

SIDE CURTAINS

The magazine of the
ROTORUA VINTAGE AND
VETERAN CAR CLUB

NOVEMBER 2021



ROTORUA



WE ARE ON FACEBOOK !

www.rvvcc.org.nz

OCTOBER PICNIC RUN



SIDE CURTAINS - November 2021

The magazine of the ROTORUA
VINTAGE AND VETERAN CAR CLUB

Clubrooms: Neil Hunt Park, Tarawera Rd, Rotorua

Postal: PO Box 2014, Rotorua

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
021 731 678

Treasurer - Terry Fitzpatrick

Club Captain
Terry Wadsworth

Asst. Club Captain
Fleur Tomlinson

Committee
Ronald Mayes
Neville Harper
Lois Thompson
Jenny Cole
Dennis Brown
Geoff Nitz

Mid Weekers - Jenny Cole

Side Curtains Editor - David Tomlinson
rvvcc.editor@gmail.com

Beaded Wheels - Ronald Mayes

Librarian - Dennis Kenny

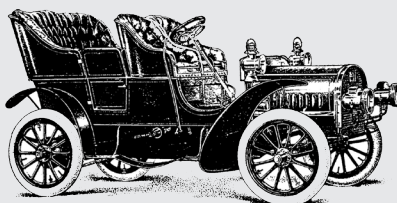
Librarian - Ronald Mayes

Librarian - Roger Couchman

Cards/Flowers - Doreen Green

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Chairman's Report | 2 |
| From The Secretary | 4 |
| October Car In The Room | 5 |
| Early Experience | 7 |
| October Midweekers | 10 |
| Coming Events | 12 |



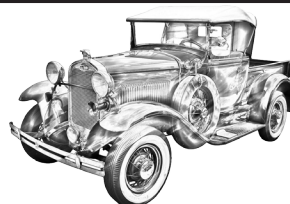
Cover Photos

Front - John Peters and Jenny Gill

Back - October Car In The Room

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

- October 2021

by David Tomlinson



It is with sadness I start by recording the passing away of Roger Couchman after a short illness in October. Many will remember Roger and Keitha taking part in branch events in their little Austin A35 which Roger sold at our Lakefront Car Show at the beginning of this year. A number of branch members attended the celebration of Roger's life at the Sala St Chapel, and we learnt a lot about his early life. One of Roger's daughters took part by video link from Australia, and a thank you note from the family follows my column. The branch wishes to record its sincerest condolences to Keitha and Roger's wider family. Thank you to Ralph Bennett for speaking on behalf of the branch at the funeral.

Our October club run was to be a replacement event for the cancelled Sulphur City rally, but ended up just being a very short run followed by a picnic on the Saturday. The weather was fabulous, and a good turn out enjoyed a great picnic location at the Tree Trust Park at Tihiotonga (now called Centennial Park). The midweekers took then the shortened run theme to a new extreme, having a café lunch barely 1km from the clubrooms.

Still to come this year are our November club run, November midweek run, Xmas social (free for Swap Meet volunteers!), and our usual December High Tea Run. Then our 10th Anniversary Lakefront Car Show in January 2022.

This is the email we received from Roger's family after the funeral:

Dear Club Members,

I am just writing to say a big thank you on behalf of our family for the support we have received from the Club following the unexpected passing of our Dad, Roger Couchman. He would have been very chuffed to see members' cars rolling up at his funeral.

It was a very sad day when Dad decided that it was time to sell his

beloved "Little Car", but he was somewhat reassured by the excitement of the gentleman who purchased it (at the January Car Show earlier this year) and had the sense that the car would live on in capable hands and enjoy many more adventures.

Unfortunately Mum had been increasingly unwell and struggling with dementia, which meant that had been unable to attend the events and meetings that gave him some all important social contact, a sense of belonging and a great deal of fun. I do remember him returning from the Club AGM when I was in NZ back in May, he had had a great evening and did mention how amazing the food was!

Thank you again, warm regards, Gayleen (Roger's eldest daughter)

XMAS SOCIAL DINNER NIGHT

Saturday, November 27th

Clubrooms, 5.30pm for 6pm dinner

3 course dinner - BYO drinks

Only \$25 per person for a night of great food and great company! FREE for Swap Meet volunteers!



Please bring a \$5 gift along to exchange and your sense of humour. Wear an item of Christmas clothing or jewellery

Please advise Fleur on 021 181 0191 or Dave on 027 412 8227 if you will attend so that catering numbers can be organised.

FROM THE SECRETARY

by
Dennis Whimp



With Covid lockdowns, I am getting numerous notices about cancellations and postponements for all sorts of rallies and events. There is much chatter about the likely introduction of vaccine passports and what that might mean for swapmeets and carshows. I know that the Karapiro Domain which is used for many water based events and the Waikato swapmeet is being security fenced with only three entrances in anticipation of the passports.

The Canterbury swapmeet has been tentatively changed to the 11-13 February.

I have the rally entry forms for the Whakatane based East Coast Rally held on Sunday 6th February.

The National office has used the new system of emailing out the annual subscription for those whom they have email addresses for. The others have the postal subs. If for any reason you have not received your invoice, please contact Linda Duffell, the office administrator at the Christchurch national office.

A big welcome to our latest new members:

Gary and Judith Gerard of Lynmore who have a 1978 MGBGT.

We look forward to seeing you at our functions and runs.

October Car In The Room *by Roger Nelson*

1975 Triumph Stag

My Stag is 1975 Model Mark 2, complete with the original 3L V8 motor and four speed gear box with overdrive. The odometer reading to date is at 182000 miles.

I purchased the car in 2010 after seeing it advertised on Trade Me for a reasonably low price for a Stag at that time, so my expectations were not that high when we travelled to Titirangi to view it. On seeing the car, the paintwork was a bit rough and because the owner kept a dog or two, when the top was down, they used to leap into the back seat, consequently the upholstery was torn and the soft top was just about past its use by date. However, the car had a new WOF and had been serviced and on taking it for a run seemed to drive OK.

A deal was done there and then and I drove it home. On driving back to Rotorua, I noticed the synchros in the gear box were worn and the diff had a bit of a whine at 50-60 mph. After hearing all the problems with Stag motors overheating etc, I was a bit apprehensive but it seemed okay. I stripped all the interior out, plus the chrome trimmings and bumpers off and left the car at ColourTone in Rotorua who stripped the body down to bare metal, then repainted it. We found very little rust even though the paint work had bubbles, we were fairly sure it wasn't a rust problem which makes me think that the car did not come from the UK to NZ in 1983 when it was first registered, but was possibly sold new in Australia, but I don't know.

With the car repainted and a new upholstery kit fitted, (which we sourced from the UK with all the original patterns), I have used the car on runs with our own Club and with the Triumph Stag Club and over the last 10 years have travelled all over NZ. In between times I have done mechanical work on it.

The first job was removing the gearbox and re bearing it and the overdrive. After re installed it I discovered after a few miles the gearbox had quite a bad oil leak, so had to remove the said gearbox again. It's not easy! I decided to try taking the motor and gearbox out as a unit as it might be easier. I was speaking to the late Jack Millar from our club and who used to be service manager for the Triumph Agents in Auckland and had a lot of knowledge. He said to me, "While you have got the motor out, you are going to replace the timing chains".... enough said!!

So we did all that and I also fitted a pressurised header tank to the cooling system and to date have had no overheating or coolant loss problems. Jack also commented that when he was service manager, if a Stag came into the workshop, the mechanics used to run away and hide, (not the easiest cars to work on!). I have since had the diff re-bearinged at Diffspecs in Drury and all is quiet on that front.

Now, I just enjoy touring the countryside in a car that is comfortable to drive and can keep up with modern traffic if I have to, except when I am stooging along at my own pace and I happen to see a "Red Panther" in the rear view mirror! I think will I or won't I, then common sense prevails and I pull over and let the boy racer go for it!!

As I said, we have driven all over NZ and petrol-wise, average 27 mpg which surprises me, as on reading stuff from the UK, they claim an average of 20 mpg. On thinking about it though, they are probably referring to automatics which we have proven to be so, after having travelling around the East Cape in tandem with an automatic, it was struggling to get from Gisborne to Opotiki on a full tank, where as we were still on the high side of a quarter full at the same point of the journey.

Early Experience *by Dave Mayhew*

I shall never forget my first ride on a motor bike; well actually it was the second one as the first was just a “go on a bike”. I came home for the school holidays when I was about fourteen years old and our Len had a hand change Francis Barnet which I managed to get up into second gear, just riding for half a mile up the road and actually passing a police car going the other way fortunately, but the policeman never seemed to bother.

Then after leaving school at fifteen, one weekend my mate turned up from Ilford riding a Douglas and showed me all the nice things about it. It was “over head valve” which mystified me as the heads were stuck out the sides and I found it hard to believe, and just using a florin (two shilling piece) he was able to remove the rocker box cover and expose the tappets which I thought quite remarkable and this endeared me and I fell in love with the Douglas there and then; I was determined to have one.

Come seventeen years old and I became a member of Her Majesties Royal Air Force, and just as soon as I had completed my square bashing and trade training I was posted to a fighter station in south Suffolk and still hankering for a Douglas motor cycle my first free weekend I dashed into the nearest town of Ipswich and straight to the motot bike shop. Unfortunately the man there said that he didn't have one in stock and on asking me I convinced him that I was an experienced motorcyclist as I had ridden a Francis Barnet. Well he managed to sell me a 1947 Ambassador 197 for 55 pounds and he needed 7 Pounds as a deposit, but I only had 3 pounds ten shillings on me but I promised him that I would borrow the rest off of my sister over the weekend and pop it in

his letter box Sunday night, to which he agreed. Dealers were obviously more trusting in those days.

Then he put me on the bike and pointed me in the right direction for my town some sixty miles away; then on second thoughts he sent me up the other way and round the block, ostensibly to give me a bit of experience before I was obliged to navigate the busy corner down the hill. Cocky me, I was up into second gear and going down the other side of the block and with the big intersection coming up fast and a policeman on it too. Policemen on traffic duty in England never beconned traffic through an intersection like in New Zealand; they never waved their arms about at all, they seemed to “strike a pose” ; typically with both arms stuck out sideways; palms flat to the traffic; and just one arm bent up at the elbow. I lacked sufficient intelligence to comprehend what this stance meant and to whom, but quite obviously- I think- he meant me to stop, but apart from knowing what the twisty thing in my right hand was meant for I couldn’t work out the sequence of the other three levers at my disposal so I continued unintentially towards the policeman in a very jerky jerky fashion; he seemed to be lost for words and his mouth opened wide and his whistle fell out and dangled on it’s white lanyard, then he yelled “STOP” but I couldn’t and he foolishly stuck his foot out so I ran over it and continued with the hackles on the back of my neck sticking out like porcupine quills in my jerky jerky fashion hoping to God that the road I was heading for was the right one for me.

Thinking back, it would have been quite silly for the copper to forget his silly pose, leave station and chase after me, he could have done little more than pull me off of my bike and achieve nothing. So he probably continued directing intelligent road

users who understood what his semaphore meant.

Thank goodness it was the right direction and I was actually singing along in third gear when I ran out of petrol. Feeling under the tank I found a little knob that pulled out and before the bike had stopped it started up again. I cursed the motorbike shop man that he had sold me a dud bike with a petrol tap that vibrated shut. A faulty petrol tap, that would have to be the worst thing that could go wrong with a motorbike, he could have the wretched thing back on Monday. Of course, the second time that I ran out of petrol I came to the conclusion that I had run out of reserve. And that was my first pushing experience. Later on that journey in an effort to keep in front of a bus screaming up a hill in Raleigh in first gear the engine seized ; well how was I to know that I was supposed to put Castrol in the petrol. I had a lot to learn.

It was seven months later that I managed to buy my 1948 Douglas Mk 111s in Sittingbourne Kent and coincidentally nearly seventy years later I have ended up with a Douglas Dragonfly and a 1953 Ambassador Supreme 197.



Midweekers, 27 October *by Dennis Brown*

Well this month, the 'Run' was more a trot, less than a kilometre from the clubrooms.

Just before departing home for the clubrooms we received an email from our President David, notifying us of the sad passing of Club member Roger Couchman. I'm sure David has passed on our condolences to his wife Keitha and family.

As usual we met at the clubrooms for morning tea and a chat.

We were hoping to visit with Marty to check progress on his MG restoration, however, it had only the day before been sent for media blasting.

Today's outing was limited to brunch at the Eastwood Café in the Redwoods. It's an impressive building. The food was good and the company great. However, they could not provide sufficient seating to allow us all to sit together. My apologies.

Thanks to: Geoff & Christine, Les & Thelma, Bob & Pat, Bill & Adelai, Michael & Denise, Shona & Pat, Dennis & Pam, Ralph, Jen & I. Apologies from Neville & Carol

A little bit of workshop gossip:

Les is close to sourcing parts for his new Jaguar project.

Ralph is back in action and dealing with outstanding issues on his Snipe.

Question - How is Dennis progressing his Buick?...:)

CLUB NIGHT - November 10th

Neil Hunt Park - 7.30pm

Car In The Room: 1970 Triumph 2000 Mk2

Followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.

November Club Run Sunday, 14th November

Meet at the clubrooms at 1.30pm.

There will be a 50km run around rural roads.

At the completion of the run there will be afternoon tea at the clubrooms.

November Midweekers Wednesday, 24th November

Meet at the clubrooms at 10am.

Depart for Taupo Botanical Gardens around 10.30am.

Picnic lunch in the Gardens, unless the weather is inclement, then we can find a café in Taupo.

Jenny Cole

Morris Minor Parts

If you are restoring a Morris Minor I may be able to help with a few parts. Front bumper, door striker plates (2 door), light fittings and more. Phone Evan 07 346 0458.

COMING EVENTS

| | Date | Event | Time | Venue | Page |
|----------|------|--------------------|----------|---------------|------|
| Nov 2021 | 10 | Club Night | 7.30pm | Clubrooms | 11 |
| | 14 | Club Run | 1.30pm | Clubrooms | 11 |
| | 24 | Midweekers Run | 10am | Clubrooms | 11 |
| Dec 2021 | 8 | Club Night | 7.30pm | Clubrooms | |
| | 12 | High Tea Run | TBA | TBA | |
| Jan 2022 | 30 | Lakefront Car Show | 10am-2pm | Village Green | |
| Feb 2022 | 9 | Club Night | 7.30pm | Clubrooms | |
| | 13 | BBQ Run | TBA | TBA | |
| | 23 | Midweekers Run | TBA | TBA | |
| Mar 2022 | 9 | Club Night | 7.30pm | Clubrooms | |
| | 13 | Chairman's Run | 10am | TBA | |
| | 30 | Midweekers Run | 10am | TBA | |

www.rvcc.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.

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 line up at Roger Couchman's funeral



October 2021 Car in the Room

