



# The Squeaky Wheel



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**Issue 14 – March 2014**

## **In this issue:**

- MOTAT Strategy 2014-2019
- Powhiri marking a new Era
- The MOTAT Barbershop Chorus
- The Kauri Museum visit
- Messerschmidt remembrance
- 'Alice' video links
- Membership Renewals & Affiliate news
- Society Support for Exhibitions
- MOTAT 50<sup>th</sup> information request
- Upcoming events & Karaka Update

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## **Message from the Chair**

*Welcome all readers to Issue 14 of the Squeaky Wheel. The Society's visit to MOTAT's 'sister' museum, the Kauri Museum at Matakoho went exceedingly well, a short report is included in this newsletter. Thank you to all those who made this visit so worthwhile.*

*I would like to advise of Nicholas Taylor's resignation from the MOTAT Board and his position as Deputy Chair. Nick deserves a thank-you for all his efforts over the past few years as a keen communicator with members of the Society committee and a strong supporter of the volunteer culture of the museum. The Society values interaction between Board members and all levels of the MOTAT Team. We wish him well.*

*The Society is pleased to support the new strategy masterplan adopted by the MOTAT Board and has invited the CEO, Michael Frawley to comment on it in this issue. Everyone is in agreement that there must be change to improve the quality of all aspects of the museum. It must continue on with what has been done well and build on the inherent richness of the museum's collections and depth of social history through its people. The Society is keen to work through the detailed aspects of the implementation and support the Board in its roll-out*

Leyton Chan - *MOTAT Society Committee Chair*

## **Magazine Update**

Production of Issue 7 of *The Driving Wheel* magazine is well underway with distribution planned for late April 2014. We are also working towards Issue 8 –

Spring 2014, which will be a special commemorative MOTAT 50<sup>th</sup> Edition. This is planned for distribution around late Aug/early Sep in time for the AGM and 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations in early October.

As always we are actively seeking contributors or ideas for articles, photos, interesting stories or experiences for future publication in *The Driving Wheel* magazine & *The Squeaky Wheel* newsletter. In addition we are seeking advertisers and relevant events to promote.

**Helpers for the magazine:** If you would like to help with graphics, sourcing addition images, contents or advertising, please let us know as there is lots to do and many hands make light work!

Contact Tessa or Andre as above for more information.



## MOTAT Strategy 2014-2019

By Michael Frawley – MOTAT CEO

I have been asked to report on the launch of MOTAT's 2014 – 2019 Strategy. The Board and I launched the strategy to approximately 130 of the MOTAT Team on the night of 18 March 2014. The presentation covered the issues identified in the report produced by Dame Cheryl Sotheran in 2012 and how the strategy would address most if not all of those issues. I pointed out that while the recent Herald article focused on the more sensational aspects of the report it reconfirmed the MOTAT Team's unanimous view at the meeting in March 2013 that the museum had to fundamentally change if it was to be relevant to the Auckland community. The strategy, which was developed in conjunction with Dame Cheryl Sotheran, is designed to shift MOTAT from being a 'collection of things' to a 'light bulb institution'.

MOTAT's focus over the next five years will continue to be on its heritage collection (e.g. trams and trains) but the museum will also highlight Kiwi ingenuity and innovation and the associated stories and technology/science where it can. The reason for doing this is that New Zealand has a long and rich history of ingenuity and while those innovations are well promoted at the commercial level, the story about how they came to be invented and how they worked isn't.

MOTAT is in a unique position to outline how our leading Kiwis came up with their innovations (e.g. some of their ideas or inspiration can be traced back to objects at MOTAT) and how they work from a technological/scientific point of view. By doing this the museum is hoping that its visitors will leave the museum thinking 'If he can do it, so can I but I will need to learn more'. A good example of this is the New Zealand designed YikeBike. The YikeBike can trace its roots back to the Penny Farthing and we have asked the person who developed it if we can have one of the original prototypes for our collection, an explanation of how they came up with



the idea and how it works so that we can develop a 'hands on exhibit' that will enable our visitors to interact with some of the technology concerned (e.g. commercial gyros). We have also asked the developer for one of their current YikeBikes so that we can demonstrate it alongside Shane's Penny Farthing.

In order to implement the strategy MOTAT will focus on four core objectives: Maximising the Visitor Experience; Empowering the MOTAT Team; Improving the Collection; and Improving Business Sustainability. We have also incorporated the values that were identified by the MOTAT Team, namely Collaboration, Integrity, Creativity and Stewardship and we will use them to guide us in everything we do.

You can access a copy of the Strategic Plan on the MOTAT Website through this link - <http://www.motat.org.nz/about/corporate/strategic-plan> - but I would like to share with you a few examples of the key initiatives outlined in the plan. The initiatives include the establishment of a 'Think Tank' of leading New Zealanders to develop programmes and exhibits, the development and implementation of an Asset Management Plan, the redevelopment of the MOTAT Website, and the review of our collection objects to identify those that are or should be in the museum's collection so as to ensure that it is aligned to the vision, and those that shouldn't be.

In order to implement this strategy we will have to allocate more funds to exhibitions and education and this is reflected in the Annual Plan for 2014/15.

### Next Steps

We would appreciate your patience and support while we work through the remaining items to bring the plan into fruition. We would like to emphasise that the changes outlined in the strategy will take some time to implement and we are in the process of aligning the museum's structure to the strategy. This will involve us in working with the various teams so as to ensure that we have the right people in the right place focused on the right activities. The important thing is that we now have a plan and a vision that we can all work to, so that we can deliver a quality museum experience that inspires our visitors and makes them come back for more.

**Left:** Shane Price at MOTAT on the Penny-Farthing and the similarly shaped modern classic - the Yike Bike.

At dawn on the 26 February 2014, many of the MOTAT Team including staff, volunteers and board members joined local iwi, Ngati Whatua, for a Powhiri symbolising a new era in the Museum's future direction.

Bruce Howat tells us a little more. ..

## **NEW ERA FOR MOTAT**

- Bruce Howat, MOTAT Board member

### **I te atatu**

(in the predawn)

### **I whiti mai te marama**

(a new moon shone down)

### **I whiti mai a Hinetitama**

(the morning star Hinetitama shone down)

### **Ka tangi mai nga manu**

(all the birds and all nature greeting the dawn)

### **Ka karanga te kuia**

(Kuia called us to assemble)

### **"Nau mai, haere mai ...**

(welcome, come closer)

### **Ki te whare taonga rere rangi**

(enter the museum for taonga of the skies)

### **Nga taonga katoa ...**

(a place for all restored taonga)

### **Haere mai, haere mai, haere mai e!"**

(welcome, come closer)

- Haare Williams



***The Goddess Venus was smiling on those who had assembled at dawn for MOTAT's powhiri on 26 February, and while we waited we reflected respectfully on the ancestors and the new beginning.***

Haare Williams had eagerly worked with the MOTAT Team, teaching Te Reo language skills, passionately imbuing Maori language and culture. The powhiri began with the Kuia call and a spine tingling inwardly focused chill quietly permeated the gathering. Slowly, the Manuhiri walk started, respectfully, graciously entering the new MOTAT Marae.

We assembled under the shadows of the restored Lancaster Bomber. The Tangata Whenua feeling the presence of ancestors, those who gave their lives and those wounded, greeted them and the families who suffered the enduring immeasurable pain created by war, cautiously stepping into the future.

The mihi (speeches) with respect, humour and challenges eloquently rolling off the tongue, via the heart. The rivalries between Nga Puhi and Ngati Whatua, tease the crowd, replying with applauded chuckles. The speeches focused purposely on the past, the present and future voyage.

The first purpose is to acknowledge the brilliant adept minds of Tangata Whenua in transport and technology. The waka arriving from the Pacific Islands, knowingly associating with the whales as navigators, started New Zealand Aotearoa on its voyage. Yet, the historical presence

of Maori as innovators, engineers, entrepreneurs is noticeable by its absence within the current environment. The voyage is to meaningfully connect with Tangata Whenua and celebrate their past, present and future role.

The other is the voyage to embrace as a collective, a strategy to create MOTAT confidently as a lively, pulsating, interactive and meaningful place – so visitors see it as a place to engage with multiple times per year. Haare Williams explained that within Maori culture, it is expected that items will deteriorate and return to Papatuanuku, Mother Earth. Restoration of old artefacts is not a Maori perspective. Maori culture is about the future in front of us taking us forward, not anchoring us to the past. Haare engages with MOTAT because story telling is inherent in Maori culture and the past shapes the future.

The third highlights the journey of MOTAT's waka over the last 50 years and how that laid the foundation for the new strategy and engagement with the Ngati Whatua. The new strategy maps out a journey for the MOTAT Waka and the Board is challenged to keep the waka on course through the storms and battles and the pressure to head back to the calm waters of the past, as those waters are an illusion and the tides have in any event changed. There was acknowledgement that by working together as one under the guidance of the Ngati Whatua the waka will prevail.

Then the closing, the hariru – hongis and the exchange of life spirit and then the hākari the sharing of food as one.

## The MOTAT Chorus

by Tessa Phillips with information  
from Roger Boud

In preparation for the recent Powhiri, MOTAT Team members had several sessions practising Waiata (Maori songs) for the occasion. This is not the first time MOTAT has echoed to the sound of music...

MOTAT volunteer and Society member Roger Boud had just been saying about how in MOTAT's 50<sup>th</sup> Year it is worth remembering MOTAT's Barbershop Chorus which used to practise at MOTAT and entertain visitors from 1979 until around 1987.

Roger noted that "My time with the chorus at MOTAT started back in 1984 when we rehearsed in the downstairs "theatrette". They were very happy occasions and we would be kicked out by security about 10pm and then stand in Stadium Road - weather dependent, and sometimes sing by the gate until the early hours."

**How did the Chorus begin?** From a little research in the Walsh Memorial library records and online it seems that in 1979 Ron Richardson, the then CEO of the MOTAT and Barbershop enthusiast, invited a Hawaiian Quartet called "The Merry Mac's" to visit and sing at MOTAT over a period of a few weeks. The quartet, along with locally established quartet "The Bridge City Barbers", gave a concert in the Museum's Aviation Theatre. [This theatrette used to be located in the Pioneers of Aviation building where the Walsh Memorial Library is normally sited. ]

At the end of the concert the women and children from the audience left but the men remained. The quartet then taught the guys a few traditional barbershop songs in four part harmony. The women and children then returned to be entertained by the 'menfolk'. At the conclusion, there was an announcement of the formation of the MOTAT Barbershop Chorus, ANZAC Day 1979. Of the 40 or so men there, about 35 turned up on the initial rehearsal night. Wayne Senior, TVNZ Music Personality, vocal and band arranger was appointed as the initial Musical Director.

Later in the 1980s the Chorus moved on to become the "City of Sails" Chorus which is still entertaining Aucklanders today, and at its height had about 80 members. Note they are currently having a recruitment drive for new members if you are interested! The chorus rehearsal venue is the Balmoral Bowling Club, and the singing starts every Monday



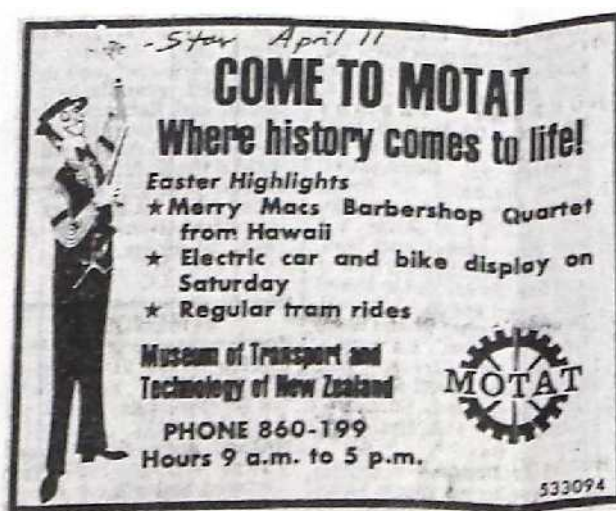
Photo of the MOTAT Barbershop Chorus, complete with MOTAT shirts! c1979  
Photo: Walsh Memorial Library, 03-1296

evening at 7.30pm.

Some highlights over the years have been gold medals won in competition, and wonderful overseas trips to International Barbershop Conventions in Texas, Utah, Brisbane and Honolulu, and the yearly Conventions held throughout NZ.

Also it might be interesting to note that the chorus uniform changed from the MOTAT sweatshirts featured in the photograph, to straw boaters and striped waistcoats whilst still at MOTAT. (Tailor made tuxedos currently adorn the City of Sails singers.)

For more on the City of Sails Chorus see [www.cityofsailschorus.com](http://www.cityofsailschorus.com) The chorus's next concert is at the Orewa Centre Stage Theatre at noon on 4th May.



April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979 MOTAT Ad. Walsh Memorial Library -  
MOTAT collection, entertainers file

# Matakohe Kauri Museum Visit

- By Tessa Phillips

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2014, the MOTAT Society were booked in for a group visit to The Kauri Museum at Matakohe, and what a great day it turned out to be.

We set off from Auckland about 9:15 with a hired 12 seater minivan (many thanks to Jan for volunteering to drive it for us) and my car. Others arranged to meet us up there. From 11:30 – 2:45 we were at Matakohe with a total of 21 people in our group, which consisted of a good mix of ages (7 to 70+) and a wide range of interest areas. We were especially happy to have Ian Stewart and his wife Margaret with us – Ian has been involved with MOTAT since its inception over 50 years ago as well as with the trams at Matakohe before they came to MOTAT.



The Kauri Museum's CEO Betty Nelley met us on arrival, and took us for an overview tour of the museum, before we headed through to the Operational Machinery Wing where the volunteers started up various of the engines including the 1929 Caterpillar 60. The sounds and the smells brought to life the changes that technology brought to the Kauri industry from its early more manual roots.

We had a shared lunch with Kauri Museum staff and volunteers and all agreed it was great to reconnect the two groups. Many thanks to everyone at the Kauri Museum who welcomed us with such open arms and helped make our visit such a good one. I hope we are able to return the favour in the not too distant future. John Syme spoke in thanks from the Society and Ian



*Above: "The Tractor that changed the lives of bushmen forever". The Caterpillar 60, 1929, replaced 112 bullocks. Starting the bulldozer is Darcy Sterling, son of the founder Mervyn Sterling  
Top: Betty Nelley shows some Kauri items. Photos: T.Phillips*



*Tea room speeches  
Above: John Syme standing on left, Betty Nelley standing on the right  
Right: Ian Stewart*



Stewart also said a few words.

After this there was a chance for us to look around in more detail, and a small group went to visit the recently opened Totara House, with another small side tour to the Textiles collection, library and archive.

There is too much to tell about the museum itself in a short article like this, but we will have more information about the displays at the Kauri museum itself in the upcoming Magazine along with some nice photos. They have done a fantastic job of taking a theme relevant to the area and using it to weave a picture not only of a uniquely New Zealand history and industry but of the lives and history of the local people involved.

For those that didn't make it on that day I can most heartily recommend it as a great place for a visit – I know I'll be back as I barely touched the surface of

## Plaque in The Kauri Museum foyer

**Mervyn David Sterling Q.S.M.**  
**3 December 1916-26 August 1992**

*Mervyn Sterling was the founder of Otamatea Kauri & Pioneer Museum. He also co-founded the Old Time Transport Preservation League, The Museum of Transport & Technology in Auckland & helped set up Wagener Museum, Houhora.*

*A descendant of the original settlers in Matakohe, it was his vision, leadership & dedication which motivated many local families & the wider community to contribute to this museum. He worked unceasingly to find exhibits, display them & record their history. His determination was rewarded as he watched the original local pioneer collection develop into a public museum of international repute.*

*This plaque was erected by the Otamatea Kauri & Pioneer Museum Trust Board in 1994 in appreciation of Merv's efforts to preserve New Zealand's History.*



## To the Editor of the Squeaky Wheel

- from William Irwin

I had heard that there were the remains of a Messerschmidt KR200 bubble car lurking somewhere in the depths of the Road Transport section. So I was thrilled to read about the efforts to restore it to working condition in Issue 13 of the Squeaky Wheel.

I owned just such a car as a teenager in Cape Town, South Africa from 1957 to late 1958. I used it to commute daily about 25km from my home near Somerset West to Stellenbosch University where I was studying civil engineering. I only have one small picture of it taken with a Box Brownie camera, all the remaining photos having disappeared somewhere during our shift to New Zealand. I have scanned this picture which shows the Messerschmidt with my younger brother Robby posing behind it.



My Messerschmidt was light grey with dark grey front mudguards and was one of the earlier KR200

models with the bonnet trim having the circular motif and the rear view mirrors mounted just below the windscreen. The 2 discs on the front of the mudguards are white reflectors which had to be added, as well as 2 red reflectors at the rear, to conform to South African traffic rules. It did not have a luggage rack as per the MOTAT example.

It could get very hot inside the transparent bubble top, especially in the strong South African sunlight, so a cream coloured cloth cover was provided which clipped into studs around the outside of the dome.

However it soon stretched and flapped around in the wind so I had a strong opaque cover made from blue Vyanide plastic material which clipped into the same studs, which worked very well.

It was great fun driving the Messerschmidt which is really a covered scooter on 3 wheels with very direct steering. It used a 191cc single cylinder two stroke engine which could run in either direction for reversing. This made it awkward for parking as one had to switch off the engine and then start it again in reverse, or vice versa. My mother thought it would be safer than a scooter or motorbike. At University I would often come out of lectures to find the Messerschmidt somewhere else, up some steps on a verandah or on top of the bicycle rack, as 3 young guys could easily lift it up. I also found myself in good company as Elvis Presley owned a Messerschmidt, in addition to all his other Cadillacs. See <http://www.thetruthaboutcars.com/2011/05/elvis-messerschmitt/>

Half way through 1958 the battery packed up. It was a small 12V battery about 15cm square and no replacement was available as the agents had given up the agency. It took about 2 months to find a replacement battery which fitted in the space provided. I eventually traded the Messerschmidt in on a conventional second hand Renault car.

## Alice en route for Waterview

The Waterview Connection near MOTAT is rapidly taking shape, with plenty of information available to the public at the NZ Transport Authority website [www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/waterviewconnection](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/waterviewconnection) The Waterview Connection project is one of the most important infrastructure developments ever to take place in New Zealand, and completes a motorway ring route around the city.

For those that missed the open day to see the huge **tunnel boring machine, Alice**, there are various **time lapse videos** on this NZTA website showing Alice in action and progress at the Waterview site. Alice is heading north toward Waterview, building the first of the Waterview tunnels as she goes.

- Thanks to Bruce Willingale of the Auckland Inventors Club for pointing out these videos.

## Affiliates news:

### Auckland Inventors Club – in Recess

Unfortunately we are sad to announce that one of our affiliates, the Auckland Inventors Club has gone into recess this year. For more on the Inventors club and its current closure please see [www.aucklandinventors.co.nz](http://www.aucklandinventors.co.nz)

However we hope to be able to encourage a few of its members to share some of their stories with us, especially in light of the museum's new focus on kiwi innovation and invention.

### Welcome to recently joined affiliates

- New Zealand Vintage Radio Society  
[www.nzvrs.pl.net](http://www.nzvrs.pl.net)
- The Bella Street Pumphouse Museum- Thames  
[www.bellastreetpumphouse.com](http://www.bellastreetpumphouse.com)

## MOTAT Society Support for Exhibitions

By Tessa Phillips, Society Administrator/Museum Liaison

Recently I have been having initial discussions with MOTAT Exhibitions about ways that Society members' knowledge can be drawn on to help the MOTAT exhibitions team in producing the most engaging exhibits possible for Museum visitors. The Society's membership is made up of some of the current and former volunteers/staff, and enthusiasts/experts in related fields. This means there is a heap of collective knowledge and technical expertise on MOTAT's collections.

Most members actively and regularly visit related museums and exhibitions both nationally and internationally and so have a great collective store of ideas. It would be great to tap into this to help identify the best ways to educate and inspire with MOTAT's upcoming exhibitions, as well as identifying additional resources available and valuable stories to provide context to the displays.

Exhibitions manager Lucinda will be coming to talk with the Society Committee at the Committee meeting on the evening of the 8<sup>th</sup> April to pursue these ideas further.

In the first instance one way that has been suggested is to run occasional exhibition Brainstorming Sessions, open for Society members/affiliates and MOTAT Team members to get together and throw possible ideas around. Of course not all these ideas will necessarily be implementable, but at the very least it brings people with related knowledge together to share ideas and be encouraged to be involved. A test session is planned for April to see how workable this idea might be.

On a more general level, the Society aims to hold more general get togethers this year that will allow members, affiliates and the MOTAT Team to mix, mingle, share ideas and network.

## MOTAT 50th Anniversary

### Wanted: your photos

As part of the MOTAT 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations, a new commemorative display is planned for the entrance to the 'I am the Last Tram building'.

The Walsh Memorial Library is involved with sourcing materials for the display from its own collections, but MOTAT would love to include your images.

If you have any interesting MOTAT related images, film, records, memorabilia or ephemera that you would be willing to share or loan please let Tessa know. (See Tessa's contacts page 1)



## "Get Smart" Exhibition – Brainstorming Session.

**When:** Tuesday 8th April 2014,  
3pm - 4:30pm

**Where:** MOTAT Great North Road site - Cropper House..

**Why:** MOTAT is currently developing a new interactive exhibition for early 2015 based around all the technological developments that went into creating the modern day smart phone. Planning is well underway but further ideas are still being sought especially for the radio/broadcast and audio visual storylines, as well as interactive elements.

To trial the idea of exhibition brainstorming sessions (see left), we would like to invite you to a 'trial' brainstorming session on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April, particularly for these aspects of the exhibition.

**RSVP:** If you are interested in attending please RSVP by Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April so we have an idea of numbers. We will give the gate staff a list of attendees for entry by non MOTAT Team/Society members.

RSVP to Tessa by 4 Apr – Ph (09)3909160, mob 021 0479973, or email: [admin@motatsociety.org.nz](mailto:admin@motatsociety.org.nz)



## Membership Renewals for the 2014-2015 year:

Many thanks to all of you that have returned your renewal forms or notified me that you would like to continue your membership. Thank you too to all of you that have sent in kind donations and feedback – it is good to be able to hear whether we are on the right track or areas we could improve!

For those that have confirmed membership by 21 March (the original cut off), your membership cards, receipts etc will be posted with this newsletter mailout.

If you haven't yet confirmed your membership please notify me ASAP and the next mailout of cards will be with the magazine mailout later in April.



## UPCOMING SOCIETY EVENTS



### “Get Smart” Exhibition – Brainstorming Session

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 3pm at MOTAT 1,  
See Page 7 for details

### MOTAT “Behind the Scenes” Series

The MOTAT Society is currently working with the Museum to plan a series of behind the scene visits at the various MOTAT sections. The idea for these is to have a tour around the relevant workshops & displays with some of the section's members, and also to have a social get together over some food and of course it's a chance for a bit of networking.

We hope this will provide a good opportunity to meet the section members and learn about projects, conservations, maintenance etc that are underway, in a more tangible way than just reading about what is happening. The invitation to these events will hopefully go out to Society and MOTAT Team members, families and friends.

First off we hope to have a Tramways visit, with the date and final details to be confirmed shortly (didn't quite make the newsletter deadline!) with other sections also expressing interest in the idea.

### Other events in the pipe line

- Michael Smythe to talk about the 'History of New Zealand Product Design', including inventions in the MOTAT collection - Late May
- Bruce Grenville to talk on 'NZ Railway Travelling Post Offices'
- Society visit to the Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum
- Movie evening including members footage and images from MOTAT over the last 50 years.

PLEASE LET US KNOW ANY OTHER IDEAS!



MOTAT/MOTAT Society Stall at Karaka Vintage Day:  
People using the MOTAT marquee; kids at the make and take table; visitors checking out brochures etc and looking at the Ford Prefect. Photo: T.Phillips

## Karaka Vintage Day Update

The 2014 Karaka Vintage Day was very successfully held on Sunday 23 March 2014 at the Karaka Sports Park by the Karaka Historical Society and Vintage Engine Restorers Auckland (VERA). Apart from a few mid afternoon showers (which provided a captive audience under the MOTAT marquee!), the day was pleasant and mild and there were large crowds of visitors coming to see the extensive displays of vintage cars, bikes, military vehicles, tractors, diggers, engine displays etc as well as rides, Karaka museum tours, MASH helicopter flights and airplane flyovers.

The MOTAT Society had a joint stall with MOTAT centrally located right at the cross over point between the main stall area, vintage cars, bikes, military and food areas, so we had a lot of foot traffic browsing on the way through.

The large MOTAT marquee had hay bales in as seating and was fully utilized as a space for eating /shade / shelter. MOTAT kindly provided three vehicles for the event – the 1953 Ford Prefect car, 1955 Bedford 'Service Haulage' truck and Stevenson's excavator – as well as the MOTAT branded large marquee and pop up gazebo. Thanks to Murray Wilson, MOTAT workshop manager, for driving the Ford Prefect (which was next to the stall) and to MOTAT volunteers John Walker and Graham Hogan for their efforts with the truck and excavator – which were located further over with the tractors and larger vehicles.

Tessa Phillips, set up the smaller pop up tent next to the large MOTAT marquee with a table containing brochures, magazines and fliers for the Museum and Society, with a large number distributed. We had MOTAT and Society Banners and also a table set up with MOTAT Make and Take trams and sheets kindly provided by the Experience Team and flags and postcards from the Print Shop. This attracted younger visitors and allowed a chance to talk to the adults. Many contacts were made for potential future visitors, members and affiliates, and it was a good opportunity to provide a positive view of MOTAT.

It was great to see many Society members there, often attending through other groups such as VERA, vintage car clubs, military groups and so on. The Society hopes to formalize some new affiliations with some of these groups shortly so we can better exchange useful information and contacts.

A great day and I look forward to the next one in 2 years! - T. Phillips