



12/2016

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

Naughty or nice? ***(The RF is coming!)***

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MX-5 Club
of Victoria

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Inside:

Vale Peter Phillips

**Vic-Tas claims the Interstate Challenge
Personalised plates - what do yours say?**



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Cover image: *The RF is coming – and will be officially unveiled in Australia at the Mazda MX-5 Fan Fest at Sandown on 21 January. (Photo: Mazda Corporation)*



Find us at:
MX-5 Club of Victoria

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Pete's Perspective ...

■ Peter Dannock – President president@mx5vic.org.au

An Outstanding Achievement

I am now coming to the end of my first year as President and many of you would have read my previous musings over the importance of volunteers to the Club.

Whether it be serving on the Committee, involvement with the Chapters or organising a run, the Club is as successful as it is due to the people who have stepped up to volunteer over the past 26 years.



Revered and respected by all members, **Murray Finlay** – known to his friends as *Grumpy* – has optimised that volunteering spirit and there is no other person in the history of the Club who has contributed more than him.

To reflect Murray's involvement, I can only start by listing the highlights of his roles and achievements over the years:

- » Foundation member 1990
- » joined 'second club' Committee 1991
- » helped orchestrate the merger of the two Victorian clubs in 1994-95
- » Life Member 1997
- » Committee member 1991-1995, 1997-2016
- » President 2006-2012
- » Vice President 1997-2001, 2002-2006, 2012-2016
- » Secretary 1991-1995, 2005-2006
- » Club Champion 1993-1994, 2009-2010
- » Outstanding Achievement Award 2005-2006; *Jinba Ittai* award 2013-2014 (Club's major achievement award)
- » *mxtra* editor/production for the last 10 years (with Alyssa's help)
- » magazine editor in the '90s and '00s
- » attended six of the 12 NatMeets, including the first in SA in 1994
- » NatMeet organising committees 2000 and 2008; assisted 2010 and 2016
- » as President, oversaw the establishment of the Club's Chapters
- » established the regular State Club Presidents' meetings; Secretary of those meetings 2012-2016

From being on the Committee for most of the Club's history to editing and producing our high-quality monthly magazine, Murray has left an indelible mark on the Club. It's an achievement that is unlikely to be emulated.

After serving on the Committee in a variety of roles over most of the first 26 years of the Club, including 18 years as either President or Vice President, Murray has decided to step down, but he aims to retain an active involvement in the Club. To this end, Murray will retain the role as Communications Officer, which will include the editing and production of *mxtra*.

On behalf of the Committee and Club members, I would like to thank Murray for his outstanding contribution to the Club and Committee over such a long period.

Though his involvement on the Committee has concluded, his involvement with the Club has not, and we look forward to Murray's continued contributions.



Mazda MX-5 Fan Fest

As you may be aware, **Mazda Australia** are offering members and friends an exclusive

invitation to one of the biggest MX-5 events Australia has ever seen, with the MX-5 Fan Fest on 21 January 2017 at Sandown Racecourse. With the One Millionth MX-5 making its way to Australia as part of its global tour, members can sign their name on this very special car and enjoy a parade lap of Sandown Park Raceway in their own car.

This event is shaping into a large national event and it cannot be run without the assistance of volunteers and so we are putting out a call for volunteers to assist, where possible, with the following tasks:

- » **Billeting Interstate Club Members:** We have several members travelling from our two Tasmania Chapters and other clubs and we are looking for Club members who may be able to accommodate interstate members at their home for up to two nights (Friday and Saturday, 20-21 January 2017).
- » **Car Park and Parade Lap Marshals:** Volunteers are required on Saturday 21 January 2017 to assist participants to park their car in an orderly manner.

For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

December

- 18 WV Christmas pizza run
- 28 CEN Yarra Ranges run

January

- 15 WV Shannons Japanese car & bike show & shine
- 17 NEV Tuesday run - Bethanga
- 21 Club Fan Fest, Sandown
- 26 WV Australia Day run

February

- 5 NEV Tastes of the North-East
- 26 CEN Twilight run

March

- 10-13 Club Vic-Tas/SA weekend
- 11-12 NEV Snowy Mountains run

We will also require assistance in getting the cars on and off the track for the parade lap. All volunteers will be able to participate in the Parade Lap.

- » **Sunday Run:** With a lot of interstate members in Melbourne, we will be doing a series of runs on Sunday, 22 January 2016. For the runs, we are looking for volunteers to assist as a run leader on one of these runs.

If you able to help with one or more of these tasks, please email **Richard Acfield** (social@mx5vic.org.au), indicating which of the tasks you can assist with.

Unfortunately, with the large numbers registered for the event, Mazda has had to cancel the previously-advertised Club members' dinner on the Saturday night. We apologise for any inconvenience that causes.

Remember that this is **not** a public event. If you haven't registered for the event, it is not too late to get an invite. Click on the 'Register Here' button from the main page of the Club website (mx5vic.org.au). Enter your details and your invitation from Mazda Australia will follow soon after.

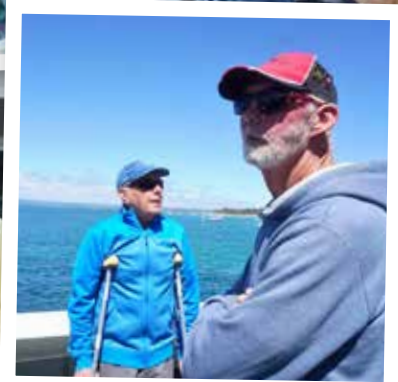
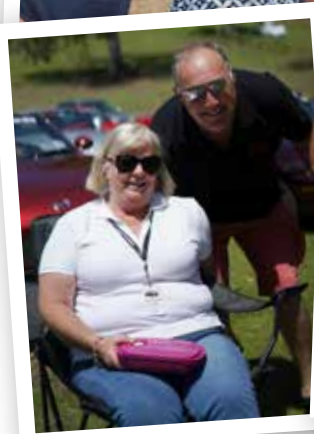
A happy and safe Christmas and new year to all ...

Remember ... leave sooner, drive slower, live longer.

Pete

Scene about ...

■ Photos: Rob Tanner, Marg Gillick, Rosh Dhillon, Bruce Harvey, Karen Bradshaw





Randy's Rant ...

■ Randy Stagno Navarra – Club Captain - Motor Sport captain@mx5vic.org.au



Farewell to a much-loved mate



On 24 November the Motor Sport Team lost one of our stalwarts, Peter 'Princey' Phillips, a man who was a fierce competitor, a loving family man, a true gentleman and a mate.

He was respected throughout his local community, thanks to the work he carried out as a paramedic, and very much respected within our ranks.

When *Princey* spoke, you listened – be it a life story or chatting about the track day we were at, you simply gave him your undivided attention.

Princey was a miracle worker. I watched him, along with his wife Pam, a radiographer, bring fellow competitor Tony Harper back from the dead after he collapsed at a track meeting in Wakefield. *Princey* took control and, with no fuss at all, gave Tony his life back. It was incredible to watch. It takes a very special person to be able to do that.

Unfortunately for us his time amongst us came to an end ... way too soon. He leaves behind a massive void.

To Pam and the family, please just know that all our thoughts are with you and that we will always be around.

Princey, I hope you're enjoying that great race track in the sky.

I'll miss you mate.

Interstate Challenge Winton 2016

The 2016 Challenge has been run and won by Victoria. As always it was a great event and this year it had more significance for we Victorians as we were 'Doing it for Princey'.

The banter off the track was almost as hard as the driving on the track. Everybody acquitted themselves very well and there were quite a few new PB's and Lap records set.

The inter-club victory tally is now Victoria: 8 | NSW: 5.

A more detailed report can be found on page 23.

2016 Sprint Championship Phillip Island ~ 11 December: the season finale

The last round of the City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship for 2016 will be hosted by AROCA at the Island.

Entries are out now, so get in early as this event is extremely popular and fills up quickly.

This will be the last round in the last City Mazda-sponsored MX-5 Sprint Championship. On behalf of the Club and all in the Motor Sport Team, thanks to City Mazda for their four years of support, which began with the 2013-2014 season.

Dates for the 2017 season were in the last *mxtra*, and are in the motor sport section of the Club website. We hope to have an announcement for the 2017 season shortly.

MX-5 Fan Fest ~ 21 January 2017

The response has been fantastic both from the local motor sport guys and interstate competitors. We now have a full house.

There is a waiting list, so if anyone believes that they cannot make it, please let me know. The entry forms will be out shortly.

I hope you're all as excited as me about the event as it looks like being a massive day.

Driver Training Day ~ 4 February 2017

It's back! This is a perfect chance for non-motor sport competitors to get to grips with their cars in the safe environment of a race track.

There will be experienced instructors beside you coaching you as you find out more about yourself and your car. There is also some classroom tuition which will then be applied out on the track.

This is not a high-speed event, so if you have ever thought of trying out motor sport this would be an ideal starting point.

Feel free to contact me for further information (*email address at the top of the page*).

And that's it for another year ...

Lastly I'd like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Stay safe – and I'll see you all trackside soon.

"If you have everything under control, you're not moving fast enough!"

Randy



Membership

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

Current
membership
count:

645

and growing!

G'day again ...

Twenty-five new members this month, plus a handful of renewals. That brings our total to some 45 additional members compared to the same time last year.

We extend a warm welcome to all the new-comers:

Central Chapter

Owen and Eva Anfruns	2016 Soul Red ND
Anne-Marie Beasy	1999 Black NB
Peter Bolton	1993 Silver NB
Jesse Boyd	2001 Black NB
Michael Chan	1991 Grey NA
Peter Clarke	1990 Classic Red NA
Jeff Green and Michelle Fazzino	1991 True Red NA
Deaglan Gahan	1990 White NA
Mike and Sue Johnson	2000 Green NB
Robert McDougall	1999 Sunlight Silver NB
Tracey and Mervyn Rea	2013 Dolphin Grey NC
Stephen and Lesleigh Semmel	2011 Silver NC
Linda Tallents	2016 Ceramic White ND
Anand Thillaisundaram	2001 Blue NB
Lauren Xuereb	1993 White NA

North-Eastern Victoria Chapter

Benjamin Ranford	1990 Black NA
Robert and Joslyn Mauchline	2000 Midnight Blue NB

Western Victoria Chapter

John and Cheryl Paul	2002 Silver NB
----------------------	----------------

All the very best for the festive season and for 2017.

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

Will

Congratulations Dave Collins

■ Loz Thomas – North-Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain

For several years now I have been invited to the Royal Flying Doctor Service *John Flynn luncheon*.



▲ *Dave & Gail Collins
with the 2016 Bernice
Jenkins Award*

This invitation has been extended to me by a friend and nursing colleague here in Bright named Margie Jenkins – daughter of the late Bernice Jenkins (OAM) who played a pivotal role in supporting the RFDS. Finally I was able to make it to my first luncheon and was really looking forward to it.

I was waiting in the foyer of the RACV building in Bourke St to meet up with Margie and other friends when, to my surprise, I saw Gail Collins walk past. We had a chat and she was telling me how David (our Club Vice President) was at the AGM which was being held prior to the luncheon and that she was meeting him upstairs on the 17th floor for the luncheon. Gail explained that David volunteers his time every Friday in many different ways.

The volunteers epitomise the spirit of the RFDS and continue the legacy of John Flynn. Each year the **Bernice Jenkins Award** is

presented to an individual in recognition of their extraordinary, long-serving voluntary service.

As the presenter was singing the accolades of this year's recipient and that this person volunteers every Friday and comes from the Dandenong Ranges, I whispered in Margie's ears, "I wonder if it's David Collins ..." *Indeed it was!*

Congratulations David. I know how much this ongoing legacy of Bernice Jenkins means to Margie and to have this personal connection, albeit through me and the Mazda MX-5 Club, was icing on the cake.

You were a very humble and deserving winner. ■

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Join the celebration!

You can register your own Mazda MX-5 to take part in these exciting events:

- » **One Millionth MX-5:** Secure your place in MX-5 history with the opportunity to sign your name on the body of the One Millionth MX-5.
- » **MX-5 Parade Lap:** Join the on-track Parade Lap with your own MX-5, as we attempt to set a new MX-5 procession record.
- » **MX-5 Show and Shine:** Join other proud MX-5 owners from around the country in the MX-5 showcase and give your MX-5 its time to shine.
- » **MX-5 RF:** Be one of the very first to see our newest member of the family, the MX-5 RF, on its Australian public debut.
- » **MX-5 Cup Cars:** Take a closer look at the cars currently racing in the Global MX-5 Cup.
- » **MX-5 Club Sprint Event:** Watch MX-5 clubs from across the country go head-to-head during a Sandown track session.
- » **Racing Simulators:** Test your racing skills to go into the draw to win prizes, including the chance to experience a passenger lap in an MX-5 Cup Car.
- » **Entertainment:** Music, food, giveaways and roving entertainment to keep you amused right through the day.

This exclusive event is not open to the public, so if you and any friends or family wish to join the event, you must register. You may have already received your invitation from Mazda to register, however, it is not too late to do so. Register your interest by sending an email with your name, membership number and email address to president@mx5vic.org.au. Your invitation to register will follow soon after. We look forward to seeing you there. ■

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Chapter chatter ...



13.11.16 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words & organiser: Peter Ferguson ■ Photos: Peter Ferguson, Gavin Newman

The weather forecast predicted a cold, wet day at Bryant Park – and it was right!

The rain came and went throughout the day meaning that those who wanted a good time needed to read when the track was driest and go out then.

The Club had nine starters running, plus an ex-MX-5'er, James Sanderson, in his Porsche. Running were Rob Krygsman (NA8), Bill Roder in his MX2 (*oops, that's an MR2*), Peter Ferguson (NA6), David Salter (NA8), Mark Manns (Eunos), Ajith Perera (NC), Gavin Newman (NB), and Peter Sansom and Emma Solberg (SE). We also had three members turn up to offer moral support and take photos – Alan Laine, Peter Ilijash and Chris Iddon.

The track started off very wet and slippery but started drying out when the rain backed off until, just when there was starting to be some grip ... more rain! So there were not too many tops down and lots of wheel spin. Even my very tired 1600 NA was suffering wheel spin – that's something you don't get every day!

Due to the weather, the number of competitors was down (approx. 30) resulting in four runs on the main track plus two in the carpark. The V8 Falcon ute entertained in the carpark with constant wheelspin around the *entire* circuit. James

in the Porsche had a beautiful spin which he held into a very nice recovery, gaining a large round of applause from the crowd.

Peter Sansom, having his first run in the SE, also had a spin in the carpark. He and girlfriend Emma were sharing the car and not only did she manage to beat him on the day, she was also spotted working on the car to bolt the battery in better (to keep the scrutineers happy) while Peter held the umbrella over her. A couple of the guys were heard to ask "*where can I get a girlfriend like that?*" Both Peter and Emma are new members of the Club, have two NBs (one an SE) and are both great assets to the Club!

Gavin and Ajith from the Club's Motor Sport Team both had good and competitive runs, however a WD for Ajith in one run put paid to a high ranking. Gavin was ninth outright, also following a WD. Both would have placed far better had they not got lost!

Mark Manns, there with his sons (one a junior) in their deceptively fast Datsun Stanza (which beat all bar one MX-5!), came third outright in his very neat and extremely well-driven Eunos. David

Salter's son, Matt, managed his usual second outright in the four-wheel drive turbo Subaru behind a turbo Nissan-engined Escort driven very flamboyantly and *fast* by GCC member Matt Paulet. This thing is a shell and always a joy to watch – it does not accelerate, *it launches!*

Bill Roder in his turbo MR2 drove extremely well and should have placed *much* better but for getting lost once – the same also happening to Rob Krygsman who got lost *three* times! *One of the challenges of khanacross is remembering which way to go.*

Newcomers Peter and Emma, sharing the SE, had a great time and vowed to come to more of these events – both showed a lot of promise with Emma in particular looking very tidy and likely to be a big improver in the future.

As always the Gippsland Car Club (GCC), who invite us along to their events, ran a well-organised and slick day (for much of the day the track was very slick!). We attended five khanacrosses this year. We are looking at doing four next year plus a hill climb and are hoping more of our Motor Sport Team members will come along and have a go. ●

Khanacross at Bryant Park



^ Above: Rob Krygsman tests his skills. Inset: Emma Solberg creates some co-driver envy.

Chapter chatter ...

15-18.11.16 | North-Eastern Victoria ■ Photos: Marg Gillick ■ Organiser: Roger Cowie



Summits: the Razorback and Mt Feathertop on the left, looking across to Mt Fainter and Mt Bogong ...

Day 1: Tuesday, 15/11

■ Dave Collins

Gail & I started the run on Monday. We were not leaving the Dandenongs at 4:30am! So we had a leisurely drive taking in the sights, coffee and craft shops.

Five cars, with tops down, and eight members were assembled at sunny Howitt Park in Bright, ready for what was shaping up for a great and 420+ km day. After a spirited zig-zag drive, Mt Hotham greeted us with snow and 8° ... *brrr*. After a few chilly photos, Omeo beckoned. Passing Dinner Plain and some beautiful scenery we weaved our way to the first coffee and muffin and a chance to catch up with the group.

Bairnsdale called us for lunch. The roads are just superb, with large sweeping bends even as we descended, a real pleasure and a highlight of the trip so far. Would you believe it – after 1½ hours we were eating again. This time in the park; really nice, with lovely sunshine. Departing with the lid up (I was getting a little burnt), we turned off the highway outside of Bairnsdale. *Oops* ... we needed a few U-turns, much to the amusement of the cows. It's not quite over yet, but time to put down the pen.

Thanks to Roger for an excellent day.

■ David Evans

The cars from North-Eastern Victorian Chapter met up with two cars from the Eastern Victoria Chapter in Traralgon. They were travelling through Traralgon to stay at Yarram for the night.

After coffee at McDonald's, we headed off through Tarra-Bulga National Park. What a great road and we had it all to ourselves. This road is designed for MX-5s, including a section through tall, straight-timbered forest with beautiful ferns – beautiful surroundings, corners and some great stuff. We then settled in to Yarram Hotel where we stayed the night. *What a night we all had!*

Even Loz left her calling card outside the door of our room! We thought it was a North-Eastern Chapter welcoming ritual. »



Day 2: Wednesday, 16/11

■ Ron Gillick

I can't tell you how Day 2 went without first telling you how Day 1 finished.

After a huge dinner and a few drinks, one of the group (*no names – what happens on the run stays on the run, but you would think a Chapter Captain would lead by example*) proceeded to fling her underwear around the hotel in which we were staying with the resulting furore keeping the hotel's other guests awake.

Leaving Yarram at 9am on Day 2 it was a relaxing drive through the South Gippsy mist to Leongatha, Hastings for coffee and Sorrento for lunch where we farewelled the Eastern Chapter members before we boarded the ferry to Queenscliff and our overnight stay in Torquay.

Dinner was at a nice little restaurant where we were joined by Coral and Will Campbell who were joining us for Day 3.

The U-turn count for the day was:

- » Roger: 1
- » Gerald: 2 (*double points for a 360 around a roundabout*)

Gerald wins Day 2. »



Day 3: Thursday, 17/11

■ Gerald Gill

After fuel and food five cars left Torquay at 8.30am to start our journey along the Great Ocean Road ... GOR, the "GO Road"...

The road is in reasonable condition after the recent dramas, just two delays for road works and a few bad spots.

First stop was at Apollo Bay for morning tea, then on to the 12 Apostles so that Captain Loz could get photos. It was here that we farewelled David and Gail as they continued on their way to Warrnambool.

Then there was five happy zoomers heading back to Lavers Hill for lunch with one gravel stretch for road works. The cars WILL need washing. Lunch was very good at a small café with an eclectic collection of wares for sale. Some members were tempted and spent.

After lunch we headed north towards our night stop at Hepburn Springs via Colac and Ballarat. I was impressed with the very green hedge wall along the Colac cemetery.

By this time it was getting uncomfortably hot and we stopped to become topped (as opposed to topless); with the a/c on we continued on to a slow run through Ballarat. We arrived at the motel at 5pm and, after a shower and a few cleansing ales outside the rooms, we walked a couple of hundred metres (well, not me as I drove due to the fact that I'm still hobbling around on crutches) to *Ruben's* restaurant. We all agreed that the pizzas were the best we'd had in a long time.

A good day and only two U-turns; the rumour that Roger was suffering from heat stroke was highly overrated. »

... to sea: the Great Ocean Road ...



... and the 12 Apostles



Day 4: Friday, 18/11

■ Loz Thomas

After the most amazing breakfast at Hepburn Springs Motor Inn we farewelled Will and Coral.

After hearing promises from Roger that he didn't even need to look at the maps and that there would be no U-turns today, the four remaining cars with tops down headed on our way!

It was only a few kilometres later that we took a right turn toward Lyonville, then a three-point turn (**not** a dreaded U-turn) to leave the promise of Lyonville behind to head to our first stop at the beautiful Trentham Falls. Gerald minded the cars whilst we walked to the lookout and, even though he wasn't with us in body, he managed to make it in to the group photo.

From Trentham it was a leisurely drive through Kyneton and Heathcote to Nagambie where we stopped to admire the impressive life-size bronze statue of the famous mare, Black Caviar. Lunch was at Euroa and also our point to farewell Ron and Marg. That left just the four of us in three cars to head home to Myrtleford and Bright but, even after the previous three days of driving amazing roads, we weren't through just yet. It was too good to resist driving through the Strathbogie region to Merton, Mansfield and over the gap to Whitfield, Milawa and Myrtleford.

Thanks Roger for organising such a terrific run. You did an amazing job with your choices of roads, accommodation, places to eat and keeping us all on track to keep within time constraints. ●



^ From the left: Gail, Gerald, Roger, Dave, Peter, Trish, David, Leeanne, Marg, Ron, Loz and Shane

Chapter chatter ...

20.11.16 | Southern Tasmania ■ Words, photos and organisers: Rob & Di Tanner ■ Additional photos: John Waldock

Following the first-ever postponement of a run due to bad weather on the 13th (60mm of rain, flood warnings and road weather alerts), Sunday the 20th dawned with a beautiful clear day, and 25 degrees.

With 10 cars and 18 keen MX-5ers, we set out from Rosny Park, following the East Derwent Highway and the Boyer road to New Norfolk.

A quick pit stop, and then back on to the Lyell Highway, which winds up through the beautiful Derwent Valley, with the countryside a beautiful green after all the spring rains. Through the small country towns of Rosegarland and Gretna, we encountered a large convoy of police on their annual charity bike ride, complete with a police escort. They were on a two-day ride from north-western Tassie to Hobart.

About two kilometres before Hamilton, we did a right turn on to Hollow Tree Road, for an MX-5 dream run of 30km of winding and undulating bitumen, with virtually no traffic, arriving at the old historic central highlands town of Bothwell. Just outside Bothwell, on the banks of the Clyde River, is the beautiful old Ratho Farm, which is the site of Australia's oldest golf course.

We called in to the farm to visit two of our members, Mike and Liz Williams, and a group of friends, who were there for the weekend with a collection of classic cars, including a magnificent 1925 Rolls Royce, a Ferrari, and various Jaguars, Mercedes, Porsches, and Mike's classic Alfa Romeo. These were all parked in the beautiful gardens surrounding the old historic farmhouse. We parked our MX-5s amongst them, and spent a great hour looking at, and talking, cars.

At 12.30pm it was back on the road from Bothwell to the Midlands Highway, another piece of classic Tassie country road. A right turn on to the highway and a short run brought us in to historic Kempton, and lunch at the Huntington Tavern.

After an enjoyable lunch, and a couple of hours of talking cars, we headed south in convoy to Pontville, and Club members Alan and Stacey Pryer's beautiful country home, where our leader John Waldock has his latest project – a classic old genuine bug-eyed Austin Healey Sprite ... complete, but in need of restoration. That should keep him off the streets and out of mischief for a couple of years.

After an inspection of this, and Alan's own bug-eyed Sprite, which is also under restoration, we all headed towards home, having had a great day. ●





Destination Kempton



^ John's bug-eyed Sprite ... a bit of work to be done yet!

< The "new" Sprite alongside "CW" the Sprite, which John and Alan lovingly restored in 2013-14

Chapter chatter ...

20.11.16 | **Central** ■ Words: Mary Mercieca ■ Photos: Anne-Marie Beasy, Bob de Bont, Clark Menze



It was a glorious warm Sunday morning when 25 beautiful MX-5s entered the Yan Yean Reservoir to commence John and Katrina's run to Trentham.

It was wonderful to see so many new members who were about to enjoy their first MX-5 run.

From Yan Yean it was a nice easy drive, except for a truck that was holding us all up, and plenty of motor bike traffic to contend with while on our way to our first stop at Broadford. The bikes were travelling very quickly and left us for dead.

After leaving Broadford and on our way to Kyneton, we couldn't believe our eyes as we spotted an echidna casually crossing the road. Fortunately it was on the other side of the road and luckily we all managed to miss it.

The scenery along the way was beautiful with some parts very similar to the top of Mt Buffalo which we had seen a few weeks earlier on the Eastern Victoria Chapter's *3 Peaks Run*. There even seemed to be a configuration of rock that looked like a mini-Stonehenge. We again encountered a fair bit of traffic on the Burke and Wills Track, before we stopped at Kyneton for a cuppa and chat about the run so far.

Before long John and Katrina were off again, heading to Trentham for our lunch stopping at Quarry Reserve, where some stayed and had a picnic, while others headed to the *Red Beard Bakery* to enjoy some very good sandwiches. We can highly recommend this bakery as they make some of the best bread you will find anywhere.

After Trentham about 10 cars left on their own way home while the rest proceeded to our final stop at Melton Reservoir, which was a lovely surprise. Lori and I had never been there before.

By this time the mercury was rising and it was getting very hot, and we felt like we were cooking in our little cars. It was time to head home after thanking John and Katrina for their wonderful effort in organising the run, their trip notes were spot on.

Back to our cars, roof on, air conditioner on, and try to cool off. All in all a great day. ●



.....

■ Organisers: John & Katrina Palmer



^ Trentham Falls

Chapter Chatter ...

20.11.16 | Northern Tasmania ■ Words, photos & organiser: **Alana McDougall** ■ Additional photos: **Rosh Dhillon, Jill S**

On a beautiful spring day 14 cars lined up at Deloraine beside the Meander River ready for our run "I've been to paradise".

As MX-5 owners we all know that Tasmania is the "Promised Land" –there is "Nowhere Else" like our roads ... they always take us to Paradise and we are always assured of a Dam fine day.

OK. Enough of the puns.

We set off, only to find ourselves on the wrong road – although it was quite enjoyable with lot of little twists and turns – the fault of the navigator (*of course - Ed!*), not the driver.

On the road around the Cethana Dam we took a detour to check out the deep-water dive barge where divers are taught deep-water diving in water that has a depth of 200 metres.

Retracing our steps, we continued out of Cethana through Gowrie Park, Railton and Wilmont. Another detour saw us at Devils Gate Dam, which has an 84m-high dam wall and looks spectacular when overflowing.

Once again we climbed into our cars to head to Lake Barrington for lunch where we were entertained by Under-14 and Under-15 school rowing.

At our lunch stop we were joined by Kelly and Carl Berggren, and Ken and Ruth Beaton. ●

Footnote:

The car that started it all in northern Tassie has a new owner.

Life member **Ken Beaton**, after owning his red NA for many years, had decided that it was time for a car with a few more comforts, so he and Ruth had purchased a silver NC ...

and today was the day the red NA went its new home with Trevor Simm.



■ More photos: see the Club's photo gallery at mx5vic.smugmug.com



.....
 teer, Bruce Harvey



^ Lunch among the gum trees, at Lake Barrington

Chapter chatter ...

20.11.16 | Western Victoria

■ Words & organisers: Chris & Patrice Van Velsen ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw, Chris Van

Produce of the Pyrenees



Fourteen cars with 25 people set off from Lucas on an overcast morning, which held the promise of being a rather warm day.

Our Chapter Captain was confined to tractor duties for the day, so Karen was flying solo. We were only a few minutes into our run on the avenue of honour when our car suffered power loss (couldn't get above about 80kmh), which was really embarrassing *as we were leading the run*. Didn't know the cause at the time, but thought my car may have had a reaction to a very slow vintage motor bike coughing and belching in front of us. After finding a safe place to park 14 cars on what is a

difficult section of road, and handing over run notes, we watched the remaining cars driving off to the west. We turned to head back for a "limp" home. After a kilometre or so, the malady which had befallen us seemed to resolve itself. We agreed that we'd try to catch up to our group and resume our run, with half a chance that we could end up coming home on the back of a yellow truck.

We took a shortcut, whilst punishing our MX for its naughtiness. We waited on the Ercildoune road for our

group, which arrived shortly afterward. Continuing our run we drove Racecourse road to Beaufort. Our journey took us on the road to Amphitheatre through Chute. We turned on the Ararat/Lexton road through Lexton and to our first stop at Talbot. The cloud had cleared and the sun had some bite.

After parking outside in our "reserved" spots in front of the *Court House Hotel*, we all spent the next hour foraging through one of the largest farmers' markets in the state. The market sells just about

everything in terms of local produce from meats to olives, dumplings to vegies. The bric-a-brac section has an amazing range of treasures. One lady was even selling her Dalek (*come in handy to "kill ... crush ... destroy!"*).

We all reassembled at the pub at midday for lunch, with a choice of roast or fish and chips. The hotel isn't open all the time and only does meals on market day, which is the third Sunday of the month. The mulberry cheesecake was pretty yummy!

One of our members, Mary,

■ More photos: see the Club's photo gallery at mx5vic.smugmug.com



came on the run without her Brian who is driving a tour bus in central Australia. Mary wanted Brian to know that she was miserable without him, and the photos taken are clearly indicative of Mary's moroseness. Brian loved this run last year; we did a few wineries and rumour has it Brian needed to have his purchases delivered by truck!

We drove on to Avoca, and spent some time at the *Blue Pyrenees* estate, where we tasted wine, had coffees and looked through the range of preserves and other local produce for sale. It was rather nice sitting outside with our coffees.

It was quite hot in the afternoon, and after months of dreary weather, we were clearly getting our first taste of summer. We left the winery after an hour or so, heading through Moonambel to Landsborough. From there we drove to Elmhurst through avenues of ancient eucalypt. There were views of the Grampians in the distance, and we were clearly traversing the western boundary of the Pyrenees.

Our drive from Elmhurst to Raglan was our favourite for the day – a scenic cruise on tree-lined avenues with winding ups-and-downs between Mt Lonarch and Mt Cole, and finishing with a couple of nice downhill esses before Raglan.

The run finished in Beaufort, where ice creams were required. ●

♥ *Exterminate!*



^ Top: Mary does her best to get through the day without Brian.
Centre: "Reserved" parking at the Court House Hotel, Talbot.
Bottom: the edge of the Pyrenees.

Chapter chatter ...

22.11.16 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words & organisers: Leanne & David Evans ■ Photos: Peter Ferguson



Tuesday, 22 November, saw a small group of those lucky enough not to have to be at work assemble at Obsessions coffee shop in Trafalgar in readiness to head off to meet some of the Central Chapter members in Noojee for lunch.

Seems like this is a repeat performance, which it is!

We had five MX-5s and one RAV4 leave Trafalgar on a very wet and windy day. Compare that to the day before, which was hot and sticky – *that's Melbourne weather for you!* Derek, who is relatively new to the Club, drove from Camberwell to meet up with us in Trafalgar, and we met Peter Prysten as well.

The 50-minute drive to Noojee was only held up by a garbage truck, a tractor and a mobile home! We then had the whole road to ourselves – including a section through tall, straight-timbered forest with beautiful ferns ... beautiful surroundings, corners and some great stuff. *This sure beats being at work!*

When we arrived at *The Toolshed* in Noojee, we were met by seven MX-5s from the Central Chapter. It was great seeing old

faces again – and some new faces.

Catching up Kyp, Lori and Mary, Bruce and Jenny, Peter and Anita, Phil, Nikki and Allister and meeting Bryan and Steven was wonderful. Alan and his son Jason arrived a bit later – they took the long way through Mirboo North and thoroughly enjoyed their drive.

As we had agreed to meet at 11.30am for an early lunch, we were the first to be served our meals. *The Toolshed* is so popular

it's moderately busy, even during the week. No wonder: great roads whichever direction you approach from, top notch pub-style food and really nice surrounds. They even had the fire on for us!

After lunch we said our farewells to our Eastern Victoria and Central Chapter members. This just left two MX-5s and Mel driving her RAV4, so we decided to drive through Neerim South and head for coffee at *Gippy Goat* near Yarragon.

Great weather, great company, nice roads and a top setting – this does beat being at work! Must do it again asap. ●



^ Jason and Alan ~ the apple doesn't fall far ...

■ More photos: see the Club's photo gallery at mx5vic.smugmug.com



27.11.16 | Western Victoria ■ Words & photos: Karen Bradshaw ■ Organisers: Jeff Woolf, Karen Bradshaw



Well here we were again, Springfest at Lake Wendouree – it's Ballarat, so will it be hot or will it be cold?

Neither! It was a perfect spring day! For once Ballarat had turned it on and got it right, weather-wise and fun-wise.

We had 10 zooming MX-5s rock up to show off to the endless stream of people walking on by. There was quite a lot of interest shown in the cars and the Club. Some had never seen an MX-5 before – *what blasphemy!* Where had they been for the last 27 years?

Some kids could be heard telling Mum and Dad which was their favourite.

The MX-5s were represented by the NA, NB and NC, but alas no ND to show off. Daryl Andrews' car drew a lot of attention from the public and Western Chapter members – particularly the engine ... so clean and pristine.

We took turns to wander up and down our side of the lake to peruse the market stalls, food vans and displays; "they" estimate that it takes about

three hours to walk around, which includes stopping along the way.

The favourite stall of all was the ice cream van! If the markets etc weren't your cup of tea there were plenty of cars at the *Shannon's Show & Shine* with a variety of cars: Fords, Holdens, Oldsmobiles and hot rods and, further on, a vintage car display where we found a white NA proudly showing off with his headlights up looking very perky.

The day was terrific – a great social time was had by all, a fun and relaxing day with nothing better to do than show off our happy little cars.

Thank you to Jeff Woolf for helping to organise the day and for getting up early to save us our spot by the Lake.

Just another happy zoom, zoom day! ●



^ Not one of ours, but a stunning NA



■ More photos: see the Club's photo gallery at mx5vic.smugmug.com

Vale “Princey” – Peter Phillips

■ A personal tribute from his great friend, Ken Read



Peter Phillips had been a great mate of Joan's and mine since he started courting our friend Pam, more than 40 years ago.

Over the years we shared many gatherings, trips and events together, firstly as couples and then with our families as our children arrived.

Some eight years ago we convinced Peter and Pam to sell their MGF, buy an MX-5 and join the Mazda MX-5 Club. Peter – known to one and all as *Princey* Phillips – quickly realised there was an active motor sport group within the Club, and became a competitive and passionate participant, winning numerous trophies on the way – including joint winner of the Club's Motor Sport Championship in season 2011-2012, and six times as Clubman Champion.

Unfortunately Peter died on Thursday, 24 November, as a consequence of cancer.

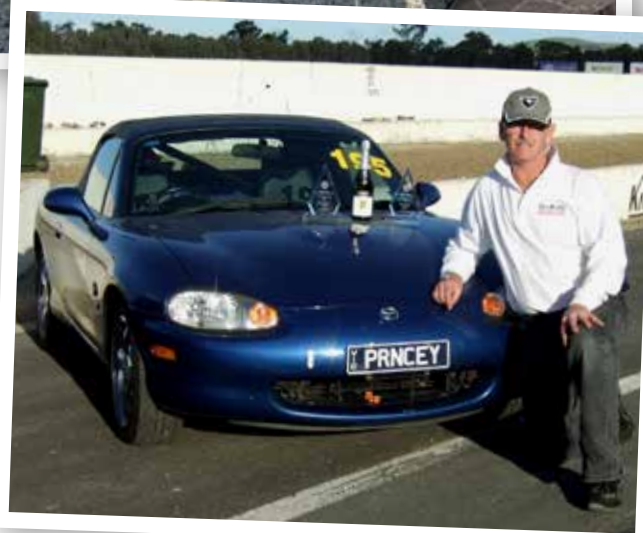
He had amazed everyone who knew him with his tenacity, resourcefulness and optimism during the eight years he battled the illness. He was determined to the very end to keep ticking off the boxes of his comprehensive bucket list.

He also participated in several *Shitbox Rallies*, travelling the outback roads of Australia raising funds for the Cancer Council of Australia. (The *Shitbox Rally* is well worth looking up on the net; the August 2012 *mxtra* covered the exploits of Peter and *Cupcake's Crusaders* in that year's rally.)

Peter had been a paramedic with Ambulance Victoria for more than 30 years, and had held many management and leadership roles within the service in the Gippsland region. His funeral at San Remo was large, and included a guard of honour by Ambulance Victoria members. Along with family, colleagues and the many friends from the varied aspects of Peter's life, it was touching to see the large turnout of members from the Club's Motor Sport group there to offer their condolences.

Peter was admired and loved by very many people and he, along with his car racing number 57, will be sorely missed. Gone, but certainly never forgotten. □

^ Ken (left) and “Princey” with their beloved 10th Anniversary limited edition NBs in August 2009



^ Peter loved the track, and Winton was a scene of many successful days under the helmet.

Motor Sport - Interstate Challenge

26.11.16 | Winton ■ Words: Murray Seymour ■ Photos: Daniel White, Graham Fletcher, David Martyn (non-member)



^ The triumphant Vic-Tas Motor Sport Team. Club Captain - Motor Sport, Randy Stagno Navarra, holds the Interstate Challenge Cup

The day finally arrives!

The planets have aligned and I don't have any road blocks in the way like vacations, weddings or important family functions to attend. Instead I'm off to Winton for a day of racing with my MX-5!

I drive in to Benalla for some fuel and food at 6.30am on a glorious sunny Saturday morning, thinking that I'm the only one up and around. That is until I see another two or three MX-5s at the Shell service station, a continuous stream of like-minded MX-5 owners up the main street at the bakery and more MX-5s pulling out on to the road from motels and hotels.

MX-5s everywhere, and all heading 13km north of Benalla to Winton Raceway for the same thing – to have some adrenalin-fuelled fun with their toys. Whether it's a daily drive, a weekender or a dedicated, highly-modified car trailered to the track, everybody is after that buzz and some friendly rivalry. Whether it's trying to beat a personal best time or beat another driver with a similar vehicle that always seems to have that edge, everyone has their target.

This time things are a little different. This time it's the interstate challenge against the MX-5 Club of New South Wales ... the closest thing Victoria has to the rivalry that New South Wales has with Queensland over State of Origin rugby!

On arrival at Winton Raceway at 7am, the pits are already filled with MX-5s, with only a handful of other brands. No WRXs or Alfa Romeos this time around. In fact considering, this was the New South Wales club's away event, I was surprised at how many members of the NSW MX-5 Club took the time to travel to

continued ...



^ Former Club Captain - Motor Sport, Tim Emery



^ Dean Watchorn puts the boot in ...

The Vic-Tas/NSW Interstate Challenge

.....

Victoria. *We were certainly outnumbered by the contingent from the north.* Looking around the pits, I could see the wide variety of people involved in this hobby: different age groups, levels of technical knowledge and professions, all bound by a common interest.

After the administration and scrutineering is done, we enjoy some general friendly jibes based on interstate rivalry and some of we Victorians volunteer our local knowledge and experience as drivers to jump in the passenger seats of visitors' vehicles to take them for a guided tour of the track at moderate speeds.

Then the morning's competitive sessions begin. These are conducted on the original 2.03km circuit with its 11 turns. This is known as the *Club Circuit* or *Short Track*. This section of track opened in 1961 and has seen such great names as James Hunt and Alan Jones on its surface.

Despite Dick Johnson describing driving Winton as being *"like running a marathon around your clothes line"*, this track does contain one of the most enjoyable sections of track that I have driven on. Known as *"the sweeper"*, as the name suggests it is a continuous curved section of road with a sudden change of direction at the end (*officially dubbed "roll-over corner"*) where the car's suspension goes from leaning hard right to hard left, with plenty of tyre squeal and sideways action. Once the car is straight, it's a bit more of a squirt on the accelerator before it's hard on the brakes to enter the first of the corners that makes up the start of the hairpins. *I love that section of the track.*

After four sessions on the short track, it's time for lunch and a break for the officials and helpers.

Break time is over and the 1km extension, constructed in 1997, is opened up for use. This combination of bitumen is known as the *National Circuit* or, imaginatively, the *Long Track*. The extension may make the track longer and allow the cars to spread out some more but I would be happy to run the short track all day.

Three sessions in the afternoon and the day's action is over.

I have had a successful day with big improvements in lap times on both circuits. *Big improvements from the driver?* Maybe. More likely the car, given several modifications since the last visit to Winton

Club officials from both sides go to work on calculating the results. I have no idea how the winners are calculated but the result is in.

The winner is VICTORIA! The cup is ours for another year, when we meet at Sydney Motorsport Park, where it's up for grabs once more!

New South Wales were the organisers of this event despite being visitors to our state. The organisation was fantastic and the event was conducted with military precision. The five run groups cycled through quickly and the dummy grid was managed perfectly. My run group's turn seemed to come around so quickly there was no time for boredom.

Clearly, with all contestants showing maturity and skill (and a bit of luck), there were no red flag incidents to delay the proceedings.

A great day was had by all! ●



^ Randy Stagno Navarra



^ Alan Conrad



^ Daniel White



^ Russell Garner (left) battles with Gavin Newman (right) and Ben Ranford (centre)

2016 City Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship | Round 8 ~ 26.11.16

(corrected points)	1st		2nd		3rd	
Overall Champion	= Dean Hasnat, Russell Garner » 70				= Noel Heritage, Simeon Ouzas » 64	
Open	Dave Moore	» 51	David Wilken	» 30	---	
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith	» 50	Tim Meaden	» 30	Steve Schreck	» 7
Super Modified	Russell Garner	» 70	Dean Watchorn	» 47	Robert Parr	» 34
Modified	Dean Hasnat	» 70	Gavin Newman	» 41	Daniel Luong	» 32
NA Clubman	Robert Downes	» 67	Tim Emery	» 27	George Vellis	» 20
NB Clubman	Noel Heritage	» 70	Max Lloyd	» 41	Peter Dannock	» 38
Standard ND	= Tim Edwards, Randy Stagno Navarra » 10				---	
Standard NC	Alan Conrad	» 60	Ian Vague	» 28	Daniel Sadique	» 17
Standard NB	Simeon Ouzas	» 64	Steve Williamsz	» 41	Ben Mott	» 10
Standard NA	Daryl Ervine	» 10	---		---	

Results [†] - Rd 8	1st		2nd		3rd	
Restricted Open	Paul Ledwith	» 1:06.2760*	Tim Meaden	» 1:10.4270	---	
Super Modified	Russell Garner	» 1:06.8250*	Dean Watchorn	» 1:08.1120	Robert Parr	» 1:13.6750
Modified	Dean Hasnat	» 1:08.9060*	Gavin Newman	» 1:10.8270	Daniel White	» 1:11.8960
NA Clubman	Tim Emery	» 1:11.1000*	Robert Downes	» 1:11.4750	George Vellis	» 1:17.0510
NB Clubman	Noel Heritage	» 1:12.3680	Murray Seymour	» 1:14.9510	---	
Standard ND	Randy Stagno Navarra	» 1:12.7800*	---		---	
Standard NC	Alan Conrad	» 1:11.9850	Ian Vague	» 1:16.7960	---	
Standard NB	Simeon Ouzas	» 1:14.9820	Steve Williamsz	» 1:15.2830	---	
Standard NA	Daryl Ervine	» 1:20.9500			* New Club lap record	

[†] Short Track only; for full results, go to: mx5vic.org.au/motorsport/motor-sport-results/

Famous Insurance - for track day insurance

■ Words: Murray Seymour, #58

Firstly, let me start by saying that I do not work for *Famous Insurance*, I am not on commission and I don't necessarily endorse them. You should always use due diligence when looking at insurance companies and make an informed decision.

Disclaimer now over, I can tell you that after seeing that Famous Insurance is a partner of CAMS, I did some research to see that they had a form of coverage for track day "incidents". After making some enquiries I found that this is an add-on to their basic comprehensive insurance.

I asked for a quote for comprehensive insurance and was surprised that the like for like coverage on my NB8A was substantially cheaper than my current insurer Shannons.

When the four family cars currently with Shannons were packaged with Famous, I made a \$1,000 annual saving. The coverage is in fact slightly better than Shannons. Legal modifications are not a problem either.

My 26-year-old daughter, who recently moved out of home, took out her own new policy and *halved* her premium.



For those involved in motor sport, you can take out the track cover for \$100 per event (per day). This has a maximum payout of \$10,000 less a \$1,000 excess (increased over the standard \$500.00 for this coverage) that would see a payout of \$9,000.

Maybe not enough for some later model cars but for the NB8A with modifications would just about cover it.

While I wouldn't necessarily take it out for every Sprint event, for Sandown Park that tends to spit out cars regularly, it would be a worthwhile proposition. ■

Personalised plates ...

■ Words & photos: Bill Roder

We all have one ... what's yours say?

We all know the deal with we petrol heads ...

... when we're driving around we can't help ourselves: eyes always out for that nice car, something a bit different. Could be an Exige or a Porsche, HSV, or something that's hotted up ...

Yeah, admit it – don't be in denial. Tell me that when you pull up at the lights next to a new Mustang or the like with one of those loud exhaust systems, you tell the good woman that it's a bit stuffy and the window needs to be wound down.

It's freezing outside, but you don't care; you get it down just as it takes off ... listen to that V8 burble. Her indoors is awake up though, and gives you that quick glance that suggests maybe that it wasn't really stuffy at all. Traffic can be very boring otherwise.

Some of us also do the mandatory check of the number plate. Hands up those who do that, come on. Just like I thought – yes, you're really smitten with this car thing, secretly having a bit of a look. Have you come out yet, or are you still in the closet, not game to admit it in case people will tell you that you need to spend some time in the room of mirrors.

Number plates ...

Some of us go for our initials with a birth date or year of the car or some combo, as our fearless Central Chapter Captain Geoff Roche has done. **GPR 001**: Geoff went to the *Vicroads* website and got plates from the '60s that had been handed back in.



Then there is the plate that makes some reference to the type of vehicle that's carrying it around, like these:

- » Marg and Mike Cemm must be kicking themselves ... they had **MIATA** on their red NA and sold it.
- » Peter Ferguson, Eastern Victoria Chapter Captain, has **PERLMX**, referring to the colour.
- » David Collins has **IZA MX5** (pronounced "It's A ...", like in *Mozart*), which he took over when the Club's former president Don Nicoll moved to Tasmania.



It's just a number plate – every vehicle has one, right?

Well yes, but some of them have had some input from you, which makes them just a little bit different from the rest. Nothing wrong with a bit of personalising, is there?

Now, there's a topic for another time.

Anyhow, where was I?





- » Geoff Cooney has **MX5 NA1**, Peter Corkran has **MX5LE**, and Mark Fitzgerald's SE carries **1MX 5SE**.
- » **mxtra** editor Murray Finlay has plain, off-the-rack **XXMX 555**.

Most plates have a bit of a story with them.

- » Stuart Robertson has **CR1SIS** on the soon-to-be-supercharged MX-5 ... Stu's son suggested that someone might be having a mid-life crisis when he took possession of his MX ("I am not having a crisis," I heard him say ... could be a wee bit of denial there).



- » Club Motor Sport Captain, Randy Stagno Navarra, has had **XITAN** on most, if not all, of his 12 or so MX-5s. No, it's not *excitin'* ... it's a Maltese word meaning *devil*. I can vouch for that; he's a devil on the track as he goes flying past me.
- » Speaking of the track, another fella who goes past nearly everybody is Colin Denman-Jones – **APTO**. Colin was looking for a word that reflected his good self on his journey through life and he figured he had '*adapted*'. Now *there's* a motto, he thought, and obviously mottos have to be in Latin. There are some technical bits but the Latin word *apto* roughly encapsulates Colin's persona. *Hope I got that right, Col.*



- » Another track dood is Dave Moore, with **BARMY**. Even though he's a Pom it has nought to do with cricket; his good wife thinks he's a bit mad.
- » Speaking of black ones (which we weren't but need to), Dennis and June Barry – **PANTHA** – had their plate in the cupboard for many years, then bought a new MX-5 which, as

you might've guessed, happened to be black. (They also have a gold panther icon inside the cabin, and got Dick Richey to repaint their wheels a special shade of gold.)

- » Chris Betts has **ARIOCH**, which was a character in a novel he was fond of. His girlfriend at the time bought the plates for him, and he liked them enough to ask her to marry him.
- » Arthur Howie did a *Vicroads* search and settled on **MX5 MAD**.
- » Collector of smurfs David Wilson settled on **SMURFR** for his new ND.

Some other great plates are **MI MXV**, **ZOOMY**, **MX5NC** and many more.

As for my plate, back in the days before personalised plates became available I wanted to buy one of those original low-numbered, two-, three- or four-digit plates at what I think was an RTA auction.

But even back in those days, the '80s, they were too expensive for me, so a few years later when personalised plates became available I went straight down and got **REGO 1**. I've had those plates on more cars than I can remember, and they look like they've been shot at (like an outback road sign).



However, the trophy has to go to the Campbells, Will and Coral. They have owned six MX-5s over the years, and still have four in their driveway ... each one with a personalised plate.

These are **MX5NA**, **MX5NB**, you guessed it **MX5NC** and zoom-zoom **ZMZMX5**.

Then Will had the audacity to try to secure **MX5ND** but was too slow off the mark ... a wee bit greedy methinks, because he figured that if he got the ND plate then naturally he would have to go and get the car to match. *I'm liking the way this man thinks.*

There are many more great number plates on MX-5s and also on many other cars. People's imagination never ceases to amaze me.

I'm not sure of the percentage of private plates in our great Club but now it's been brought to your attention I'm sure you will notice it's quite high.

Anyhow, if you see a lonely man sitting in an SE with **REGO 1** on it, don't be afraid to come and talk number plates with me.

I'm sure there won't be a queue. ■

How NOT to change the gear box oil in an MX-

■ Words & photos: Ross McKinnon

It all started with what I thought was a simple request to change the gear box oil in my 2004 SE.

I am new to MX-5 ownership, having recently bought an NB. It seemed sensible to change the diff and gear box fluids as the service records did not state when they were last renewed.

The diff was easy. However, I could not raise the car high enough at home to access the box, so I took the car to my trusty garage, who have done many jobs for me in the past and have provided excellent service.

"Your car will be ready tomorrow," they said ... would have been the same day except they had to buy a new oxygen sensor. "Wonderful," I thought.

Thus began a saga that was to last nearly four weeks.

Let me explain. Nick, real name, rang me a day or so later to tell me there was a little problem. "Oh," I said, "please explain ..."

Well, they had the car on the hoist, and Nick and his apprentice had commenced the job. Part-way though Nick was called to reception, and in his absence the apprentice had removed what he thought was the filler plug on the driver's side of the box.

For expert MX-5 owners, who know, this is a large-headed pin that holds a cross-shaft/counter-lever from dropping into the bottom of the gear box, which would prevent selection of fifth and reverse gears. »



MX-5 fire extinguishers

■ Words & photos: Peter Ferguson

Does you MX5 have a fire extinguisher?

If not, it's a good idea to protect your car in case, some time, the worst should happen – or to someone else's car and you want to be able to help.

(Of course, if you do fit one, you will have just carried out all the preparation work you need for the car to go in a khanacross! *So what's stopping you?*)

So where to fit one? ... there isn't much room in an MX-5.

The Club sells excellent brackets on the website Merchandise section, and they are only \$25.00 plus postage:

- » **NA/NB brackets:** (<https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-na-nb/37287>)
- » **NC brackets:** <https://www.tpfonline.com.au/mazdamx-5club/product/fire-extinguisher-bracket-nc/37265>

(There is an ND one coming also.)

A fire extinguisher can be bought for \$25-\$30 from lots of auto accessory shops.

The brackets the Club sells tuck neatly under the passenger's legs, directly in front of their seat (see photos). I have had them in both my cars for a couple of years and not once have they ever gotten in the way of the passenger.

Fitting is a breeze: the plates come with slots that are slipped between the seat and the floor after the front seat bolts are loosened (do not need to be removed). You MAY need to just ease the ends of the plates with a *knockometer* to bend them slightly to fit, depending on how thick your carpet is. Then simply tighten the bolts back down to clamp it in place.

You'll also need to drill holes suitable to mount the extinguisher to the plate – do this before fitting to the car.

Again, this is an easy job that most should handle with ease. ■



As was explained, the only way to fix it was to remove the whole gear box.

Nick was extremely apologetic, and said the work would be done at their cost. He said that the box would be sent out to a gear box specialist to correct, and it would be take a week or so.

Once the gear box was out, Nick rang again to say he had looked at the clutch, original after nearly 117,000 km, and suggested that it was wise to replace it with a new kit, pressure plate, driven plate, release bearing and thrust bearing, before the gear box was reinstalled. I did inspect these components; he was right, and it saved me the labour cost of a later clutch replacement.

I now have my car back. It is running perfectly. All gears select as before, the little engine warning light does not come on. As they say, all good.

The purpose of this tale is to let other NB six-speed owners, and I think NC six-speed model owners as well, to be aware that when changing the gear box oil, either yourself, or your garage if not a Mazda dealer, the filler plug is on the LEFT-hand side of the box looking to the front of the car.

The consequences of wrongly taking out the fitting on the RIGHT side of the box will be VERY expensive. ■

Below are some links on the issue

http://www.miata.net/garage/tsb/s05_112_02.html

<http://www.mazdamenders.net/forum/viewtopic.php?t=517>

http://www.miata.net/garage/6mt_fluid/



Oil for a six-speed ...

If you are changing the oil in your six-speed transmission, it's worth reading Peter Ferguson's article on six-speed lubrication. Show it to your mechanic if they're doing it for you.

See **Tech Talk** in the April 2016 **mxtra** (page 30).



Breathe life into your convertible top

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

For more information, call **0430 164 123**
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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.

Burson automotive products at trade prices



Current financial Club members can purchase automotive parts, tools, accessories and car care products at trade prices from **Burson Auto Parts** stores.

Simply ask for your discount when you purchase, present your current membership card and quote account number **112558**.

Burson Auto Parts have more than 100 outlets on the east coast. Check out the range at www.burson.com.au



Repco VIP Club retail discount

Financial MX-5 Club members may join the **Repco VIP Club** for 10% off full retail at any time, and up to another 30% off full retail with advertised offers.

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.

Repco will e-mail you online catalogues and offers.

Stretching it?

■ Words: Will Campbell PhD

Driving in convoy: the "elastic band effect"

We first published this article back in 2009, but it's worth revisiting to explain to newer members why those at the rear of a convoy sometimes feel that those at the front "must be speeding" ...

There are many facets to our great Club, but social drives continue to be popular with a majority of members.

I still thrill at the prospect of being one of a group of MX-5s driving snake-like through our State's many scenic regions and love seeing our little cars stretching out into the distance, both in front and behind me.

However, driving with a group of vehicles can be daunting, particularly for new-comers, as they try to keep up with the leader. Over the 14 years I have been in the Club, I have participated in well over 100 such events and have often heard the comment that *because a car toward the back of the pack has had to exceed the speed limit to keep up, then the lead car must also be breaking the law.*

It would be naive to suggest that this doesn't occasionally happen but, in the main, group leaders adhere to the Club's strict set of convoy rules.

So, what is going on? And why is there this perception that, because you need to speed to catch up, *then the leader is driving too fast ... ?*

It's a question that a number of us have pondered and for, obvious reasons, the situation has been dubbed **the "elastic band" effect.**



The "herd" instinct is very strong ... so the tendency is for trailing drivers to feel they have to speed to catch up and rejoin the group ...

Let's consider a common scenario

of a group of cars travelling through the open country side at 100km/h.

If we allow the required two- to three-second gap suggested in the convoy rules, then a group of 20 cars will stretch out approximately 1.25 kilometres. If the group is as large as 30, then the convoy will cover around two kilometres in length.

Of course, in any group, not all cars maintain a constant 100km/h and this often allows slower traffic to enter the convoy.

When this happens, the result is that whilst the front group continues at 100km/h, those behind the slower vehicle can be travelling at a considerably reduced rate.

However, let's simplify the situation so that our convoy consists of only two vehicles, with both initially travelling at 100km/h (see scenario tables, below).

If the second car is forced to reduce its speed to 80km/h for three minutes, then the distance between the cars grows to approximately one kilometre.

If the lead car continues at 100km/h, then for the second car to catch up, again say in three minutes, it would need to travel at an average speed of slightly more than 120km/h.

Of course, if the second car decides to accelerate only to 100km/h, then it would not catch up until the first vehicle either slowed down or stopped.

The "herd" instinct is very strong, even amongst MX-5 drivers, so the tendency is for the driver of the second car to catch up and rejoin the group.

These figures have been simplified and rounded, and some assumptions made. However, the fact remains that, in order to catch up even short time delays, speeds above the posted limit would be required.

It isn't practical for safety reasons for the lead car to constantly vary its speed so that everyone stays in convoy and retains the two- to three-second gap. However, reasonably regular stops in appropriate areas do overcome the problem.

For those new to convoy driving, it is important that you drive to the conditions and at a speed you find comfortable. If you do get behind, be patient and wait till the convoy regroups.

The Club has an excellent safety record, and it's one that we want to maintain.

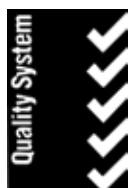
Our regular runs are meant to be fun and you should finish the day relaxed! ●

Lead car speed (km/h)	Trailing car speed during delay (km/h)	Delay (minute/s)	km apart	Distance lead car has travelled in next 3 minutes (km)	Distance trailing car has to travel in next 3 minutes (km)	Average speed required for trailing car to catch up (km/h)
Scenario 1:						
100	80	1	0.3	5.0	5.3	106
		2	0.7	5.0	5.7	114
		3	1.0	5.0	6.0	120
		4	1.3	5.0	6.3	126
		5	1.7	5.0	6.7	134
Scenario 2:						
100	90	1	0.2	5.0	5.2	104
		2	0.3	5.0	5.3	106
		3	0.5	5.0	5.5	110
		4	0.7	5.0	5.7	114
		5	0.8	5.0	5.8	116

A new option for the MX-5 owner

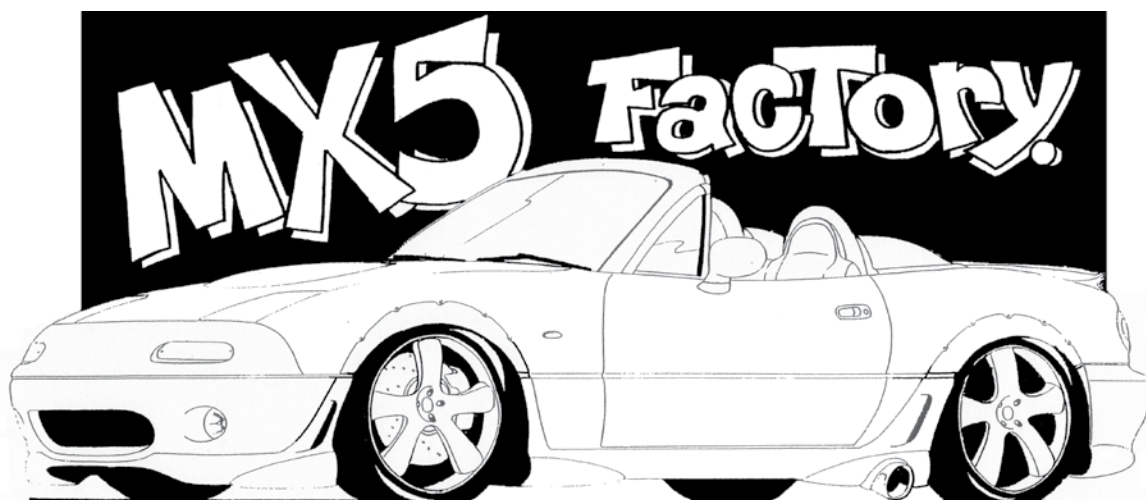
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