

THE SIREN



NEWSLETTER OF
THE ASHBURTON FIRE MUSEUM

ISSUE THREE

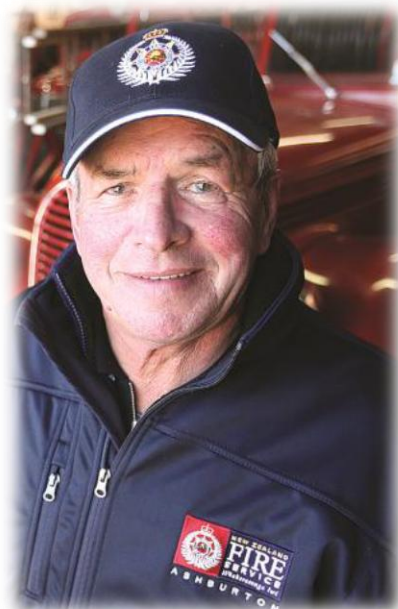
MAY 2016



From Chairman David Eddington

Welcome to Issue 3 of The SIREN !

On the cover this month we feature a man with a staggering record of service to the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade. Walter Dolman notched up an incredible 57 years of service. It's to honour people like Walter and countless others who have played a role large or small in the brigade that we are so committed in our quest to build one of the best brigade owned collections of fire-fighting history in the country.



2016 is the year we raise the balance of the funds required to build and outfit our new extension at The Plains in Tinwald. This can only be achieved by everyone giving it their best shot to assist us. Remember our statement with this project -

“We are going to do it once, and do it right.”

We are currently applying for grants from charitable organisations in our second year round of applications.

I have had a meeting with the Watch Leaders from the AVFB and they are tasked with organising their fundraising ideas and putting them into practice. They are very enthusiastic about this exciting project.

We have had a visit from our good friends from Ferrymead (NZ Fire Services Historical Society). Their thoughts and positive comments were very encouraging and that tells us that we have something very special to build on.

CHILDRENS DAY at The Plains this year was very successful with a huge crowd and we were well received.

Thanks to the guys who manned the station on that day – Alan Mac, Bill Clark, Ken Peck, Bruce Hill, Lindsay Hampton, Murray Cairns and Carl Peterson.

The WHEAT & WHEELS RALLY was a huge weekend with gave us great exposure for the Ashburton Fire Museum. Held on Peter Buttericks Farm at Wakanui, our team put in a great effort that raised not only awareness, but also approximately \$1400.00 was banked from donations, memberships, Julie Williams Catering stall, Junior Fire Fighters Uniforms, and bumper stickers.

A big thank you to all the guys and girls that fronted, it was a huge effort but also a huge success. Special thanks to Peter and Lorraine McQuarters for organising our display at Wheat & Wheels. It was great having Peter on the microphone during the day informing the public what we are about and the excellent commentaries throughout the AFM parades in the ring. Also a heartfelt thanks to those individuals and organisations who supported us with machines including the Timaru Fire Brigade Social Club, Dunedin Fire Brigade Restoration Society, the Nell Family, Ferrymead, the Trezise family, the Stewart family and others.

SPECIAL COMMEMORATION: St Andrews Presbyterian Church held a special service for Wheels Week. This years theme was "The Fire Brigade" as they acknowledged International Fire Fighters Day. Donations to the AFM were made at this service.



WHEELS WEEK STREET PARADE: Sunday 15th May down East Street. We were a part of this popular Ashburton event again this year with our vintage and modern appliances.

BUILDING PLANS:

The plans are with local architects Chilton & Mayne and should be ready to view in the near future.

Thank you to everyone who has helped get this project to this stage. We are now targeting to get the project at least to lock-up stage by the years end.

Kind Regards

Dave Eddington.

Ashburton Fire Museum Chairman.

Chasing Fire Engines

The Founder of the Fire Services Historical Society, which has established New Zealand's pre-eminent collection of vintage fire fighting equipment at the Hall of Flame at Ferrymead, cut his teeth chasing fire engines as a lad growing up here in Ashburton.

Mike Hayes generously shares his story exclusively with The SIREN.



My introduction to the Ashburton Fire Brigade dates from my time as a toddler when living with my parents on the corner of Kermode St. & Mona Square, opposite the Police Station.

My Dad, Walter (Watty) Hayes opened up Andrews & Beaven Ltd, the well known farm machinery Coy in 1926.

Our home was a two storey residence & our next door neighbour was Dick Gluyas who founded Gluyas Motors, the local Ford agency.

The two storey bit is significant because my parent's bedroom window overlooked the Gluyas property - and then in a straight line to the fire bell at the old station.

Cast back to about 1941 when it started to dawn on me the message the ringing fire bell meant. If I it woke me up at night I would rush into my parent's room demanding that the window be opened so that I could clearly hear the clanging alarm & waiting to hear the siren of the turnout appliance - most probably from the 1938 Ford but with any luck also that of the Model T which did not quite possess the strident alarm of the V8.

The bonus issue for me was that given fine weather the weekly drill was held on Mona Square & I was lucky enough to have a dress circle observation point from my own bedroom!

The only big electric siren in Ashburton that I was aware of was mounted on the roof of the Power Board building, over the railway & further west down Kermode St. nearer the Borough School.

Remember this was in the middle of the Second World War, the threat from Japanese invasion was real, & if that big siren sounded we were all in very big trouble.

Off to the air raid shelter my dad had dug in our garden.

Mercifully it never came to that and the only time I heard that siren sounded was when I was an eight year old pupil in standard one at the Borough School - August 1945.

The Japanese surrender had been expected & we had been told that the Power Board siren would be sounded immediately the surrender had been confirmed.

Every one poured out of school, my journey as fast as my little legs would carry me, was of course to the Fire Station.

I was determined to ring that fire bell & I remember very clearly being held up to reach the handles by a guy who worked at Drummond & Etheridge.

On that same day, but in August 1995, fifty years on, I was on my way to Dunedin by road from my home in Christchurch.

By then the bell tower had long been shifted to the Tinwald Domain so I made a right turn across the railway to have a look.

There was my beloved bell, still high on the tower.

I looked very closely, no one else was in sight & I realised that if I climbed up one section of the tower I would be able to reach the wires (no handles) to ring that bell.

By that time I had made more than one trip to Singapore & had learned first hand what would have happened to us if N.Z. had been overrun.

That bell was rung - in my own small commemoration of the vivid memory of fifty years ago & as a tribute to all the Brigade members, E.P.S., our servicemen & women - & civilians who gave their all to save our country from invasion.

I have a request to the Ashburton Fire Museum - may I please ring that bell once more before I depart this mortal coil?

Anecdote: At the height of the invasion threat, John & Richard Gluyas & I were determined to wreak as much damage on our expected visitors by soaking coloured crepe paper in a baby's bath of warm water, bottling it, stacking it on the shelves of Dick Gluyas's garage & handing it out to the foreign soldier's as they took over Mona Square, believing our patent product to be virulent poison.

NOTE 2

" The open door "

Getting a little older & bit more independent I got bored with looking at the exciting activities of drill night on Mona Square from my bedroom window and decided it was time to join the action.

At early evening time in the summer my Mother was in the habit of seeing me into bed upstairs & then checking me sometime later.

All went according to (my) plan but unfortunately Mother noticed on her travels that the front door of the house leading on to Kermode St was just slightly ajar. She raced upstairs & naturally, as you

would expect, the bed was empty & on looking out the window she saw a small fair headed boy up on the back of No 3 Ford parked alongside the fire plug in the middle of the square.

I don't recall what happened next but I know it was very hard to keep me away from drill time from there on.

I think I was becoming quite well known to the CFO & his men & I recall frequently walking to the station on a Sunday morning & being permitted to ride on No 3 from there to Mona Square for drill.

NOTE 3

"The wet run"

As I grew a little older & had more meat on my bones a number of other local lads also congregated at drills - Bruce McLauchlan & I think younger brother Barrie (they lived at the other side of the Square) were among them.

A new appliance arrived on the drill ground - -the EPS Ford V8 trailer pump.

This of course had to be tested out (again) & fully occupied the Brigade members. At the completion of a number of runs using the collector head I suspect that the Chief, being in a very good mood at its performance decided it was time to give the young boys a run, working at low volume from the standpipe.

Well, this was the thrill of the century for us. Can you imagine three young lads, one under strict supervision on the standpipe handle, the biggest struggling with a feeder length rolled on the bight, &, I think me with a heavy brass branch.

Our observation lessons of the Brigade did us proud, the hose was bowled, connected (screw couplings) & water shown much to the amusement of Brigade members.

I know it took a very long time for me to come down to earth!

I assure you that this story is true in every regard, my memory of the event is vivid & it took place at least 71 years ago.

I was bitten by a bug & now in my 80th year I am still enjoying the disease!

On the 28th January 2016, along with many mates from the FSHS a visit was made to your Museum at Tinwald.

We all wish you the very best in your endeavours & are very pleased to be able to assist in adding to your collection.

Please be assured of a warm welcome from all the members of the F.S.H.S. at the Hall of Flame, Ferrymead.

With kind regards,

Mike Hayes

ASHBURTON FIRE MUSEUM SPONSORS

Donations/ Sponsorship could be Cash, Products and Services

Major \$25000 PLUS Community Fund Trusts

Platinum \$10000 Lump Sum or 24 monthly payments

Gold \$5000 Lump Sum or 12 monthly payments

Silver \$2500 Lump Sum or 6 monthly payments

Bronze \$1000 Lump Sum or 2 monthly payments

The above sponsors/Donors will be promoted and acknowledged on the Ashburton Fire Museum website www.ashburtonfiremuseum.nz You will also be acknowledged in the printed media of The Ashburton Guardian, The Courier and the Mid Canterbury Herald. You will be named in our news updates and also your name will go on the Sponsors Board that will be displayed in the Ashburton Fire Museum. You will be invited to a Pre-opening Function to recognise your support. You will also receive a permanent memento for you to display as you see fit.

Life Members \$500 single or \$600 for family (1 payment)

Supporters \$100 - \$999

You will be acknowledged on the Ashburton Fire Museum website at www.Ashburtonfiremuseum.nz You will also be invited to a Fire Fighting Display/ Open Day to recognise your support.

Annual Membership \$30 single or \$40 for family per year

Your contribution will assist funding for news updates, website costs, Open days etc and you will be able to purchase branded Ashburton Fire Museum products at cost price ie. Caps, shirts etc.

Pledge Card

To be retained by AVFB for record keeping.

No.....

Company Name.....

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Phone- Business.....Mobile.....

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In support of the Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade for the Ashburton Fire Museum Project, please accept this pledge of \$.....

Direct Credit Cheque Cash Product/Services

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Signed by.....For AVFB

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Ashburton Volunteer Fire Brigade Bank Details 03 0835 0190308 00

AVFB Contact name:..... Postal: PO Box 300 Phone

Number: Ashburton

Thank you for your support



A special thank you to Tom Churchill of the Dunedin Fire Brigade Restoration Society who made a supreme effort and brought up the 1971 AEC Monarch Command Unit from his organisations collection to support our Wheat & Wheels Rally. Tom is genuinely interested in what we are developing at The Plains and his support and enthusiasm has buoyed us somewhat. Thank you Tom. In fact he's no stranger to our cause having previously brought appliances to support the Ashburton Brigade including the 1968 Merryweather AEC Ladder and a spectacular chrome-bonnet 1935 Ford V8 which he restored some years ago.

Ashburtons Almost Forgotten Appliance

Most of today's Ashburton brigade members will be completely unaware of another vintage appliance that served the borough and which has nearly completely disappeared off the radar.

Siren editor Peter McQuarters became intrigued by a photo hanging on the wall of the museum at Tinwald for a long period which showed a fire appliance heavily adorned with greenery, taking part in post-war celebrations including a street parade here in Ashburton.

Fortunately two surviving Ashburtonians can recall such a machine. Fire Museum Patron Alan McQuarters can recall seeing this appliance as a very young boy probably around the mid-1930's and although details are hazy, he described its base location as somewhere handy to where the Allenton Shopping Centre is today. This is interesting as the reasonably well-known but tiny Western Fire Brigade base was some distance away on that triangle of grassed area adjacent to the Catholic Church. Further enquiries, this time to local historian Viv Hanson confirmed the location as a council shed, behind the Allenton Shopping Centre, and approximately where St Davids Church is today.

Unfortunately, the only known photo which is the one described above, seems to have "disappeared" off the wall at the museum. We presume it has been packed away somewhere and are reasonably confident it will surface as the result of a thorough search.

What we do know though is that it was built up from vintage car origins, on an early 1920's Dodge chassis and running gear.

Various enquiries revealed that the late Colin Bearman had recovered the remains of this vehicle and we were keen to learn of its present whereabouts, out of curiosity more than anything. To bring about I guess, as they say - some "closure."

A letter penned by myself to the NZ Vintage Car Clubs magazine "Beaded Wheels", resulted in both a phone call and the following email from Mark Bearman, now living in Australia.

Dear Peter,

RE information regarding Allenton Fire Tender.

Nice to chat today and as promised some photos of the Dodge my father Colin Bearman restored in the 70's.

Originally Colin purchased the remains from Tarbottom's farm in Tinwald which backed on to the south side of Ashburton River.

The car was originally a tourer and had been cut down and used as a fire Tender by the Allenton Fire Station on the west side of Ashburton.

Myself aged 9 posing for the photos with the remains of the car as found about 1970, these were taken at the Willowby Garage on a Sunday noting all the cars at Church across the road.

The Dodge was about 1920-21, but as Colin already had a 1926 Dodge Tourer he built the Van as a 1918 Veteran model, these had the same height bonnet from 1917 to 1921 but with various other changes.

The new Van body taking shape in August 1972.

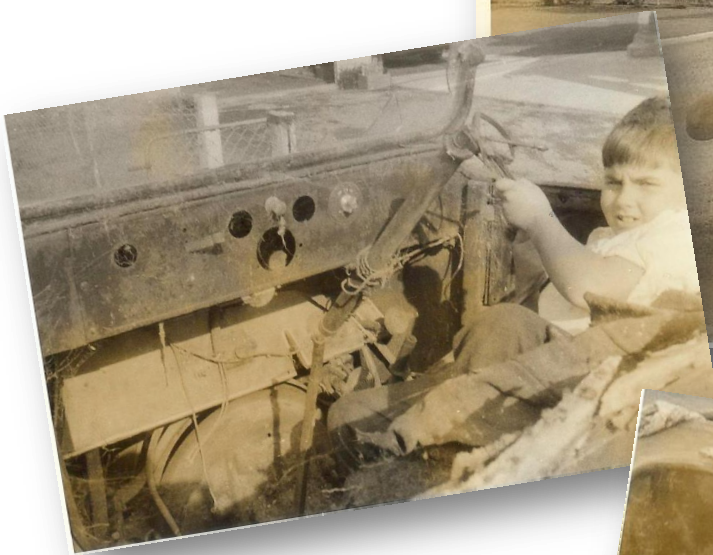
The Dodge when finished was rallied for some time in NZ by my sister and brother-in-law, Colleen and Neville Dowie and sold some years ago to a museum in Korea.

Two photos of Colin's Granddaughter Olivia Bearman in the Dodge at the 2001 Edwardian day in Christchurch.

I hope this adds some information and history you were hoping to find about the Allenton Fire Tender.

Kind regards,

Mark Bearman.





Above: Allentons old Dodge Fire Tender slowly coming back to life as a C cab van with Colin Bearman out at Willoughby in the 1970's.

Below: The completed vehicle, which as Mark Bearman describes, is now somewhat remarkably in a museum in Korea !



We are hugely thankful to Mark Bearman for taking the time and interest to solve this for us.

Wheat & Wheels Done & Dusted !





Julie & Taylah - Catering Queens from Julie Williams Catering

These girls with Lorraine Mac helping raised us a bag of cash.





The spectacular ex-Wellington Dennis TTL of Adam and Kirsty Trezise







The crowd lapping it up ! Bruce Hill at the controls of the Steamer.



Bill and Ken – the Steamer Men





Rosco WHEELS WEEK PLUS 2016



The Pride Of Ashburton is always a showstopper! Special thanks to Neil Hydes for towing the Steamer behind one of his vintage tractors. He wants the job again next year he tells us.





Above: Testimony to Arthur Wolfreys restoration efforts, the F8 still looking very smart.

Below: Awaiting restoration with Panelcraft, the 1971 ERF donated by the Fire Services Historical Society nevertheless turned up for the parade. Donna Whyllie photos.

