

OKOROIRE REVISITED

Southern Group May 2015 Outing

by Philip Meyer



<above: Who wouldn't want their photo taken with this old beauty, Peter, Michaela, Jude, Lois and Alex certainly did.>

Saturday started at 8.00am, at Autobahn, Bombay. Well, it was scheduled to, until the bloody phone rang, "Alex here, I'm mixed up in a crash on the Motorway and will be late". (Bloody Auckland, Bloody Motorway) "OK, Alex, are you injured?" "Oh no, just crawling past the wreckage." Phew!! Same, same, Peter and Mikaela, same, same, David and Maria (Skippy). Meanwhile, back at the Autobahn, surprise guest from Hamilton, Edward and the lovely Annette, on their way to a 2-year-old's birthday party in Auckland City. Bearing gifts. Including mine, well a \$45.00 one, thanks. Worth every cent, Edward, thank you for thinking of me when you spotted a model Saab 96, in the correct colour! Meanwhile, back at the Autobahn, eggs benedict are OK. So eventually all of our cars arrived: Venning's, Rossen's, Gruebner (G) had been picked up by the Timms, A. Reid, including Lois; crews fed and instructions issued. Bombay – Tahuna – Morrinsville. No sweat. 41 Canada Street. Morrinsville Historic Museum. It took the power and the prestige of the P76 Club to arrange a private viewing of a twenty minute film, The History Of Dairy Farming In

The Waikato Or The Area Within A Ten Mile Radius Of Your Present Position. Fascinating and interesting with footage of events from the time before movie cameras had been invented up until very recently. FOUR and a HALF stars. Followed by a (still private) viewing of the Museum displays. Enjoyed by all those attending. Refer to some of the photos that our friendly editor might include with this article. Thanks to the volunteers who worked the extra shift to enable us to enjoy the Museum. Moving onwards, next stop,



Tirau. Some of the troops made quite pointed comments about the lack of morning tea stops or lunch stops. Neither had been allowed for in the agenda. No, that's not quite correct – the morning tea at the Museum was not available because the catering lady had, a few days prior, suffered a bereavement. BUT I did make up for it at Tirau, with the help of Local Member and Hero, Ian Sutherland, who met us in the middle of State Highway One in the middle of Tirau, and his wife Deborah who just happened to be associated with the BEST Café in New Zealand. And it is. FIVE Stars. Come on, you crew, we have another Museum to visit – follow Ian, he's leaving now. For Tirau Museum, State Highway Five. By this time it had stopped raining, but hang on, five minutes later it started again and didn't stop for forty days – at least I grabbed the photo in the dry patch. This is another Museum that everyone really enjoyed – it was worse than pulling teeth to get everyone to the next item on the agenda. FIVE Stars. The next item? Why, afternoon tea at Ian and Deborah's of course. Theirs is the property that you can't miss, just south of Tirau on State Highway One, on the west side, the one that grows cars in the paddocks. Mostly Sunbeams. I was gob-smacked on the way there, we stopped just after the roundabout south of Tirau to re-group and a Commodore pulled in behind me: "There's a traffic Officer just pulled in behind us" "Yes, he's following us" "Yes, he's turned into the driveway". Turned out it was an Officer alright, the President of the NZ Leyland P76 Owners Club. Plus Annette of course and a couple of delightful Young Ladies who referred to Mike and Annette as Grandad and Nanna. And they joined us for dinner – but wait, I am getting ahead of myself – I haven't even rated Ian's Shed yet. It is just big enough to be home to one P76, one Cadillac, one Morris van, two Sunbeam Tigers, a couple of other cars that I have obviously missed, one Hillman engine test bed, one large workshop bench, heaps of spares and equipment. It's gotta be FIVE and a HALF stars. There is one problem with it, and that is that it's not at my place. Thank you from all of us, Ian and Deborah for your hospitality, the hot drinks, the great biscuits – cooked by the grandchildren – and the Shed visit, shame we couldn't get a close look at some of the paddock-garaged Sunbeams etc. And so Saturday ended at Okoroire Hotel. Under new management since our previous visit. There was murmuring in the ranks about the increased nightly fee (+\$15) BUT the rooms had had a makeover and were superb. We had the hotel to ourselves; we enjoyed the Happy Hour and we enjoyed very much the dinner in the dining room (after which the Timms/Gruebner party and the King party departed for home). Overall Five Stars. I would like to say that we enjoyed the rugby match, the King's Chiefs versus the Meyer's Highlanders, until, with five minutes to go, some outside patron of the female variety changed the channel to the league.....

Sunday started at Okoroire Hotel in the morning with a complimentary breakfast. And that's another FIVE Stars. During the day yesterday there was some discussion about the itinerary for today, so between us we had a Plan. Item ONE was to collect the dog from the kennels before 1.00 p.m. Well, all of us, except Alex, realized that that wasn't going to happen. I, Myself and Me were all agreed that a visit to the World's best Velodrome, situated in Cambridge should be item TWO. The rest of the crew had other ideas though and that plan ended up being number last, or almost so, so don't give up reading yet..... There were visits to two Hydro Electricity Dams to check out – don't ask me their names*, I didn't write them down, like I didn't write down the name of the Mountain that we eventually found while looking for the damn dams. Herewith a damned dam.

<Right: Our sprightly octogenarian Alex Reid negotiates the aforementioned swing bridge.>

Nor the café in the middle of the Outback that was the source of Morning Tea (Four Stars – could have been Five, but we had to rearrange the furniture ourselves). * For names you would have to ask a local, preferably one named Edward. One of the dams was graced with an Architecturally Perfect (Five Stars) Swing Bridge, which brought to mind Cave Creek to some of us. Well, me, anyway. At this point, Alex decided that, as it was close to midday, he should pursue Item One on the Itinerary (if you remember that



was retrieving the dog from the kennels). Meanwhile the Venning's and the Meyers would pursue Item Two – The World's Best Velodrome. And it is. SIX Stars. (Out of five, so it is pretty good.) Followed by luncheon at the World's Best Café in Cambridge, as rated by the Venning's – FIVE Stars. Correct. At this point the Venning's decided that the Revisit was over, so it was left to the Meyers to complete the Revisit by attending to the family at 20 Rodney Street, Hamilton to see how their birthday party had worked out in Auckland City. All was well, so we can now safely wind up this tale.



<Left: VP David about to get his face slapped!>

<Right: Alex likes to chat to the other old blokes.>



<left: Michaela has a thing for men in uniforms it seems. >

<Right: It's never too late to start saving Gordon.>



<Below: The Leyland's of Timms, Read, Sutherland and Venning outside the museum.>

