

Wolseley Car Club 2024 National Rally – Journey to the Rising Sun.



Below is a day by rundown of where we went and what we did. We had amazing weather for the whole trip except for those of us heading north on the way home on Saturday where we had rain from just before Rotorua onwards. And the food, I should mention the food, lots of it and to say again, lots more of it, I know I haven't eaten that much in ages. A big shout out to Kirsty Lee for providing us with amazing morning and afternoon teas and lunch at Matata, whew need to go on a diet after that lot.

Graeme briefed us daily on where we were going and what to do for the next day and his hubcap gong being whacked became a consistent for the whole trip. I must admit it was fun to have a turn on that thing at the prizegiving.

Graeme and his hubcap gong



We had some funny stories to pop up along the way with just a few highlights below.

Someone had an experience with their orange juice added to the salt container. Unbeknown to the person the Tomato sauce and the Salt where in paper cups on the table, the paper cups were the same as the drinking cups provided.... ooops... bet that did not taste good....

And we had someone else who thought another vehicle had left their handbrake on while driving only to realise it was their handbrake.

Kirsty had a mission with her cellphone which went missing on day five after our park up at Mid Beach in the morning. After an uneventful search she went to back to the location to see if it was in the grass and a lovely local asked her what she was doing, only to ask her if the phone on her car bonnet was hers..... How that stayed there for the trip back to the motel and then back to the parking location is anyone's guess. Glad you found it Kirsty.

Graeme Lee earned a chocolate fish for trying to unlock the wrong car and thought no one was watching his error, great spotting from Kirsty and Bronwyn.

And a couple of car issues along the way.

Mathew Heys car had an oopsy in the Carpark of the Complex and left a big trail of green on his way to Repco to purchase a new frost plug that had blown in his car. Our wonderful team hosed down the car park to clear it off. Michael and Mathew fitted a new frost plug plus a new fuel pump, filter and hoses to have it running again.

Mathews Frost Plug trail



And Michael Kruse had the tow of his life after his car blew a head gasket, all the way from the beginning of the Waioeka Gorge through to Gisborne about 140 kms. A big kudos to Ian Scott who towed him there safely. We were impressed with their towing skills. All was well after Ron Hopps changed the head gasket and the 1500 was mobile again. Thank you Ron for all your support.

Here is Michael hooking his tow rope up to Ian's car.



Sunday 17 March – arrive Whakatane.

Everyone arrived at the Complex Motel Whakatane around 2.30pm, our accommodation for the next four nights with 21 Wolseley Cars registered and 39 people attending.

We were welcomed by Graeme and Kirsty Lee after dinner at the Complex restaurant and special thanks were given to them both for their wonderful job in organizing this event. A special shout out to Steve and Janice Belcher who could not attend but who were instrumental in assisting Graeme and Kirsty in planning this run.

Apologies were received from Gordon Duthie (our National president) and his wife Beryl who were not able to attend as it was their 50th wedding anniversary and Beryl's 70th Birthday. Their family was arriving from Australia to celebrate these special occasions with them. From all the Wolseley Club we wish you the best.

We had a special guest who put in the marathon trip from Australia. And others who would have liked to have been here but for various reasons could not attend.

The Complex Whakatane



Monday 18 March – Trip to Te Kaha

We mustered in the motel carpark for an early 8.30 start to tackle the two hour drive up the east coast to Te Kaha, via Ohope, and Ōpōtiki. It was a beautiful drive with everyone arriving safely. The scenery was stunning and going over the Motu River provided us with some great photo opportunities. White Island was puffing away gently to our left way out in the ocean.

A rest stop on the way to Te Kaha at Ōmāio.



Our destination was the Te Kura o Te Whānau a Apanui the local Kura (school) at the beautiful location of Maraetai Bay (also known as School House Bay).

Morning tea at School House Bay



We were greeted by Paul O'Brien who directed us onto the school grounds where we parked the cars and were welcomed onto the school grounds with a traditional Māori pōwhiri. There are 180 children attending this brand-new facility built with the support of Government funding and wow what a fantastic school. It was amazing to experience the pōwhiri provided by the pupils and the hearty lunch, a big thanks to them all.

The children then took some time to talk with us all, viewed the cars, sat in the vehicles, had lots of questions, and enjoyed listening to the engines rev. We enjoyed it as much as they did.

Heading into the pōwhiri



The Cars lined up for the Children to investigate.



Graeme Lee officially thanked the school for having us and presented them with a framed thank you certificate.

The Ohope Chartered Club provided a refreshing afternoon tea on the way back to our accommodation in Whakatane.

Dinner for the night is at the Whakatane Sportfishing Club Inc with Graeme providing a brief on the next day's activities. Everyone was off to bed for an early night after a lovely dinner and a big day's driving.

Tuesday 19 March - Rotorua

8.30 start to drive to the Buried Village in Rotorua via Hongi's track which took us up the Rotoma hill and past the picturesque Lakes of Rotoma, Rotoehu, and Rotoiti. Hells Gate was passed with the first smells of the Rotorua thermal area evident to all. We then passed the Blue and Green Lakes to reach the Buried Village. It was fascinating to hear the history of the Mt Tarawera eruption and the devastation it caused. All enjoyed walking around the village, and they provided a lovely morning tea.



While we were out walking around the village the Judges for the concours trophy arrived to start their car inspections and they then joined us for lunch at the Landing restaurant just down the road on the shores of Lake Tarawera.

Mt Tarawera across from the Landing Restaurant



It was a very cold southerly blowing as we viewed Mt Tarawera across the lake and considered the volatility of this area. The food at the Landing was exceptional and we all left there warm and well fed for the next stage of our day's journey to Wai-O-Tapu, a thermal wonderland where we enjoyed a walk around the area. The Champagne Pool was stunning to view.

The champagne Pool.



There was an opportunity to experience a flight out over White Island (or as close as they get as there is a no flight zone around the island) a few people elected this option and left early to catch the plane, they really enjoyed the flight. (Thanks Graeme).

Michael Kruse, Annette McKnight and Dot Johnson enjoying their flight.



White island from the plane



We then proceeded back to Whakatane via Murupara and Galatea, driving through the world's 4th largest forestry plantation. It was a long but pretty drive with the Urawera ranges on the right as we headed down the valley with a stop to view the Matahina Dam.

We arrived back at the Complex at about 5.30ish to have dinner. Another big driving day and dinner this night was our choice with everyone going in different directions.

Wednesday 20 March 8.45 Start - Whakatane

Today was quiz day with a set of questions that challenged us all but what a lot of fun as some of the questions related to the previous couple of days journeys. The winner will be announced at the prizegiving on Friday night.

Our route was around Whakatane city and then out to one of the biggest manufacturing businesses in town, Extreme Boats, to view their manufacturing process. A big thank you to the team there as it was a fascinating tour of how their boats come about. Kudos to them for the jobs they have created and the economic wealth that they are bringing into the area.

From there it was out to Matata and up the coast for a visit to Bruce Seddon's home (Thank you Bruce) where we viewed his wonderful collection of cars and the surprise of his miniature railway set up. This was a delight to see, and we all enjoyed the time spent viewing it.

Then it was back to Matata Domain for lunch, wow Kirsty Lee has done an awesome job with the food she provided and all the driving around to set up for us at each of our stops.

From there it was back to Ohope Harbour via Edgecumbe. We parked our cars up on the reserve in front of the harbour to have pictures taken with a drone provided by a local photographer and then proceeded back to the motel for a bit of a rest before embarking back to the Ohope Chartered Club for dinner. Graeme and Kirsty provided a courtesy van and car for this dinner which was appreciated by all.

Day four - Gisborne

We left again at 8.30am on our way to Gisborne via the Waimana Gorge just out of Tāneatua and then through Ōpōtiki to enter the Waioeka Gorge and what a beautiful trip.

We stopped at Matawai for morning tea and much needed break before heading down the hill to Gisborne. Lots of roadworks slowed down our trip but the scenery through the Gorge and down the hill was spectacular. The weather warmed up after our brisk southerly in Whakatane and we reached our lunch venue of the Vines Restaurant and Winery with no further delays.

The food was superb and some of us stayed for a wine tasting which was well presented by the staff. It was informative and some lovely wines were tried. A few bottles were purchased to take home.

Our cars lined up at the Vines Restaurant.



From there we headed to our accommodation at the Captain Cook Motor Lodge.

A BBQ dinner was hosted by the Gisborne Vintage Car Club at their headquarters at the showgrounds. A big thank you to that team who provided not just a BBQ but a banquet as we had dessert. Their hospitality was fantastic.

Ray and Caryl Chappell at the Gisborne Vintage Car Club.



We all rolled back to the accommodation with full tums and looking forward to a good night's sleep.

Day five – Gisborne

This is it, our last day and a few brave hearts got up early (before 7am) to walk down to the beach to view the sunrise. It is another stunner of a day, we have been so lucky with the weather on this trip, not a bit of rain anywhere so far.

Viewing the sunrise at Waikanae Beach Gisborne



Image of the sunrise but we couldn't see the sun facing east due to a bank of clouds. This image shows the colours of dawn as they happened.



At 9.30am our cars are ready to go to the line up at the Midway Beach car park so the public can view our vehicles and a good photo opportunity for the press.

Line up of cars taken from both left and right.



The group credit Bronwyn Pullan



From there Graeme lee led a group out to Ron Hobbs home in Ormond to view his collection of cars and impressive workshop. The first car in the workshop we saw was Michael and Raewyn Kruse's as Ron was fixing it for him in record time to tackle the trip back to New Plymouth. Thank you, Ron, for hosting us and the work on Michael's car.

Others went shopping or sightseeing in and around Gisborne for the afternoon or enjoyed a long lunch at some of the wonderful eateries.

Some even had a good old afternoon nap.

We assembled in the Motel car park at 4pm to drive out to our prizegiving venue for dinner, the wonderful Bushmere Arms Hotel.

The gardens are spectacular with all of us wandering the grounds for about an hour, taking lots of photos, and enjoying the serenity of the gardens. Then into the bar for drinks and nibbles while we waited to be seated.

A taste of the gardens



Inside the venue – Credit Bronwyn Pullan



While we were waiting for our meals, Graeme presented us with the answers to the quiz that we did on day three, some hilarious answers that were wrong came out and the winners were Ian Scott and John Mallia (Melbourne)



Our meals were delivered, and the food was amazing with a selection of fish or beef for the main depending on what each selected. The desserts were equally yummy.

Now onto our prizegiving

Colleen Litchfield (National vice president) and Michael Kruse (National secretary) presented the trophies to the deserving winners with lots of photos taken. We also presented Graeme and Kirsty Lee with a lovely, dried flower arrangement as thanks for the epic job of organizing the rally.

Graeme and Kirsty Lee – Credit Bronwyn Pullan



Also, thanks to Ron Hopps for the box of goodies from his workshop that each prize winner could select an item from.

The Concours Trophy was awarded to Derek and Lee Brehaut



With a presentation of certificates for the top five runner-up cars these being in total mark order. Trevor and Dot Johnson, Larry and Glenys Naik, Pieter and Johanna Deutz Ebeling, Kevin Goudie and Colleen Litchfield, and Ian Scott.

The Most Original Car Trophy was awarded to Kevin and Annette McKnight.



The Most Enthusiastic Participant Trophy was awarded to Ian Scott



The Best Overall Performance Trophy was awarded to Harry and Gay Sutcliffe



The evening went off without a hitch and we all travelled back to your accommodation for a much-needed sleep.

Most entrants were gone by 9am the next morning to find their way home except for Michael Kruse who was waiting to pick up his car from Ron Hopps sometime on Saturday and Hugh and Bronwyn McKenzie who decided to spend an extra night enjoying Gisborne.

Below is an image of some members enjoying a morning tea break in the Waioeka Gorge on the way north.



The Rally Entrants Choice Cup was awarded to #19 Derek and Lee Brehaut



We will all be looking forward to the next event in two years time.