

# An Invitation to the Palace

*By Andrew Dovaston*

No not Buckingham Palace but 'SMASH PALACE' or Horopito Motors to be precise.

I was recently invited to join a rival car gang on a trip to the central North Island taking in Mount Ruapehu and its stunning surrounding area. Gary Bexley was the instigator in my invitation...he being a fully patched member of the car gang we travelled with.

We met up with other affiliates at Te Kuiti, and then travelled in convoy to Taumarnui for lunch.... Not much has changed there since our club visit a few years ago.

Some members enjoyed High Tea at the Chateau, which we were assured was very good. Others of us ventured to the higher altitude of 'The Bruce' where we viewed people dressed in strange clothing, apparently to engage in sports called skiing and snowboarding??? Thanks, but no thanks... after seeing the queue for the first aid station, a drink at the café, was more our style.

Everyone met up at the Park Hotel, National Park, for dinner and a good night's sleep. Sunday morning, we woke to a clear day, the mountain views were incredible.

But the best was yet to come! After a short 15-minute drive south, we arrived at the 'Palace', this palace is not for everyone, acres and acres of decaying relics. We wandered around, fascinated, not knowing where to look, or what you were going to see next, it felt like a memorial to everything automotive. Then there was the parts department... I almost got lost in the treasure trove of chockablock parts rooms that seemed endless.

Inside what was once an old sawmill, is a small museum. Horopito Motors has been used as a location for NZ Movies, Hunt for the Wilderpeople, and Smash Palace as well as Good by Pork Pie. There's a very nice blue E type and a replica of the Good Bye Pork Pie mini on display.

My guess is that many of our members have already visited this iconic NZ place, but it you haven't, call in and see it for yourselves.

Special thanks to Gary and the Waikato Jag club for the invite, I had a great time!

*Andrew*

