

# NORTH ISLAND MODEL A FORD CLUB INC. - NEW ZEALAND

Chapter Members of:



## MODEL A TORQUE

Month: April 2025

Issue Number: 2025/3



### Welcome to the North Island Model A Ford Club Inc.

The purpose of our club is to enjoy, restore, preserve, and protect the Model A Ford automobile and to foster a spirit of good fellowship and family participation using the Model A Ford.

Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the Model A Ford. Ownership is not a prerequisite

**[Visit our website www.modelafordclub.co.nz](http://www.modelafordclub.co.nz) for new events, articles & updates.**

## *Model A Ford Club Upcoming Event Planner 2024*

Date	Day	Event	Details
14 <sup>th</sup> May	Wednesday	Tech Night	
17 <sup>th</sup> May	Saturday	Te Aroha Run	Cars and a Monarchy collection
11 <sup>th</sup> June	Wednesday	Tech Night	
14 <sup>th</sup> June	Saturday	Club Run	Putaruru Timber Museum
19 <sup>th</sup> July	Saturday	Ryders	Dinner and Movie

*The committee are working on events for the upcoming year. Please keep a watch on the website [www.modelafordclub.co.nz](http://www.modelafordclub.co.nz) for any recent updates.*

### ***FYI below – Non-North Island Model A Ford Club Events 2024***

*If you are aware of an event coming up, please let the editor know so we can share, thank you.*

Date	Day	Event
10 <sup>th</sup> May	Saturday	Pukekohe Swapmeet Meremere

**Print this page off for reminders and stick to your fridge!  
or keep an eye on the website for updates.**



<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/ford-model-a-truck-a-farmers-market-favourite-in-waikato-and-bay-of-plenty/GNGXQVYFVVHLVHZIOUT5NSOEPA/>

## Club Run 17<sup>th</sup> May

### Visit to Bill and Angela Thompson's Car and Memorabilia Collection

109 Centennial Ave, Te Aroha 3320. Saturday 17-5-25



**Bring your own picnic lunch & deck chairs.**

Assemble 0930 Waitomo petrol station Bombay for 10.00 departure.

Route notes given on the day.

Contact person: **Terry Costello** 027 492 0642

## Club Tech Night Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May

Location and subject to be advised

## Club Run 14<sup>th</sup> June to Putaruru Timber Museum



Meet at BP service centre Drury at 9am for a 9.30am departure

Route notes on the day, with some interesting back roads to follow.



Destination is at 1331 SH1 Putaruru (southern side of town)

Museum entry \$7 per person. Entry to large model railway display on site \$5 per person

See [nztm.org.nz](http://nztm.org.nz) for information on this interesting museum

**Ryders dinner and Movie Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July maximum 50 people.**

**Book your place now by texting or emailing Andrew Costello 021 943 063**

**[Nimafc.viccaptain@gmail.com](mailto:Nimafc.viccaptain@gmail.com)**

## Grand Designs

At the National Rally for those that were interested, we said we would let members know when our episode of Grand Designs will be screened.

Our Grand Design episode will be on TVNZ 8<sup>th</sup> June 7.30 pm.

Thank you.

Kind Regards

Garry & Fiona Learmonth

## Club Captain's Report

Greetings to all members and enthusiasts of the North Island Model A Ford Club. As we reflect on the past period, it has been a fantastic time filled with camaraderie, exciting events, and a shared passion for these timeless automobiles. Our club continues to thrive, bringing together enthusiasts from all corners of the world (I can say) to celebrate the legacy of the Model A Ford.



Over the past month we have participated in the Club run organised by John Castle and no doubt a few ropees (people roped into help) where we went to Mike's collection out west and it was a very relaxing time viewing his collection, enjoying the sunshine for our morning tea and then Huapai Golf club for lunch. This was a great venue as you could choose food from the cabinet or off the menu therefore something for everyone. Thanks John and co.

We also had the tech night in Terry Costello's shed/garage once again. Where we had parts for sale and our Editor put his other hat on, as an electrician, and showed interested people how to time a Model A engine as well as how to test a generator. Supper was provided by attendees and once more, more than enough. Thanks to our events team, Andrew and Terry, for organising and Rob for his commitment. Each event has strengthened our community, providing opportunities to share knowledge, swap stories, and appreciate these magnificent vehicles.



From my point of view, not having a vintage on the road is no reason not to attend. Also remember just because you have been somewhere before that the destination is only part of the reason for going, the main reasons are in sharing our passion, knowledge and friendship. Like when I asked if we could share a ride in someone's "A" and we were able to leave our modern car at home and ride with Bill Duffy and John Castle who both were probably just as pleased to have the company. Thankyou to you both.

Looking forward, we have exciting events coming along, don't forget to check them out in the "Torque" Newsletter or on the website. Make sure you add them to your own calendars, so you don't double book out. We also, maybe not so exciting unless we all make it so, have the AGM in September (4 months away). I hear the groans from here; however, it is a necessary part of any club. So time to think about how you may be able to assist, with modern day media you don't have to attend committee meetings in person. I have been away from home and attended committee meetings from the venue I have been staying at. New blood keeps ideas flowing and a healthy club. We encourage all members to actively participate, as your enthusiasm and support are what keep this club strong. Thank you to all members for your continued dedication and passion for the Model A Ford. It's through your efforts that our club remains a thriving community. Let's keep the engines running and the history alive.

Warm regards,

Wade                      Captain, North Island Model A Ford Club

## Club run to Mike Courtney's collection.

My son Toby and myself, Andrew, started our adventure at 7am from Waiuku. Great weather for travelling. After stopping at Karaka to get some fuel Toby hopped in the driver's seat. Toby had previously driven the Road Ranger crash gearbox but alas the Model A not only has the crash gearbox it also has the brake and accelerator peddles swapped over just to add to the fun. Toby did a marvellous job in his new task.

We travelled to the designated start position and was 30 minutes early so we went to the local Mitre 10 Columbus Coffee and supped on a coffee and a chat. When we returned to the car Toby was back in the driving seat although instead of putting his foot on the clutch peddle he pressed the starter button in gear and also the brake pedal. The starter was working hard going nowhere. The more I suggested to take his left foot off the pedal and put it on the clutch the more he was sure his foot was on the clutch. Like a good Laurel and Hardy show. Well the result was a melted kill switch. I was in two minds that morning as to whether to bring my tool kit along and decided to put it in just in case.

We walked from the Mitre 10 carpark and back over to the start designation carpark to inform the guys and receive the travel destination instructions. This of course resulted in the handbrake award. I wasn't thinking about the prestigious award and more on the task at hand.

Back to the car with Terry and Jos' support. Toby's first Model A breakdown and after suggesting he could get under and fix the issue there was no hesitation and he got straight under the car and removed the kill switch wiring and bolted the ends together. Then taped and cable tied it up under the car and off we went. I was now in the Navigator's seat and managed to lead us in the wrong direction but hey we got to Mike Courtney's place. Fortunately I was advised of John Castle's misdemeanour of going in a wrong direction so like a good first five eight I rugby passed the Handbrake award on to John Castle. That was a win.

We arrived safely at Mike Courtney's place, and thanks to Mike and Kirsten for arranging this fantastic collection of cars from Model A's to speedsters, a Model T and even some well presented Austin 7's. Also in his fine collection was some talented garden art and of course it was great to have morning tea there and thanks to John Castle for organising the day. (and for so graciously accept the Handbrake Award.)

15 Model A's ventured out today. Then it was off to lunch at the Huapai Golf course and catch up again with good friends. We left earlier to go to another engagement but enjoyed the time together Model A friends and my son.

Thanks to all for a great day. Andrew Costello



# Report of the New Zealand 17<sup>th</sup> National Model A Rally – Masterton NZ

23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February 2025

The 17<sup>th</sup> National Model A Rally from 23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 brought together 256 participants from throughout NZ, Australia, UK and USA, accompanied by 142 Model A Fords, all assembling in Masterton, 100 kilometres north-east of the capital city Wellington.

Coming from Western Australia, my wife Beverley and I had already travelled 5,500 kilometres to pick up the club car owned by the Canterbury NZ Chapter of MAFCA from Christchurch. Nearly 40 years ago club members resolved to build to original factory specifications a 1928 Model A Phaeton. Over the intervening four decades the car has served the club well.

We began our journey with the 200 mile drive to Picton to catch the car ferry to Wellington in the lower part of the North Island. Along the way we travelled through mountains, then hugged the shore line of the Pacific Ocean, entranced by spectacular vistas of bays and inlets, with seals and dolphins in abundance frolicking in the ocean close to shore.

New Zealand roads offer many challenges, particularly when driving a Model A in the rain, winding our way through mountain ranges on Highway 2, the main access way separating Wellington from the eastern hinterland. The famous Rimutaka Hill is a particular challenge, with numerous narrow corners signposted variously at 25 to 35kph, overlooking vast drops to deep ravines below. The going can be slow, yet most motorists give a toot of approval when overtaking. These mountain passes were originally built when the Model A was in its hey-day, yet nearly a century later the Model A is still able to demonstrate it is up to any task.



The host city of Masterton is also the location of Hood Aerodrome which has the largest collection of airworthy World War 1 aircraft anywhere in the world. In the original planning for the Rally it was to be preceded by the “*Wings over Wairarapa Air Festival*”, which was cancelled after most had already made their accommodation bookings.

However, initial disappointment turned to joy with rally participants in their Model As invited to an exclusive viewing feast of British, German, Dutch and US bi-plane and tri-plane fighter aircraft. Flying constantly in aerial formation, pilots and aircraft practised their manoeuvres from early morning to dusk throughout the week, interspersed with combat-dive demonstrations, all in preparation for the “*Classic Fighters Air Show*”, highlighting the “*Golden Age of Aviation*” from the 1920s and 1930s, which was to be held in Blenheim, Marlborough, over the 2025 Easter weekend. It was an exciting and very memorable era-perfect bonus, serving as the introduction to a week of old-style Model A rallying.



At the opening gathering the litany of those whose vehicles had experienced difficulties en-route were revealed, with the North Island Club Captain, Wade and Trisha Alexander, organisers of the rally, amongst the number whose Model A did not make it to the starting gate. However, as Model A owners well know,

unexpected events lead to new opportunities and friendships. Beverley and I were able to offer Wade and Trisha a ride, sharing the hospitality already experienced by us from the Canterbury Club. Such encounters demonstrate why Model A communities are quite special.



The Rally began in earnest with an all-day display, with many dressing in their period finery, adding to the magic of the occasion. For the following four days cars and participants were divided into four colour groupings of 35 cars each, with a different tour each day, covering over 500 miles of diverse and challenging roads, much of it akin to 1928 pre-production road-test conditions.

The first day out for Green Group was the 150 mile return run over eight hours to Cape Palliser Lighthouse, located on one of the roughest areas of the Pacific east coast of New Zealand.



After traversing vineyards and quaint villages, it was on in earnest with many ascents and descents on narrow gravel roads, avoiding large rocks, tracing coastal cliff-top pathways, delicately navigating fords over streams flowing across roads, while admiring numerous seal colonies as we tracked the coast.



Finally arriving at Cape Palliser another challenge awaited ageing Model A crews, with 500 stairs to be negotiated for a most magnificent view of coastline and ocean. It was definitely not a day for the faint-hearted!



The second day was a more "mild" 60 mile run that was also competitive, with pages of questions for navigators to answer. Driving rain was no barrier to determined Model A enthusiasts, embracing the Pukaha Wildlife Sanctuary before being riotously entertained over lunch by the Irish owner of the "La Gra" Winery, Gaelic for "With Love", in honour of his wife and daughter.

Motoring on we encountered a most magnificent Greek Orthodox Church in the middle of a farm paddock, with exquisite iconography, equal to anything in Europe. The day concluded with a visit to the Pointon Car Museum,



a tribute to every aspect of motoring nostalgia; a magnificent collection gathered over a life-time.

Day Three to the Castle Point Lighthouse was the most challenging of all the runs, covering 150 miles over eight hours.



Most roads were rugged and rough through isolated farm country and national parks. Deep ruts to be negotiated in mud; steep climbs and descents requiring use of 1st and 2nd gears.

Following lunch and driving on the beach to Castle Point Lighthouse, it was back to serious early 1930s driving through Castle Point Station; opening and closing farm gates, interspersed with numerous cattle and sheep herds, all being an additional challenge for young players.

Our final day of touring was a more mild 100 mile run to Wharekauhau Beach, followed by a visit to Featherstone, home to the Fell Locomotive Museum, a testimony to the ingenuity of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century railway engineers, devising ways of traversing the rugged Rimutaka Ranges that once formed a barrier between the New Zealand capital of Wellington and eastern inland settlements. Then it was on to the historic town of Greytown and the Cobblestones Museum, bringing together so many aspects of late 19<sup>th</sup> Century New Zealand pioneer life in a rugged and unforgiving environment.



Not to be deterred after many hard days of driving, evening events, including the formal Gala Dinner in era clothing, all added to the magic of a very tightly run and enjoyable rally.

Thanks must be given to the North Island Model A Club for all their hard work in preparing for the well-run event.

Beverley and I also wish to again thank members of our Canterbury Chapter of MAFCA Club for the use of the Club's 1928 Phaeton, which acquitted the entire journey of over 1,100 miles without missing a beat. What magnificent pieces of engineering is the Model A.

Presentations were made for the next two rallies planned: the Australian 29<sup>th</sup> National Model A Meet in Albany, Western Australia, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2026; and the New Zealand 18<sup>th</sup> National Model A Rally, based on Blenheim and Nelson in the South Island from 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2027.

Rallying is always fun in a Model A, proving yet again it is much more about the journey than arriving at the destination.

Wes Hartley

MAFCA Member;  
Canterbury New Zealand Chapter of MAFCA;  
Model A Restorers' Club of Western Australia.



## New Wairarapa Club members

### Following the 17<sup>th</sup> National Rally in Masterton February 2025.

First a little pre-amble!

Prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> Rally, **Graham & Joy Hodder** of Featherston who had Rally No 1, decided to purchase a 1983 3 Series SWB Land Rover from the Bombay area in Auckland. They asked me to inspect it and test drive it for them. I put it up on my hoist and checked the chassis carefully for rust as the chassis is steel and in England they are prone to rust due to salting of the roads in winter. The chassis and springs and bushes etc were all fine as was the rest of the vehicle except for some minor surface rust on the front bumper and slightly perished window seals. It drove very well. For its age it was in excellent order, had been garaged all its life and had only done 78,000 km. On the strength of my report Graham decided to buy the vehicle so I stored it with my Model T until I had time to return to Featherston after the Rally and my youngest daughter's wedding, about a month later.

Graham is the local Chairman of the VCC and ran the Grass Gymkhana competition at the Solway Showgrounds for us.

In preparing for the 17<sup>th</sup> Rally I found out about an amazing walk one can do in the Ruakokopatuna Chasm on Patuna farm, SE of Martinborough, so Alayne, my wife, and I decided to book to do this adventurous walk after delivering the Land-Rover on our trailer which easily takes a Model A Ford, and the Series 3.



The Club had two new membership applications from **Andrew & Fiona Beattie** of Martinborough and **Steve & Helen Simonsen** of Clareville/Carterton shortly after the 17<sup>th</sup> Rally finished, both couples having attended our 'Public Open Day' on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb at the Solway Showgrounds. After our Committee had approved their membership and my having received their Club name-badges only a week before our planned date to drive back to Featherston, it seemed a good idea to deliver the name badges in person and to meet our new members, so that is what we did.

With a big storm raging in the southern Tasman and the west coast of the country experiencing heavy rain we drove south a day earlier than planned to make sure we could do the 'Chasm Walk' before the river swelled with flood waters. We delivered the Land-Rover known as 'Lofty' to Graham and Joy on Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> April arriving about 6pm just in time to 'freshen-up' in our motel before going to dinner with them at the Brac & Bow Restaurant in the Royal Hotel in Featherston. This place is full of 'old world charm' and the food was excellent and well-priced. A 'must' for a meal if any of you readers are in the vicinity in the future.

We made phone calls to our new members to arrange to meet them after doing the Ruakokopatuna Chasm walk which was strenuous but great fun if you don't mind getting wet. The deepest parts of the river gorge were up to about mid-thigh. The scenery was spectacular with some beautiful mossy waterfalls and clear pools with friendly eels/tuna, that probably thought they were going to get some ocering to eat!





Later in the day Andrew Beattie, a local farmer, and his son brought their Teal coloured 1930 Roadster to see us at the Claremont Motel. The car has been in the family for many years and is in excellent order. Name badges were hand delivered.

The next morning on our way back to Auckland we stopped at the multi-award winning Clareville bakery to buy breakfast, coffee and something for morning tea, as well. Their range of breads, pies and cabinet food is amazing.

We then drove a few hundred meters to find Steve and Helen Simonsen.

Steve has had a sand-blasting business and has trained as a wood-worker and mechanic. His extensive workshop looks very 'busy' and is testament to his many skills. He is currently restoring a 1928 Colonial bodied hard-top Model A Pick-up truck which has been about a 10 year project that is now nearing completion. He is



converting it to 12 volts and has just purchased the wiring loom, about the last thing to be fitted, to 'get it going'. Steve found the body in the Tinui rubbish tip and has skillfully restored and repainted it. He has several other cars under various stages of restoration and has some 'dead' Land-Rovers lying about on his property!



We have four 'couple' NIMA Ford Club members in the Wairarapa now, the other two are **Phil & Suzanne Halligan** of the Whangaehu valley who attended the 17<sup>th</sup> Rally. Phil was on gate duty at the Fleet St entrance to the Solway Showgrounds each morning to make sure people got to their correct assembly areas. **Tim & Sue Johnston** from the Tinui area registered to come on the Rally but unfortunately Tim was not well at the time so we did not get to meet him and Sue.

Our trip home was quicker than the trip down despite the heavy rain, and the fuel consumption towing an empty trailer was 50% less than on the trip south!

Martin Rees. 10-4-25.

## Committee Contacts

- **Club Captain** Wade Alexander 0272722130  
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*An extensive report from the American Antique Car Association on a seminar held on Model A Fords by Edward Francis and George De Angelis for the Ford Motor Company, with Lesley R Henry from the Henry Ford Museum, Herman Smith from The Ford Motor Company of Canada and David Lewis from the University of Michigan.*

*It noted such things as the reported 5000 changes made to Model A over the 4 years of production, and covered Engines, Radiator Shells, Carburetors, painting, Hardware, Upholstery and relevant to us in NZ Canadian Fords. (Use the enlarge function to read this. It's the best I can do. Editor)*

Paul Smith (Club Historian & Life Member)

# Model A Fords

## A Record of Some of the Data Covered at the Model A Seminar at the AACA Annual Meeting in February, 1974.

Information kindly loaned by Brian Dunnet.

*The following is based on another of the seminars held at the AACA Annual Meeting. The seminar on Model A Fords was conducted by six men who are well qualified for the task. They are Edward Francis and George DeAngelis of the Ford Motor Company, Leslie R. Henry of the Henry Ford Museum, Herman Smith of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, Lee Atherton, and Professor David Lewis of the University of Michigan. Information covered at the Model A seminar was recorded by Murrell E. Smith.*

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Murrell Smith is presently serving his second consecutive term as President of AACA's Chesapeake Region. Next year the Chesapeake Region will celebrate its 20th Anniversary. Mr. Smith owns a 1929 Model A Ford and a 1930 L-29 Cord Phaeton.

It has been said that there were some 5000 changes made on the Model A Ford during the years it was manufactured—with about 1000 of the changes involving upholstery. In addition to authorized changes, research of unrestored

cars and records reveals that some deviations from standard occurred as the cars progressed through the production lines. All of which complicates things a bit for the conscientious restorer, and for AACA judges. Of course, Ford didn't build Model A's with the expectation that they would be judged at antique car meets some 45 years later!

### Engines

Engines, after being machined, painted and assembled, were placed on a line where several at one time were turned over by electric motors. When measured resistance was lowered during this running-in, this procedure was completed. The engines received no further running-in. At this point, they were also checked for possible water leaks due to flaws in the castings. If leaks were discovered, the block went back to the shop for repairs. Or, if this was impractical, the engine was disassembled and its good parts salvaged for re-use.

After assembly and testing, the engine number was stamped on it, then the engines were dispatched by conveyor to the assembly line in the next building, or crated for shipment to other plants. Engines numbered and assembled in

December 1927, actually might not have been installed in the cars until possibly June through August 1928. Some early 1928 cars had hand brake levers on the driver's left and the engines in such cars could have numbers as high as the 500,000's. But it is known that Ford made only 150,000 vehicles with hand brake levers on the left.

Some 1928 cars with the brake lever in the middle were on chassis which had openings for the left position. These openings were simply covered over with a plate.

When engines were installed in the Model A's, it was impossible to do so in number sequence. (Before 1931, Ford built more engines than cars. In 1931, the company built more cars than engines.) When an engine was installed in a chassis, a workman called off its number and this same number was stamped on the chassis rail near the steering post on the left side. If the workman happened to call out an incorrect number, that wrong number then appeared on the chassis. Furthermore, replacement engines without numbers were often sent to dealers, who were supposed to put the same number on the replacement as had appeared on the original motor. Obviously this resulted in more possibilities for human error and oversight. From this,

one can understand why it is impossible to match motor numbers with the month in which a car was manufactured.

Specifications required that all bolts on Model A engines have a protective coating. The nuts were cadmium plated. Brass nuts were used to secure the collar which connected the muffler pipe to the exhaust manifold.

The head gasket was two sheets of copper with a sheet of asbestos between, and was unpainted.

#### Radiator Shells and Other Parts

Radiator shells on the 1928-29 models were nickel except for the Town sedan and special jobs which had chrome shells. The 1930-31 cars featured stainless steel radiator shells. Many of us recall that the 1931 radiator shell was actually used on the Deluxe cars as early as November 1930. This has the painted panel at the top and bottom. This type shell was not installed in the standard models until May 1931. So if you see a standard 1931 car with what we now call a 1930 shell, it is authentic.

Truck styling followed just behind that introduced in the passenger cars. Hence the early 1931 pickup truck had a 1930 type radiator. An exception was the Deluxe model pickup which had an extra panel on the bottom of the shell.

There is no exact date when the glass gasoline sediment bowls replaced those of cast iron. It was possibly in 1929, definitely by 1930.

The 1929 Model A usually had an Olympic windshield wiper, although some may have had electric.

In some Model A's, tail light brackets have been found with only two attaching holes instead of three, obviously having come through that way from the factory.

On Model A pickup trucks, 1928 and 1929 models were offered with sidemounts on either or both sides. The floorboards were creosoted, not painted. Most restorers varnish them even though they did not come from the factory that way. Some 1929 pickups were made with artillery wheels.

The Deluxe roadsters and Deluxe coupes could come through with sidemounts or rear mounted spares. On the roadster, a piece of antiseptic material was placed where the windshield stanchion comes through the body. Also on the open cars, there were four holes in the door panel on the driver's side, and only three on the passenger side panel.

On the station wagon, the visor was covered with material on both sides, with a cardboard stiffener between. The covering was stitched on both the inside and outside of the frame and this stitching can be done only on a Coates machine as used by harness makers. Visor kits are available with simulated stitching.

The folding seats for the Victoria, Tudor and Deluxe phaeton came in at least five different sizes and styles and were often used interchangeably. Production on the line was not stopped just because the men ran out of a certain size or style of seat; they just installed whatever seat was available at the moment.

Sometimes the metal ends of the binding tapes differed—on one side of the car they could be bright metal; on the opposite side, black.

On the Deluxe model open and closed cars, the brackets that held the door check were plated; on standard models, they were usually black.

It has been discovered that only 200 early 1928 Model A's were made with open end bumpers. If yours is one of these, you should have a comparatively early engine, along with left brake, offset starter and a square box on the starter—all of which were early 1928 features.

The "tea cup" shaped tail light was designed originally for the Town sedan introduced in December 1928. The same light was used on the cabriolet and Town sedan which came out in 1929. All other "A's" had the drum shaped tail lights.

There were three different types of bolts used to secure the body and fenders to the chassis. The bolts may be painted black, cadmium plated or without any painting or coating. Any one or a combination of these three bolts would be authentic.

#### Carburetors

The Model A Ford had a cast iron Zenith carburetor which was variously identified as "Zenith", "Zenith 1", "Zenith 2" and "Zenith 3". The numbers do not indicate the design improvements but merely identify the firm that supplied the particular carburetor. This story was covered fully by George DeAngelia in the May-June 1974 issue of ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE. Briefly, a carburetor (1928) carrying only the name "Zenith" may have been made by either Zenith or by the Holley Carburetor Company. As of

January, 1929, carburetors made by Zenith were identified as "Zenith 1" and those made by Holley were marked "Zenith 2" (both used in 1929-1930 cars). In 1931, Ford itself started making the carburetors and these are inscribed "Zenith 3". Thus 1931 model cars may have carburetors identified as "Zenith 1", 2 or 3.

#### Painting

Bodies were first primed, then the whole body was painted in the lower body color. If the upper body was to be a different color, this was put on next. If the reveals were to be in still another color, painting them was the third step. The lower body color was also used inside the car and on the bottom of the body (if of metal and attached to the body proper).

The block of the Model A was completely machined, then painted, as were all castings. Green paint was used on castings, while parts made in the stamping shop were painted black.

When made by Ford, the water pump was finished in green. If made by outside suppliers, along with some other components, the items were painted black. Ford's objective was turning out vast numbers of cars and he was not particularly interested in style inside the engine compartment.

Welding between the body and the gas tank was installed prior to the priming and painting stage. Welding used between the fenders and the body was not painted.

There were times when the drip molding was put on before the roof and before painting. On the early 1928 models, the wheel wells were painted the

same color as the body. Fenders were black, and later the wheel wells were painted black also. The cowl gas tanks were installed while unpainted, then painted along with the body.

Windshield stanchions on pickup models were usually of the body color and should be restored that way. However, some of these vehicles did come from the factory with black stanchions.

Striping was usually confined to the Deluxe models; however, buyers could also choose it on other models as a factory-order option at additional cost. Also, it was possible to obtain cars on which the wire wheels were painted the same color as the striping.

A buyer could elect to have any standard body painted in any of the Deluxe colors and in any combination, for an extra charge of \$20.00—the work being done at the factory. The Ford Motor Company was out to sell cars in any way possible, and giving the prospective buyer exactly what he wanted was one of the ways.

#### Hardware

In considering interior hardware of the Model A, a distinction is made between "body" and "chassis" hardware. Chassis hardware would include the choke rod, gearshift lever, emergency brake handle and instrument panel. Up to 1929, these items all were bright nickel plate. With the advent of the Town cars, cabriolets, Town sedans and Deluxe models, these four models had a satin finish on the gearshift lever and emergency brake lever handle (with bright nickel below the handle). However, it soon developed that the standard and Deluxe chassis were get-

ting mixed up at the plant and as a consequence, it was decided to use the satin finish on all models. The engineering department preferred chrome, but facilities were not available to chrome plate in the large quantities required for the Model A. The year 1929 saw the great stock market crash and beginning of the depression, and even the prestigious Ford Motor Company balked at making the huge expenditure that a chrome plant required.

Interior "body" hardware includes the interior door handles, window regulator handles, escutcheon plates for both, and the door locking lever. Also hardware for the robe cord on four door models, holders for curtains, the assist cord and any other bright work attached to the body.

At the start of Model A production in 1928, all of these items were bright nickel plated. The Deluxe models had satin finish intermixed with chrome and any of these three platings was correct for the rest of Model A production. Screws remained bright plated throughout. Incidentally, satin finish on nickel or chrome was obtained by rubbing the surface with a compound after it was partially plated, or by reversing polarity in the plating operation at the last moment. This produced a rough or "sandpaper" finish, after which the final plating coat went on.

The Model A choke rod was bright polished aluminum, the aluminum being cast on the rod. (Chrome rods were not used until late 1929 and 1930.) On all Model A cars from 1928 through 1931, the bumpers and hub caps were chrome plated for durability.

All Model A's with the pistol grip brake handle featured bright nickel. The

use of satin finish or chrome started with the introduction of the round brake handle with the button on top.

The instrument cluster was always bright nickel (early models) or bright chrome, never satin finish UNLESS it was a replacement cluster direct from the factory, in which case it could be satin finish. Another of the little variations which make life interesting for judges.

#### Upholstery

The following pointers on upholstery for the Model A were supplied by the LeBaron Bonney Company of Amesbury, Mass., well known specialists in that field.

Restoring the upholstery is usually the last job a restorer tackles because he first wants to get the body and motor sound. In the Model A's, there was apt to be little relationship between the color of the upholstery and the outside color of the car. Ford used any color and pattern of material that happened to be available at the time the cars were made. Further, the company would buy cloth in the same weave and color from several manufacturers and, in these circumstances, color variations were bound to occur.

LeBaron Bonney, present supplier of upholstery materials, has induced several mills to duplicate the patterns and colors used in the original cars. One of the most difficult models to keep straight as regards upholstery is the four door Town sedan, of which there were 17 models. Furthermore, three different firms made the bodies—Briggs, Murray and Ford. In ordering upholstery for the Town sedan, it is helpful to give not only a description of the original material, but also to mention which of the three firms made the body.

Many of today's upholstery materials are made in England which, as we know, has had more than its share of problems recently. Moreover, there has been a worldwide shortage of wool, worsted and cotton supplies. Increased costs of raw materials, labor, shipping and duties have of course increased the price of upholstery very substantially.

#### Canadian Fords

In Canada, the production of Model A engines started in December 1927 and the first 150,000 carried the prefix "CA" in front of the engine number. In December 1929 the prefix changed to "CAQ" and appeared on 10,000 engines. Prefix on the next 10,000 was "CAW".

Thereafter, the engines were called the "typewriter series" since the third letter of the prefix changed to the sequence of letters which appear on the top row of typewriter keys.

One of the differences in the Canadian-made Fords was the use of flat head screws which had square holes on top—called Robertson screws. Another variation was the clamp on the front bumper which was perfectly smooth instead of having the blue insert. Clamps on the rear bumpers were the same shape but inscribed with the Ford script across the center. Sometime in 1930, the Ford script was added to the front bumper.

The only other change in Canadian Fords was the color, which was called "Evergreen" and was close to Brewster green. Restorers who wish to use any other paint color, should follow the suggestions given in the restoration manual, and will be safe as concerns any of the Model A cars that were made in Canada.



## Graeme Jones

Our Club lost a valued member with the passing of Graeme Jones on 23 March 2025. As so often happens, the full extent of a well-lived life is only really appreciated when you listen to the eulogies. Graeme's children gave remarkable accounts of their father's life. They described their much-loved Dad as unassuming, and while quiet by nature, was measured, contemplative and intelligent. His son Dan, described his father as "true north on my moral compass". And a proud grandfather who loved being involved in his grandchildren's lives.

Graeme owned 3 Model A Fords during his life; a 1930 Deluxe 4-door sedan, a 1928 Roadster Pickup (ex NZ Post) and more recently, a 1928 AR Tudor. He and a friend from school days became Model A Ford fanatics and his first, the 1930 Sedan, became Graeme's pride and joy.

Leaving school, Graeme took up an apprenticeship as an Automotive Instrument Technician. At age 21 he attended Bible College, which led to volunteering as a missionary in the Philippines. The 3-month mission eventually stretched to over 20 years! A young New Zealand nurse called Mary, sent a generous donation to support the missionary work – unsurprisingly, this caught Graeme's attention. On a return visit home he met the nurse, leading to a 6-week courtship and engagement. They married a year later in 1975 and moved to the Philippines together, living in Davao City, Baguio City and Manila. Graeme & Mary's 3 children were all born in the Philippines.

In the ensuing years Graeme wore a variety of hats. During an 18-month period on Great Barrier Island supporting the Orama Christian Community, he found he enjoyed gardening, bought a small boat and developed a love of fishing. He became a cabinet maker in Auckland, then in 1998, the family returned to the Philippines, where Graeme was the Mercy Ship administrator. In 2005 Graeme & Mary set off to the UK on a belated O.E. They were soon employed by Lord and Lady Alvingham in Henley-on-Thames, Graeme as caretaker of the grounds and buildings, Mary as housekeeper – with their own cottage on the estate.

During this time they travelled far and wide by Renault campervan. Lord & Lady A. were appreciative of Graeme's many DIY skills; bricklaying, carpentry, painting, repairing old stained glass windows, repointing ... even making a very acceptable cider from the abundant windfall apples in the orchard.

One of daughter Nicola's many memories of her father, was the time Graeme bought her a child's fishing licence – funds were limited and a child's licence was cheaper. When a fish was caught, rules were respected and Nicola had to land the catch her father's fingers itching to take over!

In 2016, Graeme & Mary returned to Auckland, Graeme retirement job as a caretaker to help fund his final Model A Daughter Deborah said when not working on the Model A, loved being a Poppa, exploring New Zealand in a campervan fishing and working on a growing list of family home repair This was also the time Graeme & Mary re-joined the NIMAFC time overseas.



fish was ... despite

taking a restoration. her father with Mary, projects. after their

Our Club extends condolences to Mary and her family. We'll miss you Graeme.

### Ralph Levinson

**PS** Graeme's much treasured 1928 AR Tudor is for sale – see advertisement in this newsletter.

## For Sale

**Early 1928 ('AR') Tudor.** Good condition. 1970's body restoration needs a paint refresh but no rust and only a few minor dings. Good upholstery. Engine reconditioned in 1999 and reworked 2022 with new adjustable tappets, valves & seats and main bearings adjusted.

Multi-disc clutch converted to machined flywheel, V8 clutch/pressure plate, etc. Gearbox overhauled with new bearings and good, used main & input shafts. New brakes with cast iron drums. New WOF.

Receipts for work and parts from the last 25 years. Includes lots of extra parts, spares (new & used), books, manuals, specialty tools and

shop tools - everything Model A in my shed and under my house is included and must go!

\$29,000 Contact: Mary Jones, 02208194351930

### **Deluxe roadster for sale .**

Twin side mounts. Extra set of Ford V8 wheels with new tires. Very good condition, drives well. Offers.

Phone Dan Tait 027 5641973



**Parts for Sale** 30-31 radiator shield is new New price is \$800 Selling for \$500.

The two 21inch red wheels are excellent, the other 2 need minor welding. Chalk marked. \$300

Terry Furness 118 A Tara Road Papmoa

07 5420266



## Wanted to Buy

Original tyre valve stems to suit a 1931 Model A Ford.

Contact Richard Morse, email; [ironmountain1969@gmail.com](mailto:ironmountain1969@gmail.com) or 021 1914 764

### Missing and being searched for

The "Perpetual Trophy" a National Meet trophy which appears to have gone AWOL.

On the small plate is written: '1st Overall Rally', which incorporated a Rally route time trial, and field  
please contact a committee member.



**Model A Toolbox essential.** A yes/no circuit tester available from automotive parts suppliers. 12 volt model works fine on 6 volt



**Please send articles/reports/photos to the Editor by 20<sup>th</sup> of the month (or earlier if you can). In Microsoft Word or directly into an email (Editor can format to publish in the Newsletter).**

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