

# Rolling Rally East Coast 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019

New Zealand



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Andy's New Bike

A number of ICFR members left Thornton Beach for Tirohanga on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>. The weather was brilliant and once there, quite a few went in to the water for a swim to cool down – apparently it was “the warmest water ever!”

At 5's, much laughter was heard when Irene Bates presented an advertisement from the NZ Herald, which suggested people should not forget Valentine's Day. The advertisement was presented in the name of “David Smith”. Rob Brangwin explained that when we reached the next venue, we would be making a visit to Hinemauri Marae at Hicks Bay. We, then, practised a Waiata to sing there.

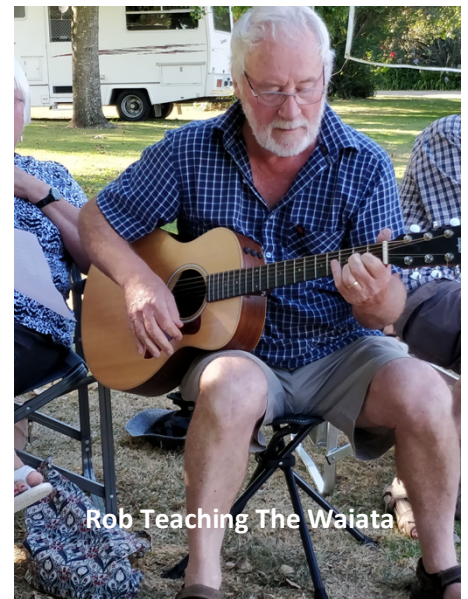
The next morning, the cycling group, including the newest member, Andy Duncan, biked the Dune Trails.

Some members sorted out for lunch and then we all headed on to Te Araroa, which is a rural Campsite in the middle of nowhere. We were instructed to find our own campsite “anywhere and come back later when (the owner) was less busy”. Opening hours of 10am to 7pm for the Office and Store, were a suggestion and definitely not an assurance!! Six cats, at least, were counted, most of them outside the Brangwins' caravan the morning they were cooking bacon and eggs. Te Araroa Campsite is also a farm and we saw sheep grazing in the campsite to keep the grass down, saving on having to mow and a very interesting pigsty, with a pig and sow and three piglets, housed in an old caravan.

The second day at Te Araroa, we were divided into two groups to visit East Cape

Manuka Oil – one leaving for 10 o'clock and the other around midday.

Sue, a former teacher runs the business with her husband, Mark, a former Scientist with the DSIR, gave us a very entertaining tour of the process involved in manufacturing manuka oil. Manuka on the East Cape of the North Island is the most valuable, as it has much higher antibacterial and antifungal properties than any other manuka in the country. In addition, manuka plants cannot be transplanted from elsewhere and show the same properties. Most of the Manuka Oil is exported to Germany. She



Rob Teaching The Waiata



Pigs at Te Araroa Camp



5'





**How Many IT Guys to Fix a Speaker?**

and flower again the following year.

Later, in the afternoon, we visited Hinemauri Marae, which is dedicated to the Great Chief, Tuwhaka Iriora. We were welcomed onto the marae, where we sang our Waiata - Tutira Mai Nga Iwi. We were praised for making the effort to learn a Maori Waiata, because most visiting Pakeha sing in English. It is considered a “no-no” to speak any other language but Maori at the entrance to a Marae. We were, then, given a very interesting talk in the Whare by Lloyd Lawson, about the history of the Marae dating back to the 1500’s. This was followed by afternoon tea in the Wharekai and the opportunity to chat with the Hapu. We, then, visited the Church on the Marae before heading back to Camp. This Marae is part of the Ngati Porou Iwi, the second largest Iwi in NZ with 80,000 registered members.

### The “Rolling Rally” – A Dated Drug Detective Dreams

The ICFR Rolling Rally that followed the Thornton Beach event allowed me to visit some old haunts and recall a few memories. I share some of them here!

I had not been in the East Coast area for around 40 years and at that time, late 1970’s early 1980s I was a Detective Inspector covering the Hawkes Bay, Poverty Bay, and East Coast area. I made a few journeys into the area with my drug and intelligence officers, seeking out drug plantations and the people growing them.

Sometimes we drove, sometimes we flew and sometimes we walked (though I doubt that I personally did much walking!) One year I took my whole family and our caravan and made my way around the coast, linking up with my working colleagues and gaining a lot of information while kind of “holidaying” at the same time.

I recall one occasion when we were flying over the area in a small aircraft, the pilot said we should put down in Te Araroa and get some lunch at the pub. From the sky there did not appear to be an airstrip so I had some serious reservations and the only clear area I could see was between two goal posts of a footy field!

Never-the-less the pilot put the plane down somewhere and coasted past the biggest pohutukawa tree in the world, and over to the hotel where the licensee came out and asked if we wanted lunch and a beer. I said yes to both – except that the pilot would not have the beer! We did that and carried on with our aerial search for cannabis plantations.

The Te Kaha Hotel was in my mind to for I recall experiencing there, for the very first time, *plastic* beer jugs. Back then surprised that I had received my beer in a plastic jug I asked the reason for this. The explanation was that they were put out for the summer months so that there was less injury from them being thrown about when “emptied!” With that explanation, the local constable called the licensee over and demanded some respect and a glass jug for the detective inspector! I was somewhat embarrassed – and did not stop there this time.

I well-remember the Ruatoria Hotel which used to have a hitching rail outside for the horses to be tied up to while the riders had a beer. A lot of police activity was attracted to that area in the years after I had left. Now I was going to see some of these things again.

also gave as an excellent talk on the different bees that make up a hive, explaining the roles different bees have in the structure. They have also moved into keeping bees and have over 100 hives. The locals gather the manuka at this time of the year and can make a very good living from harvesting the top of the bushes, leaving them to grow



**Sue Explains Manuka Oil Extraction**



**Hicks Bay Marae**

So after Thornton Beach we headed off up the Bay of Plenty side and began once again experiencing the amazing scenery – and the narrow roads! They had not changed. Nor had the one lane bridges. But it did not matter for in the whole journey I did not have to give way once as no one was there! In my first two hours on day one, I had to pull over for six cars to pass my longish rig. On the second day I only pulled over for eight.

After our brief stay in Te Araroa I sought out the general store, which as I recalled, had sold everything from groceries to hardware and furniture. Now it is a *Four Square* Store and did not have quite the same range of goods. The hotel next door though was nowhere to be seen. I questioned a local resident who explained that it had burnt down about ten years ago! Times they are a changing!

Further down the coast I sought out the Ruatoria Hotel and while it was still there, the hitching rail seemed to have gone and indeed the hotel from the outside, did not appear to be in great condition at all, if occupied even. More memories down the drain. And now they talk to of growing “legitimate” drug plantations there soon. Well they certainly have the experience.

At the end of the coast journey we passed through Gisborne and noted at the southern end that the *Jolly Stockman* Hotel was still there. What a relief. That has some memories to – but I cannot repeat them here!

How the world is changing. But not the beauty. It is hard to beat and I am so glad the ICFR spurred me into revisiting this area and bringing back some memories.

*Ian Holyoake*