

"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 12th of October.**
- We look forward to seeing you there. Supper is provided.

From the Editor:

Another Swapmeet has come and gone, and I do hope that some of you did manage to find the widget you've always been looking for, as you navigated your way through the rows of detritus. For many of course, it's the social highlight of their year, a chance to drink too much, sleep in their car or a decaying caravan or motorhome, and then wander round with a massive hangover, complaining loudly. Louise Russell always buys her tomato plants there. I find the display section of cars the most interesting, as there are often some real pearls amongst the swine, and the same can be said of the cars for sale section. I did like the number plate on an Austin 7 in the A7 club display: "It Goes". To a workshop I suppose.

I was fortunate enough to meet Morrie Bone, who's been racing assorted Anglias since they were first produced, and is still going strong. His fastest Anglia could get to 130mph on the back straight at Wigram, and given the age of his present car, he would be eligible to race in our VCC class. I told him he was far too fast for everyone, with the exception of the Stanton Corvette, and that the Barretts would sulk if he beat them.

I have a very favourite motoring book, which I often consult when looking for some light entertainment. No, not The Eagle Book of Motoring from 1963, but a much more modern tome. It's called "Total Lemons, One Hundred and Eleven Heroic failures of Motoring", by Tony Davis, an Australian muttering rotter of some note. There's the usual list of suspects: Edsel, Amphicar, De

Lorean, Stag, Marina, TR7, Leyland P76, Jensen-Healey, Triumph Mayflower, Jag XJ220, Allegro, Fiat Croma, Alfasud, Nash Metropolitan, Austins Freeway, Kimberley and Tasman, Panthers 6 and Rio, NSU Ro80 and so on and so on. All very funny. Some examples: "When an owner stands by his Triumph Stag, it's usually because he can't get the door open". "Beware any vehicle that owners defend with the phrase, Yes but it has lots of character. When those fateful words are uttered you know it's a Jaguar or Alfa Romeo that is being discussed and some poor owner is throwing buckets of money into a black hole." "Alfa Sud, the car that gave rust a bad name" The Triumph TR7, "a particularly nasty lemon", the Jensen- Healey "one of the shoddiest cars ever built". All fine objective journalism.

The infamous Austin's Allegro's square steering wheel (yes really) was called a "Quartic logical steering device". And the Leyland P76 was called that because that was the code number on the back of Lord Stokes' (BMC boss) watch. It might have been more helpful if Stokes had taken note of some of the other terms on the back of his watch such as "dust proof" and "water-resistant". And did you know that the humble Hillman Hunter was remade in Iran as a Peykan from 1967 until 2005? They were famously unreliable" What do you call a Peykan with brakes? Customised. What's on the last page of a Peykan Owners Manual? A bus timetable".

The mighty and totally over hyped Ford Edsel ("the first truly new car from Detroit in 20 years") was unveiled on a Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby live TV spectacular in 1957. It even had its own song:

We want our friends to understand
When they observe our car
That we're as smart and successful and grand
As we like to think we are.

The Edsel lasted for just over two years in production, and is thought to have cost Ford \$250,000,000.

Perhaps the A7 register might like to have the above ditty as their club motto?

But first prize goes to that well known marque, the Lightburn. This South Australian washing machine manufacturer made just the one model, the Zeta, in 1963. It was made as a station wagon, but didn't have a rear door. To engage reverse, you had to stop the engine and restart it. It was powered (?) by a Villiers two stroke of 300cc which transmitted this throbbing power to the front wheels via a chain. As Wheels magazine wrote, of the Lightburn Zeta, "Performance is virtually nil". Given that it came out at the same time as the Mini, sales totalled 343 over the two year production run. Some can be found in car museums.

For those of you who like to receive this noble publication in printed form, you need to be aware that postage costs have risen alarmingly, so from next year there will be an extra cost involved.

At the moment it costs us \$5 a posted copy.

The entrepreneurial Don Gerard has created these very smart woven badges, 40 x 65mm, that are perfect for race overalls, cap, polo shirt etc. They are \$8.50 each or \$16 for two, with \$2 p and p. Free collection of orders from any of our race meetings.

Payment to our branch account SBS 03 1355 0611198 00, add name and "Labels" for reference.



Future Events

National Commercial Rally, Wanganui, Labour Weekend

Contact Wanganui @vcc.org.nz

Wigram Revival, Ruapuna, 27th -29th of October.

If you are going to be a spectator, and we hope you are, and you have a pre 1980 vehicle and are a branch member, you can park your car in the usual display area adjacent to the VCC paddock, on the left as you come in the main gate.

Hawkswood , 12th of November.

Note change of date from the 5th.

For those that aren't aware, Hawkswood is an area north of Cheviot where a sprint on a sealed and closed bit of the old SH1 is held. It's run by the Country Gents Motoring Club, our branch and RATEC, (Rallies and Trials Enthusiasts Club). There are certain rules and regulations in terms of eligibility, so if you are interested, contact Tracey our secretary to find out the details. It's also a great spectator event, with some of the cars in the paddock even more impressive than the entrants. It's a few km north of Cheviot on SH1, and is clearly signposted, so do come along and enjoy a very entertaining day. The local Lions club do a Sausage Sizzle too.

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

As at this week, we have thirty three entries, an all time record. They range from the sublime, a Citroen 2CV, to the ridiculous, a Rolls Royce Silver Shadow, and there is a decidedly cosmopolitan flavour, with cars from England, France, Italy, the USA, Japan, the North Island, and even Australia. Mate! All are welcome of course, and hitherto badly dressed entrants assure me that dinner suits have been organised already. And we have sixteen entrants in the Concours De Confort, another record. One year the Palmer Equipe managed to have a pristine vintage toilet somehow affixed to the family UNIC thus setting a high standard that might perhaps be exceeded this year. Mimi and I will be judging the Concours de Confort, and early bribes can be delivered via courier to our home address.

Paul Coghill, a Monte veteran, has already been exposed as offering bribes to the all important officials. You might recall that there was a \$25 discount for early entries, but Paul decided to increase his chances of winning by actually adding on \$25 to his entry fee. And he runs a successful business!! I know! If he and David Hunter, in their unreliable Jags want to win the team prize, they will need to offer a great deal more than \$25, as bribes have to be shared equally amongst all the organisers.

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

Contact Trevor Kempton at natvet2024@gmail.com

National Vintage Only Rally, 5 -7th of February 2024, Blenheim.

Contact marlborough@vcc.org.nz for more details

The Pomeroy Trophy, 10th of January 2024, Ruapuna.

Can “the shoddiest car ever built”, in the hands of the strong silent Mike Crehan, win again? Or will he be pipped at the post by the “tail heavy, noisy, slow, fragile, leaky” De Lorean? The gull wing doors on the De Loreans had dodgy electrics, so occupants were often forced to climb out through the rear hatch. Perhaps Jared can show us how it’s done. But do put the date in your calendar and come along and support what is one of our great events. Our recent members’ survey indicated that the competitive events were the ones that were popular, so come along.

Past Events.

The Opening Run.

Twelve cars and their occupants met at a cafe in Cavendish Road in darkest Redwood, where we were graced by the presence of branch seniors Ellis Shear and Ron Hasell. Some new faces and cars too, an encouraging signs. Michael Pidgeon had set an entertaining route through hitherto unknown parts of Christchurch, before we headed towards the plains en route to Homebush. The weather, alas, was not on our side and at one stage there was a thunderous downpour. Modern cars all have flow through ventilation, but Craig and Elizabeth Keenan, in their lovely Talbot, discovered that it had flow through irrigation, it spite of being a saloon, the top of the windscreen being similar to the Sutherland Falls. I expect that Brenda Yates in her early Land Rover had the same experience, but she would never admit it.

Homebush is of course the home of the Deans family since 1851, and the current custodians, Crispin and Fiona Deans and their children were very welcoming. There was a great variety of displays in terms of historical items, but for many the extensive gardens were the highlight. Some of the trees and rhododendrons were planted in the 1850s, and are some of both the tallest and oldest in the country. It really was a privilege to visit what is arguably the seat of Canterbury arable farming. Many thanks to Michael Pidgeon for plotting and planning a very stimulating day.







Photos courtesy of Michael Pidgeon.