



SLK DRIVERS CLUB OF NSW Inc.

SPRING 2014 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

WET AND WINDY SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS DRIVE - JUNE 15

After fluctuating weather forecasts, most of us left Sydney under blue skies for the Heathcote meeting place. That changed as five SLKs with ten members aboard (after a late apology from Mark) drove through the National Park in light rain to the Bald Hill lookout where we stopped to admire the coastal view. However mist blocked the outlook and with a biting south west wind flinging stinging darts of rain in the face, we soon left.

We joined the old Princes Highway to access the freeway to Albion Park and turned off for Macquarie Pass making a reasonable ascent until we reached the tightest hairpin bend. There, an over ambitious truck driver had discovered that semi trailers do not go around hairpins and he was stranded in the bend. That interrupted our convoy but we regrouped at the top of the Pass. The remainder of our run took us through the undulating back roads of Kangaloon to enter Mittagong through the back door and from there to the RSL Club for lunch.

The weather was not the best and the roads and scenery are better in sunny weather, but we will experience those conditions next time.

FOLLOWING THE LEADERS!

In our formative stages we sought membership of established Mercedes Clubs. As part of that process Adam visited the Sydney Merc Club and discussed SLK top down driving events. As they did not conduct runs at that time they suggested we join, organise runs, and any members with open driving style cars could participate. We were expected to provide the event leaders and marshals, but could not manage that with our limited numbers and so declined the offer and went our own way.

Now the big Merc club has adopted the concept and this appears in their calendar for November;

"The return of the TOPLESS drive!

Special drive with your roof off (Cabrio), or sunroof open, or even with your windows down, on a balmy Sydney evening."

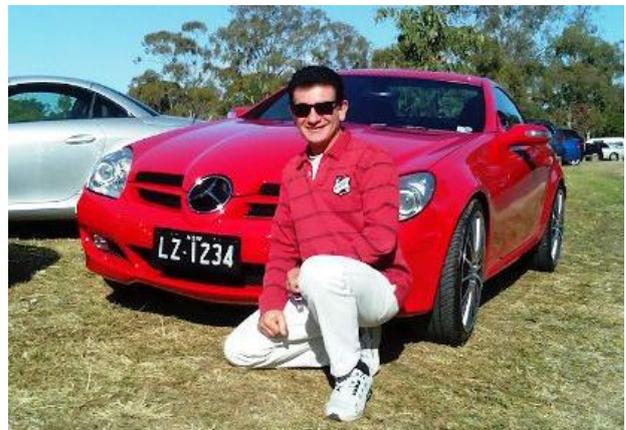
Not quite what we had in mind!

CAMS EVENT INSURANCE

The Club's affiliation with the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport was approved on May 30 and the June 15 Southern Highlands event was the first conducted under the terms of a CAMS Event Permit. The public liability insurance cover provided by the fee free permit proved the value of affiliation in the wet driving conditions on mountain roads on the day.

WELCOME LOUIS ZAMMIT

We are also very pleased to introduce Louis Zammit after he came across our contingent while riding his Harley Davidson through the National Park on the day we conducted the June Southern Highlands drive.



Louis drives this eye catching – almost *Ferrari red* - 05 R171 350 and followed his sighting of our cars at the wind and rain swept Bald Hill pause on the South Highlands drive by searching on Google to locate our website. He is the first member to join via that medium. Those who missed the July coffee meet look forward to meeting Louis at the substitute August coffee meet or postponed Camden Valley run.

RAIN STOPS PLAY!

After a damp start to the Hunter Wineries run and misty rain on the Southern Highlands drive, the *Rain Gods* struck again and forced the postponement of our August Camden Valley drive. Not much we can do to appease them when sacrificial maidens are in short supply!

PROFILE - ADAM'S SLK



Adam drives this 2006 R171 350 with Airscarfe, heated seats, and the Comand stereo system with GPS. Here are his comments; "I have owned it for almost a year and the first ever outing was to the first meet of what became the SLK Club of NSW. Modifications so far are installation of the Climatronic system, AMG sill plates, AMG tinted tail lights and an AMG rear boot spoiler (see pic below). I am still working on installing an AMG steering wheel with the gearshift paddles and collecting the parts to replace the stereo with a Harman Kardon Logic7 system.

Future plans are to replace the stereo unit with a 2009 Comand stereo unit to allow i-pod, and sd-card connectivity. I also replaced the standard battery with an Optima unit - and I would recommend this upgrade to any SLK owner. The roof mechanism, heated seats and stereo on these cars can quickly drain a battery and Optima are the best batteries money can buy.

Aside from these minor changes, there is nothing I would change mechanically to the car. It has been almost trouble-free for the time that I have owned it. Only the heated driver's seat has experienced issues, and this was fixed under warranty."

Adam's new spoiler - Where do ya get one?



GRACEFUL ADDITIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP

A highlight of the Southern Highlands run was having Anita Fernandes join us for her first event, even tolerating some unplanned top down driving in the rain! The cancellation of the August drive deprived us of the opportunity to meet Mel but we look forward to extending a welcome to her at the next event.

Our ladies are an integral part of the Club and equal in every respect to the males who tend to be the "nominal" owners of the cars. We hope to entice female SLK owners to join in due course.

COFFEE WITH SUN & SMILES!

The August substitute Parramatta coffee meet was held at the end of a week of continuing wet weather but we actually sat outside in blessed sunlight. It was too good to last because the cloud returned in the afternoon with localised showers. However, Adam surprised everyone with a presentation to Sean for his work in organising the club - a perfect replica of his SLK. Very much appreciated Adam!



SLK CLEARANCE SALE.

In a rare move, M.B. in recent months has been offering special deals on a range of its cars, but the real surprise was reductions in the price of the R172 models. Did anyone trade up?

SLK WORLD FORUM UPDATE

The presentation on the forum has been revamped, the format in the arrangement of sections is unchanged, but the sub-headings are highlighted to attract more attention. The Australian/New Zealand section is still at the bottom of the index where it is not readily noticed and the reason regular Sydney browsers are unaware of our activities. Martin's SLK Drivers Club website is likely to be much more productive in attracting new members.



Drive with your top down and spirits high!