

East Coast Route 52 Run
Sunday 21st November 2021

Ten cars departed Summerhill Shopping Centre, Palmerston North at 9.30am on an overcast yet warm morning for Ian and Sue Bailey's run.

We travelled over the Pahiatua Track, at our own speed, to Pahiatua then on towards Woodville, turning right onto the Makuri/Pongaroa Road where we parked up, waiting for the group to reassemble. Initially 6 cars arrived at the stopover and after about 20 minutes another 3 arrived. Apparently, Alec and Betty Good's car had a radiator leak so they returned home to change to their 'modern' car. Once moving again, we travelled over undulating country roads through the beautiful Makuri Gorge, passing thousands of hectares of rolling farmland turned into a 'carbon bank' of pine trees before arriving a Makuri Domain for a cuppa and a chin wag.

Makuri Domain turned out to be a true country domain found all over rural New Zealand, with a lovely pavilion catering for local community events. Whilst enjoying a cuppa three local farmers arrived, one sporting two black Labrador puppies which were for sale. Needless to say, they gained much attention. The 'locals' were soon followed by the Good's. Ian was delighted to show us his name on the community notice board as the 1989 junior Makuri golf club champion.

After leaving the Domain we continued heading east through more beautiful farming country to Pongaroa where we enjoyed a catered lunch at the local hotel. After lunch we travelled north on Highway 52 to Waione where we turned left on to approximately 10 Km's of recently top dressed and graded gravel road taking us to Waihi Falls. Those in open top cars enjoyed a good dust bath. Ian tells us that when they completed their reconnaissance run this road was nice and smooth with little dust.

At Waihi Falls some of us ventured down the valley to view the falls from the bottom whilst others who did not fancy the steep climb back up stayed at the top and viewed the falls from above. After further conversation we left the falls car park to make our own way home. Most travelled on the sealed Oporae Road to join the Weber/Dannevirke road to Dannevirke and home.

This was a well thought out and enjoyable run with Ian sharing his knowledge of the area with us all.

Steve Higgison