

New Zealand Rover Car Clubs National Rally - Nelson

20-23 February 2026

(report by Eve McCormack)

This Rally is the fourth one Ross and I have 'travelled across the ditch' to attend. We had visited Nelson on previous occasions, but had never spent a lot of time discovering the area. After flying into Christchurch, we hired a car and drove north to spend the night in Hanmer Springs.

Friday 20th saw us on the road to Nelson, a great drive with spectacular scenery across Lewis Pass and surrounding countryside. After checking in to our motel we found Club Waimea for registration and meeting up with Rally participants.

Saturday 21st started with 'Park Up and Judging' at the Classic Car Museum which was originally the site of the old NZMC assembly plant from 1965-1998. The Car Museum itself holds a wonderful display of beautifully preserved veteran and vintage vehicles. The 'Cat Cage' was a standout displaying a great range of Jaguar cars!

A Navigation Rally after lunch took us on a two hour drive in the Waimea Valley and surrounds, through orchards, hop gardens and dairy farms. The afternoon ended with a Driving Skills challenge and barbecue evening meal at the Rover Car Club rooms.

Sunday 22nd gave us the option of several regional drives, however Ross and I decided to take a drive through Nelson and found The Botanical Reserve and bravely took the walk up the hill to the (geographical) Centre of New Zealand. This was quite a steep climb, taking us 40-50minutes for a 20 minute walk, but we made it and the views were spectacular.

After a quiet afternoon - recovering - we attended the Dinner and Prizegiving at Club Waimea. Many thanks to the Committee of the Nelson Rover Car Club for their efforts in putting together a great rally. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and look forward to the opportunity to travel to New Zealand again to meet up with friends old and new.



At the geographical centre of New Zealand, Botanical Reserve, Nelson



Rovers on display at Nelson Rover Car Club House (taken by drone - N.Marshall)



Ross in close discussion with Daryl Stansbury, President of Nelson Rover Car Club, with his Rover P4 with V8 engine he is currently rebuilding.