

Taranaki Explorer Weekend – Day Two

Saturday 16 July 2022

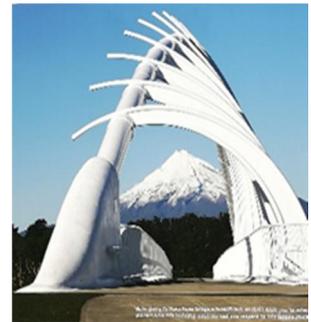
Day two dawned overcast after overnight rain but by the time we left the motel the sun was shining for what was a beautiful, still and warm day. Gary and Lorna Wood were today's organisers and after run sheets for both today and tomorrow were handed out, they lead our convoy towards our first stop.

Along Powderham Street, the one-way street heading east, our convoy parked to allow Murray to get a petrol top up. Unfortunately, this street outside the petrol station, was 3 lanes and we all parked on the left. The petrol was on the right. Murray was seen doing a u turn over three lanes then back tracking about 30 meters entering the pumps through the exit road. Luckily the road was not busy. We believe he exited via the pedestrian walkway. A bit of early unexpected excitement.

First stop was at the New Plymouth airport to view, through the mesh fence, a parked-up Catalina aircraft/flying boat.

We then set off past Bell Block (where Graeme thought we should have turned off – apparently, he was reading Sunday's run sheet) through Waitara and Urenui to Café 487 on the main road to Hamilton, where we enjoyed brunch in a beautiful rural setting.

After brunch Gary lead us through some really beautiful farming roads and across the Bertrand Road bridge crossing the Waitara river. This wooden one lane bridge was restored to its former glory about 10 years ago at a cost of \$600,000 after being in disrepair for the previous 15 years. The day after our run (Sunday) was to be it's 100-year celebration. After the bridge we wound our way through Lepperton and back down to the coast to the Te Rewa foot bridge on the coastal walk way.



The Te Rewa Rewa bridge was undergoing some maintenance but we all managed to walk over it and enjoy the spontaneous aerial display put on by the local Harvard enthusiasts. Back at the car park Lorna supplied afternoon tea. Freshly baked scones and muffins which we were told to eat up because she wasn't taking them home.

Moving on we then drove to Nyal Simkin's in Fitzroy to view his immaculately restored and presented collection of four early model cars (1908 and 1920 Rolls Royce's, a 1934 Riley speedster and a 1953 Jaguar XK120s) before making our own way back to the motel for some R & R before dinner.

In the early evening we trundled our way to the Stumble Inn in the Merrilands suburb for dinner and to watch the rugby (we won't mention the score, but well-done Ireland) before ambling back.

Thank you, Gary and Lorna, for a wonderful day of interesting roads and fun activities.

Robyn & Steve