

JUNE 2007

Editorial

For those of you who did not attend the Mystery Run - you have missed a lot, this was a very enjoyable and a memorable Car Club experience, (how safe is your marriage event)

A big thank you from all of us to Paul and Cilla Kaiser.

Liane

New Members

A very warm welcome to:

Ingrid Inkster and David Hooper ;1994S320
Baji and Anita Persees ;1997C230.

Please come to one of our events-you will be made most welcome.

Past Events

MYSTERY RUN

Sunday 29th April – The day dawned dry, but overcast, and ten o'clock saw us assembled just inside the Cornwall Park entrance, ready to do battle. There were over 29 cars ready to start the Mystery Run, from various clubs – Mercedes-Benz, BMW, VW, and Peugeot, under the guiding hand of Paul Kaiser, (who was under the guiding hand of Cilla Kaiser) of the Mercedes-Benz Car Club. Because of the volatile nature of these runs, when husbands and wives can find the car not big enough for both of them, we were offered grievance counselling if it was needed.

We set off, following the cryptic instructions, which covered an interesting course. We headed out to Panmure, taking a drive up Mt Wellington, which gave us a view of the development in the Mt Wellington Quarry site, a water-logged residential area to be. We then headed out to Bucklands Beach, checking out the registration of a silver RX7 parked down a driveway, (wonder who that belonged to) and driving down Takutai Avenue, which was where Roy and I lived when we first came to Auckland. We then travelled towards the Botany Downs area, taking in the new Buddhist Temple, which was an ocean of calm and tranquility for the mind, whilst catering for the body with a loo and a tea shop.

After our stop at the Temple we explored a new, expensive little enclave of Manukau City, a sub-division in the hills, where they can afford fancy letter-boxes even after building the mansion. We then headed out to the airport, and finally to the Villa Maria Winery, in Montgomerie Road.

By then I might add, we were pretty hungry, as it was well past lunch time. Villa Maria brought on the food fairly fast, and a great atmosphere of enjoyment prevailed.

You could tell a female had written out the Rally instructions, (that's not Paul I'm talking about) as items we had to find were a "perfect shell", "a yellow and red leaf" and an "agapanthus seed", all of which most people managed.

Garry, our President presented the prizes to - 1st prize Harold Decker, 2nd prize Alex Buwert (a chip off the old block), 3rd prize Ian Fletcher, and 4th prize to anyone who hadn't finished the rally, but had a good excuse – like "I would have tried harder if I'd known a Gewurztraminer was first prize." The 4th prize was presented to – Harold Tech for his excuse.

Klaus had so enjoyed his day, he stood up and thanked Paul and Cilla for their efforts, and hoped our Club will run a similar event next year.

Marianne Hobson

MYSTERY RUN – FUN RUN

The choice was clear – a Sunday spent doing housework and perhaps attacking the wasps' nest in our front garden or joining the Mercedes Club of Auckland Inc on their Mystery Run.. We chose the latter of course.

There was an air of mild excitement and expectation which worked up to an excited buzz as each car rolled up to the starting point at Cornwall Park. In total we were about 29 cars. Each one was polished and buffed to perfection and nearly all had a story to tell.

After a quick registration and some rather brief instructions the 29 participants were off. "It is not a race" – Yeah Right! You wouldn't know it from the way some cars tore out of the car park. Most had worked out that Stage One would end at Mount Wellington and some tried to beat the system and take a short cut. But they would pay the price for that at the end of the day. Then, with barely time to take in the view or write down the name of the Maori Fortress they moved on.

Stage Two and the Easties were on familiar territory. Heading quickly towards Waipuna, but making sure to slow down at the unforgiving speed camera, they headed towards Pakuranga Road. However nerves were starting wear thin and most were quickly losing their chance at S41NT-hood. Desperately in need of a cool swim at Bucklands Beach but with time only to collect the "Perfect Shell" they raced on towards the Buddhist Temple.

End of Stage Two - Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple and, finally, a chance to take a deep breath. Surrounded by calm and tranquillity the participants took the opportunity to stretch their legs, and stroll around the temple grounds. A few rang the Wishing Bell and prayed their marriages would survive till lunchtime.

The final stage would test nerves, patience and our ability to interpret LT as TL and vice versa. The route took us through the most scenic parts of South Auckland, if only we could take a break from counting cubes and collecting things. Challenges came thick and fast and another word and it would have been my funeral! But finally the route turned us in the direction of Villa Maria.

The gleaming line up of Mercedes, VWs, BMWs and Peugeots were a sight for sore eyes, worn nerves and frayed tempers. They put the day in perspective and a smile back on every face as the participants headed towards the dining room. A relaxed lunch included relating experiences and sipping the excellent wine on offer. The much anticipated prize giving was over too quickly with prizes given for best times while still getting all the right answers and coming close to the ideal mileage. There was also a chance to get the prize for the best reason for not winning.

Yes, at times it was difficult to follow Rule Number One – You must still be talking to each other at the end of the day – but a wonderful time was had by all and the Wishing Bell was true to its word.

I still don't know the answer to all those questions. But did I have a great time? - I sure did. Will I sign up for the next fun event organised by the Mercedes Club? Oh yes!

1st prize Harald Decker
2nd prize Alex Buwert
3rd prize Ian Fletcher
and 4th prize Harald Pech for his excuse.

By Persees Antia

Coming Events.

June 19th Tuesday 5.30 / 7.30pm. AGM at the "The Commerce Club of Auckland Inc' 22-33 Ohinerau St , Remuera. Starting from 5.30pm onwards, meals are available for purchase at these licensed premises. 7.30pm prompt start for the AGM. Contact Heather Newkirk for more details on Ph 09 426 2664

July 7 Saturday 6.30pm. Ryder's Dinner And Movie House, 177 Riversdale Road,

Avondale. If you have been before, you will know what a lot of fun this is. Meet first for a natter and a drink (BYO), followed by a Roast dinner and then a movie. Dinner and movie \$20 per head. The Movie will be selected from a small library they have on the evening. To book, SEND YOUR CHEQUE payable to Mercedes-Benz Club to P O Box 1587. Phone Heather Newkirk for more details on Ph 09 426 2664

August 14 Tuesday 7.00pm. Annual Dinner and Prize Giving. This year we are going upmarket. Join us at PORTSIDE at the Viaduct basin (132 Halsey Street). Wonderful outlook, great food and a fun MC to keep us entertained. Subsidised two-course dinner costing you just \$30 per person. Buy your own drink and dessert. Ample safe parking right outside for your Mercedes. Mark this date in your calendar now and be sure to keep it free. To confirm your place by 2nd August by SEND YOUR CHEQUE payable to Mercedes-Benz Club to P O Box 1587. Phone Lyn Hood for more details. Ph 6343573

October 12-14. Weekend in Pahia/Kerikeri.

Travel North on Friday night to stay in Paihia for two nights at the accommodation of your choice. Consider the Abel Tasman Lodge or Admirals View Lodge (\$110-\$145 pn). Meet our Northland club members on Saturday morning in Kerikeri at 9am for a 9.15am start.

First stop on Saturday is Adrian and Sylvia Garrett's to view a couple of very early restored Rolls Royce's and an early Vauxhall. See their Shire Horses and perhaps ride on the cart. You can also look at the Gypsy caravans. On to Pete and Cecilia's museum which is the next stop. Here for \$16 per person we will have Morning Tea and entry to a newly established museum where we will view his collection including a mix of early 1900 to PreWar vehicles. In the past this collection has included Austins, a Stuz Bearcat and other special vehicles drawn from the several hundred in private hands in the Kerikeri area.

There will be some free time in the afternoon to visit the many attractions of Kerikeri, such as the Kaleidoscope Factory and a couple of craft shops where Ian Hillier has arranged a discount for Mercedes-Benz members who produce their Auckland Membership card. In your free time explore the many other shops and attractions around Kerikeri which include the Chocolate factory where you can watch chocolates being made and perhaps have a free sample.

In the late afternoon we hope to visit one more car collections before heading back to Paihia for a change of clothes, and then on to 7pm dinner which we will pre book at a reasonably priced restaurant.

On Sunday morning we will travel back home to Auckland. If we can add anything of interest to do on this day, we will let you know nearer to the event. To express interesting in joining us, please contact Lyn Hood ph 6343573 evenings, (membership@mercedes-club.org.nz). Northland members, contact Ian Hillier on ph (09) 436-1888 or 027 436 1888.

December 8, Saturday 11am. Annual Christmas function. This year it will be at Willy and Hein Vankan's, 3 Mountain Road, Henderson. Bring your own drink, glasses, cutlery and plates and a couple of folding chairs if you have them. BBQ food will be provided. To let us know that you are coming for catering purposes, or for more information phone Willy Ph (09) 836 2734.

RACING MERCEDES RAMBLINGS by Ken Williams

15th April & the weather looked doubtful with showers predicted. I had entered the BBM & the 280CE (fresh from the panelbeater). Tim's 500SEC had an engine problem at a test day earlier so it wasn't going & Lawrence's normally reliable 500SEC had a strange intermittent fuel problem so it couldn't race.

The BBM qualified 4th on a damp track so I was 4th on the grid for race 1 behind 2 twincam Brabhams & a Formula Ford. One of the Brabhams didn't start, but I beat the F/Ford & was chasing the leader hard, but on the last lap down the back straight I was at about 7000rpm in top, (about 250kph) when it did a HUGE backfire, scaring the hell out of me, but it carried on to gain 2nd place but didn't sound quite right. Everything seemed to check out OK but when I went to line up for race 2 it just would not start. Race 3 was a handicap & it started OK but sounded like 5 1/2 cylinders at low revs. I started down the back with the Brabham & it ran well enough to get me up to 2nd place with only one slower car to pass when it started backfiring constantly so I limped it into the pits. Later investigation showed a broken camshaft pedestal, caused by the backfire blowing the valves open only to be whacked shut by the piston as the cam was trying to open it! Something had to give! However, a spare old pedestal & some V8 valvesprings & its ready to race again without even having to take the head off! What a strong old engine. This is the 12th year of racing this motor without ever having a rebuild.

The 280 however slowed down & stopped during qualifying. Only a blocked fuel filter luckily but it put me at the back of the grid for race 1. I got past a few cars but then it started raining & the handling didn't feel right. I didn't want to bend my new paintwork so I quietly maintained my position to the flag. Race 2 was a handicap & it stayed dry so I was able to finish 3rd. Race 3 was also a handicap but wet so I carefully managed 6th.

Next day I put the 280 on a wheel alignment machine & discovered the rear wheels toeing out! Not good for a wet track. Also found 35 year old rubber front suspension bushes worn out & 1 front shock absorber only working up not down. So now it's all fixed ready for the final meeting of the season on 13th May. I'm currently running 2nd in the series, 2 points behind the leader with double points awarded for the last meeting.

Classic Days Salzburg September 2006

Each time I went to Europe on Business over the last 10 years you would take the hire car and drive to the next appointment thinking one day I should be doing this in one of my classic cars. As retirement became imminent plans to send my 220sec W111 1964 Coupe to Europe were put in place. I had rebuilt the motor back in 2001, so things to be done included a full bare metal re paint, full service including all fluids (more about this later)

new brake pads and the installation of a disabling security system.

As 2006 was the year this was all to happen much research commenced into what classic car events were scheduled, at what dates and where, and how they could be fitted into a place and time frame. I first read about Mercedes-Benz Classic Days back in 2002, at Classic Adelaide in 2004 I had discussions with the manager of the MBCCI regarding the possibility of being accepted as an entry for Classic Days, his reply was Garry if you are prepared to bring your car from New Zealand of course you will be given a place.

So an application made and accepted. This is the premium Mercedes-Benz classic car event in the world. The rest of our time in Europe was scheduled around this event. Arrangements made to ship the car by container, then the most difficult part of the whole exercise, Insurance! The insurance requirements for classic days are onerous. For cars from outside Austria one must have a European green card with EU 1 million car insurance and EU 3 million public liability insurance, after months of investigation I had no option but to have the car registered in an EU country.

As we wished to start our European odyssey in the UK this meant putting the car into Southampton, having the car MOT'd and registered in the UK, this was no mean bureaucratic feat. But once achieved insurance was arranged through the UK MB club group insurance for their members going to Classic Days with Peter Best Insurance brokers.

Two and a half weeks in the England, France and Germany saw us arrive at Salzburg on September 3rd, find the hotel, unload and leave Alison, then to the Salzburgring the headquarters for 7th Mercedes-Benz Classic Days event. Three to six documentation and scrutining, first documentation, a big infopack, gift, number 156 rally plates with transponder, livery decals, identification tags, programs, all done with the usual German efficiency, Mr. Boyce is all your insurance documentation in order yes I say, good was there reply please sign this declaration here. That was that they did not even look at that so hard worked for documentation. Then to scrutining I was so sure of the car being tickity bo having just completed 3800 km in two and a half weeks, that it would pass the critical eyes of the MB classic center mechanics. Everything was going well until they put a moisture meter in the brake fluid reservoir, max allowed 2.5% mine 3.4% failure, no ready to run sticker, Bugger.

Arrangements made to change the brake fluid at the local dealer on Monday night, then to fitting the rally plates and decals at your dedicated parking place. Two classic days, 250 Mercedes-Benz cars up to year 1980, from 28 nations the oldest competing car a 1904 Simplex Cabrio, 2 x SSK Roadsters, 5 x 540k Cabrio's, 17 x 300 SL Gullwings, 33 x 300SL Roadsters and 26 x W111 coupes and cabrio's the same as our car just a sample of the car types. The event is in four parts day one and two are for regularity trails on the Salzburgring. Day three the hill climb, day four and five the touring rally through the Berchesgadner land and the Salzkammergut. Day six is the Concours d' Elegance in the Residenzplatz in Salzburg.

All cars are kept at park ferme at the Salzburgring over night, massive security as you can expect with the value of cars there. Busses take you to and from your hotel, seven Hotels used for the 650 people attending. The main event is staged around a massive marquee capable of seating 650 people on round tables all at the same time the marquee also has a stage, Bar and entrance out side seating terrace, the marquee is used for some of the social functions the luncheons for the first three days and for the coffee and cakes each afternoon but more about the social program later.

The Salzburg ring is built in a valley with the track up and down each side and the hair pin at the top end, a good long back strait opening out at the bottom of the valley to a long sweeping curve, tight corner then an S bend into the pit straight then chicane then back to the hairpin. It is mainly used for club and classic events as it has no regulation run of areas as it is constrained in the valley.

Monday you are put into packets of 30 cars all about the same types ie W111s and as you line up to go to the track they check your ready to run sticker, not there because of the brake fluid problem that was not to be fixed until that night. I then overheard a phone conversation between the controller and the classic center mechanics that said send him to Boxenstop four now, I needed no encouragement and got myself to box four in the pit lane fast, the door was open I drove in the door went down four people with floor jacks had the car up and all brake fluid changed inside five minutes with the words, you bring your car all the way from New Zealand no problem but do not tell the other 24 people that also failed the Brake fluid test. Now to the regularity trials, as I was driving on my own with no co driver it is impossible to time well enough to be competitive so as I was in the same packet as Ian Kerr the president of the UK Club Pat his wife said follow us I will time for the both of you, so on to the track.

Four laps to get the feel then four laps that are averaged to give you your standard time for the next two days 2.48 mins. Then into the afternoon with four laps at your standard speed and four more laps two at two seconds faster and two at two seconds slower. It sounds a bit boring but as the results started to be posted the competition got more intense. I am following Ian and trying to cross the start line the same distance behind him each lap, its hard to do but my mistake is to my advantage I am two places higher than him at the end of the day. The Tuesday was much of the same with the trials getting more difficult as the day went on, I ended up in the center of the pack very satisfied with my two days of fun.

I also got to drive a SLR and a new CL500 coupe and ride in the back of the latest Marback limo. Alison worked on the Monday and did the ladies program on Tuesday. Wednesday was the hill climb on the Gaisberg at the back of Salzburg, target speed 50 km/h time 9.58 mins. Alison agreed to time, people that had been up before said flat at the bottom steep and windy at the top, we set a plan ½ way up in 1/3 of the time the top half was not as steep as envisaged so I was early at the top by 6.976 seconds with a time of 9.51240 seconds and a speed of 50.5 Km/h. 25th out of 156 we are very pleased with ourselves.

Thursday the first of the rally touring days, the cars are divided into two groups of approximately 125 each odd and even numbers, we number 156 are even so we are to do the Karl Benz Route a drive from Salzkammergut to Innviertel 229 Km. The description from the program says.

This rather leisurely tour leads into the varied hill landscape of the Innviertel in the state of Oberosterreich, which adjoins the Salzkammergut to the north. This agricultural region which is enclosed by the Danube, Inn and Salzach rivers and the forested Hausruck range of hills with the 800m high Gobelsberg. The circuit continues on the banks of the Mattsee, Attersee and Mondsee lakes, which are spread out across the green countryside.

Lunch at a terrace restaurant in a monastery on the banks of the Danube, hidden regularity speed sections in parts of the forest areas and great excitement as coming up behind the 1904 simplex at 70 Km/h with both the passenger and driver with white leather hats driving goggles all flapping in the wind, it all looked like an early motoring poster but was real and happening just behind us. A beautiful day fabulous country side Austria at its best.

Friday we do the Gottlieb Daimler Route a drive through Salzburger and Berchtesgarden land 239 Km. The program description says.

Following a new course this classic car drive leads through the neighboring Austrian and Bavarian Alpine landscapes. Whether it is the Rossfeld mountain course or the Lofer Pass both stretch man and machine with plenty of curves and, in the first section, feature passages that are a trial of strength. Afterwards the Alpine cuisine of the Winklmoos-Alm can be enjoyed in a relaxing midday break. During the outward journey the Chiemgauer mountains provide inspiration in their own unique way with a repeatedly changing panorama.

It had rained over night and the cloud was still down as we climbed up to Berchtesgaden a short glimpse of the lair as we went by, big climbs up and hard on the brakes going down. But the car performed well. We failed to get any results from the regularity sections on either day.

Saturday was the Concours d' Elegance in the Residenzplatz in the center of Salzburg. We were taken there in lots of 40 cars by police escort you arrive and are announced down the red carpet, a big cheer for the car from New Zealand. 250 cars all lined up in so a unique setting is a sight to be seen. The surrounding buildings, fountains church bells all lend to the fairy tale setting. The judging is by the people's choice so as expected a 1937 540K took the prize.

The social program was extensive with diners each night, a welcome party with champagne on the terrace of Salzburg Castle with a fireworks display. Driver's night Dinner at the big marquee, Austrian nights hosted by the local Mercedes-Benz agents at restaurants around the region, entertainment each venue. The bar at the marquee was open from 9am each day with three choices of alcohol free beer. Coffee and cake each

afternoon in the typical Austrian way.

2006 was the 250th anniversary of Mozart, on the Thursday evening Daimler-Chrysler AG invited all 620 people registered for Classic Days and other guests 900 in all to the Mozartium in Salzburg to a concert presented by the Salzburg symphony and soloists of popular Mozart classics, this was a special night with the usual refreshments during the 40min interval.

The Saturday night was the formal Gala evening at the Residenz to Salzburg, cocktails, canapé, a formal dinner, string quartets in each room. A formal seating plan with us seated with the Australians. A speech from Dr Dieter Zetsche chairman of the board at Daimler Chrysler where the New Zealanders got a special mention. The Residenz is next to and is connected to the Cathedral, at the end of the evening we were taken through a series of corridors that led us into the gallery of the dome of the Cathedral. With very low lighting we had a short 10min organ recital of the start of the Bach cantata and fuge a truly moving experience.

The registration cost for the event was EUR 850 per car, the general opinion from other participants is that Daimler Chrysler subsidized each car by EUR 4500 to run an event of this quality.

I advise any of who have the ability to do this event, go do it, you will not be disappointed. It was a fabulous week in car heaven.

Visit www.classicdays.de
Garry Boyce