

Hop History

The first Beach Hop was held in April 2001 and was established to coincide with the local Rock'n'Roll Club's (Coastal Rockers) birthday hop which was bringing people to the town. A group of interested people got together to put establish a 1 day festival and it is estimated that around 6000 people attended including many from out of town. \$3000 was raised from this event which was donated to the Onemana and Whangamata Surf Life Saving Clubs as well as the Whangamata Volunteer Coastguard.

The 2002 Beach Hop Festival really put Whangamata on the map as the place to be for Rock'n'Roll clubs, Bands, Hot Rods, Classic Cars and Motorcycles. It is estimated that over 10,000 people attended the festival making it one of the largest events in the Coromandel area. Entrants were received from overseas and from as far away as Wellington and Kaitia. The event was featured in a number of national publications and over \$20,000 was raised for water safety organisations in the area.

Beach Hop 2003 was held 25th-27th April 2003 with a police estimate of 25,000 people in attendance. There were a number of well-known celebrities at the Beach Hop including top NZ Fashion Designer Trelise Cooper and once again Gary McCormack travelled all the way up from Christchurch to be the festival MC. Nearly \$30,000 was donated to the water safety benefactors. The event became the largest on the Coromandel Peninsula (by double), the largest speciality car show in New Zealand and the 2nd largest Rock'n'Roll festival in the Southern Hemisphere.

Beach Hop 2004 had 42,000+ people and 1300+ cars with well known celebrities Gary McCormack, Trelise Cooper and Kevin Black in attendance. The Beach Hop has come one of the largest events of its kind in the world!

Beach Hop 2005 saw a huge crowd of over 60,000 people attend. We'll be upfront - the festival was gate crashed by youth who'd come to party. Fortunately no one was injured or serious damage to property. But there was one hell of a mess to clean up. Thankfully the Police and Council were determined that the festival continue - with some changes.

Beach Hop 2006 and those changes included a town wide liquor ban and pre-registration of vehicles. 1200+ vehicle and 45,000 people enjoyed the relaxed family atmosphere at the re-vamped festival. Why only 45,000 people? For the first time in 6 years the festival was affected by rain. Heavy rain! The town was isolated for 5 hours.... But we still had a GREAT time. For the first time 2 Australian bands performed at the Festival - the Retro Rockets and Bobkats.

Beach Hop 2007 saw the fine weather and crowds return. Car entries were on par with previous years. We really stepped up the entertainment with 7 bands from Australia and 13 from New Zealand. Superb weather put everyone in a great mood for one of the best festivals yet.....

Beach Hop 2008 was the first time we gave away a car since 2004 and thanks to Makita a stunning 1959 Pontiac Catalina which now resides at Paul Sloan's house in Hamilton. Massive crowds and over 1300 car entered.

Beach Hop 2009 saw the introduction of a new festival format to reduce congestion and spread the crowds around. Entries were capped at 800 cars for the full festival which was cut back to 4 days with an unofficial "warm Up Party" in Waihi the day before the festival. The festival was moved 1 month earlier and resulted stunning summer weather for the entire fesitval. We also had 3 classic Mustangs which found new homes thanks to Makita - this was the biggest classic car ever and drew the biggest crowds ever.

Festival Statistics

Year

Crowd
Hot Rods / Classic Cars
Bikes
Funds Raised

2001
6,000

100

100
\$3,000

2002
10,000
300
200
\$20,000

2003
25,000
700+ (unofficially 1278)
360
\$30,000

2004
42,000+
1,300+
400+
\$17,000

2005
65,000
1250
200+
\$10,000

2006
45,000
1220* (1st year cars officially counted)
100+
\$10,000

2007
65,000
1167
150+
\$10,000

2008
80,000
1310
100
\$10,000

2009
100,000
800+
180
\$10,000