

"Dripfeed"

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

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Noggin & Natter: 2nd 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 11th of May.**
- We look forward to seeing you there. Supper is provided.

From the Editor:

After another very quiet month, it's a very positive sign that we can welcome a number of new members, some of whom are very young. So welcome to Andrew McLennan, 73 Rover P6 and a 65 Chevrolet Impala, Gary Prescott, 49 Vauxhall Velox, 70 Vauxhall Victor, the very young Courtney Chamberlain, 28 Austin 12/4, 57 Jaguar Mk 8, and equally young Logan Brown, co owner of the Jaguar Mk 8 with Courtney, 39 MG TB, 48 MG TC, 36 MG SA, and a 57 MGA. The Mk 8 Jaguar was not found in the depths of one of the Chamberlain sheds, but was bought by Courtney and Logan. I was on a fairly long run with them recently and it performed faultlessly, give or take a pint or two of oil, which is of course, part of the very advanced Jaguar self lubricating system.

There were a number of other Jaguars on the aforementioned run, known as the Oddball Rally. It was started some twenty five years ago by Messers Chamberlain, Fox, Trolove, Moody and other assorted reprobates, most of whom had a Jag of some sort. It happens most years, and the aim is to drive in convoy as fast as possible to a distant destination or two, stay the night then repeat. All great fun. I got invited along about twenty years ago as the token trendy leftie tofu munching French car owner, and a splendid time is guaranteed for all. It's sort of like Irishman, in that you don't want to be the winner because you've got to organise the next one. For the sake of diversity, there were a couple of 60s Mercedes and a Ferrari along this year, as well as an Aston Martin and a very nice Suffolk SS Replica. Each morning, on the motel parking areas, all the Jags had their hoods up to add oil, and as we left, you could see where they'd been. I think it's some sort of territorial ritual, to leave a calling card of a black oily variety.

Basil McCoy our Northern Ireland correspondent has sent me some more copy from his local VCC magazine, with the usual enviable variety of cars. Basil does a lot of research about early racing events in Northern Ireland and he recently wrote of a shoebox full of material he had been given. I rather liked the following excerpt: "Helen Irvine was a very spirited driver and at a race meeting at Kirkistown, while driving her P Type MG, she tipped the car over while coming out of the hairpin. She fell out, where upon Alan Shattock, close behind in his Norton engined single seater Leprechaun Special, ran over her helmeted head. She was whisked to hospital, and was fortunately unscathed. She is still with us to this day."

Gavin Bain has owned a very rare 1927 Voisin C11 Sulky for twenty five years. This very unusual car was new in New Zealand, and bought by Christchurch optician George Sevicke- Jones, who had premises in The Square. He owned it for many years, and after he sold it, it went to a North Canterbury owner, then ended up in Invercargill in a rather sorry state, especially after the garage in which it was stored was inundated by the Oreti River. A failed tow start didn't do much for it either. Gavin had been keen to buy the car for some time, but the previous owner was loath to sell. Nothing daunted, Gavin kept up annual contact, and when the old bloke died, the Voisin came up for tender. Although Gavin's wasn't the highest bid, the family accepted it because Gavin promised to keep it in the country and eventually restore it.



The restoration process is well under way, and given the Voisin's full immersion in the Oreti, it's a very complex and costly challenge. Avions Voisin started out in the aviation industry, but after WW1 turned to car manufacture, designing his cars in a very different way from mainstream marques. The complexity of his

cars meant that they were not commercially able to withstand the depression, and one of his leading designers, Andre Le Febvre went to Citroen, where he was responsible for the revolutionary Traction Avant. The Voisin C 11 has a two point three six cylinder sleeved motor, as were Willys Knight, Daimler, Minerva etc, and a conventional three speed gearbox. Body restoration is well under way, and the body style is known as a Sulky. Last week was a momentous one for Gavin and the staff at Auto Restorations. The motor has been completely rebuilt, and with suitable fanfare, was fired up. It ran perfectly, so a giant step forward in the restoration process. Head to the link below on you tube to see the engine running.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wswvGs0IK0&t=324s>

When we were chatting afterwards, Gavin bravely revealed a well kept secret. When a young and clearly foolish young man, he owned an Austin 7 Ruby. Yes, really. He recounted the story of taking his then girlfriend back to her family home in Sumner one night when, surprise surprise, the Ruby ceased forward motion. Gavin's mechanical skills were no greater then than they are now, so the long walk home to Sumner began. When the young couple finally arrived at Sumner, many hours after curfew, the girlfriend's father was not impressed, suspected Gavin of all sorts of immoral behaviour with his darling daughter (probably justified) and told him never to see her again. Given that the ex girlfriend's family went on to become the first surfboard manufacturing company in Christchurch; Gavin's life could have been very different. If the dreaded A7 hadn't broken down, things may well have progressed swimmingly, Gavin might have become part of the Surfboard empire, and have spent the ensuing years driving round Sumner and Taylor's Mistake in his VW Kombi, looking like a smaller version of Peter Croft. For want of a nail etc etc. There's a moral there somewhere....

Future Events

AGM 11th of May, Papanui RSA 7.30pm.

Please come along to support the committee, offer suggestions, and even stand for office! Ron is standing down from secretarial duties, after many years of outstanding service, but will still look after the competition side of our events. Tracey Barrett, after prolonged pestering, has bravely agreed to take over the secretarial role, and is helping to show what an inclusive branch we are. As Tom Scott said in one of his brilliant cartoons, all we need is a gay albino whale to join the committee and we've got the diversity issue sorted.

Levels CRMC Meeting 13th of May.

National Commercial Rally, Wanganui, Labour Weekend

Contact Wanganui @vcc.org.nz

The Hadstock Gymkhana, 21st of May.

One of our great events, which now have two enormously prestigious trophies to be competed for. Three and four wheeled vehicles slug it out for the much admired Cynthia Trophy, named in honour of one of our hosts Cindy Chamberlain, on whose farm this titanic struggle takes place. Our much more recent trophy, the Johnny Angel Trophy (named after host John Chamberlain), is really the Anti John Foster trophy, as on his Triumph 500 motorbike (I refuse to try and spell the model), John kept winning, mostly by putting his foot down when cornering, thus giving him a totally unfair advantage. The more competitive four wheeled entrants complained, so a new trophy, of extreme tastefulness was made. John won it, (he was the only entrant), but last year it was snatched from his grasp by Will Dawber, on a Yamaha of some sort. So this year should be a battle of youth verses experience in the two wheeled department, with a third entrant looking likely.

So do come along for a very entertaining day and see if George Kear in his Mini Cooper can hold onto Cynthia yet again. To get there, turn into the Leeston Road from Springston, then right into Bethels Road just before the Selwyn Bridge. Proceed for about 2km until you see the VCC sign on your left, and turn into the paddock. Scrutineering at 9.00am for those without a WOF. We hope to start sometime before 10.00am

Night Trial, 24th of June

Starting at Northwood Super Centre. Meeting at 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start.

Balcairn Trial, 9th of July.

Details in the next issue.

Rallye Monte Carlo, Show Weekend 17th – 19th of November.

Due to popular demand, this great and classic event is on again. The last Monte was in 2021 and had a record entry, which we hope will be repeated this year. Make sure you book your accommodation at Akaroa early, as motel and Air B&B are sometimes hesitant to book for one night at a popular weekend.

We have tweaked the rules and towns quite a bit, as they were set when the club only catered for cars up to 1960, and a majority of the cars entering were thus older and slower. Now it's too easy to win in a relatively modern and much faster car, and we need to recognise the greater effort required by older cars to get the town points. Speed limits have changed too. So if you have an older and slower car, this could be your moment of glory. And if you have a newer and faster car, prepare to drive immense distances. James Palmer, one of the original organisers, has devoted a good deal of time to re thinking the rules and regulations, as under the old rules there were really only one or two ways to get your maximum points and it was becoming somewhat predictable. The changes that the sub committee have devised should definitely help the older slower cars, and also make experienced competitors rethink how they approach it. It will be all about cunning and ingenuity, and reading the rules carefully, rather than driving flat out for hours and hours. I hope you've seen the ad in Beaded Wheels with an early bird saving of \$25 if you enter by the 31st of July. We already have a lot of interest, with the intrepid MGA team from the North Island registering their intent. Perhaps this year they will have the correct headlamp bulbs, and a lot more bribe money

National Veteran Rally, Dunedin 25th – 29th January 2024

Contact Trevor Kempton at natvet2024@gmail.com

Past Events. The Plains Run.

A small exclusive group assembled at the Christchurch Stadium ready to tackle the long straight roads of the Canterbury Plains. Quite an international flavour really with cars from France, Germany, England, and Japan. Craig and Elizabeth were in their MK 2 Jag of dubious antecedents. Supposedly

a 3.4 manual, it seems as if it might have been an automatic of the 2.4 variety at some stage, as some identifying numbers have mysteriously vanished. However it's got some gleaming go faster wire wheels now, and if it ever gets a much needed paint job, will become one of the many Mk 2s with extensive competition history. The run meandered round backroads to Lincoln and environs, but en route to Rakaia, things started to become confused. When Michael Pidgeon and I drove the route a few days earlier, we felt we had it worked out fairly well, but somehow instructions were slightly less than accurate and the Keenan Jag and the Rickard Morgan drove vainly up and down a very muddy farm track while trying to work it all out, something the gleaming wire wheels did not appreciate. I was following Pat and Colleen O'Conner in their MGA, and we got lost in quite an original way, but did manage to get to Rakaia, where we turned left after the bridge and plunged into that vast swathe of the Canterbury Plains containing the bustling metropolises of Dorie, Kyle and Pendarves. There's a huge area of land between SH 1 and the coast, and we traversed a good portion of it. The O'Conner's managed to get lost again, but we eventually ended up at Bruce McIlroy's emporium in Ashburton. The Great Man himself was away on a Roller rally, so we were showed around by Anthony and as always it's an impressive spectacle. Highlights were seeing the Lucy Wills/Tony Tripp 4 and a half, as well as Richard Moody's 3/4 and a half, ex Bob Beardsley and Brian Wright. Nearly finished was another 3/4 and a half, the bits of which were sold to John Chamberlain by Gavin Bain some years ago. It now has a racing style body and will look pretty impressive when it's finished.

We had lunch outside the inner temple, picked up our crumbs and set off for the Ashburton Plains Railway and Historical Museum Precinct at Tinwald. It's far bigger and comprehensive than I expected, very much like a junior Ferrymead, with historical buildings and machinery, the emphasis being on farm machinery. There were fire engine rides, a train ride, and a generally pleasant atmosphere. All good fun.

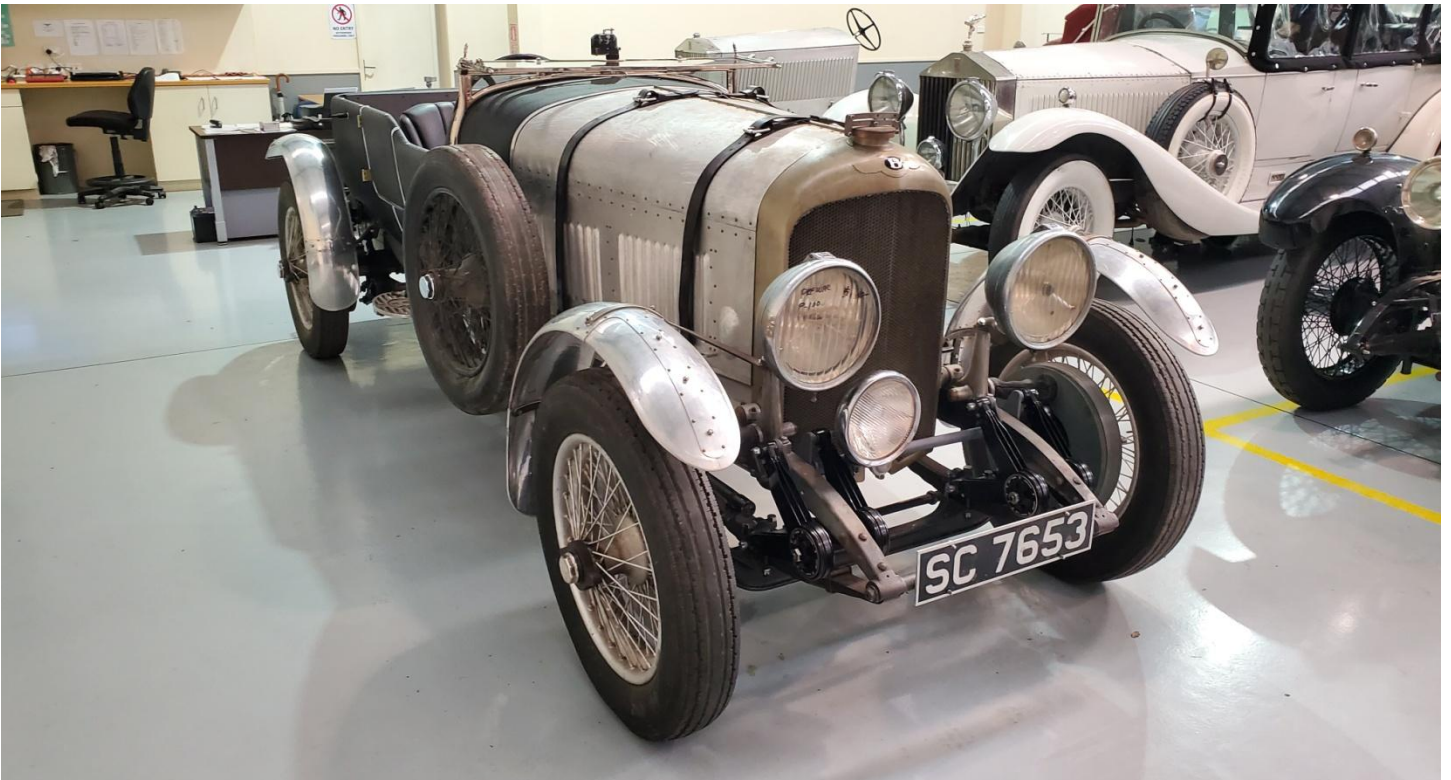
However, of the seven cars that came on the run, only two were not committee members, and as this is now about the third run we have organised that has had very low numbers participating, perhaps this sort of event is no longer relevant to members' needs. Michael Pidgeon puts a great deal of time and effort into thinking of interesting new destinations that we hope will appeal to members as a reason to drive their cars a decent sort of distance, which is what the branch is meant to be about, but if the support is not there, perhaps it's time to stop bothering. An AGM topic perhaps.?



Cricklewoods finest



Contrasts



Chamberlain's bitsa