

MILITARY RUN - 15th June

By Natalie Cox

Some of us headed off from Tauranga, on a beautiful, sunny morning, towards the Kaimais where we were lost in the fog. We carried on to Matamata and regrouped with the rest of the travelers, including new members Roy and Sharlene in their XJ6, Steve and Pauline. (yes, another Steve) in their XJ8 and Tony in his Mk2. After fueling up with hot drinks and 2nd breakfast, we started our journey. The Waikato couldn't quite match up to the sunny weather, but in true military fashion, we kept a stiff upper lip, donned our jackets and carried on.

Seeing as how it was a day of trucks, tanks, guns and all things green it was good to see the female contingent amongst us. Jag Club women must be very loyal and supportive of their men, or maybe Gary, we were just so appreciative that you gave us the chance that women don't often get, to learn about big powerful stuff. I feel we should show our thanks and reciprocate by organizing (instead of a pub crawl) a "craft crawl". You could learn about the beauty of quilting, weaving and floristry.



Anyway, before I get too excited about that trip, I shall return to this one. Having not travelled these roads before, I was so amazed at the lovely old homesteads set in beautiful countryside with rolling, green hills. Remember what green grass looked like? After a superb drive we pulled up at the Tauwhare Military Museum. First thing we saw was an old aeroplane that was used for domestic flights up until 2001, then spotted an old 1943 Jeep. SShh, don't tell anyone I said this, but this might be interesting.





Thank you Peter Yates from the Auckland Club for connecting us to this place because it's a bit of a hidden gem. Our host for the day was Grant whose parents started the museum decades ago. It is packed with vehicles (eg Bren Gun Carrier), guns (eg machine guns), models (eg guns), ammunition, (to go in the guns), uniforms (to wear when carrying guns) and all sorts of memorabilia from WW1, WW2, and some from Vietnam.

Must admit I'm not a fan of guns, they tend to kill people, but this museum was full enough of other things to keep me interested. Afterwards we sat outside with the aeroplane and enjoyed tea/coffee that Grant supplied and our picnic lunch.

The next stop was nearer to Hamilton, at Riverlea, where we were met by Brett, a very enthusiastic Military Collector. He had lots of big, green trucks, a couple of tanks, an army Hummer (very cool) and a



classic Buick, which was neither military nor green, but very nice. His collection spread over 3 large sheds and several containers. Although more basic (translation--- dirty and greasy) it just amazed me what people had tucked away in their sheds. I applaud them for saving these pieces of history that too often end up as scrap metal.

This was a good day and even though all 22 cars with 28 people encased inside couldn't make it to both places, they got to see one or the other. And they all got to take their Jaguars out for a drive. We thanked Brett and headed off home, or, in my case, to a craft shop as payback to hubby for volunteering me, a female pacifist, to write up about military "stuff."

Natalie