



**INTERNATIONAL CARAVANNING  
FELLOWSHIP OF ROTARIANS [NZ] INC  
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[www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk](http://www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk)  
[www.rvfr-aus.org.au](http://www.rvfr-aus.org.au)

*Susan Blackman writes . . . .*

Our rally organisers had chosen well for this August Rally, the Rotorua Top 10 Camp with its excellent facilities, paved surfaces and heaters blazing away in the ablution blocks. What luxury for a winter camp! For the more adventurous the Camp's hot mineral pools beckoned!

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August**

On Friday our rally leaders Jean Dillon, Barry and Kay Benton offered an additional excursion - Rail Cruising between Mamaku to Tarukenga. Judging by the numbers, lots of our members were keen. Our mode of transport was a RailCruiser V3000 fully automated petrol-electric four seat hybrid rail vehicle. They were equipped with clear drop down waterproof sides, heating and rugs. Very cosy!



After gathering at Mamaku Railway Station and fortified with complimentary tea and coffee we were briefed by Train Guides Colette and Heather about the rail system and, of

course, Health and Safety.



So it was all on board the 9 railcars awaiting and we were soon clackety, clacking along the rail tracks at a controlled speed of 20kms an hour. Our route took us on the old logging route passing through the Dansey Scenic Reserve, home to Kauri, Rimu, tree ferns and fantails. Along the way, rolling paddocks and a 360 degree view which included Lake Rotorua. We marvelled at the construction of the line, it was pick and shovel and very hard labour. Originally planned in 1877 to take tourists to view the pink and white terraces, it finally opened in 1894 after the Mt Tarawera eruption changed the plans in 1886. Our destination today was the Tarukenga Station where our carts were then turned around on a turntable in readiness for the return journey.



It seemed no time before we were back at the Mamaku Station, greeted by the chilly wind and by the second group of ICFR members waiting patiently in anticipation for their turn. A great excursion.



Happy Hour saw 86 members, including prospective new members meeting at Parksyde (thank you rally organisers for that) where all were welcomed by President Peter. It was great to see so many including Bryn and Mandy after a three year gap.



The usual format, announcements, display of the newly purchased defibrillator and names given for supper arrangements. After dinner there was much scurrying around to fulfil this worthy appointment. It's always a nice thing to participate this way as it gives members the chance to get to know one another better.

### Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August

Yippee its fine and awakening to a real frosty morning - great for the day's excursion to explore Lake Rotoiti.

55 members met at the Okere Falls Wharf and then boarded the comfortable catamaran "Rotoiti Explorer". Thankfully the vessel had drop down plastic curtains that kept the icy winds at bay.



Our commentators were Skipper Marcus, Barry Benton and Joy Baker. What a difference personal knowledge makes and we were regaled with many a tale of happenings on the lake. Skipper Marcus showed us many lovely lakeside homes and he also commented that this lake has a great collection of vintage wooden launches, of which we caught the odd glimpse.

We had a very pleasant stop adjacent to Te Arero Bay where we ate our picnic lunch in glorious sunshine against a stunning backdrop of large tree ferns and fantails darting above us, perfect!

Our final stop on the lake was at the Manupirua Hot Pools where a large number of members donned their togs and braved the elements to soak in the mineral pools, what bliss! Some brave souls even went into the lake afterwards but the rest of us let them do it without our support! Back just after 3pm, what a great outing but time enough for members to look at their eyelids should they feel the urge!



Saturday evening saw members back again at Parksyde, what a great facility that our rally organisers were able to procure. It was even more appreciated being able to walk there through a gate from the campground, specially made in time for our events at the venue.



The catering staff served an excellent roast meal followed by dessert, all comfort food for the time of the year.

Our after dinner speaker was Anna Grayling from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Her presentation was stunning as she is involved with the Watercare of Rotorua's 14 lakes which had been for many years in serious decline.



Her power point presentation showed us how much Government monies have/are being set aside, the science and research which is taking place to implement best practices and the improvements which are gradually occurring in the lakes. It was very heartening to learn that the water quality management of the lakes is now in very good hands.

Anna's presentation could have not been more pertinent as most had just spent the day on Lake Rotoiti and seen how clear the water was. An inspirational and passionate speaker who shared all her knowledge with us, we were very lucky to hear her.

### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August

Another frosty morning and even the camp's black cat looked puzzled when trying to drink water from a bucket of ice!



President Peter ran a very humorous meeting (*I was told to write that!*), five new members were inducted . . . . .

Joy Baker, Kevin & Ann Longman and Derek & Lynne Vincent.



Our newly appointed Treasurer Laurie Young proposed a vote of thanks to Ian Burson for his sterling contribution to the club for many years. Then he reported on the healthy club finances. A witty Sergeant's session followed when Jean Dillon and George Brennan extracted ample monies

to enable donations to Parksyde Trust and St Johns. Temporary ongoing 'custodianship' of the



wooden spoon saw it transfer from Andy Bax to Ian Burson. Thanks were in the capable hands of Terry Daniell who commended the rally organisers, especially Jean Dillon for her first rally, with Kay & Barry Benton for their superb efforts.

The usual communal lunch for the brave hearted outside in the chilly wind and the day concluded with yet another happy hour and pizzas to follow.

So once more another successful rally; how lucky we all are to belong to this great group and on this note the scribe signs off!

*Susan Blackman*



**FUTURE RALLIES:**

**2014**

23 - 25 Sep Omokoroa [*Informal*]  
31 Oct-2 Nov Orewa, AGM

**2015**

13 - 20 Feb Matai Bay, Bush/Beach Camp  
20 - 22 Feb Waipapakauri

**2015**

Apr Hawkes Bay - Kennedy Park??  
Aug Auckland area to arrange  
Nov Bay of Plenty area to arrange