

Blue Gavel New Zealand

THE PAST COMMODORES CLUB

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Editor

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From The Bridge

President Ron

President's Christmas message

Well it's hard to believe that is now three months since the AGM in Thames and we could be forgiven for asking, where has the time gone?

There has not been a lot of news coming in from the regions. However, I trust you are active in your areas.

Russell is doing a superb job in the Auckland area having had two meetings since the AGM which have been very enjoyable evenings and great for promoting Blue Gavel in the area.

Christine has slotted into the position of secretary treasurer very well and is doing a superb job. – Thank you Christine

I would also like to congratulate Val and Ron Evans who have been married 58years this year and still going strong. I would also like to welcome a new member Peter Dallimore from Tauranga.

With summer fast approaching I trust you will all be looking forward to the festive season and holiday time with your respective families. With this in mind both Kay and I would like to take the opportunity to convey to you all season's greetings and trust you all have a safe and happy holiday/cruising where ever you may be.

I look forward to seeing you all sometime in 2011.

All the best

Ron Stephenson

President



The new Gavel presented by Chris McCallum. Thanks Chris it is awesome!

From The Editor.

Russ Wiklund

To get to the meeting this year we decided on a rather long way around. Starting from Auckland we drove to Wellington met the Fenn's at the ferry then set our GPS to take us to our hotel. We made a good decision to have a day around Wellington



prior to heading North. Wellington is a very pretty place and the new motorway system makes getting back into town very easy.



How does a house like this exist so close to skyscrapers?



The park was beautiful considering it was the latter part of winter.



The back streets are fascinating and I could spend a lot of time walking around this area. The top picture is looking back at the city



across the water. There is no denying Wellington is a very beautiful city, especially on a calm sunny day!

Tuesday we headed out on highway 2 over some very steep hills. It was wet and bleak but it cleared later in the day. We made it



to Napier in time for a look around the town and some of the quaint areas above the town on the way to the lookout.

The man made harbour, and on the right, the city on the beach!

From the lookout the land seems to stretch away to the North East for ever and it is hard to convince yourself that the next day you are going to be beyond that, that you can see. The road from Napier to the East Cape is slow and winds around a lot so we had a stop at the Tolaga Bay wharf and like all good boaties had to walk out to the end of it.



It was a long walk but very interesting.

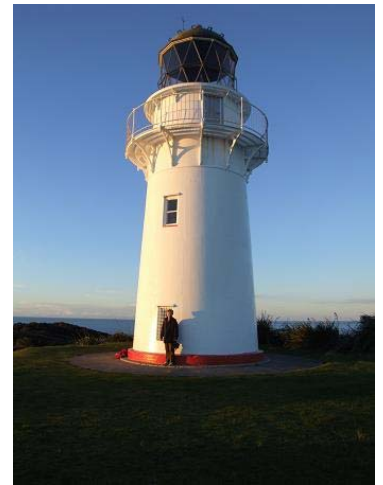
Prior to the wharf we were tired so stopped at the Te Puia Springs for a swim. They didn't look much but like most hot pools looks are deceptive and we were able to relax and enjoy the bush around us.

We also visited a church to see some wonderful carvings.



From here it was full ahead for Hicks Bay however the driver rebelled at Ruatoria as he needed coffee!

It was to be a quick stop but turned out to be a long one. We were well looked after and as a consequence we ended



up at Hicks Bay a bit later than expected. It was cold and wet but the dining room was warm and the food good so all was well.



I was up at 5am as Von and I had elected to climb the 700 steps to the Cape lighthouse. It's 20 Ks down a very narrow road that had just been cleared of slips. We made it just as the sun came up so were the first people in the world to see the sun that day. The view was stunning but the prospect of 700 steps down on "rubber" legs tended to take the edge off it.

The Hicks bay wharf and the bridge leading to it were very interesting. No room to pass on the bridge even a bicycle would

be too much!



Next stop was the outskirts of Whakatane for lunch and a few more stops on the way into town. While we were having coffee Jim pointed out the boats across the street appeared to be floating on water higher than the street. We wandered over for a look at the evidence of the recent floods and state of the river. It was evident they had had a rough time over the last week or two. The water level was about level with the road. From Whakatane we headed inland taking the short cut to Thames. This was a good move as the weather packed in and gave us a wet welcome to our motel.

No matter where we meet it's always the catching up with old friends or meeting new members that makes the weekend so enjoyable. Friday night was a little different with a full on meal in a small restaurant. There was another much younger group there and we showed them how to enjoy a night out! They were very quiet and reserved. Sat. morning started with a meeting at 8-45am and then off at 9-15. This was not enough time for the meeting and there are some further matters to be resolved. In this regard a committee was set up to enable more to be done during the year. This should be a big improvement on the previous system of leaving it all up to the president.

It was decided to make a big push for more members to enable us to be more proactive in helping Sail Ability and our next meeting is set down for Lytteleton. There were some problems as a North of the Bombay's gentleman suggested

Picton. A geography lesson by Jim sorted the problem out and over lunch the situation was resolved amid considerable advice, and non sympathetic remarks.

Prior to lunch the great train ride up to the "Eyefull" Tower took place. This is a great trip on a sunny day but unfortunately it was wet and the visibility poor. After a look around Coromandel town we headed back to scrub up for the Saturday night do.

We were made very welcome by the Thames Sailing Club as was the case years ago when we visited Thames every year. We used to sleep on the old tram seats as many people used old Auckland trams for baches along the coast, and as a result here were a lot of spare seats. The seats are gone as are the old trams, sad but progress must be made (and I don't mind if I never sleep on one of those seats again!).



We were unable to make much of a dent in the pre dinner nibbles prior to starting on a roast meal. Some of us had tried the spare ribs (the house special) at lunch time and so were very full by nights end.

Sunday morning started with more nibbles and finished with the sad goodbyes for another year. We had a date with with the Miranda hot springs as we never pass without a dip. On the way we saw the new Tapu bridge. It is very impressive although I cannot see why they started by building the centre section first. The old bridge is a one way only bridge and in the summer you can spend 3 hours watching the grass grow while waiting your turn to cross.

Around the Regions

Canterbury had a meeting on the 21st of November at Godley House on the other side of Diamond Harbour. The ferry trip and meeting were well attended and a lot of fun. This was the last meeting to be held there as the earthquake has made it unsafe to use and will possibly be pulled down. The next meeting is a Xmas dinner on the 21st of Nov. at the New Brighton Working Mans Club. This will be a good chance to talk about the situation in the area. I have not pushed for photos for this log but will for the next log when things have settled down. I am sure it is a world record for such a quake and no fatalities. There were a lot of close shaves and no doubt we will keep hearing of those over the years to come.

Westport.

The roof is on the first storey of the new yacht club. They will complete the top when money comes to hand. Kathy will send some photos later. Meanwhile Deniston has been in the news and looks to be a major tourist attraction in the future. It is a unique piece of history and I am pleased it is to be preserved.

Auckland had another meeting at Devonport Yacht Club. The new Commodore is Sue Johnston wife of Kevin who is a past commodore. She is doing a great job and on completing the year will be able to join an elite group of husband and wife eligible members. Norm Hatwell is also a Commodore this year so we will have two married commodores and also some members who have been commodores of up to 3 clubs.



Harry has been doing some overtime as town crier. He looks the part and I understand does an excellent job. On the right is the Auckland gang at Devonport Yacht Club. Above is the view looking back at Auckland as the lights come on.

All the best for Xmas.
Russell

