

John's Weekend Away 9, 10, 11 May 2025
Part 2 - Saturday 10 May 2025

Travelling through stunning scenery towards Kairakau Beach, we were blissfully unaware of the scenario that was playing out behind us, until stopping to regroup at the Patangata Tavern. Steve and Robyn (our tail end Charlie) had a bit of a mishap with their MG and were stranded several km's behind us. Unable to offer assistance as this did not appear to be a quick fix, they were left in the capable hands of the AA to help.

Carrying on we arrived at the Kairakau Beach settlement, parked up on the grass affording a beautiful view of the sea in front of us and jagged cliffs behind. Out came the picnic baskets for a cuppa for those who wanted one, while others strolled northwards below the cliffs or south along the beach to see what they could find in the rock pools.

Field mushrooms were a plenty scattered amongst the grassed area, collected by some local lads looking for a lunch treat.

A beautiful mosaiced seat by Barbara Riach, built in 2012, was moved to the beach in 2016 to be admired by visitors and locals alike. A truly splendid piece of mosaic art consisting of various tiles incorporating fish, flowers, starfish, pebbles and coloured "gems".

Upon leaving Kairakau Beach, we meandered back to the Patangata Tavern for lunch. Inside revealed a rather quirky collection of memorabilia covering every available wall space. Rugby team photos from yesteryear, a couple of mounted trout that didn't get away, endless quirky signage (Welcome to the Pleasure Dome, Breath Testing, Police Operation), formica tables with matching chairs, a juke box, bakelite radios, dated phone/fax machines, tie dyed wall and ceiling hangings and an outside seating area, with more quirky paraphernalia amongst the gardens.

Orders taken for lunch were speedily dispatched, with fish and chips being a firm favourite and thoroughly recommended by Facebook reviews.

With full stomachs, we headed away to our next stop, Porangahau Beach. The roads were still showing signs of earthquake damage and Cyclone Gabrielle, with some repairs being undertaken, which made for a bumpy ride. This did not deter a lone cyclist, who we passed along the way, but when we had to navigate a rather deep metalled bump in the road, he endeavoured to overtake us all! Autumn colours could still be seen on the trees which made for some spectacular rural scenery, but it could also be noted that those dratted pine trees could be seen like hedgehog prickles, covering productive farmland!

Arriving at the beach, it was time for a cuppa and a biscuit or two before a quick stroll along the beach. As the sun was sinking lower in the sky, it was time to head back to our accommodation in Waipukurau, and ready ourselves for yet more food at the Leopard restaurant.

As the evening concluded, Paul had been contacted by Steve and asked to welcome our new members and to thank John for another successful weekend.

Sunday dawned another blue sky day, though a little more cool than we all had been used to of late. Breakfast was rather a quiet affair, with many opting to call in to say farewell as they headed back home.

Thanking you once again John for organising such a memorable weekend away.

Liz Morris