

Taranaki Overnighter Run 18/19 June 2016

This year's keenly anticipated 'Brown's' run began unofficially in Wanganui on Friday evening when nine MG Manawatu members dined together at The Brick House Restaurant.

At 8.15 on Saturday morning ten cars assembled at Virginia Lake and were soon officially away on the third running of a mid-winter Taranaki tour organised by Taranaki gurus Robin and Claire Brown.

A smooth run found the convoy at the well-kept Hollard Gardens near Kaponga for a leisurely morning tea. There we were joined by New Plymouth MG Manawatu members Garry and Lorna Wood and John and Ronnie Jury in their MGF's.

We travelled from there to Cape Egmont for lunch at the excellent Boating Club facilities with a great view over the rocky coastline. We were welcomed there by Robin and Claire's daughter and son-in-law who live nearby and are involved with the club and the impressive rescue boat based there. Made our way to New Plymouth and the Flamingo Motel by 3.30 via the narrow winding bush-lined Carrington Road and the group of 23 enjoyed an excellent dinner and evening at Okurukuru Restaurant near Oakura.

Sunday morning at 8 the hardworking Browns were cooking up a bacon and eggs storm for us as usual on their run. Thus fortified we started out at 2-minute intervals from 9.30 on a little 'scavenger hunt' rally through the city, which took us to our first 'collection' of the day.

The rally event was kindly organised by Flamingo Motel owner Tony and some good fun was had with Michael and Elaine Anderson taking the honours.

And what a collection this was. An amazing array of perhaps thirty vehicles immaculately housed and maintained to perfection on a superb 6 acre garden property. The contents of the collection blew us away but we came away with no idea of who is the owner.

The next stop was a total contrast – a huge collection of tractors near Inglewood and a wonderfully passionate owner with an endless repertoire of stories about all the different makes and models.

We drove from there to the Stratford Mountain House for a very nice lunch in lovely surroundings. The local members and a couple of other cars left the tour there and the remaining eight cars travelled together back to Patea for another amazing collection visit.

In a big old commercial building in the main street lives a very entertaining and happy little elderly man Jim Baird with a delightful sense of humour and a very large number of old cars, mostly in the state they were in the day they were retired. Except for one, a 1917 Buick Doctors Coupe on which Jim has almost finished a magnificent restoration.

This brilliant visit capped off another of the outstanding 'Brown's Taranaki Tours' that are gaining legendary status. The intimate knowledge Robin and Claire have of Taranaki and their keenness to share it is much appreciated and we ain't seen it all yet.

This immensely enjoyable, pretty much 'laugh a minute' weekend ended with the remaining participants enjoying a farewell gathering at McDonald's Wanganui before dispersing home to reality.