

# "Dripfeed"

NEWSLETTER OF THE BANKS PENINSULA BRANCH  
OF THE  
VINTAGE CAR CLUB OF New Zealand (INC)

VOLUME 47, No 1 FEBRUARY 2024.

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## **Noggin & Natter: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the Month**

- Noggin 7.30 pm at the Papanui RSA. Upham Room – enter either from 55 Bellvue Ave or the first entrance on the left on Harewood Road (Papanui / Main North Road)
- **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> of February.**
- We look forward to seeing you there. Supper is provided.

## **From the Editor:**

Another year of motoring beckons and at this early stage, the omens are looking most propitious. Like many clubs, we have been worried about falling numbers at our events, but the three events we have run, or been part of have had record entries. The Little River bunfight, The Pom and the VCC field at the Skope meeting at Ruapuna all had wonderful support and the National Veteran rally in Dunedin also had record entries as it celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. "Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated", said Mark Twain, and this sentiment seems to apply to the branch, sometimes thought of perhaps as "we few, we happy few, we band of brothers", to quote Henry the 5<sup>th</sup>. Indignant women members can blame Shakespeare for this shocking omission of their gender rather than the Editor, who couldn't seem to find a more contemporary quote to plagiarise.

Committee members have not been overwhelmed by expressions of interest, to use a current employment phrase, from those wishing to take over the job of Dripfeed editor. It's not too onerous really, just a day or two a month when you have to do some organising and writing, and of course you have the chance to write what you like, something I've always found highly entertaining. Please get in touch with me or any other committee member to find out about the generous employment and remuneration package that is on offer. Time is running out.....

Long time branch member Tony Tripp died recently. Tony and his wife Nicky owned what is known as the Lucy Wills Bentley four and a half litre Van den Plas, a wonderful car that came to New Zealand

with Lucy as a new car in 1929 and remained in her ownership until her death, when it was left to Tony and Nicky. It's had a busy life, sometimes being used on "Snowden," the high country sheep station near Lake Coleridge where Tony and Nicky have lived for many years. It's arguably one of the most original and well used Bentleys in existence. The family still have the original invoice, a special quilted jacket for the radiator that the factory made when they knew it was going to McKenzie country winters, and a quilted petrol tank protector to cope with the shingle roads of the colonies. This marvellous and important car will stay in the family for the next generation to enjoy.

Tony was an ardent Citroen fan, especially the early DS19 model. He told me the story of how when he was a teenager, his family went on a European holiday in 1956. They went to the Earls Court Motor Show and Mr Tripp saw a new DS19 and promptly bought it. They set off from London in this remarkable new car, and got as far as Glasgow, where it broke down, and refused to rise. The Citroen dealer in Glasgow had never seen a DS19 before, so factory technicians from the factory in Paris were sent out to fix the problem while the Tripp family stayed in a hotel at Citroen's expense. They then continued on their holiday round Europe, brought the car back to NZ and owned it, and other DS models for some years. When I arrived at "Snowden" in my D for one of our Opening Runs, Tony was overjoyed, sat in it, made it go up and down etc, and became most nostalgic. Suddenly a voice boomed out from the verandah. "No Tony, you can't buy it!" It was Nicky, laying down the law.

The branch extends its sympathy to Nicky and her family.

The peripatetic Mike Crehan turned up at Ruapuna with a virus. Sadly, this did not mean he had to go into isolation for years, but The Virus, to write the correct title, is in fact a NZ built racing car. I think barn find is the correct term, which is being unfair to the barn. Anyway this remarkable relic (the car), was on display, along with a comprehensive history, written by Neil Wilkinson, one of the constructors. In the late 1960s, a group of enterprising engineering students were inspired by Ron Walton, a well known Christchurch personality who taught Science at Boys High and later hosted a TV science programme. He started a car club at Boys High, which I remember, and a few boys, (Ron Hazlehurst, Ted Sharpe) and mostly him, built a couple of cars called the WASP and the BEE, based very loosely on a Cooper 500. Neil Wilkinson and his university friends were convinced they could do likewise, and in best number 8 wire traditions, did so. After considerable experimentation, it actually went, powered by a BSA 650 Gold Flash, and in 1968 it was timed at 91.3mph at a Canterbury Car Club Sprint. The engine blew up of course so they tried a Lloyd 600 which was a step backwards. When Mike found it, there was a Honda 500/4 jammed in the back. Mike intends to restore The Virus and thus preserve yet another part of our motoring history.

A very emotionally distraught Garry Moore rang me recently, and in between sobs, blurted out some terrible news. One of his children had bought a Citroen!! What was he to do? The Citroen Support Network sprang into action, and soon, trained emergency intervention responders were racing to Warrington Street, and our three step recovery programme was suggested.

Step 1: Take out a sizeable mortgage. Step 2: Buy a large hat and dark glasses Step 3: Drink lots of French wine. Our thoughts and prayers are with Garry and Pam at this difficult time.

## **Future Events.**

### **Sunday March the 10<sup>th</sup>, Summer Gymkhana.**

Remarkably, this is something new, as the committee has decided we should try a new venue during the drier months when we are a little light on events. Steve Aldersley (C Type Replica, A7 Hotrod)

has kindly offered the use of his rolling acres at Loburn. It will be much the same as Hadstock, which it is not replacing, but will perhaps be a drier circuit which will lead to better traction for all. It's at 123 Hodgsons Road, Loburn. There are six letterboxes on the roadside, and go right to the end of the drive, where signs will let you know where to go. We aim to start at 10.00am so get there a bit earlier for form signing etc.

## **West Coast Scenicland Rally, 23<sup>rd</sup> of March**

Details from [westcoast@vcc.org.nz](mailto:westcoast@vcc.org.nz)

## **South Island Easter Rally, Nelson, 29<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> of April**

Details from: [drivingbaby7s@gmail.com](mailto:drivingbaby7s@gmail.com)

## **Past Events.**

### **New Years Day Picnic, Little River.**

The annual bunfight was much more civilised this year, with many clubs observing the thirty year rule, and one or two not coming, which helped ease congestion. As requested, most moderns parked on the road, so there was a bit more of the just the right crowd but no crowding feel. There were 285 cars, and perhaps about twelve proper vintage cars, so all is not lost. The weather was about right too, so all in all, a pleasant day in the country and a positive start to the motoring year. Many of the people I spoke to regard it as the best event on the motoring calendar.

### **The Pomeroy Trophy.**

This was the best attended Pom ever, with forty five eager punters turning up at Ruapuna to do battle. There were lots of new entrants driving a vast range of cars, and crucially, many of them were young, as in under thirty, which for some of us, is extremely young. It was a bit of a family affair too, with three Dacombs and three Kears. I had a great time as Suitcase Monitor, firm but fair, mostly. Thanks to the RATEC timing equipment, that part of the day was trouble free and we finished the entire event with twenty minutes to spare. Accurate lap counting is still something of an imperfect science and there has been a suggestion that we use transponders next year.

The braking test continues to be graveyard of expectation, and there were some wonderful tyre flat spotting moments to be seen and smelt. The wiggle woggle caught out a few too, as it tightens up at the end, but for most the twenty minute reliability trial is the highlight, especially for new entrants, as they find out a lot about their car and themselves.

Some standout entries were Jeremy Evans in his 1959 Bentley S1, which went remarkably well, rolling majestically through the turns like an ocean liner in a force ten gale. But in terms of sheer bulk, the Bentley was dwarfed by the 1965 Pontiac Bonneville, driven by Harry Dawber. Known as The Aircraft Carrier, given that the boot could carry a brace of Minis, this beast was raced by Harry's father Mark back in the Good Old Days, and then as now went remarkably well, with drivers of the smaller cars reporting a shadow across the sun as this vast monolith approached. It's had front discs and competition pads fitted, so it's not an original car, but Harry reported 115mph down the straight.

Kevin Manchester was driving a rare 1987 Renault 21 Turbo. Paul McCulla was in his Peugeot 205GTi Rally car, Thomas Stephenson was in a Peugeot 306 XSi, I was in my Citroen CX GTi Turbo 2, Andy Bain was in a Citroen BX16v, and so the glories of the French motor industry were on display. The Jared Dacombe DeLorean, with its French motor performed faultlessly, and David Whitfield in his rare and eccentric DKW 3=6 impressed many. Derek Milne was in a Jaguar Mk 2 3.8 with D type replica wheels and Coombes modifications, and Phil Benveniste was there with his immaculate Jaguar XK140. There were Loti, MX 5s, E Types, a Capri, a Spitfire, a Sierra Cosworth, a TR3A, the list goes on and on.

I hadn't had my CX on the track before and in retribution for Waterloo, enjoyed passing the XK140 and the Mk 2 3.8, as did Andy Bain in his very fast Citroen BX16v. However, I couldn't catch the Bonneville or the DeLorean. Must try harder.

The winner of the Pomeroy trophy was Craig Pidgeon in his delightful Sunbeam Lotus, and the winner of Class B was Paul McCulla in his rocket ship Peugeot 205 GTi. The Sharpe Family Spirit of the Day Award went to Jeremy Evans in his graceful Bentley S1. This really was one of our most successful Poms ever, with everyone behaving themselves, and the Grinometer was off the scale.

Many thanks to Craig Keenan, Ron Hassel, Michael Pidgeon, Pat and Colleen O'Connell, Elizabeth Keenan, Louise Russell, Brian Smith, Digby Gemmell, and Tracey and Mark Barrett for making it happen.

Photos – thanks to John McDonald

### **Ruapuna, Skope Classic.**

Another record entry of twenty seven cars in the Murray Maxwell Vintage Field. Murray was a long time Austin 7 Supercharged owner, driver, tweaker, optimist, delirious enthusiast and all round lovely man, and on the rare occasions when he and Gordy Routledge had their little buckets of bolts going well, they were unstoppable. I remember Murray passing me far too easily on the downhill straight at the Dunedin Street Race many years ago when I was racing my modified Citroen Big15. As he glided past he gave that universal salute of respect that drivers give each other in that situation, the one that Winston Churchill used, but with a bit more upward movement.

However, back to this year and as always the Barretts in their Lotus 23s carried all before them. Graeme Hamilton had the ACE 111 really humming, and he and David Owen in the C Type Replica had some great battles. It's always a thrill to watch two skilled drivers having a good dice. Brian Reed from Blenheim was in the famous 260M Zephyr for the first time and it was great to see this important car racing again. Mark McFaddyn, the previous owner was given a drive at lunchtime and didn't stop grinning for ages. Neil Kay in the Mallock was going very well, as was Doug Moody, getting a works drive in the surprisingly fast Bello, given that it's 1600cc. Des Ward had Peanut, the A35 that's been raced for many decades, going well, fast enough to hold off Jared Dacombe in the Nash Metropolitan, often known as the Flying Kelvinator, or the Tissue Box.. Mike Crehan had a works drive in the Mk1 Shadetree Special, it's first time out in eleven years, and Tony Steer in the Terrapin had a good meeting too. Bill Cowie had a trouble free run in the Spangeralli Holden, as did wife Maureen in the Mk 2 Shadetree Special.

This was Peter Leversedge's final Skope meeting in his mighty Ford V8. Peter has been racing since 1962, and has had great success with his Neil Stuart built V8 Special, racing at the Nelson Beach races, innumerable hillclimbs and sprints, Speedway, and of course Ruapuna. The V8 is extremely fast, especially down the straight, and is still able to pass younger cars with great ease.

Rob Cope-Williams, long time Ruapuna commentator, competitor, and general repository of Ruapuna knowledge since day one has presented a trophy to the branch in memory of his father Bill Cope, an

Englishman who raced in the UK after the war with some of the great names: Sammy Davis, Freddie March etc. He always had slower cars, drove to and from the circuit, but enjoyed himself immensely, so Rob's trophy is for a competitor in a road registered car who fulfilled some of those criteria. The inaugural winner was David Owen, C Type Jaguar Replica. David dedicated his win to his parents Geoff and Shirley, who were there. Geoff, one of the foundation members of the branch is a talented driver who successfully raced a wide variety of vehicles for well over fifty years. Clearly, that talent has passed to David, to whom we extend our congratulations, and we extend our thanks to Rob for his generous gesture.







