

MG Trip – Wanganui Motor Vehicle Museum and Small Bore Shooting

23rd August 2015

It's been a rather cold, dark and wet winter really, so when we counted the days to the next MG run, it took a good number of investigations with radio, paper and TV weather reports, to decide that the trip to Wanganui might be an opportunity to take the top down.

19 cars met at Bulls at 9.45am albeit with some confusion as to where the meeting place was, but at least we did have that all important coffee before hitting the road again! It was great to see a number of new members with us including Larry and Diane from Motuoapa who, given the icy state of the Desert Road currently, had come down the night before, staying at Wanganui to ensure their trips across the road were completed in daylight. Gay and Bill had organised a great day, introducing us to local points of interest; of which many of us had no idea existed. Some of us travelled through from Bulls to Wanganui with tops down even if the cloud looked rather threatening, the sky getting darker and darker as we neared the city. There were constant reminders of the June floods, with signs of the inundation of massive floods leaving a covering of silt over the land and through buildings at Whangaehu and Turakina and evidence of slips on roadsides.

At Wanganui, we gathered at Virginia Lake, only to discover that that local café had become so popular that there was insufficient parking for us all, however, once all together we followed Gay and Bill to Ian Chamberlain's home where we were able to park all around his house on his



immaculate lawn among his well-tended gardens, just as it started to drizzle (I did hope that things wouldn't get too wet for the lawn when it came time to drive off). Firstly we were lead to a lovely old vehicle, now installed with an antique organ whose music attracted us to his shed. It was there that we found a rich collection of vintage vehicles immaculately restored by Ian who spoke of his passion for his vehicles and his work in restoring them. It is always a mystery to me how these men manage to

get time, skills and resources to ensure these beautiful elderly vehicles are restored to such a high standard. Yet one can only listen to the passion in their conversation about their vehicles, that you realise it is a very serious life style choice for themselves. A walk down the hill from one property to another,



and we found ourselves in another man shed belonging to Ed Boyd, with an equally interesting collection of treasured vehicles as well as other paraphernalia of the motoring kind. For me the thrill was to discover a cute little Austin Seven coincidentally, about which I had been in discussion with some people in Palmerston North only a few weeks previously. This wee vehicle painted in Automobile Assn colours, having spent its early life as a Service Vehicle for the



Wanganui AA. I am sure all of us found plenty to fascinate, from the vehicles to the antique furniture tucked away in the corners of the large shed.

Our next stop was right next to Wanganui's reservoir, where we gathered our lunch and camp chairs to enter the rooms of the Westmere Miniature Rifle Club. It was great to be able to settle out of the rain, in a warm room and enjoy our picnics and each other's company before we were given instructions on how to use a rifle! Well that was an experience! For some, it was like a duck to water – their ability to handle a rifle and gain very good results, having counted their achievements at getting close to those targets! Graham Toms and Leigh Greer were the top shooters with 87 points and for the women Robyn Christensen achieved with 81 points with Rachel Dean a close second with 80 points. Thanks must go to Sid and his friends of the Westmere Club for the time they spent with each of us, patiently coaching us individually, how to hold that rifle and how to look through the sights in an effort to get us to accuracy in our shooting.



It was yet another great day, and thanks again to Gay and Bill who put a lot of effort into making sure we all had an opportunity to explore something different and experience something new.