This exchange came about as a result of a personal request from Matthew Nidek of FFI. The group’s planned exchange to Brazil was cancelled as a result of the Zika virus, and they were keen to find an alternative exchange for the dates they had arranged. Matthew approached the NZ Field Reps, and we were able to put together a brief exchange with our club, Wairarapa, Taupo and Tauranga – a total of 10 days altogether.

There were eight ambassadors – three couples and two single women. Three Board members (me, Jan Reid and Beth Lough) and Lynnette & Bruce Connon hosted them for three nights, from Wednesday 4th to Saturday 7th May.

We kept the activities fairly low-key to give the ambassadors time to recover from their long journey. The first full day was wet so we took them to Coastlands for a spot of shopping and then all had lunch together at The Woodshed at Kapiti Lights, and then went on a tour of the Chocolate Factory. The following day we all went for a long walk from my home out to Waikanae Beach, and many photos were taken of the wildlife, the native plants, and each other, on the way there and back. The rest of the afternoon was free with hosts. That night we all met again for a fish & chip dinner at Lynnette & Bruce Connon’s, where we enjoyed a singalong of children’s songs which was fun.

On the Saturday the ambassadors went to Southwards Car Museum, where they were joined by the hosts and other members of the Wairarapa FF. After Southwards they came back to my home for a pot luck lunch to which other club members were invited. A total of 33 guests were at the lunch and the food was delicious and plentiful. My grateful thanks to those club members who brought food to the lunch. We also had a set of Giant Jenga which was fun to play with the three teams – Wairarapa crashed the tower and lost the game.

The ambassadors left mid-afternoon with their new hosts to continue their tour.

Personally I found my ambassadors lots of fun to host, and we found time to teach each other Rubbicub and Mahjong, which they really enjoyed. They are keen to host us some time in the future so we could consider this when we look at hosting options for 2018.

Debbie Lattey, ED
9 May 2016

Our guests at Southwards.

*Back row L-R:*
Fenny Gee, Charles Fung, Jessica Chung,
Lily Lin, Jacky Chang, Paul Lin

*Front:*
Nancy Lin, Sunny Lin