

National Rally/AGM Gisborne 2021

We all went on a summer holiday - to the Gisborne 2021 National Rally and AGM.



[The Bridge Span lot: Apologies in advance. L to R, Back to Front, Colin Edmonds, Dorothy Blair, Graeme Storer, Eric Connor, Gordon Gruebner, Mike King, Karl van der Brink, Ron Butler, Colleen Francis, Brian Francis, Ken McKenzie Roy Buchanan, Brian Morris, Alex Reid, Jan Moore, Mark Hammond, Andrew Larsen, Ian Burroughs, Karen King, Stephen King, Steve Learmonth, Lesley Connor, and Kim Taymezzo.

Doug Richie, Don Edmonds, Debbie Larsen, Paula Buchanan, Don Learmonth, Jan Richie, Christine Hammond, Jan Gruebner, Carmen King, Sonya Jones, Rob Jones, Lyn Morris, David Timms, Maria Williams, and Edward Tubman.]

There is much to be written about this great event and here I shall cover off the statistics and the bits that Sonya and I did with the company of a couple of other couples that were a little off the main route undertaken by the larger group.

As most of you know we try to take the road less travelled. On this occasion with us staying in Puketapu at my brothers the road was pretty straightforward but made better by a successful visit to a new memorabilia shop in Dannevirke along the way. We in fact started from Palmerston North rather than Masterton as Sonya had business there on the Wednesday. Thursday saw a bit of a family reunion at Puketapu, and Friday was the beginning of the P76 members' reunion at the old Ahuriri Tavern in Napier where seven p76's as usual attracted a lot of attention from the passing public. There we met Jan, Ron, Ken, Roy and Paula, Eric and Lesley, Brian and Lyn and with us that was seven. A bit further up the road near the Bay View BP, being rapidly rebuilt after a terrible fire we met Don Learmonth, Ian Burroughs and Brian and Colleen, giving us ten P76's travelling in convoy through Whirinaki and onto Wairoa, well until the first really big hill where we dropped back a bit being in the 3 speed 6.

We had agreed to travel the back road from Wairoa to Gisborne with Eric and Lesley, taking in the sights as we went, however, when we arrived in Wairoa there were no Leyland's to be seen anywhere! Quick call put the Connor's in Frasertown where Eric was keen to visit so we met there and had lunch. Not much there really and I can only assume the towns rail history was what attracted Eric, but then I had history there too with the old NZED from the mid-'70s.

The little store had enough lunch for us and tables outside to sit at and eat and watch the world go by from – here we planned to stop at the Tiniroto Tavern for refreshment, it was buzzing, luckily we ate earlier. Along the way, we found the Te Reinga Marae and Falls and went for a look. You wouldn't believe that in the middle of nowhere we had to turn left in front of a huge logging truck only to have to pull over immediately in front of him – bloody tourists you could almost hear him saying! The falls were lovely but fenced off so photos weren't a thing but there was the bridge across the river, only just big enough for the truck but ample room for Eric, George and Lesley to pose on. We record George on many a country bridge just like the club visits lighthouses and steam trains. It is one of our things.



My intended photoshoot at Tiniroto did not come out as planned but no matter. Refreshed and having educated some of the locals most politely about the cars we headed onwards along SH36. It really is a beautifully scenic drive that we all enjoyed doing. And then we were in Gisborne looking to check-in and find the Sunshine brewery, well not that quickly but we did.

There was a particularly good turnout for the NR&AGM, forty dedicated souls including twelve from the Southern Group. Brilliant. And over the weekend we were joined by a non-member in a nice HOTO Deluxe that has previously graced our Wainuiomata driveway years ago. Once with Warren and now with Trevor Johnstone. Trevor's car generated a lot of interest amongst members, as did ours with him. See the HOTO below.



Being so bright should lead us into the colour spread. We had 18 Club P76's attending in 9 factory and 2 non-factory colours. Trevor's car made 19 in 10 factory colours even if for only the one day. Most unusually the lead colour was B as B with 4 beating out BA with 3 followed by Nutmeg 2, and that's pretty rare too, Crystal White 2 followed by one each of PMAG, FB, AEB, ON, DR and the non-factory colours RF and DKR.

However, those AWOL should/could have added another AEB, CW and 2 x CB of which there were none. Instead, we had a Lexus, a Honda and an unknown along with Graeme and Dorothy who flew up to Gisborne and had a hire Toyota as I recall.



[Eric and Rob outside the Te Reinga Marae while we walked to the falls of the same name.]

[Te Reinga Falls as well as we could see them from the walkway.]

As mentioned, the unprecedented appearance of 4 Bold as Brass cars scored them the cover. I can only think of one other that could have been there (now 2 more) and in years past would have been. The cars are L to R the Hammond deluxe from Christchurch, the Gruebner Super from Papakura, the Reid Super from Howick and the Larsen Deluxe 6 from Waitara. Great effort from all of you.



There will be more on the weekend in Gisborne in the following issues and maybe even here but now we return the Monday of our departure where Brian and Colleen decided to accompany us to Opotiki via the Waioeka Gorge rather than going around the East Cape. We set off at a dawdling pace stopping at all the historic/scenic spots along the way, even pulling over to let trucks pass us. One of our key destinations was Matawai where we hoped to finally learn the fate of the old Matawai Pub. Sadly, no more this once great watering hole doubling as a museum of local logging and farming history is now closed, a private residence (looked deserted) with the proud Matawai Pub or Tavern sign now removed from the verandah as you can see above. We parked the two P76's precariously on the bend for one last photo



Amongst the many historic places, we stopped and learnt about was a rest area where we found an old railway bridge crossing a river. Camper vanners from Matawai saw us arrive here and had looks of amusement on their faces.

Nutters touring around the country in old cars! A photo of the bridge and two great P76's above the river follow. As you can see, we weren't able to explore the bridge, but we were amazed at the crystal-clear water flowing in the river. Haven't seen river water like that in years.



From here we cruised into Opotiki and settled into our familiar surroundings before the rumbles of others started to arrive. Brian and Colleen visited family and we rested in the café across the road, still a very pleasant experience. So, more tales were to be told by those who had not experienced the magnificence of East Cape before, there is no doubt there is spectacular scenery to see and history to experience on your way around. Most of this discussion took place at the Royal Hotel over dinner. A bustling night, the place was jumping with P Nuts and a couple of birthday parties as well. We had a quiet booth to share with Andrew and Debbie, wonderfully comfortable, great food and refreshment enjoyed by members muddled around the premises as you can see below, a mixed group including Karl, Ken, Alex, Brian, Lyn, Paula, and Edward. The steaks may not have been as MASSIVE as the Gisborne RSA but just as delicious.



The following morning saw us all departing our various ways, happy with another great event, tour and learning experience, boning up on our history and catching up with old and new friends.

We again took as many back roads heading to Taupo for our regular visit to Brian and Sandra's MG emporium, however, we had to abandon GPS Google whatever and vowed to put the Shell Road Map back in the car (why did it ever leave) when we're directed to what appeared to be a 40 + k gravel road with trucks reversing down it. Observation soon put us on a more travelled route, and we still enjoyed some cross country driving before arriving in Taupo. We just don't seem to tire of the green scene and old vehicles and other sights you find in the country. Some damn flash estates too! But 40 K of metal wasn't for us that afternoon. We even stopped for coffee in Taneatua and milkshakes and souvenirs at the Waiotapu Honey shop/café as we took the Broadlands Road through to Taupo, all the while attracting waves from passers-by be they on foot or in cars and trucks. The racetrack was looking very flash too!

After a restful night in Taupo, we started for home along the clear blue sky Desert Road. This was proving to be a lovely drive, the mountains virtually devoid of snow, so much so we turned around and went back to pose us and the car in front of the magnificent view only to have a big ute reverse in beside us and take up the right-side view of all our photos! Really? But we admired the view and discussed it with the ute people before we set off again. As we went through Waiouru we spotted a few P76's in the Army Museum carpark. What an opportunity, we turned around again, and went and parked next to two of the three cars there and immediately attracted comment from a visitor. This we thought would be a great surprise, emailing the photo to the car's owners later on. But nature intervened and I decided I needed the little boys' room and knowing it to be just inside on the ground floor figured we would be safe in our surprise but no, I met Ron as he was leaving said room. Below you can see our car, Ron's and Ken's in all their sunbathed glory.



We travelled through to Taihape and explored a couple of back streets just for fun and settled on a lunch venue.



After lunch, we actually walked Taihape's main street, haven't done that fully before! But we saw no more P76's that day. Proceeding home we turned off before Mangaweka to go through Rangiwahia, Kimbolton, Ashhurst and over the turbine hill to Woodville for another shortstop and onwards to Masterton.

All in all, a great journey and a great weekend, brilliant navigator, thanks Sonya, probably the 2nd biggest steak I've ever eaten, Gisborne Gold, WA165, fantastic museum, lots of wonderful P People and cars and I only needed two car transporters to bring my dream machines home from the museum. But there is so much more and hopefully, a couple of other writers will fill in some of the gaps. 2022 beckons.

National Rally/AGM Prizegiving

The AGM took place at The Vines inside a large marquee of clear plastic construction offering great light (or not if you take photos like I do) and a pleasant outlook into the vineyard. The meeting was despatched quickly, and the official awards were presented by founding member and Past President, Ed Tubman.



The Past Presidents Piston Broke Trophy – Jan Moore – for a broken driver side window



Furthest Travelled Taxi Trophy– Brian and Lyn Morris, Dunedin.



People's Choice Award – Stephen King



Twenty Year membership certificates were also presented to those gaining them and in attendance, on this occasion by President Andrew Larsen. Mike King and Brian and Lyn Morris were the recipients on the day and two others were to be presented later to Bruce Cooper and Ian Hunter, both of whom had been waiting a long time for theirs, say about 22 years! Apologies from he who should do better!



The many Spot Prizes and the big ones from the event's sponsor GAS Petrol Service Stations were presented after the dinner later in the evening. This happy duty was ably undertaken by Ed and Dorothy Blair. Many thanks to Dorothy for adding some glamour to the awards. Here we see Colleen Francis and Carmen Pallesen- King receiving their prizes. There were several others in on the act too

National Rally Highlights

Now to add a few more highlight shots of the National Rally and AGM and what/who/where we saw things happening. You will recall there was an intergroup singing competition to be held using our theme song, Summer Holiday. This was won hands down by the Southern Group who can be seen getting down to the music and giving it their all. I recall Ken, Mark and Graeme in particular, really getting into the swing of things. Sadly, the other groups capitulated so the Southern Group won but no less deservedly so. They were great. And now every time I write/read this the song comes back to me. I should have got it out of my system back in March.



Founder member Don Edmonds and his son Colin came to Gisborne in their CB P76 disguised as a Lexus. Don pops up all over the place and they were a late but welcome entry to the weekend. We talked about the family getting involved in the supposedly small amount of work needed to get CB back in action. See you and it in New Plymouth next year old mate. Don has popped up at numerous events around the North Island in particular and often surprises us when he walks in the door, or tent.

Jan Moore introduced the members to an amazing accessory, a probably expensive variation on the 44-

gallon drum in the boot. Jan and Malcolm's drum as you can see below is fitted with a lift up lid that acts as a padded seat back with a seat cushion fitted as well. The cushion lifts out to allow storage in the body of the drum. There are carry



handles on each end and stabilising feet fitted. Beautifully finished in Dry Red with Parchment upholstery to match their (first) car there can surely be no better way to decorate your P76 boot space. This accessory is so spectacular it later appeared in the July issue of Petrolhead along with Jan and Malcolm's DR D and Frank Waghorn Jnr's BA S V8. Reefton held a little car show netting about 285 cars! Google it. As you can see it fits two.





As we know Edward arranged a great sponsorship deal with the Gas Fuel Company. The group that went around East cape certainly took advantage of their petrol supplies even if it was too late to win a spot prize. This photo shows a line-up of V8's at Ruatoria (I think, we went the other way) It's an unusual way to have a car show but it seems to attract a lot of onlookers when we all line up for fuel!

Another car to make a hit in Gisborne was the PMAG Executive custom P76 from Waikouaiti with Brian and Lyn Morris aboard. Always a great looking car this time it was sporting "Lake Pipes" and sounding extra special. Featured previously with its colour coded rear louvre, boot lid aerofoil, flash mags and black

leather interior, she is a beauty.



National Rally & AGM 2021 visit to the East Coast Museum of Technology

Undoubtedly one of the highlights of the weekend for many of us was this visit, the one where we took the big group photo, and the rather interestingly curved line of Leyland's, not the greatest photo for viewing all the cars but special in its own way. Sorry Mike!



There were restoration/trade training workshops as well, indeed one was working on a chassis I surmised to be of military origin but hey, I'm guessing. The worker was heard to say that it is harder to get young people into the place to do some of the urgently needed work and assist with restoration and maintenance AND learn some valuable skills along the way.

I mentioned previously how I'd need two car transporters to take my wish list home. Maybe one with a big low loader would be better. The Dennis F8 and Leyland Comet fire appliances along with the DX Vauxhall, the Kimberley (reupholstered in an astonishing multi tone green) the Morris 8 E type and if space allowed a further difficult choice or two could be made. Along with several smaller exhibits of course, the pedal car and dolls house for Abby and some models for me. There was a wealth of historic everything on display. Domestic appliances, steam engines, toys, cars, trucks and tractors, period furniture, artworks, lawnmowers, prams, signs, bottle agricultural equipment. I think I even saw a boat. Stoves, typewriters, big model boats, washing machines that really looked scary, tools, radio equipment, B&W televisions, period clothing, photos and paintings! Like I said, where to stop? Here, I think. What follows is in part my wish list but no less interesting to many of you, I'm sure.

Absolutely go there if you are in Gisborne



(above) Dolls house and pedal cars.



(Right) Dennis F8 fire appliance

This machine was in beautiful condition, they have fascinated me since I was a kid, our local Volunteer Fire Brigade having one if not two in service when I lived in Haumoana. Whilst talking to the bloke in charge of the extensive Fire Appliance collection I learnt that our old machine has been fully restored and is now in Napier. This made me very happy.

The Fire Engine shed was huge and held many great and quite unusual exhibits of more than just fire appliances, but they were very close together, so photos weren't really an option. My machine was at the front luckily!



Dennis lawnmower, whoever knew they made something like this?



Vintage Pram, used for car sickness training maybe?



Leyland Comet NZ Fire Service tanker, don't you just love it. A local Gisborne unit.



And sticking to the Fire Appliance theme, a vintage never heard of before Denby Appliance stunningly restored.