

## Bruce Ardell's Car Museum – 10 April 2022

The day dawned clear and sunny for our trip to Bruce's car museum in Fordell. However, by the time of departure the sky had turned to heavy cloud cover.

Eleven cars started from Feilding, initially some from the Squash Court car park with the others from Victoria Park car park. Amongst those were new members Sam Parkinson and his father Alan in Sam's recently acquired MGF and Ken Ragett accompanied by his young granddaughter.

Robert Wilson led us through Halcombe, the northern extremities of Marton to Turakina and on to the Fordell Hotel, where we met up with 8 further cars, some from as far as Waikanae. Toni then took over the run to Bruce's home. Where he also operates his motor vehicle parts business specialising in parts for cars registered in New Zealand during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Upon arrival Bruce gave us morning tea and an introductory talk. He is certainly an interesting character working 12-hour days without a mobile phone or computer nor does he watch TV. He conducts his business via land line and fax, recording everything on paper with a pencil (which needs replacing annually). Bruce conducts tours throughout the summer weekends and apparently is booked out two summers in advance. So, thank you Toni for arranging this viewing for us at very short notice.

We commenced our tour in Bruce's parts store. There are so many parts for so many cars it's impossible to know how many items he holds in stock. Bruce advised that the last in-depth stock take he undertook was the year GST came in and that took over a year.

From the business side of his interests, we progressed down the hill to the first of his museum sheds. This shed was in the process of being expanded for what looks like the third time and housed old fire engines, motor bikes and various machinery. From there we moved to the larger shed, again one which had been extended in every direction since it was first built. This shed housed cars from 1940's to about the time of the Ford Cortina Mark 4. I didn't count the number of cars but there were so many that most had their registrations 'on hold'. Some cars of interest included a Vanden Plas, a big black four door Chev (something a gangster or an ambassador would have driven) and a very rare 1953 Skoda sedan.

After our tour some of our members departed for home whilst the others moved to Virginia Lake in Wanganui for a BYO picnic lunch before leaving for home.

Another very enjoyable day organised by Robert and Toni with a great turn out of cars.

Steve Higgison

