


# Top 10 Gisborne Holiday Park, Waikanae Beach, 5-6 May 2017

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Hard to believe that the Gisborne which the ICFR rally rolled into on May 4-5, was the place so hit by horrible weather and flooding just a few weeks previously. The city gave the 62 Rotovanners balmy weather, calm sea, non-stop sunshine.

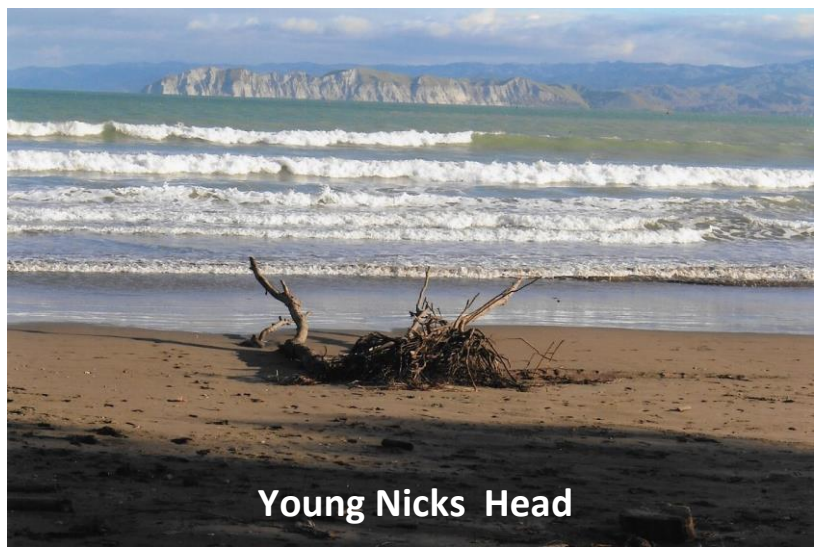
The view from our sites at the Waikanae Beach Top 10 Holiday Park was magnificent, across the bay to the white cliffs that Young Nick spotted from the masthead of Captain Cook's vessel, Endeavour, in 1769. Just a few metres away was the very spot where Cook and his crew came ashore, to be greeted by Maori. The voyagers coped with the hongi but misunderstood the haka, at which point everything tragically turned to custard, and Cook and his men left without being able to replenish food stocks or water. Hence the name they gave the area – Poverty Bay.

Despite this, the encounter was a very big deal. The meeting room in the fine new surf club building adjacent to the south end of the camp has a quote on the wall from Dame Anne Salmond which says it all: “*The foreshore of the Turanganui River is one of the world's great voyaging sites. It is the landing place of the Horouta canoe, celebrating the achievements of the Polynesian star navigators. It is a place where Captain James Cook and his companions first came ashore in New Zealand, heralding the traditions of European exploration and discovery.*

*“It is the site where Tupaea, the Ra'iatean high priest navigator, who sailed with Cook, first met Maori marking the links between local people and their ancestral homelands. It is a meeting place of cultures, of challenges and shootings as well as friendly exchanges. Here Captain Cook and a local man saluted each other with a hongi...the first greeting between a Maori and a European. “It is a sacred site for all New Zealanders, to be celebrated with pride and treated with dignity.”*

What a place to be camping.

Friday night Fivesies at the surf club was the usual raucous event, but the traditional socialising of balloted groups of five or six people in individual vans after dinner was replaced by a wine-tasting with a difference. Groups competed to name the three main



**Young Nicks Head**





flavours in each wine and appropriate food matches. Bev Mouat tried very hard but cracked near the end coming up with “mince on toast” for a rather smart merlot. The title of Wine CleverDicks of the night went to group Pinot More, which won after a play-off with Missionaries, and Bev’s group won a special judges’ award for their name “A Tiny Hint of Jockstraps and Peppermint”.

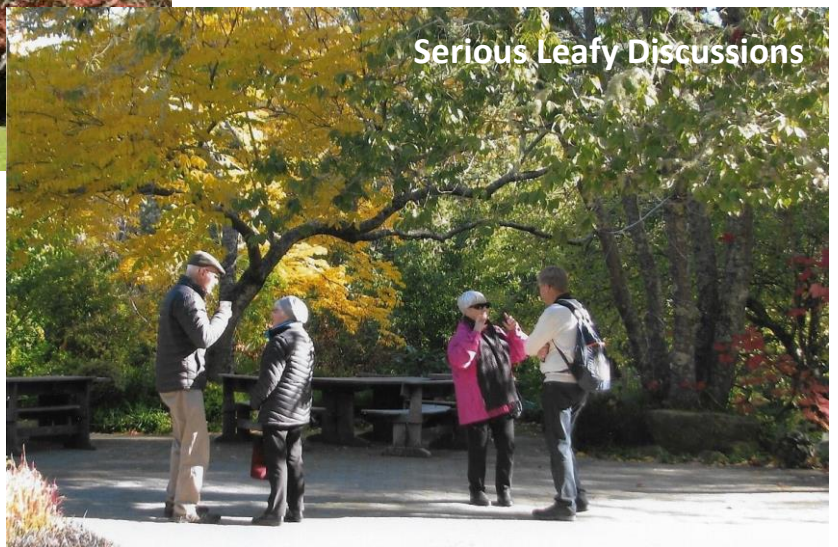
“Big Saturday” was a visit to the National Arboretum of New Zealand, the beautiful Ngatapa valley 35km



to the northwest of Gisborne. This is a dendrologist’s (tree scientist) paradise, with over 3500 different trees shrubs and climbers from around the globe. It is the largest collection of northern hemisphere trees in the southern hemisphere, some of them rare and endangered species in their country of origin. Although it was late autumn the place was still aglow with stunning colour. Rotarians walked the trails or went on the jeep-drawn trailer. The founder of both Eastwoodhill and the

Pukeiti gardens in New Plymouth was the extraordinary, sometimes difficult, sometimes charming, Douglas Cook, who started farming at Eastwoodhill in 1910. Cook was wounded in WW1 and was inspired by the great parks and gardens he saw while recuperating in the UK. He apparently liked to work on the property wearing nothing more than a hat and a single gumboot (for digging work). Try as we might, we could find no staff members following this practice.

Eastwoodhill was bought by H.B. (Bill) Williams in 1965 to ensure the future of the property. He began the process of establishing a self-governing body to develop it into a public arboretum, key goals being to conserve and promote the conservation of rare and endangered plants, and to promote understanding and appreciation of the world flora, emphasising cool and warm temperate trees.



The collection has been expanded and enhanced in many areas since then, supported by entry fees, donations and fundraising by Friends of Eastwoodhill. It now includes an educational and visitor centre.

That evening we enjoyed an excellent buffet meal and toe-tapping entertainment from seven-strong ukelele group The G’zunkers at the Tatapouri Sports Fishing Club on the Gisborne wharf.

Four people who went by car rather than shuttle bus to this near-by venue, ended way up the coast at the settlement of Tatapouri thanks to a demented tom-tom and were able to report that what is at Tatapouri



by night is basically absolutely nothing.

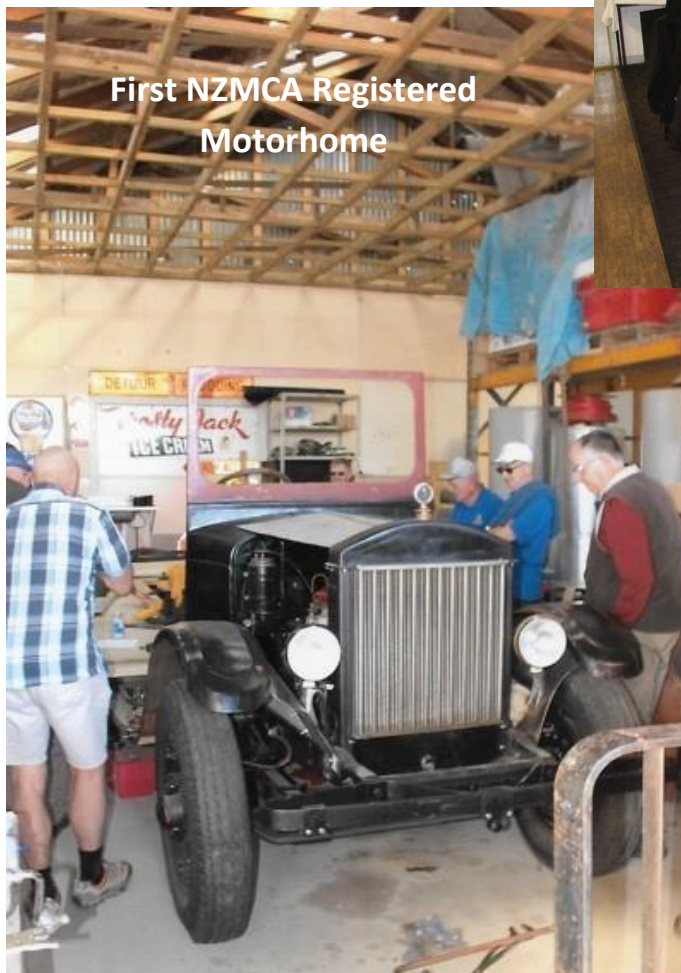


Next morning, back at the Surf Club the annual meeting proceeded smoothly except for Andy Bax's jokes. He was awarded the wooden spoon for his tireless work in stirring up people at other tables during the wine competition, accusing one group of having an average age of 100.

On accepting the spoon he launched into



**Tatapouri Sports Fishing Club Dinner**



**First NZMCA Registered Motorhome**

a rhyme about a novel use for a sock involving human anatomy, which is not suitable for a family newsletter. His wife Mandy, our secretary, was seen with her head in her hands.

Rotarians went in different directions for lunch, some of them joining Laurie and Gaynor Young back at the Wharf Bar & Grill to celebrate their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Laurie gave Gaynor a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday card altered to read Happy 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and we all agreed it is the thought that counts.



**55 Years Married**



**Fish and Chips**

In the afternoon many of the group – especially the menfolk – took up an invitation to view the reconstruction of the old truck that became the very first NZMCA-registered motorhome. Will it be towed to every rally for photo-opportunities with new members? We just don't know and maybe we shouldn't ask.

That night we had a "crush" – a cosy fish and chip dinner shoulder to shoulder in the camp dining room. One of our great hosts, Rob Brangwin, and friend Kevin Upton, then produced guitars and song-sheets and the evening ended in a rowdy sing-along. Thank you so much Gisborne and our hosts Brin, Mandy, Rob 7 Julie!