



Life Membership

Sue Ransom

- awarded 27 July, 2003 -

Every so often it is the privilege of the President and the Committee to pay tribute to someone who has made a special, lasting and memorable contribution to the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria. Today is one of those occasions, and I'm very pleased to announce that the Committee has inducted another person to the ranks of our life members ...

The conferring of Life Membership of this Club is not something which is done lightly. It has gone to only six other people in our 13-year history.

Our Constitution requires that it be awarded only in recognition of "*exceptional service to the Club spanning at least three years or having an effect that will (or has) benefitted the Club for three years*". It also requires a unanimous vote of the Committee in favour before it can be conferred.

This year's recipient is unique because, while her contribution has certainly been "special, lasting and memorable", this person is not well-known to most current members of the Club. Having done an enormous amount of work in the early days, not only to get the Club up and running but to ensure its on-going success, she was then content to step aside and let the Club develop in its own way.

It is typical of this person that she has never sought any personal recognition for her efforts or involvement with the Club; for this reason, many current members are not aware of her contribution. However, members who have been involved with the Club since its inception assure me the Club would not be where it is today without her vision, energy and untiring efforts in support of the Club and its activities.

Sue Ransom, as an employee of Mazda Australia, was responsible for the launch of the MX-5 into Australia, and the results of that launch speak for themselves through the popularity the marque achieved among enthusiasts from the very beginning.

Beyond that, however, Sue put a great deal of her own time and energy into helping to establish the first MX-5 Club of Victoria Inc. in 1990 which, with 167 foundation members, achieved fame as the club with the largest inaugural membership ever to affiliate with CAMS.

After Mazda and this club severed ties in 1991, Sue set about forming the new Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria, which soon developed a strong following of its own.

Sue's support for that club, despite holding no office or even at that stage being a member, was outstanding, and her influence was felt through all aspects of the Club's activities. She helped with the organisation of many events, used her motor sport contacts to arrange many interesting speakers, gave great support to the Club newsletter ... even providing the station wagon to bring the food and drink along on Club runs!

She was also integrally involved with setting up all the other Mazda MX-5 Clubs around Australia, and was responsible for the March 1993 meeting of all club presidents which gave rise to the tradition of NatMeet that is still going strong.

Another part of her role in raising the MX-5 profile saw Sue manage Tasmanian Premier Ray Groom's drive of a red and silver MX-5 in the 1994 Targa Tasmania. When this little car later became Sue's own, she "powered it up" with a supercharger and a MoTeC engine management system, fitted Koni shocks and lowered springs to make it an ideal all-round package. Sadly this car has passed into other hands, and Sue's involvement with the Club in recent times has been limited.

However, there is no doubt that the influence of her time with and support for this Club from its earliest days has extended across the 13 years of its existence. It is not forgotten and is certainly worthy of recognition, however belated.

In the opinion of the President and Committee of the Mazda MX-5 Club of Victoria, Sue more than meets each of the requirements for Life Membership, and I am very pleased to present her with this award today.