



# WESTERN CAPE MAZDA MX-5 CLUB

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## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: WOLSELEY 2015-04-26.

Doing a long trip proved more popular than I thought (*and that on a long weekend nogal!*) – and didn't it turn out to be a huge success! And there's no improving on a proven recipe: a scenic trip with our favorite sports car with some good friends to a relaxing lunch works every time and, with the weather playing along as brilliantly as it did on Sunday, what more do we want?

Accompanying yours truly and Joanita were Diane Novitzkas and Paul Riggall; Chris and Daphne Foster; Duncan and Rowena Mackintosh; Gerald and Jocelyn Poswell; Rod Manson; Charmaine Jackson and son Richard; Soné Mouton and Paul Burger; Steve and Shelley Davies; Dennis Burger and Michelle and Genevieve and Clinton. Brian Lewer and son James; Daine Kinnear as well as Jack Bates and Lori were also to accompany us to Wolseley but were unfortunately forced to apologise at the last moment due to unforeseen circumstances.



*Above left:* Clinton & Genevieve Thomas.



*Above right:* Gerald Poswell and Shelley Davies.

Apologies were received from George and Anna-Marie Slade; Brian and Avril Roy (*still abroad*); Jonathan and Eloise Dekel (*Jonathan working*); André and Nerine Davis (*in the Okavango – sounds exiting!*); Allan Hughes and Janine Hayward; Mary-Lisa Evans; Steve and Mari Ashton; Phil and Julia Wilmot (*abroad*); Peter and Carla Truter; David and Julie Dyer; Alex and Maureen Paterson; Ivan Gee and Wendy-Anne; Alan and Alison Sheard; Geoff and Mo Ford and Martyn and Eleanor Warren (*Gone fishin'*).

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*Above left:* Dennis Burger and Michelle.



*Above right:* Chris Foster and Jocelyn Poswell.

The trip to Wolseley was originally planned to take us via the famous Bain's Kloof Pass. (See pic on right) But, with recent veld fires on the mountain we were not quite sure whether the Pass was open to traffic or not. So on Sunday morning we phoned the local Police/Fire Services at both Municipalities and were eventually told that the Pass "is open". However, arriving at Wellington we found the road closed off and we were not sure if this included the Pass as well. To play safe, it was decided to detour via Nuwekloof Pass and Tulbach and then thru' Wolseley on to our destination. It was a marginally longer trip than originally planned but happily, everybody enjoyed it.



Later, when returning from Wolseley, we planned to travel thru' the scenic Slanghoek Valley. However, passing the Wolseley entrance to Bain's Kloof, we noticed that it was in fact not closed off: some intrepid Members (Yours truly, Dennis and Michelle; Genevieve and Clinton; Gerald and Jocelyn; Paul and Soné) then promptly decided to go this route.

Bain's Kloof is a narrow, winding (and at times bumpy) pass: sports car heaven, therefore! The devastation caused by the recent fires was clear to see (see pic left) but come Spring, nature will have healed these wounds with lush new growth.

These mountain passes were built by Thomas and Andrew Bain in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: I read somewhere that it reduced travelling time between Cape Town and (e.g.) Beaufort West from 20 to *only* 12 days! With modern transport it's now become a popular, 90 minute's travel, lunch venue for the Cape Town crowd.



Our venue: The *Winterberg Mountain Inn* ([www.winterberginn.co.za](http://www.winterberginn.co.za)) is owned and ably managed by two ex-journos: husband and wife team Reint and Karien (*see pic on left*) Grobler. In 2009, they started (and still own) the nearby *Tolhuis Restaurant* from where they moved over to what was then known as the *Mill and Oaks Inn*, turning it into today's *Winterberg Inn*. The Inn not only offers an uncomplicated menu but, if our Members are to be believed, decent value for money. The setting is as rustic as one could imagine: dining tables are set (when weather permits) under huge Oak trees with the majestic Winterberg Mountains as backdrop.

The Inn also offers overnight accommodation at reasonable rates.

We were seated outside (but under cover) and enjoyed the Sunday lunch three course set menu – and I quote Diane Novitzkas: “*goeie lekker boerekos!*” (Having recently spent some time auditing Afrikaans speaking businessmen in Namibia, Di’s Afrikaans these days is better than mine. Well, almost.....) No complaints were received, only compliments: and that’s the way I like it.

In closing:

- If any proof were needed, Sunday showed that our Members enjoy a good, long drive. From MacD’s to our venue, going via Bain’s Kloof, is some 130 km whilst the same journey via Slanghoek Valley is some 120 Km. I received many SMS’s re the day (*thanks everybody!*) and many expressed a wish for another such drive.
- *Winterberg Inn* also showed that here are still places where one can enjoy a good meal without taking out a second mortgage. The word “cheap” sometimes has a connotation that is none too complimentary but *Winterberg* again proved that it doesn’t apply to all establishments.
- Next Month’s outing is being organized by Gerald Poswell. Yes, I do have an idea where he intends taking us but my lips are sealed - just keep your diary open for the 24<sup>th</sup> May!

Kind regards to all

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