



Waipu Caledonian Park



Matauri Bay Holiday Park



Whatuwhiwhi Holiday Park

## International Caravanning Fellowship of Rotarians (NZ) Inc

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### *Northern Ramble*

*13-20 April 2012  
Waipu Caledonian Park,  
Matauri Bay Holiday Park,  
Whatuwhiwhi Holiday Park*

### Websites to view

[www.icfr.rotarysouthpacific.org](http://www.icfr.rotarysouthpacific.org)  
[www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk](http://www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk)  
[www.rvfr-aus.org.au](http://www.rvfr-aus.org.au)

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### *Bennie writes . . .*

Like migrating birds homing in on their target, a record number of early birds arrived and set up their nests on Thursday at Waipu Caledonian Park – a total of 18 vans.



Frequent short showers made setting up interesting, and from 5 o'clock there was a noisy contingent with their refreshments in the hall, hosted by Barry and Kay Benton with Rodger and Barbara Palmer, our organisers for the weekend.

On Friday morning, the short windy showers continued as new arrivals came in through the day. Rodger showed his local knowledge by leading a group south to a spot at the base of the Brynderwyns – the Piroa Falls. Accessed by a steep and challenging track created by the local Rotary Club, the falls were worth the effort. Then we followed Rodger back to his farm not far away to enjoy the great views and extensive gardens and orchards overlooking traffic winding its way up the Brynderwyns in the distance.





On Saturday the brief showers grew less in the morning and at morning tea those virtuous people who correctly answered the question in their registration form about the length of their forefinger in metres were rewarded with chocolate bars. Arrangements were made for those going for the garden walk in the afternoon. At these privately-owned gardens a short distance away, they were greeted by Sonia, who talked about the unusual species in her 5-acre garden. This included a fig tree which grew on the trunk of a host tree and was fertilised by a small beetle. As

there were no such beetles in New Zealand, the fig tree was purely ornamental. The collection of roses was extensive.

Others scoured the town shops and monuments looking for answers to Rodger's and Barbara's 26-question quiz. A knowledge of Gaelic was helpful. A visit to the museum revealed the fascinating history of the intrepid souls during the Clearances in Scotland, who when forced out of their homes which were burned down around them, banded together and sailed to Nova Scotia. After 30 hard years trying to subsist there, they built their own ships and sailed to Australia to encounter drought and gold fever, and so on to New Zealand where they created the settlement of Waipu, - 900 of them. The Scottish customs and culture live on there today. Dinner was at the RSA within walking distance, and everyone seemed satisfied with the meal and the service.



Sunday started with unsettled weather but the meeting proceeded in the hall, with Peter Blackman standing in for President Robin, who had sadly gone home sick. Matters were dealt with in good time for the meeting to end well before noon. The weather put paid to the lunch BBQ but cleared enough for the afternoon games.



The Highland Games have been held every year at this Park on January 1<sup>st</sup> since before 1900, lasting 4 to 5 days.

The ICFR Games were held today, lasting 2 hours of highly competitive play, including Caber tossing, Ladder golf, Lemon & Spoon, Gumboot Throw, and Toss the Sheaf. Once some irregular scoring had been corrected by the judges, the winning team from the ten competing, was Roger Clotworthy, Peter Blackman, John Edmonds and Brian Tait.



Fish and Chips and



Pizzas were the menu for dinner.





### *Stewart reports . . .*

Our journey in the “winterless north” continued on to Matauri Bay Road 170 km north of Waipu. By mid-afternoon all had arrived and settled in with the assistance of Barry and the obliging camp owner.

*[Panorama: Andy Duncan]*



With the sun shining some were heard to remark they felt they were now on holiday. The odd fishing rod appeared and a blow up kayak.

5's saw a big gathering at the southern end of the camp and all were welcomed by Barry in his usual light humoured way.

The next morning dawned bright and sunny and the first small group, Andy & Joyce,



Peter & Susan & Stewart made their way up the steep climb to the Rainbow Warrior memorial lookout and experienced the stunning vista's out to the Cavelle Islands, Matauri Bay, camp environs, Dover Samuels' property and surrounding country side. Meanwhile down on the Camp sports green a game of “Rounders” took place under the auspices' of an experienced, fair sighted

umpire, Pat Griffen who's rulings at times were somewhat baffling and suspect of biased advice, bribes and Kit Kats.

Following lunch, at 1:30pm a larger group was seen to assemble at the foot of the track to the lookout. All enjoyed the views from the top.



At 3:30pm six sets of petanque boules appeared, teams assembled and the fun began. Some serious and some not so serious. The delivery poses of participants had to be seen to be







believed and it was obvious that some had taken ballet lessons. A great location enjoyed by all and the camp was soon cleared the next morning as we all headed to our next destination Whatuwhiwhi with a promise of fish and chips at Mangonui.



### *Bennie continues . . .*

The vans rolled in to Whatuwhiwhi on the beautiful Far North Karikari peninsular on 18<sup>th</sup> April, almost filling the park with 10 caravans and 24 motorhomes. The large catches brought in by the camp-based boats inspired a few to try their luck, others visited the Matthews Motor Museum, with dozens of cars and tractors all restored from almost scrapmetal over 40 years, plus for the ladies many household items from the past including



pianos and a grand piano dating from 1850. It was sobering to see many items we remember using ourselves – should we also be in a museum? The beautiful long golden sands of Tokerau Beach were nearby, and the large empty subdivisions built during the boom still waiting for the population influx which never happened. It was agreed that this, our first official rolling rally, had been a great success, due largely to the huge efforts of Rodger and Barbara Palmer, with help from Barry and Kay Benton. It wasn't over for many, who went on to other places such as Matai Bay and Cape Reinga to the north, Hokianga and Tauranga Bay to the south, to catch a few more days of the great weather.



#### **FUTURE RALLIES:**

June 18/20	Miranda Hot Springs
Aug 11/13	Mt Maunganui
Sep 25/28	Omokoroa Thermal H P
9/11 Nov	Karapiro AGM