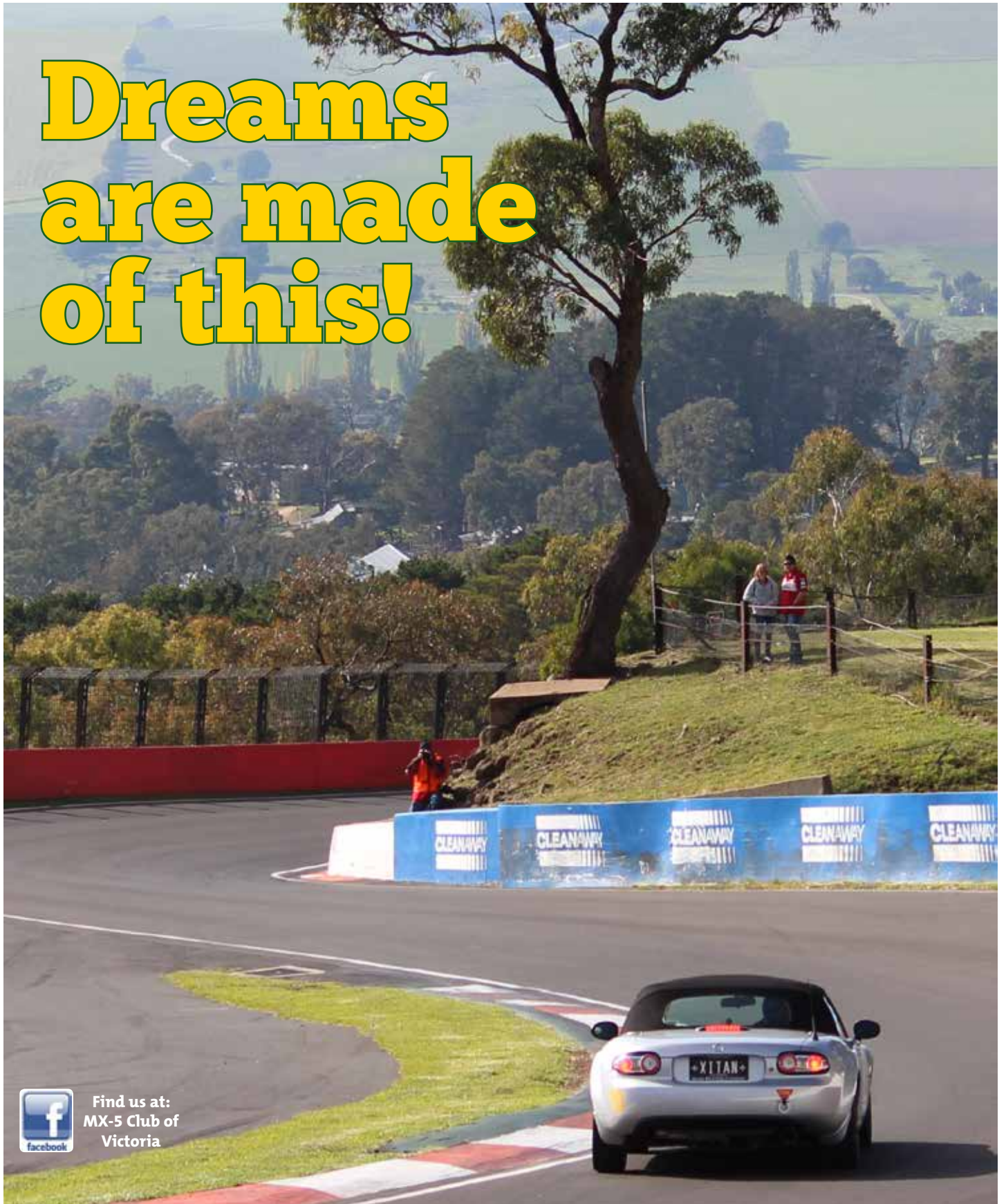


THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB OF VICTORIA & TASMANIA

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5/2014

## contents



- 4 President's page: *Don's Drive(l)*    5 Scene About
- 6 Membership | crossword #19    7 Full Throttle
- 7 NatMeet IX in Caloundra ... *there and back*
- 10 Like us on Facebook ... *your contributions welcome!*
- 10 2015 Club calendar ... *very collectible!*
- 11 Favourite Road ... *Kiandra to Khancoban – in the high country*
- 32 Club Grill ... *meet Travis McInnes, Eastern Victoria Chapter*
- 33 Best in Show ... *top gong at the RACV Classic Showcase*
- 34 Tech Talk ... *Say cheese!*

### Chapter chatter

- 12 Northern Tasmania ... *West Coast Gentry*
- 14 Eastern Victoria ... *Magnificent MX-5 Muster at Maffra*
- 15 Southern Tasmania ... *Easter Bonnet run*
- 16 Western Victoria ... *Halls Gap run*
- 18 Central ... *VicMeet 2014*
- 20 Northern Tasmania ... *Trail of the Tin Dragon*
- 22 North-Eastern Victoria ... *The "No Idea" run*
- 23 Central ... *Well done those men!*

### Motor Sport

- 26 A dream, a man and a mountain
- 28 City Mazda Sprint Championship ... *Rd 10 – Phillip Island*
- 30 What a weekend ... *and what a welcome!*

Cover  
image:

Randy Stagno Navarra attacks the Dipper at Mt Panorama. He and other Club members had a big day at on The Mountain over Easter. Photo: Andrea Stagno Navarra



Find us at:  
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Victoria

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# Don's Drive(l) ...

■ Don Nicoll – President [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

Hi everyone, welcome to the May *mxtra*. Once again we have plenty to keep you entertained.

**This month** I thought I might put my two bobs' worth into the new model MX-5 discussion, the so-called ND. There has been a lot written about the new car and we see artists' impressions from the media's motoring gurus and the occasional carefully-worded release from Mazda, all adding to the expectation and confusion. The latest information from the New York Motor Show certainly added to the discussion.

I thought I might approach it from what we know as fact and then do a bit of speculation about body shape, rather than take a photo of a Mazda6 and superimpose it on the back end of an NC, which seems to be the common approach of many in the motoring press. First-off we have seen photos of a mule which comprised an NC-like bonnet with an extra few centimetres between trailing edge of said bonnet and the windscreen. So the car could be longer from front bumper to windscreen ... why?

Well, if you looked at the rolling chassis which made its debut at the New York Motor Show last month, you will have read that the engine sits almost behind the front axle. There was also commentary on the opportunity this offers to lower the centre of gravity. Could explain why the mule is longer than the current NC? But this has another implication. If you can lower the engine then you don't need the taller bonnet of the NC (compared with the NA and NB) which makes you question the need for the Mazda6, large-mouthed grilles that have been used in the artist's impressions.

My betting credentials are not good, but if I was asked for an opinion then you would have to speculate on the need to carry the current Mazda KODO, soul of motion design elements into the next MX-5 when you have an engine bay which may be more like the original NA than the current NC. So I'm betting that the current Mazda design will either not apply to the new car or it will be a very scaled-down version. If you can lower the bonnet and gain some better aerodynamics, would you insist on following the KODO design of the other Mazda models. My reading of Mazda is that *Jinba Ittai* comes before everything else in the MX-5, so forget the "shark face".

**Moving on.** As I write we are about to hit yet another milestone in our Club membership. We are now over 575, which Will (our Membership Officer) had predicted as a likely target for the year. I'm not sure how he does it but there will be some maths involved somewhere! At the rate we are going we are heading for over 600 next Club year. *Just amazing.*

**In spite of the number** of members, we still struggle to find people prepared to help out on the Committee or in Chapter roles. Having said we are now back to a full strength Committee thanks to Alex Hailstone joining at our last meeting. It is great to have some more youth on the Committee to look after the interests of the younger members of the Club. We still need a Central Chapter Captain to take over the role vacated by Ron Macdonald. If you are interested please let me know.

**Finally** a big thanks to Murray who, besides looking after all the Club communication activities and holding down a job, has decided to go back to college for a spot of re-training. He started the course at the beginning of the year and somehow he has continued to contribute to the Club and the Committee without any noticeable change. I am not sure how he does it, but I'm extremely grateful for his efforts. Thanks again Murray.

Must go ... the driver's seat is getting cold!  
**Remember ... Safety ~~fast~~ first!**

Don

## For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

### May

- 16 Motor Sport awards night
- 17-19 Eastern: 3 Peaks run
- 18 North Tassie: Picnic at Ross
- 18 South Tassie: Picnic at Ross
- 25 NE Vic: Scavenger Hunt
- 25 Eastern: Khanacross

### June

- 1 Central: Yarragon run
- 7-9 Western: Queen's Birthday weekend run (with Eastern)
- 8 Eastern: Gippsland run
- 19 Central: New members' night
- 22 NE Vic: Tastes of the North-east

### July

- 5 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 2: Phillip Island
- 12 Central: Trivia Night
- 18 Eastern: Social night

### August

- 3 NE Vic: Mitta Mitta/Dartmouth
- 3 Sprints 2014-15 Rd 3: Winton
- 10 Central: Lancefield run

### September

- 7 Eastern: Licola run
- 14 Central: Healesville Sanctuary run
- 14 NE Vic: Mt Buffalo run
- 26 Central: Chapter dinner

### October

- 12 Central: Great Ocean Road run
- 18-19 2014 Winton 6 Hour
- 19 NE Vic: Jingellic run
- 26 Eastern: Leongatha lunch run
- TBA Central: High country run

### November

- 15-16 Summit to Sea run
- 16 Eastern: Mt Worth run

### December

- 14 Central: Annual CFA run
- 14 Eastern: Social night
- 14 NE Vic: Christmas run

# Scene about ...

■ Photos: Kelly Berggren, Bronwyn Roche, Karen Bradshaw, Ron Macdonald, Wendy Clark, Marg Gillick





# Membership

Will Campbell – Membership Officer [membership@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:membership@mx5vic.org.au)

Current membership count:

583

and growing!

## Hi all!

Membership has again taken off with 24 new members since my April report.

Apart from when the Club was first formed and to the best of my recollection, that's the highest monthly increase in our history. And it's 47 more than the same time last year.

Our current 583 is a record membership for the Club; with a month of the current membership year still to go, we might even make 600!

So, with the appropriate fanfare, I'd like to welcome the following folk to our ranks and wish them all the best for a fruitful and long involvement with the Club.

## Central Chapter

James and Margaret Cash	2007 Blue NC
Stephen Gallagher and Lisa Donovan	1990 Neo Green NA
Travis Forrest	1999 Classic Red NB
Harvey Kellam	1990 Red NA
Raymond King	2011 White NC
Tony Mackeson	1992 Silver NA
Mark, Sue, Luke and Lachlan Manns	1990 Green NA
Ben Mott and Belinda Wadeson	2003 Silver NB

Roger and Teresa O'Halloran	2010 Metropolitan Grey
Justin Power	2011 Silver NC
Ian, Katherine, Caitlin and Alannah Stewart	1989 Classic Red NA

## Eastern Victoria

Clive Budd and Carol King	20055 Galaxy Grey NC
---------------------------	----------------------

## Western Victoria

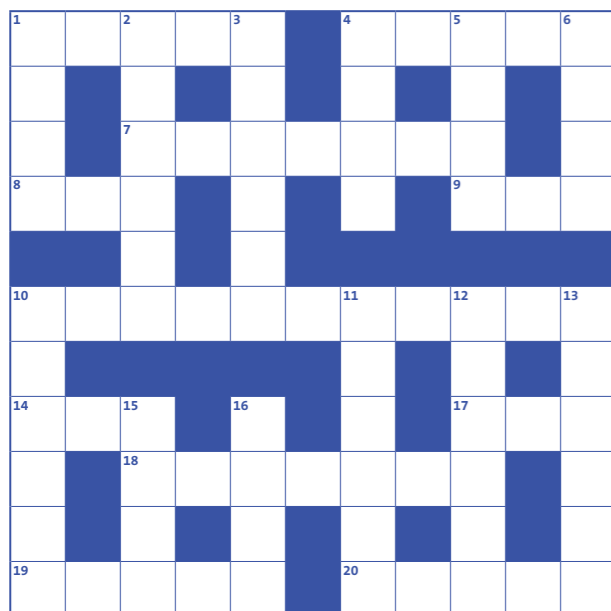
Kathy Reynolds	1989 Silver NA
----------------	----------------

See you out and about ...

Will

# Alan Bennett's MX-5 crossword #20

Theme = Girls' names



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

## MX-5 crossword #19

April 2014 – Answers

## Across

- I carp on about a Ford 2-door (anag) (5)
- Lee is looking for a 2-door Lotus (anag) (5)
- Many led astray and remade (anag) (7)
- First woman? (3)
- I'm adamant she's part of the first man? (3)
- A field and open ground that sounds like margarine, congratulations? (6,5)
- A beam of sunshine (3)
- A circus artist who sells without s's (3)
- A big ailment runs together (7)
- An antelope jumps in ya lap! (5)
- An Irish poet sounds hungry for yeast (anag) (5)

## Down

- Catherine cut short? (4)
- More a beach girl than a maple leaf? (anag) (6)
- Violet blue in God I trust (anag) (6)
- Macpherson's a model belle! (4)
- Affectionate island near Scotland with an optional internal name (4)
- The most famous dame of them all (4)
- Hand built English sports car with running boards (6)
- Subaru left something behind in a one legged racy car (6)
- Famous Marcos shoe collector (6)
- A hill so steep starting with a holy list perhaps (anag) (6)
- Sounds like a Melbourne river or a ray of sunshine (anag) (4)
- A shortened form of Antonina or Giannina (4)

Answers next month ...



# Full Throttle!

Daniel White – Club Captain - Motor Sport [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)

## City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship Round 10 – Phillip Island, 5 April

This was the final round for the 2013-14 Sprint Championship, and was a great way to finish of another successful season of MX-5 motor sport.

Twenty-eight MX-5s took to the track on a rare sunny day at Phillip Island. Paul Ledwith set a blistering lap time of 1:51.9055 – a new Restricted Open Class lap record. Nice work, Paul; perhaps you should consider bringing the family along to the track more often, or was it just the luck of the Irish???

See the full report on page 28.

## Motor Sport Awards & Annual Motor Sport Meeting – 16 May

This will be happening about the very time you're reading this. Stay tuned for the full report and results coming up in next months *mxtra*

## 2014/15 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship Round 1 – Sandown, Saturday 10 May.

This year we started our season off earlier than usual, as we are progressively moving towards aligning our season with a calendar year (ie, January to December). The season will still consist of eight to 10 rounds per year with some exciting innovations planned.

## Club Motor Sport Safety Equipment

For some time now I have been highlighting the importance of safety within our motor sport group – in particular, personal safety and upgrading of helmets to include the use of HANS devices.

(A HANS device sits over the driver's shoulders and connects to the helmet to prevent the head and neck from moving too far in the event of a sudden stop or change of direction.)



In a major safety drive CAMS, the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport, will make it compulsory from 1 July 2014 for competitors in all international and national circuit races, road events and off road events to wear HANS or Frontal Head Restraints.

Although this CAMS initiative does not directly apply to Sprint events, it is pleasing to see that many of our regular sprint competitors have invested in their own safety and have purchased new HANS-compatible helmets and HANS devices.

Our Club is committed to safety in motor sport for our competitors, and has purchased two Bell HANS-compatible motor sport helmets and two HANS devices.

These are available for use by Club members who would like to experience driving on the track using the HANS device.

I would like to commend the Committee for their foresight and support in the purchase of this equipment for the benefit of all members including the motor sport group.

If you are considering buying a new helmet and HANS device and would like to try-before-you-buy at one of our Sprint rounds, please send an email request to [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au) or [captain2@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain2@mx5vic.org.au) to reserve one.

Daniel #146  
"Racing – converting money into noise!"



# NatMeet XI ... there and back!

Words & photos: Dave & Gail Collins, Charles & Rodney Tickler, Bruce & Jenny Gray, Grant Butler & Saeko Fujiki, Arthur & Lyn Smith

## Wed 9 - Fri 11 April

The drive north ...

**Day 1:** Bruce, Jenny, Grant, Saeko, Gail and I set off for Caloundra.

It's 1850km to NatMeet and four days of MX-5 pleasure.



The route is planned, the motels booked. No Newell or Hume for us, straight up the middle. The Olympic, New England and the renewed Bylong Valley Way are to be our carriageways. All pretty quiet the first day with regular coffee and loo stops, and a special treat – a lunch time stop at the Junee Chocolate and Liquorice Factory. Our first night is in Cowra. Alas no time to visit the Japanese Gardens.

**Day 2:** a 7.30 start and the anticipation of travelling the Bylong Valley Way; *drive.com.au* has voted one of the 10 Great Aussie Drives. Its 140km run from Ilford north of Bathurst to Sandy Hollow west of Muswellbrook. It does not disappoint; it's a pleasure to drive a great winding, undulating and totally quiet road. Add stunning scenery, green valleys, rising hills, meandering rivers to the joy ... magic. If only we could make it one of our runs. We stop at Kondos for lunch as Grant had learned it had a bakery. But of course we find it closed for the day. Coffee is found, and Gail and I buy hats (but that's another story). Armidale is our location for our overnight stop.

**Day 3:** another 7.30 start and we're off to Brisbane and Caloundra. Alas we should have heeded Bruce's advice to take the longer route via Esk. Instead we take the direct route and find ourselves in the 8km rush hour jam from Brisbane. An hour later and we're on the last stretch, having had an almost fantastic run. The fun is about to start.

~ Gail & Dave



The Concours d'Elegance

## Saturday 12 April

NatMeet - Day 1

Up early and took the lid off, leaving Brisbane at 9.30. Having set Caloundra in TomTom we promptly took a wrong turn and went over the Storey Bridge. Got back on track and had a pleasant drive up the freeway; traffic very heavy! Checked in at the Oaks Hotel and collected bags of freebies.

Already lots of keen types washing and polishing for the concours tomorrow (toothbrushes etc much in evidence!). At 1pm we're off on a short run around the beaches and find that, in Queensland, they don't wait if you get held up. Lost again.

At 6.30pm we all start gathering poolside for the welcome, briefing and BBQ. Then the rain starts and we move inside. A concise briefing by chief NatMeet organiser John Tait, then food and we start chatting. What wonderful motoring stories!

~ Charles & Rodney

## Sunday 13 April

NatMeet - Day 2

Concours day dawns overcast but that doesn't stop the last minute detailing being completed after overnight showers.

With the 80 cars in position and the 60 judges briefed, the inspections and judging begin and is fortunately completed in record time ... just before the rain starts. Arthur and Lyn Smith are the best performed of the Vic/Tas team with a score of 102.61 points for their immaculately-prepared Classic Red NA6A.

The afternoon run is undertaken in difficult, wet conditions through the Glasshouse Mountains, finishing in the small township of Maleny for coffee or ice cream before we head back to the resort to prepare for the evening's 1920s theme night dinner.

Around 6pm as everyone is preparing for the 7pm party, fire alarms ring out through the resort. The fire brigade arrives as we're exiting the resort, but 15 minutes later we're allowed back to our rooms.

As usual there are some great costumes and we're entertained by an amazing vocalist. Dancing follows to finish off another fantastic NatMeet day.

~ Jenny & Bruce



# - Caloundra, 9-16 April, 2014

Hosts: Mazda MX-5 Club of Queensland



## Monday 14 April

NatMeet - Day 3

At 6.30am, as we open the curtain, it's raining again.

We leave Caloundra in the rain, and it continues all the way to the racing circuit at Lakeside Park. Our convoy leader tells us that, in the past, some races have been cancelled because the lake overflowed and flooded the racecourse. The track competitors are already at the circuit having had a very early departure from the resort.

Miraculously, as we're about to start the funkhana, the rain stops and the weather more the less holds during the events. We do have to dodge a few showers over lunchtime. The rain stops again for our parade lap and the group photo! The drive back home sees us caught in rain yet again.

In the evening we venture out to dine in Mooloolaba with some merry interstate friends. Dinner is delicious! Even better is the beautiful ice-cream afterward! A stroll along the beach finds us in the moonlight which begins to break through the clouds. *Tomorrow will be a fine day, won't it?*

~ Saeko & Grant



^ The magnificent Glasshouse Mountains

Ahh, Queensland ... overcast one day, raining the next!



## Tuesday 15 April

NatMeet - Day 4

The sun is out; the temperature's up. At the pre-run meeting we are urged to stick with our planned group and get to know all the members. Leaving our resort with a short interval between our 12 plus groups we sweep through roundabouts and head towards Kenilworth for an hour-long pit stop. Many steep climbs and exciting descents and the 8km along narrow Burnett Lane is a real rollercoaster run. Heading towards Flaxton Gardens for lunch, the narrow green valleys and steep treed ridges are stunning.

Our lunch venue is a beautiful restored Queenslander, with a lovely outdoors area and superb views over a magnificent hinterland towards the coast. As we settle in, group photos turn into a real circus with much banter about States and between members. Our lunch is tastier than expected, but soon we have to head back to Oaks. A choice of routes, some lovely tourist town stops.

Suitably spruced up for our presentation dinner night we feast on a delightful video presentation of photos, a lovely dinner and drinks with due applause and much fun as all worthy winners were presented with trophies or gift kits. As the last formal part of the night Dave Collins, our Club Treasurer, presents an exciting panorama of Tasmanian delights for the possible 2016 NatMeet.

~ Arthur & Lyn



## Wed 16 - Fri 18 April

The return ...

Having said our goodbyes and already looking forward to the next time we get together with friends from other States, it's time to head home. Gail has to be at work by Friday lunchtime, so no dilly dallying. We remember Bruce's words, so Esk it is – more great roads and scenery; a great way for Grant and Saeko and Gail and me to begin the drive home. Tamworth was our stop on the first day.

**Day 2:** should we leave early and run the risk of kangaroo strike or delay and have a longer run into the evening and possibility of roos? Locals advised us to wait, so we leave at 7.45. Plenty of warning signs, but thankfully no roos. A quiet day and good run through to Young where Grant and Saeko are staying; we push on to Holbrook or Albury to be closer to home for a shorter run on Friday morning, but then decide to keep going. Plenty of stops and we're home after a 1250km day.

NatMeet is over for another two years; next time Victoria and Tasmania will host, so it's a chance for you to experience a great fun four days.

We can't wait to see you there.

~ Dave & Gail

# Like us on Facebook!



Ben Sale, Social Media

The Club's Facebook page needs friends ... and contributors.

We would love it if more members submitted content for our page ([www.facebook.com/mx5vic](http://www.facebook.com/mx5vic)).

We've set up a new e-mail address for your submissions:

[facebook@mx5.vic.org.au](mailto:facebook@mx5.vic.org.au)

Please send through any photos from Club runs, motor sport or anything else Club- or MX-5 related and we'll share it with the community!

We just ask you to keep it simple; – only send through a handful of photos at most, and keep any captions brief.

E-mail your contributions to [facebook@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:facebook@mx5vic.org.au), or post the content on the page's wall, and we can share from there.



25th anniversary

## 2015 Club calendar: very collectible!



Just in case you needed incentive, we now have a very collectible prize on offer for the best photo\* submitted for the Club's 25th anniversary 2015 calendar.

It's a rare limited edition print of Fredd Briggs' famous 1993 "Classic" NA – the one with the tan leather interior and BBS wheels (the car, not the print!).

We have secured print #46 of 100, signed by Toshihiko Harai, the Program Manager of the original NA project.

It would take pride of place in any lounge (or pool) room. The framed size is 635 x 878mm (25 x 34.5").

The commemorative wall calendar will be sent free to all financial members in December.

We're calling on all members to submit your best MX-5 photos ... whether they be something spontaneous from a Club event, something staged with a scenic backdrop, or even something shot in your back yard. It could be at sunrise or sunset, or with storm clouds or a rainbow in the background. It's up to you.

If you think it's worth consideration, we would like to see it.

We've already received about 70 shots from 14 photographers, and some of those are very impressive.

All photos are welcome, no matter what your level of skill as a photographer or quality of your equipment. The shots don't need to be new – you might have an all-time favourite in your archive.

There are just three pre-requisites:

- » the car must belong to a Club member
- » the format must be "landscape" (ie, wider than high) to suit the layout, and
- » your image should be the highest resolution you can make it. The higher the resolution, the better for printing. As the calendar will be A4 size, a picture size of 3600 pixels wide x 2600 pixels deep would be ideal (about 8 to 10MB)

Please e-mail your entry to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au), with "2015 Calendar" as the subject. The deadline for submissions is 30 September, 2014. ●

\*The judges' decision is final!

## My favourite MX-5 road ...



Words & photo: Gerry Engwerda, North-Eastern Victoria Chapter

### Kiandra to Khancoban

This road is usually part of the North-Eastern Victoria Chapter's annual March weekend Snowy Mountains run.

The road starts at the junction of the Snowy Mountains Highway, 25 minutes drive west of Adaminaby, and the Link Road heading towards Khancoban. It passes two scenic stops – the Tumut pondage and the Tooma reservoir.

The road is sealed all the way and, while moderately narrow, leaves plenty of room for two cars to pass. The gentle sweepers at the start of the Link Road quickly turn into a series of tight turns and hairpins. It's hands on wheel and gear shifter all the way here.

The scenery is stunning if you slow down a bit to appreciate it fully. Vast expanses of whitened mountain ash destroyed by the 2003 fires give the scenery a surreal appearance. Most will regenerate. For the hour's run to the Alpine Way west of Khancoban, the road rolls, dives and twists with spectacular mountain vistas on both sides.

Not too far along, the road begins a steep descent to the Tumut Pondage. Cross the dam wall to park and then walk back for postcard views of the dam, the echoes and the islands behind it.

Some 15 minutes further on is the less dramatic but equally beautiful Tooma storage. From there the road eases up a little



with fewer tight corners and more gentle sweepers that give you the chance to open up a bit. Just be mindful that the limit throughout is 80km/h, which is usually more than fast enough for the conditions.

As you near the Alpine Way you enter some fabulous earth cuttings that dramatically increase your sense of speed. If you have the top down (and who wouldn't?) the sound bouncing off the walls is worth the trip in itself. **A great run!**

Distance: 77km | Time (without stops) – 1 hour and 10 minutes from the Link Road to the Alpine Way intersection. ●

If you have a favourite MX-5 road, you're welcome to submit a short description (150 words) and a photo to [editor@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:editor@mx5vic.org.au) and share it around!

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# Chapter chatter ...



**29-30.3.14 | Northern Tasmania** ■ Words & photos: Kelly Berggren ■ Organisers: Carl & Kelly Berggren

*A select few joined Carl, my girls and me for a tour of the fantastic west coast roads this weekend, all of us living it up in fine 1900s English gentry-style at Penghana B&B (circa 1898 National Trust house) in Queenstown.*

Carl took the lead, with Stasi (6½) as comms in Ken's pristine Classic Red NA, then Michael and Anna's red NB, then Michael and Karin's red NC, with Charlie (two days off turning four!) being a proper tail-end Charlie with me in our red NA ... four little red cars all in a row!

Jo and Brent joined us in their blue NA at Moina (Brent's had his blue since new!) and we all joked about putting them in the middle for group pics.

Everything was rich and lush – the wet, black curvy roads, rich green forest ferns, mist twinkling on red tail lights, old-world elegant rooms and a sumptuous three-course fine dining dinner with full silver service.

Highlights:

- » beautiful roads all the way south
- » Mackintosh dam spillway and lunch break with lots of home-made yummys!
- » stunning Lake Plimsol road, with sky touching lake touching sheer rock
- » Stasi's fairy princess entrance on the carved staircase
- » Michael's cool tie, everyone dressed up and all the ladies looking very lovely
- » perfectly-cooked gourmet dinner with lots of wine, laughter and good company
- » Jo playing piano while Anna sings, and Stasi and Charlie danced
- » The full-size pool table tournament
- » The 99s (the endless climbing hills east from Queenstown) and again in reverse!
- » Lake Burbury road and Nelson Falls (... and counting mushrooms!)
- » getting to know a great bunch of people better over a wonderful weekend. 😊

Thanks to everyone's input and company, and a big thanks to Maureen & Bill at Penghana for being wonderful hosts! ●



# Chapter chatter ...

## 6.4.14 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words, photos & organiser: James Lang

Some time back, the Gippsland Vehicle Collection (aka the "Maffra Shed") put the word out to the other car clubs that their 10th birthday bash was due to be held on 6 April, and asked if the MX-5 Club would be interested in displaying a few cars on their lawn as part of the festivities.

Since I am a member of the aforementioned shed, Alan Laine thought I was a good candidate to organise a few of our happy bunch to spruik the virtues of joining our club. Leaving home the weather was a bit damp so best to leave the roof up and see how the day panned out. We arrived at Maffra and staked out our territory on the grass and set up our club banner. The rain gods decided to give it a miss and so it seemed a safe bet to "dip your lid". Most of the day was spent checking out the other vehicles on display, lining up for sausages and coffee etc, and answering any Mazda-related questions.

The local dignitaries started handing out awards for the 'best in show' to the various categories and I was rather stunned to hear "MX-5 Club" echo over the PA system, so the booty (a plaque and five litres of Penrite oil) was collected and so we posed for with our prizes, and went off to toast our win with coffee and cake at the shed canteen, then try to work out what do with the oil apart from splitting it in to six equal small containers ...

Thanks to my fellow Club members - Graham, Peter, Rob, Steve, Nicholas and John for a grand day out.

PS: After Graham saw the shot of us posing for with our winnings he remarked that we could have taken out the "Grey Beard" category as well, if it weren't for clean shaven young Nicholas in the group photo! ●



The winners (L-r): Peter Ferguson, Rob Krygsman, Graham Keene, Nicholas Bodey and James Lang. John Bodey and Steve Green are missing from the photo.

## Magnificent MX-5 Muster at the Maffra Shed



## 13.4.14 | Southern Tasmania ■ Words: Michelle Waldock ■ Photos: Rob Tanner, John Waldock ■ Organiser: John Waldock

The brief was, well, brief – decorate your car bonnet or an individual bonnet with an Easter theme.

I underestimated the reluctance of most MX-5 owners to tamper with their cars in any way that could involve damage to paintwork. So while we had lots of 'bunnies' wearing ears, not many participants were 'bunny' enough to touch their cars. Actually, only one couple – the Tanners – decorated their MX-5, as the pictures show.

After the driver briefing, all the Easter bunnies hopped into their cars for the drive down through Sorell to the Tasman Peninsula. This road has long been a favourite of the Chapter; 'the road is long, with many a winding turn' as the song goes. Unbeknownst to us, however, sections of road work meant a necessary slowing down (due to gravel – gasp!) and many of the winding turns are being straightened. There were many sad comments over the radio during these slow sections by those for whom the word 'bends' is synonymous with 'fun'.

Despite the changes to the road, the scenery never fails to impress, particularly the section from Pirates Bay through to Port Arthur. The eucalyptus forest is regrowing spectacularly well following the recent bushfires that decimated so much of the native flora and fauna, as well as the township of Dunalley. This little town on the banks of the Denison Canal is the usual 'rest stop' for the chapter when driving this route. We parked the cars next to the Canal as usual, and then we became aware of a mini-busload of Japanese tourists who excitedly took photos of the seven cars lined up next to the Canal as well as any member still wearing their Easter bonnet. After our '15 minutes of fame', the convoy set off again, crossing the Canal to head to our final destination of Port Arthur. The day was typical of April in Tassie – cool with clear blue skies punctuated by small cotton wool clouds. Perfect for driving in convoy with tops down.

We reached our destination, the appropriately named Eucalypt Café at Port Arthur, right on time and set about demolishing a hearty lunch. Member Di Tanner took out the prize for best individual Easter bonnet, while Rose and Michael Grubits won the prize for the best decorated car, which not only looked great when we met up in the morning but the decorations survived the drive intact. After lunch was over, members headed to their cars for a leisurely drive back to Hobart in the afternoon sunshine. ●

## Easter Bonnet run



▲ Rob & Di Tanner

◀ A great run led to a relaxed lunch in Port Arthur



▲ Another day out on Tassie's busy highways!



# Chapter chatter ...

6.4.14 | Western Victoria ■ Words: Janette Todd ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organiser: John Gleeson



*Changes in direction for some – but it's the road ahead for Halls Gap and the Grampians!*

For a number of reasons (read: travel, renovation, family commitments) we haven't been able to get to a Club run for ages, so we thought it was about time that Cerri (our Cerrion Silver NB) had the chance to blow the cobwebs out!

Meet at 9am for a 9.30 start. Leave home just before 8am ... so much for that extra hour in bed at the end of daylight saving time .... *Western Chapter, here we come.*

the wind dropped and the sun came out – perfect for an MX-5 run.

Rounding up the convoy of seven vehicles we learn that we will be heading to Elmhurst for our morning cuppa after picking up four more members at Lexton. No run notes, but follow John and Noellene out of Ballarat and on to the Sunraysia Highway heading towards Learmonth. Over the radio comes

Noellene "turning left onto the highway" only it isn't the highway at all but just a small dirt slip road before the on-ramp – our lead driver was a tad too eager it would seem!

**U-turn #1.** Just love that everyone has the same smile on their dial – it wouldn't be a Western Chapter drive without a U-turn!

On we go; through some beautiful countryside, great roads, a massive wind farm and we reach

Lexton to pick up our extra cars. "Turning left towards Amphitheatre" advises Noellene and we all turn left. Only, from somewhere behind us there is an amazingly loud whistle and a cry of "Over here. This way." I don't know for sure, but I suspect that it was Ian Bradshaw calling out to us as he would his cows in the paddock!

**U-turn #2.** And it wasn't even morning tea time yet! Back across the main road to the waiting cars lined up at the designated meeting spot by the toilets. This time it was Noellene wondering out loud "I'm sure we met you across there the last time".

We made it to the Recreation Reserve at Elmhurst where thermos flasks of tea or coffee and home baked goodies were produced and everyone took time to natter some more. (In the interests of "The 7th Chapter" John and I notice that the Reserve would be a great free camp area!)

Taking the Pyrenees Highway we travel on through Ararat – no fitness gurus or losers to be seen this morning, instead some lovely old buildings and homes with most of the outlets in the shopping precinct appearing to be occupied.

With Halls Gap our destination for lunch it was lovely to see Milly joining our convoy as we turned left into the town centre. Lockie and Tracy have had more than their share of misfortune and health concerns of late, so it was good to see them out and about. Lockie might be looking a bit battered around the edges but his spirit and wit are as sharp as ever.

Following lunch it was across the Grampians to Zumsteins. The ferocity of the recent fires very quickly became evident – the earth in many places was totally devoid of grassy growth and was just ashen remains. Trees stood as charred pillars – their branches, having fallen to ground, will in time be cleared away or become home to smaller animals when they return to the area. It had an eerie beauty and Mother Nature has already begun the task of nurturing the re-growth, cocooning her charges in soft, apple green foliage as though snugly wrapped in woolly blankets. Some gentle rains are needed now as the grasses emerge to hold the soils together and bush vegetation can once again thrive in this picturesque area.

Everyone



commented that it was a strange feeling to see the cars through the landscape as we snaked our way around the many bends. The waterfall at McKenzie's Falls was clearly visible, as were the rocky outcrops of the surrounding folds in the mountains and the deep waters of Wartook Reservoir. The power of nature was quite humbling.

We said our goodbyes at Zumsteins, but continued in convoy intending to travel back across country to Dadswells Bridge and then home via the Western Highway. The devastation stretched well into the Wartook Valley and was quite intense in most parts.

Turning right on to the Roses Gap road we had only driven a short distance before coming upon a road closed sign; clearly there is a lot of clean up work remaining.

So, through no fault in the planning it was **U-turn #3.**

John and I held back as we wanted to have a closer look at some land that once was owned by friends. I am not sure which direction the convoy took for their return journey, but I am told by a reliable source that a group dinner ensued at the golf club. John and I made our way home after a long day of driving. We had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and thank the Western Chapter for their hospitality.

We would encourage you, when you have the time, to visit Halls Gap and the Grampians – they are definitely open to tourists and we can help them on their road ahead by visiting and spending time and money in one of the prettiest parts of our State. ●

## Western Chapter June run ... in the east!

We're having a weekend in Gippsland over the Queen's Birthday long weekend, 7-9 June – leaving Ballarat on Saturday, 7 June, and joining the Eastern Victoria Chapter run on Sunday, 8 June.

All Club members are welcome to join, but you will need to book your own motel. Being a long weekend you should book asap. We suggest:

- » Moe Motor Inn, 03 5217 1166 – double room \$99.
- » Comfort Inn Moe, 03 5127 3344 – single room \$99; double \$111.

This will be a magnificent driving weekend through beautiful country!

Hope as many as possible can join us.

Please let John know if you're coming: 0418 501 811 / [western@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:western@mx5vic.org.au)



Arriving in Ballarat in good time we had to drive past Casa Gleeson where we notice Captain John standing by his car scratching his head: "now what have I forgotten – ah, yes ... Noellene are you ready?"

Through the main shopping centre and on to the Arch of Honour, but not before a smart move detour down to the Botanical Gardens and a quick pit stop.

When we joined the group for hellos and introductions John G was patting himself on the back for being first to arrive, but Jeff Woolf quickly pointed out that has rarely happened before. Laughs from the outset and we know we are in for an enjoyable day. The weather was erring on the cool side when we left Sunbury, but (amazingly) the clouds soon parted,



*And modelling a lovely MX-5 Club shirt, we have ... John Todd!*



# Chapter chatter ...

12-13.4.14 | Central ■ Photos: Wendy Clark, Bronwyn Roche, Ron Macdonald ■ Organiser: Wendy Clark & Ron Macdonald

The Central Chapter decided those going to NatMeet in Queensland should not have all the fun ... Ron & Wendy organised a "VicMeet" weekend away for those staying home.

Ten MX-5s met up at Healesville and waited patiently while their owners refuelled inside the Beechworth Bakery.

The weather was very kind after the wet week we had just experienced. The roads were terrific, the scenery amazing and of course the cars enjoyed the company of their owners ... and each other.

Here are the cars' recollections of an ideal MX-5 weekend ...



L-R: Ron, Siddique, Geoff, Shio-Lee, Cheow, Lilly, Murray, Alyssa, Jerome, Wendy, Geoff, Bronwyn, Annette, Judy, Helene, Arthur, Eric, Jeff, Greg & Sue



Stonelea cabin



*This run was a great release of my pent-up emotion. I was keen to show off my ability to corner and rev (my driver tends to be fairly conservative!). We travelled through Launching Place and Warburton to the Woods Point Road. I had some happy memories as I sped past the Reefton Hotel on the way to Reefton Spur. The road was excellent and all of a sudden we were there - Gallipoli Park, Marysville. Most satisfying.*

*"Little Red" (OUY 594)*

Mazda MX-5 Club  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

It may not be as famous as the Black or Reefton Spurs, but I reckon the Skyline Road that runs across the high ridge west of Alexandra down into Eildon 'sparks my plugs' every time!

Keeping my traction under control I zoomed left, right, left, right around the curves. I'm told the views are great but I only had eyes for that sweet little Skyline track - worth driving all the way from Marysville for this treat!

Take it from this MX-5 you'll love it too.

*GPR 001*

Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

After lunch in Eildon I headed off on our favourite road, Eildon-Jamieson road with nine other MX-5s.

My friend AAS 050 clipped a branch - only very minor damage. The blackberries that you told me about are still hanging over the road on the tightest of the bends. Our friend Geoff Cooney was very sick on this part of the run. I do hope this never happens to him again. After 60km of bends and with a big smile on my grill I must say goodbye and see you when I get home.

*Em (RCB 237)*

Mazda MX-5 Club of Vic/Tas  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

At last, a chance to cool my brakes. That last 50km of tight bends gave them a workout. I'm glad my driver didn't use the handbrake, to look after my discs. And he gave me a full tank of fuel!

Leaving Mansfield for Alexandra, we pass through stunning farming country with a backdrop of magnificent high country vistas. I leave Maroondah Hwy, directed by an enthusiastic group of people enjoying a drink at the local corner pub in Alexandra. "That way!" they point and shout. I turn and follow my fellow MX-5s to Stonelea Resort, Acheron, where we chat well into the night in the car park.

*UIB 615*

Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

After a fantastic day's driving my mum and dad (Judy and Jeff) and the other owners had all built up an appetite. They met us in the carpark of the resort and we headed on the 10-minute drive to the Mt Pleasant hotel in Alexandra. We soaked in the old-world charm of the main street while the humans refuelled inside. The food must have been good because they were there quite a while, and we heard a lot of laughs.

*See you soon, HERMX-5*

Mazda MX-5 Club  
PO Box 74380  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

"A picture is worth a thousand words." Travelling from Mansfield to Acheron we had managed to snap a few thousands words' worth of scenery. The drive was most exhilarating with a few winding roads. The scenery was breathtaking and the air crisp and 100% pure. Every turn of the road brought wonderment and pure pleasure amongst the giant ferns and trees that it felt like we were transported to 'Avatar-land'. Our journey ended at Stonelea Resort in Acheron.

*XPA 317*

Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193



Even after so long in the Club, some of these roads were new to my owners and me, and others we had only travelled in the opposite direction. It's amazing how doing a road the other way shows it in a whole new light ... we noticed so many things we hadn't seen before!

Thanks to Wendy & Ron for organising a fantastic weekend, with all the opportunities to stretch my legs and breathe a bit harder than usual! And thanks to all my fellow MX-5s for your company.

*XMX 555*

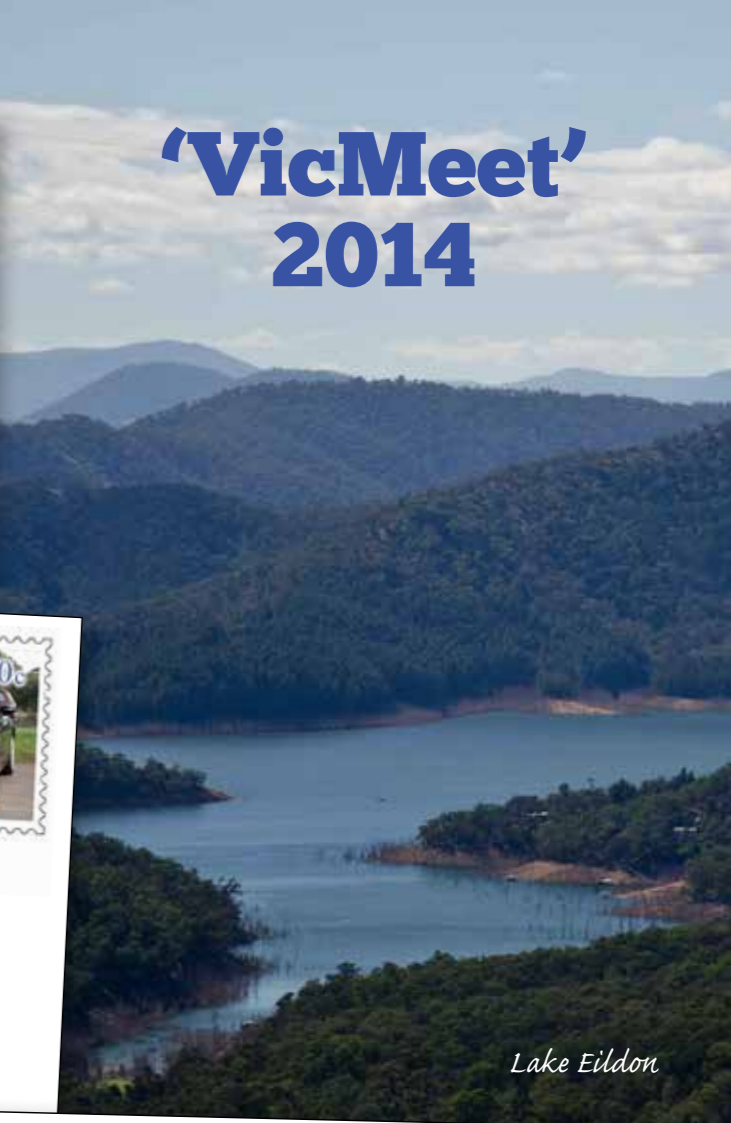
Mazda MX-5 Club of Vic/Tas  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

Despite all the great roads and lovely accommodation, I think my owner's young son Jerome's favourite moment this weekend was meeting the Easter Bunny at Maccas, our finishing point in Doncaster!

*AAS 050*

Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania  
PO Box 7438  
Beaumaris VIC 3193

# 'VicMeet' 2014



Lake Eildon

# Chapter chatter ...

13.4.14 | Northern Tasmania ■ Words & photos: Kelly Berggren

■ Organisers:  
Karin & Michael Stosh



## TRAIL OF THE TIN DRAGON

*Karin and Michael had organised us a great run through north-eastern Tassie, via some lovely twisty farm roads, with a stop for morning tea at the Derby tin centre.*

We had tea, coffee and yummy fudge as well as an interesting short movie about the history of tin mining in Derby at the turn of the 20th century.

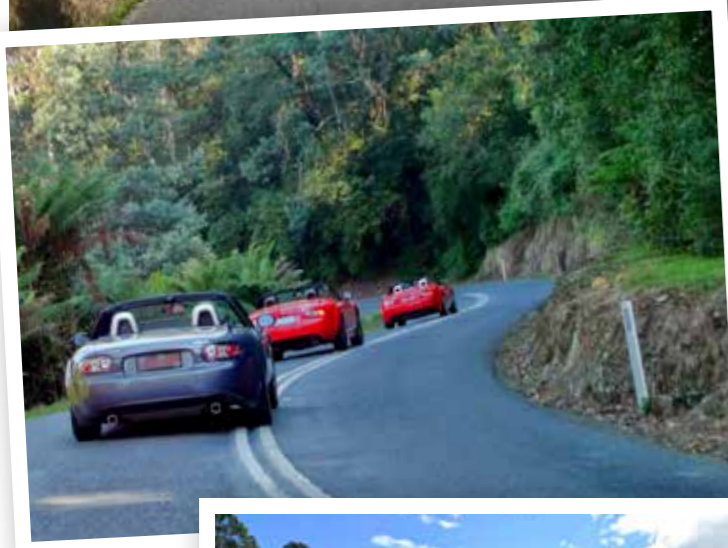
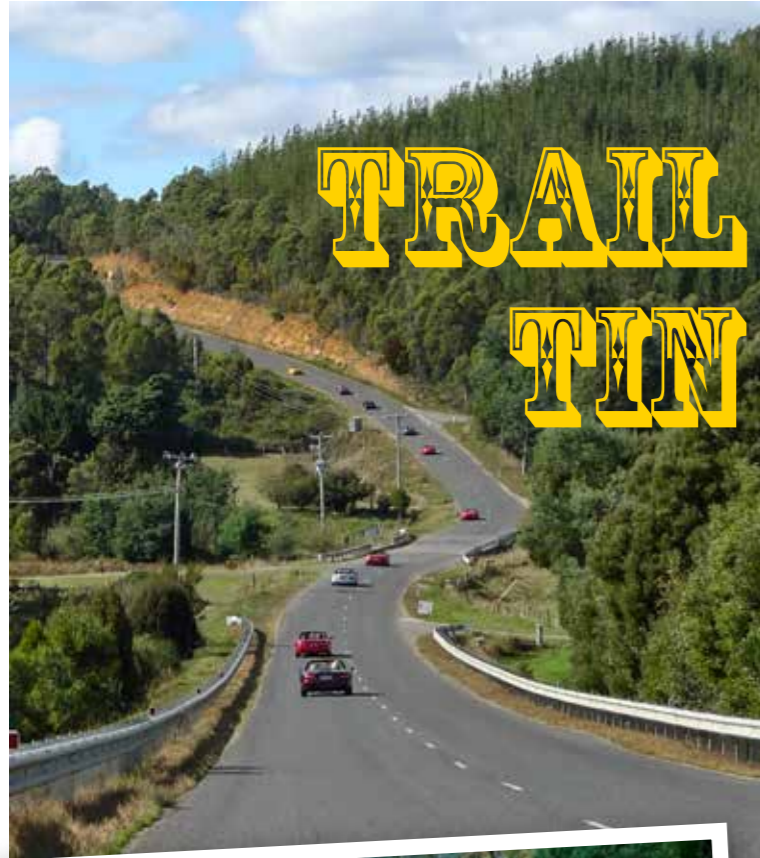
The original school building next door had displays of mining, household and school items – can you imagine Ken and Keith as naughty school boys?!

Afterwards we took Bruce's favourite side trip through Legerwood – as we hadn't practiced going through multiple doglegs for at least an hour! 😊

Then we headed to Scottsdale for a picnic lunch in the park. After lunch, saving the best for last, we all headed back to Launceston through the Sideling. This is a wonderful stretch of very windy road cutting up and back down between two mountains, and is a fast favourite amongst our Chapter.

A few went ahead to take two runs up and back while the stragglers were to stop on top at the lookout ... but Ford enthusiasts had taken over the entire lookout parking lot! We all stopped at the bottom instead, cheering and honking the Ford group as they passed us with a friendly wave.

A great day spent out in the glorious Tassie sunshine and winding back roads. Big thanks to Karin and Michael! ●



^ On The Sideling



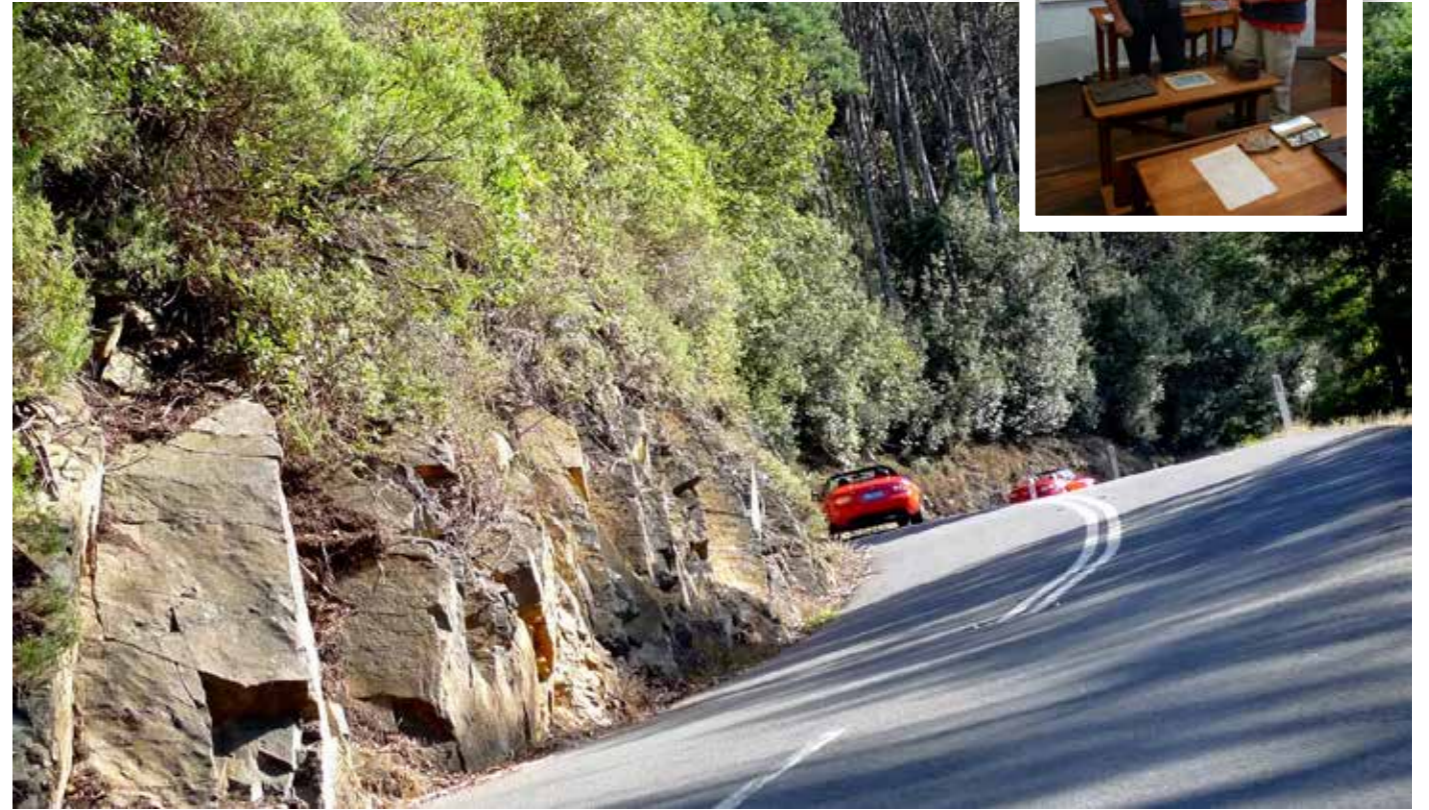
^ Karin & Bruce at the Tin Centre



^ Briseis tin mine, Derby, circa 1902

^ Some of The Sideling's twisting corners

^ Keith & Ken ... in school



^ The start of the Legerwood section. Bruce is sandbagging it for more space!

# Chapter chatter ...



**27.4.14 | North-Eastern Victoria** ■ Words: Pam Bown ■ Photos: Marg & Ron Gillick ■ Organiser: Ron Gillick

*After a lovely social night with Marg and Ron, the pre-run run from Corowa to Yackandandah started in brilliant sunshine and autumnal reds.*

Then with seven cars to go, the big "mystery" ... where to???

*Anywhere in our fantastic cars on a day like this is indeed a Magical Mystery Tour.*

Ron leads through rolling hills, green pasture and sweeping bends to Beechworth and coffee.

Gerry then leads heading south through vineyards and olive groves to Eldorado. No pot of gold but a huge dredge, all 70 metres of red rusted structure like the modern sculptures we see about. Magnificent.

Roger now leads with his assignment to find us a lunch spot in 20 minutes, magically finding twisty MX-5 roads for us to zoom along, chancing upon a sparkling stream to eat by. The men were catered for with trees.

Tyrone now leads with the imperative to "find toilets". Well, we find gravel, so turn about, then more gravel, DANG, but it's all fun and part of the game to go down side roads for adventure on roads we don't know.

Toilets found and well used and Shane leads past the Big Kiln and the Hopper Tree Root, into Myrtleford and on to Lake Buffalo and lots more sweeping bends, passing iconic tobacco sheds on the way. Then at the Lake's launching ramp, a funny flashback to Joan Read's NC, "TUB", that nearly got a bath in the lake when Ken borrowed the car whilst Joan was in UK.

Gerald leads for further roads and regretfully Tyrone and I peel away towards Melbourne.

Thank you Marg and Ron for a lovely time. ●



*The "No idea where we're going" run*



# Chapter chatter ...



27.4.14 | Central ■ Words: Ron Macdonald ■ Photos: Wendy Clark, Karen Bradshaw, Ron Macdonald

*Twenty-five cars and 42 people gathered at Cranbourne on a bright sunny Sunday morning to participate in the "Lest We Forget" run.*

It was very pleasing to see so many faces, a mix of old and new, venturing out to honour the members of the Australian Defence Force who saw active service during the Vietnam war. In keeping with the theme of the day, a small packet of ANZAC biscuits was attached to each of the run notes.

along Drouin road in Poowong, the 25 cars made a very impressive sight, each one glistening in the morning sun. The first half had been a fairly easy 45-minute run with just a few corners ... but the best was yet to come.

With the "transit stage" out of the way we then got down to some serious MX-5 driving. First was Bass Valley road, a narrow 7.8km very winding stretch with five one-lane bridges. By the time we turned right at the T-intersection in Bena the wide smiles on the faces of the drivers was very evident in our rear view mirror.

We had chosen the most indirect route from Poowong to Phillip Island taking in as many of the winding country roads possible that area had to offer. Many of the passengers enjoyed the constantly changing scenery, everything from bush land to rolling green hills and the occasional ocean view. The drivers, on the other hand, were too busy – their eyes glued to the road as maximum concentration was needed to negotiate the many bends and keep an eye out for the odd local 4WD coming in the opposite direction.

With Kongwak, Glen Alvie, Kernot and Archie's Creek now behind us we made the right turn on to the Bass Hwy for the rather mundane last 22km of our journey to Phillip Island.

On arrival at the museum we parked the cars in the special car park that had been allotted to us and it was time to put the



■ Organisers: Wendy Clark & Ron Macdonald



feed bag on. With shelter from a cool breeze supplied by a small clump of bushes we all enjoyed our picnic lunch, taking the opportunity to do some catching up with old friends and acquainting ourselves with some new ones. Lunchtime over, we took the obligatory group photo in front of the museum's Grumman S2 Tracker display (bottom left) and headed inside to see the museum proper.

Volunteer staff members Trevor Hill and Bruce Dickie welcomed us warmly before Trevor gave us a brief description of the displays, followed by an excellent 18-minute sound and light show which outlined the basic history of Australia's involvement in Vietnam, including the poor treatment suffered by many on their return to Australia. The museum itself is outstanding with many vehicles of the time on display including Cobra, Huey, Wessex and Sioux helicopters and a Centurion tank. Combined with the weapons displays, various types of equipment and personal items the Vietnam Veterans' National Museum is really a must-see, even for those who don't have a great interest in the military itself.

One of the highlights of our visit was the display of both colour and black and white photographs by renowned war photographer Tim Page. Tim's photographs are amazing and really capture the human side of our involvement in Vietnam. Having been wounded in action four times himself, once while helping to load wounded soldiers into a helicopter, he was more than just a war photographer. Unfortunately the display of Tim's photographs will have finished by the time this goes to print, however if you ever get the chance to see them I would suggest you do.

**One final note:** as this is the last run Wendy and I will host, I would like to thank all those who have participated over the last two-plus years; your support of the Central Chapter has been very much appreciated. ●



^ Guess where the wind is coming from!

# A dream, a man and a mountain

Words: Randy Stagno Navarra Photos: Andrea Stagno Navarra



Randy in XITAN, heading into Murray's Corner

*The Dipper, Forrest Elbow, The Esses, Hell Corner, McPhillamy Park, The Chase, Conrod Straight, Griffins Bend, Mountain Straight ...*

... these are names that mean so much to motor sport fans as you can only be talking about one race circuit, Mount Panorama, Bathurst. Twenty-three corners of pure nirvana for we aficionados who are usually glued to the TV come time for the Bathurst 1000 or the Bathurst 12 hour.

To race at Bathurst has always been a dream of mine, one I thought I'd never get to do. This was to change come Easter, as four of us were lucky to get the privilege to climb the mountain. Owen and Christine Boak, Russell Garner and myself had entered the Bathurst Motorsport Festival, so with cars packed we all headed north for the long weekend.

I had never even been to Bathurst so as we drove down the road that takes you into the track and finally seeing that famous Mount Panorama logo on the hill I confess that I got quite emotional ... here I was at the home of Australian motor sport and soon I would be taking on the

track in anger!

But first comes all the usual track day preparation. Time to put on R Spec tyres, sign in and get the car all sorted for scrutineering, which it passes easily. At this stage I have to thank Andrea and my dad for their help over the whole weekend. Without them I couldn't have done what I did. With the car all ready it was just a matter of waiting for practice which occurred on Good Friday.

Finally the time came to head out on the track. I really did not know what to expect. I knew that there was a lot of concrete walls around which doesn't inspire too much confidence but I had no idea how steep the climb up the mountain would be.

As soon as you turn into Griffins Bend you just seem to go up and up until you come to Skyline where all you see, funnily enough, is sky! Then the rest of the roller coaster ride begins going down the

mountain. First the Esses and then the Dipper where the car seems to fall out from under you before the furious run to Forrest Elbow. Then down Conrod Straight ... gravity seems to take over and the car slingshots down the mountain, furiously grabbing gears until suddenly I'm in sixth gear so all I can do now is hold on.

Before I know it I'm through The Chase before I brake hard into Murray's Corner and on to the main straight. Then comes Hell Corner and the long climb up Mountain Straight. My goodness I'm in heaven!

"I'm at freaking Bathurst" – that's all that kept going through my head. There is so much going on, so much to take in. Blind corner after blind corner and always those concrete walls seem so close. This is a track you have to respect or else it will bite back ... hard.

Then the session is over. I pull into the pits and sit there, so much going through



Christine Boak



Russell Garner

my mind. I take my helmet off and I'm grinning like a mad man. This is epic. I could never imagine it could be like this. My time: 3:06.6. If I had to go home now I would be happy ... but luckily for me I have four more sessions to go.

**Saturday morning. Session 1.** Locked and loaded, here we go. Conditions are perfect. This time the track is a bit more familiar. I at least now know the layout, now it's time to learn the finer points and see how far I can push.

Mind you, in the back of my mind there's always a little voice telling me that some of the greats have come to grief here so be careful. Plus I drove my car there and I do want to drive it home.

As at every track day I start to know how far I can push. Surprisingly the track is not that hard on our cars, mainly because we aren't doing the sort of speed that a GT car or a V8 Supercar does. Still, across the top of the mountain an MX-5 can be king and I do catch quite a few slower cars through the corners. Though at this stage overtaking them isn't my main priority ... that will come later. Checkered flag is out; session over, I head back into the pits ... still grinning like a maniac. 3:03.1. That's better but my goal is a sub-three minute lap.

**Saturday afternoon. Session 2.** This is it. I'm feeling good. Throughout the day I've spoken to a few of the old hands and been given quite a few good tips: what markers to look for, which lines to take through certain corners; where I could push harder and where I need to be cautious. All this helps. The car seems to react better to the new lines and I find it more comfortable to push on. I start to utilise the strong points of the MX-5, carry more speed through the corners, braking later and accelerating earlier. Now I'm having fun. Me in my element chasing and overtaking whenever and wherever I can. I'm sure my competitors can hear me chuckling as I go past them.

In the middle of all this fun the session ends. 2:59.8 – *mission accomplished!* I can't hide my enthusiasm at breaking the three-minute barrier! I hug Andrea so tightly I'm surprised she doesn't give

birth. (For those who don't know we will become parents this year. Bathurst and a baby all in one year. Brilliant!)

**Sunday morning. Easter. A special day for most. A special day for me. Session 3.** Another glorious day at the mountain. Feeling good, the car is going great. I've gone under the three-minute barrier. Now I can relax and have fun. What an amazing session to have.

Everything goes perfectly. I manage to find a gap between a couple of cars so I could push as hard as I could. I even put my window down to hear the sound of my exhaust reverberating off the walls. I truly am in motor sport heaven. I brake later and later. Accelerate earlier and earlier. I fly through The Chase, foot flat to the floor and the car just sits beautifully – she still has much more to give.

Lap after lap I throw Xitan at the mountain and she loves it. This is what she is built for, to attack corners time and time again. I know I am going faster than the previous day. I'm having so much fun I feel like a racing god. I pull into the pits and I get the call I've been waiting for: 2:55.8. Yes! That's better!

**Sunday afternoon. Session 4.** It's been a great weekend at the mountain so far. This is the last run. I honestly feel a bit sad. I don't want this to end. This is where my heroes won their greatest victories. Part of me feels like we are kindred spirits. Man and machine against this incredible circuit.

The greatest victory is coming back in one piece. Out I go. Lots of traffic, especially across the top of the mountain where I seem to catch everyone. Still, 100% commitment and concentration. This is everything I wanted – good healthy competition with cars of various makes and differing power. Each of us using our car's strong points to try and get ahead of each other. Too soon it comes to an end due to a WRX lurching its engine heading up the mountain. Oil everywhere ... the red flags come out and in we go.

Only four laps ... three of them in the '57s and one in the '58s so I'm happy with the consistency.

With this the weekend comes to an end, but what a weekend.

You couldn't wipe the smile off my face for the entire weekend and I'm still smiling. This is one racetrack that is hard to get out of one's system. Certainly one of the best in the world and I feel lucky to have driven it.

I have so many memories that keep popping up. Taking The Chase at full noise is so much fun with the car on the limit. Coming down the mountain is truly epic ... let's say you know you're alive when you do. Third gear through Griffins Bend heading uphill is where you wish you had an extra 300hp. Overtaking at McPhillamy Park and then going over Skyline – memories that will last me for the rest of my life.

Like every race weekend it's also the people that make the event. The banter with all the competitors, the veterans always happy to give us new guys some valuable tips. Also it's always great to see the look of amazement on people's faces when they see the times our MX-5s were getting. The friendly faces from the NSW MX-5 Club. So lovely that some of them drove for three hours just to say hi.

Makes you feel really special, most of all, our little group. Owen, Christine, Russell, Claire, John, the kids, my dad and my number one supporter, Andrea. So happy that I was able to share this experience with people I admire, respect and love so much. They are the ones who made Mount Panorama such a special place.

I have to add that everyone did really well. Owen was fantastic in the Production Sports Cars and ended up with his best lap of 2:38.3. Christine had a great Sunday with a 2:55.1. Russell was his usual speedy self with a 2:50.5.

I can truly say that we all would head back there in a heartbeat. It is really hard to put the whole experience in words. The emotions are incredible and one that you can only truly share with people that were there. Just know that we had a great time. The MX-5 Club of Victoria and Tasmania was very well represented at the mountain. ●

• Randy finished fourth in his group of 54 cars. For those who would like to see more pictures and videos of the event, hop on to Xitan Racing on Facebook.

# Phillip Island ... a magnificent circuit

Words: Max Lloyd Photos: Max Lloyd, Andrea Stagno Navarra

*Early to bed, the car is ready, boot loaded ... everything is done. The alarm is set for 4am; we are gone by 5 and at the gate for a group chat in the dark at 6.45!*

Phillip Island, in my opinion the best circuit in Victoria and, I believe, the best in Australia, is ready for us. A cool breeze is blowing and the dry track is in perfect condition.

This is the tenth and last event of our championship for 2013-14 and the last opportunity to bring home the trophy.

My wife, Lesley, is keeping me company today. She will be helping out in the control tower as a scribe for the Clerk of the Course, David Floyd. Her job is to record every communication to the control tower from flag marshals and circuit personnel.

Scrutineering runs well in the new under-cover bays. There are a few minor problems with cars not complying with the regulations regarding roll bar padding and out-of-date fire extinguishers. It is a good idea for all competitors to check through their scrutineering sheet a day or two prior to the event to make sure they are completely ready.

**No surprises at the drivers' briefing.** The Alfa Club welcomed a large field of drivers from other clubs, which included BMW, Porsche and Maserati, with some drivers competing for the first time.

The meeting gets off to a flying start without a delayed Neil Choi, who had a problem with his towcar on the way down. After a lengthy wait for the RACV, he returned home to pick up another vehicle.

Dean Monik at last was able to debut his new car (not a Mazda!) and put in very impressive times. He was still faster than his dad, Ray! Paul Ledwith showed us all how to do it with a PB and, with the track conditions so perfect, it would seem that he was not alone.

Noel Heritage had his last run in the ever-faithful NA that he has shared with Robert Downes. Noel is preparing a NB8B for the Clubman class.

This meeting capped off a very exciting and satisfying year for me, with the only drawback being the recent absence of my sparring partner, Princey (Peter Phillips), who has not been able to compete since he retired his NB8A at the Winton 6-Hour. However, it was great to see him at the track with his new pride and joy, a silver NB8B. Princey, a senior ambulance officer, has had a busy start to the year, having put in many weeks in Morwell during the Hazelwood fires, moving house and getting his new car ready for competition.

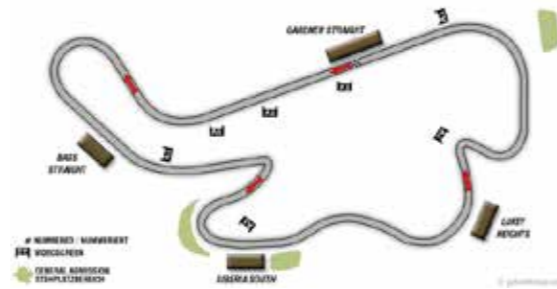
Both Noel and Princey will ensure that the Clubman trophy will be tightly contested in the 2014-15 competition. *Bring it on!*

**I came across some interesting facts** about motor racing at Phillip Island. The very first AGP was held annually on a road circuit near Cowes from 1927 to 1935. In 1951, two Cowes businessmen, wanting to restore motor racing at the Island, formed PIARC and managed to put a deposit down on the current site for a new circuit.

Membership grew quickly to 3,000 and with donations from Repco, Olympic Tyres and many others, the track opened in 1956. The circuit was designed by Melbourne engineer, Alan Brown, who based it on the Zandvoort circuit in Holland.

Despite having to build the track to public road requirements of wide-entry bends and tight exits (not ideal for racing) and cars having to run in a clockwise direction, on the day the track opened, competitors were instructed to drive anti-clockwise – a move that was intended from the word go!

**It is certainly a magnificent circuit and I love it!**



## 2013-14 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship | Round 10 - 5.4.14



### City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 10 Phillip Island - 5.4.14

Results - Round 9	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 2:04.6180	---	---
Standard NB	Peter Dannock » 2:07.1051	John Downes » 2:08.3312	---
Standard NC	Randy Stagno Navarra » 1:59.4284	---	---
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 2:04.2261	Leon Bogers » 2:05.7727	---
Modified	Ray Monik » 1:59.6387	Gary Prescott » 2:00.8915	Daniel White » 2:01.5480
Super Modified	Russell Garner » 1:55.0737	Robert Parr » 1:59.2008	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith » 1:51.9055**	Mark Fitzgerald » 1:58.2951	---
Open	Mike Kirby » 2:00.9571	---	---

\*\* New Club lap record

### Championship standings after Rd 10 - Phillip Island, 5 April, 2014

(corrected points)	1st	2nd	3rd
Overall Champion	Noel Heritage / Randy Stagno Navarra = 80	---	Paul Ledwith » 74
Standard NA	Noel Heritage » 80	Daryl Ervine » 21	---
Standard NB	Peter Dannock » 60	John Downes » 51	Leon Bogers » 37
Standard NC	Randy Stagno Navarra » 80	Alan Conrad » 52	Peter Marks » 21
Clubman	Max Lloyd » 68	Tim Emery » 51	Peter Phillips » 40
Modified	Gary Prescott » 56	Dean Monik / David Wilken = 40	---
Super Modified	Russell Garner » 80	Robert Parr » 21	---
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith » 77	Brendan Beavis » 44	Mark Fitzgerald » 7
Open	Mike Kirby » 46	David Bruce » 38	Mark Fitzgerald » 20

# What a weekend, and what a welcome!

Words: Ian Vague Photos: Neil Choi (AROCA), Jack Clayton

*I had the great fortune of attending the AROCA Circuit Training day at Winton on Saturday, 22 March, and the Sprints on Sunday, 23 March.*



*Ian in action at Winton*

**As one of the new kids, both at the circuit, and at the Sprints, I was more than a little nervous when my wife Janet and I arrived at Winton early on Saturday morning.**

I needn't have worried at all, because after registering for the training, I quickly identified Tim Emery, who came and scrutineered the car for me, then found out that Noel Heritage was to be my 'on-track' trainer for the day.

The initial theory session with Sam Gumina and the AROCA representative was a fantastic refresher of things that I had a vague knowledge of due to having participated in an advanced driving course some time ago. Both presenters were extremely easy to follow, and only too willing to answer any questions.

Then it was off to the track with Noel as instructor in the passenger seat. After a couple of laps to familiarise me with the track, and get the tyres and brakes up to something like their optimum temperature, Noel began to give me specific advice on the way to approach the short course corners and how to best navigate them.

The witches' hats made identifying the apex much easier, and I was soon going quick enough to have a couple of small "offs", which scared the hell out of Janet watching, but merely elicited "just a racing incident, keep going" from Noel.

The next theory session built nicely from the first one, with some very interesting information about deliberately driving outside the adhesion circle at times. It soon ended and it was back in the car with Noel, for another couple of sessions.

Noel showed an amazing amount of patience with an over-eager driver, whose competitive drive slightly exceeded his ability to take it all in, and he had obviously been discussing my 'progress' with his peers, as my only major "off" in the afternoon was met with: "Yes, I've won the bet!" (*The bet about where I would go off as I got quicker.*)

I left the circuit on Saturday with both Noel and Tim asking me to come along to the gathering at the North Eastern Hotel that evening. Unfortunately, I was so tired after all the concentration required trying to follow Noel's advice that I dozed back at the motel and missed it.

**But that was only the beginning!**

Up bright and early the next morning, Janet and I picked up some *McBreakfast* (because nothing else was open in Benalla) and headed back to the track.

We arrived there about 7.50am but, unlike the previous day, the gates were open and most of the pit bays were already taken. My first direct introduction into the motor sport "club" was that, as we slowly cruised past them, Noel recognised us and pointed out a saved bay near his and directed us into it.

I had completely lucked in, because my neighbours in the pit bays on either side included Daniel, Tim, Paul, Leon, and Noel and Robert. A bit further up was Allan, another NC2 driver we had met as interested spectators at Phillip Island in November, who greeted us with "Yes! Another NC – at long last!"

After registering, having the car scrutineered, getting my allocated number and my Dorian (timing device), it was time for the drivers' briefing, followed by the brief introduction of the Interstate Challenge for the MX-5s, against the NSW MX-5 Club.

I was in Group 4, so I had the opportunity to watch a couple of groups of Alfas and a few ring-ins and one group of mainly MX-5s before it was time to bring the car to the dummy grid.

With words of encouragement from Noel, Robert, Tim, et al ringing in my ears I hopped in and progressed to a spot towards the rear of the dummy grid. The first couple of laps were a blur with most of Noel's words of wisdom completely forgotten. After that I started to concentrate on getting specific corners right, following Noel's instructions (*gee, the corners look different without the cones at the apex!*). I think that I managed to get all of the corners right at least once during the day, but not the double right-hander at the end of the back straight on the long circuit extension and, worst of all, not the left-hand double-apex sweeper.

I can still remember Noel talking me through the left-hand sweeper, and vividly remember how good it felt the one or two times I actually got it right, and managed to slingshot towards the next apex and the first of the slow corners.

Noel's description of that corner "sorting the men from the boys" certainly rang true with me, and without him in the car on Sunday, I didn't have the nerve to drive it as it should be done, costing me a couple of seconds a lap. Next time I might just graduate from primary school!!!

I obviously have a lot to learn about how to make an MX-5 go fast around Winton. Thanks to Noel's advice and encouragement, I was certainly not the slowest MX-5 on the track. I know what I need to do to go quicker, especially at Winton. Now it is up to me.

Without doubt this was one of the best weekends I have ever

## Driver training and first-time competition at Winton



had. The warm welcome given to us on Sunday, by Noel especially, and Robert, Allan, Tim, Daniel and many, many others was much appreciated. The willingness of everyone to happily answer every dumb question and help out when asked was amazing.

Janet and I both came away from Winton feeling that we had made many new friends, and looking forward to future Sprint days. I can't commit to the entire Sprint series, and wasn't at Phillip Island in April, but July at Sandown looks like a date.

I truly hope that, as I get more comfortable in the car and learn the nuances of the various tracks, my times will improve. But regardless of that, the camaraderie I found with this new group of friends and – perhaps in time – competitors will certainly bring me back many, many times. It felt like being welcomed into a large family.

If you are tossing up whether or not to try motor sport, I highly recommend the AROCA/MX-5 circuit training, and especially the Sprint series. *Give it a go!!* ●



*Daniel White*



*The dummy grid*

### Trading Post



**For Sale** 2007 Brilliant Black NC \$22,800

For details of this and other items to buy, swap, sell and borrow, see the "Trading Post" section in the "Clubroom" section of the Club's website, [mx5vic.org.au](http://mx5vic.org.au)



### Burson automotive products at trade prices

Current financial Club members can now purchase automotive parts and accessories at trade prices from Burson Auto Parts stores.

Burson Auto Parts have generously extended their Club discount offer to all financial MX-5 Club members around Australia. Simply ask for your discount when you purchase, and present your current membership card. Quote account number 112558.

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast, offering a complete range of tools, spare parts and car care products.

Check out the range at [www.burson.com.au](http://www.burson.com.au)



### Club VIP retail discount

The Club has signed up as a member of the **Repco VIP Club**, which all financial MX-5 Club members are qualified to join.

To join, simply type this link into your browser:

<http://vip.repco.com.au/registration/register/1160>

and then enter your details.

You'll receive a temporary "VIP" card via e-mail, with a plastic barcoded card and key tag following within 14 days.

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(NB: only Peter Rutherford or Hayden Dally are authorised to give Club discounts in-store.)



# Travis McInnes

Assistant Chapter Captain, Eastern Victoria

**Name?** Travis McInnes

**Age?** 36

**Born?** Moe, Victoria

**Current abode?** Traralgon South

**Profession?** Mechanical Engineer

**Partner?** Jo McInnes

**Pets?** Remi the Golden Retriever

**Fave food?** Barbecue Shapes

**Can you cook?** Not much

**Favourite tippie?** Bulmers Original Cider – on tap of course

**First drive?** Land Cruiser Ute

**First car?** Mazda 1300

**First fender bender?** I reversed into my brother's car in our driveway – hung over and exhausted from partying too hard during O-week

**Everyday driver?** Red NA6, called "Mushu"

**How many MX-5s have you owned?** Two ... so far

**Current MX-5?** Mushu the red NA6 is for the daily drive and Club runs. I also have "Helga", a white NA6 (with orange shiny bits) that I use for sprint meetings with the Club

**MX-5 improvements?** Oh, so many over the years. My two current favourites are the Mania intake and Enkei J-Speeds fitted to Mushu

**MX-5 dislikes?** Scuttle shake – that's why I always fit the hard-top for exciting Club run drives

**Why an MX-5?** Price, suspension design superiority and the abundance of aftermarket options. I'm a tinkerer, and they are the perfect platform upon which to build a fast and fun racing car. They also look pretty nice, when fitted with the right bits

**Fluffy dice?** Nope

**Passions besides the MX-5?** Nordic Biathlon and anime cartoons

**Favourite TV show / movie / book?** Initial D / The Matrix / MOTOR Magazine

**Dream wheels (money no object)?** Porsche Cayman S

**Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong?** Nope

**Favourite other Mazda?** The Series 7 RX-7 is a personal favourite

**If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what?** Honda S2000

**How long in the Club?** 7 years

**How many MX-5 Club runs or track events?** Nine sprint meetings and eight-odd Club runs

**Favourite Club run/track?** Broadford in July 2012 was sensational. The car ran flawlessly and I pushed super-hard. I even banked some good times. Such an

## The MX-5 Club Grill



exciting track, perfectly suited to the handling prowess of the MX-5

**Have you been to DECA or NatMeet?**

Nope, but I did a gravel hillclimb with the Maffra & District Car Club – they were shocked to see a "sports car" out there in the dirt! Most of the cars would have fetched less than \$500, but some of the kids behind the wheel were bloody quick!

**Ford vs Holden?** Holden! I raced a Gemini in the Victorian Rally Championship in 2005 ... and Fords are rubbish!

**What's playing in your MX-5?** The aforementioned Mania intake at full throttle. When I'm not on the gas, Kingswood's new EP, "Change Of Heart"

**Footy team (AFL / NRL / A-League)?** Yawn ...

**Final comments?** Our first child has just arrived, but we have no plans to sell either Mushu or Helga. I'm pretty sure I can shoe-horn a baby seat into Mushu for nice slow Sunday drives!

## Best in Show!

Words & photo: Cary Warren, Club Captain – Social



On a brisk March Sunday morning 12 MX-5 Club members from various chapters ventured to the world famous Flemington Race Course ... not to see world class thoroughbreds run around the track, but to see great steeds of machinery.

It was the famous RACV Classic Car Show of 2014 and, for the first time in its history, Japanese cars and their clubs were invited to participate.

More than 1000 classic and vintage cars were on display – a show record! Although we only represented a small portion of the cars on show, we hit the general public and other car clubs with a great punch!

Once the cloud burnt off to reveal bluebird skies, our MX-5s shone in all their gleaming glory as we added the last polish and finishing touches. We had all models represented from stock-standard to sports modified – NAs, NBs and one sleek NC.

Positioned alongside our cousins, the Mazda RX-7 Club of Victoria, we had a constant flow of visitors admiring our cars. This gave us a great opportunity to

promote the Club and all it offers. Don Nicoll, our President, was interviewed in a live broadcast across the show boundaries.

Unknown to us, throughout the day judges inspected all the cars on display, looking for various traits – originality (including paintwork), age and condition. I was very fortunate to take the award for the "Best Japanese Open Sports Car" with my Classic Red 1990 NA.

I would like to thank all the members and their partners who participated on the day, promoting our great Club and cars with such great enthusiasm, a job made easy ...

I look forward to joining them and more of you out there again for next year's show!

Zoom Zoom ●



Helga at Phillip Island



Jo and Remi in Mushu

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Many of our members not only enjoy a day out driving their MX-5 – they also like to record that day for posterity.

With the Club calling for members to submit photographs for the 2015 calendar it might be timely to have a look at photography and how you get that best shot. Naturally which camera you decide to use (or buy) will depend on your intended use and budget; however, this *basic* guide may help you avoid many of the pitfalls.

To understand fully how to take great photos you have to first understand what photos are. The word *photography* comes from the Greek – *photos* and *graphos*, literally translating to *light writing*. When you action the shutter you capture light which, depending on the intensity and frequency, creates an image on your film (or digital sensor), it is all about the light!

### Megapixels

This is the biggest con of the digital age. If you listen to the advertising hype they will attempt to convince you that a 10MP camera will take a photograph with double the quality of a 5MP camera ... but nothing could be further than the truth. What the megapixel count tells you is how large the resulting file will be, not the quality of the image. In the real world most people will not have any need for more than 6MP ... unless you intend doing some very serious cropping.

Camera resolution (megapixels)	Image size (pixels)	High-quality prints (inches)	Acceptable quality prints (in)	Screen or internet viewing
6	3000 x 2000	11.7 x 16.5 (A3)		High quality
5	2592 x 1944	10 x 13	13 x 19	High quality
4	2272 x 1704	9 x 12	12 x 16	High quality
3	2048 x 1536	8 x 10	10 x 13	High quality
2	1600 x 1200	Nil	8 x 10	High quality

A very good example of the *megapixel BS* is to look at the Nikon D4 professional camera which retails (without a lens) for around \$7000 and *ONLY* has 16.2 megapixels. If a pro can produce great images with a D4 then why would an amateur need 24.2 megapixels (D3200)? The simple answer is "they don't"; the key to the quality of image produced by the D4 is not its resolution but its sensor size (36.00 x 23.90mm), as explained below.

So why do camera manufacturers keep bringing out cameras with more and more megapixels? The answer is simple: *so you will fork out for the new model camera which is basically exactly the same as the camera you now own (and will do exactly the same job)*. In fact often, by adding more megapixels to a sensor (in particular micro sensors), you *reduce* the quality of the image due to decreased sensitivity and increased "noise" because the amount of light collected by these smaller pixels is less (remember, it's all about the light). This is why you often see cameras on E-bay with 4 zillion megapixels for only \$10 ... *avoid them like the plague!*

### Sensors

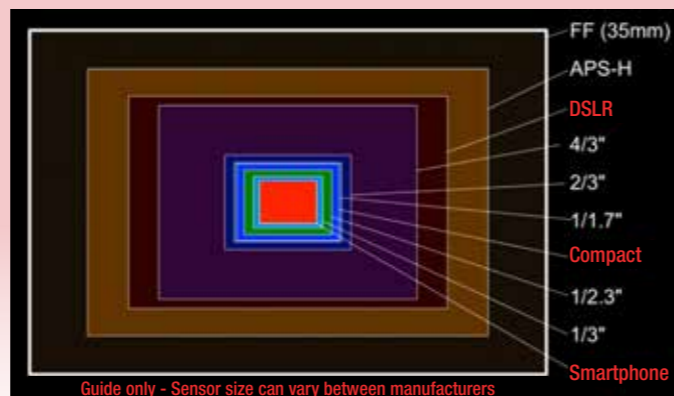
Far more important than the megapixel count is the size and quality of the camera's sensor. *This is where so-called smart phones just don't make the grade*. Sensors are made up of a grid of "photosites" – and the quality and size of the photosites is the

key to taking good clean photos.

When you compare the data of a smart phone and a digital single-lens reflex camera (DSLR), it quickly becomes abundantly clear which is going to collect the most light and therefore produce the better image, even though they have the same claimed pixel count (resolution). A 6MP 1/2.5 inch sensor in a smart phone has photosites with a surface area of 2.045 x 2.045 microns. When you compare that to a 6MP DSLR camera with photosites 7.880 x 7.880 microns, it's obvious which is the one to use.



As you can see from the chart below, a smart phone sensor – or even the sensor in a compact camera – is minute compared with the sensor in a DSLR. The *Samsung Galaxy SII* (smart phone) has a sensor 4.54 x 3.42mm, the *Lumix DMC FH1* (compact) is 6.08 x 4.56mm compared with the *Nikon D7000* (DSLR) at 23.60 x 15.80mm. Clearly, in a situation where size does matter, the DSLR with its larger sensor (and photosites for a given resolution) will produce a much clearer, more detailed image.



### Lenses

The other important thing to consider is the lens. This is again where the smart phone struggles: tiny lens + tiny sensor = very little light captured (in comparison with a dedicated camera).

Another trap for the unwary is so-called digital zoom; this is just another advertising gimmick designed to impress those who don't know what it means. With a traditional *optical zoom*, the lens moves in and out to magnify the image (much like a telescope or binoculars). With *digital zoom*, which is often advertised at a massive 40X, all that happens is the camera uses software to take your photo and blow it up to 40 times its actual size. This is no different from you doing exactly the same thing in Photoshop or some other photo editing software ... the result, as you can imagine, is *atrocious*.

Lenses come in a wide range of prices from budget to "OMG how much?". As with a helmet, always buy the best quality "glass" you can afford – it will be well worth it in the long run. ●

Next month: Smart phone / Compact / DSLR comparison

## A new option for the MX-5 owner

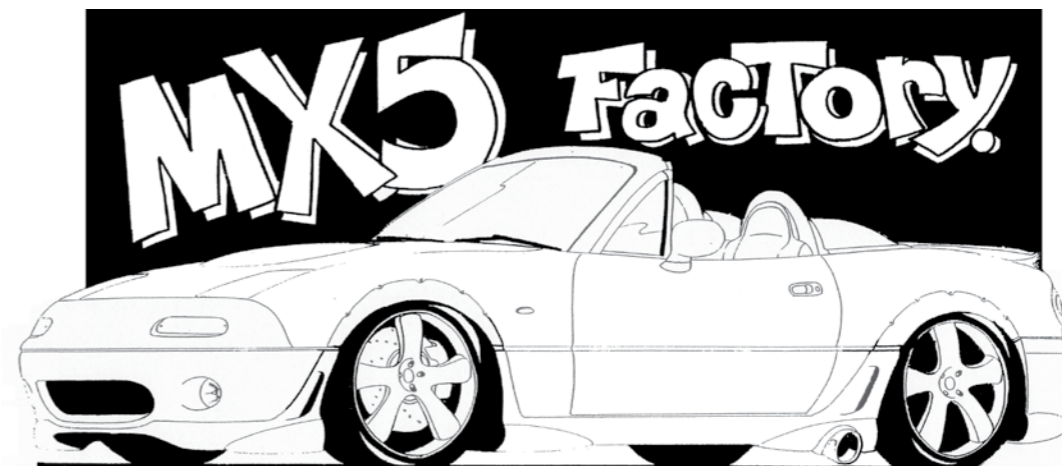
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# THE ALL-NEW MAZDA3 HAS ARRIVED AT CITY MAZDA

City Mazda is thrilled to welcome the highly-anticipated All-New Mazda3 onto our showroom floor. Experience the next great drive by booking an All-New Mazda3 test drive at City Mazda and see for yourself what all the fuss is about. The All-New Mazda3. City Mazda's Next Great Drive.

## ASK ABOUT OUR QUICK-SMART MAZDA SERVICE GENUINE MAZDA SERVICE WHILE YOU WAIT

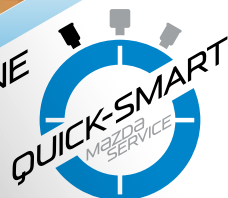
Quick-Smart Mazda Service fits car servicing into your schedule better than ever. Our technicians work to have your vehicle in top condition and you back behind the wheel within the hour.

Quick-Smart Mazda Service, applies to most scheduled services, so next time you book a service, why not give it a try?

**FREE COURTESY BUS TO CBD AVAILABLE, OR  
HELP YOURSELF TO ONE OF OUR COURTESY BIKES!**



BOOK ONLINE



\*Conditions apply. Limited to 1,000km, 10,000km, 20,000km, 30,000km Scheduled Mazda Book Services. Additional repairs required above service are limited to minor items such as wiper blades and globe replacement.

# CITY MAZDA

VICTORIA'S LARGEST UNDERCOVER MAZDA SHOWROOM

14-28 Montague St, South Melbourne | **03 9329 2000**

www.citymazda.com.au |  www.facebook.com/CityMazda