

MG Whanganui - River Road Run



On Saturday 11 March Robyn and I joined our Whanganui members on their River Road run to Pipiriki organised by Chris and Margaret McLeod. Meeting at the kart track just north of the Dublin Bridge on Anzac Road, Whanganui, at 9.30 am meant an 8.30 start from Feilding on an overcast and foggy morning. By the time we reached Halcombe the fog had lifted and we experienced warm sunny weather for the remainder of the day.

There were 8 cars that departed for Pipiriki; Chris and Margaret McLeod (MGB), Evert and Liz van Reenen (MGB), Toni Jenkins and Keith, (MGB), Brian Shaw and Mike Green (MGB), Neville and Pauline Groves, (BGT), Russell and Julie Gainsford (MGA), Ian and Sue Pearson (Magnetite) and ourselves. Our first picture stop was on the River Road at the top of the first hill, from there we wound our way to the Matahiwi Gallery for coffee in the old school house where the gallery was housed. Also on this site is the 'River Queen' which was used in the film of the same name from 2005, shot on the nearby Whanganui River.





Then we motored on to view the historic Kawana (flour) Mill, established in 1854. The mill operated until it was abandoned in 1913. It was restored in the mid 1970's, opening in 1980, the wheel and millstones are authentic but the building is a replica. The next stop was the church at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was, in the 1800's, an isolated site where, in 1892, Suzanne Aubert (better known as Sister Mary Joseph or Mother Aubert) established the congregation of the Sisters of Compassion. They became a highly respected charitable nursing/religious order. Jerusalem was also the home of New Zealand poet James K Baxter, who is buried nearby.



At Pipiriki we were met by Colin and Lois Webb in their 'T' car who escorted us to their home on the farm just north of Raetihi where we enjoyed their hospitality and our BYO picnic lunch. It had taken us a tad over 4 hours to reach their place so our lunch stop was shortened as the 'Parapara's' were waiting.

Our drive down State Highway 4 was uneventful apart from about four stops for traffic lights controlling various slips and washouts and a short visit to one of Chris's 'Riding for the Disabled' friends at the old Kakathi store, now a beautiful rural property.

Back in Whanganui most of our group made their way to the Whanganui East Club for refreshments and a debrief. Robyn and I left about 5.30pm for our journey home.

Our trip was very well organised by Chris and Margaret with plenty of stops for sightseeing and to stretch our legs. The road surfaces were in very good order with seldom a pothole to be seen. It was good to catch up with some members who we have not seen for some time. Thank you, Chris and Margaret, for a great day out, very much enjoyed and appreciated.

Steve Higginson (MGB)