

# mxtra

4/2017

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

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MX-5 Club  
of Victoria

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**Inside:**

**Biennial Vic-Tas/SA weekend  
Chapter and motor sport round-up**



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**Cover image:** Philip Menezes, Jeff Green, SA's Allen Weber and Murray Finlay pop the bonnet on the old Holden at Barney's Bar & Grill in the joint Vic-Tas/SA weekend at the Grampians. Photo: Dianne Lindner



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> or post: **mxtra, Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania, PO Box 8173, Croydon VIC 3136**

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# Pete's Perspective ...

■ Peter Dannock – President [president@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:president@mx5vic.org.au)

## Fan Fest Wrap Up

In my February article in *mxtra*, I talked about the MX-5 Fan Fest held at Sandown Raceway on 21 January 2017 and the terrific day that it turned out to be. In recent weeks, the Club has had an opportunity to meet with the team at Mazda Australia to do a debrief of the event, highlighting the things that went well and things that could have been done a little better.

It is fair to say the things done well significantly outweighed the things that didn't go so well.

### So, what went well:

- » Over 1500 participants attended the day, with 477 cars taking part in the Parade Lap (a number which was confirmed by counting the cars passing a fixed camera point at the end of the straight). The Parade Lap was the main highlight of the day and the photo of all the cars on the straight was a great shot and occasion.
- » Even though it was a private event, everyone who expressed an interest in participating in the event attended. No-one was turned back at the gate.
- » On-track activity went without a hitch, with no major delays to schedules or breakdowns on track. It was felt that the mix of on-track activity was about right.
- » Everyone who wanted to sign the one millionth MX-5 got an opportunity to do so. In fact, there were still almost 300 signature spots left at the end of the day.
- » We were blessed with some great help from volunteers during the planning phase and on the day. Without them, the day would not have been as successful as it was.
- » Everyone who attended the day followed instructions to a tee. Whether it be following the parking directions or completing the

disclaimer before the Parade Lap, everyone played their part and made the day run smoothly.

- » The Sunday Run proved to be an outstanding success and complemented the Fan Fest activities of the previous day.

### And what didn't go so well;

- » There were some difficulties with the registrations. Limitations in dealing with duplicate email addresses did cause some issues in registering participants.
- » There wasn't enough food available. For those who waited in a queue for almost one hour for a coffee, you have the patience of a saint. It was fair to say the limited availability of food was disappointing.
- » Many people would have liked to purchase merchandise on the day. Whether it be Mazda or Club merchandise, there was no opportunity leave with a new shirt or hat to commemorate your attendance on the day.
- » We were overwhelmed by the number of cars entered for the Show 'n' Shine. With over 300 cars entered, judging took a lot longer than anticipated and became a little rushed.

Again, I would like to thank those in the Club who helped over the weekend. Who knows what opportunities we may get to have another event like this in the future? However, I am sure that the success of the MX-5 Fan Fest will give Mazda Australia confidence to do more events like this in the future.

### A Moment of Self-Indulgence

It has been 12 months since the MX-5 RF was announced at the New York Motor Show. Since then, we have seen it on display at the MX-5 Fan Fest, just prior to its release in Australia in late January of this year.

## For your diary ...

See the full calendar for details

### April

- 22-23 NTas Tarkine Tiger Hunt
- 23 EV Baw Baw run
- 30 CEN Trentham run

### May

- 7 EV Wilsons Prom run
- 7 WV Melville Caves run
- 14 NEV Tumberumba run
- 21 CEN Seven Shires run
- 21 STas Ross Picnic
- 24-25 EV Marysville Mid-week o'night

### June

- 4 EV Khanacross, Bryant Park
- 7 EV Lunch'n'Lies, Noojee (Wed)
- 9-12 EV Echuca Touristy weekend
- 18 CEN Fish'n'Chip San Remo run
- 18 STas Ausmas run
- 20 NEV Tuesday run - King Valley
- 25 EV Grand Ridge Road run

Well, I couldn't help myself; after test driving the MX-5 RF, I placed an order. Though I liked the Crystal White Pearl with the black roof, I wasn't as sure of the Chrome Brown Nappa leather that came with it. So, I had to forego the black roof and settle for the Crystal White Pearl MX-5 RF GT, with black leather interior.

More than two weeks has now passed since taking delivery and I couldn't be happier. The car drives and handles like a dream. The equipment level is top class and the car looks a million dollars. Though my NB and NC are great cars to drive, you truly get a sense of progress and achievement with the All-New MX-5.

All right, enough self-indulgence from me. Enjoy the months ahead, as there is still plenty of activity going on in the Club, even though the weather is getting a bit cooler.

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

Pete

## Scene about ...

■ Photos: Alana McDougall, Richard Acfield, Dianne Lindner, Marg Gillick, Karen Bradshaw, Lucas Fitt, John Waldock, Bob de Bont, Peter Ferguson





# Randy's Rant ...

■ Randy Stagno Navarra – Club Captain - Motor Sport [captain@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:captain@mx5vic.org.au)



After the crazy start to the year, this month has seemed quiet. I have to say it's kind of nice not having a couple of events on the go as it gives me a chance to catch up with all the queries that have been coming in. Hopefully by now I've answered them all. If not my apologies, and hit me up again.

On a personal note, last month was great for me as after 18 years I was able to drive a Sierra RS Cosworth again. I was also lucky to have been invited by [Motoring.com.au](http://Motoring.com.au) to do a write-up on my experience. We'll be running it in a future edition of *mxtra* but, if you have a few minutes, hop on to their website and check out the review.

*Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship – Rd 3 ~ Winton, 11 March*

This round was held over the long weekend and, as usual, we had a small field for this event. It turned out to be a very hot day but the 12 of us had a great time and the competition was fierce as always. No more so than in our NB Standard class where the top three were only separated by 0.9 of a second ... actually, the margin between first and second was only 0.003 of a second with Gareth Pedley just edging out Simeon Ouzas at the end of the day. I'm looking forward to seeing some more close battles throughout this season.

*Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship – Rd 4 ~ Sandown 23 April*

Hosted by the WRX Club, this is the first of a double-header for us at Sandown. Fan Fest was a good practice for us so we should all be set to post some good times. Entry for this event is open.

*Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship – Rd 5 ~ Sandown 13 May*

After our April warm-up we are back at Sandown with the AROCA club.

Entries for this event have been sent out. Get in early as this event fills up quickly. Being Mother's Day I urge you all to bring your mums down as we will be doing parade laps at lunch time. What better gift to offer Mum ... along with chocolates and flowers?

With our next two rounds being in the heart of Melbourne I invite everyone to come down and support the lads. It's always great to catch up with social members on these days.

Till then, stay safe and see you all at a track soon.

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

*Randy*



**Club event photos**

*Have you taken some good photos on a Club run?*

**Are you willing to share them with the rest of the club?**

*You can!*

The Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania has a SmugMug Gallery at [mx5vic.smugmug.com](http://mx5vic.smugmug.com)

Email them to your Chapter Captain, or centrally to [smugmug@mx5vic.org.au](mailto:smugmug@mx5vic.org.au) (Bob de Bont), so they can be added to the event gallery.

Please remember to include your full name for credits.

**Visit the Club merchandise online shop ...**

... for a great range of Club- and Mazda-branded merchandise:

[mx5vic.org.au/clubroom/merchandise](http://mx5vic.org.au/clubroom/merchandise)



# Membership

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

Current membership count:

**733**

and growing!

*C'day again ...*

Another bumper month with 22 new members.

On behalf of our fine Club, I extend a warm welcome to:

## Central Chapter

Eden Beavis	1994 Blue NA
Matt Brogan	1991 White NA
James Doyle	2005 Copper Red NC
Jennifer Kirkaldy & David Tulloh	2016 Soul Red ND
Dionne Lewis	2017 Machine Grey RF
Issy McAdams	2015 White ND
Jan & Stephen McMillan	2016 Soul Red ND
Alex Nguyen	1993 Classic Red NA
Richard Noble	1990 Classic Red NA
Alexandra Stuart	2004 Velocity Red NB SE
Matt Todd	1995 Classic Red NA

## Eastern Victoria Chapter

John Muldoon	1990 Classic Red NA
Ray Poletti	1993 Classic Red NA
Neil Watson	2015 Ceramic White ND

## Western Victoria Chapter

Gary Marr	1990 White NA
-----------	---------------

## Northern Tasmania Chapter

Brian & Christine Baker	2004 Titanium Grey NB SE
Lawrie & Judy Pitt	2004 Silver NB SE
Robert Sciberras	2010 Silver NC

It's around this time of the year that the occasional renewal for the coming year arrives. Whilst it is good to get in early with some things, it would be appreciated if you could wait till I've sent out the renewal email towards the end of June. At this stage, the Committee is still to discuss any change in our fee structure.

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

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# Dean Hasnat

2016 Club Motor Sport Co-Champion

Name? Dean Hasnat

Age? 40

Born? Box Hill Hospital

Current abode? Chelsea

Profession? Food import and distribution

Partner? My wife, Carmel (right)

Pets? Would like a dog but we are not home enough to look after one properly

Fave food? A good steak. Also getting into Mexican food at the moment

Can you cook? Yes, but don't much nowadays

Favourite tippie? Almost any beer. Currently in a pale ale phase. NOT Bundy & Coke!

First drive? On dad's lap

First car? 1976 Holden Gemini

First fender bender? Met a pole in Point Leo SLSC car park

Everyday driver? VW Amarok

How many MX-5s have you owned? Just one ... so far ...

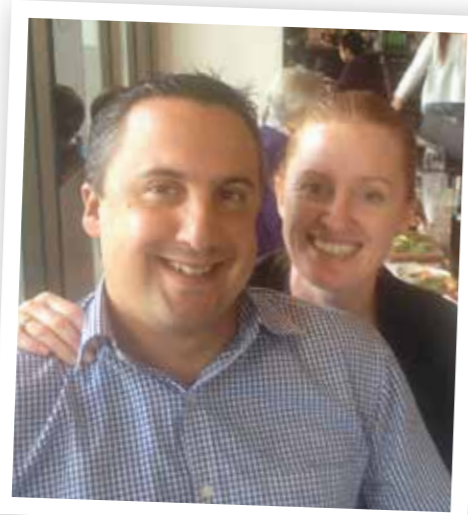
Current MX-5? 2001 NB8B

MX-5 improvements? Track day-type stuff

MX-5 dislikes? Pulling up next to a big truck at the traffic lights, realising your eyes are level (almost) with their wheel nuts, and wondering if they can see you ... ???

Why an MX-5? The most reliable and cost-effective way to get on to the fantastic race tracks we are blessed with in Victoria. The cars are simply incredible in the way they handle, and put up with being tortured around the track, lap after lap

Fluffy dice? Not likely!



## The MX-5 Club Grill

Passions besides the MX-5? My wife, two young boys, and motor sport in general

Favourite TV show / movie / book? Eric Bana's "Love the Beast" or the Moto GP movie, "Hitting the Apex"

Dream wheels (money no object)? I'd be racing Porsche Cup GT3

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? As A-to-B transport, sure

Favourite other Mazda? The new ND looks good, and the early RX-7s seem to be ageing nicely

If not a Mazda (gasp!), then what? I have a soft spot for some older classic cars, but I'm not into breaking down so I'll stick with Mazda!

How long in the Club? Coming up to four years

How many MX-5 Club runs or track events?

No Club runs, but around 25 track days

Favourite Club run/track? Winton suits the cars, but Phillip Island for the speed

Funniest thing seen at a Club event? Some of the tribal elders having an afternoon nap between track sessions

Have you been to NatMeet? No

Ford vs Holden? Holden

What's playing in your MX-5? 7000RPM

Favourite holiday destination? Anywhere with a nice beach and warm water

Footy team (AFL / NRL / A-League)? AFL - Richmond

Final comments? The cars and Club are a great way to get a legal fang. The track crew are very welcoming. I remember turning up at my first track day and Noel Heritage (who I'd never met at that point) waved me into a garage next to him. Then when I arrived at my second track day Leon Bogers (who I also had not met at that point) waved me into a garage space he'd been saving.

I'd encourage anyone who is thinking about trying a track day to get out and have a go. With a small amount of prep the cars are ideally suited, and you only need to go as fast as you are comfortable.



Dean in action at Phillip Island



Kai & Taj, helping with the post-race wash

## Chapter chatter ...

4.3.17 | Southern Tasmania ■ Words & photos: John Waldock ■ Organisers: Maureen and Garry Whittle



Our twilight putt putt golf run was enjoyed by 14 MX-5 cars on a wonderful sunny autumn day.

After a quick chat and briefing, we set off, tops down. We took the scenic drive following the back streets of Rosny College car park, through Montagu Bay, Rose Bay and Lindisfarne to Geilston Bay. Our route took us along Derwent Avenue, which enabled us to enjoy the vista of the Derwent River from suburban Lindisfarne. Our convoy turned left on to the East Derwent Highway, and travelled through to Grass Tree Hill Road via Risdon Vale.

We wound our way through the corners of Grass Tree Hill Road, prior to turning on to Back Tea Tree Road. We meandered through the farming country side, via Tea Tree Road, through to Campania where we had quick comfort stop and that friendly natter and banter amongst Club members.

Leaving Campania, we headed back along Colebrook Road, turning in to Fingerpost Road. We then travelled on to the Tasman Highway which took us to Brinktop Road. Our route took us through some of the picturesque Cole River Winery region. (No time to stop for wine tasting; maybe next time.)

We then journeyed to the historical township of Richmond, travelling over



## Twilight golf run

the Richmond Bridge, through Richmond and arriving at Nate's Restaurant situated within the Barilla Putt and Play golfing complex at Cambridge.

Some of our members displayed their various golfing skills at putt putt golf prior to an enjoyable evening meal of pizza and pasta. Some of us even had a wee dessert. Lots of giggles were heard amongst the members as the occasional golf ball went astray.

Of note was Maureen with two holes in one, whilst our fearless leader, John, was observed utilising his mathematical skills to calculate the angles required to convert his trusty putter into a wedge, to chip his golf ball out of play.

An enjoyable afternoon, highlighted by wonderful weather, magnificent scenery, and great company. ●

## Martin Benders to retire ■ Peter Dannock

Martin Benders, the Managing Director of Mazda Australia, will retire this month.

After 32 years with Mazda, the past four as Managing Director of Mazda Australia, Martin, left, has continued the company's sure and steady growth and record annual sales and market share.

Throughout his tenure, our Club has enjoyed terrific support from Martin, whether it be our biennial NatMeet gathering, our Club awards functions or the recent MX-5 Fan Fest. He has been a big supporter of the MX-5 and this has resulted in there being no other car club in Australia that has enjoyed greater support from their vehicle maker than our Club.

Vinesh Bhindi, right, currently the Sales

Director at Mazda Australia, will become the new Managing Director on Martin's retirement, and I am confident we will retain the same level of support from Vinesh.

We would like to wish Martin and his family the best of luck for his retirement; he will always be welcome to join us on any Club run or event in the future. ■



See more photos at mx5vic.smugmug.com

# Chapter chatter ...



5.3.17 w | Northern Tasmania ■ Words: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Alana McDougall, Rosh Dhillon, Bruce Harvey

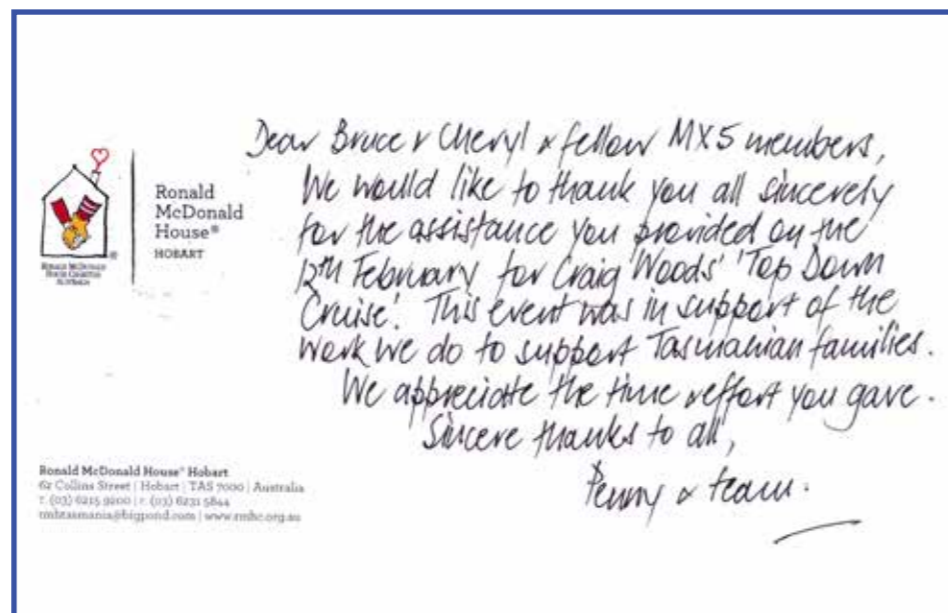


Along with every other car club in Northern Tasmania we recently received an invitation to take part in a fundraising drive, primarily for convertibles, on 12 February to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House.

On the morning of the drive, 12 MX-5 Club members assembled along with the organisers ... but, after waiting nearly 40 minutes past the start time, it was obvious that no-one else was coming ... very disappointing.

Through the generosity of our members, we raised \$200 for this great cause *and* we had a great day out with a drive to Devonport and lunch at Sandra and Keith's home. ●

~ Bruce Harvey



■ Organiser: Bruce Harvey

*The swirling fog gave the streetlights an eerie aura as we made our way in to Launceston for our dawn drive to the east coast.*

The plan was very simple: a 7am departure from Launceston, up and over the infamous "Sideling", a bit of a detour through the Derby back road and then 30-odd kilometres of the exhilarating Weldborough Pass to St Helens for breakfast/brunch ... all without encountering any other traffic – successfully as it transpired.

Eleven MX-5s and 16 bodies had set their respective alarms and were at the start point, and we had set off before the 7am radio news had finished.

The lovely people at the *Bayside Inn* in St Helens were happy to provide what turned out to be a smorgasbord of hot and cold food for an incredible \$18.00/person and such was the morning that, while seated in the outdoor dining area, it was easy to transport ourselves to a Mediterranean resort.

Limitless tea and coffee and gallons of fresh orange juice prompted one absorbed member to say out loud "I wonder what the poor people are up to." We probably overstayed our welcome, so nice was the morning; however – fed, hydrated and rested – we set off for the

second half of the day. After a cruisy drive down Tasmania's equivalent to Victoria's Great Ocean Road, interrupted for a photo opportunity at one of the many scenic viewing spots and posing for the international tourists, we arrived at the turn that would take us to the small town of St Marys via Elephant Pass.

Another 20km further on from St Marys, we turned right for the detour through Rossarden. Unfortunately (or not, depending on your point of view) the road was liberally laced with chicanes in the form of potholes that had not yet been repaired after some bad weather. A short history break to stretch the legs on the Rossarden picnic area was taken before we re-joined the main road at Avoca.

Perhaps when we have our next dawn run we'll head west initially to avoid the vision problems caused by the low sun angle, but it was agreed unanimously that this will not be the last early morning run in Northern Tasmania! ●



▲ L-R: Michael Lindsay, Richard Wassom, Samantha & Rosh Dhillon and Rob Davies



▲ On the beach at Four Mile Creek on the Great Eastern Drive

## Chapter chatter ...

**8.3.17 | Eastern Victoria** ■ Words: Lori & Mary Mercieca ■ Photos: Peter Ferguson, John Poletti  
■ Organisers: Leeanne & David Evans

*Well, anyone who has done the Lunch & Lies run knows that it is usually held in Noojee, but our wonderful Eastern Victoria Chapter decided it was time for a change ...*

... and what a great change it was – to the beautiful historic town of Walhalla. And, of course, the Chapter didn't let us down with the weather – it was another picture perfect day.

Even though we only had a minute to spare as we got caught up in traffic trying to get out of Melbourne, we managed to meet the others at *Obsessions Café* in Trafalgar for a morning cuppa.

We headed off on our way to Walhalla, driving through some lovely Gippsland towns including Willow Grove, Erica and Rawson to our lunch stop at Walhalla's Star Hotel, affectionately known as "*The Wally*". There were about 20 of us for lunch, with a few newcomers, and we all enjoyed the meal and chat.

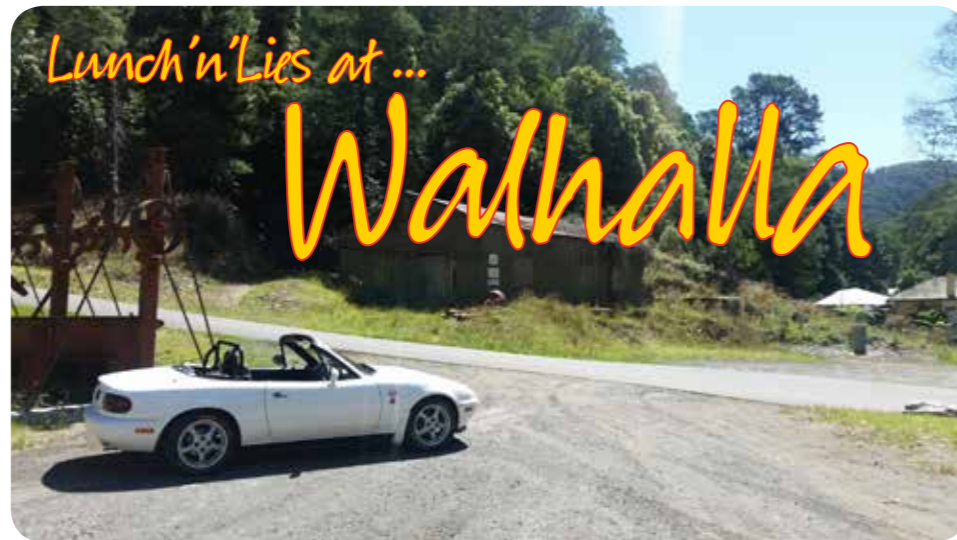
After lunch we headed off for a walk through the beautiful little township, taking the obligatory photo with the rotunda.

Around 2.30pm we headed off on our way to Moe, through Tyers and Yallourn North. At Moe, we stopped off at Macca's for coffee and more chats about the wonderful day we had had, before we all headed off on our separate ways home.

We must say a big thank you to David and Leeanne Evans for organising this wonderful run. For us, one of the best things about the MX-5 Club is seeing parts of Victoria that we have never seen before, but of course the **best** thing is the beautiful people we have met.

One thing we must mention is that Peter Gillies' ears must have been burning because we all wanted to know from Ferg how he was going, and we can't wait to have him out on the roads again *zoom zooming* around. Speedy recovery mate.

Till the next run ... ●



^ Walhalla's famous rotunda and star Hotel



^ Leeanne, Lori, Mary and David

## Vic-Tas/SA Clubs' biennial get-together

**10-13.3.17 | Club** ■ Words: Richard Acfield ■ Photos: Dianne Lindner, Richard Acfield  
■ Organisers: Richard & Lorraine Acfield

### 2017 Grampians Discovery

*What a fantastic weekend!*

The fun began on Friday with a convoy from the west in South Australia that departed Taillem Bend, and a convoy of Victorian members from the east that started in Beaufort.

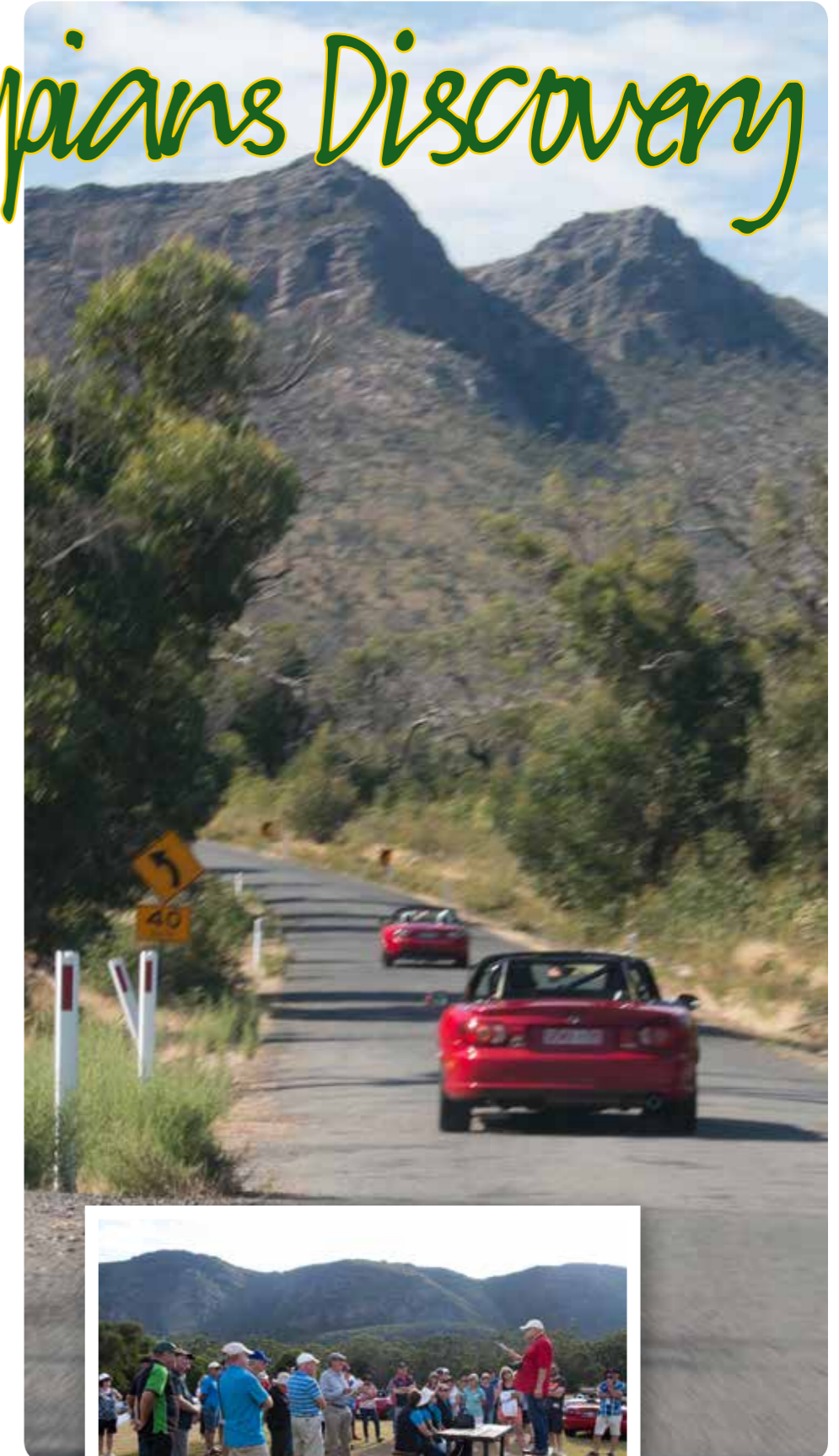
After arriving and checking in at *The Grampians Motel* we early arrivals congregated on the motel balcony for drinks and greeted every car as it arrived. We soon had a bubbly crowd of 51 chatting away as if they were old friends (which many were), enjoying a drink or two and watching the sunset over the ranges behind us. We then went to dinner in the motel dining room and enjoyed a two-course meal ... and stayed till late.

The following day we assembled on the grass in front of the motel for a photo opportunity and a briefing. Dianne Lindner stood precariously on a step ladder (steadied by her husband Richard) to take the wide-angle shots of the 28 cars lined up in three rows (see p 14-15). We had grown by one car as Jeff Woolf from the Western Victoria Chapter had joined us for the morning run to Wartook.

The cars were split into two groups to reduce congestion on the Grampians roads; I then led the first convoy out on to Grampians Road, and we were followed 15 minutes later by Kerry Reynolds and his convoy.

Mt Victory Road over the central spine of the Grampians was obviously designed with MX-5s in mind, as it twists, turns and undulates through mountain forests. We duly arrived at Reids Lookout for a short stop and a look over the cliffs before heading out once again. The next 15 minutes were bliss as we descended into the Wartook Valley along the still-twisting road ... but unfortunately we caught up to a Lexus driver doing 20-30km/h who obviously never looked in his rear view mirror. He finally turned off and we were on our way once again. This was one of the few times this happened; most drivers, when they saw a procession of

*Richard delivers the drivers' briefing > on Saturday morning ...*



✓ The first night pre-dinner gathering

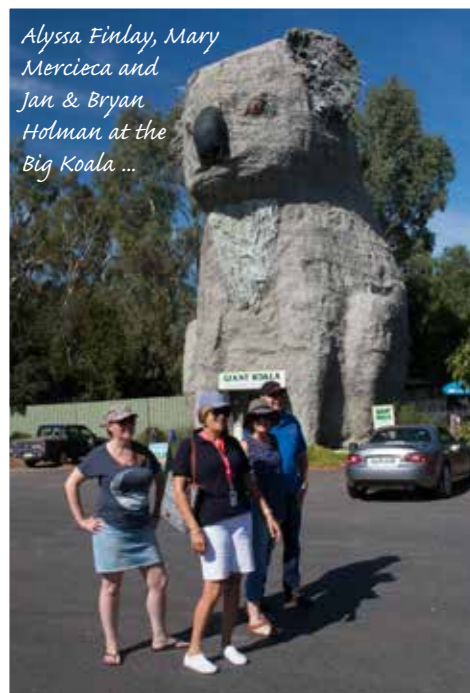
Where's that bloody bus? >



MX-5s following them, pulled over to let us pass. Lots of waves and toots followed. The second group got an uninterrupted run.

The going heading west on Roses Gap Road was gentler than the road over the ranges, but heaps of fun with its sweeping curves that allowed a faster cruising speed. The scenery was spectacular and the expected run-ins with the local wild life didn't occur. On arrival at the Western Highway we turned north-west towards Dadswells Bridge.

At Dadswells Bridge, 14 cars parked under the Big Koala for



Alyssa Finlay, Mary Mercieca and Jan & Bryan Holman at the Big Koala ...



a short rest break, sheltering in the shade of the bus stop as we waited until the second group caught up. We headed off to our lunch at the Wander Inn near Wartook, with the second group following five minutes behind. On this leg of the run the scenery changed once again – we were now on flat and mostly straight roads with olive groves and vineyards flashing by at regular intervals.

Lunch at the Wander Inn was very good and great value. We dilly-dallied there a bit before heading back over Mt Victory Road for a short stop at McKenzie Falls. The trip back to the motel was up over the mountains again and then via the little-used Silverband Falls Road, which was a fantastic piece of road and the highlight of the afternoon run.

Dinner that night was a BBQ in the motel grounds, and the food was terrific and plentiful. Gentle rain fell



McKenzie Falls

# 2017 Grampians Discovery ...



continuously throughout the evening but we were undercover and the temperature was mild so we just ignored it.

On Sunday morning we arose bleary-eyed to a bright sunrise and slightly-damp roads. This run was expected to be the pinnacle of the weekend and our expectations were certainly met. Firstly we did a hillclimb up Mt William along a narrow and twisting road that was quite challenging and, after regrouping at the top, descended at a moderate clip. Spectacular views and lots of gear changes made this a fun run. At the bottom of the mountain we found the second group patiently waiting so as not to meet us coming down as they went up.

Having assembled at the base of the mountain we left the second group to discover the thrills of Mt William. We headed south towards Dunkeld along gently-curving and undulating roads, through forests most of the time, and

with the Grampians looming high on our right the whole way. One car had a narrow miss with a startled kangaroo; evidently it almost collected the MX-5 but some quick reactions (from the driver, not the kangaroo) averted a disaster. After a 30-minute break in Dunkeld it was off again towards the Victoria Valley on the western side of the Grampians.

Victoria Valley Road was deceptive; it started out narrow but fairly straight with no traffic ... this lulled us into believing that this was going to be easy. After about 15 minutes, however, things got exciting; we approached a saddle between the hills and found ourselves entering the Mirranatwa Gap which was spectacular – or so the passengers told us afterwards.

We drivers were so busy concentrating on the blind hairpins that seemed to go on forever and then changed direction, we were unable to take our eyes off the road. Rejoining the Dunkeld-Halls Gap Road, we headed to our lunch stop at Pomonal. Lunch was at Barney's Bar and Grill, which is inside an old shearing shed that displayed a lot of old tools (no, not the drivers!), rusting corrugated iron,



A grand tour through a grand old landscape



Victoria Valley Road

concrete ... and even a makeshift cinema! The atmosphere was terrific, with the noise level reflecting a happy group of MX-5 people after a successful run. After lunch we split up to do our own thing for the afternoon, and met up that night at the Halls Gap Hotel for our final meal together.

Once again the food was very good – and the largest serves I've ever seen. We were the last to leave the hotel dining room and straggled back to the motel for a well-earned sleep.

Monday morning saw people busily preparing to leave. The South Aussies were away first and the rest departed in dribs and drabs. Lorraine and I stayed in the dining room until everyone had been in so we could say goodbye to all.

The weekend was a raging success, due to careful planning and the assistance of a few Club members. Will Campbell helped with the selection of lunch stops and Lockie Storey assisted with the run routes. Bob De Bont researched and then compiled all the run notes, saving me a lot of time and angst – there were quite a few comments on how easy to use and accurate they were. ●





# Chapter chatter ...

11-12.3.17 | North-Eastern Victoria ■ Photos: Marg Gillick, Bob de Bont, Karen Bradshaw, Lucas Fitt, Lockie Story, Loz Thomas ■ Organiser: Gerry Engwerda



Day 1 ■ Words: Loz Thomas

*Eleven cars and their 19 occupants gathered on a brilliant sunny morning at McDonald's carpark in Wodonga, all ready to enjoy a great weekend run to Jindabyne.*

After the mandatory coffee and a chat, Gerry gave us a briefing and welcomed us all including visitors from other Chapters (Greg & Kerry, Ian & Jan and Bob from the Central Chapter, and Ian & Karen, Lockie & Tracey and Neil & Mary from the Western Victoria Chapter).

At 9.30am we left Wodonga and followed the shoreline of Lake Hume to Tallangatta, and then over one of my favourite roads, the Granya Gap, before reaching our first morning tea stop at Walwa where Bill and Elaine joined us.

After our caffeine fix and more chit-chat we headed on to Khancoban and entered the Kosciuszko National Park. The roads were in top shape and the views spectacular. Tumut Ponds was our lunch spot, and a beautiful spot to sit and enjoy the views. We were getting ready to leave when a Porsche and Jaguar pulled up. We waited until they left ...



^ Lockie salutes a great mountain road

*and then another five minutes to give them a head start!*

We arrived in Adaminaby for our afternoon tea break, but not before we did a mandatory U-turn after missing the turn off near Cabramurra. Following the Snowy Mountain Highway we turned in to Kosciuszko Road and went through to Berridale. While we regrouped in Berridale, the Porsche and Jaguar went past ... we'd given them a five-minute head start and we still beat them! 😊 We continued on and made it to Jindabyne around 4pm.

Our accommodation for the night was *Panorama Hotel* (formerly known as the Ski Inn).

After checking in, some gathered to enjoy a couple of beers/wine on the verandah that offered spectacular views of Lake Jindabyne. It was unfortunate that the accommodation booked a function after we had booked, which meant that we were unable to have dinner there ... so we all had to get back in the cars and drive to the *Jindabyne Hotel*. No loss though ... it's a great pub on the banks of Lake Jindabyne and the meals were excellent.

It was an early night for most and a long night for some as the function carried on into the late evening causing disruption to sleep. For some this was compounded by noises coming from the kitchen in the early hours of the morning. Needless to say the *Panorama Hotel* will not be getting our business next time.

**All in all a great start to the weekend! Looking forward to Day 2 ...**



^ Handsome bunch ... too many to name!



*Lake Jindabyne from the hotel*



^ Three wise monkeys: Gerald, Roger & Shane



Day 2 ■ Words: Ian Sonderhof

*The day started with a great breakfast looking out at the magnificent view of the lake and the mountains.*

But there was no time to waste and at 9.10 on a warm sunny morning (22°) we were away to Walwa. No stopping at *The Distillery* this time and just a passing wave to Thredbo Village before the obligatory stop at Dead Horse Gap.

Lots of laughs and some great group pics but a very short stop as the clouds were rolling in, the temp had dropped to 14° and the wind was howling through The Gap and up the legs of our shorts.

Morning tea was at Geehi Flats Camping Ground on the banks of the Swampy Plains River where the kangaroos abound. So quiet and picturesque ... but no rest for an MX-5 fanatic; a few more group pics in front of the historic Geehi Hut and the order was given to start up.

It was warming up nicely as we headed for Khancoban and enjoyed the sound of Ian Bradshaw's exhaust through all those beautiful cuttings – it's a wonder he didn't shake a few more rocks loose! (It was good to catch up with so many considerate drivers on the way down, who pulled over to let us go charging through).

What a great sight it was as we drove out in to the open country – especially for we City Slickers. Cattle contentedly resting under the giant riverbank trees, fields of many colours and the far-off mountain ranges a beautiful dark blue green. You North-Easterners really are blessed to be living in such a beautiful part of the world.

**Right on midday we crossed the border back into good old Victoria – you really can tell the difference. Just 10km further on and with much tooting and waving Jan and I had to take the turn off to Corryong and "The Big Smoke" while everyone else carried on to Walwa for lunch and no doubt many more laughs and talk of great past trips and even better ones in the future. ●**

See more photos at [mx5vic.smugmug.com](http://mx5vic.smugmug.com)

# Chapter chatter ...

**19.3.17 | Eastern Victoria** ■ Words: Emma Solberg ■ Photos: Leanne Evans, Bob de Bont, Peter Ferguson, Luke Reid & Kearen Bradshaw ■ Organiser: Peter Ferguson

*Though the morning started out dark and foggy, it was not long before the sun broke through to kick off what would prove to be a beautiful day out in Gippsland (no clouds allowed on Eastern Chapter runs, right?).*

Meeting in Longwarry, we had a chance for some good-hearted banter and group photos before starting off ... in what appeared to be the complete opposite direction from that which I was expecting, quickly making Pete and me feel lost but following along enthusiastically nonetheless.

Skirting around Warragul, we headed south towards Poowong for a quick break and some more photos of the lineup. Once rested, it was off into the hills past Ellinbank and on to what was one of the best roads of the trip. Winding along the edge of the Mount Worth State Park, we were at once afforded some fantastic corners and a gorgeous view over the valley. The road stopped short of perfect, however, at least for those of us up front, when we encountered a green Ford, who was apparently oblivious to the fact that the half a dozen or so of us following him clearly wanted to be doing more than a mere 60km/h! It did at least provide Pete with some fuel to crack some bad Ford jokes over the radio.

Eventually we shucked off this nuisance and had an almost-clear run north to Noojee. Here we unfortunately had to split from the group at large for a while, as we had not booked ahead for lunch at the Noojee Pub; however, we did manage to squeeze ourselves into the pub at a bar table outside with all the Harley Davidson crew. Turns out we got a treat: a seat right next to the band, so we didn't feel like we were missing out on much. If the rest of the meals were as scrumptious as our fish and chips were, then I'm sure the group lunch was fantastic too.

After a short walk by the river we regrouped at the car park. Here we waved farewell to some, while those of us who remained had a little fun filming a video of us all passing underneath a very fancy drone before we kicked off the drive back to Trafalgar down another great windy road through the beautiful forest that surrounds Noojee.

The day was concluded with iced coffees at the café in Trafalgar with talk of car parts, the pros and cons of ND ownership and the general chit-chat, all rounded off with Mark and Helen complaining of their knob being too hot as they left. [Ed's note: Helen is threatening to knit a gear knob cover as the aluminium knob gets waaaaay too hot in the sun!]

**We had great weather, great roads and great food – as if we'd allow anything else in the Eastern Victoria Chapter!** ●



See more photos at [mx5vic.smugmug.com](http://mx5vic.smugmug.com)



**19.3.17 | Southern Tasmania** ■ Words & photos: John Waldock ■ Organiser: David Pitt

## Lunch run to Dover



*It's great when someone else organises a run. We get a great day out, less stress for the chapter captain and run notes as well.*



The run started at Rosny as usual with beautiful blue skies greeting us as we assembled. A very healthy group of 13 cars departed (*on time!*), heading south towards our lunch destination.

The drive south of Hobart via Fern Tree offers some lovely driving roads and views towards Bruny Island and the Channel area. Apart from the occasional cyclist brightening our day with their lurid lycra, the morning was going well, with a quick

wave at the pub which features in the ABC program "Rosehaven". Alas, no TV cameras there as we trundled merrily past.

Once past Huonville, a short drive led us to Franklin for a coffee and rest break. As well as an opportunity to "caffeine up", I had the chance to tell the story yet again about the respraying saga of my rims (*my wheels, not my glasses!*).

Once the line to the toilet had disappeared, we headed back on to the road towards Dover.

Overall the drive south is about 100km, but it feels longer due to the change in terrain, scenery and winding roads.

Upon our arrival at the Dover RSL club we tabled up and ordered food while more stories about rims and spray painters were told. The great views from our table also provided a talking point while we waited for our meals.

Lunch servings arrived and they were enormous! Silence descended as everyone tucked in. Those who had been eyeing the dessert menu prior to lunch now declared 'they couldn't fit in another thing'.

Despite some of the group mentioning postprandial naps, we climbed into our cars and wended our way back to Hobart.

**A few keen members headed back via Police Point Road, a favourite stretch of tarmac which loops and winds its way along the coast.** ●



See more photos at [mx5vic.smugmug.com](http://mx5vic.smugmug.com)

# Chapter chatter ...

**19.3.17 | Northern Tasmania** ■ Words & organiser: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Bruce Harvey, Jill Steer

*A bundle of desirable things might include ... a drive in your MX-5, a glass of Tasmanian craft beer, cider or wine and a full-of-flavour curry to finish.*

We were able to combine not only all of these things but were able to add some great company including Central Chapter visitors Lori and Mary Mercieca.

We started this perfect day late – 3pm to be exact – at the Launceston Motor Museum with 13 buffed MX-5s eager to enjoy the late afternoon warmth. Michael Lindsay, alias *Kochie*, had planned and refined the run route over the couple of days prior and was eager to get us moving. The mandatory briefing complete, we set off and – despite several sets of traffic lights – were able to maintain a reasonably tight group on

the way out of the city centre. *Kochie's* formative years were in the rural area south-east of Launceston so he knows the roads well and he soon had us criss-crossing the best of them.

More great roads in a westerly direction had us at the base of Mt Blackwood (aka the Poatina hill). Heading south now, the ascent began initially only as far as the village at Poatina. It was here unfortunately that Trevor's car managed to find the part that had not been rebuilt and leaked some fluid from a tiny hole in the radiator. The ladies elected to stay and console Trevor while the rest of us

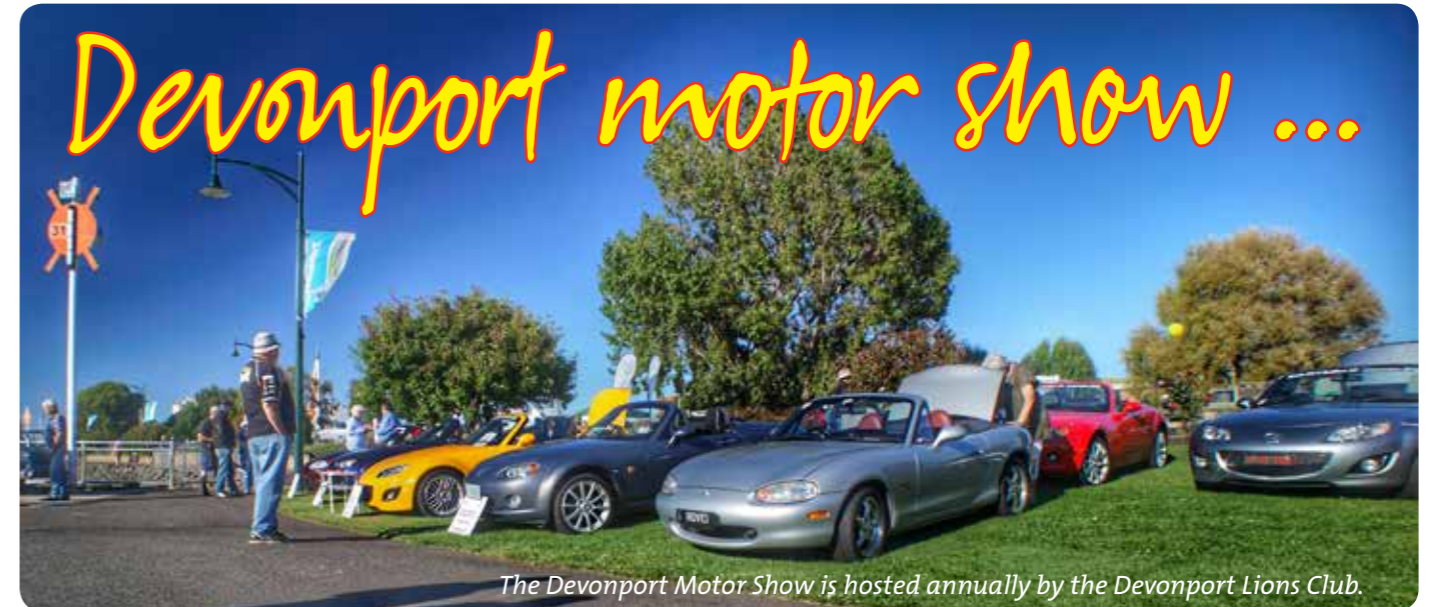
continued to the top of the mountain and back, having thoroughly enjoyed the trip up and down.

With the next destination *Tandy's Ale House* (Trevor Simm's new business venture), *Kochie* was able to combine a great series of roads that led here and finished the driving part of the day in a satisfying way.

**So how can I rate this day in Tasmania ... the ale was faultless, the food heavenly, the drive perfect and the company – well it made the day divine. ●**



**19.3.17 | Northern Tasmania** ■ Words & co-ordinator: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Alana McDougall, Rosh Dhillon, Bruce Harvey, Jill Steer



The Devonport Motor Show is hosted annually by the Devonport Lions Club.

The Mersey River banks hosted around 550 cars for the 2017 event. Our Club display, complete with banner and posters, was popular with the crowds and plenty of pictures were taken. ●



# Chapter chatter ...

26.3.17 | **Central** ■ Words & photos: Bronwyn Roche ■ Organisers: Karen & John Palmer

*Some people dream about driving a sports car ...*

*Some people dream about owning a sports car ...*

And some people are living everyone else's dreams and were driving their MX-5s around the fabulous hills north of Melbourne on John and Katrina's navigation run. *Who needs a Formula 1 car, even if it is F1 Grand Prix day?*

Starting at Yan Yean reservoir on the Plenty River, the run gave us plenty to enjoy:

- » plenty of corners and curls
- » plenty of views across hills and valleys
- » plenty of fun and a BBQ lunch afterwards
- » plenty of work for navigators looking out for the clues to answer the navigation quiz.

Run participants had a choice of three pathways from Yan Yean to Healesville, via sealed local back roads. We looped around Arthurs Creek, Cottles Bridge, Pantons Hills, Hurstbridge and Christmas Hills – the place names are a big clue to the ups and downs roads in the area.

Then we all got to drive up to Kinglake via the Myers Creek and the Kinglake-Healesville roads. *Shhh, don't tell anyone but these solid gold roads still have 100km/h sections and were practically empty on the Grand Prix day.*

Thanks to John and Katrina (and their son Matt) for organising the trip, quiz and catering – we love those home-made choc chip cookies. Thanks also for not dobbing on anyone who opened the cheat sheet map!

If you think your MX-5 looks good in the garage, you should see how good it looks, and performs, out on a Central Chapter run, discovering new ways of getting from A to B.

**See you on the Trentham run on 30 April – also starting at Yan Yean reservoir. Zoom Zoom. ●**



28.3.17 | **North-Eastern Victoria** ■ Words & organiser: Loz Thomas ■ Photos: Loz Thomas, Ron Gillick



*After meeting in beautiful Beechworth at the bakery and enjoying morning tea and a catch up, the group of four cars sedately made our way to Stanley under police escort.*

Arriving in Stanley the lead vehicle kindly veered left and we went right, leaving Gerald to lead the way down the Stanley range. A short but ferocious storm the day before had left a lot of leaf litter on the road, so caution prevailed on some of those tight twisty corners.

With some rainfall over the last week or so, the countryside had greened up and with clear blue skies it was a perfect day to be out and about and enjoying some of our great roads and spectacular scenery in the North-east. We had it all in the first part of the drive with brilliant sunshine one moment then fog the next as we traversed the top of the ranges.

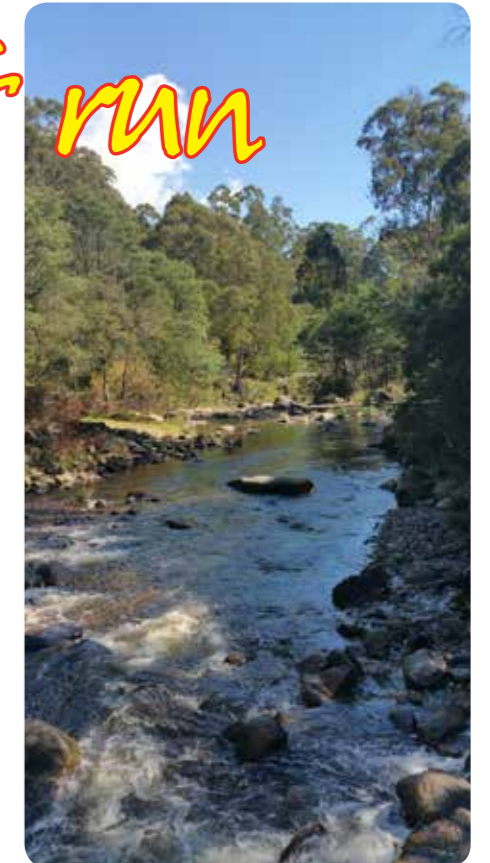
Lunch was at the Bogong village picnic grounds alongside a beautiful mountain stream. Continuing up to Falls Creek we had to be patient with a number of cyclists who didn't look like they were having as much fun as we were.

Arriving at the Wallace Hut car park, Gerald decided that the 750m walk to the hut was probably going to be a bit much for his still recovering ankle which was severely fractured in a motorcycle accident 15 months ago. He had planned to enjoy a quiet coffee and cake, but was ear bashed by an elderly couple who were there when we arrived and were still there when we left an hour later. Wallace Hut is one of the oldest huts in the Alpine National Park and, surrounded by snow gums, is one of the most photographed and picturesque huts.

It was then on to another hut, Cope Hut, which was first used as a ski refuge in 1929. On-mountain accommodation has come a long way since then!

Leaving Falls Creek we made our way back to Mt Beauty and Bright and finished the day with ice cream at the Bright Berry Farm.

**Another great Taking it Easy on Tuesday run! ●**



# Phillip Island Classic Festival of Motor Sport



19.3.17 ■ Words & photos: John Poletti, Eastern Victoria Chapter



*One day, sometime in the not-too-distant future, the Goodwood Revival historic motor racing meeting (in England) WILL be on my yearly planner!*

... but for now, the Phillip Island Festival of Motor Sport is the go-to event in this country to get your fill of famous and exotic thoroughbred, and sports racing cars.

A 7.30am start for myself (NA), Ray (NA), Murray (NB) and Bob (NC) to meet up with Randy(ND) at San Remo at 8.30am for a coffee break.

After said heart starter, we made our way in convoy to the track. I recommend anyone thinking of going next year to get there well before 9am as the fans were arriving in droves as we made it to the ticket box.

Just as spectacular as the racing is the amazing array of classic cars that fill the general car park! Everything goes ... the best of British – MG, Morgan, Triumph, Jaguar, Aston Martin, etc. The Italians were there – Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Ferrari, and Lamborghini.

It's also great that the Japanese marques are now gaining true classic status with many Nissan and of course **Mazda** sports cars on display, one being an original and un-restored Cosmo. These "George Jetson"-styled rotary-powered wonders are making big \$ numbers at the auctions. Of course, no classic event is complete without the

thumping V8s, AC Cobras, Mustangs, Camaros, GT40s and own home grown heroes, GT Falcons, Toranas, Monaros, Pacers, and Chargers.

Feature driver for this year was Tasmanian multi-championship winner, John Bowe. We were lucky enough to bump into him in the pit paddock where Randy had a *fan boy* moment! We also had a quick chat to Kiwi great, *Gentleman Jim* Richards, who was there to pilot a black and gold beauty, the brutish JPS BMW 635csi.

Marque of the event was the turbo power house from Ford UK, the Sierra Cosworth RS500. It was this car, according to Randy (who owned a Sierra Cosworth himself), that put an end to Group A touring car racing, not the Nissan GTR *Godzilla* as is widely believed. *Why?* Because without the dominance of the Sierra Cosworth worldwide, the GTR would have never been developed. Lined up in the pit garage (another fan boy moment for Randy!) were the ex-Sierras of Allan Moffatt, John Bowe, Colin Bond, Tony Longhurst, Glenn Seton, and a replica of the famous black and dayglow orange TEXICO cars that dominated Bathurst in 1987, only to be disqualified on a "technical" infringement.

Our Club Motor Sport 2IC, Gavin Newman, was there in an official capacity as one of CAMS' starting grid officials. He took the time to run us through how things are done – *thanks Gav!*

**It really doesn't matter what manner of classic Autotechnica you fancy, the Phillip Island Festival of Motor Sport will have something to take your fancy. Put it on your yearly planner for next year. ■**



# Oh sh\*t! Keys locked in (NA) boot!

Words & photos: James Lang

On the recent Eastern Victoria Chapter run to Bright, I was absent minded when I opened the boot of my NA outside the Mitta Mitta pub, put my keys in my coat pocket, took off my coat and then put my coat in the boot and then closed it and then said to my wife – “I think I have just done something really stupid.”

Early model NA's did not come with a remote boot release.

There was nothing I could do immediately so we ordered lunch and asked the other Club members if they had any good ideas which did not involve breaking the key barrel or taking to the boot lid with an axe ...



Extended stop in Mitta Mitta

Since I did not want to damage my car I thought I would call the RACV – I have Total Care coverage – to see if they could offer any help, and they said they would organise a mobile locksmith to open the boot and get me out of my predicament.

Luckily, Mitta Mitta is not such a bad place to be stuck in for a few hours. Eventually I got a call from the mobile locksmith who asked me if I had spare keys at home, and if so, could somebody take a close-up photo of the spare key and send it to my phone? Then the locksmith could get an idea of the key profile as a starting point to shape a replacement key. Luckily my eldest daughter was at home and took a photo of the original primary key and sent it to me via Facebook.

When the locksmith arrived he looked at the photo of the primary key and said that, with the five-digit number on the key, cutting a replacement key would be a simple matter. Wonderful stuff! The locksmith then used an app on his smartphone to come up with the key profile, and then entered this data into a small computer-controlled key milling machine in the back of his van.

The key profile was displayed on the milling machine's screen and it was fascinating to watch as the milling tool removed metal from the blank in the correct places. Once that was done he removed the new key from the machine, and then opened the boot.

**All this was achieved in under five minutes!**

I certainly got my money's worth from my RACV membership as the \$350.00 call-out fee for the locksmith was covered with the Total Care package. The spare key now resides with my wife's car keys in case I am absent minded again in the future ...

## So, if you own an early model NA – what can you do to prevent this happening?

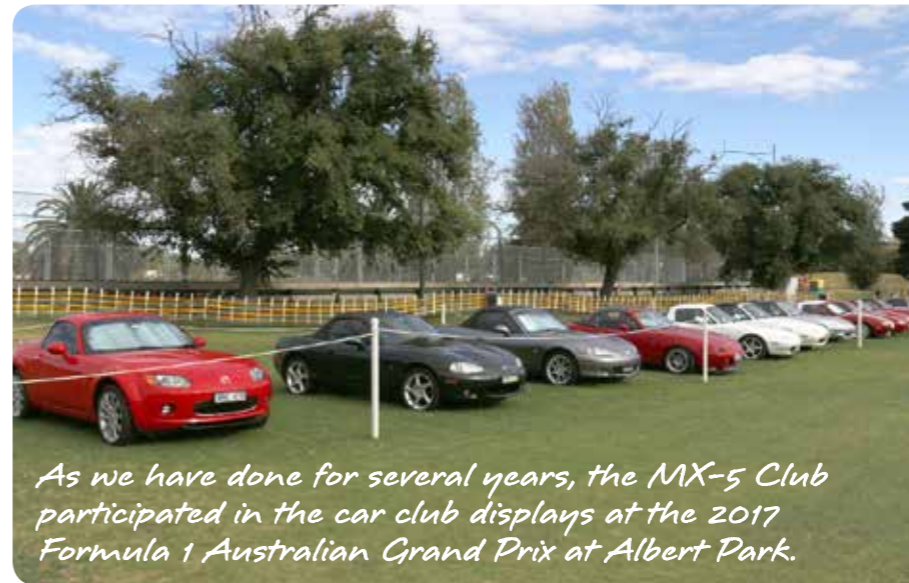
1. Attach a spare key to somewhere under the car – super low tech!
2. Fit a cable-operated remote release from a later model NA
3. Fit a remote electric boot release – a suitable unit is available from Jaycar Electronics (catalogue number LR8834) and retails for \$40.00
4. If you are in my “Mitta Mitta” predicament and are up the creek without a paddle and have no other options ... you can remove your rear number plate and, using a 20-25mm hole saw, drill a hole in the right-hand side ‘dimple’ which is below the right-hand number plate attachment screw. Then use needle-nose pliers to grab the actuator rod and open the boot. Seal up the hole with a rubber blanking grommet. **Crude but effective.** ■



Boot solenoid

# Club display at the AGP

Words & photos: Peter Ferguson



As we have done for several years, the MX-5 Club participated in the car club displays at the 2017 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix at Albert Park.

An email went out and you had to be quick responding to secure one of the 15 places. There was a cost of \$30 per car but for this each owner received two passes for the four days, so it was a pretty attractive deal.

Our display was near the corner of Albert and Queens Roads and well away from the main “goings on” on the other side of the track where many of the more formal displays are and where the cars are pitted. This was OK on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, but it got VERY busy on Sunday with probably three times the Saturday numbers. We put our chairs directly opposite a big screen and speakers so were kept well informed on the event even though we could only see a relatively short section of track.

There were lots of other club displays to look at. As well as the MX-5s, there was a big display of Toyota MR2s, Holdens, Cobras, Sprites, Triumphs (including some nice sports cars – TR3, TR4, TR6 etc), Vanguard's, American Iron, Minis, rally cars (current and historic), Subaru's, Mustangs and, with a fairly short walk, other niceties such as Fiat's (not so close that we were annoyed by the rusting noises!), Aston Martins, Porsche's, Alpine's, Renault's, Citroen's, Datsun/Nissan, MG's (too bad about the oil leaks on the grass!) etc etc. All in all some really nice stuff.

The various practices for the GP was great to be around and V8 Supercar racing drew really strong interest from the crowd – I wonder how they will maintain this interest once Holden and Falcon are defunct ... ■



# Round 3: small on turn-out, huge on fun!

2017 Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship | Round 3 - 11.3.17



*The heat is on!*



Randy Stagno Navarra



Robert Downes

Round 3 of the Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship saw a return to Winton Motor Raceway, with the rain from Round 2 being replaced with sun and enough heat to transform some cars into portable ovens capable of cooking your family's Sunday roast.

With the event being run over the Labour Day weekend there was a relatively small turnout primarily made up of the usual suspects. The field of MX-5s was further thinned with several late withdrawals including Peter Dannock whose car refused to start the night before the event after making the trip all of the way up to Benalla earlier that day.

Despite the reduced field, a great day was had and the competition wasn't by any means hampered with the three Standard NB drivers being separated by less than 0.1 seconds at the end of the day. New lap records were also set by Randy Stagno Navarra and Alan Conrad in their respective classes.

11.3.17 ■ Words: Gareth Pedley ■ Photos: Susan Gallus, Suz Gallus Photography



Tim Meaden



Dean Watchorn



Noel Heritage



Randy Stagno Navarra



Andrew Tate

The day saw each run group getting five sessions and, with the event being hosted by the WRX Club for the first time this year in our Championship series, the Long Track configuration was used throughout the day. A few sessions after lunch, oil was dropped on the track ... all the way from Turn 2 to the pits by a WRX. This marked an earlier finish than normal however, with some solid sessions under the belt and the heat, it's safe to say some were relieved to be packing up and cranking up the air conditioning to maximum for the drive back to Melbourne.

It was good to see no MX-5s having any major incidents on the track, with only Alan Conrad cracking a front brake disc, Simeon Ouzas having to replace a split heater hose (thanks to those Club members who supplied him with spares to get back on the track) and Randy Stagno Navarra battling with his overheating phone as it refused to record. In addition, everyone generally stayed on the black stuff, although a few did give the fillings in their teeth a good workout whilst driving over Turn 8's exit kerb, with some drivers reporting reduced grip and

more understeer than normal through this corner.

Round 4 of the Essendon Mazda Sprint Championship will see the first scoring event of the year at Sandown Raceway. The event is being hosted by the WRX club with registration through their website. I'm looking forward to seeing a strong contingent of MX-5s! ●

## Round 3 results / Championship standings



### 2017 Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - Round 3 | Winton - 11.3.17

Long Track	1st	2nd	3rd
Restricted Open	Tim Meaden » 1:41.3041	---	---
Super Modified	Dean Watchorn » 1:38.5654	---	---
NC/ND Modified	Alan Conrad » 1:40.7676 *	---	---
NB Clubman	Noel Heritage » 1:45.6377	Murray Seymour » 1:48.5739	---
NA Clubman	Robert Downes » 1:45.9767	---	---
Standard ND	Randy Stagno Navarra » 1:43.0296 *	---	---
Standard NB	Gareth Pedley » 1:47.6268	Simeon Ouzas » 1:47.6290	Steve Williamsz » 1:47.7104

\* New Club lap record

### 2017 Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship - after Round 3 | Winton - 11.3.17

(corrected points)	1st	2nd	3rd
Overall Champion	Alan Conrad » 310	Robert Downes » 300	Noel Heritage » 215
Open	Dave Moore » 100	---	---
Restricted Open	Tim Meaden » 200	---	---
Super Modified	Dean Watchorn » 100	---	---
NC/ND Modified	Alan Conrad » 300	---	---
NA/NB Modified	Leon Bogers » 100	Daniel White » 75	Gavin Newman » 60
NB Clubman	Noel Heritage » 200	Murray Seymour » 150	Peter Dannock » 100
NA Clubman	Robert Downes » 300	George Vellis » 75	---
Standard ND	Tim Edwards » 100	Randy Stagno Navarra » 100	---
Standard NB	Steve Williamsz » 210	Ibrahim Rafel » 200	Gareth Pedley » 190



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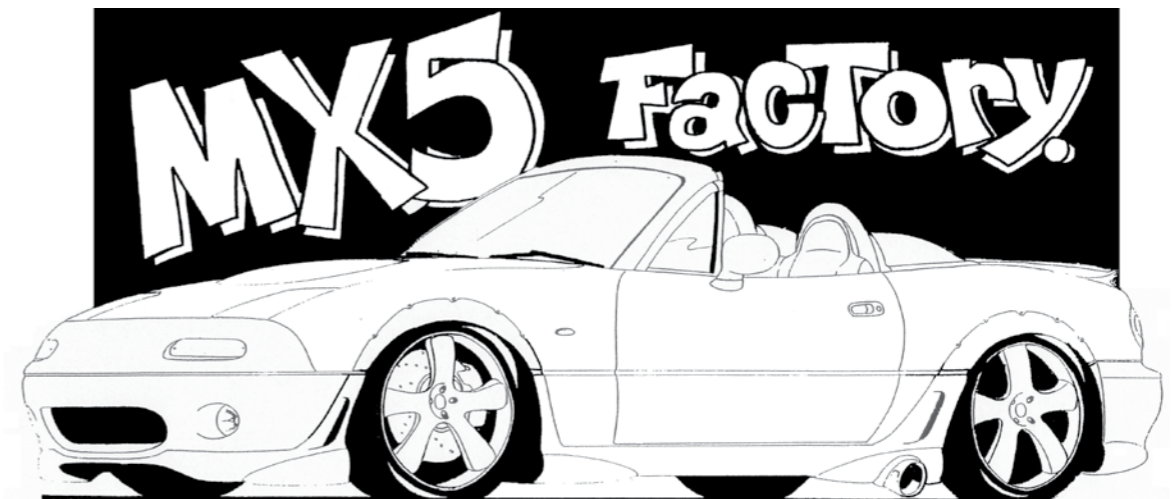
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