

Wheels with Attitude

2nd February 2014

by Jamie McFarland

Sunday the 2nd of Feb was the annual Wheels with Attitude show at the A&P Showgrounds in Dannevirke. This year's theme was "the Best of British" and was centred around the old BMC car company product sold through the Wright Stephenson company in Dannevirke which for a number of decades was the leading car sales company in the Tararua... some would say that's where my interest in P76's stems from as my family bought a large number of cars from this dealership over the years including a couple of P76's new in the mid 70's.

Ron Butler and family made the trek up from the Kapiti Coast which was great; they also claimed a couple of entry draw prizes (for the second successive Dannevirke Show! - stay at home next time Ron, give the rest of us a chance!) His car was looking splendid as always. Our own was looking slightly worse for wear as it's in prep stage for a respray, but hope to have it tidied up over the next year, time will be on our side especially now the family F100 is all but finished bar upholstery.



In terms of what was there, obviously a large number of Austin and Wolseley product, most of which is still housed locally which is very cool and shows the strength that Wright Stephenson had in the local car sales market, a large number of American muscle dating from mostly 50's up to today's latest, Chev Camaro, Ford Mustang and Dodge Challenger product. A lot of interest was shown in our 12 year project copper coloured '56 F100. We had an approach from a NZV8 Magazine staffer about a feature with the F100. Look out for this later in the year once some cows are sacrificed for seat coverings. A lot of interest in some retro caravans, including a couple towed in by a very nice Zodiac wagon (I think a Zodiac, me and British Fords don't mix well) and a Hillman Hunter Wagon a model which I've never seen before, so that was cool.

(Many moons ago I worked for DSIR and we had a Spanish Olive coloured Hunter wagon)

Car of the show in my opinion was a 1936 Auburn Boat Tail Coupe, owned by an expat Dannevirke couple, this is a 7 litre straight 8 supercharged engine (effectively a cut down aircraft engine) and all were hand built and if you have seen the quality of this car it would be said to be the American Bentley of its time. A very special car where the selling point was they were all tested to 100mph before delivery to the customer, of which stars of the day, the likes of Clark Gable owned examples of. According to Geoff, the owner, back in the day of these cars it was said that "if you have money buy a Cadillac, if you have money and class you buy an Auburn!"

An interesting day out, unfortunately for the organisers the local A&P show was on at the same time so people were packing up from that and cars were intermingled with the show people, also the horse people packed a pad and wanted the main arena to themselves this year so the car entries were on either side of the main hall and not in one big group which upset some, it would have been nicer to be in a big single group but at least you got fit walking back and forth!

I'm looking forward to 2015 show and hopefully a greater turnout of P76's!

The photographs are from Masterton Morris Minor enthusiast John Chesmar, he has a "few". That he took both the McFarland's truck and Ron's P76 are testament to the quality of the vehicles.

The McFarland family 1956 F100 Ford Super Custom Truck — followed by a Newman tractor, Ron's P76 TFR V8, a classic NZ racing coupe, a 36 Ford and one of several Ferrari's on display. A lot of everything imaginable goes to Dannevirke, hell a lot of it comes from within Dannevirke.

