

MG Manawatu Great Lake Driving and Putting Tour

Friday 10th – Sunday 12th May 2024

We all made our own way on the Friday morning to arrive at Awastone Riverside Haven, Mangaweka around twelve noon. A great way to start the weekend off with 9 cars assembling along the banks of the river. Those in attendance were John and Viv our event organisers, Paul and Josie, Robert with son Grant, John with son Chris, Helen, Roger and Mary, Ian and Sue (Whanganui), Neil and Liz and ourselves. Awastone provided a buffet lunch which we enjoyed in their outside patio area in the beautiful sunny setting.



After mix and mingling over lunch we departed in convoy for the drive to Turangi. The views of Mount Ruapehu were magnificent with only a small cloud halo above the mountain.



Arriving at Turangi Bridge Motels late afternoon we settled in, some of the group took a short trip to Tokaanu Hot Pools although were disappointed to find them shut. It was a relaxed night, finding our own evening meal of either takeaways or dining at one of the eating spots in the metropolis of Turangi.

We woke to a stunning Saturday morning, departing the motel early. We travelled around the lake which was like glass with glorious autumn colours surrounding the foreshore, bypassing Taupo, to catch the Aratiatia Rapids water release at 10am.

At Aratiatia rapids some of us got a spot on the bridge to view from above and others made their way down to the bottom track to watch from below. The warning sirens sounded, with cameras at the ready, we waited. Not disappointing us it was a spectacular sight as millions of litres of water cascaded with force through the narrow gorge.

Next stop was Kuka Honey Hive in Wairakei for morning tea and honey tasting. Lots of interesting things to see, with free honey, mead & liqueur tastings, live beehives, health & wellness products, honey-based skincare, an amazing range of gifts and delicious honey ice cream.

We left the honey bees behind and drove to Kinloch via Acacia Bay where we stopped for Lunch. The weather was looking after us, we continued to enjoy the sunshine and the beautiful view of the bay.

On our way back to Turangi, via the western route, we stopped at the lakeside at Whareroa and then on to Kuratau, where we enjoyed Paul and Josie's hospitality at their lake house for afternoon tea.



Dinner Saturday night was at the motel restaurant, lots of laughter, eating, drinking and fellowship. It was great to catch up with Diane and Larry who joined us for dinner.

Sunday was a cold frosty start however by the time we arrived at Diane and Larry's at Motuoapa the mist had cleared and we were in brilliant sunshine again.



Larry had prepared his 12-hole golf course to Augusta National conditions; the flag was raised and those eager golfers started their round. Morning tea was served, Diane and Larry always the perfect hosts.



All too soon the weekend was coming to an end. We stopped at Waiouru Army Museum for our farewell lunch, and from there we each made our own way home. It was a great trip away with the group, thanks to Viv and John for expertly organising a very successful weekend.

Robyn and Steve