ensuring the day was run smoothly are appreciated.

Special thanks also goes to our MX-5 Club members who assisted with duties on the day. Scrutineering: Max Lloyd, Brendan Beavis, Dale Fitzgerald. Drivers' sign-on: Noel Heritage and Mark Fitzgerald. It was great to have our Club members getting involved and contributing to the running of the event. Well done guys!!!

New Member Arrival for the Garners

Congratulations to Claire and Russell Garner on the safe arrival their new baby boy Nicholas Garner on 24 November. Nicholas already appears to be following in his father's footsteps by posting a new record labour time of just on two hours. Best wishes to you all.

2013 Motor Sport Calendar

Here is a further update to next year's motor sport calendar. Winton and Sandown are confirmed; we're just waiting on final confirmation for Phillip

Island and Broadford events. Please note that we may also pick up some additional rounds with the WRX Club, if their dates fit in with our calendar. I will advise the Interstate Challenge date once this has been finalised.

2013 Championship Dates		
Rd 6	10 February	Winton
Rd 7	20 April (Sat)	Phillip Is (TBC)
Rd 8	12 May	Sandown
Rd 9	16 June	Broadford (TBC)
2014 Championship Dates		
Rd 1	6 July	Phillip Is (TBC)
Rd 2	21 July	Broadford (TBC)
Rd 3	3-4 August	Winton
Rd 4	1 September	Sandown
19-20 October		Winton 6 Hour
NSW/Vic Interstate Challenge Wakefield Park – Nov (TBC)		
Rd 5	5 December	Phillip Island

Merry MX-mas and Happy New Year

I would like to wish all the motor sport competitors and members a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I hope you all enjoy the festive season, drive safely and I look forward to catching up with you all in February at Winton.

#146 is for sale

The band is breaking up ... my much-loved track car is for sale (I've bought another one). See the ad in "Trading Post" on p 30.

Daniel #146

"Racing – converting money into noise!"

2012-13 Championship | Round 4 | Phillip Island Sprints – 17 November, 2012

Results - Round 4	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 2:05.875	Robert Downes » 2:06.435	John Stone » 2:11.563
Standard NB	Steven Downes » 2:03.370**	John Downes » 2:07.716	Murray Seymour » 2:09.180
Standard NC	Robert Hart » 1:59.193**	Randy Stagno Navarra » 1:59.384	Alan Conrad » 2:01.320
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 2:06.935	Fabian Mastronardi » 2:09.760	George Vellis » 2:15.516
Modified	Russell Garner » 1:56.078	Dean Monik » 1:58.306	Ben Sale » 1:59.733
Restricted Open	Paul Murphy » 2:00.764	Charlie Tickler » 2:02.920	---
Open	David Wilken » 1:53.136	Paul Ledwith » 1:53.974	Christine Boak » 1:56.134

¹ New Club motor sport team lap record

The MX-5 Club Grill



Introducing ...

Bob de Bont - Central Chapter

Name? Robert de Bont

Age? 52

Born? Bendigo, Victoria

Current abode? Thomastown, Melbourne northern suburbs

Profession? Creator of technical documents and parts books for a range of trucks

Partner? My long suffering wife, Margaret

Pets? Goldfish

Fave food? "See food"

Can you cook? Camp oven and BBQ is my domain

Favourite tippie? Brown Brothers

First drive? Trail bike at 14, cars at 16

First car? Austin 1800 MkII

First fender bender? At night on a bike, head-on with a car which was turning right across my path

Everyday driver? Nissan Pulsar N16S2 Hatch or a Hyundai i30 CDR Wagon

Current MX-5? 2001 NB in Crystal Blue

MX-5 improvements? SE shocks and springs, MX5+ roll bar, seat foamectomy, wheel alignment and good tyres

MX-5 dislikes? Lack of cruise control and lack of torque at 100-110kmh

Why an MX-5? Rear-wheel drive, unbreakable and fun – attracts a great bunch of people

Fluffy dice? None

Passions besides the MX-5? Motorkhana and motor sport in general

Favourite TV show / movie / book? Harry Potter

Dream wheels (money no object)? A newer MX-5 or a Toyota 86

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? Better than walking, but only just

Favourite other Mazda? RX-3, old school style and simplicity

If not a Mazda (gasp!) what? 1936 Delage D6-70 Competition Coupe (right)

How long in the Club? Three years (seems longer)

How many MX-5 Club runs? Lots of Club runs and track days

Favourite Club run? GOR and Ben's High Country

Funniest thing seen on a Club run? Chris Boak and her white ear warmers on a Gippsland Chapter run



Done DECA? Yes, done one and run one. Best bit of driver training offered and one of the few times you can push beyond the limit in a safe area.

Ford vs Holden? Holden

What's playing in your MX-5? '80s rock

Footy team (AFL/NRL/Soccer)? Swans and Storm

Final comments? Should have bought one years ago. The MX-5 comes with a great lifestyle and the MX-5 Club have many great people to meet along the way



Scene about ...



■ Photos: Bronwyn Roche, Ron Macdonald, Karen Bradshaw, John Waldock



Chapter chatter ...

Showing our support

4/11/12 | Central Chapter

■ Words: Alan Bennett ■ Photos: Alan Bennett, Ron Macdonald, Wendy Clark ■ Run organiser: Don Nicoll



In the deadly 2009 bushfires that devastated Victoria, Strath Creek CFA lost two firefighters in the onslaught from the 'perfect storm' that swept the area.

At that time their firefighting capability was restricted to a water tank on the back of a ute and their base was a tin shed with only rudimentary facilities. In the aftermath that followed, in addition to the haunting stories of those that perished, the plight of the firefighters and their families was also dramatically highlighted. Several of the CFA regulars and volunteers were suddenly thrust into the media spotlight with some areas in particular receiving a lot of publicity.

Many of the smaller CFA areas were equally impacted but their stories did not grab the attention of the media. It was in this context that the original run to Strath Creek was created in 2009.

Strath Creek is located approximately 100km north from Melbourne's GPO with the local post office opening back in 1885, over 100 years before the term "snail mail" was coined. It is in the Shire of Murrindini and the township is located on the banks of a creek of the same name and, in the 2006 census, the population stood at 432. The CFA is now housed in a brand new fire

station 100m from the old one and they now possess a new fully-functional fire truck of the type you would see in any local fire station. The CFA also serve the Reedy Creek area which does not have its own fire station or truck, however funding for the station has just been approved and the building may be in place for next year's run.

Last year we got a tiny bit lost on the way to the starting point and pulled up just as the last cars were leaving – so this time we were there early but not before Ron and Wendy (thanks Don and Linda for the Melway reference!). No coffee shop! Ah well, there'll be time for that later.

By the time Don called us together there was a good and colourful mixture of 17 NAs, NBs and NCs plus something that definitely was not an MX-5 ... 29 people so

several drivers out on their own. Two trial members who bought their red NA on the Thursday made their first Club outing three days later – *must be some sort of record.*

We set off from the Research shops taking the C728 and heading for Kangaroo Ground and plenty of roundabout practice before heading for Kinglake where the 2009 fires were devastating.

Some great corners on the C746 and plenty of them; I expect the people who built the Hume had lots of corners left over and they joined them together and placed a good set here and an even bigger set 20km further along on the Myers Creek Road. Sixty kays arrived too early and the flat and straight roads of Healesville presented themselves with a compulsory and welcome stop at the Beechworth Bakery for that caffeine that we were by now so really looking forward to. Plenty of tasty treats to choose from and, we didn't want to disappoint the very busy cash register operators so we checked out the apple square and a date scone.

Time for a chat about lots of subjects that included a pig called Crackling, dogs that locate truffles, best Club drives, how come Mazda only sold nine MX-5s in September (99 YTD),



Hi Don,

Your generosity raised exactly \$455.05. I personally would like to thank the individual who put in the extra 5 cents, above and beyond!

Seriously though, thanks to you, and the club for your patronage. It helps us, and is always interesting.

Hope the ride home was pleasant and traffic free!

Eric

why they quietly dropped the soft top option from the new NC facelift and how relaxing it was to be sitting in the sunshine still smiling about all those lovely bends.

All too soon we were quickly slip, slop and slapping with the sun block before setting off, retracing our steps on the C724 and, being very careful with the cyclists we encountered, zoomed past Flowerdale and headed towards Yea where we noted several paragliders scraping the blue sky above the hills, soaring on the rising winds to our left. Twenty minutes later we were veering left in to Strath Creek Park and on to the local CFA station.

The park was looking more developed than last year. A generous picnic table under shade beckoned and we all made it a friendly squeeze whilst we watched the CFA team undergoing some on the job training on survival in the fire truck – what initially looked like a clever system to automatically wash the truck turned out to be a method of keeping the truck cool while the fieries sheltered in the purpose-built fireproof capsule behind the cabin.

BYO lunch was the order of the day before the hat was passed around and a cheque from the Club started a collection to the CFA funds that they richly deserve. President Don received a lovely e-mail from Eric, the Strath Creek-Reedy Creek brigade captain, thanking our members for their generosity.



Then it was time for a few brave fieries to go for a spin in an MX-5 (*“Just till they go white in the face,”* advised Don). More sun tan lotion and we retraced our steps, opting for the windy way home, as you do. ■



Chapter chatter ...

Springfest at Lake Wendouree

4/11/12 | Western Victoria

■ Words: Noellene Gleeson ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw

We arise at 7am and can't believe it ... it's "Springfest Sunday" – and the sun is shining!

How wonderful ... the last two years for this event, the weather was like the middle of winter.

John and Jeff are meeting up at Lake Wendouree at 8.30am to set up our area. I am meeting up with some members at 9am in Drummond Street.

We arrive at our new allocated spot under two beautiful trees – the four-wheel drive club had taken our original spot, but we came out the winners as it was much better than our original area.

Sixteen beautiful sparking MX-5s line up along the foreshore. Janette and John Todd brought up a variety of Club merchandise and set it up on a table. We also have another table which we cover with a terrific selection of photos to show people just how much fun we have in these wonderful little cars.

The beautiful weather has brought thousands of people out for the day. We are a part of the *Shannon's Show and Shine*. There are 500 varieties of cars and clubs on display.

Many people admire our cars and express an interest in our club so of course John is in his element.

Shannons have a "Top 5" car competition for the day and anonymous judges go around and select the winners.

Towards the end of the afternoon a gentleman approaches our selection and a very surprised Brian Taylor is presented with the winning trophy for his pride and joy Titanium NB (right). *Congratulations Brian.*

We have had a very enjoyable day chatting and relaxing together in a beautiful location and in perfect weather.

Everyone starts to head off home all except poor Ron Diprose. This is when he finds out maybe he should have listened to his wife when he had car trouble in the morning and she felt he perhaps shouldn't travel to Ballarat.

A few of us kept him company until the RACV truck came and loaded his NB on the back and gave him a safe lift home (hope it's all better now Ron).

John and I set off home very happy with the results of our day at Springfest 2012.

We thank all members who supported and joined us for the day. ■



◀ Ian,
Noellene &
John



◀ Brian
Taylor
(right)



Coasting it ... 25/11/12 | Western Victoria



■ Words: Karen Bradshaw ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw, Bronwyn Roche ■ Run organisers: Ian & Karen Bradshaw

Alan and Dawn and Ian and I waited eagerly at the Wallinduc Fire Shed for the Ballarat group who had started the run at Sebastopol College.

It had been a long three weeks since we had ventured anywhere in our little car. Right on time in rolled our Ballarat convoy of eight cars, full of our friends from Ballarat, Talbot and Melbourne. Woolfie had no incidents with the sunscreen, which was disappointing – he seems to have mastered the rogue sunscreen by using a spray-on and not a lotion, *but time will tell ...*

Ten cars headed off to Forrest and lunch at West Barwon Reservoir. After catching up on all the gossip and renewing friendships we headed off for Turtons Track with David Ralph in the lead this time. We zoomed through Turtons track with the cars loving the continuous curving corners and dodging some oncoming traffic. All too soon we were through to Beech Forest to regroup ... it was suggested that we turn around and go back through Turtons Track instead of heading to Lavers Hill, but we pressed on. After getting stuck behind all the slow cars and Sunday drivers on the Great Ocean Road to Skenes Creek, we wished we had gone back through our favourite stretch of road!

Finally we got to Skenes Creek and turned on to the road to Forrest. We enjoyed a great run up the mountain, only to come across some more slow cars, one which pulled over ... the other, well – I won't say what we called him.

At Forrest we farewelled Brian Taylor, then hit the road again for a short spurt to Barwon Downs for an ice cream stop; I think we must have nearly emptied the shop out of Magnums! The shop owner was certainly a little overwhelmed when we all tramped in! After our treats we headed to Winchelsea where we had yet another chinwagging session. We said goodbye to Geoff and Bronwyn Roche and David Ralph from Melbourne – thanks for coming out with us for the day.

Just out of Inverleigh we come across a flock of cockatoos that flew right across in front of us. Thank goodness the MX-5 has such good brakes and we didn't hit any of the squawking pests or get any nasty little packages dropped on us.

After zooming around the winding road between Inverleigh and Shelford we waved goodbye to the Ballarat members and headed for home for a quiet beer with Alan and Dawn. What a great day we had driving such good little cars and how lucky we are to have made such good friends. ■



^ *I know that 5 cents is down there somewhere ...*



Chapter chatter ...

Hooning to Huonville 11/11/12 | Southern Tasmania

■ Word & photos: John Waldock ■ Run organiser: John Waldock

So again the chapter assembled, in sunshine no less.

November's run was taking us on a bit of a Southern Tas classic, down through the Channel area and back to Huonville, then on to *Home Hill* winery for a tippie or two.

The day began well, with the run organiser [me] surprisingly on time (for a change). As zero hour approached, more members arrived until we had a grand total of 12 cars. Wine tastings are always popular, or maybe it's just the drive itself ... who knows? Leaving pretty much on time, we headed south through Hobart and Kingston on our way to the Channel area.

Driving through Margate we picked up another car, taking our total to 13 as we headed further away from civilisation. The road is winding and uneven, but has great views of the Derwent River and the D'entrecasteaux Channel, which separates Bruny Island from mainland Tasmania. It's a popular area for boating and fishing as its within easy range of Hobart.

Anyway, we continued on, fairly uneventfully towards Verona Sands and onwards to Cygnet. We had a trouble-free drive, the roads relatively quiet with no camper vans (always an annoyance at this time of year – all those mainlanders wanting a slice of heaven, I suppose!).

Huonville, and a right turn, continuing to Ranelagh and *Home Hill* winery. We were very well hosted and tried a number of their wines (only tasting amounts, not full glasses). A number of the group stocked up their cellars for Christmas ... *or so they said!* The group split a little at this stage, some deciding to stay at the winery for lunch while the rest headed back through Huonville to Franklin and the riverside picnic ground for lunch and a chat and some wine (only a little).

It's funny who you meet on Club runs. While organising our food, our group was approached by two ladies who own MX-5s in New Zealand, so we had a bit of a chat about car clubs and MX-5s in general. It sounds like most car clubs are the same, with interesting personalities, politics and hard-working volunteers who keep it all ticking over.

After lunch, and quite a chat about life in general, it was time to return to civilisation. I would like to thank *Home Hill*, who so kindly treated us to their wines. I think I know where we will be going for our next more formal lunch! ■







Goodwood Revival Meeting

■ Words & photos: Noel Heritage

By some good luck and some good management, I just happened to accidentally -on-purpose be in the United Kingdom (with nothing else to do) on the same weekend as the recent Goodwood Revival Meeting.

I appreciate it's not exactly a Mazda-related activity but if you're a car nut/rev head or similar, this is definitely one for the bucket list.

Being an Historics racing tragic this is as close to heaven you are ever going to get and yet, despite it all, nothing can prepare you for the sheer scale and magnificence of this event until you actually go there.

Run on the old Goodwood Grand Prix circuit within the grounds of the not-insignificant estate of the Earl of March and Kinarra (and with an Australian connection: read *'Almost Unknown, The story of Squadron Leader Tony Gaze'*), it is a visual and emotional attack on all your senses from the moment you arrive until the moment you reluctantly leave. I was there for two full days and was *still* reluctant to leave (helped by not being able to find the hire car in the immense car park for a wee while to boot).

Not only are the cars typically gob smacking but the whole atmosphere is also helped by the vast majority of spectators dressing in period costumes from WW2 through to the sixties. All very pukka and you had everything from WW2 paratroopers to quite a few Admirals plus the odd one or two Earls of the Manor thrown in. The ladies were typically dressed in beautiful day frocks and hats and really looked great as well.

Not only is the action on the ground but also in the air (Goodwood was the site of an RAF Fighter Command base during WW2) with regular flying displays by four Spitfires and two Hurricanes in close formation. When they were not at it, try a couple of P51 Mustangs, a P47 Thunderbolt, a Sea Fury (the ultimate piston-powered fighter?), a couple of Hunter jets plus the show stopper of them all, the Battle of Britain Commemorative Flight Avro Lancaster all punching holes in the sky. With the Saturday being a perfect cloudless day, everybody went home with faces sunburnt from looking up.

The cars are simply indescribable and included a parade of 15 of the only 39 Ferrari 250 GTOs (Gran Turismo Omologata) ever built ... this lot having an estimated insurance value of £300 million! Some of these priceless gems even reappeared in the RAC TT Celebration race and were punted around by an all-star cast including the likes of Vern Schuppan, Danny Sullivan, Arturo Merzario, Derek Bell and Jean Alesi to name a few.

The Carroll Shelby Memorial race also had 28 Cobras all belting around the track and, like with the Ferraris, the top two thirds were going for it.

The sports car race had Lola T70s, McLaren M1s plus five (yes, five) Ford GT40s all giving it all amongst a host of other dream cars.

It was all deadly serious and a stalled car at the start of race for historic 1.5 litre F1 cars resulted in a massive starting line pile that literally had cars stacked on top of each other. The repair bill would defy description and included a Ferrari V6 front engine F1 car that suffered the ultimate rear ender into the car in front (ouch).

The German contingent showed up with five Silver Arrows and four Auto Unions from the Mercedes Benz museum. I was



The spectator car park!



► Don't let the Prancing Horses fool you—these are Alfas ... Enzo Ferrari raced Alfas before starting his own company



ing 2012 ... or, not your average track day!



fortunate enough to be standing next to one of the Silver Arrows when they were warming it up ... and the noise was painful! They then let the whole lot loose on the track in the hands of the likes of Sir Jackie Stewart, Sir John Surtees, Jacky Ickx etc for a bit of a blast. This included one ex-F1 World Champion getting it slightly wrong at a chicane and shooting one of these priceless gems over the ripple strip in a move that remind one of our just-past Motor Sport Captain's effort at a recent Winton meeting!

The historic motorcycles also turned it on for the Barry Sheene Memorial Trophy with a classic 1937 BMW horizontal twin really going for it. Not surprising when you find out the guy riding is one Troy Corser.

While this was all going on, the crowd was treated to more aerial entertainment with among others, the two Hunter jets doing low-level fly-bys (with victory rolls) through the middle of the circuit at approx 200ft.

The weekend was also a tribute to American great Dan Gurney and each day featured a parade of many of the cars he had driven throughout his career. Try Porsche F1, Brabhams, Can Am, Trans Am, Indy, NASCAR and his own beautiful AAR Eagles (some would say the most beautiful F1s ever built). It was quite a line up. On the Sunday there was a truly stirring presentation by the Earl and his sister. At the conclusion of Dan Gurney's own emotional response, the crowd rose as one as the Band of the Royal Marines played the national anthem of the United States of America with, at the split second of its conclusion, a fly-past by the P51 Mustangs and P47 Thunderbolt. It was stirring stuff.

If you ever get the chance, go.

The photos will do the rest of the talking. ■



^ Just the odd Ferrari

< Our next Safety Car?



Mercedes-Benz
Silver Arrows



One of 28 Cobras



^ A British Supercar!

Father & son bonding ... at 180kmh!

■ Words: Murray Seymour ■ Photos: Daniel White & Murray Seymour



Not long after submitting my online MX-5 Club membership registration request and answering positively to the question regarding any interest in motor sport, I received a phone call from (then) Club Captain - Motor Sport, Robert Downes.

He suggested I come down to Sandown Park racetrack and have a look at the proceedings at the next AROCA Sprint day. I did and I was interested but there was an issue. Oil left on the track from a car with a failed engine (not an MX-5) led to incidents that resulted in panel damage and I considered that my NC was too good to put at risk on the race track. As this car is my daily day drive, I didn't really want to walk to work either.

I had always wanted to drive a race car and although my primary school dream was to be a Peter Brock or Allan Moffat, I had never driven a car on a track. A standard MX-5 may seem a world away from GTR XU-1 or a GTHO but getting out on the track in a 140 horsepower car would release enough adrenaline for a bloke suffering from a mid-life crisis and looking for a hobby.

So how do I convince the wife that we need another car (an older, cheaper NB) with the sole purpose of being used on the race track?

Father and son bonding!

Every father wants to spend quality time with his son but you need to find a

Hi Daniel, Robert and MX-5 Club members

Following a full-on 2012 sprint series with many achieving great successes, I would like to thank you all, the MX-5 Club members, for your participation and support of the AROCA Sprint Series.

No doubt your enthusiasm overwhelms me in many ways and the level of driving skills developed and shown has certainly impressed many.

The cooperation between the two clubs has been tremendous both in participation and assisting such as administration and instructing. Several ideas were implemented throughout the year with great success and encouraged many to participate.

I can only invite you all back for 2013 and I can only foresee both clubs growing in numbers

and I will endeavour to come up with new ideas and formats to make it all more interesting and fun and entice more to participate – such as a junior program, circuit training, perhaps a touring session, maybe even a racing session (but this is much more difficult to do but difficulties have never got in my way of doing things).

So I wish you all well for the Christmas season and that much work is being carried out to make your MX5 go faster and better and see you all in 2013.

Regards

Neil Choi

Competition Secretary,
Alfa Romeo Owners Club (Vic)

2012-13 Championship | Round 4

Phillip Island Sprints - 17 November, 2012



common interest, and sometimes that's not easy ...

Fishing? Fish swim away when the rods come out.

Sport (the type that *doesn't* involve turning petrol into noise)? Seymours are genetically programmed to avoid sport.

Music? *Definitely* no common ground there.

Driving a car to the limit in the relative safety of a race track?

Bingo! What 17-year-old boy wouldn't jump at the chance? Even a reserved person like my son Jacob would have a go!

Car purchased, and readied for the track. I dip my toe into the motor sport events in December 2011 and in April 2012, Jacob hits the track at Sandown Park followed by Phillip Island. Wherever possible, the Club puts an experienced Club member into the car as an instructor for a newbie; this was arranged for Jacob and I know it wouldn't have been an easy job. After all, I spent many an hour with "L" plates on the car and although in my opinion the public roads are a whole lot more dangerous than the race track, being in a car with a 17-year-old novice stranger at high speed requires nerves of steel. The dedicated AROCA Winton Circuit Training day in August was a must do for Jacob.

On arrival at the Phillip Island circuit on the morning of Saturday, 17 November, our new Club Captain – Motor Sport, Daniel White, suggested that I act as Jacob's instructor for the day. My response: "*You don't have teenage children, do you?*"

He knew where I was coming from and a fellow Club member was nominated. Alas, Jacob finally scared an instructor so much in the practice session that he didn't want to get back into the car for

the first official Sprint session. Looks like I'm the instructor today.

What did Jacob do that was so scary? Turn 4, also known as Honda! Way too fast into the corner and we end up sideways and after a couple of corrections we managed to come off unscathed. Of course a father's reaction is to try to grab the steering wheel, which resulted in some fiery words from the driver's seat about not touching the controls.

Instructions were given about approaching the corner at a slower speed. The next lap and we come into Honda quicker, not slower and a spin results. Now I know why instructor #1 for the day wouldn't get back in the passenger seat! Another few laps and the corner is still an issue. Session ends, lap times checked. *Not flash ... 2 minutes 18 seconds.*

Next session and I get back in the passenger seat. This time, Jacob must have taken on board some of my rantings from the passenger seat. Honda was approached at the correct speed. His confidence was up and so was mine. Hurtling down the main straight towards the high-speed Turn 1 at 180 kmh I was starting to relax – no longer clenching the dashboard as I realised that he had half an idea how to handle a car at speed.

More importantly he was taking on some of my general advice. Session ended and times checked: 2 minutes 12 seconds, and this was with a 100 kg weight penalty – me!

After a few jokes about the timing equipment being faulty it was smiles all round. Whilst 2:12:54 is no Club record, the improvement in time was substantial. More importantly he was closing in on my best time of 2:09:18.

Looks like there might be some father son competition happening in the future! ■



*Ready to go ... Top: Max Lloyd.
Above: Dean Monik. Below: Geoff Blick at his first track day*



Championship standings after Rd 4 - Phillip Island Sprints, 17 November, 2012

(corrected points)	1st		2nd		3rd	
Overall Champion	= Stephen Downes / Robert Hart		»	40	Noel Heritage	» 36
Standard NA	Noel Heritage	» 36	Robert Downes	» 29	John Stone	» 24
Standard NB	Stephen Downes	» 40	John Downes	» 21	Murray Seymour	» 18
Standard NC	Robert Hart	» 40	Colin Denman-Jones	» 24	Alan Conrad	» 22
Clubman	Max Lloyd	» 32	Fabian Mastronardi	» 26	Peter Phillips	» 20
Modified	Russell Garner	» 34	Robert Parr	» 23	David Wilken	» 20
Restricted Open	Charlie Tickler	» 17	Paul Murphy	» 10		
Open	Brendan Beavis	» 18	Mark Fitzgerald	» 17	Christine Boak	» 16

"MX-2.5" continues to improve ...

■ Words: Graham Wilson ■ File photo: Jess Murphy, mx5pics.zenfolio.com

**2012-13 Championship | Round 5
Winton Sprints ~ 2 December, 2012**

The last sprint of the year turned out to be quite hot, but still a good time for a spot of Alfa-hunting.

My ambition on the day was just to better my last times, as is the case with many members I guess.

Luckily I was able to do this early in the day as the tyres got quite mushy in the heat.

I only managed to get down to a 1min 55sec, just over two seconds better than my previous best, but this has kept my record of a new PB every time out at every track for the year. This has given me quite a deal of pleasure being my first full year back after so many years out of the sport, coping with a severe spinal difficulty, and in a vehicle perhaps not originally designed for the track.

So our times now read:

- » Phillip Island 2 min 14 sec.
- » Sandown 1 min 45 sec.
- » Winton long 1 min 55 sec.
- » Winton short 1 min 18 sec.

I am pleased with these times, though, quite naturally would like to be faster.

One of the main highlights of the year has been the tremendous friendship and encouragement from so many members of our Club. I must admit that before I got back on the track I wondered how the "MX-2.5" would be accepted, but now know I need not have been concerned as most people have recognised the superiority [?] of the machine.

It does appeal to my weird sense of the ridiculous to achieve something in this car, rather than in a true sports car which you would expect to be quick anyway.


I would like to single out **Noel Heritage** and **Robert Downes** for their particular support, though most people have been great. I did have one member of another

club tell me it was rude to have "Captain Slow" on the back screen.

Anyway, a great year from my point of view, and looking forward to being faster ... hopefully next year.

Thanks again to all. ■





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2013 Mazda6 Celebrity Race ...



... your chance to shine!

You will have read that the "Celebrity Race" at next year's Formula 1™ Australian Grand Prix will feature the new Mazda6 diesel.

To highlight the brand's involvement still further, Mazda Australia has asked us to provide 20 MX-5s to take the "celebrity" drivers on a parade lap of the Albert Park circuit prior to the race on Sunday, 17 March. Mazda will be providing two of the new-look NCs as well.

So we're looking for 20 Club members to volunteer! There will be 20 celebrity drivers, and all 20 MX-5 Club cars will do the lap.

Spots will be allocated strictly first-in-best-dressed, with volunteers #21 onwards added to a reserve list.

Successful "applicants" will have a decal across their windscreen with their celebrity's name (removable static vinyl). Each participant in the *Auto Avenue* will receive two "Motorsport Credentials" (equivalent to general admission tickets that allow you to drive your car on to the circuit – one for the car owner and one

for a guest) for the for the four days of the Grand Prix, and a boxed lunch and a drink each day. We will have access to a private Mazda seating area adjacent to the "celebrity lounge" for shelter from the madding crowds. With luck, there might even be a special Mazda T-shirt and/or a cap to commemorate the event.

So, what's the catch? Our cars will need to be "bumped in" to the Albert Park precinct on the Wednesday before the race (13 March), and stay there until after the parade lap. If your MX-5 is your daily-drive, that might be difficult.

We'll be free to leave as soon as we have delivered the drivers safely back to base (to beat the crush exiting after the Grand Prix).

In the intervening time, our cars will be on public display in a special area. Mazda will provide overnight security for all cars, as well as cleaners to get rid of the daily dust (with each owner's permission, of course).

Mazda has allayed concern that the

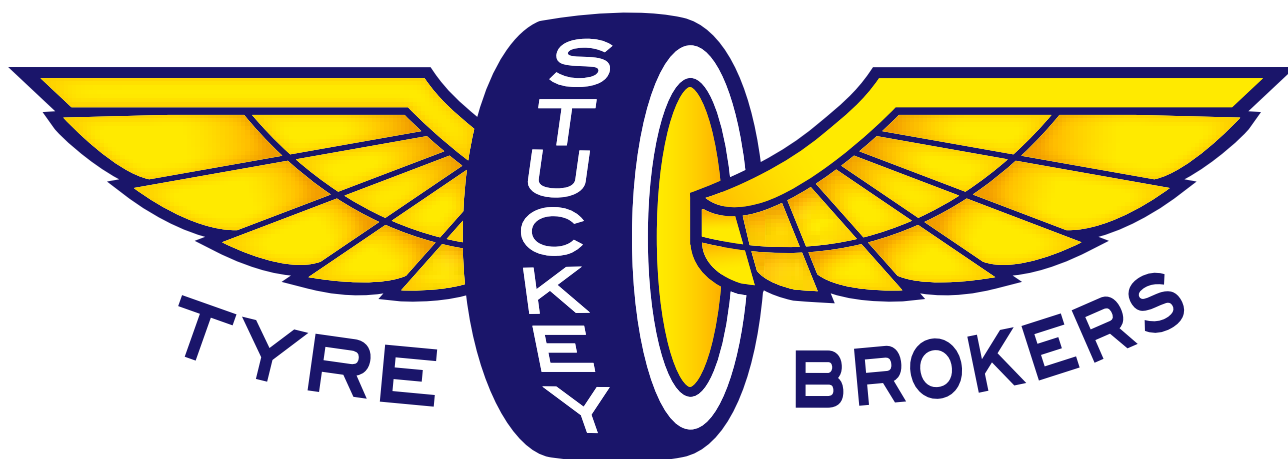


^ Multiple Paralympic gold medallist Matthew Cowdrey and Olympic cycling champion Anna Meares will be among the Mazda6-driving celebrities racing in 2013

celebrity drivers might need to sit up on the back ledge for higher visibility ... fine for NA and NB models but potentially damaging for NCs and impossible for any car with a roll bar. The celebrities will be sitting in the passenger seats.

Interested? Please contact VP Murray Finlay (editor@mx5vic.org.au) to add your name to the list. ■

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Chapter chatter ...

Summit to the Sea 17-18/11/12 | North-Eastern Victoria

■ Words: Ron Gillick ■ Photos: Greg Jordan, Marg Gillick ■ Run organisers: Sue & Stuart James

Day 1

Early on a brisk Saturday morning, 12 cars assembled in the car park of McDonald's in Wodonga.

We had several visitors from the Western Victoria Chapter and one from Central Chapter, all looking forward to a run from one side of the State to the other and back again.

After some had endured the necessity to eat breakfast at McDonald's, we assembled in the car park to catch up with old friends and to conduct a brief meeting before getting on our way at 8am.

The first part of the run took us down towards Mt Beauty where we stopped for coffee before heading up into the mountains over Falls Creek. We stopped on the wall of the Rocky Valley Dam for a group photo shot and whilst there a large convoy of Clubmans shot past.

After a short break we headed off across the plateau before starting the descent to the Omeo Highway intersection and then into Omeo where we stopped for lunch. The Clubmans had also chosen Omeo as their lunch stop so there was much discussion between some of our group and theirs.

Back into the cars after lunch and we were off for the beautiful drive down through Swifts Creek, Bruthen, Bairnsdale and on to our overnight stop at Paynesville on the Gippsland Lakes. Our run organiser, Stuart, had chosen well as the motel had great rooms and was perched on the edge of the marina.



^ The gang at Rocky Valley Dam

< Clubmans (Clubmen?) on parade





Day 2

Some were up early for a walk along the edge of the lake before meeting up at Fisherman's Wharf for breakfast which was a vast improvement on the McDonald's one the previous day. Central Chapter member, Greg Jordan, had a flight to catch later that afternoon and had to leave us after breakfast to return direct to Melbourne.

We were on our way by 10am for the drive back up to Omeo which was to be our first stop for coffee. After a quick break we were back in the cars. We were doing the return trip via Mt Hotham along the Great Alpine Road.

Just before Hotham Village is the Dinner Plain resort where we stopped for a rest and toilet break. While standing around in the car park under a reasonably sunny sky we had a snow storm. Actually it was just a few flakes falling out of the sky but that's about as close to a snow storm that I've seen, or ever want to see.

Our final part of the run was over Hotham then down the mountain to Harrietville to finish the run in Bright where we had a late lunch. Goodbyes were said and, reluctantly, we all headed off home ... apart from some of the Western Victorians who stayed overnight in Bright.

On behalf of everyone on the run, thank you to Stuart and Sue for organising such an enjoyable weekend. ■

◀ lunch in Omeo ...

... and a well-earned drink on Paynesville ▼



Chapter chatter ...

Gunning it to Gunns Plains 18/11/12 | Northern Tasmania

■ Words: Sandra Tillack ■ Photos: Kelley Berggren ■ Run organiser: Keith Tillack

Keith and I, usually fairly well organised (Keith's influence), had nominated a meeting time of 9.15 at our usual Devonport meeting venue.

However, a late night had us scampering around at the allotted time with a flat iPhone and no car charger in sight. Reluctantly we hurriedly headed out without it, knowing as organisers a phone could (and would) have come in handy, and at 9.20 we arrived to find three cars waiting for us with drivers good humouredly ribbing us for our tardiness.

Well that made four cars and no-one else from the north ... until ... finally ... seven more cars arrived in convoy from Launceston way. More ribbing, more excuses amidst much laughter and jibing amongst good friends ... at last, time to go.

Heading out of Devonport in perfect conditions (not too hot, no icy winds blowing), we set out in a westerly direction through the Don village, on to the picturesque Forth valley and turned on to the Kindred Road where we delighted in driving through Tassie's best rural farmlands – rolling paddocks, spring crops planted, new born calves at every turn and farmers busy at their seven days per week commitments on the land. Turning left through Sprent we headed south, the roads becoming narrow, traffic almost non-existent, and our little MX-5s humming along beautifully in the sunshine.

South we went, heading through forestry plantations until we found ourselves on straighter roads. Unknown to the group, we had missed our turn off and were “flying blind”. Nevertheless, an enjoyable 10km sweeping loop found us heading back to where we should have been in the first place, our nonchalance disguising the moments of panic in the lead car. Couldn't have planned it better ... the loop led us back to the intersection of Central Castra Road, which pointed us through windy gullies and steep, narrow roads. Following the Preston Road we wound our way to Raymond Road past some beautiful waterfalls, making a mental note to stop there “next time”.

Much enjoyable *zoom, zooming* and we wound down the hill with fabulous views of Gunns Plains, a verdant, fertile and productive valley which is also home to famous limestone caves (*another mental note!*). This area previously grew hops but farms, orchards and wineries still abound.

We wound our way around flat, green pastures with the Leven River bubbling alongside, until we arrived at Wings Wildlife Park, our morning coffee stop. Picnic tables amongst man ferns with the sound of the river close by was a welcome way to spend almost an hour. Unfortunately, our demands for caffeine were too much and the café's cappuccino machine went on strike, so some poor souls forfeited the offer of instant coffees for



delicious icecreams instead. Wouldn't you know it, I was the “lucky” one with a coffee!

This is where the fun began – a wrong turn to get out of Gunns Plains saw 11 beautifully polished and previously much admired MX-5s heading up a narrow gravel road copiously coated with Tassie's rich, fertile, chocolate brown soil generously laden with ... cow manure ... and nowhere immediate to turn around! Oh dear – our popularity rapidly dropped at least five points! Backtracking, we finally headed off in the right direction climbing up along the hillside, once again with spectacular views of Gunns Plains, until we ventured into heavily wooded areas interspersed with farms and got into the rhythm of more swinging, rolling corners. (We did strike a small area of road works midway, with a few hundred metres of clean gravel road – however everyone had been forewarned of this section and so, hopefully, we were forgiven.)

After 30 minutes of previously untraversed roads by our group, we found ourselves in the Upper Natone area where we peeled off to the left to head towards Upper Stowport. Eight cars followed ... and the last of these watched in consternation as the other two went straight down the road, their view of the intersection hindered by a large farm vehicle which had pulled out onto the road. Two-way radios were quickly put to use, and some 7-8 minutes later our tail-enders re-joined our group. Tally ho! ... rounded up we drove on our pre-determined route, apparently only to get to the intersection where the two cars in question had turned back to rejoin us!

Okay, enough excitement for the day! We progressed through Upper Stowport, down beautiful winding roads unhindered by



world “continents” planted with varieties endemic to their countries.

At 3 o'clock we headed back along coastal scenic roads bordering Bass Strait from Burnie, travelling east towards Devonport through Sulphur Creek, the little tourist village of Penguin, Ulverstone and Devonport. Several of our northern friends waved us goodbye as they headed for their one-hour drive back to Launceston, but most of the group ventured back to the Tillacks' home for a final hour of socialising, and planning of our Christmas function, before going their separate ways. ■

✓ *Sandra, Keith, Michael, Nigel, Karina and Paul take a break from ... sitting in their cars*

much traffic, into Fern Glade, an unspoiled, natural picnic area in the Burnie municipality (yet *another* mental note!). Heading south from Fern Glade we sedately drove through built up areas until we reached our luncheon destination 5km away – the Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens where lunch was prepared for us by volunteers. Sitting in our private glassed dining room with balcony, looking over 11 hectares of rhododendron gardens, completely cleared, planted and run by dedicated volunteers over a period of 30 years, we soaked up the ambience, floral scents from the gardens and sunshine as we lingered over fruit and cheese platters and refreshments. A few keen nature lovers amongst us enjoyed a walk through the winding trails dividing



^ *The magnificent Emu Valley rhododendron gardens*

Finally ... a roll bar for an NC!

■ Words: Robert Hart #184 ■ Photos: Robert Hart & Brown Davis Automotive

CAMS 'Type 2 Half Safety Cage' with Removable Backstays for the Mazda MX-5 NC

Recently a 'half cage' designed and constructed by Brown Davis Automotive was installed in my 2008 NC soft top.

The installed cage is intended to be compliant with Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) ROPS design and construction standards. CAMS is the National Sporting Authority (ASN) for motor sport in Australia, delegated this responsibility by the FIA.

Typically this "half cage" would be appropriate for use in CAMS-sanctioned motor sport events where a "Type 2 Half Safety Cage" (refer *General Requirements for Cars and Drivers - CAMS Schedule J: Section 13 "Safety Cage Structures – Specifications – Open Sports Cars"*) is acceptable, whilst also being suitable for use on a public road.

This cage retains the flexibility to lower the soft top (with the backstay members removed). It also features substantial tubular members, increased elevation of the main roll hoop (greater rollover head clearance), improved rearward vision, replication of all ancillary tapings (for speakers etc ...), and twin mountings for race harness eyelets for both driver and passenger. As such it represents an excellent and possibly unique solution for the NC owner who wishes to improve their safety in relation to a rollover event while competing in 'club-level' motor sport.

Design Brief and Discovery:

During the MX-5 Club motor sport annual meeting last May an item of general business was tabled relating to the removal of the soft top in the "Standard NC" class. The crux of the discussion related to the requirement imposed by the current class rules for the original equipment soft top to remain in the vehicle in its "factory" location. In complying with this requirement the possibility of fitting a ROPS (rollover protection system) suitable for low-level motor sport is precluded, as the backstays required for a compliant cage directly interfere with the soft top in its retracted position. Thus an investigation into a suitable solution was initiated.

The brief: "a road usable FIA/CAMS-compliant ROPS that allows the soft top to be operated" seemed straightforward enough; however, on investigation it became apparent that a suitable off-the-shelf solution is not available. Various

reasons for this situation exist:

1. The standard factory rollbar is a substantial affair which is heavily integrated into the structure of the MX-5 NC. It attaches to the NC structure at six discrete points, while also providing pickup points for the seat belt upper pivots, central speakers and transverse plastic bulkhead with cubbies, fuel release etc ...
2. Typically the tubing type or diameters (ID and OD) employed in the commercially-available half cage solutions produced in the USA, UK and Germany do not comply with FIA/CAMS mandatory requirements.
3. The diagonal cross-brace for the main hoop employed in the commercially available half cage solutions does not extend to the floor of the vehicle as per FIA/CAMS requirements; rather it typically extends only to the transverse

box-section cross member which runs at shoulder height between the seatbelt mounting points aligned with the B-pillar.

4. The main hoop typically does not have backstays due to the aforementioned interference with the soft top in the retracted position. The option for a 'Petty Bar' that runs forward from the centre of the main roll hoop to extend into the passenger footwell does exist as a possibility that would address this issue; however the petty bar has the twin disadvantages of putting a roll cage member close to the driver's head (potentially causing injury in the event of an accident) as well as precluding the use of the passenger's seat. Furthermore it cannot be legally used on a public road, as no part of the roll structure may extend forward of the 'B-pillar' according to advice provided to CAMS by VicRoads Standards in May of 2012. Note that there are some exceptions to VicRoads' advice which relate to frequency of use on a public road system. In addition, VicRoads' advice does not apply retrospectively to those vehicles fitted with a ROPS which was previously installed in compliance with the requirements of Victorian Standards Information 28 (VSI28).

Realisation:

After discussing the design brief with a number of fabricators, Brown Davis Automotive were approved to undertake a conceptual study.





Brown Davis Automotive rapidly came to the conclusion that the most practicable means of meeting the design brief would be to make a half cage that replicated the original equipment cage with all its factory mounting points and ancillary equipment attachment points, whilst also incorporating a diagonal brace on the main hoop, removable backstays and materials of the correct type, dimensions and angles to comply with FIA/CAMS mandates.

In this regard Brown Davis was well equipped to provide a solution to the difficult challenge of engineering the removable backstay elements, as they had previously certified a system of precision tube joiners to a unique CAMS-registered design tested to be as strong as the original tubing materials. These tube joiners provide a very elegant solution for separating the backstays from the roll hoop simply via the use of only four cap screws. With the backstays removed the soft top can be lowered just as it would normally. It is anticipated that the majority of owners might use the cage with the backstays removed on the road, attaching them only for a track outing. In my own car I have chosen to leave them in at present, however as the warmer weather comes upon us I will remove them to enjoy the pleasures of open top motoring. The structure you see pictured is the result.

My thanks are offered to David Brown (Managing Director) and Kevin Sharp (Engineer) at Brown Davis Automotive for agreeing to develop this cage and for giving freely of their time to discuss and work through our requirements. Brown Davis had the exclusive use of my MX-5 for three weeks and gave up a space in their workshop over that period without complaint in order to develop their solution.

This cage is being offered to MX-5 Club members for \$1,395, powdercoated satin black, and with all the necessary CAMS paperwork. This in my opinion represents excellent value for a sophisticated and complete solution.

Brown Davis Automotive [(03) 9762 8722] has expressed a desire to continue to develop the cage based on Club member feedback. ■



Replacing the flexible clutch hose

Words & photos: Ron Macdonald

This is definitely not the most fun job you will need to do on your MX-5 but after quite a bit of cursing I finally stumbled on the best method of replacing this troublesome little blighter.

Overview

The full hydraulic system for your clutch can be seen in figure 1.

From the clutch master cylinder a steel line travels along the firewall to the passenger side where it then descends to a bracket at which point it is fitted to the flexible line. From here the flexible line goes behind the engine (across the top of the bell housing) back to the driver's side where it connects to the lower steel clutch line. The lower line descends under the car where it is coiled into a pig's tail then finally connects to the clutch slave cylinder.

Removal

Starting at the passenger side of the car, locate where the steel and flexible clutch lines join (figure 2).

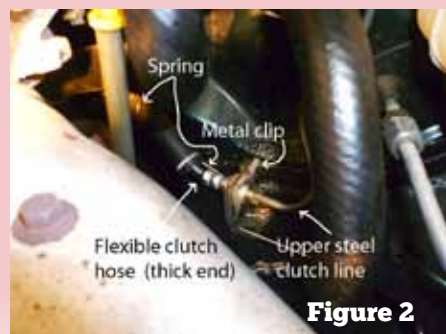


Figure 2

Place some absorbent rags under where the two lines join, then using a 10mm flare nut spanner, separate the steel and flexible lines. Remove the steel clip from the fitting on the end of the flexible line and also the spring that is wound around it. That is the easy part done. **Note:** If you don't have a flare nut spanner, one can be made from a spare 10mm ring spanner; it is not advisable to use an open-ended spanner as they usually burr the heads on the fittings.



Jack up the car and place it on jack stands.

Note: NEVER get under any car that is only supported by a jack. On most vehicles this is a very dangerous practice ... with the low clearance of an MX-5 it is suicidal!

Next, get under the car and locate the slave cylinder on the driver's side of the gearbox (figure 3); using the 10mm flare nut spanner remove the lower steel clutch line. The lower clutch line is also attached to the bell housing with one bolt (10mm) at the "pig tail"; remove this also.

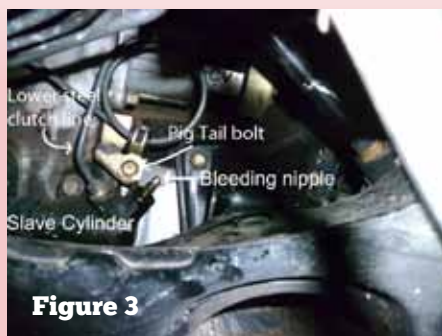


Figure 3

On the side of the gearbox you will see a wire loom held in place by a single bolt (10mm) (figure 4); remove this bolt and push the loom out of the way (you don't have to do this bolt but it makes it easier).



Figure 4

You will now be able to see where the flexible clutch line and lower clutch line join on a bracket attached to the bell housing (figure 5).

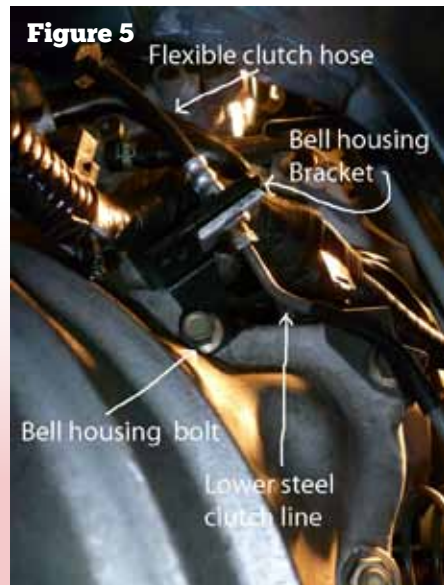


Figure 5

Using a 12mm socket and a long extension bar, remove the bolt securing the bracket. The loom you have just moved out of the way is also attached to this bracket by an expandable cone through a hole in the bell housing bracket. Compress this "cone" and force it back through the hole in the bracket using a pair of needle nose pliers. The whole assembly can now be removed from the car. Once out of the car you need to separate the flexible hose from the lower clutch line. If you have a vice put the flexible hose fitting in the vice and remove the lower steel line with a 10mm flare nut spanner. If you don't have a vice, hold the flexible hose fitting with a 17mm open-ended spanner and remove the steel line with a 10mm flare nut spanner. Finally, remove the metal securing clip.

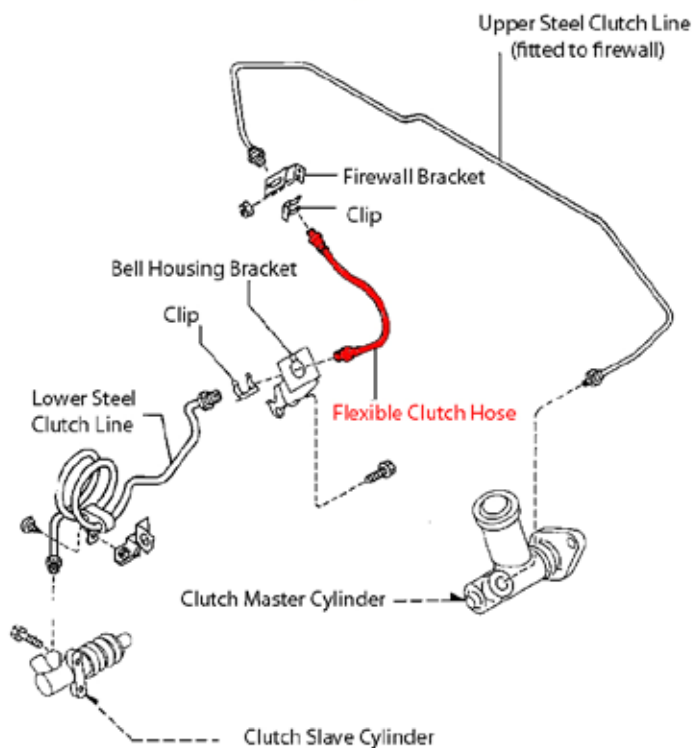
Refitting

With the new hose to hand fit the thin end of the flexible hose to the lower steel clutch line (finger tight only). Refit the metal securing clip and tighten the steel line fitting ensuring the lower clutch line will be at the right angle when refitted to the car. Place the 12mm bell housing bolt into the socket and bar and push through the hole in the bell housing bracket. Put the whole assembly back in place and tighten the (12mm) bell housing bolt (finger tight only). Refit the connector to



Figure 1

Clutch Piping NB MX-5



the slave cylinder and the “pig tail” bolt and tighten both (in that order). Fully tighten the bell housing bolt and refit the loom clip to the side of the gearbox. Unless you have miniature hands, don’t attempt to refit the plastic loom clip to the bell housing bracket – we will deal with that later.

Everything under the car should now be back in place. From the top pull the loose end of the flexible hose across to the passenger side and refit the metal fitting (finger tight). Place the end of the flexible

hose back into its bracket, fit the steel clip, tighten the metal fitting and reattach the spring. Your little girl is now back as she was.

Bleeding

Before we get on to the bleeding process, a word on brake fluid. Always use a quality (DOT4) brake fluid in your clutch system; do not use fluid that has been lying around with the top off the bottle or a bottle that was opened more than 12 months ago. If in doubt buy a new bottle. Brake fluid is hygroscopic, so it absorbs

moisture (even just from the air). Brake fluid that contains water will not only boil more easily, it will also rust out the steel components of the clutch’s hydraulic system.

It is at this point in time you invite a friend over for a beer (“Oh, while you’re here ...”). I might add that wives also make very good clutch pumpers if required. If however you are like me and have no friends, the process can be done with one person though it is much slower. Either way the process is the same.

Ensure the clutch reservoir is full of FRESH brake fluid. Depress the clutch pedal (can be done with a suitable length of wood between the pedal and seat). Get under the car and remove the rubber dust cover from the slave cylinder bleeder valve. While the clutch pedal is on the floor open the bleeder on the slave cylinder, close the bleeder valve then release the clutch. Continue this process until you get a steady stream of fluid (with no air bubbles in it), making sure you only open and close the bleeder when the clutch pedal is pushed to the floor.

Periodically check the master cylinder and top it up if required ... if the master cylinder runs dry it will suck air into the system and you will have to start all over again! The system will have plenty of air in it so be prepared for the bleeder valve to splutter – keep your head well away and if you get brake fluid in your eyes irrigate them with plenty of fresh water. When you’re finished, replace the dust cover and check the entire system for leaks.

Finally, bend a large cable tie into a “U” shape; from underneath poke it up making sure it captures the cable loom and bell housing bracket from the top, then tighten the zip tie and you are all done. ■

What you’ll need:

- » NB flexible clutch hose (Mazda part # N05341380)
- » 10mm flare nut spanner (or modified ring spanner - see right)
- » 12mm socket and a long extension bar
- » 17mm open-ended spanner
- » DOT4 brake fluid
- » vice (optional)
- » wife or unsuspecting mate (or a length of timber)

10mm ring spanner
modified into a
10mm flare nut
spanner



The “no friend”
system for pumping
the clutch



Trading Post ...

Please note: notices in the Trading Post 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.

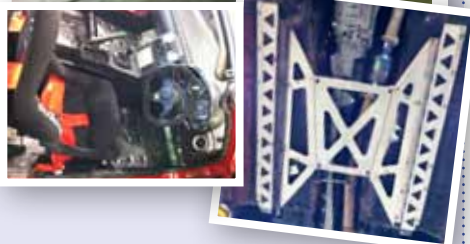
For sale 1993 Clubman NA

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Asking price: \$12,500 neg.

Contact: Daniel (Club member)
0400 304 006

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- » 119,000km (only 9654 km over last six years)
- » Factory stock engine & aircon
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- » Rego plate *not* included



Asking price: \$11,250 neg.

Contact: Sandro (former Club member) 0408 65 70 76

For sale

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- » Excellent condition; fully maintained, second family owner
- » 11 months' rego.
- » Full respray by Novaks South Melbourne Oct 2010 (cost \$6,500)
- » Hard top, roll bar, two-tone leather seats, sports wheels, Sony CD/radio

Asking price: \$7,950

Contact: Andrew (non-member)
0418 747 897

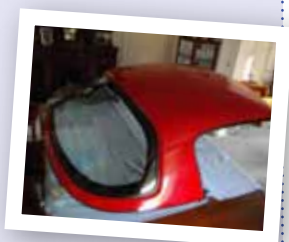
For sale

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- » Series 2 Classic Red
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