

mxtra

12/2015
mx5vic.org.au



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



**Merry
Christmas,
everyone!**

Thanks Don!



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MX-5 Club
of Victoria

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12/2015



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image:

Outgoing president Don Nicoll receives the Club's thanks for his outstanding service during his 3½ years at the helm.

Photo: Geoff Roche



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

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Don's Drive(l) ...

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



Welcome to our last edition for the year.

As I hinted last month, I stepped down as President at our November Committee meeting. We went through the normal process of declaring the position vacant and asking for nominees. Will Campbell proposed Peter Dannock who accepted and, in the absence of any counter bids, was unanimously endorsed. Very quick and clean. My best wishes go with Peter; after his years on the Committee as the Club Secretary, I'm sure he will do a great job.

It was decided to leave the Secretary role open for a vote at the December meeting as Bruce, Ben, Alex and Randy were not present at this meeting; Bruce on holidays again, Ben and Alex in NZ and Randy with wedding anniversary commitments (nice to see Randy put Andrea before the Club).

I have to say I've really enjoyed the last three and a half years as President. There have been times when I've scratched my head and wondered what I was doing but those moments have been few and far between. It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to lead the Committee. I'm a great believer in the statement that good leaders usually have great support from their Committee and that has certainly applied to me. So my thanks go to the Committee together with the wish that you continue to support Peter in the same way, as I am sure you will.

At the November meeting we signed off on the majority of the 2015-18 business plan, so a three-year plan rather than the five-year plan I wrote about last month. The plan concentrates on several areas of Club activities which I will try to summarise as follows.

Administration / Management

- » find a permanent home for the Club, or at least a storage place for Club assets;
- » develop a longevity plan for Committee and Chapter positions;
- » continue to improve our budgeting skills to better plan where we invest;
- » review alternatives for the terms Chapter and Chapter Captain (there

have been comments we sound like a bunch of bikies!).

Social

- » integrate on-line bookings and payments into the planned membership platform in the Club website;
- » identify methods (events, communications) for engaging our young members;
- » regular driving training programs for ALL members (eg, the Tasmanian approach).

Motor sport

- » foster more interaction between social and motor sport members in motor sport activities;
- » plan to run the Club's own track days;
- » purchase a motor sport trailer to carry spares at track events;
- » consider the formation of a motor sport chapter (or whatever we call chapters in future).

Membership

- » identify and move to a new membership database platform integrated with our website;
- » revisit Club surveys to better understand the reasons people join and remain in the Club;
- » ensure we are encouraging ALL age groups to join and stay as members.

Merchandise

We left finalising this until December as we need Bruce to clarify a couple of points.

Communications

- » despite protestations from Murray that he really liked the workload we felt we needed a support for the magazine. Yours truly volunteered to resume my previous VP role of gathering content (something I can do in Tasmania just as easily as here);
- » we need to work out what advertising on our website is really worth and set prices accordingly;
- » establish a business directory for current members;
- » Facebook: review and identify how we

For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

December

- 13 NE Vic: Christmas run
- 13 Eastern: Gippsland run
- 13 NTas: Christmas picnic
- 19 STas: Christmas get-together
- 20 Western: Christmas run
- 30 Central: Murray's unplanned run

January 2016

- 9 Central: Twilight run
- 24 NEV: Bogong Village/Wallace Hut
- 26 Western: Australia Day run
- 31 Central: Mornington Peninsula run

can use it better;

- » review the website virtual clubroom concept and implement outcome.

For the Chapters we felt there is a need to encourage the more social side to runs. Some Chapters do this really well but we think others may benefit from a similar approach at least on some runs. We sometimes struggle getting people to volunteer to write reports. There have been several tricks employed (not least by Bob de Bont recently on a Central Chapter run) but we need to think a little more creatively to attract volunteers. We also think there is an opportunity to review old runs stored on the website to save members feeling they have to continually invent new runs.

That's about it folks, save to thank you again for your support while I've been on the Committee and to wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year. Looking forward to joining the Southern Tasmanian Chapter.

Must go – the driver's seat is getting cold!

So, for my final time – remember ...

Safety *fast* first!

Don



Scene about

■ Photos: Geoff Roche, Karen Bradshaw, John Waldock, Ron & Marg Gillick, Alan Laine, Jenna Perks





Membership

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

Current
membership count:

600

and growing!

G'day again!

600 up! I extend a hearty welcome to the following newcomers:

Central Chapter

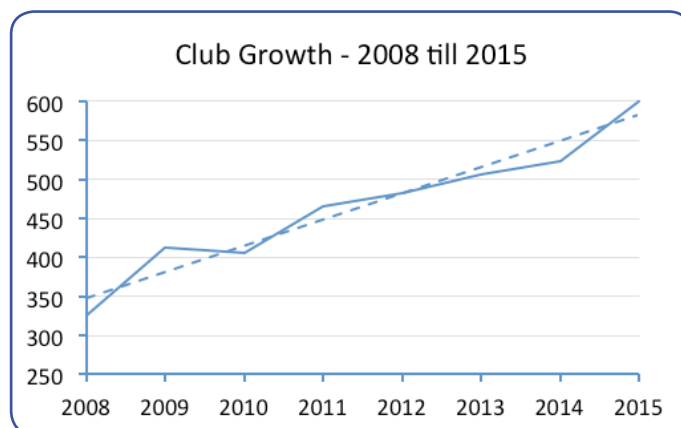
Richard and Lorraine Acfield	2005 Velocity Red NC
David Evans	1991 White NA
Fynn Groves	1999 Blue NB
Meriden James	1989 Classic Red NA
Jack Oxtoby	2000 Blue NB
Andrew Philpott	2003 Burgundy NB
Glenn Wainrib	2015 Ceramic ND

Western Victoria Chapter

Geoff Molloy	1990 Neo Green NA
--------------	-------------------

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

Those of you who regularly read this report will be aware that I like graphs. This month's effort shows the growth of our Club over the last eight years. With a small glitch in 2010, numbers have steadily increased with almost a doubling in the time displayed. A good effort!



Enjoy your MX-5 and I'll see you out and about ...

Will

First gong!

2015-16 JAHFA Car of the Year



The fourth-generation MX-5 ND has collected its first major prize – being named the 2015-2016 Car of the Year by the Japan Automotive Hall of Fame (JAHFA).

JAHFA's judges praised the all-new MX-5 for its sophisticated open-top sports car design and advanced *Skyactiv* technology. They also noted the outstanding driving performance and fuel efficiency the model exhibits thanks to its lightweight yet highly rigid body.

"Our Roadster represents everything we stand for in terms of our car-making philosophy, so we are delighted to have that recognised," said Masamichi Kogai, President and CEO of Mazda. "Mazda will continue to build cars that brighten people's lives. We aim to become a 'one-and-only' brand for our customers, a brand they will choose again and again." ■

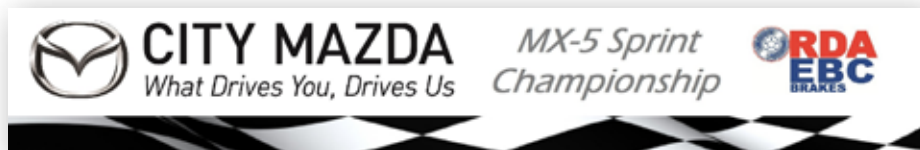


Track Torque

■ Tim Emery – Club Captain - Motor Sport captain@mx5vic.org.au



City Mazda MX5 Sprint Championship – Round 9: The Final Round



To top off a year of 15 events, over two Championship seasons, plus an Interstate Challenge and record breaking result at the Winton 10 Hour a slightly reduced field made the journey to Broadford for the last round of the 2014-15 Sprint Championship season. With the results of some classes already decided, and only being a few weeks after the 10 Hour, although numbers were down Broadford is always a fun track to compete at.

A number of classes were going to go down to the wire, including a 'point-by-point' battle between Gavin Newman and Tim Meaden in Modified Class. Check out the report on page 32 for all the action.

Two Tassie Tracks in Two Days – 13-14 February

Hopefully you have all put the date in your calendar for the Tassie Track days ahead of NatMeet in Tasmania in February. We'll have Saturday at Symmons Plains Raceway near Launceston, and Sunday at Baskerville Raceway near Hobart.

Entry forms / Sup. Regs. are now available and most of the Motor Sport Team will have received an email with all the details. Make sure you get in early and take the opportunity to drive at one or both of these two famous tracks.

Please contact me if you want more information.

2016 – Another Big Year of MX-5 Motor Sport

We have now finalised our dates for the 2016 MX-5 Sprint Championship rounds. As per last season to enable a mix of tracks across the year we will be sharing events with both AROCA and WRX Club in 2016.

A new inclusion for this year will be the Round 8 Winton event that we will share with the NSW MX-5 Club. This has come about

by the NSW Club having limited access to book NSW circuits for their own Championship and deciding to include Winton in their calendar. This will be a great chance to 'share' an event with the NSW Club and we will be planning some new driver training elements to be included in the day to encourage some track day first timers – should be a great event!

2016 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship

Round 1:	Phillip Island	30 Jan.	(WRX)
Round 2:	Broadford	28 Feb.	(AROCA)
Round 3:	Sandown	30 April	(WRX)
Round 4:	Sandown	7 May	(AROCA)
Round 5:	Winton	12 June	(AROCA)
Round 6:	Phillip Island	2 July	(AROCA)
Round 7:	Sandown	3 Sept.	(AROCA)
Round 8:	Winton	26 Nov.	(AROCA)
Round 9:	Phillip Island	11 Dec.	(AROCA)

Tim

"The older I get, the better I was!"

Trading Post



For Sale 2000 Heritage Edition NB ...

For details of this and other items to buy, swap, sell or borrow, see the "Trading Post" section in the "Clubroom" section of the Club's website, mx5vic.org.au



Car care products – member discounts

Waxit Car Care in Tullamarine is offering Club members 12.5% off all products (excluding already-discounted kits and the following brands/products: Polishangel, Vikan, Flex and Concours 900 Polisher).

Check out the Waxit range and order online at www.waxit.com.au. Our Club coupon code is **mx5club**.

Please add your Club membership number to the "comments" section of your order.



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Renovo offers all Mazda MX-5 Club members a 10% discount on all their products.

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My favourite MX-5 road ...

■ Words & photos: Lisa Gershwin, Southern Tasmania Chapter

Hobart to Swansea

Sometimes I swear the MX-5 was made especially for Tasmania.

Mmmm ... the mountainous S-curves, ocean drives, country roads ... never easy to choose. But one of my favourites is Hobart to Swansea.

About half way along, if you blink you'd miss the town of Buckland. But do stop. On the right is the old church. Go ahead and let yourself in, the door is always unlocked. Then look to the left and behold a stained glass window from the 14th century, imported here in the 19th century. And the graveyard out back gives a chilling feel for the tragedies of nineteenth century Tasmania.

Leaving Buckland, the road meanders along a stunningly beautiful river canyon, then north along the east coast. Just a few clicks before Swansea don't miss Spiky Bridge on the left. The reason for the spikes is mysterious, but they stand as a whimsical glimpse of Tasmania's convict history. ●



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 and share it around!

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John Hayhurst

The MX-5 Club Grill

Central Chapter

Name? John Hayhurst

Age? 61

Born? Warragul

Current abode? Mulgrave

Profession? Telecomms. Engineer

Partner? Wife – Annette

Pets? Not at the moment (though some Possums think they are!)

Fave food? Greek, Asian, Australian

Can you cook? Enough to survive

Favourite tippie? Bourban & Coke

First drive? The farm Land Rover, almost indestructible

First car? FE Holden

First fender bender?

Hit in the rear end while stationary on the Princes Hwy, Officer – caused major damage

Everyday driver?

Hyundai i35 – company car

How many MX-5s have you owned?

Just the one ... no need to change!

Current MX-5? 2002 Classic Red NB

MX-5 improvements? Nothing to improve, just a bit of chrome trim here and there

MX-5 dislikes? None, just gets dirty on the runs and attracts stone chips

Why an MX-5? An affordable, great-looking modern classic-style convertible sports car that is fun to drive

Fluffy dice? No, just wouldn't suit

Passions besides the MX-5?

Family, music, classic and sports cars, AFL, travel

Favourite TV show / movie / book? Grand Designs / Just about any Robert De Niro movie. Midnight Express

Dream wheels (money no object)?

(Classic) 1960 Corvette convertible. (Modern) Aston Martin

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong?

Only if there was nothing else left and I couldn't walk

Favourite other Mazda? BT50

If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what? Toyota 86

How long in the Club? 5 years

How many MX-5 Club runs or track events?

51 runs and haven't had a bad one yet

Favourite Club run/track?

Kinglake to Healesville – best roller coaster ride ever

Funniest thing seen at a Club event?

My passenger trying to tell me, when it's raining, the top probably should be up

Have you been to DECA or NatMeet? DECA



Ford vs Holden? Holden – HQ SS a favourite

What's playing in your MX-5? 60s, 70s & 80s music

Favourite holiday destination? Torquay – has it all

Footy team (AFL / NRL / A-League)? Western Bulldogs – still waiting to see a premiership win

Final comments? This is a great club to belong to – very well run and the members are all a friendly group. From my first run I couldn't believe how many other people wanted to do what I enjoyed in a car the same as mine. Let's keep the passion alive. ●

Chapter chatter ...

3.11.15 | Western Victoria ■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organisers: Karen & Ian Bradshaw



Melbourne Cup Day ...

Well, if you weren't into the race that stops a nation then you should have been at the Ballarat Festival of Motoring at the Museum of Australian Democracy and Eureka (MADE).

But before we got to MADE, Ian and I detoured to Ballarat City Mazda to pick up a new ND that was on loan to us for the day – to show off at MADE.

I got a real hoot driving it across Ballarat, thoroughly enjoyed zipping and zooming across town. Luckily Jeff Woolf was there early to save us a spot so that we got to park all four cars together. We had Jeff's NB, our NB, the Everetts' NC and of course the ND.

We registered the cars for the day's competition for a bit of fun. There was a wide selection of cars for the judges to peruse – an assortment of Ford, Holden, Toyota, Mazda, Volkswagen to name a few – all of varying ages and models. Of course they were all polished to within an inch of their life and were obviously very cherished by their owners.

The judges had a massive job to do, visiting the ND and other cars several times. With the four MX-5s parked together, they drew quite a few spectators and a lot of comparing was done between the cars with boots, doors and bonnets all opened and shut many times for inspections.

At 3pm those of us who had “cup withdrawal” symptoms made our way into the theatre inside MADE to watch the Melbourne Cup. With that done and dusted for another year, it was time for the presentations, we were asked to move the ND into the presentation area – a good sign that perhaps we had won something.

We waited with anticipation through the major winners, then it was announced that the MX-5 Club had won *Best Presented Club** and that the ND was the *Best Presented MX-5* ... not bad for a borrowed car!

We would like to thank Lucas from **Ballarat City Mazda** for the loan of the ND for the day; we enjoyed promoting it. Also thank you to John Emery for inviting us along to such a fabulous day to celebrate motoring. ●

** Sound familiar? This award follows the Motor Sport Team's “Best Presented Club” award at last month's Winton 10 Hour.*

^ Karen is the envy of Ian, Jeff and Alan in the Ballarat Mazda ND
Inset: Looks like it's straight off the showroom floor! Oh, wait ...





29.11.15 | Western Victoria ■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organiser: Jeff Woolf



It was 29 November and Springfest had rocked around quickly – time for us to gather at Lake Wendouree, Ballarat, to show off our MX-5s and socialise for a few hours.



As our Chapter Captain was confined to farm duties and was restricted by a strained hammy, it was my job to take the MX for a quick zoom zoom to Ballarat. I arrived at 10.10am to join organiser Jeff Woolf, the Gleasons, Gwenda Parkinson, Chris Van Velzen, new member Geoff Molly and Brian Taylor.

The ND didn't make its promised appearance but we still had eight gleaming little cars all lined up ready to be scrutinised by the passersby. The weather was a little cool when the sun disappeared and there was a slight breeze blowing off the lake BUT it was a big improvement on last year!



We were joined for a short while by Lawrie Hocking who had a day pass from the hospital. There was lots of chit chat as we caught up on what everyone had been up since we saw them last. Then we took it in turns to wander along the lake to check out all the food, produce craft stalls and of course the Shannons big show and shine – all sorts of cars on display – a real liquorice allsorts display.

It was just after 4pm when the crowd had thinned out and stall holders were packing up that we decided to call it a day and go home. Another great day had by all. ●



Chapter chatter ...



Old Friends, New Friends

Standing in the Westfield carpark at Airport West on Sunday morning waiting for the sun to rid us of the morning chill, we knew it was going to be another special run as today was the Club's sixth run to Strath Creek/Reedy Creek in support of the CFA who were deeply affected after the horrific bushfires of 2009.

With 23 MX-5s and one Mazda3, new members and old, Don, our Club president gave us our instructions for one last time before he leaves us for a life in Hobart.

As everyone took their place in the colourful convoy we headed out onto Melrose Drive, under the freeway, past the airport and on to Mickleham Rd. The traffic thinned out and we felt the rush of the wind as we picked up our speed on the Hume Highway through Craigieburn.

Leaving the Hume for the B75 towards Kilmore and Echuca we hit a few straight stretches and sweeping bends with just the odd car and horse float to navigate around as we passed through Wallan and into Romsey. We then discovered why the roads were quiet, everyone was at the Romsey reserve for the towns 2015 Swap Meet Car & Motorcycle Show. That suited us just perfect as we motored along the scenic straight stretch from Romsey to Lancefield.

Our colourful convoy arrived into the main street of Lancefield and a few of us reminisced about our memories of the old bakery with the wood fired oven while others fuelled up on fresh coffee and treats from the local bakery and café. Walking down the main street of Lancefield you could easily think you're walking back in time with the old worldly charm of the surrounding buildings. It was a pretty leisurely stop and we got the chance to move around and chat, something we all love to do and do so well. We discovered before leaving on the next part of our run that we lost Cary's NA due to overheating back on the Donnybrook Road, but more about that later.

Heading north out of Lancefield we had the open road to ourselves and the stunning scenery along the Pyalong Road with the natural rock formations that cover the surrounding hills. I found myself staring in wonder at just how some of those rocks manage to balance so precariously on top of each other. We had

some great road to give our cars the ride they love, straight road, some wide sweeping bends, rolling hills and the beautiful bush countryside. Yep all with the wind rushing though us and the warmth of the sun to add the extra sprinkle of delight to the drive.

Turning off the Pyalong Road and briefly on to the Northern Highway we turned into West Road, a scenic road that again is a perfect playground to let our little motors strut their stuff and we swept around bends and along the straights. With perfect blue skies and the awe inspiring backdrop of the Great Dividing Range we arrived into Broadford before our final run to Strath Creek.

After the wide bends, the hills and straight stretches that had got us to Broadford we were ready for the nice little run of twisties to get us to Strath Creek, and with such an awesome run so far the majority of us were itching to give it a little coming down the 4km stretch from the Murchison Gap to our final destination. What we didn't expect was a little black Toyota Yaris that was putting along at a snails pace, oblivious to the line of cars building up behind them and ready to roar. Surely they'd pull over, we thought – they had plenty of time and opportunity – but unfortunately, no. A touch of an anti-climax, not for us but for the cars of course ☹. However, it didn't dampen our day or our arrival at the Strath Creek CFA.

Waiting to greet us with smiles on their faces were the men and women of the Strath Creek-Reedy Creek CFA ... and Tom the dog. Standing around talking about the highlights of the run, we settled under the shade of the picnic area and enjoyed a much-needed lunch and some great conversations while the Strath Creek-Reedy Creek CFA sparked up the barbie.

Once our bellies were filled and we'd passed around the CFA Captain's hat we gathered around the 2400 litre fire tanker in



8.11.15 | Central ■ Words: Dianne Lindner ■ Photos: Dennis Barry, Alan Bennett ■ Organiser: Don Nicoll



... and Farewells

^ President Don presents the Club's donation to CFA Brigade Captain Gavin



^ 43 beans of coolant!



^ Don receives his well-earned recognition



^ A bush BBQ... does it get any better?

front of the smart double-fronted CFA station and listened to Don tell us about how we came to be where we were right now.

At the time of the 2009 bushfires I was living overseas and could only imagine what terrors people suffered. I know many communities suffered terrible, terrible losses and communities have slowly had to rebuild their lives and their towns.

The MX-5 Club are not only a great bunch of people but how wonderful to be part of the rebuilding of the Strath and Reedy Creek CFA over the past six years with this fantastic annual Club run. With a donation of \$300 from the MX-5 Club and the donations from everyone today on the drive, I'm happy to say that we have handed over \$608 to continue to help this community of CFA firefighters and volunteers keep our state safe. Gavin, the CFA Captain, told us this most welcomed donation will be used to build a new area to house recently-acquired breathing equipment.

We also bade a farewell to Don Nicoll, our Club president for over the last three years, who was presented with a wonderful red MX-5 mounted trophy in recognition of his service to the Club. I'm sure I speak for everyone else in wishing Don all the very best for his future in Hobart.

With lunch and the formalities completed there was only one thing left to do before the drive home. Eat cake! The CFA had put on the most wonderful afternoon tea for us.

Thank you Don for organising a fantastic day and a special thank you to our friends at Strath Creek-Reedy Creek CFA for your wonderful hospitality. See you next year. ●

□ **Just a footnote about Cary's NA:** a few cars had stopped to offer assistance, but Cary and his dad, Colin (a retired mechanic), assured all they would be OK so everyone continued on.

Needing to top up the radiator and not having any water, Colin suggested they use their thermos of coffee (yes, coffee) to top up the radiator, and this was sufficient to get them to the nearest water supply. To be on the safe side they phoned the RACV who got them home safely. *We just hope the NA doesn't develop a caffeine addiction!*

□ **Another footnote:** we were saddened to hear that, just days after our visit, the Brigade was involved in an forlorn effort to save the Strath Creek general store from fire. Fortunately, no-one was hurt.

Chapter chatter ...

8.11.15 | **Southern Tasmania** ■ Words: Mike Williams ■ Photos: John Waldock ■ Organisers: Liz & Mike Williams



A couple of years ago some old Alvis friends of ours, Chester and Sally McKaige, wisely decided to forsake the wastelands of Bentleigh East for the delights of the Tasmania countryside.



In spite of numerous predictions of doom and a long search for a suitable abode, they finally moved a couple of years ago to the small village of Carrick just outside Launceston. One of their many claims to fame is the ownership of a fascinating and eclectic collection of motor vehicles and associated paraphernalia and it was with the intent of viewing same that eight cars headed north from Hobart on a typically lovely Tasmanian day. We had initially planned the visit for 12 months earlier but a serious health hiccup for Chester required a delay.

The McKaiges live in Carrick House, a very attractive 1840 stone home set in a couple of acres of garden on the edge of the village and to which Chester and Sally have added a large garage and

workshop as well as significant bathroom renovations and giving the garden a surge of love.

Chester's collection is something to behold, and includes:

- » **1905 single-cylinder Darraq** named Josephine – the same model as that made famous by the 1950s British movie *Genevieve* starring Kenneth More and Kay Kendall.
- » **1907 six-cylinder Napier** that had been converted to a half-track on a farm and Chester has subsequently rebuilt it. It is presently in Melbourne having a new racing body built for it.
- » **1923 12/40 Alvis** converted to 12/50 specifications by the addition of an overhead valve head and front brakes. It has a beautiful polished aluminium ducksback body, external exhaust, and it goes like a rocket!
- » **1927 Delage DM** six-cylinder that was very recently fitted with a new, magnificent, and suitably flamboyant dark blue boat-tailed body with superb varnished timber decking. This car is presently being given its final fettling prior to taking to the roads.





- » **1920-something 3-litre Bentley.** In Chester's family since 1947, this car was originally fitted with a Van den Plas four-seat touring body that was replaced following a minor catastrophe with a locally-built body of similar style but of fully metal construction. The VdP bodies typically used the Weyman style with stretched fabric over a timber former.
- » **1936 Speed 20 Alvis saloon** bodied by Charlesworth and, as usual, in lovely condition. A very attractive and practical grand touring car powered by a 3.5L six with triple carburettors and a four-speed, all-synchro gearbox. These boxes were originally fitted to Speed 20s and were the first all-synchro boxes in commercial production. They were said to cost about the same as a contemporary Austin 10.
- » **c. 1951 hillclimb special** – built by an employee of the Government Aircraft Factory for the 500cc class, this fascinating vehicle is front-wheel drive, the first racing car in Australia with disc brakes (using the same technology as that employed on the Winjeel trainer built by the GAF), and

a 500cc Matchless motorbike engine in a tiny machine. It apparently competed in the 1952 AGP meeting at Albert Park where it broke a valve.

- » **1952 side-valve "high light" Morris Minor.** The car was passed to Chester from his godfather and is anything but your mother's MM. It is fitted with a Coventry Climax motor and is reputed to go like stink.
- » A recently acquired **MGA 1500** in obligatory red and in nice order.

On top of this lot, he has a couple of Edwardian Rudge belt-drive motor bikes, a '50s Solex step-through, a miniature ride-on steam engine, a collection of horns and a vast array of motoring books.

After perusing the collection and asking numerous informed and un-informed questions, we adjourned to his BBQ where he'd kindly provided salad and meat on top of the coffee and fruit-cake (and this in the absence of Sally who was visiting the UK) we'd imbibed while admiring the collection. We returned to Hobart independently with some deciding to take the longer but delightful route via Longford, Poatina and Bothwell, a drive not to be missed ●



It's all in the detail(ing) ...

14.11.15 | Club ■ Words: Abby Singh ■ Photos: Alan Bennett, Bob de Bont ■ Organiser: Bob de Bont

The moment I saw the invitation for the Club Detailing Day, I knew that I had to go. More than me, it was my "X" (MX-5) who was craving for the much needed love from me and I didn't want to disappoint her.

So there I was, ready to go and learn some basic lessons to make her feel loved.

Well, I reached our meeting point at Macca's parking in Keilor Park just in time. I was really delighted to see an enthusiastic lot of 13 people having their morning coffee. Sharp at 9.30, Randy guided us to former Club committeeman and **mxtra** producer, Steve Woolmer's workshop, **Sanmer Detailing**.

Steve was really generous, and at the beginning made it clear that he was not going to promote any of his products and would really focus only on sharing his experience and expertise. He wanted us to gain as much knowledge as possible. He mentioned that he is a teacher and wanted his students not only to listen but also to get their hands dirty while learning.

Steve showed us two most popular techniques of car washing: the *two-bucket technique* and *Garry Dean's method*. Though he did not recommend Gary Dean's method, he showed us both. For both the techniques he wanted us to include areas we often ignore while washing the car, such as wheels, fuel cap, window trim, the gap in the soft-top joint, and the often-forgotten boot chamber. He recommended "Super Degreaser" for these areas, where dirt and grime are easily accumulated ... and

easily overlooked. He advised using a soft paintbrush to rub off the stains and the wash them immediately.

Two-Bucket method

Items we need:

A hose or pressure washer (it is not mandatory to have a pressure washer), a soft wash mitt – preferably microfibre, few soft drying microfibre cloths, two buckets, and a car wash liquid (Multipurpose Cleaner), which he buys from Aldi.

Directions:

Add two capsful of your Multipurpose Cleaner to your first bucket. Take the second bucket and fill it with clean fresh water to rinse your mitt. Then thoroughly rinse off your car to remove any loose dirt and dust, starting from the top and working to the bottom.

Dunk your soft microfibre wash mitt in the cleaner solution from the first bucket, and squeeze it out over the section of the car you are going to wash. Lightly wash over this section, applying no pressure to the surface, then put your mitt straight into the second bucket to rinse out any dirt collected from the car.

Next re-load your mitt with cleaning solution from the first bucket and wet the next area of the car. Again lightly

wash over this area with the mitt, then go straight back in the second bucket to rinse.

Follow this two-bucket method over every section of the car until complete. Now take the hose and rinse off your car, working from the roof down.

Before drying the rest of the car, start with the windows and windshield using a microfibre cloth. Steve sprays Bowden's Naked Glass on to the cloth for perfectly clear glass.

Then start drying the car. Use HD Quick Detailer on a microfibre cloth and wipe down gently over the painted surface and again no pressure required (remember, darker the color, softer the paint would be). Steve recommends Quick Detailer as it has wax and works better than traditional wax. Repeat the same process for the inside of the door and boot chamber.

Using a clay bar (Bowden's Clay Bar) for scratches

Flatten the clay and wet the surface to be clayed. Gently rub or glide the clay over the scratched surface without applying any pressure. Wipe the area and check for the result (it surely needs some patience).

Once the scratches are filled and can no longer be seen, hand polish or machine polish the surface as convenient





(machine polishing is recommended for best results).

John reminded me of an old English saying "*Spit and polish until you see your face clearly*" which seems very true.

Gary Dean wash method:

Start with the same process by cleaning the wheels, fuel cap, window trim, soft-top gap and the boot chamber with Super Degreaser.

This is a single-bucket method, so you will need a bucket filled with clean water and several microfibre towels soaked in it, a drying towel and a plastic bag. Now soak the whole car with car washing liquid. Once done, then take a wet microfibre towel and wipe one panel at a time with single-direction strokes. Follow the same instructions for the rest of the panels.

For the next step, Steve demonstrated a new technique to find scratches,

wrapping his hand in a plastic bag and then softly gliding it across the panel to feel any scratches before going for the claying process.

Once done, follow the same process mentioned in the two bucket method, using the HD Quick Detailer to polish either with hand or with machine.

Steve recommends:

- » Don't wash your car under direct sunlight.
- » Use the right kinds of brush for wheels and other areas to make the job really easy and effective. Same goes with the detailing microfibre cloths.
- » Use a machine polisher to bring out the best result in detailing.
- » For resealing your clear coat, use HD Epoxy or Big White (this can be bought online and will last for six months).

- » For trims, use Trim Care or Solution (*this should not be used on the soft-top*)

Even Robert had a hidden treasure for interior detailing, which he kept hidden until the very last. That is called Cyber Clean, which is a slimy gel cleaner that cleans every corner of the interior of your car. ●

For more information, try these links:

Two Bucket method: http://howto.carcareproducts.com.au/2009/09/23/washing_and_drying_using_2_bucket_method

Two Bucket video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVAXphcgKnY>

Garry Dean wash method (video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTAeFSrQjP0>



^ Using the clay bar ...


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Chapter chatter ...

21-22.11.15 | North Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Marg Gillick & Noellene Gleeson ■ Photos: Marg & Ron Gillick, John

Day one

We went to look at "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" ... at Temora.

Temora Aviation Museum in southern New South Wales houses an extensive collection of ex-military aircraft, all in flying condition. Each two years they hold the "Warbirds Downunder" airshow to showcase these aircraft as well as many more flown in by private collectors and the RAAF.

On Saturday morning five cars met outside Bunnings in Albury ... another five from Ballarat, led by John Gleeson, couldn't find Bunnings ... *I thought blokes could sniff out boys toys shops!* Eventually they arrived and 10 cars set off up the Hume and Olympic Highways, with the Gillicks in the lead. After one missed turn, one U-turn and the roof on one car trying to put itself down on its own, we arrived at the Temora airfield together ... where parking attendants managed to scatter us far and wide into different car parks.

We made up a few of the 20,000 people who *oohed* and *ahhed* as military aircraft from every era, from tiny biplanes to the F-18, zipped and looped through the skies above Temora. Clear skies meant sunscreen and water were the order of the day as we gazed upwards marvelling at Spitfires and Sabres, a Catalina, The Roulettes, an F-18 etc etc. If you enjoy watching aircraft look at the website (www.warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au) and book for the next show in 2017.

We straggled in to the motel in Wagga Wagga for our overnight stop and enjoyed drinks and nibbles. Ron and Gerry played pizza delivery boys as we shared a late meal together. Stuart did a lap of the pool in his bathers, Woolfie did a lap of the pool in his car ... he said he was changing parking spaces. Bed looked good after an early start that morning and we needed to rest up for a long drive home on Sunday. *Naturally we were not going by the direct route ...* ●





Day two

We are up bright and early for the second day of our wonderful weekend with the North Eastern Victoria Chapter.

One car has left us today, but two more are joining us for today's run, so this has turned out well.

Loz, being a nurse, checks Gwenda's injuries caused from a trip on uneven paving the night before (thanks Loz). All well, we head off on the dot of 8am towards the town of Tumut.

The weather is perfect and so is the scenery we are travelling through, green rolling hills, magnificent tree lined roads, just what lovers of the MX-5 crave for. This is why we love coming up to the North Eastern runs.

We arrive at Tumut and everyone makes the most of the general store for a coffee and, for many, breakfast.

All ready to go for some more great driving, we now have a new leader in Shane. We continue on the Snowy Mountains Highway towards Kiandra and Cabramurra.

We are travelling through the Snowy Mountain ranges which now open out to the flats with wild brumbies continuing grazing, ignoring us as we pass.

After a few sweepers and bends we are amongst the trees surrounded by wild heath, every few kilometres our surroundings continue to change. This is a beautiful part of our country that everyone should try to visit.

Oops, a T-intersection ... where to now? OK left, then right, oh NO! A gravel road. Another change of leader, a U-turn, then right ... now we're on track again.

Down under the trees, around the tight bends, a turn here, a turn there and we are now approaching Walwa where we will have a lunch break. Some go to the store, some to the local pub.

With tummies now full off we go towards Albury. Two cars branch off towards Bright, the rest now are travelling beside the Hume Weir. The weir is low but there are still patches of water all the way down. This is a great stretch of road; just plain fun. Across the bridge over the Hume, then on the last stretch to Albury.

We call into a selected coffee shop, feeling a bit hot and thirsty. We all have a good natter then say our goodbyes to those going other ways.

The Ballarat mob then follow Marg and Ron on to Corowa.

We check in to our motel and then out we go, into the pool – clothes and all!

What a way to end a great run ...

Good weather, fantastic country, great company, brilliantly FUN cars ... **zoom zoom!** ●

Chapter chatter ...

15.11.15 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words & photos: **John Poletti** ■ Organiser: **Alan Laine**

After an hour's drive from my home in the "deep south", I arrived at McDonald's Traralgon to find a couple of 5-ers already parked, and their owners, visiting from Central Chapter, sipping on their McCoffee.

We all arrived in dribs and drabs, and as it got closer to start time, Alan, our run leader was worried that he hadn't specified the correct McDonald's. You see, there are two Maccas in Traralgon but, after some consultation, we concurred that the correct address was on the emails and Club flyer.

It wasn't long and we had our full crew of 13 cars, quite a few from Central Chapter as it turns out. *Maybe the Eastern Chapter runs are better!*

Come start time, we were ready to get cracking. Alan gave us our run briefing, "this isn't a race" and we were away. We weren't

heard an NC sound so racy!). It wasn't long and we made it to Churchill for our lunch break.

Churchill provided us with a choice of bakeries, KFC or self-provided picnic lunch from the boot of an MX-5. After much car and sunny weather wonderment talk, we all peeled out of the car park and on to the Jeeralang West road. Winding up into the hills, dodging the remains of fallen trees from previous wind storms, the view overlooking the Latrobe Valley was breathtaking. At the top of the hill, the sealed road ended and we did a U-turn to head back down. It was then I heard the distinct "tick-tick-tick" of a stone caught in the tread of a left hand tyre.



long out of Traralgon when someone's UHF radio was open, which course means radio communications are almost impossible! An impromptu stop and we found the offending radio. Apparently these new fangled tiny hand-held UHFs have "voice activation", so any outside noise (of which there is a lot in a roadster) activates the transmit function. Don't know how it got turned on, but after some frantic button pushing it somehow turned off then we were on our way.

Alan took us on some fantastic roads around Hazelwood, Yinnar, and Mirboo North, with Peter and Trish, now known as "Tail end Charlie", doing a fantastic job giving us very clear messages that the last car in the convoy had made the last turn! I had Rob and Mel in their beautiful NB SE turbo directly in front of me, with Andrew in his NC making a glorious noise on acceleration (turns out he has a cracking after-market exhaust system. I've never

As I sped up, it made the "ping!!!-tinkle-tinkle" sound of the stone firing out and bouncing against the under body. Cool, I thought, don't need that stuck in the tyre. Around a right hander and a strange, let's just say ... unnatural ... sound came from the left side of the car. Left hander, no noise, next right, weird sound! I grab the radio. "Rob," I lamented, "I think I've done a wheel bearing".

We pulled up, I got out and walked around the front of the car thinking it was the front left, grabbed the wheel and tried to determine if there was any bearing wobble ... without noticing the rear left tyre smoking, and as flat as a road kill rabbit! Off to the boot for the trusty but ugly space saver. Not so trusty, as it happens: this idiot forgot to check it for air and of course it was flat as well! Thankfully Rob and Mel loaned me theirs. Not only that, but Rob offered me an identical 15" NB rim off his NA track

▲ Alan Laine (second from left): *This isn't a race!*



NIC IS 18!

Our favourite "L" plater, Nic Bodey, recently turned 18 and was the first booking that morning to go for his licence – he breezed through it of course. **Congratulations Nic.** If anyone needs a good set of well used L plates, Nic is the guy to see!

We look forward to seeing Nic on more runs and perhaps we will even see Mum and Dad (Trish and John) in ANOTHER MX-5 ... ?

car. This meant we would miss the next section of the run as we headed back to Rob and Mel's place in Traralgon to do a mega-fast pit stop to change the wheel. I love the camaraderie within this great club! Many thanks to Rob and Mel for their generosity and help. **Lesson learned: always check your spare!**

I followed Rob and Mel into Trafalgar where we caught up with the rest of the crew. We all headed out of Traf up the freeway, sometimes two abreast, in groups of four or five, looking spectacular, getting the "stink eye" from some fellow motorists, and an approving nod from others as we made our way on to our finish point at Civic Park in Drouin, where our Eastern Chapter end-of-year break up would be.

Jenna had kindly arranged for a pizza place to open early for us, and after orders were taken, Jenna and friend played the role of

the pizza delivery guys!

A local couple who couldn't come on the run during the day joined us for our Chapter break up. They even brought some lovely cake! (Sorry, but I've forgotten their names!)

Having a dozen or so MX-5s lined up together always brings in the public for a few kind hearted questions, like "what are they?", or "are you all in a club?" Peter Ferguson's PR skills go into action – he is the king of roping in new interested parties!

As I had an hour and half drive home, it was time to leave the festivities, with everyone still talking about the fun drive, and the guy who forgot to check his spare tyre for air!

Once again Alan Laine put another top day together. Thanks also to Jenna for organising the after-run break-up. ●

Chapter chatter ...

15.11.15 | Western Victoria ■ Words: Chris van Velzen ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw

Our run commenced on a cool Ballarat morning ... chilly and overcast. The forecast of a mid-20s appeared a relatively remote prospect. Eleven cars with 17 people.

We welcome Greg (*slipper*) and Stella in their NB2 and Geoff in his immaculate NA to their first run. With tops down we set off, and almost straight away the clouds parted.

We travelled through most of the 23 kilometres of the Avenue of Honour, beside the dry Lake Learmonth and on to Waubra, travelling through some of the 128 wind turbines of the fourth largest wind farm in Australia.

Our first stop was the Talbot farmers' market, where most bought various items such as local produce or handcrafts. This market is one of largest in Western Victoria, held on the third Sunday of every month. The forecast was right, and the jumpers and coats got relegated to the boot. Speaking of boots, Greg – who drives in slippers when driving – neglected to change into one of his, walking through the market with one

boot and a slipper on the other. Greg developed the "gout limp" to disguise his wardrobe error.

After around an hour looking through the market stalls (an hour which passed very quickly), it was on to Mount Avoca vineyard to sample a few wines. Geoff's NA failed to start, which turned out to be a couple of loose battery terminals shaken loose after a drive on the gravel drive. Epiphanies are rare on these sorts of runs, but Geoff – after having his NB2 for six months – had one, and admitted to our Chapter Captain that on the drive to Talbot, he discovered his car had a sixth gear ... *being a member of the MX-5 Club has a great many benefits!*

Our luncheon stop was at the Blue Pyrenees winery, where we enjoyed lunch of shared platters of locally-produced food, accompanied with various beverages and the great company of the

great people of the Club. We were looked after well here with the great service of the folks at the winery. The meal ended with either sticky date pudding or lemon curd tart ... yum!

Mid-afternoon saw us take a leisurely drive to Moonambel, visiting the *Taltarni* cellar door. Whist a few people enjoyed the tasting, some of us reached that point in the day when a coffee was the drink of choice.

One last cellar door at Summerfield, before the drive back to Ballarat via Waubra and Lake Burrumbeet.

This run was a little different from usual, with probably more time spent outside the car, rather than driving, but it gave us a chance to have a chat with food and drink in one of Victoria's great wine growing regions. ●



▲ Waubra wind towers



■ Organisers: Chris & Patrice van Velzen

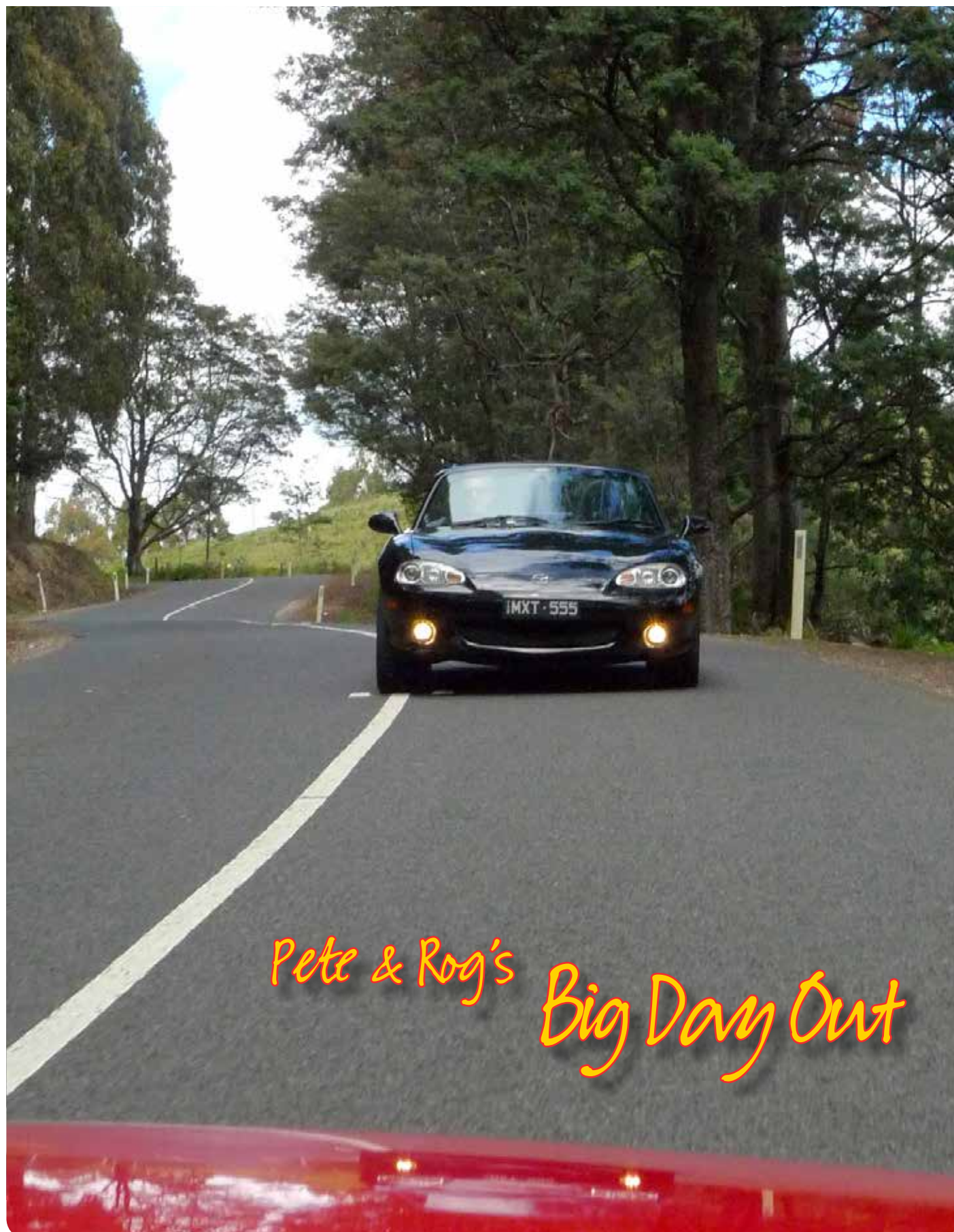


^ Taltarni vineyard

^ Centre photos, left to right: Geoff, Alan, Dawn, John, Patrice, Mary, Brian, Noellene, Chris, Greg, Jeff, Ian and Brian

Chapter chatter ...

15.11.15 | Northern Tas**mx****nia** ■ Words: Peter Steer ■ Photos: Jill Steer, Bruce Harvey, Kelly Berggren
■ Organisers: Peter Steer & Roger Lehner



Pete & Rog's Big Day Out



✓ Ken Beaton

^ Scott Park (sans better half Belinda), over indulging!



Peter and Roger's big day out was greeted by fine weather, and we greeted each other at Anvers house of chocolates

Eighteen cars turned up for the run including a new ND owned by J. Rowlands. After a coffee and a few tall stories we came together for the briefing about marking the corners on the run – especially for the new members – driving carefully and obeying all road signs and speed limits.

The middle of November run was a drive to keep everyone together and enjoy the scenery, and a drive to introduce the new members to what our cars are all about and the fun we have in them.

At 10.15am we left for Port Sorell via the road to Devonport airport. We did a big loop, then on to the Frankford Highway, stopping for a pit stop at the Frankford hall. We had everyone together until I suggested the faster drivers go ahead over Holwell ... they forgot to stop at the Beaconsfield turn off, but we did all come together at Beauty Point for lunch.

Lunch at Tamar Cove was really a great meal, and standing on the deck and admiring all the MX-5s was a great sight. Two more cars had joined us, taking the total of people to 33 for lunch. We will all visit there again as service was very good.

As we left our lunch break, some members left us but the majority came to Beaconsfield through Flower Gully and Winkleigh to Exeter, back on the Frankford Highway to Rosevale then on to Westbury, ending up at the '50s Diner at Deloraine for milkshakes, spiders or coffee.

Then all departed on our own ways home, having done another *Tasmxnia* day (to quote our *Fearless Leader* Bruce Harvey, who had tuned the big 60 during the week.)

A day spent with old friends and new, and a great day had by all. ●



Chapter chatter ...

21-23.11.15 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Leeanne Evans ■ Photos: Leeanne Evans, Peter Ferguson, Alan Laine
■ Organiser: Rob Krygsman

This run is now in its third Year and what a great weekend we all had. The three peaks we visited over this weekend were Mt Hotham, Falls Creek and Mt Buffalo. We had members from Central Chapter join us and even from Western Victoria Chapter – well done!

Ten cars assembled – two NBs and eight NCs – and we left Traralgon around 10.15am. Rob Krygsman led the way and off we went for our first coffee stop at Bairnsdale.

The run from Traralgon to Bairnsdale was great as we took the back way through Maffra and then the back way from Stratford to Bairnsdale. From Bairnsdale, we turned left on to the Great Alpine Road, and headed to Bruthen (four of us stuck behind a horse float).

From here we headed north on the Great Alpine Road; what a great road this is! The scenery is spectacular and with endless great corners, what more could you want? We all finally made it into Omeo for our lunch stop at around 2-ish. Lovely little town and Alain even had a “chicken parma in a meat pie” from Omeo Bakery (for Alain, life is not worth living without a parma!).

After lunch it was off again to Mt Hotham – our first peak. The road was just glorious, but we had to contend with trucks, slow cars and cyclists on our way up. We reached Mt Hotham and it was just beautiful, with sunshine streaming on our cars. After many photos, we left Mt Hotham and this road has to be one of the best in Victoria, with sweeping bends and plenty of corners all the way to Harrietville. We finally arrived at our destination in Bright – all 10 MX-5s registering into our motel for the next two nights.

Sunday, 22 November – Bright, Mt Beauty, Falls Creek (second peak), Mitta Mitta Lunch stop, travelling on Omeo Highway and back to Bright

Some of the girls stayed in Bright to do some shopping so nine cars left this morning, with Ian taking the lead.

En route, a stone from another car cracked Rob's windscreen and when we stopped for a break, Grant had a tree branch fall on his car and leave a small dent – we got out of there very quickly. The roads were fabulous and the lunch at Mitta Mitta great. The drivers arrived “home” feeling pretty tired after a great day.

Sunday Night we welcomed Loz and Shane Thomas around our pretend camp fire! Loz is the North Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain and we actually had three current Chapter Captains on this very night: Loz, Western Victoria Chapter Captain – Ian Bradshaw, and our very own Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain – Peter Ferguson ... plus two ex-Chapter Captains from Eastern Chapter – Elaine Laine and Grant Butler. What a turn up we had.

Monday, 23 November – Mt Buffalo (third peak)

Ian and Karen Bradshaw and Gordon left us on Monday morning. Peter Gillies had a slight accident in the wee hours on Monday morning – the bathroom door in his room jumped out and hit his head. He was just a bit bruised and sore at breakfast, but loved telling us his story.

We left Bright just after 9am on Monday morning, all with our tops down and with Peter F leading the way, headed for Mt Buffalo. The only complaint we all had was getting stuck behind some cyclists. They just loved travelling in pairs and took up the whole road. The drive up to Mt Buffalo was just superb.

We all reached the Chalet and walked around the ‘Grand Old Lady’ and then admired the views looking towards the Australian Alps. What a morning we had. Then it was my turn to sit with Peter Ferguson as he led us down Mt Buffalo. Jenna sat with Dave and enjoyed the sedate driving, whilst I had the time of my



^ Mt Buffalo Chalet car park



✓ From the top: Mt Hotham; Tawonga Gap; Bright; Mt Buffalo



life with an ex-rally driver, who wound me up by telling me he that he wasn't that good at rallying as he crashed all the time! Well, *I just aged by 10 years!*

On our way down we passed lots of cyclists, which were kind to the two Peters and Kerry, but that was it. They wouldn't let the rest of the gang pass them – how rude!

We stopped in Myrtleford for coffee then Rob took the lead we travelled through Milawa, Oxley, Moyhu and we are not sure where else – Rob's GPS had a hissy fit.

We all finally made it to Mansfield for lunch. After lunch and a lot more chatting, we left Mansfield and now there were six cars left.

We meant to go via Alexandra but missed the turnoff so went via Yea and then down to Healesville for coffee, and along the way we said goodbye to Peter Gillies and Grant and Saeko.

We travelled the back way to Gippsland. More nice roads but spoilt a bit by cars going home from work. No matter – great scenery.

We all made our last stop for the evening at Yarragon at 6.30pm and said our sad farewells to all our MX-5 friends. All I can say is what a fantastic and wonderful weekend we all had and bring it on next year!

As there is talk of making it a four-day run next year, it should be even better. ●



Chapter chatter ...

18.10.15 | "7th Chapter"

■ Words: Janette Todd ■ Photos: Janette Todd & Joan Read

Ticking the boxes!

Swapping their MX-5s for something with a bit more towing capacity, three couples from the "7th Chapter" – the affectionate name given to the Club's "caravanists" – recently enjoyed a 10-day stay on the Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia. Destination: Cape Jervis.

- ✓ Great Company
- ✓ Food and Wine
- ✓ Wineries
- ✓ Panoramic Views
- ✓ Steam Trains and Paddle Steamers
- ✓ Amazing sunsets
- ✓ Motor Museums
- ✓ Waterfalls and Windfarms

✓ And more drinks!



Jenny and Bruce Gray were already on the road with their caravan, heading south from Queensland, so they arranged to meet at the Cape Jervis Station Caravan Park. Joan and Ken Read and Janette and John Todd formed their own little convoy (complete with UHF radios for communication between the lead vehicle and tail end Charlie) and decided to take two days/ nights to make the 900km journey.

Why Cape Jervis? There is not a lot to do there – actually, there is *nothing* to do there unless you want to catch the Sealink Ferry across to Kangaroo Island. However, when you can get powered caravan sites for \$17/night, driving to nearby tourist locations isn't too much of a problem.

Arriving early afternoon on a Sunday gave us plenty of time to set up the vans in time for "Happy Hour" – and believe me, we all needed plenty of time. The caravan park is a farm stay where one of the paddocks has been set aside for travellers ... and there is not a level patch of dirt to be found. It took some doing to ensure we were relatively level but we got there in the end and thoroughly enjoyed our early evening tittle.

We had thought of popping across to Kangaroo Island for a day but when we saw the fares that thought soon popped out of our minds.

It would have cost each couple \$210 (using one vehicle for the six of us) just for the day. A friend of Joan's advised that you can get day sailings for \$30 per person on the day of the KI markets – that's more like it – but as luck would have it we missed November market day by one!

Never mind, we all enjoyed standing and watching the ferries arrive and depart – watching the *tetris* of loading vehicles of all dimensions from motor bikes, cars, motor homes etc through to the four-tier B-double sheep transporters. The skill of those drivers as they reverse their trailers over the gangplank and into their allocated spots on deck was in itself worth watching. We made a mental note to ourselves that when we do get to go across to the Island some time in the future we definitely DO NOT want to be placed next to those trucks – what they washed from the deck after the sheep had departed doesn't bear thinking!

Victor Harbour with its causeway to Granite Island and the Port of Goolwa beckoned and we enjoyed many pleasant hours wandering around these areas including a journey on the historic Steam Cockle Train and *Oscar W* paddlesteamer which took us on a short voyage around part of the mouth of the Murray River system. Joan and Ken opted for a horse-drawn tram ride across to Granite Island whilst Jenny,

Bruce, John and I chose to walk across and around. There were windfarms and waterfalls, as well as a small motor museum of classic cars including the sweetest little red Wiles Thomson.

There were wineries and eateries aplenty. Shops to wander in and out of – how patient were those men – it was *only* 45 minutes in the shoe shop! We also had the opportunity to catch up for a lunch time meal with former members of the South Australian MX-5 Club – Alison and Keith Greenlees and Diane and Greg Charnley – at a very tasty café on the esplanade at Aldinga Beach.

Whilst on the subject of food: in true MX-5 style we ate well. Coffin Bay oysters deserve a special mention – plump, creamy, succulent and only \$12/dozen – the first lot were so "bad" we just had to go back a second time and tried for a third but the little shop was closed, more's the



^ C'mon! It's only bloody shoes!



✓ Well, there is one thing to do in Cape Jervis: Ken, John, Joan, Jenny, Bruce and Janette at the Pear Tree restaurant



Janette, John and Ken put a new slant on regrouping on a Club run ...



pity. In between visiting a few wineries of McLaren Vale we found the *Blessed Cheese* deli and so varieties of French fromage were a popular nibble at happy hour. We even had a farewell dinner of fillet mignon followed by crepe suzettes with strawberries and blueberries. Who says you can't have cordon bleu whilst caravanning!

Then, to complete each day there were stunning sunsets as we gazed across the waters of Gulf St Vincent toward the twinkling lights of Kangaroo Island.

In closing it must be said that "what happens in the camping ground, stays in the camping ground" – BUT it is imperative when preparing to leave and you are hitching up your van that, before he takes off, the driver checks that his navigator has emptied kettles, kitchen sinks and glasses of water and that they are not sitting on the loo, with the very real risk of back wash! I am not naming names but it certainly gave cause for great laughter – and there was plenty of that during our holiday together.

We all agreed that the "7th Chapter" will do it again because there are a lot more boxes to tick! ●

The Bob and Stephen Show!

Motorkhana wrap 2015 ■ Words & photos: Bob de Bont

The 2015 NGK Victorian Motorkhana Championship will finished with the presentation night on 16 December, with a couple of Club members shining.

Here's a quick recap of the year focusing on our Club members and their achievements.

Of the 11 planned rounds, two including Round 1 were cancelled so the year started at Pakenham on a wet grassy surface which eventually dried out as the day progressed. Class B was a tight tussle at the top with **Stephen Gallagher** in **Bob de Bont's** old NB8B triumphant over Bob in his NC2 with both showing the rest of the class a clean pair of heels. Next round was the dust of Werribee with **Kim Cole** taking the challenge to Bob with Stephen in third. Deniliquin was flooded out and postponed for a week which didn't work for Stephens's roster, giving Bob a free run as the only Class competitor. Back to Pakenham for the next round and Bob turned the tables on Stephen, with a cameo appearance for **Mark Szutta** giving his NB8A a spin.

The year's biggest round was at the Toyota Factory, Altona with 17 competitors in Class B. Again Kim took the challenge up to Bob with Stephen in third, with **Jan Micallef** bringing his NA out for a run. Off to the Bendigo round and a "no show" for Bob. Stephen was challenged by local hotshot, Peter Panozzo in his Datsun 1600 and ultimately succeeded by five seconds. Next was a cruise to the Colac Saleyards and the unusual sight of two MX-5s in convoy, both with trailers. Stephen and Bob rejoined hostilities and were head and shoulders above the remainder of the class with Bob being victorious by two seconds.

Next stop was Mount Gambier and Stephen's turn for a free run as the only entrant in class. The last round for 2015 was held where it had started at Pakenham with Stephen holding a technical points lead and Bob needing to finish fourth or better to take the Class championship. After a tight tussle with the lead swinging between the two antagonists, Bob emerged triumphant.

Highlights for the year was a gentleman who turned up to a Pakenham event in a beautiful Elfin MS8 resplendent in a white jumper as he had thought the event was on bitumen; to his credit he stayed and competed for the day. Again at Pakenham, a gentleman brought out his Mercedes Benz SLK 200 for a day of fun.

Bob and Stephen acquitted themselves admirably by dominating the class and taking a clear first and second in the Championship. MX-5s won all nine rounds and the top three places in Class B. The venerable MX-5 again proved to be the weapon of choice with not a single problem exhibited by the 10 different MX-5s used by the various competitors throughout the year. ■

The State Motorkhana Champion is Mike Excel in his XL Special.





Straight to the pool room!



No, you're not dreamin'!

Daniel White at City Mazda found this collectible MX-5 poster during a clean up. It's free to a good home.

It's on 5mm MDF board, but it's quite large – 2200mm high x 2400mm wide ... it only needs a few screws to attach it to your wall (or ceiling!), but you won't get it home in the MX-5!

If you're interested, please call Daniel on 9329 2000. ■

Evolution of a logo ...



1934



1936



1962



1991



1992



1997



"Und in hier, ve put der trick software ... nobody vill suspect ein thing!"



MERRY CHRISTMAS

From everyone at Soft Tops Online we wish you and your family a happy and safe Christmas. We thank you for your support throughout 2015 and we look forward to doing it all again in the New Year. See below for the latest offers and information.

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE DATES

Our office will be 2pm on Wednesday 23rd December, 2015 to 8am on Monday 4th January, 2016.

To ensure you get your stock (indent items not included) order before Christmas please place your order by **COB Friday December 18, 2015.**

ITEMS IN STOCK INCLUDE...



**MX-5 90-97 Cloth Top w/
Plastic Window - No Rain Rail**



**BMW 3 Series 87-93 Cloth
Top for Manual Frame**



**MGB 63-1970 Stow-Away,
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Road trip: MX-5 ND tackles the Arctic Circle

Top Gear's Tom Ford recently took on the endless Alaskan Arctic tundra in the most inappropriate car ... the new MX-5!



To read all about it, here's the link: <http://www.topgear.com/car-news/adventures/road-trip-alaskas-arctic-limits-mazda-mx-5#1>

2015 Championship done and dusted!

Words: Gavin Newman ■ Photos: Suzanne Newman

The last round of the City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship was held at Broadford on 1 November.

Being the last event of the year, eight out of the nine classes had effectively been decided, with the leaders having a sufficient buffer so as not to be threatened by the other competitors. The one class still in contention was the modified class with Tim Meaden and me still slugging it out for the top step – OK we don't actually have a podium ... or steps, but let's not get technical.

Even though for many there was not a lot to play for, we still saw 18 Club members there plus Ralph Thompson from the NSW club who again snuck over the border to come out and play. It was great to see some faces that have been missing at a few rounds this season, some relative new comers and also a very first timer with Peter Stevens turning up to have a crack. What was also great was to see the level of guidance and support that the experienced club members offered to the newbies. Overall, the level of participation, considering so many classes were already been decided, shows that it is not all about the points, but also about the enjoyment that comes from getting together. Or maybe it was one last chance to give each other a hard time.

On a personal note, my day started at 3am by getting up to watch the Rugby World Cup final and as a Kiwi seeing NZ beat Australia to be the first team to win back to back World Cup tournaments was a great start to the day. (Sorry Tim, when you give me the authoring rights, you have to take the good with the bad!) Maybe not the best preparation for a track day, but it did mean I was the very

first one to the track and had my choice of garages!

The forecast was iffy all day, but the rain held off in the morning. Unfortunately there was some confusion over the track density so the run groups had to be re-organised meaning there was a bit of down time. Also unfortunately, Ralph's red NC decided that most of the engine oil would better off outside the engine rather than within as he suffered a significant mechanical failure which ended his day having been towed back to the pits. Hopefully it was not too expensive as I understand that is a 'special' engine.

Broadford is an interesting track. It is primarily used for motorcycles so it's narrow in parts. And to borrow from former F1 commentator Murray Walker "This is an interesting circuit, because it has inclines. And not just up, but down as well." So it has its challenges and takes a fair amount of concentration to get every bit right to post a good time. It's a circuit I've grown to enjoy.

As the morning progressed times were dropping slightly, and everyone was keen to have a decent go after the hard working officials had had a break after lunch. Unfortunately the weather was not really keen to play ball and by mid afternoon it turned nasty. Nasty in the way that thunder and lightning can really unsettle you when you are waiting on the dummy grid to head out. A few brave souls persisted, but once there were large puddles on the circuit, there wasn't much point and most people took their bat and ball and headed home.

Robert Parr and Alan



Conrad posted some good times and the rest of the field was ranked about where you'd expect. As for the final placings for the season, I won't give too much away here. The club's prize giving is planned for 10 December which is the 'night of nights' for the motor sport group. As well as the formal prize giving, it also involves a fair amount of each of us trying to convince the others just how good we really are out on the track, and as the night goes on the stories get taller and the lap times get better – it is a lot of fun.

It has been a great season in 2015. Nine rounds packed into less than seven months including a trip to Sydney plus an additional non-championship 10 hour relay at Winton involving 15 cars. I'm sure many are looking forward to taking a breather over the Christmas break and coming back in 2016 for more fun.

A quick thanks to City Mazda for their support and also the organisational effort put in by Club Captain - Motor Sport, Tim Emery, and Assistant Club Captain, Randy Stagno Navarra. Well done guys. ●



Championship update ...



2015 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship Round 9 [final round] | Broadford - 1.11.15

Results - Round 8	1st	2nd	3rd
Standard NA	Robert Downes » 1:13.9	---	---
Standard NB	Peter Dannock » 1:14.3	Ben Mott » 1:14.4	---
Standard NC	Alan Conrad » 1:11.0	Arjith Perera » 1:17.6	---
NB Clubman	Noel Heritage » 1:12.5	Max Lloyd » 1:13.8	John Reid » 1:14.3
Modified	Tim Meaden » 1:11.1	Gavin Newman » 1:12.5	Leon Bogers » 1:12.9
Super Modified	Robert Parr » 1:09.7	---	---

* new Club lap record



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*Note: only Peter Rutherford or Hayden Dally are authorised to offer Club discounts in-store.



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Enter your details at <http://vip.repco.com.au/registration/register/1160>.

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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'Garage Star' Delrin door bushings

■ Words: John Poletti, Eastern Victoria Chapter

When I bought my mid-life crisis (that's what my beloved calls it!) – my 1990 NA6 – I thought I'd done pretty well.

It had clocked up over 280,000 kilometres, but was quite tight for its many travels. I had driven a few and this one felt great.

It didn't take long however, especially after a few Club runs on our not-altogether-smooth South Gippsland roads, for the dreaded body shake, scuttle shake or windscreen wobble to rear its ugly bobbie head. After all, when one is on an MX-5 Club run, one does tend to "test" the chassis a little doesn't one? As it happens, turning the steering wheel hard left and right in quick succession while negotiating quiet country roads at, ahem, road legal speeds, does in fact make the MX-5 um, well ...flexible. Apart from the obvious annoying rattle, this also, of course, compromises the effectiveness of the steering, brakes and suspension.

So with every little road ripple, my smiles turn to frowny grimaces while on Sunday afternoon drives. After much research I decided to forgo the many under body braces available on the market, mainly due to cost and time in fitting, and went for the "Garage Star" Delrin door bushings.

In the MX-5, the standard factory bushings are quite soft; they work well, until the body, like my old girl (car) starts to soften up. When this happens, the doors which are integral to chassis stiffness, aren't as tight in the door cavities as they once were. This means there is a weakness in the middle of the chassis. Hence, body shake.

Enter omgpham.com, a web page I happened upon while researching this issue. The reviews for the door bushings were glowing to say the least! A couple of clicks later and I was waiting in anticipation for them to arrive in the mail.

Two weeks later they appeared in my mail box. I had my door bushings installed in under 10 minutes. On turning out of my driveway, I could feel the change in the chassis immediately. Let me just say, the body still has shake, but I would estimate a reduction in rattles by at least 75-80%! Door window shake is all but gone, windscreen shake is still there but greatly reduced. You can feel the steering and suspension working as they should. Who would have thought these two little blocks could make such a difference to chassis rigidity. It's the best money I've spent on the car so far. Oh, \$105.00 shipped. *Well worth it, I reckon.*

When tightening new bushings in place, do up 10mm fixing bolts just hand tight. Close door, then open and close the door four or five times. Nip up the 10mm fixing bolts, then close and open the door a couple more times, then fully tighten the 10mm fixing bolts.

You will notice that the doors will be a little firmer to close, but they will close with a nice "ker-thunk".

You may need to check the 10mm fixing bolts after a few drives, and give them a nip up. It's also important to use the bolts provided and not the Phillips head originals because using a screw driver to tighten them will not be as effective as a socket.

So if you are looking for a quick and easy fix for your tired NA/ NB, consider some new door bushings to freshen up the chassis. There are a couple of different brands on the market so have a shop around.

Keep on fangin' ... ■

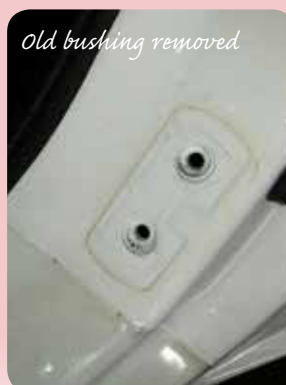
Factory rubber bushings



Use a 10mm socket to remove the old fixing bolts.



Old bushing removed



New bushings, with supplied bolts

Old bushing



Old bushing

New bushing

Et voilà!

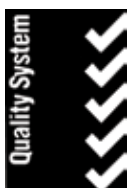


■ **Please note:** All "Tech Talk" information is provided as a guide only. All work is carried out at the owner's risk.

A new option for the MX-5 owner

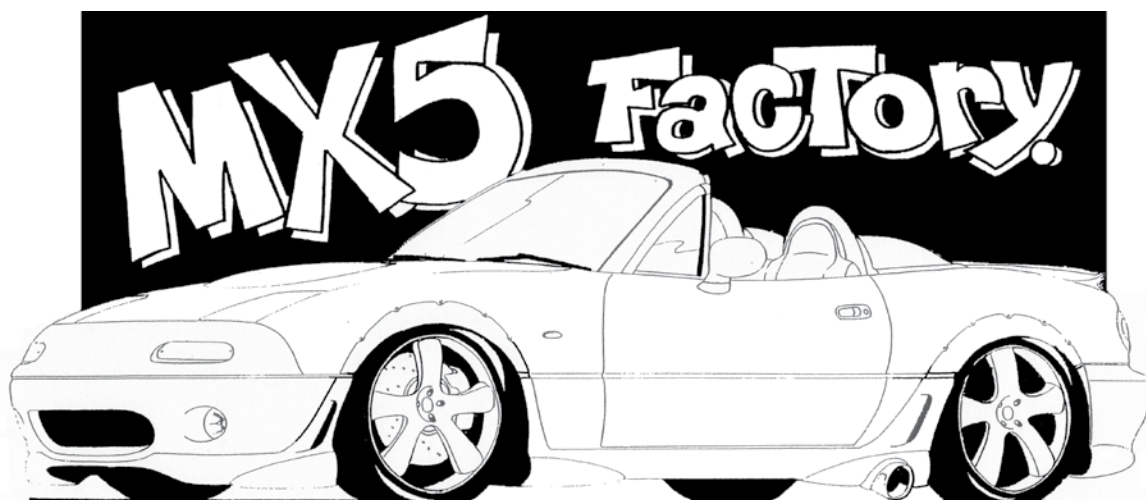
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