

SIDE CURTAINS

The magazine of the
ROTORUA VINTAGE AND
VETERAN CAR CLUB

MARCH 2021



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www.rvvcc.org.nz

FEBRUARY BBQ RUN



SIDE CURTAINS - March 2021

The magazine of the ROTORUA
VINTAGE AND VETERAN CAR CLUB

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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

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Secretary - Dennis Whimp

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Treasurer - Terry Fitzpatrick

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Asst. Club Captain

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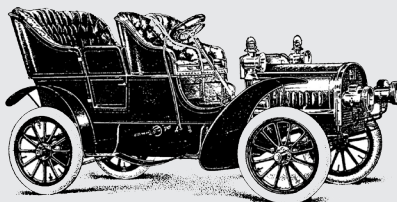
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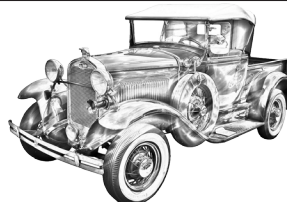
Cover Photos

Front - February BBQ Run

Back - February BBQ Run

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

- February 2021

by David Tomlinson



February's club night, our first for 2021, had Jim Maud's 1993 Mercedes-Benz 500SL roadster on display. After a good talk on the car we went through the various branch and other events over the next few months hoping 2021 would be less disrupted than the year just past.

The Ellerslie Concour d'Elegance did take place as planned, with a fairly good turnout, including a large number of Japanese cars not seen in years gone by. While this did manage to go ahead, Auckland entered lockdown by the end of the day, so people like me had to scarper fast. I took my 1993 Bentley Turbo R, and the Judd's displayed their 1967 Jaguar E Type. As this was the event's 50th anniversary, many clubs displaying concentrated on models celebrating anniversaries this year. Jaguar had the E Type, celebrating 60 years, and Mercedes-Benz focussed on the R107 series roadsters (like our December car in the room) celebrating 50 years. There were a few surprises, including a Bugatti Veyron on display (there were many Bugattis there), and other notable vehicles were a new Aston Martin DBX SUV, a Jensen 541, several Volvo P1800s and many of the past winners of the Master Class event. This year the winning car was a left hand drive Mercedes-Benz "pagoda" roadster. Other cars in the Master Class included a Jaguar XK-120 and a Holden HQ Premier. The new 50/50/50 event aimed at younger people only attracted 14 entries.

Our BBQ Run was held the following week, and attendance was down a little as many club members were involved in other activities (including the truncated and ultimately cancelled Art Deco weekend), and others travelling our own country far and

wide. Those that did take part went on an epic drive up to the coast near Te Puke then along many sealed forestry roads before returning to the club rooms for a BBQ dinner. Thank you Kevin and Terry, and all others who put this on. It was a long day, but well worth it.

I was looking forward to Brit-Euro too, but this was postponed due to Auckland's lockdown, and is now planned to go ahead on April 11. I still plan to attend with two vehicles, and I believe the Judds are also going. This really is a great show, with over 1200 cars on display (only British and European marques).

In March we will have the Harper's newly complied Studebaker Golden Hawk as the car in the room (gearbox willing!) and it will be a very interesting talk I am sure, as it already has a very impressive history in New Zealand, despite being in the country less than 12 months. Don't miss March club night.

Our March club run is set back a week, as Fleur and I will also be travelling around the South Island in the middle of March. The run will start and finish at my workshop in Ngongotaha, to avoid clashing with an athletics event at the clubrooms car park on the day. Be there by 10.30am for a very short run, a mix of rural and urban, all sealed roads, with the plan to all be back by midday for a "free lunch" at my workshop. It is a very short run, followed by free food, you have no excuse not to take part! See you all there!!!

Between club night and the Chairman's Run the delayed "Not The Spring Tour" will be travelling the southern length of the North Island, so there will also be the opportunity to talk to the returnees about their experiences on the run at the Chairman's Run luncheon.

In April we will have club night, the Night Run and midweekers, and then in May our club night will also be our AGM. May's

club run is already planned, so there is a lot to look forward to, crossing our fingers that we don't get caught in the claws of Covid-19 again. Hopefully this will be our last year of disruptions, and they will be very few and very far between.

Regarding the AGM in May, this is a chance to have your say, and also for considering being a part of running of the club. Although we finally have a Club Captain after years without one, there is still room for more helpers at the committee table, and new ideas can freshen things up. If you leave it all the same group to do things all the time, you will get dished up the same stuff! Think about playing a more active role in the branch.

The Swap Meet is getting closer too, it will be our July club activity, and I have gazetted the July club night to be a week earlier than usual so we can finalise anything that needs sorting out only a few days before hand. I am sure we will have the volunteer board up no later than our May AGM night.

Lastly, I survived a very frosty week at home after inadvertently purchasing another Rolls-Royce in early March, so those attending the Chairman's Run will count at least one more in the workshop than last year. I also helped a person in Whangarei buy Bob Mowbray's former Rolls-Royce, so my excuse was I was just correcting the equilibrium of one car leaving the area.

Jensen 541
at the Ellerslie
Concours



FROM THE SECRETARY

by
Dennis Whimp



A big welcome to our new and re-joining members.

Jim and Carol Bennett who have Austin Minis

Paul Nagle who has a 1972 MGB roadster

Tom and Jamie Fyfe and family who are re-joining us

We look forward to seeing you at our events and meetings.

Will existing members please wear their name badges as it makes it easier for our new members to get to know you. (And some of our older members who have don't turn up that often). If you have lost your name badge I can get a replacement for \$15. New members name badges are free.

If you have to contact VCC National Office re change of address, or change of cars etc, the new Office Administrator is Robyn Ashworth. She replaces Julie Cairns-Gee who retired after 25 years in the job.

Remember that the Swapmeet will be on Sunday July 11th this year, Covid permitting.

Our signwriter, Roy Burrows who has just changed the date on the swapmeet signs at the stock-car track reminded me

that he was trained in painting woodgrain finish onto metal dashboards and trim from 1930s cars. He is still able to do this work if anyone requires it.

Why I like old cars. They have dip sticks to check the engine oil levels. On many current cars the dipstick is an optional extra costing around \$40. The theory is either that you don't need to know, or that the computer can simply show you the level on the screen. A neighbour with his new Audi had to watch a Youtube video on how to scroll through the screens, which knobs to turn, buttons to push and screens to tap and then the relevant screen would not load if the engine oil was cold. I'm sure life is not getting simpler.

Just as well I don't live in the USA or I would be tempted to buy lots of vintage vehicles. A quick scan through last year's Buick club magazines showed some real bargains. A 1930 roadster the same as mine and partially restored at US\$7000, a 1934 Buick sedan complete and driving at US\$12,500, a 1930 Buick master sedan at US\$9,000 and quite a few others of similar vintage for similar prices. It is fortunate that we live this far away although I see there are a few of these vehicles arriving into NZ.

Bugatti
Veyron at
the Ellerslie
Concours



Touring the South Island *by Michael Thorne*

I have just returned from 3 months touring the South Island. Towed the Panther on a trailer behind the Motorhome. Its self contained for about 8 days with full bathroom/ kitchen, solar, Sat TV etc - just the basics really. Had a chance to do a few track days in the Panther.

Although not the main purpose of the trip I visited a number of museums including a one in Geraldine. Well presented with 7 large sheds (photo of the tractor shed below). Bill would have been in 7th heaven. Attended a number of music festivals including “Music in the Mountain” at Tapawera. My van ended up as party central. Had a fabulous time and the music was pretty good too. I never really understood “Steampunk” but visited Steampunk HQ in Oamaru.

I had been looking for another usable classic for some time. As I was approaching Waimakariri I noted that Waimak Classic cars had just listed a 1985 Alfa Romeo GTV6. It was delivered to Rotorua a few days ago! See you for the ‘Not the Spring Tour’.



February Car In The Room -

1993 Mercedes-Benz 500SL

by Dennis Whimp

February's car in the room was Jim Maud's extremely tidy Mercedes-Benz 500SL which is a 5 litre engined roadster with both hard and soft tops. Jim started by explaining that he joined the Wellington branch of the VCCNZ in 1966 with a Ford Model A roadster which was not looked on with any enthusiasm by those in that club, but was in Rotorua when he shifted here a few years later. After a stint in Canberra, he moved back to Rotorua and sold the Model A in the 1970s to replace it with an Aston Martin.

The Mercedes-Benz came about in 2016 when he went to look at the new Ford Mustang and was somewhat put off by the requirement to put down a \$5,000 non-refundable deposit to confirm your order with no definite delivery date. A fellow customer there had the Mercedes that the Ford dealer would not take as a trade in. So Jim after some negotiating became the proud owner with what was a far better car than the Mustang. These roadsters were around NZ\$250,000 new. The car was built in Germany and exported to Japan. It came to NZ in 2014. The engine is an all aluminium V8 fuel injected 320hp with the top speed limited to 250km/h. Transmission is 4 speed automatic.

The convertible hardtop needs two people to remove and put back on. The cloth convertible top goes up and down with the push of a button. There is a roll bar that automatically extends if the car senses that a rollover is imminent. Jim hopes to not get the opportunity to try that feature out.

A problem since solved was that the engine would stop suddenly at the most inconvenient place such as at traffic signals. Turned out to be the distributor caps having hairline cracks. There are two distributors and the replacement cost for the two caps and points was eyewatering. Another issue was the brake warning light being on indicating the brake disc pads were worn. It turned out to be dust on the sensors that was easily cleaned after a fair bit of investigation. Thanks Jim for showing us this top of the range vehicle and explaining the fun in owning it.



BOOK REVIEWS *by Ronald Mayes, assistant (apprentice) librarian*

From Reg. Munro's estate we have been generously donated more books for our library, including scrapbooks with cuttings of all sorts of local and international news from days gone by - treasures for future browsers! Amongst the donated books I have been perusing the following:

1. Lucky all my Life - the Biography of Harry Weslake, by Jeff Clew (1979). You may have wondered about that Weslake Patents sticker on the rocker cover of your 1950s BMC car. All is revealed in the book, and much more besides! Harry Weslake was a cylinder head design specialist who breathed life into many car engines, from 1920s Bentleys to post-war Austins, and had a serious interest in motorcycle racing. A great read.

2. Encyclopedia of Classic Cars - Saloon Cars 1945 - 1975, by Rob de la Rive Box, translated (not particularly well) from the Dutch original, 1999. A rather strange mix, European cars predominate, some English makes and models receive little attention and American car cover is rather limited. Rather large coverage is given to the microcars of the 1950s, most of which died out with the advent of the Mini. (Have you ever heard of a Kleinschnittger?) Whenever I look at such an encyclopedia I always first check out the makes and models I know well. In this case I found considerable numbers of errors so I do not recommend this book as accurate reference material. One redeeming feature, though, are the photographs of early car makers - now we can put faces to famous (and some infamous) names!

3. The Rover Story, a Century of Success, by Graham Robson, 1977. Anything written by this author we know will be accurate! From its beginnings as the Coventry Sewing Machine Company in 1861 until the mergers and manoeuvres resulting in the formation of British Leyland, the vehicles and fortunes of Rover are covered here. The experiences of gas turbine engine development is particularly interesting (it all came to nought, of course, as a motor vehicle power source.) It is perhaps fitting that the book ends just at the time of the introduction of BL's Specialist Division car Number One, the Rover SD1 3500, for which high hopes were held. Unfortunately that car suffered, not alone, from the quality issues which hit the British car building industry in the 1970s and 1980s.

CLUB NIGHT - March 10th

Neil Hunt Park - 7.30pm

Car In The Room: Studebaker Golden Hawk

Followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.

Chairman's Run

Sunday, March 21st - 10.30am

Please note the run will be starting and finishing at Creative Stone, 14 Hall Rd, Ngongotaha, due to an athletics event operating at the clubrooms area.

The run will be relatively short, first car away at 10.40am, finishing with a complimentary luncheon back at the Chairman's workshop. Fruit juice, tea and coffee will also be provided.

Midweek News *by Bob Mackay*

As the "Tour" is arranged to start on the 14th March, there is no midweek run arranged this month unless some one wishes to step forward and arrange a run.

Since the last club night two more cars (4 people) have made bookings to join the "Tour". It appears that there is still accommodation available, please ring me if you require details.

COMING EVENTS

	Date	Event	Time	Venue	Page
Mar 2021	10	Club Night	7.30pm	Clubrooms	11
	14-19	'Not Spring' Tour		contact Bob Mackay	11
	21	Chairman's Run	10.30am	14 Hall Rd, Ngongotaha	11
Apr 2021	14	Club Night	7.30pm	Clubrooms	
	18	Night Run	TBA	TBA	
	28	Midweekers Run	TBA	TBA	
May 2021	12	Club Night	7.30pm	Clubrooms	
	16	Club Run	TBA	TBA	
	26	Midweekers Run	TBA	TBA	
June 2021	9	Club Night	7.30pm	Clubrooms	
	13	Prizegiving Run	TBA	TBA	
	30	Midweekers Run	TBA	TBA	
July 2021	7	Club Night	7.30pm	Clubrooms	
	11	Swap Meet	7am	Paradise Valley Raceway	
	28	Midweekers Run	TBA	TBA	

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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.

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.

Branch Members' Cars at Ellerslie Concours



Alan Judd's
1967 Jaguar
E Type



David Tomlinson's
1993 Bentley
Turbo R

BBQ Run Head Chef and his Riley

