



Fall 2014

Miatas of Muskoka

TEST DRIVE by Jacob Black

Submitted by Bob Macaulay

There seem to be two types of responses to the Mazda MX-5: the first is that it's a bit girly or a hair-dresser's car; the second, by those in the know, who say it's the best handling, best value and most fun sports cars going around.

While I am uncomfortable with the notion that femininity is somehow an unwanted trait in any context, I'll admit to being in the first crowd for a very long time. I long held the belief that convertibles of any stripe were only suitable for attractive women to be seen in. But true classics, be they art, literature, film or motor vehicle have a knack for shattering stereotypes, for challenging bigotry and prejudice so completely that they become seminal and transformative.

And my attitude about tiny engines and droptops was in for a battering.



Sure, I know that the MX-5 is raced the world over in everything from autocross to production-car championships and one-make national series.

Sure I know that it has an almost perfect front-rear balance, is manual, rear-wheel drive and that it has the soul of a British or Italian roadster minus the "character". Sure I know that they are apparently bulletproof even under the most brutal treatment – but still I didn't get it.

I didn't even get it when I first sat in it, though I did get the low ride height and go-kart driving position. I certainly didn't get it when I pinched my finger on the roof latch trying to figure out how to open it. And when I realized this one, as tested, was north of \$40,000 but was missing navigation, Bluetooth streaming music, power seats

and USB connection – I *really* didn't get it.

And I didn't get it on the highway, where passing meant rowing through gears and pushing the throttle through the firewall just to access the 167 hp and 140 lb-ft of torque produced by the 2.0L engine.

But then, just then, as if by magic, it was time to leave the highway. The clouds of traffic parted – as if this cherry-red roadster was Moses himself – leaving a series of uncluttered off-ramps ahead of me.

"Time to see what these people are on about," I said aloud to myself. I'd like to think the car chuckled at that point.

And as I turned into the 270-degree right hander I immediately, and overwhelmingly, *got it*.

<http://autos.ca/>

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Muskoka Fall Colours Cruise
*Sun. Oct 05

End of the Year Dinner Date
*Sat. Nov. 22

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MoM's "Scavenger Hunt"

Sunday June 22nd an adventurous group of nine miatas set off from the Bracebridge Home Depot parking lot at six minute intervals to try their luck at answering the 90 questions included in our second annual Scavenger Hunt. Unlike most car rallies, speed was not an issue so participants could, and had to exercise their powers of observation as they followed the prescribed route along the backroads of Muskoka ending up at the North Granite Ridge Golf Club in Port Sydney for a sit down lunch of chicken parmesan. Comments heard from competitors at the destination point ranged from "that was fun" to "brutal!"

Congratulations to our winners Enno and Marina Hoekstra followed closely by Bob and Carol Macaulay as well as Laurel Bauldry who correctly identified and noted the location of all six roadside mystery images. For the second year running, our illustrious leader, Michael Topping was forced to open his panic envelope when he "got lost". Many thanks to all those who participated.

Lynn & Ted Bryan

Miatas of Muskoka Special Event – Orillia Mazda

(September 6, 2014)

We had a special *Miatas of Muskoka* event at *Orillia Mazda* on Saturday, September 6, 2014, from 11 AM to 1 PM. At the suggestion of dealership management, and facilitated by one of our members (Cal Lander), we were invited to attend and "show" our Miatas for dealership promotion purposes, and in turn were treated to a nice BBQ by dealership staff. In total, we had 13 MoM cars show up, including some members from Lindsay, Orillia, Bracebridge and Huntsville. De-

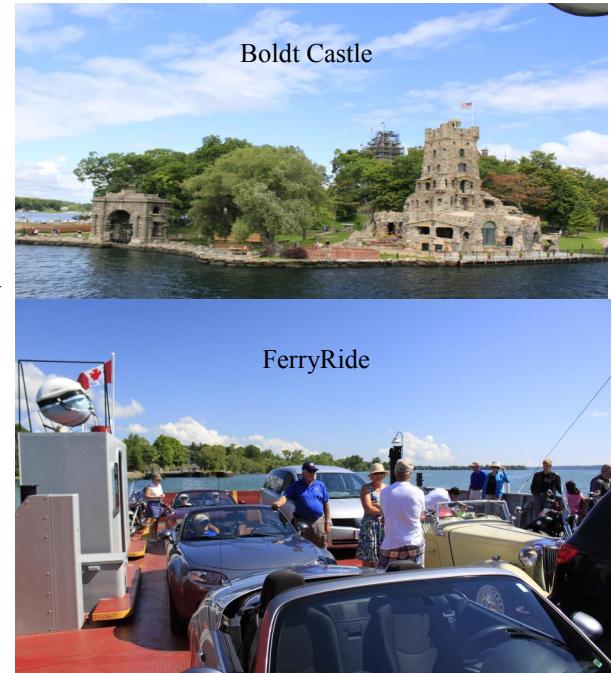
spite a troubling forecast, the weather turned out fine, allowing us all to arrive and show our cars with tops down. After the BBQ, several members headed for home, but those that were still around were led through Orillia by the Landers to our favourite ice cream place in Orillia, the *Red Caboose*, for a little post-BBQ "dessert", and then we headed north for a nice cruise up the always-entertaining Southwood Road, from Severn Bridge to Torrance, then east into Gravenhurst and

from there up Muskoka Beach Road (another great Miata Road) to Bracebridge.

All-in-all, it was a fun day...and definitely something different from our usual club events.

Orillia Mazda management suggested that they might host us again for a similar event when the next-generation (2016) MX-5 actually arrives on their lot, likely spring or summer 2015.

Bob Macaulay



Members Share





More from our Cruise Directors...

SNAP SHOT OF GANANOQUE CRUISE

Five Miatas left the meeting place in Huntsville on Aug. 22nd and one Miata travelled from Montreal, meeting us at the Ramada Inn in Gananoque. The 56 miles through Algonquin Park were somewhat tedious as a “tin top” in front of the lead, set the pace at 80 k's/hr. keeping a string of approximately 17 cars behind him. A minor example of road rage was evident when the lead tail gated him many times and when two polite Miata drivers gave him the horn loud and long when he finally turned off just before the East gate.

The roads were excellent and we arrived at the Inn at stated time of 6:30PM feeling just a wee bit stiff from the long drive. Did I mention we stopped for ice cream in Barry’s Bay?

We had a rousing, noisy dinner at The Old English Pub in the centre of town and retired early in preparation for the boat cruise next morning. The crossing was calm and the cottages/homes on the islands very old (on the whole) but quite lovely. Very different from the scenery on our Muskoka Lakes. Irving Berlins and Rand McNally’s homes were pointed out to us as well as many osprey nests with the birds perched in them. Did you know the RCMP patrol the water border for Canada and the Coast Guard patrol for the U.S?

The smallest International Bridge is in Gananoque waters spanning 10 feet between Canada and the U.S.

For an island to be considered an island it must have two trees and be 6 square feet in size and it needs to be 2 acres in size to be built on. The Boldt Castle was well worth visiting – very lovely and interesting but still requires much more work before completion. Unfortunately, my camera decided to shut down half way through the tour so another member of our club will be providing pictures.

Some of us had a swim in the heated outdoor pool back at the Ramada Inn, some sat in the shade reading, someone had a lesson in the use of their new iPad and some had a snooze before departing for a wonderful, elegantly served dinner at Trinity House B&B downtown Gananoque. I must say, we must be getting old as we had another “early to bed” evening.

Breakfast was at the Inn in the morning. We departed from the group to visit family and Bob and Carol took over as Lead for the cruise home. I understand they made many interesting stops and arrived in Muskoka about 7PM. All in all, a trip worth taking. Maureen Newton

SAINTE-MARIE AMONG THE HURONS Midland Cruise

This cruise was the first one that I have “directed” for our local Muskoka Miata Club. We started our cruise in Washago at a new fresh food market called [“Canoe”](#). Fresh pressed coffee and a fresh cinnamon bun was just the ticket to start the day. We had 8 Miatas of various vintages to cruise the back roads to [Sainte-Marie among the Hurons](#) in Midland. More experienced club members were on hand to make sure we tested our CB’s and that I had all our signed up members accounted for.

We started the day with our tops down in the true spirit of the day. After realizing I had left my written notes at home, we used my GPS to run the route from our test run. My co-pilot must remember her reading glasses for the next trip!! She was great at advising up coming turns using a CB. A wonderful bonus of farm country is the roads are in a grid pattern, so if we missed a turn, it wouldn’t be the end of the world. We drove around the bottom of Sparrow Lake and headed south and west over hills and dales seeing all the country estates and fall harvest looking farmsteads. The roads were in great shape and we wound down River Road in Coldwater before heading along highway 12, also freshly paved to arrive at in Midland. We departed at 9:30 and arrived close to 11, just about dead on for timing.

According to the Guide, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons was a 17th century French Jesuit mission to the Huron (Wendat) nation that last for 10 years. The site was taken on in 1964 by the Ontario Government, in cooperation with the Society of Jesus and the University of West Ontario and opened to the public in 1968. Our group spent a mere hour and a half touring the site, with self guided “wands” to explain the different structures and explain the history. Definitely worth a return visit!

A short 5 minute drive later we arrived at [Henry’s](#), for a fabulous fish and chips lunch, there are actually two restaurants, the other one is on an island ...an adventure for another day....

Pouring down rain shrunk our group for the second leg of the cruise to [Big Chute Marine Railway](#) where the rain let up for those who wanted to stroll about. The last two cars headed on to Bala to finish the cruise at Don’s Bakery. The weather stayed foggy and the roads wet, but the fall colours were evident and will probably peak soon.

My co-pilot had never been down Southwood Road, a nice twisty route that would bring us back closer to home, it is the path to the Torrance Barren’s a local dark sky reserve where the stars are lit brilliantly with minimal light pollution to distract from the sky. My co-pilot enjoyed the scenery while I enjoyed the twisty roads!

Whew! Made it Home!! Sarah Lomas



BOLDT CASTLE

GANANOQUE

GREY COUNTY WATERFALLS CRUISE August 9-10, 2014

A small but intrepid group of 6 MoM cars – originating from Huntsville, Bracebridge, Orillia and Lindsay -- met just north of Orillia bright and early on Saturday August 9th, and under a mixed sky of sun and cloud, headed west across Simcoe County via Horseshoe Valley Road and Hwy. 26 through Stayner to Duntroon, where we continued north and west through the very scenic escarpment country in Grey County, via Kimberley in Beaver Valley, to our first waterfall stop in the hamlet of Walter's Falls.

After enjoying the views of the 45-foot falls and taking lots of pics, we ventured into the adjacent Walter's Falls Inn for lunch, where we were escorted to a reserved table in a prime spot on their 2nd floor terrace, overlooking the falls. Both the food and the service were outstanding, and the warm, sunny weather certainly contributed to the enjoyment of the meal. Afterwards, a few of us headed across the parking lot for an ice cream cone, before heading out for our next waterfall stop. Although the Inn couldn't accommodate us for that night's accommodation (already booked for a wedding), we all agreed that it was definitely worth considering for a future overnight stop, especially in spring or falls with lower rates.

After a short drive through the hilly back roads of Grey County, our next stop was at Inglis Falls, which is just west of Hwys. 6 & 10, south of Owen Sound. This is a beautiful, high waterfall (60-foot drop), located in a local conservation area, with scenic viewpoints at several spots along a well-used trail traversing the top of the escarpment...again, lots of pics were taken, including some group shots. The next stop was only a few minutes away, at Weaver's Creek Falls in Harrison Park, which is located in the south end of Owen Sound. Since it was a sunny and warm Saturday, the park was quite busy, so we had to search a bit to find parking and the trailhead to the falls. The trail turned out to be actually quite short, and the same description could apply to the falls – the pictures we had seen in advance made it look quite substantial, but in actuality, it was less than 10 feet high.

So, we didn't linger there, and on the recommendation of a local we had chatted with in the park, we decided to go looking for Indian Falls, a short distance north Owen Sound. That proved to be a really big disappointment...we found the parking area and started up the 1 km walking trail toward the falls, only to meet another local who was headed back down from the falls toward his car. He advised us not to bother going any further as the trail was rough and uneven, and there was only a trickle of water passing over the falls due to the mid-summer timing. Apparently the best time to see Indian Falls is in the spring right after the snow melt.

We then decided to back-track to Owen Sound and check in at our reserved lodgings, Pincecrest Motel & Resort, conveniently located right on Hwys. 6 & 10 at the south end of the city – not fancy, but affordable, clean and comfortable. We got settled in and relaxed, with some going for a swim in the large pool, and others just relaxing with a book or the Saturday paper. Shortly before dinnertime, we gathered at outside at the picnic tables for Attitude Adjustment Hour – some snacks and adult beverages – then, after checking online ratings of several local restaurants, we secured a reservation at Shorty's Bar & Grill in the downtown area, which was only a short drive away from our motel.

Upon arrival, we were ushered into our own private dining room, nicely set up for our group of 12. Again, we enjoyed prompt and cheerful service, and had a great meal...the good online ratings hadn't led us astray.

Back at our motel, some turned in early, while others gathered outside in the nice gazebo for a nightcap and chat about our enjoyable day.

On Sunday morning, the group said goodbye to John & Catherine Thomas, who were heading south to Goderich for a Celtic festival, and the rest of us checked-out and went up the street to Tim Hortons for a quick breakfast. Under sunny skies, we then headed southeast back across some of the same scenic Grey County secondary roads, and through Beaver Valley again, where we stopped for some pics at a scenic lookout. We then proceeded to our next waterfall, east of Flesherton, called Hoggs Falls. This is a beautiful waterfall set deep in the woods along the Bruce Trail , and is accessed by a short walk along a very pleasant path. Although the actual falls are only about 22 ft. high, the natural setting made this a very attractive spot.

We then continued east to the hamlet of Eugenia, where Eugenia Falls is located, a short walk from a well-marked parking area on the south edge of the hamlet. This waterfall is the highest one we saw on this trip, with a total drop of about 100 ft., and again, a beautiful sight, so naturally, lots of pics ensued. Our trip then carried on east, through Singhampton on Hwy. 124, to a spectacular "Miata road", which took us south through Glen Huron to Dunedin, and then east to the scenic village of Creemore, which was our reserved lunch stop, at The Old Mill House Pub, located on the main street immediately across from the Creemore Brewery. We had a very nice lunch, and afterwards, everyone browsed the main street shops before we headed for home, back through Stayner and across Horseshoe Valley Road...with a stop at a garden centre south of Elmvale for an ice cream cone and to buy some fresh corn. We continued east, said our CB goodbyes to Cal & Gail Lander as we passed Orillia, and the rest of us headed north on Hwy. 11 back home to Muskoka.

All-in-all, it was a great trip – good weather which allowed top-down driving the whole cruise, lots of very enjoyable Miata-road cruising, scenic countryside, beautiful waterfalls, enjoyable meals, good company and lots of laughs. We all agreed this same trip would make a great "fall colours" overnight cruise.



www.miatasofmuskoka.com/
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miata-of-Muskoka/177889645646804>

We are a small group of Miata enthusiasts that like to explore the twisty back roads and scenic lakes in Canada's premier vacation playground Muskoka!

PICNIC – ALGONQUIN PARK Thurs. July 17th

Cruise Directors: Dave & Diane Phillips

On July 17, 8 cars left the LCBO parking lot in Huntsville for a SCENIC PICNIC CRUISE. After a quick stop at Henrietta's bakery on Hwy 60, we motored on to the Oxtongue Rapids Park for our picnic. As it was Don Nickalls birthday, Maureen provided a birthday cake surprise for dessert. After lunch, we continued up Hwy 60 to RAGGED FALLS PARK for a hike and scenic view of the falls. We then headed back towards Huntsville via the Portage Roads for an Ice cream stop. We were blessed with a sunny day for our picnic and a good time was had by all.

NORANDA TRIP August 16 - 17 th. Only 3 cars attended- the Charletons, the Bauldrys and the Hills. Stopped at Temiskaming Shores for lunch and looked around the train station and a small farmer's market. Arrived in Noranda in the late afternoon and stayed at a very nice hotel in the downtown area of Noranda. After dinner at Pizzadelic (wonderful dinner) we went for a lovely stroll by the lake close to the hotel. We were given a very nice brunch on Sunday morning before heading off home. The drive was very scenic and enjoyable. Laurel

Mark your calendars

**Sunday October 5,
10:00 a.m.**

**MUSKOCA COLOURS
TOUR** This cruise will take place
“rain or shine.”

Our recent weather suggests summer is over and it will soon be winter, ouch. However, we have one more cruise to our season, that being our Annual Fall Colours tour on Sunday October 5th. The route is a typical Muskoka Colours Tour with lots & lots of turns and of course the colours should be close to their peak. An added bonus is the Trillium group is doing their colours tour on the Saturday so Huntsville should be crawling with Miatas!!!

Michael Topping, Cruise Director



**Saturday November 22
5:00 p.m.**

END OF THE YEAR DINNER

Patterson-Kaye Lodge on Golden Beach Rd., Bracebridge is booked for Sat. Nov 22,2014. Cocktails/meeting start at 5:00 p.m., and dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m.
Please R.S.V.P.

