

## MG Manawatu Tawhiti Museum Run - 16 August 2020

It was a rather crisp morning, with the promise of a stunning day, that saw Manawatu MGer's assemble in Bulls for the start of this month's run.

After a warm welcome from today's organisers Alan and Robyn, and armed with our driving instructions, we set off towards our morning tea destination, of Virginia Lake Reserve in Whanganui. Travelling along SH1 to Turakina, we then took a right turning into Turakina Valley Road which meandered through some stunning scenery at every twist and turn. This was certainly a great driving road leading us through to Fordell and into Whanganui.

Our group expanded from 14 cars to 18 from here and after refuelling ourselves, headed away again along the main highway catching some amazing glimpses of Mt Egmont against a background of blue sky, along the way. So much so, we stopped for a quick photo opportunity at Patea.

On arrival at our destination, Nigel Ogle's Tawhiti Museum, we were met by some of our New Plymouth members and our numbers grew to 37 for lunch at Mr Badger's Cafe. What a great turn out!

With lunch over it was time to have a wander through this unique enterprise. An inside look through the Museum itself, was awe inspiring. Being the creation of artist Nigel Ogle, his attention to details is simply stunning. Extensive use is made of both life sized and smaller scale figures to present our heritage in a series of realistic and engaging displays. So much so, you can just imagine the scene coming alive at any moment. The figures are all created from moulds cast from real people on the premises, in the "body shop" which can also be viewed as part of your museum visit. It was noted that some displays were headed "How Grandma made ....." but I guess for some of us that would be Great Grandma and for children of today, Great, Great Grandma!

Illuminated only by the twinkling of lanterns and candles, you can drift in a boat and step back in time and experience the Traders and Whalers display which shows amongst other things, burly sailors bartering with local Maori for pork, potatoes and flax in return for European goods, especially the flintlock musket.

Close to the Traders and Whalers entrance, is the corridor leading into the Farm Power Hall, an impressive collection of vintage farm machinery. Everything was displayed to perfection and it must have taken hours and hours of work to line up all those tools on the beams.

Also a new diorama display behind the Cafe titled "A New Car in Town" was absolutely fascinating to look at. The detail really was exquisite, you could almost feel like you were there taking part.

Another new display shows the life of local novelist and short story writer, Ronald Hugh Morrieson. The most successful film based on his work remains the comedy, "Came a Hot Friday" which became one of the most successful local films released in New Zealand during the 1980's.

I'm sure everyone would agree, that there was something here for everyone and even though some of us had been here before, it is not a place that you would ever tire of coming to visit again and again. Many thanks to Alan and Robyn for organising such a great day out.

Liz Morris