



Ron's lesson in **Aussie logic 101**

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MX-5 Club
of Victoria

Print Post Publication: 100018450

Inside:
772: another membership record!
Replacing the NB battery
Behind the scenes at motor sport



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7/2017

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Cover image: *The sign warns of the dangers of crocodiles and says "Keep away from the water's edge". So ... where did they put the sign?*
 Photo: Marg & Ron Gillick, in Kakadu



Find us at:
MX-5 Club of Victoria

mxtra is the monthly newsletter of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania Inc (#A0021659A).
 PO Box 8173, Croydon VIC 3136. Registered for Print Post: 100018450

All contributions are welcome. Please send articles and photos (as attachments) to the editor, **Murray Finlay**:

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Pete's Perspective ...

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

Another Membership Record!

The **2016-2017 membership year** has ended with another record membership of **772 members** across our six Chapters in Victoria and Tasmania.

What a great effort, without a doubt due to the great people who make up the Club, in conjunction with the world's best-selling two-seater sports car that we all love.

This record could not have been achieved without the many members who renew each year. As we close one membership year and open a new one, it is important that you renew your membership for 2017-2018.

For those that have already renewed their membership, thank you. The Club looks forward to providing you with some great drives, motor sport and social events in the year ahead.

Handover at Central

As I have said on many occasions, the reason for this strong club is a great car, great people and those people in the Club who step up and volunteer to help run the Club.

A great example of this willingness to get involved has been our Central Chapter Captain, Geoff Roche. Three years ago, Geoff stepped into the role as Chapter Captain under difficult circumstances and has done an outstanding job. Not only has he brought some stability to the Chapter, but the Chapter has had a regular schedule of great drives and events over that time. It would be remiss of me not to also recognise the support that Geoff has received from his wife Bronwyn and the Assistant Chapter Captain, Bob de Bont; both have been a terrific support to Geoff.

As of the end of the current membership year (30 June), Geoff has stepped down as Chapter Captain for the Central Chapter

and John and Katrina Palmer will replace him. Bob de Bont will stay on as Assistant Chapter Captain. So please welcome John and Katrina to the role when you are next on a run; I am sure they will get the same support that members provided to Geoff.

On behalf of the Club's members and Committee, I would like to congratulate and thank Geoff for his magnificent work over the past three years. We wish Geoff and Bronwyn the best for the future and look forward to them both joining us on many more runs to come.

Annual General Meeting

To ensure that the Club runs smoothly and efficiently, the Committee oversees the Club's statutory requirements, whilst fulfilling the needs and wishes of the membership.

In this governance role, it can and does delegate responsibilities outside the Committee (eg, Chapter Captains), whilst retaining an overarching responsibility of club prosperity and viability.

All members have the right and an opportunity to determine who is on the Committee. On Wednesday, 9 August at 7pm, the Club will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Albert Sailing Club. There are several ways you can participate in the process of shaping the Committee:

- » **Join the Committee:** if you would like to join the Committee, put in a nomination.
- » **Attend the AGM:** come along to the AGM and have your say in who is on the Committee.
- » **Submit a proxy vote:** if you can't be at the AGM, you can submit a proxy vote.

[All forms relating to the AGM can be downloaded from the event listing in the calendar in the Social section of the Club website.]

By now, you would have received the information regarding the AGM. Please take the time to review and act on the information provided. A strong club has a strong Committee and it is the membership that ensures that the Committee remains strong.

If you have any questions regarding the AGM, please feel free to contact the Club Secretary, Bruce Gray (secretary@mx5vic.org.au).

New Members' Night

Our latest **New Members' Night** was held recently at Essendon Mazda with almost 60 members in attendance. Not only was it a great night to get more information on the Club, but a great night for like-minded members to share their experiences and have a chat.

Thanks go to Daniel White and his team at Essendon Mazda for hosting the night and providing the catering. It was great to be amongst the showroom of cars, including a number of MX-5s on display.

We will make sure we don't leave it as long until the next New Members' Night.

Annual Awards Luncheon

The **Annual Awards function is coming** in the next few weeks. This year the Annual Awards will again be a lunchtime event – on **Sunday, 6 August**, between 12pm and 3pm at the Mazda Australia head office in Mulgrave.

Put the date in your calendar and see the member email or the flyer on the website calendar (or with the print version of this magazine) for more details.

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

Pete



Scene about ... *new members' night*

■ Photos: Geoff Roche





Randy's Rant ...

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



Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship ~ Rd 6, Phillip Island – 1 July

I've just arrived home from an amazing day at the Island.

Thirty-two competitors enjoyed the beautiful if cold weather and most of us came back with our own PBs ... including myself. The fastest father/son combination were at it again with just over 0.5 of a second separating Ray and Dean Monik. I think this is going to be a very interesting battle in the months to come.

Also, for all you concours lovers out there, I highly recommend that you check out the Monik machine, as you will not find a better-finished or well-kept MX-5 on the road ... never mind on the track. There will be an article in next month's *mxtra* about this event.

Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship ~ Rd 7, Winton – 13 August

We are back up at Winton with the WRX Club. Entries should be out any day soon. This will be the only chance we get to practice for the Winton 12 hour later this year. So I'd encourage anyone who is going to take part in the 12 Hour to get some practice in for that event.

Phillip Island 6 Hour ~ 29-30 July

Both teams are pretty much set, but we still need a few more helpers for this event. So if anyone is free for the weekend or just one of the two days, please let me know. It takes quite a bit to run these events and I do know from past experience that it can be quite tiring if you haven't got enough helping hands.

We had a couple of fun social events this month. The first was a motor sport dinner that was a lot of fun. It was great to catch up in a more relaxed environment, and not have to worry about lap times for a change. Judging by the banter that was going on this half-yearly catch-up could become a regular event.

The New Members' Night was very entertaining too. Apologies for my stumbling speech! I'm certainly no public speaker, but I enjoyed catching up with both new and old members and hopefully got to answer everyone's questions. It still surprises me that some members believe that you need a dedicated race car to take part in our Sprint series. Your daily ride is more than

capable of doing track duty. Back in my May Rant I did outline what is required to put your car on the track. My ND is my daily drive and in 20 minutes I can have it ready for track duty. *I still think being on a race track is safer than going for a quick blast down the Great Ocean Road.*

Now that the result is out I can let slip that a couple of months ago I had the pleasure of helping out *motoring.com.au* with their **Australia's Best Drivers Car (ABDC) Award** which was held in Tasmania. Tested over some amazing roads and at Baskerville Raceway, it was great to see that the judges must have been looking over my shoulder and used my top three as the eventual winners (sorry I had to say that, Matt Brogan). I won't give away the winner; hop on to their website and check out the results.

I can definitely say it was an amazing experience and I got to drive some cars that I could only dream of. There were loads of highlights but there are two that I'll mention.

Firstly, driving the last Aussie V8, the **HSV GTS-R W1**, will be something that will stay with me for ever. The handling, incredible performance and sound of this car is something to behold. It shows that we can really build great cars here in Australia. Such a shame that they will be consigned to history. **Secondly,** I also got to drive an **Abarth 124 Spider**. Well, what can I say? Fiat have taken a brilliant car and dumbed it down to a good car. Chassis is great ... of course; it's a Mazda. The looks? Well, I don't get the retro thing. Why would you want to make a new car look 50 years old is beyond me. To say nothing about the fact that the original 124 was a 2+2. The proportions simply look wrong. Then there is the engine; so much turbo lag that a Mazda2 could possibly out-sprint you if you're caught in the wrong gear. I have no doubt that by buying the MX-5 you are getting the better car.

Now it's time for me to sit back and wait for *Top Gear* to contact me for a gig on their show.

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

Email them to your Chapter Captain, or centrally to 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





Membership

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

Current
membership
count:

378

and growing!

Another record membership: 772 members in 2016-17

G'day again ...

A new membership year and we're already off to a good start, with 378 new and renewing members since 1 July.

With a final count of **772 members** for 2016-2017, the Club continues to show a very healthy rate of growth. Renewals have been rolling in over the last few weeks, but I expect this to continue for the next couple of months. Notices were emailed or posted in mid-June, but if you missed out please give me a call on 0413 066 093 or email me at membership@mx5vic.org.au.

Since my last report, the following folk have joined our ranks. I wish you all a hearty welcome:

Northern Tasmania Chapter

Ruth Deans	1992 Classic Red NA
------------	---------------------

Eastern Victoria Chapter

Fiona Muldoon	1990 Classic Red NA
---------------	---------------------

Western Victoria Chapter

Aaron Smith	2004 Velocity Red NB SE
-------------	-------------------------

Central Chapter

Ian Brown	2006 Silver NC
Sandra Elliott	2001 Classic Red NB
James Kennedy	2000 Black NB
Isaac Kong	1989 Classic Red NA
Bernadine, Jared & Sarah Lampard	2005 Galaxy Grey NC
Brad Magee	1991 Green NA
Rafael & Maria-Luisa Rodriguez	2016 Ceramic White ND
Craig Salter	1999 Silver NB
Len Scott & Wendy Miller-Scott; Walter & Kerry Scott	2017 Soul Red ND RF

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

Will

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Steve Reid

The MX-5 Club Grill

Central Chapter, and new Committeeman

Name? Stephen Walter Reid

Age? 69

Born? Melbourne

Current abode? The Basin

Profession? Retired (builder)

Partner? Barbara, my lovely wife of 37 years

Pets? Golden Retriever, 10 weeks old

Fave food? Italian

Can you cook? Just to survive

Favourite tippie? Southern Comfort (on the rocks)

First drive? 1962 Ford Falcon

First fender bender? While waiting to do a right hand turn hit from behind

Everyday drive? Toyota Rav 4

How many MX-5s have you owned? Two

Current MX-5? 1990 Classic Red NA and 2016 Soul Red ND

MX-5 improvements? None – both standard cars

MX-5 dislikes? No glovebox in the ND

Why an MX-5? Mid-life crisis – plus the most comfortable seats for Barbara's back condition

Fluffy dice? No way

Passions besides the MX-5? Family life – four kids and six grandchildren



Favorite Club run? Yea to Euroa to Lake Nillahcootie via the Highlands

Have you been to a NatMeet? No

Ford or Holden? Toss the coin each way

What's playing in your MX-5? Smooth FM 91.5

Favorite holiday destination? Fiji/Phillip Island

Footy team? Geelong (Go Cats!)

Final comments? We wanted to join a car club that is organised, fun times, see our fabulous country, and meet people with a common interest. My wife and I have enjoyed being members of the MX-5 Club and look forward to many fun times ahead.



Favorite TV show/ movie/ book? news, docos and sport, Paint Your Wagon

Dream wheels? Range Rover Sports

Would you drive a Daewoo or SsangYong? Better than walking

Favorite other Mazda? CX-7

If not a Mazda then what? Jeep SUV

How long in the Club? Three years

How many MX-5 Club runs? Not enough ... average of one every eight weeks (time out for illness)



The Longest Table ...

■ Words, photos & organiser: Loz Thomas, Chapter Captain, North-Eastern Victoria Chapter

The Hospital Research Foundation has its major annual fundraiser called "The Longest Table".

Similar to other fundraisers such as **Girls' Night In** and **Australia's Biggest Morning Tea**, money raised goes to help fund research and finding lifesaving treatments for cancer.

On 16 June I hosted, for the third time, a dinner in my own home as part of *The Longest Table*. I chose this particular event to be part of because it's a small group and 100% of money raised goes to the cause – none is lost to administrative costs.

I also love to cook and have friends over for dinner and I wanted to help in some small way in raising money for cancer research. My sister is a breast cancer survivor, thanks to this research and subsequent successful treatment, and my brother sadly lost his battle with brain cancer three years ago.

This is why I am passionate about supporting this event.

Over the last six weeks I went around to many businesses in Bright and surrounding areas to ask for donations of vouchers and prizes that I could raffle on the night. I also approached the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania to ask for support. It was very much appreciated to receive a donation from our fantastic Club.

It was a *Black & White* affair, and 33 of my gorgeous friends got out their little black dresses and strings of pearls for a three-course dinner and a night of entertainment.

There were also five amazing waiters (my husband Shane, right) being one of them) looking very dapper in their tuxedo t-shirts. They worked like troopers throughout the night serving meals, making sure everyone's glasses were kept topped up ... and doing all the dishes.

It was a privilege to have Kelvin Glare, retired Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, as a guest speaker.

It was a hugely successful night with, to-date, \$7,269.00 raised. ■



*Thank you to the
Mazda MX-5 Club of
Victoria & Tasmania*



My table is still open for donations until the end of July. If you would like to donate, please go to www.thelongesttable.com.au and find my table, "Lozza's on Paiano".



Chapter chatter ...

7.6.17 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Leeanne Evans ■ Photos: Peter Ferguson, June Teeuw & Leeanne Evans ■ Organisers:

A nice mid-week drive and lunch in front of an open fire. What could be better?

This Wednesday run saw a small group of 10 – 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 six cars leave Trafalgar on this very cool but sunny day in early June. Remember this is an Eastern Victoria Chapter run and nearly all the time we can drive with our tops down!

The 50-minute drive to Noojee was a very pleasant drive; we had the whole road to ourselves which was great, including a section through tall, straight-timbered forest with beautiful ferns – beautiful surroundings, corners and some great stuff.

Mel had a great time sitting next to Peter ... she actually enjoyed the view! *This sure beats being at work!*

We arrived at the *Toolshed* in Noojee, ahead of the four cars from the Central Chapter: Bruce and Jenny Gray, Peter and Sue Gillies, Mary and Lori Mercieca and Bryan Holman. It was so good to see Peter again and driving his MX-5 with a black bra on!

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 that it's moderately busy even during the week, and another car club arrived shortly after us. No wonder: great roads from whichever direction you approach, top notch pub-style food and really nice surrounds.

In all, 17 people attended and enjoyed a very leisurely 2.5-hour lunch. It was great to see everyone, especially with the very cool weather we'd begun to experience in early June. After lunch, Derek said his goodbyes and was gone, while the rest of us just sat back and enjoyed the warmth of the fire.

At the car park, we said our farewells to Bruce and Jenny, Bryan, Mary and Lori, Peter and Sue from Central, and our Chapter Captain Peter had to get Mel home so she could collect grandchildren from school. This left Alan and Ed, Keith and June (who we *think* are from our Chapter) and John Moore ... and of course 'Bumble Bee' (David and me) driving home through Neerim South and Nilma. Alan and Ed drove straight home, which just left three cars heading for coffee at the *Gippy Goat* near Yarragon.

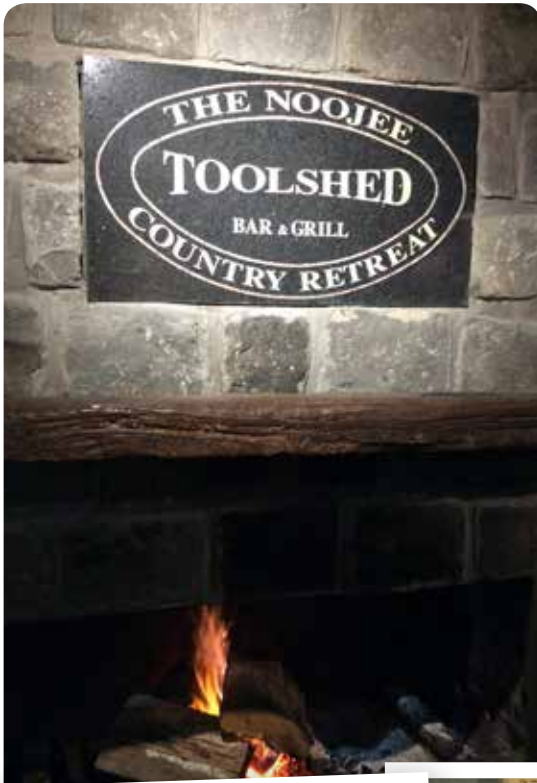
Great weather, great company, nice roads and a top setting – this does beat being at work! Must do it again next year! ●





David & Leeanne Evans

Lunch & Lies at ...



^ Peter Ferguson and Mel Lees; Mary Mercieca and Ed Laine; Leeanne Evans;
June & Keith Teeuw, Derek Pickard, John Moore and Bryan Holman

Chapter chatter ...

9-12.6.17 | Western Victoria ■ Words: Club members ■ Photos: Karen Bradshaw, Bob de Bont ■ Organisers: Karen &

Echuca Touristy run

Friday:

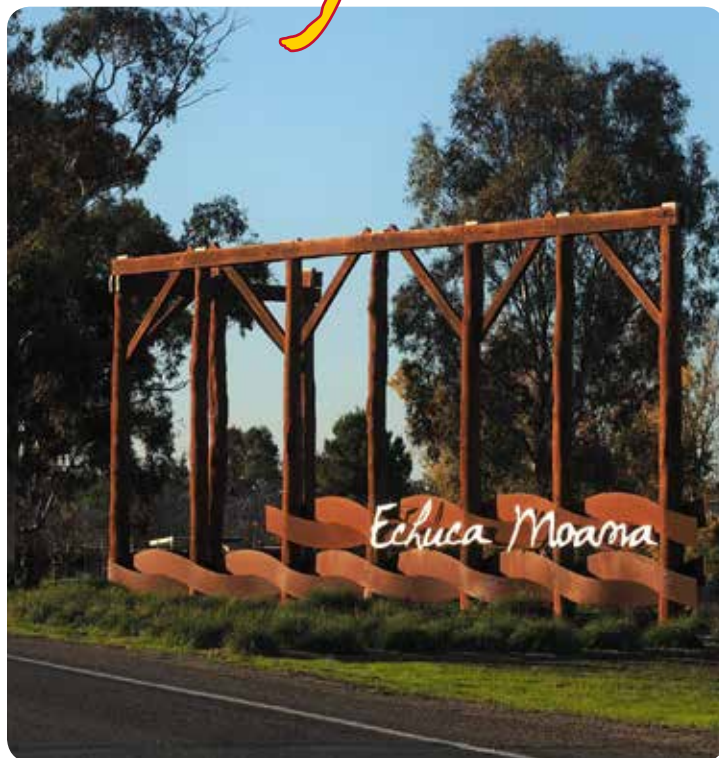
We met on a beautiful sunny day for this time of year at Lucas, at 10.30am for a coffee (which our Chapter Captain thought was better to wear than drink), before an 11am start.

A drive through Daylesford and Woodend for a stop at chilly Romsey for lunch and to pick up another four cars. A scenic drive through Lancefield and onto the Burke and Wills track over the Great Divide to Mia Mia. We then skirted the eastern side of Lake Eppalock.

An afternoon stop off at Lake Cooper vineyard for a wine tasting and nibbles of cheeses, olives, salami and crumbed prawns all courtesy of the hosts at the winery delighted us all. Not a bad drop I may add. We then travelled on an unsealed road for a few kilometres to take the shine off the cars, before re-joining the black top to Echuca. After a couple of drinks and settling into the *Golden River Motor Inn* we walked to the bowls club at Moama for dinner.

A chilly walk back to the motel for socialising where some decided a late night was in order.

~ Chris & Patrice



Saturday morning:

On Saturday we awoke to a cold but lovely sunny day that just got better as the day progressed. First stop was the Port of Echuca, discovering all the tourist attractions on offer and deciding when we would go for the obligatory ride along the river on a paddle steamer. One of our favourite stops was at the *Echuca Chocolate Company* where we sampled liqueurs flavoured with chocolate, orange or white chocolate ... all very yummy. Needless to say we walked away with bottles and, of course, some chocolate – more yummy!

~ Lori & Mary

We woke on Saturday to another beautiful Echuca day. It was a “do whatever you like day”, so we wandered down along the wharf, had a cruise on the *Mary Ann* then hit the shops for a very productive afternoon shopping! We finished the day off with a great barbecue and drinks at the motel.

~ Gwenda

^ The Port of Echuca (sounds weird!)



✓ Found him! Alan ... and "Wally" (aka Ed)

Saturday afternoon:

Walking in to the Steam Rally, the first stop was a stand for amateur radio. Being a keen operator, Ed was getting information on aerial options. A lot of this technical information went over my head, so he told me to go on ahead and he would follow. I had no idea the show was that big and I knew Ed and I would not meet up again in the crowd of hundreds. After doing the rounds, the search was on (Ed is known as "Where's Wally" as he wanders off all the time on our runs). Meeting up with Ian and other MX-5ers to establish a time and meeting place, no-one could find him. We both have Garmin trackers and after Wally was finally located back at the amateur radio stand, our Garmin steps were compared; he did 7,000 and I did 12,000 ... my extra 5,000 were searching for Wally, and unfortunately also resulted in a hole in my shoe!

~ Alan (Laine)

On Saturday Lawrie and I caught the bus to the Steam Rally and watched my son's wood chopping competition and the displays of steam engines and machines, old trucks and classic cars.

After catching the bus back to town, we did our groceries for the stir fry and bought an electric wok as the BBQ wasn't big enough. We also decided to buy a dozen oysters for our afternoon tea. We tried to be greedy but we felt guilty when Gwenda walked passed, so we shared one. Hmm ... I wondered what the peasants were doing that day. We had a good time hanging out in the BBQ area with the whole group waiting for the BBQ to cook and get stacked on the stir fry. I wish I had cooked more. I didn't think it would be that popular!

~ Virgie



Sunday morning:

It was a short walk from the motel to the Sunday market in Moama, where we found a hive of activity. A short walk further across the road brought us to the lovely Horseshoe Lagoon and the reconstructed foot bridge through wetlands and gum trees.

~ Jan & Kevin

Ian and I were the last to leave for the market, meeting some of our members on their way back with their bags of goodies! We wandered around and bought a couple of things, but mostly we sat and enjoyed the sun while listening to the great music. We headed back to the motel for a lunch of leftovers from the BBQ the night before ... fuel for the afternoon's activities.

~ Karen



Masterchef Bob >



^ 2, 4, 6, 8 ...

^ Top: Patrice and Chris
Above: Ian, Lori and Mary

Chapter chatter ...

Sunday afternoon:

After lunch the majority headed to the Moama Military Museum and winery where more supplies were purchased, and a number of Devonshire teas (and coffee) were consumed. With an earlier-than-expected finish, the group decided to visit the Great Aussie Beer Shed which included all things to do with beer and an amazing display of beer cans. As well as the beer collection, there is a vast collection of historic items sourced locally and from afar.

~ Bob

In the afternoon, Sue and I took advantage of the sunshine in the MX-5 and with the top down completed a loop, firstly out to the Perricoota Station, about 30km downstream on the NSW side of the Murray river. The historic packing shed has been converted to a restaurant and function centre providing good food and wine overlooking a quiet branch of the river. From there we headed out to Barmah to check out the red gum forest, which is known to be the largest in Australia (and therefore, the world). The return trip to Echuca on the Victorian side was not too exciting but overall the round trip was a great way to spend Sunday afternoon. Future MX-5 visits to Echuca could include a lunch at Perricoota Station – highly recommended (hint! hint!).

~ Sue & Ian

After our afternoon activities, we settled down for drinks and nibbles again in the BBQ area, once the hunger pains began, pizzas were ordered from the pizza shop up the road and delivered to the hungry, chilled hordes in record time – yum, yum! After indulging in the pizza we settled down again in Bob's room for our nightly chin wag.

~ Karen & Ian



✓ Putting the "GI" in VirGIE; Karen's traditional morning greeting; Lyn and Sue enjoying the, er, brisk conditons



Monday:

We woke Monday to find it very foggy and a bit chilly. Never mind: we still headed off to Torrumbarry Weir with the roof down! We were down to five cars including local members Phil and Kylie Masters. On the way we met with some very well-trained milking cows heading in the opposite direction – not the least bit concerned about us! By the time we arrived the fog had cleared to a dull, cloudy day. After we walked over the weir, inspected the fish ladder then some watched a video of the history of the weir, we headed off towards home via the long way, with the plan to have lunch at Lockington.

~ Karen & Ian

We stopped at Lockington to discover the only food store in the town was staffed by three ladies who were unable to "multitask", being unable to cook/process more than one order at a time. After 45 minutes, when they were yet to commence cooking any of our burgers, we gave it up as a poor joke and left disappointed and unfed with three cars heading west, then south to skirt Bendigo and find a bakery in Maldon which could (nearly) process our order and supply a late lunch.

Thanks to Ian and Karen for organising the weekend and to all those who made the effort and helped make a good weekend into a great weekend.

~ Bob and the anonymous grey NC

The Western Victoria Chapter would like to thank the RACV and the Club Committee for their generous support of our Echuca Run.



Behind the scenes

of the MX-5 Sprint Championship

Recently, Gavin Newman, Assistant Club Captain – Motor Sport and regular competitor, swapped helmet and driving suit for pen and paper to have a look at what goes into putting a motor sport event together ...

Like a lot of things in life, there is a lot going on at a motor sport event that is not obvious until you look under the covers.

I spent the day recently at Sandown talking to the people that make a round of the Essendon Mazda MX-5 Sprint Championship run smoothly. While this may be a club-level event, the formula for running the day has a lot in common with higher class events such as the Supercars, or the Shannons Nationals.

1 Secretary

Today's event, like many we do, is being organised by the Alfa Romeo Owners' Club (AROCA).

Neil Choi from that club is the Event Secretary.

Cat herding springs to mind as Neil brings together a team of around 25 people across many areas to make the event happen.

A lot of the work happens in the weeks prior as he organises:

- » Driver entries and collecting entrance fees
- » Track hire
- » CAMS Permit
- » Officials, recovery and medical crews
- » Catering and helpers
- » Preparing and distributing Supplementary Regulations

Then on the day of the event he oversees the driver sign-on and the issuing of *Dorian* timing devices, conducts the briefing with the Clerk of Course and co-ordinates the day's activities. As Neil commented, he relies heavily on having the right people in the right roles.

Trivia: Due to noise restrictions, most tracks do not allow race engines to be run before 9am – certainly not on track!

About the Author:



As well as competing in the MX-5 Sprint Championship, Gavin is a CAMS-accredited Silver Level Circuit Official who has assisted at everything from club motor sport events right through to the Formula 1™ Australian Grand Prix.

For more information about getting involved in motor sport officiating, go to: www.cams.com.au/get-involved/officials/become-an-official



^ Neil (orange vest), along with the Clerk of Course, briefs the drivers

MX-5 Motor Sport – a look behind the scene

2 Scrutineering

Scrutineering is carried out by club members and involves inspecting every car, and the driver's safety equipment, against a checklist. Inspecting nearly 100 cars before the day gets underway is a big task, and of course no-one likes to hear that their car may not be able to take part ... but the objective is the **safety** of everyone, so it is a crucial start to the day.

Club member Leon Bogers > has a close look at an NA about to take to the track



Ross and his assistant > keep an eye on things

3 Race Control

Housed on the top floor of the control tower, the race control team literally has an overview of all on-track activity.

Ross Flood (right) from AROCA is the Clerk of Course and calls the shots from here over the Race Control radio.

His days starts with a track inspection so that he can report on the track to the drivers at their briefing, and he provides the official approval to get the day under way. Ross's priority is **safety** and, if you hear the dreaded PA announcement asking for the driver of [your car number] to report to Race Control, the walk of shame will end with a conversation with Ross.

While this may be somewhat daunting, the point of the conversation is to make the driver aware of what went wrong and what the expected behaviour is. In *most* cases that is where things end, without the need for escalation to the Stewards.



Trivia: When a Sector calls race control, the protocol is to say 'Race Control this is Sector 4.' There is sometimes a delay before the radio starts transmitting, and it is crucial for race control to know who is calling them.

4 Stewards

The Stewards of the Meeting are Confederation of Australian Motor Sport (CAMS)-accredited officials who are present to ensure that all CAMS requirements are met. At this event the Stewards are **Bill Bennet**, **Bob Fraser** (both CAMS Gold-level officials, the highest level on the scale) and **Graham Williams**, a Club-Level Steward. Between them they have *many decades* of experience at all levels of motor sport and are only too willing to tell me about their role. Their first priority is **safety**, which involves such things as reporting on the track conditions, inspection of

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5 Timing

Most drivers will say that we are *not* racing for sheep stations, but the truth is that, for many, it is *all about the results*.

Whether it's beating another driver in your class, or setting a PB, it is the timing team that keep the score on the day. They rely on the same *Timetronics* system as you will see at the Australian Grand Prix or a Supercar event, and laps are timed with an accuracy to within 1/10,000th (one ten-thousandth!) of a second!

Each car carries a *Dorian* timing device that is

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Trivia: the pres to p the wor



Zita Szedlacsek (L) and Christie Roberts while maintaining the manual backup timing penguin has an ear on the rad

6 Venue Staff

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Trivia: Every time a car crosses
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io and eyes on the track.

Brendan Stuart is the Venue Manager for the circuit and takes a lot of pride in presenting the circuit in great shape ready for us to go racing.

During the week prior to our event, there had been a horse racing event which required removing sections of the Armco barrier on the main straight and installing a 'bridge' across the motor sport track to allow equine access to their track.

This all has to be reconfigured to create a motor racing track that meets CAMS' standards.

Other preparation might include mowing the vast areas of grass, doing minor track repairs, cleaning the pit garages and cleaning the racing surface. Brendan also inspects any repairs to barriers and the like that are damaged during the day.

Compliance with local authority

regulations is also important and monitoring noise is one of Brendan's tasks during the day.

He is also responsible for setting the annual calendar, and planning is already well underway for 2018. Firstly, the horse racing events are locked in, then the *Supercars*, other national motor racing series, *V8 Race Experience* hot lap days, local events ... and car club events then need to be slotted into the calendar.

7 Flag / Communications / Sector Marshal

At larger events, these functions would be allocated to separate individuals. At our events, *one person at each point does it all*.

Flags involve displaying the blue flag to oncoming cars to indicate there is faster traffic behind, plus displaying the yellow flag to indicate an incident further down the track.

For those paying attention, this means these people need eyes in the back of their heads to see in both directions, but in reality the flaggies also rely on hearing what is going on behind them.

They also need to keep an eye on the Sector prior to the one they are monitoring and, if a yellow flag is displayed, they then show a green to indicate the way is clear and passing can resume.

Sector 11 and the Start-Finish also have the *bad boy* (or girl) black flag to advise a driver to return to the pits, and of course Start-Finish also has the chequered flag to signify the end of a session.

The flaggies are also the eyes and ears for Race Control out on the circuit, providing updates via radio, particularly if there is an on track incident.

I spoke to **Kevin McPherson** at Sector 11, who travels in from Koroomburra. By his own admission he loves his motor sport and, in 2016, spent *112 days* at various tracks working as an official at both car and bike events.

Nick Gibson at Turn 9 made the comment that *"the flaggies really like the MX-5 Club as they are the only ones to regularly show their appreciation with a wave at the end of the day. That wave means so much to the officials."*

Trivia: At the end of a session, the Starter identifies the last car to receive the chequered flag. Each Sector then tracks that car around the circuit, letting race control know when it has passed so they can start the next session once they know the track is clear.



Kevin indicates to a slower car that a fast one is approaching. His other flags are at the ready and an 'IN' board to indicate drivers must pit at the end of each session.

MX-5 motor sport ... a look behind the scenes (ctd)

8 Pit Lane

Those in Pit Lane keep an eye on the pit lane traffic and spectators/helpers, and organise the next group of competitors to head out.

The official at Pit Exit releases

the cars on to the circuit once they get clearance from Race Control. As competitors we often see this person standing in the way of us getting out there and having some fun.

But often they are held up until a recovery is completed, or other officials are in place and the circuit is 'closed' and ready for use.

Trivia:

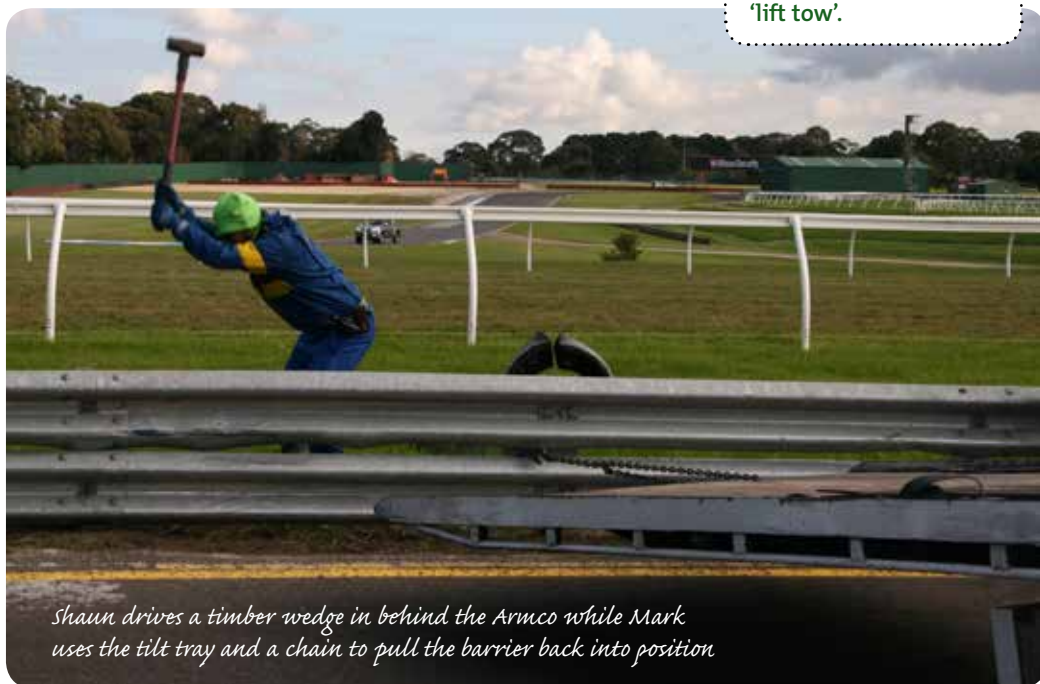
A tow where the car remains on the ground is called a 'flat tow.' Where the car is loaded on to the back of a truck, it is called a 'lift tow'.

9 Recovery & Fire

Shaun and Mark drive the recovery vehicle and tilt tray.

These are the guys you really don't want to see out on the circuit, as it would normally mean you've broken down, or used something solid like a wall or another car to slow yourself down.

Their primary job is to pick up broken cars, and to clean up any spills and debris and return the circuit to a usable state. The recovery vehicle is well stocked with oil soaker, brooms, blowers, fire extinguishers, sledge hammers, and large timber wedges for 'chocking' Armco uprights back into position when a car has leant on them.



Shaun drives a timber wedge in behind the Armco while Mark uses the tilt tray and a chain to pull the barrier back into position

10 Medical

Another group that you normally don't want to see, unless it's during the lunch break, is the Medical team.

AROCA organise a private ambulance for our events and, although this incurs some cost, the risk with using one from *Ambulance Victoria* is it could be called away at any time, and all track activity would have to cease.

The Medical team today is **Bryce Lindemann**, a paramedic with 29 years' experience, and **Josephine Lindemann**, a Div 1 nurse who is a Charge Nurse in her day job.

They spend most of the day in Pit Lane watching the action but, if required, they provide the initial triage of injuries then stabilise and treat the patient. If they determine the patient requires hospitalisation, they will call *Ambulance Victoria* and hand over the patient for transportation and further treatment. Otherwise they assess the condition of the patient and, in the case of a driver, provide clearance for them to resume competition if they think it is safe.



Bryce and Stephanie in pit lane

Trivia:

Any time a car makes contact with anything solid, however trivial it may seem, it is protocol for the medical team to check the driver for any signs of injury.

Drivers often say that they could not go racing without the work that these dedicated and experienced people put into planning and running an event.

The officials don't do it for the money – that's for sure! They do it for the love of cars and motor sport and the enjoyment of being part of a team.

When you look at the effort they put in, it's obvious that those of us who compete should thank them ... heartily, and often! ■

Chapter chatter ...



4.6.17 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words, photos & organiser: Peter Ferguson

Eight Club members – Bill Roder, David Salter, Peter Ferguson, Deaglan Gahan, Rob Krygsman, Craig Salter, Ajith Perera and Stuart Robertson – lined up for the Khanacross at Bryant Park on Sunday, 4 June.

There was a relatively small field on the day (24 cars) so each we got six runs and still finished the day with enough time to go and have a coffee afterwards, and de-brief on how we could have done better, *if only* ...

Bill in his SE did extremely well, taking out first place outright, which was creditable as the *Bionic Excel* (so named by David Salter – it's a Hyundai Excel, BUT with turbo Nissan SR20 engine and full running gear, including rear drive and independent rear end, grafted in) was finally running well and starting to be very competitive. **Well done, Bill!**

David Salter (fifth outright) drove consistently and smoothly to show that he's starting to take these Khanacrosses very seriously. The fact that his son Matt (not present with his WRX at *this* particular Khanacross) and his other son and new member, Craig, are there competing against him, provides some serious motivation. He keeps mumbling about needing more power (to stay ahead of them perhaps?).

New attendee Deaglan Gahan showed considerable promise and, but for a WD (*wrong direction* – very common for new attendees), would have shown a much better result than his still creditable eighth outright.

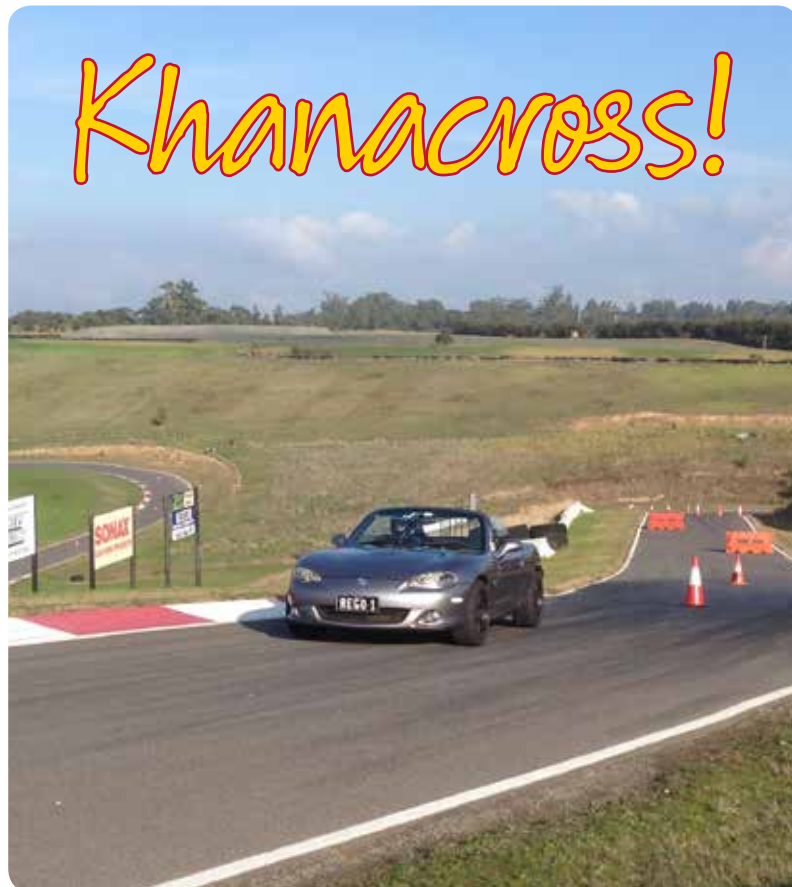
Ajith Perera recently wrote off his daily drive/track day NC, so had to borrow a car to attend. *He chose to borrow his son's BMW Z4!* His son must have had to be tied down to allow this to happen. Ajith showed considerable restraint to behave himself all day but still put in some good times with, unfortunately, one WD.

Another new attendee, Stuart Robertson, was there in his supercharged 130kW NB. The car is having some teething problems and Stuart was caught out with several WDs – **not getting "lost" is one of Khanacross's great challenges!** Both Stuart and the car showed great promise, however, and we look forward to his return.

Club members Peter Ilijash and John Moore also attended to barrack for the MX-5s.

The next MX-5 Club event at Bryant Park is a hillclimb (same track but without the witches hats in the way, and little chance of getting lost!!) on 13 August.

Why not come along and have a try at this superb track? A flyer for the event is on the social calendar page of the club web site. ●



▲ Top: Bill Roder on his way to first outright
Above: Stuart Robertson with his mid-life "CR1S1S"

Chapter chatter ...

18.6.17 | **Central** ■ Words: Alan Bennett ■ Photos: June Teeuw, Philip Menezes, Dianne Lindner, Sandra Elliott, Tim Keane

I get the feeling that it would be easier to organise a school swimming outing for 25 young children than to co-ordinate a car club run ...

Ode to Reversing Chapter Run Performance*

Today was the worst Chapter run ever!!!
And don't try to convince me that
There's something good in every signpost
Because, when you take a closer look
The roadway is a pretty risky place
Even if
Some sun does shine through once in a while
Twists and turns don't last forever
And it's not true that
It's all in the engine, gearbox and suspension
Since
True driving pleasure can be attained
Only if one's dexterity is good
It's not true that zoom zoom exists
And I'm sure that you can agree that
The skill level
Creates
My driving ability
It's all beyond my control
And you'll never in a million years hear me say
Today was a good MX-5 day

Oops, read it from the bottom to the top

**with apologies to Chanie Gorkin*



San Remo



THIS way ... !



^ *Um ... Starboard!*



^ *Over the hills and ...*

.....
■ Organisers: Geoff & Bronwyn Roche



Lost.

1,590,000,000 results on Google.

It's an American TV drama. It's a dog's home. Absent, adrift, disorientated, hidden, strayed, nowhere to be found.

It means something to all of us. But let me rewind before I explain.

June 18, 2017 and **Geoff (Chapter Captain) and Bronwyn (unsung hero) Roche** are completing three years of organising Central Sunday runs with a very popular fish and chip run to San Remo. Thirty-eight cars duly arrive in Officer to set out not in one convoy but two. Another car caught up with us at morning tea and four cars from Eastern also joined us there. Our run was so popular that John and Rosie met us at the finish line just because they could.

But I'm getting ahead of myself again ...

We met in the cool winter air and soon it was speech time. As Geoff explained the run he emphasised that corner marking and enjoying yourself go hand in hand and not only make it worthwhile, it means everyone gets there without getting LOST.

Hint.

For anyone that has thought (even briefly) about organising a car club run, they know there is a significant amount of work involved in planning, ensuring the run notes are correct, increasing the font so people like me can read them, doing a practice run to iron out any details, guessing how many run notes to print and crossing fingers and toes that everyone enjoys

themselves, and – did I mention this already (?) – *corner mark*.

Lack of waiting at corners is the biggest issue and an ongoing frustration for people like me that missed two corners (yes, I am run note challenged; I blame my genes) and ended up on the side of an unknown road squinting in the distance looking for my corner to be marked. Worse, still, that the car behind me (sole occupant) has followed me into the wilderness. *Sigh*. Just goes to show that lost is more than a state of mind. We just abandoned the run and took the direct route and still arrived last ... but we *did* arrive.

After the break the second leg was easier to keep in contact with the car in front and behind – until we *all* got lost, not once but twice. At least we were all lost together; it made the day more interesting.

Geoff pre-warned the San Remo Foreshore fish and chip shop that 60 people would challenge their cooking, calmness and cash register – and they coped extremely well, not just with us but an abundance of other customers as well. The fish, in particular, was fresh and delicately cooked.

John and Katrina Palmer will be joint Club Captains for Central Chapter from now on – as many of us know it's a two-person job and this is an excellent way of recognising that.

Big shoes (brakes) to fill but I am sure your corners will be marked, everyone will confirm their attendance and Bronwyn and Geoff can now relax knowing the Chapter Captaincy is in great hands. ●

Chapter chatter ...

18.6.17 | Northern Tasmania ■ Words photos and organiser: Bruce Harvey ■ Photos: Jill Steer, Alana McDougall



Koukla – noun:
gorgeous girl # MX-5

Given most of us consider our cars in the feminine (“she’s a beauty”), the final destination for the Northern Tasm~~x~~nia June run *Hooked on Kouklas* restaurant on the banks of the Tamar River at Gravelly Beach was extraordinarily fitting.

The start of this great day involved 20-odd cars and 28 drivers/passengers enjoying a mid-morning coffee at the *Blueberry Barn Café*.

Following the briefing, which included a timely “heads-up” about logging and log truck activity from the café owner, we were able to roll on to the Frankford Highway before making the right turn for the Holwell Gorge emerging at Beaconsfield.

Beaconsfield is a bustling busy little town (made national headlines in 2011 when two trapped miners were rescued), but it stopped momentarily to watch the parade of cars down the main street on this sunny winter Sunday morning.

Through the town, a right turn led us to Exeter, passing little settlements like Flowery Gully and Winkleigh. A brief break at Exeter allowed excess coffee to be removed before another right turn started the next part of the drive.

The road through Bridgenorth and Westwood and emerging at Carrick is a combination of flowing curves connected together, with some 90° corners thrown in for good measure ... making for great driving. A right turn at Carrick and then another right turn at Hagley had us heading through Selbourne and on to Rosevale.

If you had been reading diligently and counting the right turns you may have realised that the last turn was the fourth and would complete a circle back to Bridgenorth. A short but slippery sprint was safely completed from Bridgenorth to Legana where we were able to cruise beside the river before turning into Gravelly Beach and the lunch that waited.

As the cars lined up opposite the restaurant with the river behind us. *Hooked on Kouklas* owner Kathy came out on to the front steps to make us welcome and commented how nice it was to see all cars had their tops down to enjoy the best air in the world. ●





Chapter chatter ...

18.6.17 | Southern Tasmania ■ Words: Michelle Waldock ■ Photos and organiser: John Waldock

Winter in Tassie means crisp, clear mornings followed by mild windless days.

It was just such a morning when the Chapter gathered for our annual *Ausmas* run. The destination was Bothwell, on the edge of the Lake District and home to Australia's oldest golf course. The Chapter has been to Bothwell before and its position on the rim of the Central Highlands makes it a great Ausmas destination – *if there is anywhere that snow is going to fall gently into the open top of a MX-5, Bothwell is the place!*

Fifteen cars showed up at our usual Rosny meeting place ready to start. Although the sun was out, the air was as crisp as expected, so the drivers' briefing lived up to its title and it wasn't long before the group headed out.

Once away from traffic lights, roundabouts and zip merges, the group made good time as we wended our way past Richmond and on to Tea Tree Road. There are three roads that join Richmond to Brighton and, in a case of stunning Tasmanian originality, they are *all* called Tea Tree Road ... the only distinguishing feature being the addition of the words *back* and *middle* for two of them. This time the group took *Middle* Tea Tree Road to join up with Brighton and then on to the new Brighton Bypass which does exactly that, becoming the Midlands Highway just past Pontville.

The weather this winter has been cold but without much rain, so the countryside was barren as we made our way to our mid-run stop at Kempton. A large car park behind the café that was our pit stop meant there was plenty of time to get warming beverages and small snacks to keep us going until Bothwell. Once suitably refreshed, we piled back into our cars and headed on up the highway until we turned left at Melton Mowbray, which was once a major stop on the Midlands Highway, but has sadly declined to a huddle of houses and a pub.

The road to Bothwell has everything for the MX-5 driver: sweeping curves and tight bends, long straights and twisting climbs. All the drivers made good use of this tailor-made terrain, disembarking from their cars outside Bothwell Pub with flushed faces and happy smiles.

The smiles continued through our two-course lunch and obligatory prize draw before the group headed back to Hobart, some via Hollow Tree Road to Hamilton and then following the river back to Hobart, and some via the Bothwell Road and Midlands Highway. ●



^ Toasted sandwich with ICE! A Bothwell winter special!



^ It's warmer inside!



.....
20.6.17 | North-Eastern Victoria ■ Words, photos & organiser: **Loz Thomas**

The meeting place for this Tuesday run was Beechworth.

... and it was another frosty and foggy morning that greeted us as we set out from (variously) Bright, Myrtleford, Echuca, Benalla and Kilmore to make it there. Daryl and Judy Owen and Phil Masters left home at 7.30am just to make it to the start.

We welcomed Chris and Robyn from Bathurst who will be relocating to Beechworth in the not too distant future, so we look forward to seeing them more often. We also welcomed Mark Howard who has moved to Bright, and Kerry Reynolds from Melbourne.

With a frost though, it invariably means it's going to be a cracker of a day – and we weren't disappointed. After catching up for coffee and a chinwag it was time for 10 cars and their 13 occupants to head off under clear blue skies. Most of us had our tops down (*and heaters going!*) as we left Beechworth and headed to Stanley, and then the short but curvy descent to Myrtleford where there was still some fog around and ice on the sides of the road, so some caution was warranted.



We followed the snow road to Milawa and Oxley and then drove through the small townships of Moyhu and Whitfield in the King Valley on our way to the southernmost vineyard in the region – *Chrimont*. Peter and Anita Silva enjoyed their drive from Melbourne and met us there (that made 11 cars!!!)

It was in Chrimont's new cellar door, restaurant and larder, with its strikingly modernistic architecture, that we enjoyed each other's company, unparalleled views of the Black Ranges, delicious food, contemporary wines and the hospitality of the owner, Jo and her staff. It didn't take long for three hours to pass us by.

It was after 3.30pm and so a couple of cars left to head back home. Eight cars (and occupants) continued along on our merry way to Hurdle Creek. Just 6km from Milawa is the family-owned-and-run small batch Gin Distillery. We saw first-hand the process of making craft gin, and some of us enjoyed a gin tasting. A few of us left with gin bottles tucked under our arms and in our jackets.

By now it was after 4.30pm so we bade each other farewell and made our own way home.

I think it was safe to say that everyone enjoyed their day in the beautiful North-east. ●



Chapter chatter ...

25.6.17 | Eastern Victoria ■ Words: Stephen Gallagher ■ Photos: June Teeuw, Bob de Bont, Peter Ferguson ■ Organiser:



As per the weather bureau's forecast, the day started rather cool but at least dry.

So for some of us, it was tops down as we headed for McDonald's Drouin. For Lisa and me, the drizzle started just as we entered Drouin. Not the weather we had hoped for on our first run with the guys from Eastern.

However, after a warm welcome, great coffee and defrosting, the rain had stopped ready for the trip briefing. With tops down, 23 5s headed south for Poowong. For some reason, Poowong seems to be a magnet for MX-5s ... I've lost count of the number of runs I have attended that pass through there, not to mention the frequency my '5 Chrystal finds herself there without her Club family.

Mother Nature had changed her mind and decided rain should now be administered to our hearty bunch, so we left Poowong with rooves up and wipers going. *Bummer!*

We motored towards Ellinbank and the start of the Grand Ridge Road. However, as the first section of the Grand Ridge Road is still gravel, the planned route took us beyond the start of the road to a detour road that bypassed the gravel section.

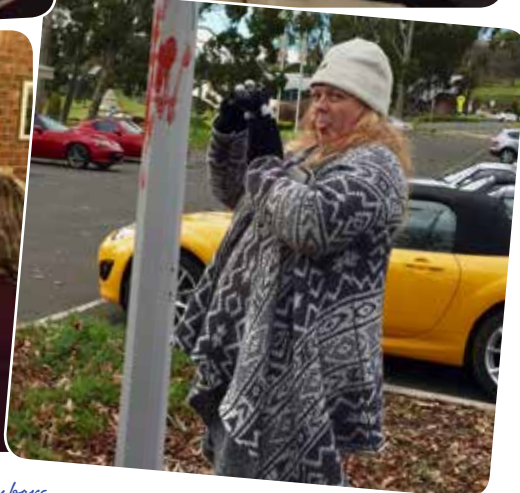
Around three quarters of the way to Mirboo North, a call came over the radio that we had an ND off the road. Three birds had decided to collide with the windscreen of the red ND (two birds died from the impact!). The resulting shock meant late braking and turning for the corner, which in turn meant the car ran wide, down a small embankment and got caught in a barbed wire and electrified farm fence.

Thankfully both driver and passenger (father and daughter) were uninjured. Damage to the car was a "popped" bonnet, lots of scratches and a dented rear quarter panel. After extraction, the car was able to continue to lunch and then home.

Another quick stop at Mirboo North for a re-group, or as it turns out, an ungrouping.

With a new leader, the front half of us followed verbal directions up the "wrong" but direct and great twisty road, while the second half of the group went along the planned route for the run into Boolarra.

Lunch was at Boolarra Community Hotel, a nice cosy place for a leisurely lunch. For a pub that is off the main road, it was very busy and importantly, warm and dry. ●



^ The faces of members enjoying another great Club run ...



.....
Peter Ferguson

Grand Ridge Road run



^ The faces of Gippsland ...

Members of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania Inc (“Club”) are required, under this Code of Conduct, to behave at all times in a way which upholds the Club’s values and complies with its Statement of Purposes and Rules. The Code of Conduct contained within the CAMS Member Protection Policy applies wherever the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria & Tasmania’s Code of Conduct is deficient.

Honesty and integrity	A Club member must behave honestly and with integrity in the course of Club activities.	Confidentiality	A Club member must maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the member has with any sensitive matter that relates to the Club.
Care and diligence	A Club member must act with care and diligence in the course of Club activities.	Conflict of interest	A Club member must disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with Club activities.
Respect and courtesy	A Club member, when acting in the course of Club activities, must treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment.	Proper use of resources	A Club member must use the Club’s resources in a proper manner.
Lawful compliance	A Club member, when acting in the course of Club activities, must comply with all applicable Australian laws.	Undue advantage	A Club member must not make improper use of: – inside information, or – the member’s duties, status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the member or for any other person.
Directive compliance	A Club member must comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the Club’s organisation who has authority to give the direction.	Behaviour – general	A Club member must, at all times, behave in a way that upholds the Club’s values, integrity and good reputation.

v2: August 2014



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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**



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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.

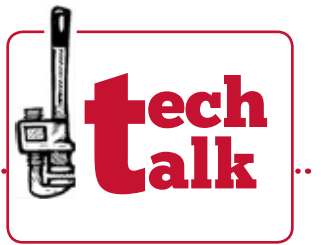
Enter your details at **http://vip.repco.com.au/registration/register/1160**.

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.

Replacing my NB battery ...

■ Words: Julian Elliot



I purchased my 2001 Classic Red NB MX-5 in April 2016.

At the time I thought that the cranking speed was slow and that I needed to replace the battery. Talking to other owners and reading the forums I decided that slow cranking was normal and the battery was okay.

Everything was fine until Monday, 29 May 2017. I started the car and the cranking speed was a lot slower than normal. Having taken the car for a drive on Sunday I thought that was a bit unusual. I let it go because I was going for an outing with the Escape Motoring Club on the Wednesday, and that this would charge the battery again.

Come Wednesday I tried to start the car and ... *nothing*.

I panicked and tried to buy a battery locally. I went to the auto electrician and was assured that this battery would fit. When I tried to fit it, of course it wouldn't. In order to go on the run I fitted the original battery and with some trepidation I jump-started the car. Fortunately it was okay for the day.

Next day I tried starting the car and the battery was worse than the day before,



Federal battery 8AMU1R

and quickly went flat. I decided to return the incorrect battery and look for a replacement. After an email to Bob de Bont I was advised to look for an AGM vented battery. I jumped on the internet looking for an AGM, expecting that to be the brand name and not the battery type. It turns out that AGM is not a brand name, and stands for *Absorbed Glass Mat*.

After a few phone calls I found a battery at *Every Battery* in Heidelberg that would fit the car. It was an AGM, and vented (which is required to prevent fumes building up in the boot ... and subsequently in the cabin).

The cost was \$245.00, which is the most I have ever paid for a battery. The warranty period is 12 months. The model number is 8AMU1R and the maker is Federal.

I fitted the new battery and everything is better than it has been in the past; cranking speed is up and I feel confident that my problems are solved.

The biggest problem now, if you want to call it that, is saving all the stations in the radio. ●



General images of the battery with its two vent tubes



The gas created when a battery is being charged is hydrogen – which is both corrosive and explosive. If not vented to the outside, the gas will cause corrosion in the boot and – in extreme circumstances – an explosion.



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



Last word ...

.....
"Men's Health" magazine, June 2017 ■ Author: Andrew Chesterton

Under the heading, "Best Cars of 2017", the magazine asked: "Looking to buy? Or just after a bit of automotive porn. Here are the the cars to keep an eye out for this year."

And here's what they wrote ...



Best sports car you can actually afford Winner: Mazda MX-5

Pining for a sports car you'll never be able to afford is now a pointless pursuit because there is, at last, a vehicle out there that will deliver all the fun for far less than stupid money.

Mazda's MX-5 is a perfectly formed, rear-wheel drive roadster that turns not much money (prices start at just \$31,990) into a million-dollar experience.

Yes, it's about as roomy as a wetsuit but it's so much fun to drive, even at legal speeds, that you'll be wearing that self-satisfied smile you always see on Ferrari owners.

The secret is a clever combination of light weight, purity of design and Japanese engineering. That fact that it's a convertible only adds to the joy quotient, particularly on sunny days and balmy evenings.

Best of all, there's even a folding hard-topped version, the RF, which costs just \$4,000 more and looks even better. ■

Man as Machine

The uncomfortable truth about all those sleek supercars is that, for the vast majority of your ownership, they're almost entirely useless.

After all, what good is a nuclear arsenal strapped to your right foot if you've got nowhere to unleash it?

Enter Mazda and its *jinba ittai* philosophy. An idea deployed in the making of the first-ever MX-5 back in 1989, but adapted and adopted by more recent lightweight gems like the Toyota 86 and Subaru BRZ – not to mention the spectacular Porsche Cayman – *jinba ittai* translates loosely as "horse and rider as one".

The idea is simple: in Japan's Kamakura period (between 1185 and 1333), the country's archers fired from atop moving horses, making hitting distant

and moving targets more than a little tricky.

The answer, they found, was *jinba ittai* – a near-telepathic connection between horse and the little Japanese guy bobbing atop it like a cork in an angry ocean.

In car terms, this means replacing the archer with a driver and the horse with limited horsepower, ditching huge and powerful engines in favour of deeper connection between man and machine: razor steering, perfect weight

distribution, better feel through the brake and accelerator, the poise and balance of a gymnast. But it also means squeezing maximum fun out of sports cars without risking an instant licence-shredding every time you plant your right foot.

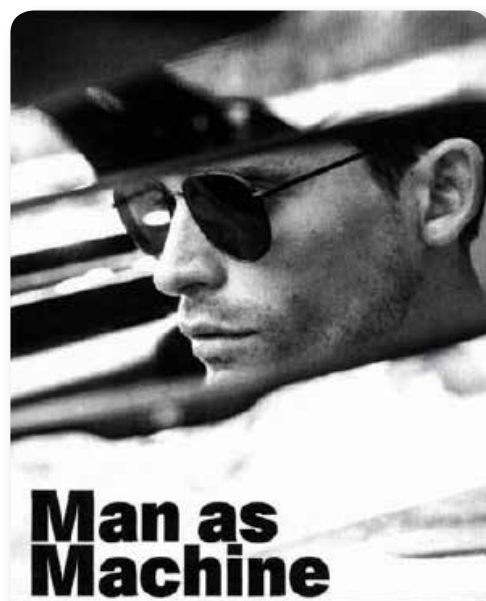
"I believe the car should feel like an extension of your being – that is the essence of horse and rider," says Takao Kijima, former manager of the MX-5 program.

"A horse and rider communicate through feeling; a horse adjusts its gait to allow the archer to release his arrow."

"We aim to create the same relationship between car and driver. When the car and driver are in perfect harmony, driving is fun." ■



▲ Takao Kijima at Fan Fest in January 2017



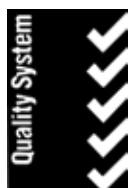
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A new option for the MX-5 owner

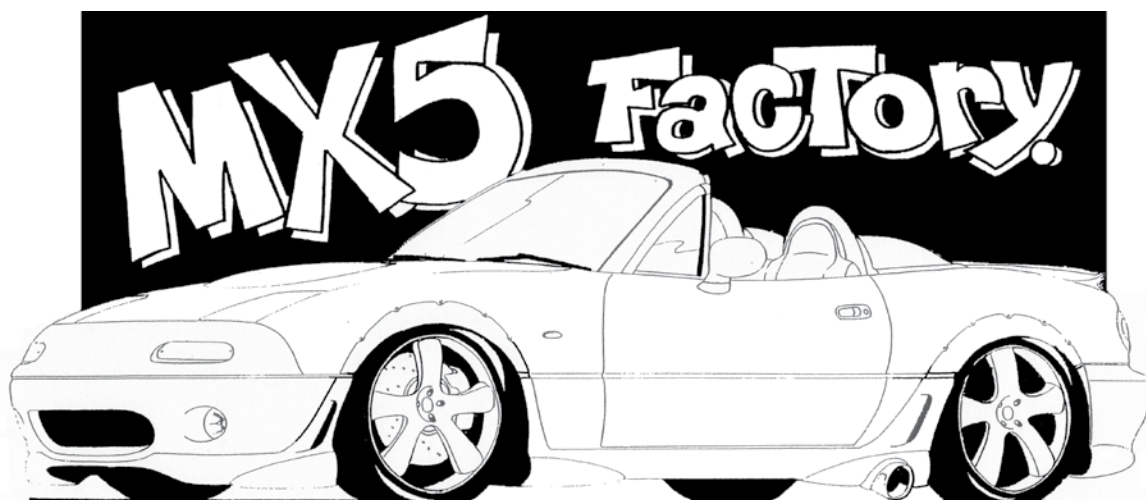
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