



Whakatane Rally = 5-7 April 2013

Rally organisers: Peter & Susan Blackman, Don Paterson, Barry & Kay Benton

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL by Jan Edmonds



photos by Andy Duncan

We arrived mid-morning Friday, a fresh sunny Whakatane day, to find White Island trip had been cancelled (wave conditions) but lots of folks already in



camp, so it was chatting followed by an 'Open Home' in Fay and Robin Bly's new English import caravan, and very nice it was too. An afternoon spent relaxing in many ways, from golf for the energetic to sleeping for the lethargic.

Happy Hour at the new time of 4.45pm saw all 55 people in camp including 2 new couples from BOP who were welcomed to the Rally, Kevin & Gail Upton with Murray & Joan Bailey.

The enjoyable supper finished off day one.

Saturday dawned sunny, but a little crisp. By 8.45am we were all on the bus, off on a morning Mystery Tour, to 'Two interesting places' and so it proved to be.

Extreme Boats was Venue No 1 with the owner Glen, a former mechanic and dairy farmer speaking to us about his business



of 15 years, building top quality aluminium boats.



Originating in 2 workshops on his farm and progressing thru to his purpose built factory, where he employs 27 staff. He has orders, almost a year in advance and each boat takes 140 hours to build. If they come in under time the worker gets a week's pay as a bonus, but the boat must be up to top standard.

His original designs were drawn up by a marine architect from Christchurch, but now he uses a computer to draw up the plans himself.

These plans are fed into a computerised cutting machine which controls the cutting router and the pieces were all laid out on the cutting table, complete with pen markings showing all the intersections



and fold lines, so no paper plans are used in the assembly. One man is then responsible for the full assembly of each craft, up to the painting stage, which is contracted out. It is returned to the factory for final finishing touches done by

a team of four. There is a set order for putting the boat together so the aluminium doesn't distort in the welding process. The 200 tonnes of high-grade aluminium used is imported from France and Italy and ordered 12 months in advance. At present it is the cheapest it has ever been, with our high dollar.

The factory makes trailer boats ranging from 4.6 to 11m fitted to the buyer's



requirements. A third of his marketing is done through boat shows where his boats have won 12 awards out of the 13 times he has entered. He also uses magazines, the fishing shows on TV and TV adverts. He has one dealer in each state of Australia, and also markets in Japan, the US and New Caledonia and looking to Finland as a joint-venture with a local manufacturer. His boats sell from between \$80-\$90,000 (minus motor). He admits that if it weren't for the financial backing of his dairy farm he would not have been able to afford the capital necessary to progress as he has done. He will build between 140 and 150 boats this year. New Zealand has the second highest boat ownership in the world after Norway, but statistics show that they are used on average for just 17 hours per year.

A short walk around the corner brought us to the second venue, the warehouse of Ora honey; where sales manager Peter and his wife Maggie organised a morning tea for us and then told us something of the operation.



The Maori owned enterprise Whakaari International is based on Manuka Honey which comes from manuka forests on East Coast Maori land between Ruatoria and Waihou Bay. Most of their staff is Maori. They have three beekeepers with around 1500 hives, producing between 20 to 40 t of Manuka Honey each year.

It is extracted out of a plant based at Cape Runaway and transported to the bottling plant at Awakere. Labelling was being hand done by four Maori ladies in the warehouse. The Manuka honey, known for its antibacterial and antiseptic properties is a valuable product these days and their labels carry a UMF rating (unique manuka factor) showing how highly that particular honey is rated from 5 to 20+, and thus the cost rating increases. UMF will often increase with the ageing of the honey. Being GE free is a positive strength for export. Most of their production is exported to China, Australia, North America and some to Europe. No honey is allowed to be imported into New Zealand. Several of us took advantage of



being able to purchase bottles of their honey.

Our bus driver, Noelene, gave us a bit of a tiki tour around town, driving out to the Whakatane River mouth, very calm today,



but often turbulent.

Many folk debussed in town while the remainder were driven back to camp to

Bent coin Barry?





spend the afternoon at leisure before being collected again by bus at 5:45 p.m. to be taken to the Whakatane Golf Club for dinner. After time spent socialising we were served a very tasty selection of food, which was beautifully cooked and much enjoyed by everyone. The meal was followed by a mind blowing table quiz put together by Susan and Peter on a variety of topics. Amid much laughter and comments the winning team of table 4 consisting of Judith and Bill, Terry, Jean, Joyce and Andy and John and Jan were declared the winners, and being humble and modest in their victory, promptly awarded themselves the Rose Bowl Trophy, the largest in the clubhouse. A most enjoyable evening.



After an extra hour's sleep in, courtesy of daylight saving being all reversed, we

emerged to another sunny autumn morning, jackets all round. Morning tea in the Communal area was followed by the business meeting conducted by Pres Robin Matheson, who formally introduced our visitors, followed by a brief introduction from Barry Benton.



Some members had attended a memorial service in Tauranga for Ross Burson and we stood for a minute's silence in remembrance of Ross who together with wife Dorothy had joined the club in 1992 and had helped run three rallies. A resignation had been accepted from Doris Hextall. She and Keith were foundation members of this group leaving only Peter and Jeannie Parr with this honour.

Robin reminded us to check our ICFR website which Barry has been updating.

<http://www.rotarysouthpacific.org/information.cfm?id=1507/>

The Brits also have a good web site which has our newsletters posted.
www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk/

Future rallies were promoted by their respective organisers with the request that you advise organisers if you're not coming as this affects the hiring of buses et cetera. Ideas were called for rally sites for next April and several are to be checked out. Today being an auspicious occasion for Joyce Duncan (21 again) the, we all sang happy birthday to her. An enjoyable session of fines by sergeants Irene Bates and Charles Spain followed, and they managed to extract \$123.20 from us for our sins.

Jean Dillon gave a very accomplished thank you to the rally organisers, Don Paterson who did the original organising, at present overseas, and Peter and Susan and Barry and Kay who very capably did the ground work this weekend.

Fish and chip orders were taken by Kay and some of us shared a communal lunch, followed by a variety of leisure pursuits including walks, lattes, train rides, sleeps etc. Happy hour, followed by fish and chips concluded the day, and another happy and successful rally.



Robyn East & Honey Bee

Also 'snapped'.



Quizmaster

DIRECTORY

President: Robin Matheson
grarobin@farmside.co.nz
Vice President: Peter Blackman
pblackman@orcon.net.nz
Secretary: Andy Duncan
anjo.duncan@xtra.co.nz

FUTURE RALLIES

10 - 12 Jun	Miranda Hot Springs
2 - 4 Aug	Whangateau Holiday Park
24 - 26 Sep	Omokoroa Thermal Holiday Park
15 - 17 Nov	Opunake Beach Holiday Park
2014	
7 - 14 Feb*	Pohangina Valley [Bush Rally]
14 - 16 Feb*	Himatangi Beach Holiday Park
* NOTE DATE CHANGES	