

King Country Forgotten Settlements Run - September 7th & 8th

By Michael Creak

Well - the weather forecasts for the weekend warned us of what was to come and based on these those of us with E types kept them in the garage and went in our Jaguar saloons. What a fortunate choice it turned out to be! Saturday was not that bad with sunshine until the afternoon and then showers as we progressed towards Otorohanga, to meet up with others from various areas, and onto Taumarunui for the night stop. We met outside the old railway station in Otorohanga where Phil gave us a briefing and handed out some more instructions showing us the back roads on which to travel.

We stopped for an early lunch at the Bosco Cafe in Te Kuiti, then travelled SH3, then onto SH4 onto Ohura Road through Matiere, Nihoniho and Ohura where we had a coffee stop. In passing, Matiere was interesting as it seemed to be the terminus for the self-propelled rail carts. Then onto SH43, which is part



of the Forgotten Highway, to Taumarunui. The countryside was interesting in that the hills were pointed and very steep suitable only for sheep of which there were many. The roads usually had so few cars that the sheep stopped to look as some 18 Jaguars went past!

We occupied two Motels, being Forgotten World Motel (where most of us stayed) and Kelly's across the road. The Forgotten World was fine and I heard no complaints about Kelly's so all good so far.

Dinner was only five minutes' walk down the main street so we were able to dodge the heavy showers which dropped a few times during the evening and all night long. The meal at Jasmines Cafe was Thai food and comprised a selection of dishes, laid out on the tables so there was plenty to choose from, even for picky me!

Sunday, as expected, was comprised of heavy and light rain showers although it held off whilst we had another briefing from Phil.

Anyway, onward we travelled on SH4 to Manunui where we turned onto SH43. Then onto Ngapuke Road through Ngalonui and Taringamotu followed by



Matieri - Self propelled Rail Carts



Ohura

Ongarue Back Road to Okahukura and across the Onague River on the bridge which was once the branch line to New Plymouth. Then onto SH4 and right onto Ongarue Road, then Tapuwae Road where we visited the Tapuwae Gardens.

Before mentioning the gardens, the countryside was different from Saturday having rolling hills occupied by cattle which, again stopped to stare at the Jaguar convoy going past! On both days we noticed the huge abundance of wild trees across the fields and countryside in general.



Abandoned shops in Ohura



On Sunday we also came across a family of ducks which were sitting at the side of the road as we went passed refusing to move, despite the danger they were in.

The Tapuwae gardens would be great on a fine day but we had to drive on an unsealed road for some 3kms each way and our cars

ended up a kind of dirty grey colour (which took me about 2 hours to clean off at home). We were so thankful the E types stayed home.

Sandy Homer's XJS, being low, was grey up to the middle of the side windows.

Not a good place to visit other than in summer!



The garden is really a woodland garden covering some 8 acres and has been 53 years in the making. It has peacocks, ponds and many pathways leading to different areas. It is also claimed to be the actual centre of the North Island. We still managed to walk the gardens through the

rain before travelling to our last stop being the Wooden Heart Cafe in Benneydale for a very welcome warm and lunch.

Somewhat mixed reception here as our numbers (despite being pre-booked) overwhelmed the kitchen and some had to wait too long and



some got a refund. Anyway our weekend ended here and we all departed for home after thanking Raewyn and Phil for a great weekend.

Michael