



North Shore  
Vintage and  
Classic Car Club

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# Progress:

The monthly journal of the  
North Shore  
Vintage and Classic Car Club  
April 2024



Hi all, Another month has gone flying past and we zoom into autumn. It's been a busy month in the renovation shed and we've made good progress on our project vehicles. The restored Wolseley engine is about ready for Trade Me (but please shout if you are interested as there's a deal to be done). We will also be placing the Wolseley body and plenty of spares on Trade Me so again, if you are interested please contact any committee member. The Chevrolet has all but achieved its conformance inspections and Terry Flude is pushing ahead to get the car on the road and warranted. We have decided that dressing the car as a US Army staff car is the way to go and that will make some sense of the brown paint job. Tony Gillet has painted two coats of primer on the BSA Van framing ready for cladding. We have been given three spare fire-hose lengths for the Fire Truck and we are fabricating some racking to hold these hoses on the right side of the truck and match those on the left.



We have just **two** more editions of Progress before we need a new editor. Can you all please think about who might be able to take over from me for the July Edition. Perhaps your partner, husband, wife could be the new editor? As I have mentioned many times, the task is more of an organising and presentation challenge rather than writing original material. We have a team of regular contributors who will supply photographs and text for articles. I use a simple piece of software called Microsoft Publisher, which comes bundled with Microsoft Office, but there are many other free products that do a similar job. Most of what I do is copy and paste from articles and slide that around to fit together with the pictures that are sent to me or 'borrowed' from the web. I am expecting to spend some time helping the new editor put together the first few editions.

**Stuart Battersby: Editor. 022 471 2759 or [battersby56nz@gmail.com](mailto:battersby56nz@gmail.com)**

## In this edition:

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*Cover Girl: Mike Garner's Mk2 Capri.*

# Chairman's Report: John Higham.

March 2024.

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Hello Members,

There are a few occasions in life where terminology matters. Such as "Sales and Marketing", or possibly more correctly, marketing and then sales. "Marketing" is raising brand awareness such as which hamburger brand you might prefer, "Sales" is when you front up and not only buy the upsized hamburger, but get punted with fries and a drink as well, and the till rings.

And so it might be with "Governance" and "Management". Most of you will be fully aware of the differences. Examples of local bodies, companies or schools with elected members, directors, or governors or trustees respectively on the Governance side; and Management, with CEO's, deputies, heads of departments and the like on the other. The governance is where direction, ambition, targets, budgets, etc are formulated and management is where it is enacted and put into practice.

I belong to an organisation with in excess of 22,000 members. The governing board has for over 100 years been made up of persons elected from the organisations general membership. It would have to be said, that even with such a large membership to draw from, the calibre of board members might make one wonder if they are really up to it. It is when you see the occasional board member who actually understands governance and brings to the table fresh ideas, innovation and vision, as examples, that you realise what might be achieved with a fully functioning board.

So what has all of this to do with the NSVCC? Well I have been pondering if the committee is in a governance or management role, or maybe a bit of both. And is it really producing the goods or can it do better? The principal function of the committee, as a collective, is governance; and occasionally management. Most management is carried out by individual committee members and seconded volunteer Branch members.

Obviously past and present committees must have done, and continue to do, some things very well as evidenced by the Branch. It has a thriving and growing membership, has property, sheds, tools, equipment, vehicles, spare parts inventory, etc. All of that is a reflection of a 50 year history of progress. So I am not having a go at anyone or anybody, just asking if what we are doing is the best there is?

And this is where you all come in. Our AGM is due in June. How about you standing for the Branch committee and bring those fresh ideas, innovation and vision?

John Higham, Chairman.

09-478-7973 or email: [jmhh.higham@gmail.com](mailto:jmhh.higham@gmail.com)



# Some great photos from around the manor: Terry Costello.

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*Robert Brown and a couple of mates inspect a Model T Ford.*



*The club Morris Eight performed admirably back and forth to the Brits and Euros.*



*Morris Oxford passing through.*



*Huge effort by Clive and the gang to pack away all his garage tools and spare parts.*



*Wolseley engine restored by Paul Kelly and just about ready for TradeMe.*



*Your editor fettling a replacement tank panel for the Bedford. (It's a long story).*



# More club photos from March:

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*John Castle and Colin Austen discuss who is the eldest.*



*Magnetos, generators and things electrical from the Electricians' corner.*



*Whoops!*



## **Please sir, I have a confession to make!**

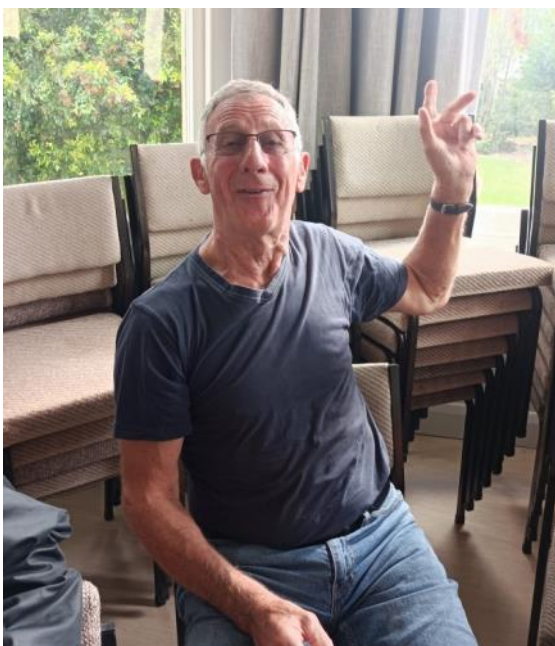
*At last we have managed to catch someone on the "Edge of Hidden Drops". What fun we had this morning as newer member Les Osbourne introduced himself at Smoko and then admitted that he had become the first victim our "Edge of Hidden Drops".*

*The gang soon pulled together and a suitable pair of ramps appeared from one of the sheds ("We are short of nothing that we haven't got") and*

*Les was on his way again with only a small dent in his pride! Les commented how much is fixed by a good cup of tea and some new mates.*

*Now it's probably just a coincidence, but unless I'm mistaken that's a Mercedes and equipped with all the latest Teutonic safety technology, automatic braking, lane assist, cameras and sensors at every corner. So how come?.....*

*On discussion with my learned colleague Mr Richard Bampton we agreed that this would never happen, could never happen to a British built Austin or Ford..... just saying.....*



*Hands up! "Yes it was me".*

I attended the VCCNZ Delegate's Conference in Christchurch on the weekend of 16/17<sup>th</sup> March.

There was the usual agenda of items. Matters arising from the previous meeting; Murray Trounson stated that a suggested format for Financial Reporting for the Branches would be sent out before the end of the financial year.

The various reports were taken as read and approved. Kevin Clarkson, Beaded Wheels, reminded the group that they were always looking for interesting articles, particularly on member's vehicles.

Neil Beckenham, Registrar, asked delegates to remind their members that it takes time to issue VICs and they should allow 3 months before needing the VIC to participate in club activities.

Vero insurance. We have been instructed to put VCC in the subject line of any emails to Vero. That will ensure that your email goes directly to the VCC team.

General Business. Various successful bids for National events.

- **North Otago- Commercial Vehicles labour weekend 2024**
- **South Island Easter rally 2025 Canterbury**
- **North Island Easter Rally 2025 Waikato.**
- **2025 AGM will be hosted by Southland**
- **2026 TBA**
- **2027 Ashburton**
- **Daffodil Rally this year will be on 25th August**
- 

Members planning to attend the Veteran Rally 2025 in Blenheim are encouraged to book their accommodation early as it coincides with a Food and Wine festival.

We then had a presentation by Gareth Wishart, GM Innovation for HWR Group on hydrogen as a fuel. Particularly on the dual hydrogen/diesel fuel systems that HWR have developed and are being used in NZ. One interesting fact is that one dual fuel truck makes the same CO2 reduction as 15 EV cars.

Then came the main business of the day. The chairman laid out the timeline of the work required to get in our revised Constitution into the Companies Office. We had to make a decision on structure this weekend.

Then Alan Thompson, the Wellington delegate, then gave a presentation on the motion that I have outlined before. Basically, until we identify the problem with the structure/governance issues, how can we come up with a solution? He contended that we can make any minor tweaks necessary to comply with the new Incorporated Societies act in time. But we can still amend the Constitution at any time after the deadline if we decided that, in fact, we do need a major shake up to the structure of governance.

Glyn Clements, NI club captain, pointed out that, if we rejected the motion to delay making major changes until we had decided what the real problem is, we would be adopting the structure that came out of discussions at the last March meeting.



But those discussions were based on the erroneous information that we **HAD** to change the structure I.E. we would have 6 “super” delegates on the management committee, each representing 6 or so other branches, and in some cases huge geographical areas. He then asked the delegates if any of them would put their hands up to take on the job. Not one did.

The motion was put to the floor and carried in spite of 8 management committee members voting against.

There followed a discussion to determine what the problems were. In my opinion, nothing new was noted. There was certainly no “light bulb” moment. After 10 minutes or so, the chairman put forward the proposal that we adopt the structure outlined above.

Astonishingly, even after the previous two actions, the motion was passed and would have even if the committee had not voted. So, even though the delegates in the room are some of the very few of 8377 members that are interested in the administration of the VCCNZ, all said they would not volunteer for “super” delegate, they voted for it.

That was pretty much it for Saturday.

Sunday morning, after a hearty breakfast supplied by Canterbury branch, we had a presentation by a very enthusiastic Gary Jackson, president of the Federation of Motorclubs NZ. The results of the survey last year have been revised. The annual spend by motoring enthusiasts in NZ is calculated to be \$16.5 billion. 71% of the general public approve of what VCC members do. A quarter would like a classic/vintage car in their garage. The full results are online should wish to read the 150 page document! We were told that it is well indexed so you should be able to find specific areas of interest.

Mention was made of a petition started by Ella Forest on change.org to remove WOFs for cars over 40 years old. Not many in the room had heard of it. I have looked it up and signed it.

Then followed workshops to discuss items pertaining to the structural change. After much discussion the branches in each super delegate's area were determined. North Shore will be with Auckland, Waitemata, Warkworth Wellsford, Northland and Far North. And if you think that is a big area, it is actually, probably the smallest to cover. One of the items discussed in the workshops was the frequency that the super delegate visits each branch for face to face meetings with their delegate and chairman. It was initially suggested 3 times. So that is 18 meetings plus their own branch meetings, 11 or 12. Plus National committee meetings. Plus two weekend meetings. Plus any projects that are allocated at national level. I'm wondering if anyone with a job will have time for this position.

Finally, Murray said that the Branch Manual, now known as the Club Procedures Manual will soon be online and hard copies would no longer be sent out. Whilst quite large, it is searchable by topic.

After the usual round of “thank yous” etc, the meeting was closed.

***Addendum: We were asked by the Chairman not to write our reports until we had the official version so that we had the facts. I found that a little disturbing. We have now got the Chairman's notes and he has omitted the very telling point that no one said yes when asked by the NI Captain if they would stand for the regional delegate's position. If not the people in that room, then whom?***

# Brits and Euros Show: Report and photos by Richard Bampton.

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In spite of our club organiser (no names, no pack drill) for this event attempting to sabotage the club members' day out by trying to call the whole thing off the day before (because he was afraid of a little rain) several of the more intrepid members resisted this dastardly effort and the NSVCC put on a (relatively) good display.

The stout-hearted gentlemen who did turn out; Paul Brinsford, Armstrong Siddley: Gerald Miller, Rover P6 3500 V8: Richard Bampton, NSVCC 1936 Morris 8 Series 1: Andrew Lunt, Morris Minor 1000 Traveller, with passenger Jim Masson: John Castle, Sunbeam Rapier, with passenger Bill Duffy were allegedly inspired by a member who pointed out that we, as a car club, surely have a duty to support one of the best car shows in New Zealand, and, having committed to the organisers that we would be attending, to withdraw (as the Auckland Zephyr Zodiac Club did, leaving a gaping hole in the line) would be not only letting the planners down, but renegeing on our obligation to them. It reminded me of the point made at the recent SGM, where it was pointed out one of the attributes that makes

our Club so good is the commitment of so many members. The MGB GT in the row belongs to an interloper. The car is the American version and, although it was suggested that we should let the tyres down, when it was pointed out that the owner, Mervyn Stowers, was not only a very nice man, but also owned an Austin 7, the tyre deflators were mollified and relented.

To be fair to the event organiser, he did turn up to let the Morris 8 out for its first outing for

2024. Richard filled up with petrol (*when will those who use Club vehicles learn that they should return the vehicle with a full tank?*) and followed Andrew and Jim in the Morris Traveller. Starting almost instantaneously the little Morris behaved very well, storming up the Harbour Bridge

in top, and almost attaining 50 mph on the downhill (with a following wind). The oil pressure dropped a mere 5 psi from the cold starting pressure, and then stayed constant. A little idiosyncrasy is that, on tickover, the ammeter gives a small negative kick when the SU fuel pump pulses. But she stormed along the motorway at a constant 48.5 mph and, guided by the Traveller, arrived in good time to join the other NSVCC supporters.

Motorway driving was made a little more interesting because, when the turn switch was operated the indicators flickered only once, although the pilot light flashed extremely rapidly.

The morning was fine and a good temperature, and there was little doubt that the Morris 8 was the car in the lineup that most visitors homed in on, with the other Morris coming second. Apparently it is a Morris Isis!!!!.

How did that happen? And should it be corrected?



*The line-up*



*Star attraction: Morris 8*



*Morris Isis??*



# Brits and Euros Show: Cont.

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The show had fewer cars than usual, but, as always, there were some interesting ones and it is always good to see all the usual ones. But the best part is, of course, meeting up with old friends, making new ones, and talking about cars.

I was struck by two things: 1) How very ugly the modern Lotus cars are (no photo because they were just too awful) and 2) The Morgans: There was a Morgan Aero 8 on show, and I remember seeing it at a London car show on its debut in 2000. It carried on the Morgan tradition well, using new technology, as can be seen by comparing it to the Plus 8.

Unfortunately there were no vintage 3-wheelers, or the early flat rad cars, but there was the newest addition to the Morgan line-up – the Morgan Super 3. I think it is another very ugly car (others may disagree, but they would be wrong) however its performance figures are quite impressive. How long/many miles does the rear tyre last?

There was a drop of rain or two around lunchtime, but that did not deter the intrepid show-goers who settled into their chairs to enjoy their lunch, each other's company and a little badinage.

And here, especially for our esteemed editor, who was, unfortunately unable to attend, is a photo of Ford Sidevalves.

Since the public had largely decide to disappear, the decision was taken to follow the lead of several other clubs and go home. The journey back was accomplished at the same comfortable cruising speed of 48.5 mph, but with a couple of minor experiences. Because of the light rain the wiper was switched on. It waved lazily back, making little difference to visibility. Its arc of travel was variable, sometimes operating more to the right and sometimes more to the left. But descending Harbour Bridge at a slightly increased speed the wind caused the arc to move farther and farther to the right until the blade disappeared out of sight above the windscreen.





Since the driver, despite his advancing years, has 20/20 vision the little moisture falling on the screen did not impede progress. The second problem, also partly due to the light precipitation, was that the impossible-to adjust-correctly A pillar mounted rear view mirrors were of little help for lane changing, which is occasionally necessary on the motorway. Eventually the technique of looking a long way back through the central rear view mirror to spot passing traffic made it possible to gauge when it was safe to dodge across to the next lane safely. The log book was filled in – a rare occurrence – and all the little faults (noted above) were written down in the book, plus one extra – the carpet in the front works its way forward, and one day it may jam under the pedals, with possible dire consequences. However Jim Woonton our fabulous upholsterer will easily correct this.



*The team survives the rain.*

We all enjoyed the day, the cars and the camaraderie and are looking forward to next year's show. Make a note in your diary NOW of Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025 and make the commitment to support both NSVCC and the Brit and Euro Car show and enjoy a great day out.

And finally, a big thank you to Kelvin Hawke who looks after the Morris 8 so well. I wouldn't have enjoyed the day half so much if I had been worrying about the condition of the car, but I knew that it would make it in style. He is already on top of all the other little glitches, with Dennis Martin assisting with the indicator issue. Thank you Kelvin.



*Fabulous array of Ford Sidevalves at the Brits and Euros Show.*



# Tractor boys visit: and other odds and sods.

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I'm sure that many folks think that we are a little crazy persevering with our 50 something year old vehicles and attempting to drive them all over the country in modern traffic. Well these chaps take the biscuit. They had driven their tractors all the way from the Waikato/ King Country up to the North Cape and were travelling back south and camped out at Masons Road the night before their early start for a police escorted drive over the harbour bridge. Barb Stubbs and John Higham called in to have a chat and take some photos. Barb gave them some bacon..... Yep that's a little random, but apparently Barb does that with people she's not sure about.



If you like old motorbikes then you should probably call in sometime and see the little collection of older stuff that is resting at Masons Road until such time as it's sold off.



Finally there was the Ardmore Airshow recently and Tony Sparkes went down with some pals and took a couple of photos. Peter Boot, a friend of mine from the photography club also went along and he was quite entranced by the renovated WW2 Mosquito that was on display. He also was rapt with "an older gent" who was looking at one of the jet fighters and offered to give Peter and his party a bit of a run through the plane. During the discussion this old gent mentioned that he used to fly Lightning Fighters in the Cold War. Now I'm sure that there are still quite a few Lightning pilots still



*Who is flying this one?*

kicking around, but I do wonder how many live in Auckland now and indeed how many match the description given by Peter. So **Richard Ellis** (Lightning Cold War Pilot) were you down at the Ardmore Air Show and entrancing visitors with your knowledge and experience of British Cold War Fighter Jets??

## NZ Registration Plates: Courtesy of Lane Smytheman and Don Muller (National Archivist).

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From 1925 the Government was responsible for the registration of all vehicles and it was given to the then P & T Dept (later the Post Office) to issue licensing plates. Until 1967 the plates were pressed steel and new ones were issued every year, the change being at the end of June each year. However during the war and after, new plates were only issued every 4 years with different coloured stickers being required each year. These stickers were put on the outside in the centre of the windscreen. 1967 saw the change to permanent aluminium plates with a two letter prefix and coloured stickers were still issued each year. With the next change to black characters on a reflective white background in 1986, internal labels and the spreading of licensing throughout the year was introduced.

Motor cycles and trailers were only issued with one plate of a different 'size and different numbering systems were used. While the pressed steel plates until 1966 for private cars had only numbers, there were also plates prefixed with letters defining the vehicle's category ie. T: taxi, R: rental, P: passenger bus, L : lightweight truck or van, H : heavyweight truck, E : tractor or similar, Govt : government. This was discontinued with the introduction of permanent plates 1986 plates of black on yellow with the last 2 digits showing year of issue were available for car dealers and were renewed annually. Personalised plates were introduced in 1988 and while most are black on white they can also be blue or red on white. The MN1 -MN9999 series was taken in 1984 for use in the Cook Is. I and O were not used as letters because of confusion with l and 0 but early 1990's the 0 with a stroke through it was introduced because of permanent plates.

During the war and after until June 1950 petrol was rationed by issuing coupons with registration. Cars above 14hp were allowed half as much again as cars below 14hp and the amounts varied from time to time but was often about 36 litres a month for cars under 14hp. Trade and other essential users could get greater allocation with a license. During the period of the fuel crisis of 1979 - 1980 a further windscreen sticker was issued when registering. It showed the day of the week which the owner nominated as their carless day. also available was a sticker with a large white cross on it for those exempted which were granted by the Post Office.

When July 1st was the date for everyone to change each year a special depot would be set up in the centre of town, and the demand would result in long queues. The pressed steel plates had to be changed on the night of June 30th or before the car could be used (no days of grace were given) This being in the middle of winter and especially after 4 years nuts could be well rusted and those days not many people had power in their garage so it was a task not looked forward to.



# NZ Registration Plates: Cont.

The first plate of the 3 letter series was AAA104, Because AAA100, 101, 102 and 103 Had been purchased as personalised plates as had 229990 - 99. With the 3 letter plates the font type was changed slightly around the **DFF** issue. Prior to 1925 Local Councils registered motor vehicles. Sometimes the number was painted directly on the vehicle. Other times on plates of rental or wood and the number could be prefixed, for example CH for Christchurch.

In the table below we have shown all the registration combinations from 1925 to today. Overleaf we have included a photograph demonstrating all the formats.

Period	Lettering	Separator
1925-1926	White Numerals on Green	Square
1926-1927	White Numerals on Black	Hyphen
1927-1928	Orange Numerals on Black	Star
1928-1929	White numerals on Brown	Diamond
1929-1930	White numerals on Blue	Circle
1930-1931	White numerals on Black	Colon
1931-1932	Orange numerals on Black	Triangle
1932-1933	Black numerals on Orange	Hyphen (low)
1933-1934	White numerals on Dark Brown	Star
1934-1935	White numerals on Oxford Blue	Diamond
1935-1936	White numerals on Bronze	Comma
1936-1937	Black numerals on Yellow	Inverted Triangle
1937-1938	White numerals on Black	Escutcheon
1938-1939	White numerals on Green	Maltese Cross
1939-1940	Black numerals on Orange	Pentagon
1940-1941	White numerals on Venetian Red	Triangle.
1941-1946	White numerals on Black	Diamond
1946-1951	Black Numerals on Mid Buff	Hyphen
1951-1956	White numerals on Black	Comma
1956-1961	White numerals on Venetian Red	Star
1961-1966	Black Numerals on Yellow	Full stop
1967-1985	2 letter prefix Silver numerals on black	None
1986-2001	2 letter prefix. Black on reflective white.	None
2001-onwards	3 Letter Prefix began	None

		
Before 1905 (1) Owner provided	1908 Series, Christchurch	1908 Series, Tuapeka
		
1908 Series, Franklin	1908 Series, Geraldine	1908 Series, Oamaru
		
1925 - 1926 white on green (square)	1926 - 1927 white on black, hyphen	1927 - 1928 orange on black, star
		
1928 - 1929 white on brown, diamond	1929 - 1930 white on blue, circle	1930 - 1931 white on black, colon
		
1931 - 1932 orange on black, triangle	1932 - 1933 black on orange, underscore	1933 - 1934 white on brown, star
		
1934 - 1935 white on dark blue, diamond	1935 - 1936 white on green, comma	1936 - 1937 black on yellow, triangle
		
1937 - 1938 white on black, escutcheon	1938 - 1939 white on green, Maltese cross	1939 - 1940 black on orange, pentagon
		
1940 - 1941 white on dark red, triangle	1941 - 1946 white on black, diamond	1946 - 1951 black on dark yellow, hyphen
		
1951 - 1956 white on black, comma	1956 - 1961 white on dark red, star	1961 - 1966 black on yellow, period
		
1963 Base, aluminum on black		
NZ Number Plates Pre 1925 Local Body. NZ 1925-1986.		



# Upcoming Events: Events through to April 2024.

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## Future Events:

### April 2024

**April 21: Annual NSVCC Car Show:** At Masons Road. Any vintage, veteran, classic, rod welcome. Spread the word to all friends and local clubs. Let's have as many members on show as possible.

### May 2024

**May 18: Tauranga (Bay of Plenty) branch visit:** Afternoon visit to have a look around plus tea & biscuits. Followed by dinner at the club (Barb Stubbs and Tony Sparkes cooking up a storm)

**May 19: Garage Run** to two private vintage & classic collections in Taupaki followed by lunch at the Huapai Tavern. Run will start from the clubhouse. Timing details t.b.a.

### JUNE 2024

**June 17:** Club AGM. 7.30pm at the clubhouse.

**June 23:** Coach visit to Hamilton not feasible at this time of year. Substitute event will be scheduled.

## **Longer term thoughts**

**July 21: South Heads Run**

**August 25: Daffodil Day Run** in conjunction with Waitemata and Warkworth/Wellsford.

**September 21-23: Spring Tour** Likely destination Taranaki.

**October 20:** Potential for Hamilton Gardens Visit.

*Do you have any interesting ideas for a club run? Suggesting a destination does NOT mean that you have to plan the run. We just want ideas for potential trips.*

## Regular Diary

**Committee Meetings:** Last Monday of every month, 6.00pm. Observers always welcome.

**Tuesday Mornings:** Restoration shed open. Coffee and tea at 10am.

**Wednesday Evenings:** Club night. Coffee, tea and banter, 7.30pm.

**Thursday Mornings:** All sheds open. Why not come along and explore the parts shed? Fantastic experience, even if you don't need any bits! Coffee, tea, cakes and savouries at 10.30am. Gold coin donation please.

**And remember...**

**International Festival of Historic Motoring: Nelson 15-21 March 2026**

# Beaches of Whangaparaoa: Photos and commentary.

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Even if I say so myself the March club run went pretty well. In episode 1 of the event we visited the beaches on the north coast of Whangaparaoa but on this occasion we called on the south facing beaches. Navigation was simple but the challenge for members was to spot the clues and answer the questions (some observation and some cryptic). The team with the most correct answers were the winners.

We had great weather for the run, most folks got most clues and lunch at the Mainsail Bar and Bistro seemed to go down very well. A few photos of mine and Andrew Lunt's below, but have a look at the branch Facebook page to see more of Andrew's great shots.



*Nice to see the "Andrews' Nash out again.*



*The Stubbs' V8 Daimler.*



*Ross and Linda's MX 5.*



*Jim and Lynn Hefkey's Almac.*



*Guy Williams' 3-Window Coupe.*



*Max Pople's Top XJC.*



*Paul Collins and his Humber*



*Pete Stubbs just misses the Weiti River.*



*John Castle attempts a 'donut'.*



## WINNERS:

*Left: 1st Place to Andrew Lunt.*

*Right: 2nd Place Stephen Raffills.*







*Andrew Lunt takes first prize.*



*Stephen Raffils gets the box of chocolates.*



*Daimler V8 meets the infamous MET 59.*



*Ford 3 window coupe and Daimler 10 window saloon.*



## **BODY LANGUAGE**

*Caption Competition*

*My thoughts below:*

***Bruce Pitcher:*** "I'm right on this one Paul, and I won't change my mind".

***Paul Collins:*** "I don't care".

## Focus on the Marque: Ford Capri: “The car you always promised yourself”

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The Ford Capri made its sensational debut at the 1969 Brussels International Motor Show. Apparently the inspiration came from Ford of America's phenomenally successful Mustang, launched in 1964.



*1969 Mark 1 Ford Capri.*

Initial sales exceeded the predicted demand by 100 per cent, because the Capri created a new breed of car on the UK side of the Atlantic. Here, at last, was a sleek, eye-catching 'fastback' that bridged the gap between the traditional two-seater sports car and the family saloon. The Capri concept was made all the more attractive by a remarkably wide choice of engines from a 1.3-litre to the lusty 3.0-litre V6 — and by a range of factory-fitted option packs. It all added up to a four-seater whose performance, looks, comfort and convenience could be tailored to suit individual preferences and pockets.

The newcomer also became a hit in the United States after appearing at the 1970 New York Motor Show. More than 500,000 Capris were exported to North America.

Ford's policy being one of constant improvement, engineers were soon working on a significantly revised version, despite the original selling like iced drinks in a heatwave. Unveiled early in 1974, the new Capri featured a tailgate, rather than a conventional boot lid, which made the rakish hatchback an even more practical proposition. Other changes included bigger side windows — notably for the benefit of backseat passengers — additional soundproofing and the optional availability of power-assisted steering.

Ghia versions of the 2.0-litre and 3.0-litre Capris added even more value-for-money luxury to the line-up. Features included alloy wheels, tinted glass, a tilt-or-slide sunroof, and special bodyside mouldings. At the top of the performance range, a useful power increase accompanied by bigger brakes raised the 3000GT's top speed to 116 mph and chopped the 0-60 mph time from 10.2 to exactly 9.0 seconds. (Ford Test Figures)



*1974 Mark II Capri.*



Another big step forward was taken in 1978, following an extensive research programme that concentrated on the subtle science of aerodynamics. The result was a Capri that combined greatly enhanced efficiency with lines that were more attractive than ever.

Most of the energy-saving improvements were made at the front, where key features a spoiler, a smoother bonnet line, and a radiator grille whose 'aerofoil' louvres were carefully shaped to reduce drag at open road speeds. Extending major services intervals to 12,000 miles helped reduce ownership costs by an astonishing 44 per cent over a typical two-year period. A laminated windscreen became standard equipment, right across the range.

Thanks to a dramatic increase in aerodynamic efficiency, the hard charging Capri 3000S now combined 0-60 mph in 8.5 seconds with a 122 mph top speed. (Ford Test Figures)

Ford's Special Vehicle Engineering group was entrusted with developing the Capri 2.8i that made its debut at the 1981 Geneva Motor Show. Based at the Research and Engineering centre in Essex, SVE decided to adopt the 2.8-litre V6 with Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection, plus lowered suspension, thicker anti-roll bars, gas-filled shock absorbers, and wide-rim alloy wheels fitted with Goodyear's 205/60VR NCT tyres.

The specification also included a five-speed gearbox, a limited-slip differential (1984 onwards) and ventilated disc brakes for the front wheels. All this translates into a car that goes with wonderful eagerness', the Autocar test team enthused after rocketing from 0-60 mph to just 7.9 seconds.

The Capri 2.8 Injection Special with seven-spoke alloy wheels, leather edged seats and other attractive features joined the popular 1.6-litre and 2.0-litre Laser models in 1984. Packed with performance and character, it paved the way for the superb Capri 280. Ford's stylish Capri goes from strength to strength and is proof that sporting characteristics can be blended with the more down-to-earth virtues of a practical, family sized car.



*1978 Mark III Capri.*



*1986 Ford Capri Laser.*

*Editor: As far as interesting photos go you have now seen all the four various body styles of the Capri. Ford, however, have been masters of tweaks and touches to give a constant stream of newer, better features to the basic Capri platform. The remaining three pages outline the details of those tweaks. Each feature in itself is just a small jump, but added together the upgrades and tweaks are a masterclass on how to extend the profitable market life of a single design for nearly 18 years. Capris across the world have now reached the "Gold" status and are one of the most sought after classics in the market.*

Before the Capri's launch there was a traditional landmark in the lives of those who enjoyed driving something special. It was the sad day when the rakish two seater had to be exchanged for a saloon.

The arrival of the Capri changed all that. It provided the perfect cocktail of multi-seat convenience, personality packed styling, performance and value-for-money luxury blended with a liberal dash of that exclusive ingredient called panache. Few cars have ever appealed to quite so many people.

In keeping with Ford's overall philosophy, the Capri story has been one of steady development. The latest Laser and 2.8 Injection Special come from an engineering team with a world-wide reputation for making a good thing even better.

The original 'car you always promised yourself' was such a resounding international success that more than a million had been built before the adoption of a tailgate turned the Capri into a versatile hatchback. Ford then concentrated on the wind tunnel, where exhaustive tests improved the Capri's aerodynamic efficiency while making its styling more attractive than ever.

Technical expertise is not needed to appreciate how smoothly and sweetly the bonnet sweeps down to a wind-cheating radiator grille. Equally significant is the way the bodywork below the bumper is sculpted to ease air under the car and past the front wheels. In addition, the Laser and 2.8 Injection Special sport a black, tailgate mounted spoiler. Attractive as well as functional, it goes well with the Capri's long-nosed, low-slung styling.

Smooth, flexible, fuel-efficient engines producing up to 160 PS provide performance in keeping with the strong visual appeal.

Ford's beautifully responsive three-speed automatic transmission is optional with the punchy 2.0-litre power unit, but the company's five-speed manual gearbox is standard equipment on the lively Laser and hard-charging Injection Special.

Light and precise-just like the clutch - the gearshift is right in line with the Capri's sporting character.

The suspension reflects the Capri's unique, wide-ranging appeal. Developed over millions of road miles and in the hectic, high-technology world of racing, it combines the comfort of a saloon with the crisp handling and tenacious road-holding demanded by today's most enthusiastic drivers. Rack-and-pinion steering has always been associated with performance cars. The Capri's make light work of parking without compromising the 'feel' and quick, clean reactions needed on the open road.



Features praised when MOTOR magazine put the 2.8 Injection Special through its paces included 'truly superb' Recaro seats, and the Capri's S traditionally taut handling characteristics. 'Although power-assisted, its steering retains feel and is quick and precise yet well weighted, the testers reported. 'You always know exactly what's happening to the front wheels, which makes mid-corner steering corrections easy to apply.' Equipment and trim levels highlight Ford's reputation for value-for-money quality, For instance, all Capris feature a sunroof, twin door mirrors with remote control on the driver's side, a laminated windscreen, a heated rear window, tailgate wash/wipe, integral rear fog lamps, reversing lights and a lockable cap for the 13-gallon fuel tank. Inside, flexibility is one of the most attractive facets of the Capri's character. It is basically a four-seater, but the back seats can be folded, together or individually, to optimise luggage space. Load length then increases from 36" to 65.3" with a maximum width of over 50".

The fundamental virtues of the Capri design have inevitably attracted the attention of Ford's Special Vehicle Engineering team. Their unrivalled know-how makes the 2.8 Injection Special a genuine supercar whose price is as attractive as its performance. If only there could be a future generation of Capri models but, alas, 1986 was the final Capris assembled at the Cologne factory. The Capri always sold well which is, of course, one very good reason why Ford should have continued its production, even though its identity no longer conforms with the present Ford range.

If you liked the Capri shape you had to have one since, as the Ford Public Relations people said, "It's the car you always promised yourself." As a prospective owner, the choice was yours, performance or economy. There is no argument that, performance wise, the Capri offered excellent value for money.

The Capri changed its identity halfway through its life, with a hatchback body providing even more practical motoring for Ford enthusiasts. Designed for the UK and European markets, it suited our roads and climatic conditions well, even though a few of us would have been delighted to accept a convertible version. Its straightforward mechanical layout, of leaf-spring rear axle and MacPherson strut front end, rack and pinion steering and a choice of engines, all taken from other existing Ford models, made the Capri a winner with the DIY mechanic or tuner.

The only criticism the Capri deserves is its restricted rear leg room and limited luggage space compared to the new generation of hatchback designs but, compared to many of its sporting rivals during its day, the Capri has a great deal to offer and has proved capable of providing every day practical motoring with plenty of class.

*If you've managed to reach the end of this article (Well done!) . You may find the final page overleaf interesting as the timeline of all the Capri upgrades and versions are explained on a single page. Thanks to Mike Garner for all his research and efforts in preparing this article.*

- JULY 1966** The Ford management of Great Britain decide to go ahead with the manufacture of the 'Colt' (the codename for the Capri derived from the Ford Mustang).
- OCTOBER 1967** The now characteristic rear U-shape side windows were fitted in place of those originally drawn up for the Colt. First prototypes were already being tested and complaints, from rear passengers, of a claustrophobic feeling, meant that the side windows had to be modified. The original 'Colt' name was dropped following the discovery that the Japanese already held the copyright.
- NOVEMBER 1968** Manufacture begins at both the German and British plants.
- JANUARY 1969** The Capri makes its first official public debut at Brussels Motor Show.
- MARCH 1969** The 2000GT introduced for the UK market, fitted with the V4 engine.
- SEPTEMBER 1969** The 3000GT introduced, powered by the Ford Zodiac 'Essex' 3-litre V6.
- MARCH 1970** The 3000E goes on sale, the Executive treatment consisting of vinyl roof, cloth insert seats and opening rear windows.
- SEPTEMBER 1970** Power assisted brakes become standard across the range, together with an improvement in lighting.
- SEPTEMBER 1971** The first of many special edition models introduced. The first, based on the 2000GT, painted in bright vista orange with rear window slats and a bootlid mounted spoiler.
- OCTOBER 1971** 3000GT given increased power output — hotter camshaft and larger inlet valves, re-shaped inlet ports and larger jets in the twin choke carburettors plus tubular exhaust manifolds; 3.09:1 final drive and new set of gearbox ratios; softer rear suspension; improved brakes.
- JUNE 1972** All models received the now characteristic 3-litre bonnet bulge.
- SEPTEMBER 1972** Facelift for the Mk I consists of larger lamps for both front and rear of the car, revised facia, two-spoke steering wheel, anti-roll bar fitted to rear in place of the original link rear axle with softer suspension. The new 3000GXL built with uprated gearbox and quad headlights. The UK range includes the 1300L, the single overhead cam 1600XL/GT and the V4-2000GT.
- AUGUST 1973** 1,000,000th Mk I Capri built.
- DECEMBER 1973** • Production finished.
- JANUARY 1974** Limited run of the RS3100, officially 1000 manufactured for Group 2 Racing, featuring front and rear spoilers and overbored 'Essex' V6 engine.
- FEBRUARY 1974** Mk II Capri introduced. Mechanically similar but now offered with choice of power steering and new body style featuring three doors; trim levels include the Ghia.
- MARCH 1975** Capri S (Midnight), painted black with gold coachlines, gold alloy wheels, black interior with gold cloth inserts for seating.
- OCTOBER 1975** The 'S' model established as regular production model.
- OCTOBER 1976** UK factory stops production of the Capri; from now on all manufacturing transferred to Germany.
- AUGUST 1977** The Capri no longer built for the USA market.
- MARCH 1978** Mk III Capri introduced, revised bumpers to include plastic quarters, quad headlamps, metal front spoiler and new grille.
- MARCH 1981** 2.8i Capri; petrol injection fitted, together with Granada V6 ventilated front discs, new suspension, alloy wheels and new interior trim.
- JANUARY 1983** Five-speed gearbox fitted to 2.8i with upgraded interior trim.
- FEBRUARY 1983** Range reduced to LS, S and 2.8i. LS and S models gain the 2.8i-based interior. The 'S' gains the 2.8i-based suspension.
- NOVEMBER 1983** Tickford introduce full turbo production, rear disc brakes, limited slip differential, luxury interior and body-styling modifications.
- JUNE 1984** Laser announced.
- OCTOBER 1984** 2.8i 'S' launched, with leather seats, limited slip differential and new alloy wheels.
- JUNE 1986** 2.8i Turbo Technics announced.
- NOVEMBER 1986** Final production of the Capri. Special Edition 280 model launched, based on the 2.8i S.



# Committee Notes: Precis of March 2024

Committee Meeting from Maurice Whitham.

Progress  
April 2024

**New Members:** A. Followell and F. Lester

## Notes:

**Open Day:** We need members to attend on the day to assist. The rest of the organization is under control.

**By Laws:** Latest versions have been published in Progress with no comments apart from the Disciplinary Process, which needs a little tinkering and Head Office Approval. Committee to discuss and finalise at the May committee meeting.

**Wide Span Shed:** The underlay on the five span roof is deteriorating and Wide Span is to look at the shed on Thursday.

**Deceased Estate:** Parts, motorbikes and a car have been received from a deceased estate on behalf of National Office. The intention is that they will be stored pending a sale by tender.

**Roller Door Parts Shed:** Danks have been asked to have a look at the roller doors. They are very difficult to lift and need adjusting. Arnold Van Zon to arrange. Both doors in the restoration shed to be looked at as well. Approved.

**Overland Engine:** An old seized engine is to be painted and then mounted under the Brooklands sign on a small plinth.

**Low Alarm battery:** Arnold Van Zon raised the issue of a low battery alert on the alarm system. To be checked.



*Some early Triumph TRs with an Austin Healy and an E-Type? Ardmore Open Day. Thanks to Tony Sparkes.*

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**Phone:** 09-4792779: **email:** [northshorevcc@gmail.com](mailto:northshorevcc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.northshorevcc.com](http://www.northshorevcc.com)

**Club Nights:** Every Wednesday from 7.30pm.

**Restoration Shed:** Every Tuesday & Thursday morning 9am - 12pm.

**Committee Meetings:** Last Monday of the month, 6.00pm.

**Club Runs:** Normally 12.30-1pm start, 3rd Sun. of month. Always check the 'Upcoming events'.

**VERO Branch Reference Number:** HO0300144 (Quoting this number when renewing your insurance gives a small commission back to the club).

## Club Committee

**Chairman:** John Higham 09-478-7973

**Vice-Chairman:** Terry Flude: 021 958 678

**Secretary:** Maurice Whitham 09-627-0310 or 027-296-9293

**Treasurer:** Ross Moon 09-426-1508 or 022 426 1508

**Club Captain:** John Castle: 09 479 4135 or 021 957 032

**Club Delegate:** Tony Sparkes 09-473-5872 or 027-499-5588

### GENERAL COMMITTEE Members:

**Stuart Battersby:** 022 471 2759

**James Liu:** 021 0274 4158

**Richard Lloyd:** 09-420-5048 or 027-483-2898

**Andrew Lunt:** 0274 996 803

**Barb Stubbs:** 0274 768 120 or 09 420 4094

**Arnold Van Zon:** 09 473 5750 or 027 2765336

### OTHER CLUB OFFICERS (Non Committee)

**Members' Garage Manager:** Kevin Lord 027 235 0142 or 09 413 9157

**Welfare Officer:** Brian Bisset 09 554 1740

**Librarian:** Kevin Benseman 022 678 5629

**Beaded Wheels Correspondent:** Richard Bampton 09 947 3042

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