


Karapiro Rally 3 August 2018 to 5 August 2018

<p>New Zealand</p> 	<p>DIRECTORY</p> <p>President: Kevin Longman kblongman@xtra.co.nz</p> <p>Vice President: David Smith davidhsmith.email@gmail.com</p> <p>Secretary: Mandy Bax bax@computer.net.nz</p> <p>Treasurer: Raymond Scott scott-ray@xtra.co.nz</p>	<p>Rally Organisers: Raewyn & Neville Bell / Bill Wilson / John & Jan Edmonds / Rosemary & Malcolm Walker.</p> <p>Newsletter Editor: Mandy Bax</p> <p>Newsletter Scribe: Jean Dillon</p> <p>Photos: Andrew Bax</p> <p>Web Page: www.icfr.org.nz</p>
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Acting President David Smith welcomed us to the Karapiro Rally in the Don Rowlands Centre at 5's on Friday night. David made special mention of Judith & Bruce Burling (Kerikeri) who were to be inducted to ICFR on Sunday morning, and to guests Lynne & Neville Whitworth (Tauranga) and Carol & Alf Harwood (Tauranga) who were visiting for the first time.

Bill Wilson, on behalf of the organising committee, told us of the weekend's events, and then, as usual it was a time of catching up with each other, although at least 20 members had arrived a day earlier and had already spent time socialising.

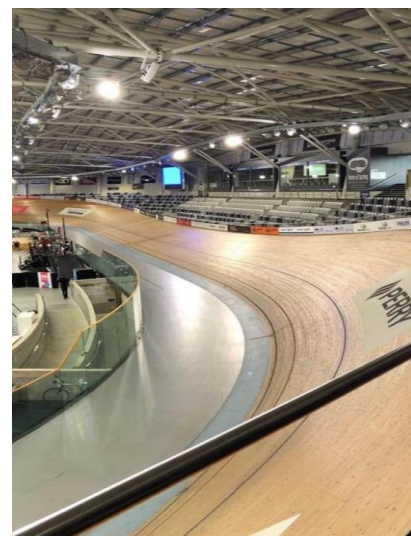


On Friday night the usual Supper in Vans was organised – always a very popular part of the weekend's programme. Saturday morning we woke to a real Waikato fog, which eventually cleared and we were treated to a sunny warm morning. By this time we were on 2 buses bound for the Velodrome and to John Fisher's Robotic cowshed.

At the velodrome we were told the track is 250m long,

with construction taking place over 21 months from Feb 2012 and is made of Siberian spruce wood, which is smooth, strong, light and has no splinters. The track is at a 43.5 degree angle and the highest point is 6 storeys high.

The complex is a community facility, concourse walkers, trikes, recreation & track. It was opened in April 2014 by the Duke & Duchess of Cambridge.....remember the locals presented Prince George with a bike? It cost \$34 million to build but would cost \$55 million to replace. The track's top speed is 75kph set by Eddie Dawkins. The venue is also used for events, fundraisers, dinners, spa expo, cross fit games etc. Many high performance athletes use gym (Waikato BOP Magic, NZ 7's team, Olympians). It is also home to Triathlon NZ. It has recovery pools, a medical centre and athlete lounge. Since the opening of the complex Cycling NZ has won 31 track cycling medals on the world stage. A wonderful complex to visit.



Then we were back on the bus to travel to John Fisher's Robotic dairy farm. John has 4 Robotic milkers, and is in his 7th year of operation. Presently milking 220 cows, but when calving is finished he will be up to 300. The heifers are brought in to the shed 3 weeks prior to calving to 'train' them. The cows are very relaxed with the robotic system but have to change from a herd mentality to an individual mentality, as they present for milking in their own time. John has 2 full time workers, working less hours than normal on a dairy farm as their hours are 7a.m. to 5 p.m., with exceptions at calving time.

The computer system is Swedish, but there is IT support in Cambridge, and it also has a phone alarm system. John acknowledged that his animal health is better now as the robots pick up infections quicker, and the fact that the cows walk less on hard races their feet are less troubled. Each robot costs \$250,000. There are 25 robotic farms in NZ now with the biggest having 24 robots.

We were back at camp by 12.45 for a free afternoon. Quite a few members tried the local café with positive comments about the food.



5p.m. saw us back in the Don Rowlands Centre for Happy Hour and then a tasty dinner catered by 'Gourmet Delicious'.



After dinner, the Cambridge Rotary band, the Bruised Bros, led by our own Bill Wilson, entertained us with songs from memory lane. A very enjoyable evening.

Sunday morning dawned wet and the rain continued all day. The usual Sunday meeting was held, ably conducted by David Smith, in the absence of our President, Kevin Longman.





Judith & Bruce Burling were inducted into the club as new members. Rescue Helicopter

Future rallies discussed, the sergeant's session raised \$234.00 for the Waikato and the meeting closed at 11.15

Sunday night was Pie & Coleslaw night; there were 70 present, which surely must be a record for a Sunday night attendance. The meal was tasty, and finished off with a delicious chocolate mousse.

Altogether, a very good rally, and congratulations must go to the organising committee of Raewyn & Neville Bell, Jan & John Edmonds, Rosemary & Malcolm Walker & Bill Wilson.

