

# SIDE CURTAINS

The magazine of the  
ROTORUA VINTAGE AND  
VETERAN CAR CLUB

APRIL 2020



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[www.rvvcc.org.nz](http://www.rvvcc.org.nz)

# BBQ Run, March 2020



# SIDE CURTAINS - April 2020

The magazine of the ROTORUA  
VINTAGE AND VETERAN CAR CLUB

**Clubrooms:** Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd, Rotorua

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**Email:** rotorua@vcc.org.nz

**Website:** www.rotoruvintagecarclub.org.nz

**Vero Insurance:** Phone 0800 658 411 and quote your VCC membership number

**Club Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday of month (except January), 7.15pm for 7.30pm start

## OFFICERS

**Chairperson** - David Tomlinson

**Secretary** - Dennis Whimp  
Ph 021 731 678

**Treasurer** - Terry Fitzpatrick

**Club Captain** - vacant

**Asst. Club Captain** - vacant

### Committee

Bob Mackay

Terry Wadsworth

Ronald Mayes

Kevin Scott

Lois Thompson

Neville Harper

**Mid Weekers** - Bob Mackay

**Side Curtains Editor** - David Tomlinson

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**Beaded Wheels** - Ronald Mayes

**Librarian** - Dennis Kenny

**Asst Librarian** - Roger Couchman

**Asst Librarian** - John Kirkland

**Cards/Flowers** - Doreen Green

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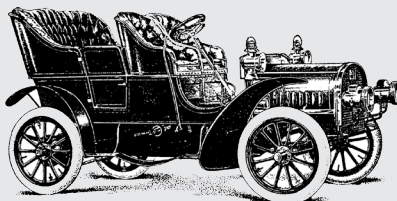
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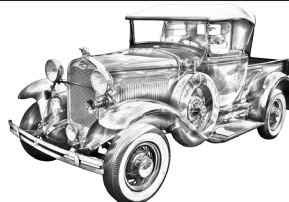
### Cover Photos

Front - The Judds at Art Deco, Napier

Back - Vanden Plas Princess 1100

## CLUB CAR PHOTOS

If you want your club car photo on the clubroom wall then get in touch with Doug Green, and he will organise a time and place for a photo shoot. It would be good if we could have all member's car photos on display.



# Chairman's Report

## - March 2020

*by David Tomlinson*

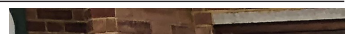


What a difference a month makes... As I write this, barely three weeks ago I was at the Brit-Euro car show in Auckland, having crammed so much already into 2020. Now, Fleur and I are stuck at home until further notice with 3 kids, and my business locked up, and to date the only option to pay the bills is to borrow money and pay it back with interest!

While some branches, including our own, considered what we should or could continue to do or otherwise, the bombshell Level Four lockdown has seen virtually all social activity banned nation-wide, and a consequence has also seen the postponement of the Vero Festival planned for January 2021 in Taranaki.

Our branch has had to postpone the Swap Meet, the Sulphur City Rally and our AGM. The latter will mean our annual accounts will likely have to be dealt with later in the year, or by electronic correspondence and then filed late. It may be difficult to hold a Swap Meet this year, or the Sulphur City Rally, but to date the Stock Car Club have been very helpful about the possibility of holding the Swap Meet later in the year. It may also be we have a scaled down version of the Sulphur City Rally on a normal club weekend run too.

I missed both our March club night and BBQ Run while Fleur and I spent a few days in Australia for our first wedding anniversary. We returned to self-isolation and were managing it well but after day 8 of the 14 required the lockdown came into



effect. Seeing the photo of the Lincoln car in the club rooms for March club night made me glad I was not one of the people helping marshall it in and out that night. By all accounts club night and the BBQ Run were enjoyed by those that made it along.

We were going to hold our branch committee meeting much later than planned due to my self-isolation and other absentee members, but with the lockdown we approved accounts by email and we will communicate that way for the foreseeable future.

We had planned to print this issue of Side Curtains too, as it will likely be the last issue before we resume normal club activities again. But with our printers closed, no chance. We will do our best to keep in touch with members through email, our Facebook page and our branch website. Beyond that all we can do is hope you all keep safe during these troubling times and that things get back to a semblance of normality very soon.

On top of all this, my driver's licence will likely expire during the lockdown, so I wonder where that leaves me for driving when its over, and insurance-wise?!



Top: Ford Thunderbird

Right: Chev Bel Air

I will leave you with a couple of pics of cars we saw by our hotel in Caloundra, Queensland.



# FROM THE SECRETARY

by  
*Dennis Whimp*



## Membership Lists

I have received an email from VCC National with the following electronic lists that were current at the end of January:

Membership list by Surname order with vehicles owned (485 pp)

Membership list in Branch order with surnames & vehicles (457 pp)

Membership list in vehicle manufacturer order (697 pp)

They are not huge electronic files. If anyone has nothing to do for the next 4 weeks, they give a fascinating insight into vehicles similar to yours and how big the sheds must be to house some of the collections. Email me and I can send you a copy by reply. Note that these lists are confidential to the club and must not be circulated outside of our members.

## Clubhouse concreting

The excavation at the rear of the clubhouse to remove all the accumulated detritus and the concreting to channel all the water from the rear out to the carpark is now complete. It worked really well as expected during a recent deluge. The concrete is from the rear wall of the clubhouse to the bank retaining wall and has really tidied up that area. There will still be heaps of oak leaves and acorns accumulating in the area but we can get our lawnmowing contractor to blow them all out

to the carpark. Council trees, council problem. Incidentally, I have been chasing the Council up to check the oak trees for decay. They tell me that they have now checked over 6000 trees and removed many of the dangerous and decaying ones including those above the deerstalkers building next door. The ones behind our building are not on the priority list.

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Morris Minor Van - Brooklands Museum, UK



1934 Railton Terraplane - Brooklands Museum, UK

## March Car In The Room - Warren Harris' 1978 Ford Lincoln Continental Town Car *by Dennis Whimp*

We have had some big cars in the clubrooms as part of the car in the room, but Warren's immaculate 1978 Lincoln Town Car must take the prize for the longest. And probably the widest as we only had less than a couple of inches to spare at the columns. We were all impressed with Chris Staines' 1959 Cadillac but the Lincoln at 5.92 metres is 22cm longer than the Cadillac.

When Warren joined us around 5 years ago he had a tidy 1924 Maxwell, but he told us that getting under it was becoming a problem. About 20 years ago he had owned another early 1970s Lincoln Continental but had nowhere to store it undercover so sold it to a Westside friend Chris (not Staines). Chris now has five of these 1970s Lincolns. Warren heard about 18 months ago that Motorsport Vehicle Importers had just brought in an immaculate black 1978 Lincoln Town Car from Japan with only 55,000 miles on the clock, so the Maxwell became a deposit on the Lincoln. The Maxwell is still for sale if anyone wants it. And so it was that Chris with all the Lincolns drove the car to the club night. He and Warren gave a very entertaining and informative talk.

The 1978 Lincoln Town car was the longest car that Ford has ever made (not counting the stretched limos). It was made to rival the Rolls-Royce and this model had a Rolls-Royce style radiator that was almost the identical size. The seats are especially plush leather and very comfortable. It has coil springs in all 4 corners and epitomises the big American floater. It was a leader in safety, having ABS disc brakes and a



front radar that automatically braked the vehicle if it was going to run into the back of the car in front.

This car has conventional hinged 4 doors, not like the models of the 1960s which had rear suicide doors. It was a 1961 Lincoln Continental Presidential convertible that John Kennedy was assassinated in. If you want to see an identical town car, watch the Netflix film, *The Irishman*. The car they do the road trip in is almost identical to Warren's but without the extra plush upholstery.



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**Warrants Of Fitness during lockdown - NZ Herald, 25 March 2020**

“Insurance companies will still cover you for a crash if your warrant of fitness runs out during the lockdown period, as long as your vehicle doesn't have an existing safety issue. But it's still not clear whether police will ticket people for driving without a WOF.”

## BBQ RUN, 15 March 2020 *by Ronald Mayes*

This run promised to be something different! It was the first one organised by Robyn Skelton and Paul Wollaston, with help from his son Gene. Robyn's parents Bill and Adelai knew nothing about the plan but they were at the start with their trusty Austin 7. It even began at a different location: the clubrooms carpark would have been full because of another event, so we met under the trees in Long Mile Road.

13 cars and their crews attended, there were several pages of instructions and lots of questions. Off we went and perhaps the hardest part of the 1 1/2 hour drive was at the start: the right turn into a very busy Tarawera Road. Up the hill and around Lake Okareka to a checkpoint by the Blue Lake. What is painted on the water tank we had passed and who was the artist? Then the navigator had to throw a soft toy into a bucket, how many missed?

Back into town and reading the instructions a few steps ahead had us in the right lane for the turn into Fenton Street. Just before that, though, the question about the business on the left: spell Pak 'n Save wrong and you lose a point. Around the lakefront and on to Kawaha Point and over to Western Heights. We had to count the speed bumps on one road but there were many, many more - glad we took the automatic Triumph as its track is just too narrow to straddle most of them at normal speed.

On we went and we stopped to glance at our first house on the corner of Homedale Street and Beryl Place, then on to

Pukehangi Rd (with a very rough patch near the bridge, where it had been dug up prior to rebuilding.) Finally up to Tihiotonga and parking in the reserve behind Robyn and Paul's home. More questions included what is the name of that black building in town which we could see? It was the Pullman Hotel. Many seem to have forgotten or never knew of George Mortimer Pullman's contribution to luxury rail travel. His descendants would probably know nothing of this hotel, it is owned by the Chow brothers of Wellington who have built up a large inventory of buildings, financially helped by profits from rather infamous "gentlemens' clubs" there.

The barbecue was fired up. Smoke from it rivalled that from the steam locomotives hauling Pullman trains but the sausages and steaks were cooked to perfection and everyone enjoyed their early meal. Robyn read out all the answers to the rally questions, with either groans of "Should have known that" or smug "We knew that one!" from the participants. There had to be tie-breaker to separate first from second: one driver wore his club member's name badge, second place went to he who did not.

Well done, Robyn, Paul and Gene, great fun and thoroughly enjoyed by all!

Taking part were: Terry F. and Sandra (BMW), Geoff and Christine (modern), Ralph (Buick), Kevin and Maryann (Ford V8), Maurie and Shirley, Terry W. and Christine (Holdens), Bill and Adelai (Austin 7), Les (Chev. utility), Ken and Lynn (modern, but it is a Jaguar!), Bob and Pat, David and Jill, John and Jenny, and Ronald and Gloria (Triumphs.)

## ANOTHER GRUMBLE - *from Simon Taylor, writing in Classic and Sports Car magazine, December 2019, edited and added to by Ronald Mayes.*

He wrote about having taken 1 1/2 hours to drive 8 jammed miles in west London traffic in his AC Ace, feeling very small and jammed in by huge modern steel boxes. Why are they so big? Sure, they have lots of safety features but a modern MINI Countryman weighs 1440kg, almost 2 1/2 times that of a real Mini, and is almost 2 metres wide, 600mm wider than a proper Mini. Why did BMW have to insult Alex Issigonis by using the name of his creation to feed off its reputation? And the hulking new Rolls-Royce Phantom in the queue alongside him, taking up such a vast amount of space.

And modern cars look depressingly the same. (That's why European ones now have huge name badges on the front, so you know what is the make - *RGM*) with curious creases in the bodywork that bear no relationship to the overall shape - "superficial individuality" the author says. (The ugly Nissan Juke (Joke?) comes to mind there, surely its committee of stylists were all doped up with hallucinogens and couldn't reach any agreement, incorporating round lights low at the front with crocodile eyes on the tops of the wings - *RGM*). Some of today's efforts resemble Star Wars stormtroopers or cartoon monsters with jaws dripping aggression, like recent Toyotas. But some makers do try to recall the identity of their cars from several generations ago: Alfa Romeo's triangular grille and BMW's pair of kidneys at the front come to mind.

From time immemorial cars had a "face": the round headlights were its eyes and the air intake its mouth (from a happy face like a Morris Minor 1000's to a proud and patrician Rolls-Royce, or even a Packard.- *RGM*) Every small boy could recognise a make by its radiator: Riley, Vauxhall with the bonnet flukes, Citroen's

double chevron, and Daimler with the wrinkled top recalling the cooling fins on very early models and so on. The once-proud Rolls-Royce radiator continues in caricature today. It awkwardly plays its part in the styling of all current models, including a vast, dreadful SUV called the Cullinan. That name is apparently Gaelic for “good-looking lad”. The sound you can hear is Sir Henry Royce spinning in his grave.

In the 1950s the tall radiator gradually disappeared or shrank to a much smaller size, but cars all had individuality and you wouldn't confuse an Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire with a Humber Super Snipe, or a Standard Vanguard with an Austin A70 and, back then, you wouldn't have been stuck in a 5mph traffic jam.

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## **NEXT CLUB NIGHT - ???????**

Neil Hunt Park - 7.30pm

Car In The Room: ????????

Followed by tea, coffee and biscuits ?!

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## **Club & Midweek Runs**

There will be no more conventional club nights, runs or other activities until life starts to return to some normality. As things develop the committee will endeavour to get things back on track so we can once again enjoy using our cars and being in each other's company.

All we can do for now is keep safe, if you have any suggestions to keep interest and contact up, email or phone Chairman Dave or Secretary Dennis.

# March BBQ Run



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[www.rotoruaVintageCarClub.org.nz](http://www.rotoruaVintageCarClub.org.nz)

The branch website aims to meet the needs of our members, to promote our branch nationally, and to potential new members. If you have any suggestions please contact David Tomlinson.

Please also make sure you “Like” our Facebook page to keep up to date.

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## Contributions to Side Curtains

This is your magazine! Please feel free to share anything you think might be of interest to the membership by sending it to the editor, preferably by email, and a picture says a thousand words, so include photos where possible. Members taking part in club runs or events hosted by other branches are encouraged to pen a short piece about their experience to include in the next issue going to print. All items to the editor by the end of the month.

# March Club Night



# 1964 Vanden Plas Princess 1100

