

# OVER THE HILL TRIP

## Plus, a history Lesson or two

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2025

The day dawned calm and sunny for Robert's run over the new Te Ahu a Turanga/Manawatu-Tararua Highway. Departing from the Palmerston North Railway Station at 9.30am we travelled through the city, past the Summerhill Car Park at the top of the hill and cruised onto the Ashhurst end of the new road. There were sixteen cars on our trip, resulting in an even split of cars, with 8 stopping at the first lookout with the remainder travelling onto the second lookout, looking over Woodville and surrounds. This was the first time for many over the new highway and comments suggest it was not a disappointment.



At the Woodville end roundabout we took the third exit onto Napier Road, this being the old SH 3 through the Gorge, to the Balance Bridge which we crossed and parked up at a small scenic reserve for our morning tea stop. From there it was through the Balance countryside to just short of Pahiatua where we stopped at the Scarborough Road intersection to view the Sir Keith Holyoake memorial commemorating his birth site and his lifetime of service.



We continued south of Pahiatua to Bridge Road and then turned left onto SH 2 back towards Pahiatua, stopping at the 'Little Poland' memorial on the way. This memorial was on the roadside near the site of the Polish children's camp established near the end of World War Two. Approximately 800 children came to Pahiatua from Europe via ship to Wellington, trained up through Palmerston North to Pahiatua and transported by truck to the site. Our starting point at the Palmerston North Railway Station was quite poignant because the children's train stopped at Palmy on their journey, where they were greeted by many locals.



Then onto Pahiataua township and a visit to their museum, where we, in groups of about 10, were given a presentation, in their 'Polish Room', on the children's camp, story behind them coming to New Zealand and what became of the children (and camp) when it was time to move on. This was a very informative and educational presentation about a time in our history which many were not fully conversant. Apparently, many Polish tourists come to the Pahiataua Museum to learn a little of their own history and seek out family names on the honour board. A visit to the roadside memorial and museum is well worth the time as this is a small part of our war time history that is not well known. The club has provided the museum with a small donation in appreciation of their work and the time given to us on the day.

The end of our museum visit was the last occasion on this trip when we would all be together as our next stop was Woodville for lunch at the various cafes and a look through the second-hand shops, after which we made our own way home in a time that suited.

Thank you, Robert, for a very informative days outing. No doubt many of us have passed the two roadside memorials on occasions and not given them the time of day to stop and learn a little of our past. Much appreciated.

Robyn and Steve

Those on this trip were;

Robert & Glenn, Martin & Debbie, Chris, Alan & Robyn, Liz & Neil, Paul & Josie, Ian B, Graig, Roger & Mary, Graeme, Evert, Brian, Ian & Sue P, Bruce & sister-in-law, John & Anne, and ourselves.