

Sunday 12th May, Mother's Day and MG Manawatu were off on a run to the Wairarapa including travelling over the Castlepoint Station track where permission had been obtained for our group to transverse. Robyn mentioned in her preamble to us, we need to bring warm clothes, tank full of petrol, chairs, morning tea etc.

Robyn also advised the cars would get dirty, there was a gravel road, then the Station track which would involve cattle stops, wandering stock and gates to open and close.

I had been looking at the weather map the week before, it was going to be raining and each day as I looked, it progressively got better, until Saturday the map indicated no rain until 6pm. Great.

So 13 cars lined up at the Square in Palmerston North at 9.15am, a very good turnout. However some chose to bring their moderns, John Eames brought the 4wheel drive Suzuki for a run, and in case of trouble with any cars that might need a tow off the track, and we also brought our Toyota Rav, due to me suffering from hip and back pain over the past 2 months, I thought the Rav would cushion my hip and back better than the MG, and I am sure it did.

We went via the Pahiatua Track road into Pahiatua where we turned left into Tiraumea Road at the BP station south of Pahiatua and continued on back roads until we came to our morning tea stop at the Alfredton Domain. I had been watching a yellow topdressing plane coming at us in all sorts of angles as we drove along and once at the Domain, this topdressing plane gave us a wonderful display of flying low over the trees, maybe he had seen us and wanted to entertain us.

A welcome cuppa and we were on our way via the back roads to Masterton. Masterton was my home town but I had never travelled the Whangaeheu Valley road to its entirety before, so it was a first for me. There were a couple of areas on the road marked for upgrade, one in particular was quite scary a drop in the road had pushed up an area of tar seal that should have been marked more substantially.

In Masterton we stopped at Henley Lake to meet 2 cars from Wellington to join our convoy now of 15 cars.

So off we went on the Castlepoint road, turning to the right to go to Riversdale first, then turning left at Langdale Road, and on to Waimimi Road (the gravel road), this was an area I had never been to, so keen to check it out. It was a narrow gravel road but nothing too dramatic, good surface, we did meet a car coming the other way, he stopped to let everyone pass and as we were tail end Charlie, we stopped to tell him we were the last. Where are you going he asked, Castlepoint I said. No you can't get to Castlepoint this way, he said "Yes we can I said". We have

permission to traverse the Station road. Oh well in that case you CAN go to Castlepoint he said. Robyn stopped on top of a hill, the weather was great, sunny, no wind and breathtaking views of Castle rock in the distance and Riversdale beach.

We continued on and then we came across a MGF that was overheating, John Ireland to the rescue with a couple of bottles of water in his car and the car was on its way again. We dipped down to Otahome which was at the end of the gravel road. We were lucky that we were tail end Charlie so many photo opportunities. I am not sure who took the most photos me or Robert Wilson.

Anyway we stopped again for the MGF that overheated, nothing wrong, but they found a stream that allowed them to top up the water bottles again, just in case, at this stage we went on ahead, but a radio message from Robyn indicated we were about to go onto the Station road and everyone needed to know which path to take at the fork in the road, so we waited for all our group to catch up and motor on so we were tail end Charlie again. Then we entered the gates of Castlepoint Station track.

The station track was interesting, reasonably wide in places, very stony and could have been more disastrous if it had rained, and we were dealing with mud, but only dust so very lucky with the weather. As we came closer to Castle Rock the beaches stretched out and then as we headed inland the sight of Castlepoint settlement and the lighthouse beckoned us to stop for more photos.

I noted there were lots of cowpats on the road which would have been great manure for my garden but I knew I would be pushing it if I asked Trev if I could have some.

Finally at the bottom of the Station road, lots of cattle stops and all gates opened they must have known we were coming through.

By now everyone was making a beeline for the toilets and something to eat as it was 2pm. Luckily I had made sandwiches and we nibbled on these as we went. The cafe food looked really good, we only had coffee and cake as our daughter in law had invited us for Mother's day tea.

We headed towards home after a quick trip to the end of the road to view the lighthouse and the reef, and had a great trip home. We saw few cars on the road back to Masterton then headed over the Pahiatua Track again and just a little rain commenced in Pahiatua, before coming into Palmerston North at 4.30pm.

A great day out everyone had an adventure, great company, fabulous weather and the scenery breathtaking, many thanks to Robyn and Graeme for making this outing happen.