

THE WOLSELEY WORD

CAR CLUB

Sept/Oct 1985

NEWSLETTER

Vol.10 No. 3

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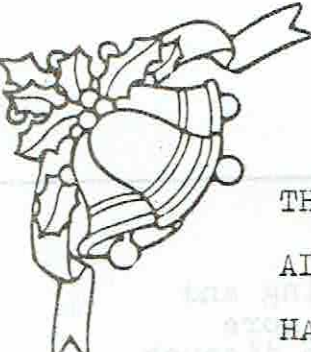
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MENU

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND TO
ALL OF OUR MEMBERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR.

IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING WE ALSO WISH YOU PLEASANT
AND SAFE MOTORING.



New Members

We welcome the following as members of the Wolseley Car Club.

Betty Bruce	Main West Road Sheffield	6/90
Ian Gibson	29 Moir st Wellington.	4/44
J.&G. Maurice	Nelson	
Richard Harvey	61 Hensley st. Invercargill	6/80
Owen and Maxine Roberts	163 Quinns Road. Ch.Ch.	6/110

(New members also included in Wellington Branch Notes.)

NORTHLAND



BRANCH

I am having a little trouble getting things established up here, possibly due to my isolation here at Kerikeri. Don Norman, a keen member from way back, has joined forces with me and we are working at it now. Mr Bob Mayo, a new member to our branch, is also now in the ranks. Don is a dentist and Mr Mayo a retired builder who now operates the Ruaene to Kohukohu ferry, and both are keen Wolseley owners. The plan is now to note registration numbers and check with the Post Office or try the personal approach where possible. We have a few people lined up and now we are officially underway I feel sure we can make some progress, all be it a little slow.

Regards from the far North
Phil Ziegler

MANAWATU



BRANCH

Electricity has now been connected to our spares building and things are more or less operational from there. A few more working bees may be required and we are meeting soon to discuss these and other activities into the New Year.

I would like to wish all of the other members in other branches a very Merry Christmas and wish you all a prosperous New Year. If any of you are travelling up (or down) our way please feel free to look us up.

Regards to all
Alex Sutton

WELLINGTON



BRANCH

On the 16th November we held a very successful full day outing to the Silverstream Railway Museum. We had an excellent turnout (for our young branch) of nine cars, including a particularly nice 6/99 and four very nice 6/110's. It may be interesting to some of you to note that all of the latter (not the 6/99) were CNG powered. Two prospective members also came along which was most encouraging. Thanks to all who came. I am sure you all enjoyed your day as much as we did.

I had a ring from the Manawatu Branch (which was great) suggesting that we try and combine some activities next year. We will aim to do this perhaps meeting half way and will be finalising some dates and details soon.

The need at the moment is for the formation of an enthusiastic committee now we are officially off the ground - how about making a New Years resolution?

The following persons are now fully paid up members of our branch as of November:

Roy Salmon	24/80 and Seris III 18/85
Hillary Hollingum	Hornet 1966
Ron Marshall	6/110
Rod Webb	6/110 Mk II
Ray Ansell	A/110 Mk I
Faith Filer	1300
Bruce McLachlan	18/85
Ian Giles	6/110 Mk II and 1300
Richard Tyson	6/90
Murray Harris	18/85
Bernie Quin	A/110
Gavin Smith	18/85
Derek Wanders	6/99
Bruce Welsh	24/80
Ray Watson	6/110 Mk II
Grant Fielder	6/80

Apologies if I have left any out

Happy Wolseleying
Roy and Fiona Salmon

Coming Activities

Sunday 22nd December

Christmas Barbeque at Roy and Fiona Salmons, 24 Conclusion St, Ascot, Porirua. BYO food and refreshments. Come anytime during the afternoon. On wet or fine. (Hopefully this newsletter will arrive in time but it may not.)

Sunday 26th January

Early Days Picnic (organised by Lower Hutt City Council Summer Programme) on the banks of the Hutt River opposite Avalon T.V. complex 11am - 4pm. Come along and join us. We want as many of you as possible to bring your cars for a club display and to meet us over lunch. (Manawatu members also welcome.) More details from Roy (358-661) if required.

NELSON

WOLSELEY

BRANCH

Our club continues to grow and parts are starting to move, so our wrecks are coming into their own at last. Finances are starting to build up also.

Two 6/99's are on my lawn and will end up being one good car. When restored (which will take probably two years at my place) we will have something good. One is the car I tendered for last June and the other is one I have an interest in at present. It is going.

A 6/80 is also coming into club hands soon. This car will probably be restorable too - it has a good body.

We are running a Christmas Cake Raffle and proceeds will go into the parts fund.

Chief Ape please keep up the good work. I use your articles and so have other members here. The article about brake cylinders was most useful.

We will hold our Christmas break-up on 8th December. Hope the weather improves as the November outing was cancelled and the Pelorous one disrupted by rain so some of us missed our connections at Pelorous Bridge.

Working bees have been successfull with cars stripped and parts labelled and packed in car cases. My thanks to all mambers who helped out.

Regards to all other members
Ollie Reid

CHRISTCHURCH



BRANCH

REPORT ON PAST ACTIVITIES

Guy Fawkes Evening

This was held on Saturday night 2nd November on a rather dubious overcast evening, however it really did go off with a bang. Unfortunately an advertisement in the newspaper stated that it was on Sunday night so I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused anyone. Fortunately the majority of members trusted the details on the previous broadsheet and got the date correct.

The venue; Ourihuia Domain, was perfect and we were sheltered from the rather cool wind behind a huge hedge. A good barbeque and various antics with a frisbe and ball passed away the couple of hours before it got dark and everyone was rather worn out by the time the first sparkler was lit. With everyones fireworks being let off one after the other it proved a cheap and effective way to have a good display which the adults as well as the kids enjoyed.

By the time 10pm came all of the gunpowder had gone and we were able to head away and get the kids off to bed before it became too late.

About 11 cars turned out which was really great considering the bad weather, including the first seen 6/110 Mk II of Trevor Taylor which has had a sunroof, cruise control and various other gadgets added. Thanks to all those who braved the weather and made it such a pleasant activity.

Christmas Party at Orton Bradley Park

Once again the weather was a bit doubtful but it was decided to go ahead with the run rather than opt for the contingency plan of running just the Childrens Party in the Hutcheson St Hall during the afternoon only. Fortunately this decision paid off, and although overcast all day, it was warm and windless for the whole day.

A number of people left from the starting point in Sydenham at 10:30 and many others arrived at various stages during the

afternoon. A good picnic lunch was enjoyed by the early arrivals, and provided you could find a place to put down your rug (or whatever) away from the sheep dung that was littering the ground in places (we think they had grazing in the domain up to a few days before we got there) then it was most pleasant indeed.

Colin then proudly produced a cricket bat that had been bought out of club funds the day before to get a bit of a game up. Colin Miles immediately took charge of the set, banged in the wickets and declared he would bat. The first ball saw him stumped - literally! The handle broke off the bat. After inspection we all agreed it was faulty manufacture and Colin offered to return the bat and get another one - fortunately Ray Miles had brought a spare so the game could continue.

About 2:30 Mike Dickison and Colin Hey disappeared in Mikes 1500 to buy some icecream for the children. Twenty minutes later the 1500, Mike and the icecreams came back but Colin had somehow been changed into Father Christmas and arrived throwing lollies out of the window too. The children were all questioned as to what they wanted for Christmas (I understand the information was discretely passed on) and then given out their gifts along with another handfull of lollies. As Father Christmas was driven off into the sunset an afternoon tea was set up for the children complete with fizz and icecream so they really did have a good time.

Unfortunately I had to leave about 5pm so I am not sure how many stayed on for a barbeque tea, but I understand quite a few did. Altogether about 18 cars turned out at some stage during the day which was really fantastic, including a 1930's Riley owned by Ken Boucher from the Riley club who drove over to say hello. Along at their first run were the Downers and the Sharps - great to see you. Julian Sharp has converted his 6/99 to LPG (I think he did it himself) and this attracted a bit of interest.

A great thanks to those of you who came along to the run - I hope you enjoyed yourself as much as I did.

Roving Reporter

Microwave Evening 30th Sept.

This was an evening designed for the ladies, although not exclusively. We had a full hall, about 30 people attending. Gwen Kerr had been invited to give us a demonstration on the use of a microwave and the cooking methods, and how they differed from conventional cooking. To start with, Gwen told us all about the different types of microwaves, approximate prices and what the more expensive ones did compared to the cheaper ones.

It was then on to cooking, she did chicken, right through vegetables to savouries, even did a steam pudding. All the cooking on these items were a fraction of the ordinary time, and much better for you as you don't boil away the goodness.

Cooking dishes was another item covered. It was put across that you don't need all the fancy dishes you think. Everyday dishes you have in the cupboard are just as good. The evening was rounded off by Gwen answering questions. A cuppa and a bite to eat rounded off an interesting evening.

Lynn Hey

Cake Stall

Swap Meet

This took a lot more organising than we thought. Lynne Graham and I were in charge of organising this part of our swap meet display.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who contributed biscuits and cakes, we were really overwhelmed with the response, also all the members who collected these items on our behalf. Well we arrived there bright and early, 8:30am, to give us plenty of time to set up and get ourselves organised before the rush at 10am. We had a few problems to start with the tent, because we had to put the table in it as the sun was really hot. Once this was sorted out we were swamped with people, we had stages where we were quiet which enabled us to each have a break with the help of a few extras standing in. The stall stayed open until 4:30pm when all the other stalls were closing also. The couple of items were taken to Gordons for the workers to enjoy with a light tea. We ended up making a total of \$180, a marvellous effort for a cake stall.

Lynn Hey

Economy Run

This year's economy run to Hanmer was well attended as economy runs usually are. The day was fine and we assembled at the service station on the corner of Marshland and Preston Roads at 9am. The cars were filled and set off by Colin Hey with myself going first and checking everybody in at Hanmer.

We all met outside the pools and then some of us went for a swim. It was very enjoyable. We then went to Hanmer Forest Park for a picnic lunch and a look at the cars. There was a fine line up of Wolseleys present and the owners included such fine and upstanding people as Colin Miles Snr and Jnr, Ray Miles, Rex Fielding, Colin Hey, Gordon Macadam, Albert Harkess, Trevor Taylor, Les Amtman, Harold Smith, Ken Williams, Mike Dickison and respective families.

The return run was completed and everyone filled their cars and then waited while Colin Hey computed the results.

1st place in the 6 cylinder class went to Harold Smith in his 6/110 Mk II Auto with 25.6 mpg and second was Les Amtman in his 6/99.

The four cylinder class was won by Ken Williams in his 1500 with 40.06 mpg and second was Mike Dickison in his 1500 with the 1500 of Colin Hey coming in third. (Great little cars)

Next year the Rover Car Club have been invited to join us so out with the tune-up kits.

My thanks to everyone who participated.

Club Captain

COMING ACTIVITIES

Sunday 12th January 1986 Summertimes Car Display in North Hagley Park

Our club has been asked to provide 3 or 4 cars for a display - if you are interested please contact me. Cars will be in place from 12:00 to 5:00 pm. Many other clubs are also displaying cars so it should be worth a look.

Sunday 26th January 1986 Homestead Run

We are going to "Manderley", a 130 year old Homestead and farm at Little River. There we will be able to view the home and gardens, watch genuine trial dogs in action and see a shearing demonstration. Cost will be \$3.00 for adults, children 10 and under \$1.50. There is a swimming pool there which the children will be welcome to use. The Homestead visit will be followed up by a barbecue tea at Little River Domain for those who can stay on. We have also invited the Rover and Riley Clubs to boost our numbers. This will be an excellent afternoon so don't miss out.

Meet at the Supervalu Car Park, Corner of Lyttelton Street and Lincoln Road, at 1.30 pm sharp.

Sunday 9th February Concours Competition / Wings and Wheels

With the Inter marque concours being held the following week it was decided that we should hold our own club competition beforehand to allow a club team to be chosen. What we propose to do is have the cars entered for our own concours on display at the Wings and Wheels show where they will be judged. Cars will have to be in place by 9am and there until about 4:30. If you would like to enter please contact Colin Hey. Start preparing now. If you would like to have your car on display but not entered please let him know too. Free passes to all entrants.

Sunday 16th February 1986 Inter Club Concours

This event is being organised this year by the Daimler and Lanchester Owners Club, so we can expect a very high standard of organisation (and participation from other clubs). Even if you don't propose to enter it will be well worth a look. The venue has been changed to Cranmer Square, from 11am onwards. Also note that the date was wrong on the last "Secretaries Desk"

Sunday 9th March 1986 Car Rally

An easy navigation rally finishing at a destination suitable for a barbecue tea. Meet at Riccarton Mall, 2pm. The Sunbeam Car Club have been invited to join us in this event to add to the interest.

IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR WORRIES ABOUT ANY OF THE ABOVE,
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT COLIN HEY AT 894-533 OR
GORDON MACADAM, Ph. 527-410

SPARES SHED NEWS

The permit was finally obtained without too many problems (except the wait while the red tape was cut) and all of the materials have now been delivered on the site and building can now proceed. With Christmas coming up it will be a bit difficult to get much done, however it should be all go in the New Year and hopefully our parts will have a permanent home soon. More and more parts are coming to hand so the need for the building is becoming greater and it is most definite that this move will be the right one.

On the fund raising side, the Vintage Car swap meet proved very beneficial. About \$600 was raised there through the efforts of the ladies in the Christchurch Branch who helped out to make a most successful cake stall (thank-you very much) and the men who rummaged around in their garages for odd car parts and things they no longer required. A number of raffle tickets were also sold there which helped bring the total up.

By the time you read this the raffle will have been drawn and the name of the winners will probably appear in this issue. Many thanks to those of you who helped out and sold (or in many cases bought) tickets, and also a special thanks to Gordon Macadam the now somewhat frazzled organiser, and Mike Dickison who assisted him.

Hopefully in the next newsletter we may be able to publish a photo of the building going up - keep your fingers crossed.

WORKING BEES

CHRISTCHURCH MEMBERS NOTE:

Working bees will start on Saturday 18 January and will be held every Saturday thereafter until complete. If you can help, please phone Colin Hey 894-533

RAFFLE RESULTS

The raffle was quite successful with 1372 tickets being sold all over the country. None of the prize-winners were club members and this is a testament to the way club members got out and sold the tickets.

RESULTS OF THE DRAW:

1st. prize: ticket 1197 'marina' Woolston, Ch.Ch.

2nd. prize: ticket 960 J. Reece, Invercargill.

3rd. prize: ticket 1242 K. Spurway, Linwood, Ch.Ch.

COMMITTEE CAR SAGAS

RON NORRIS has had another spot of bad luck with his 4/44 developing three cylinderitis - a rather serious disease. Treatment by John Finlay soon had the problem rectified. However it turned out to be another engine out job to replace the camshaft which had somehow lost a lobe. Ron was becoming a little bit disheartened with the car, however a drive around the block when it was all back together again changed his mind and it's likely to be seen at a few more club runs yet.

MIKE DICKISON's 1500 is still keeping him guessing at where the brake fluid is going. All the wheel cylinders have now been overhauled, however a slight fluid leak still persists and it appears to be the master cylinder this time - a job that will be tackled in the not too distant future. The exhaust system will soon need a look at too, but otherwise the car is running superbly and is still enjoying its fresh lease of life.

COLIN HEY's stable is much the same since the last report with redecorating jobs in the house having taken priority lately. Time is taking its toll on the white 1500 however. Colin has now owned it 11 years and everyday use is starting to take its toll with more and more work - particularly cosmetic work - needing to be done. He is reasonably confident it will last another couple of years however at which stage a major rebuild can be undertaken. At the moment Colin's sights are set on the Interclub Concours in February with some more cleaning up being planned on the black 1500.

GORDON MACADAM's Vanden Plas has recently had a major paint touch up and now looks quite smart. This work was prompted by a large scratch put on it after a roll of netting wire fell off the back of a truck and hit the car. This also gave him the opportunity to fit a brand new boot lid that came with the car. The 15/50 trundles on still unscratched.(I think.)

ROD and LYNN GRAHAM's 6/110 came to an untimely halt a few weeks back after the brake booster failed and emptied the contents of the master cylinder into the engine. No harm was done and after the booster was repaired things were (and still are) back to normal.

ROBERT and LYNN HEY have still not much to report on the 1500's as Robert's motor reconditioning business has been picking up and the time has just not been available to spend on the cars. I will report progress next after it occurs.

FRANK NOORDANUS, with seven weeks of school holiday this year, decided the time of (w)reckoning has come for both the 24/80 and 15/50. Throughout the year a 24/80 auto box has been rebuilt, short block overhauled and head reconditioned. The holidays should see the engine assembled and wed to the borg-warner 35. The 15/50 had its first cut and wax with most pleasing results. The holidays will see some electrical work and a complete interior trim.

MONKEY MECHANICS CORNER

Thanks for the vote of confidence for my feeble efforts.

This article will look at the 24/80's.

Stan Edmonds of Levin has one and is having problems with the column shift and wanted a four change gearbox. Being somewhat ignorant on 24/80's and believing a 24/80 is only a 16/22 with two extra pistons, I suggested a 16/22 gearbox from an Austin Cambridge or a Seris 5 Morris Oxford would fit. We had one in our parts department so Stan took it with the shift cover and the clutch plate in case the spline was different.

The good part: the 16/22 box fits straight on to the 24/80 backing plate of the motor: the clutch plates are the same.

The bad part: the motor would not turn over.

- Reason: 1) the 24/80 pressure plate might be too big for the 16/22 bell housing. (This has yet to be proven.)
2) Stan found that the front motor pulley was sitting on the cross member. This means the 16/22 gearbox sits higher up in the chassis and this puts the front of the motor down.

The answer to this problem is to lower the gearbox mounts by packing with washers or alternatively packing up the front engine mounts with washers. A little of both would probably be the best. The 4-speed 16/22 gearbox has a lower first gear which would be good for heavy towing. This also brings up the possibility of gearing the car up for more economy. Two ways to do this are:

- a) a higher diff ratio
 - b) larger wheels
- OR the ultimate would be a MG B-GT box with overdrive.

The other problem we found was that the speedo reading was wrong. I think he will have to change the speedo for a 16/22 one which matches the gearbox.

Hope this has got you all confused and anyone wanting more information can contact Stan Edmonds 136 Weraroa Road, Levin.

CHIEF APE

P.S. The mystery car is a 1930-33 Wolseley Hornet!

GENERAL NOTES

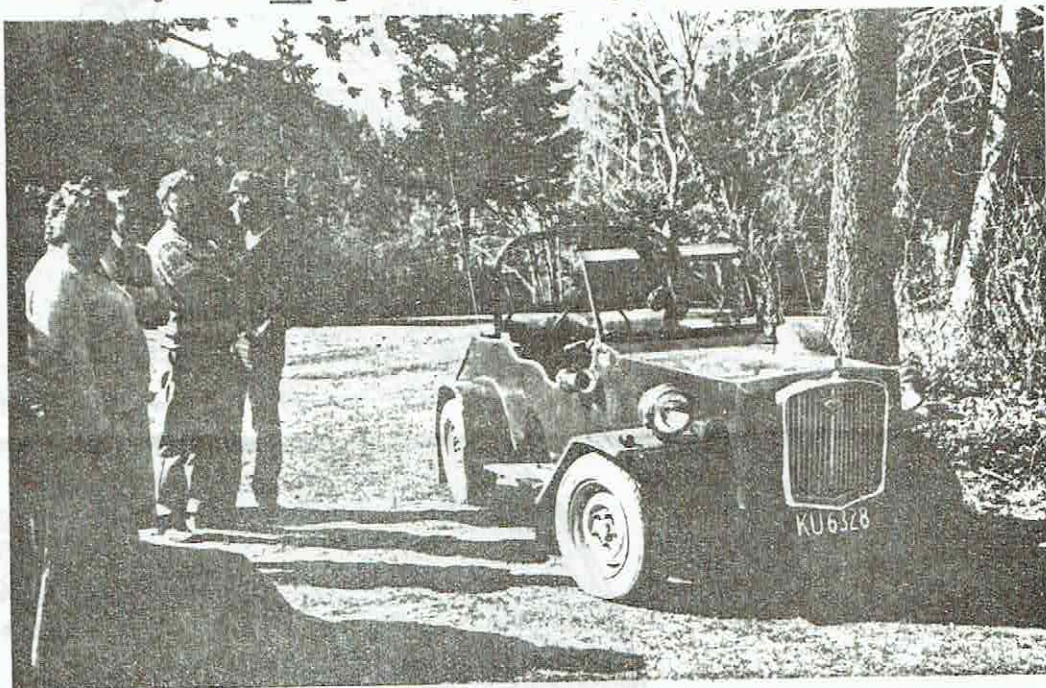
- Bill Williamson is flat out on the 6/90 restoration (police car) in the hope of having it ready for the police centenary next year. The celebrations are due to be held during February and March so we wish you all the best Bill as the race starts to get it all back together again.
- I had a ring from Ivan McBain, our only member in Gore (Southland), the other day. He was up here to attend a conference and rang to say hello - really good to hear from you Ivan. His Mk II 6/110 is now semi-retired and the 16/60 is having the engine reconditioned at the time of writing so that is keeping him busy.
- The Christchurch Branch successfully sold the 6/80 belonging to a deceased member of the club and is now owned by an American working out here during the summer with Operation Deep Freeze. He was searching for an old car with a difference and was pleased to acquire the 6/80. Apparently it will be stored in a hangar at the airport during the winter when he is back home - I wish I had a hangar to store our cars in!
- Geoffrey Williamson is still trying to get together a club album and would appreciate any photos of past runs or activities or club cars that he could include with his collection. If you can help out please write to him at: 80 Mathers Road
Christchurch 2

MYSTERY CAR

Two mystery cars so far and no ideas offered. Last issue's car was genuine Wolseley and is genuine mystery, have another look.

This month's Wolseley is of dubious parentage.

Can you identify any of its ancestors?

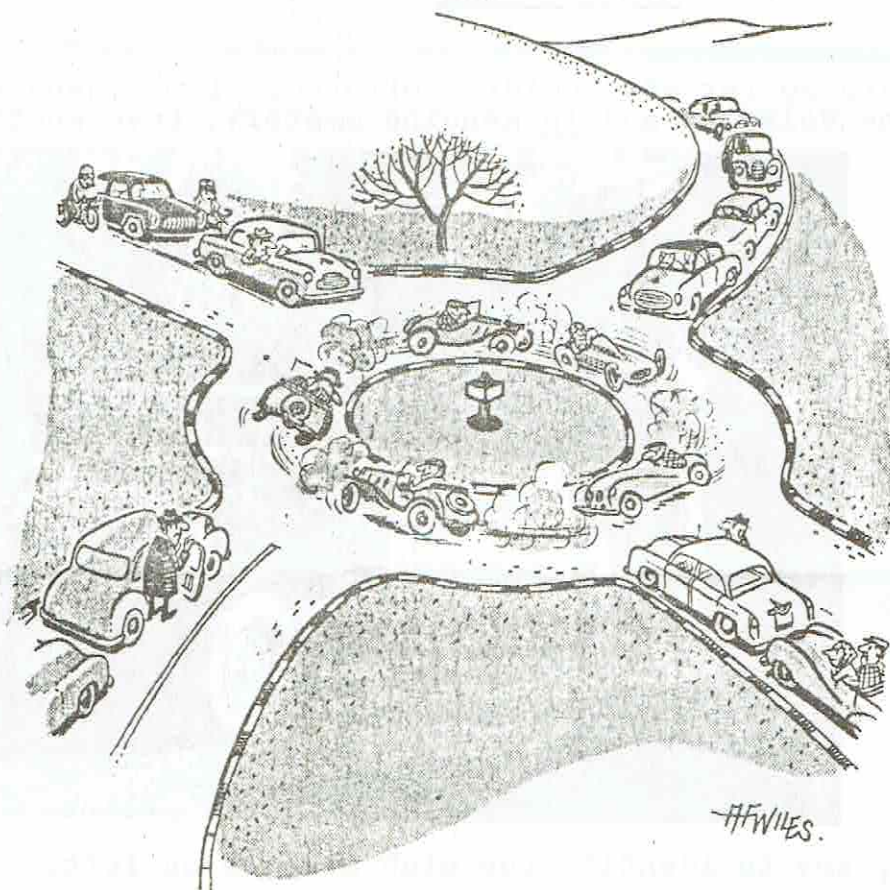


If this fails, try to identify the club members on left.

(STOP PRESS) Thanks to 'CHIEF APE' for identification of last month's car as a 1930-33 Hornet.

BUY, SELL & EXCHANGE

- Buy - 600 x 16 tyres, preferably 8 ply, with some life left in them.
Contact: Roy Salmon, 24 Conclusion Street, Ascot Park, Porirua. Phone (04) 358661.
- Sell - 24/80 most parts except motor, good electrics etc.
Contact: Roy Salmon (as above).
- Sell - Set of Jackall Jacks for series II and III models, \$150.
Contact: Roy Salmon (as above).
- Sell - 18/85 - 1970, Breaking for parts. Most things O.K.
Contact: Bruce McLachlan, 24A Liverpool Street, Trentham, Upper Hutt. Phone 278-277.
- Sell - Mk I 6/110 Auto. 1964. Good body and upholstery, excellent mechanically. \$1500 o.n.o. Stereo tape player.
Contact: Grant Mercer. Phone 559-986.



The following article is reproduced from the Wolseley Register 1983/84 year book and is a condensed version of an article written by the Wolseley Register Chairman, John Brindley in 1976. When in England last year I had the pleasure of meeting John and was able to see photos and publicity material about the Wolseley Gyrocar. A photograph of the finished car appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Colin Hey

THE WOLSELEY GYROCAR

One warm evening in April 1914, six impeccably dressed gentlemen stepped into their car in Regent's Park, London, and set off to make motoring history. The occasion was the first public outing of the Wolseley Gyrocar, the world's first and, to date, only successful two-wheeled automobile.

The story began two years earlier, in 1912, when Count Peter-Paul Schilowsky, a lawyer and member of the Russian royal family, commissioned the Wolseley Tool and Motor Car Company, one of the oldest and most famous of British vehicle manufacturers, to produce a two-wheeled car to his own design.

Such a vehicle would be of immense military value in that it would be able to travel across terrain too difficult for conventional motors, and yet be able to reach a higher speed with a lighter body and using a less powerful engine than a four-wheeled vehicle. It would also be ideal on snow and ice.

The plans that the Count unrolled in front of the startled Wolseley engineers showed a cumbersome six-seat open body slung between two wheels in tandem, as in an ordinary bicycle. The front and central pairs of seats were separated by a locker that contained a patented gyroscopic mechanism to keep the car on an even keel. The gyroscope, which was driven at 2000 and 3000 rpm by a 1.25 hp electric motor, resisted the overturning movements of the car through a rack and pinion system which was connected to an ingenious but frail-looking arrangement of two pendulums and two cords. Sprags on each side of the car were automatically lowered whenever the gyroscope was stopped.

Motive power was supplied by a 16/20 hp Wolseley-Vickers car engine mounted at the front of the car, ahead of the radiator, and driving the back wheel through a conventional gearbox and clutch. A transmission brake was mounted behind the gearbox; as far as is known there were no brakes on the wheels.

In spite of the Heath-Robinson look of his invention the Count must have impressed the Wolseley engineers for his strange order was accepted. Work began almost at once and went ahead on a trial and error basis. Throughout the year that it took to build the chassis the Count was a frequent visitor to the Adderley Park, Birmingham, works and, although he would never allow his aristocratic hands to touch a spanner, he proved an efficient, if slightly eccentric, foreman.

On at least one occasion he declared a half-day holiday at his own expense for all members of the Wolseley experimental department, while on other occasions he would fling one of his gloves into a crowd of apprentices and reward the youth who returned it.

Eventually the chassis was ready and a Wolseley test engineer took it for its first test run. This is the report he made:- "On November 27th 1913 I made an effort to move the car, which was successful, no derangement of the governing gear taking place. We drove the car backwards and forwards for a distance of about six feet many times. During these tests it was noticeable that one could stand on the side of the car and step into the body without any disturbance of balance.

We then moved the car partially round a radius to the left, backwards and forwards. Eventually we drove the car the whole length of the works, backwards and forwards, with four passengers. Then His Excellency decided to take the machine over on to the track, impressing on me that we must go very gently. We drove into the Arden Road, making two stops on the curve, and we had to reverse so that we should not use full lock.

I then drove the car steadily up the Arden Road, going as slowly as possible and slipping the clutch in first gear all the time. We took a wide sweep into Bordesley Green Road and suddenly, when opposite the Directors' mess room, the vehicle heeled to the nearside and dropped onto its sprag. It was lifted by eight men, the engine restarted, and the car driven back to the experimental department; but it was supported by outside assistance as His Excellency did not attempt to balance the car in the street."

The next five months from November 1913 were occupied in sorting out the various teething troubles, building a body and fitting it to the chassis, and in re-designing the car's front suspension and steering gear to improve the cornering ability.

Then, on April 28th 1914, the Wolseley Gyrocar was publicly demonstrated for the first time before a large and interested crowd in Regent's Park. Throughout the next few weeks the car and its designer were a familiar sight in the West End. Wherever they went large crowds followed. However, the Count always rode as a passenger alongside the driver and never took the wheel himself in public. In fact, it is not known whether he ever drove his own invention!

Satisfied with his achievement, Count Schilowsky paid off the company and made arrangements to ship the car over to Russia where he intended to use it on his estates and also to demonstrate its military possibilities to the government, but the First World War intervened and he hurriedly returned home.

The Gyrocar lay neglected and rusting in a corner of the factory through the war, and for some time afterwards lay on its side like some stricken beast on the testing track at

East Works until the directors of the company finally assumed that the inventor had been killed in the war or the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless, as long as there was a possibility of the Count still being alive, they could not dispose of what they considered was a "white elephant". Therefore the car was buried.

It was quickly forgotten. In the early Twenties there were more pressing problems to consider than the fate of an eccentric Russian. The company, whose quality-built cars had been used by royalty, was badly hit by the recession in the motor industry and, like so many other well-known firms, it was bankrupt. The owners, the great Vickers armaments and aircraft combine, sold the company to the late Lord Nuffield, whose Morris cars had become a household word.

Resurrected

Then, in 1938, nearly 23 years after its interment, someone remembered the Gyrocar and decided that, after all, it could be of some value, if only as a curiosity. The order was given for the strange vehicle to be resurrected from its grave. This apparently simple process was complicated by the fact that the area in which the car had been buried had been turned into a railway goods yard. However, part of the track was removed and the decayed remains were brought back into the light of day.

Many pounds were spent on the car's restoration and, although it never again took to the road, the Gyrocar was awarded the place of honour in the company's museum.

According to factory rumour, the Count re-appeared shortly after this. An old man living in exile and deprived of his estates, he is supposed to have visited the factory one day to see his invention. Then he disappeared again, this time for good.

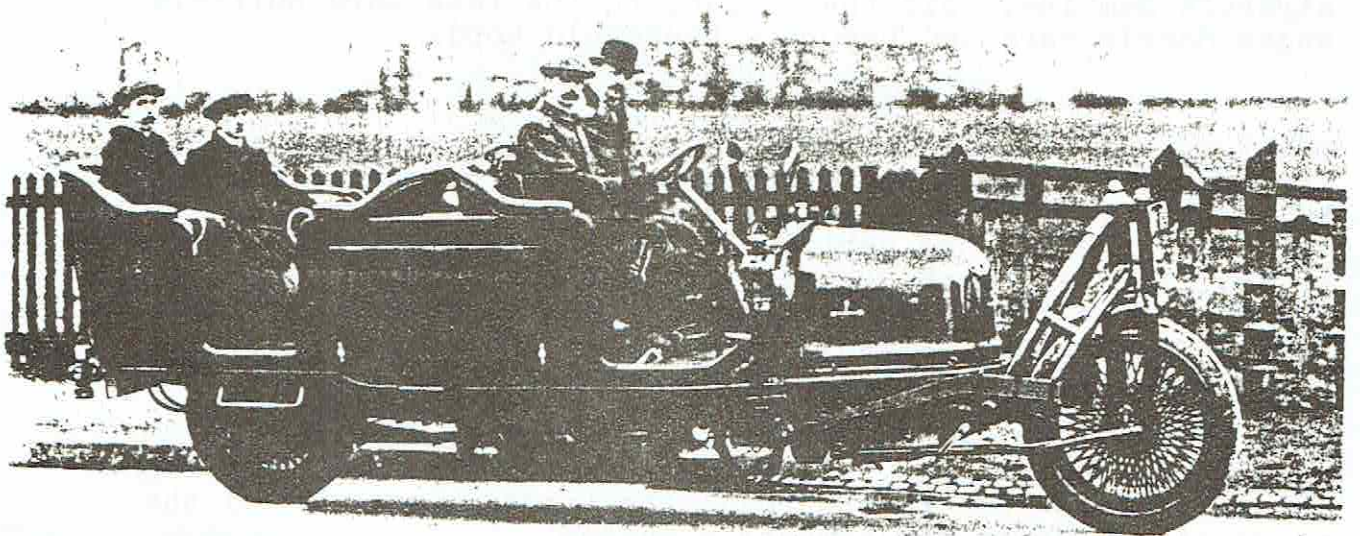
Undignified End

The Gyrocar survived the Second World War, emerging unscathed from the heavy air-raids that damaged the factory in 1940. But, with the coming of peace, the words "white elephant" were again used and the long and eventful life of the strangest vehicle ever produced came to an undignified end in 1948 when the Gyrocar was finally broken up for scrap.

The "white elephant" which had had a place of honour in the company museum was ordered to be scrapped probably because of the move of the Wolseley headquarters from Drews Lane to Morris Motors at Cowley.

St. John Nixon, the famous motoring historian, described the Gyrocar as a striking example of misapplied talent on the part of the inventor and ingenuity on the part of the company.

However, there is an interesting sequel to the story of the Gyrocar. In 1962 the Ford Motor Company of America proudly announced their dream car of the future - the Gyron - and hailed it as the world's first two-wheeled car. Just one small thing was overlooked by the public relations men when they launched their costly and magnificent scheme. The Ford designers and engineers, with all the resources of that vast organisation at their disposal, failed where their British counterparts half a century earlier had succeeded they could not get their two-wheeled car to work!



Gyrocar built in 1912 by the Wolseley Company for His Excellency Count Peter Schilowsky

