

BLACK SHEEP CAFE

(or... shall we stay, shall we go)

By Natalie Cox

We decided to all meet at the Marist Rugby Club, after all, why break with tradition. It was a very sensible time of 10:30am and we didn't head off until 11am, so some people with great foresight brought morning tea. Boy, did I want to steal their coffee, because naturally I didn't show any foresight what so ever. Waited for those lucky ones that had spent a few extra minutes in bed, and off we went.

We drove off along the motorway heading towards the Kaimais and turned off at the Poripori Waterholes, where we stopped to have a regroup. Were quite a few people picnicking and enjoying the weather. Carried on up a winding road to the Minden Lookout. Most of us did anyway. Some loved the countryside so much that they forgot to turn left, and enjoyed the views for a bit longer than the rest of us. Amazing scenery all over Tauranga, Omokoroa, Matakana Island and the inner harbour. The view is so spectacular that we sometimes pack a picnic lunch and just sit up there soaking it all in. Beautiful when the sun is shining.

After the photo stop, we headed down to Whakamarama and The Black Sheep Cafe which was not black, nor were there any sheep there. On entering the cafe there was a large gallery of artwork that local people had done. Some of it was really good, and if I had some space on my walls, would definitely have filled the Jags boot. Of course, I would've done it while hubby was elsewhere, and explained the boot load once we got home. Funny thing is, he can see \$149 value in some black plastic bit for the Jaguar but thinks a genuine piece of artwork for \$49 is too

overpriced to waste money on. Hence telling him after the fact. Once we admired all the art and critiqued every piece, we headed in to get seated. Several of us sat out in the courtyard under the sun, while some opted for a shadier table. Next thing we hear this dreaded call, "The power's out." They managed to serve drinks to those with cash, but guess what, we didn't have any. Lesson 1- Always keep some cash in your wallet in case of an emergency. I must've been wagging school when they taught that. Actually, I think I was wagging school when they taught a lot of things. Steve and a couple of others jumped in to action to try and save the day. The people running the cafe were panicking, imagining all these dollars running out the door.





They looked confused, having been placed there by an absentee owner, only knowing how to cook and take your money. They knew nothing about leaky eaves or weed spraying, and definitely nothing about electricity. In desperation, they called an electrician who couldn't figure out why everything in the switchboard was correct. Meanwhile, people were getting hungry, and the cashless ones (remember me) hungry AND thirsty. We decided we couldn't wait any longer so another cafe was found, who weren't thrilled to have 32 (30 actually

cause 2 had to go) people arriving unexpectedly, but the money, who could refuse that. We said we'd ring back and confirm. Problem solved! We let all these starving, fading-away-to-nothing people know food was on it's way. They started getting up and heading towards the promise of food, when, wait for it, best timing ever, the power came on. The electrician found another power board that no-one knew about. (Remember only taking money and cooking) We rushed up to put in our orders, a certain cashless husband got his parched wife a drink, and we sat down and carried on chatting just like we were doing about an hour previously, oblivious of the drama that was about to happen. The restaurant staff had big smiles on their faces as they returned to doing what they knew, taking our money and cooking our food. The food was good and they got it out really fast, probably worried that if they took too long, they'd have a riot of rampaging customers. At the end of our meals, they brought out a tub with a scoop of ice-cream in it for free which I thought was a lovely gesture.



Everybody seemed happy afterwards, finally getting a drink, enjoyable meal, and a whole lot of drama, which makes for a good story. Thank you everyone for your patience, I had a great time seeing you all.

Everybody seemed happy afterwards, finally getting a drink, enjoyable meal, and a whole lot of drama, which makes for a good story. Thank you everyone for your patience, I had a great time seeing you all.

Natalie

