

# Miniature Auto

ma264

**New Zealand**

49th year of publication!



Kovap tin-plate Zetor tractor  
See Eric's article on page 10

Miniature Auto is the bi-monthly newsletter of  
The New Zealand Model Vehicle Club (Inc.)

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*The views and opinions expressed in Miniature Auto are not necessarily those held by the New Zealand Model Vehicle Club (Inc.) and the Executive and no responsibility can be accepted by the Club and/or the Executive.*

**ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO MA NOW!!**

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## EDITORIAL

Firstly, I must apologise to Howard Brockie for not printing his letter on the future of our Club. It must have got 'lost' when I changed e-mail services due to Vodafone pulling the plug and I accidentally deleted the old In Boxes, etc. Please continue to use the existing Editor e-mail address as shown in the Directory opposite as Ian has redirected it to my new address.

However, please read Howard's thoughts and let your views be known through the pages of Miniature Auto, or your Delegate.

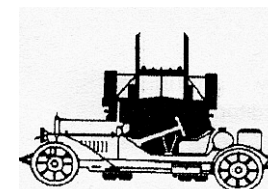
Be wary of buying through the internet with credit cards. I have just heard of one Member having his account 'hacked' when he bought from a well known French trader. OK, the the money was restored to his account, but it is always a hassle. To my shame, I too got caught the same way twice! (I know, once bitten, twice shy). It was a couple of years apart and I was not sure the first time whether the leak happened from their account. The site did start with https, which should mean it is secure. Even using intermediaries such as Pay Pal does not always guarantee safety because someone used my account to buy Bit Coins. Change passwords regularly was the lesson here!

Don't forget your ideas for the Club's 50th Anniversary in 2019 (see page 18).

Happy modelling!!

*Ron*

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## BRANCH NEWS

### SOUTHLAND from Fred Hawkes:

Well 2018 is here and let's hope that it is successful for everyone. Did you all have an excellent Christmas and a restful time to follow? We hope so.

First bit of news is that I'm back on-air with another cellphone and the number remains the same as the old one (021-25 666 83). I'm in the process of rebuilding the files that got lost when the old phone died.

Our last meeting was the Christmas meeting and it took the form of a dinner at the Makarewa Country Club. The food was excellent and there was a wide selection to choose from at reasonable prices and with good sized helpings. (Several of those present were seen leaving with "doggy boxes" and I don't think they all have dogs). We finished up around 9:30pm with everyone paying for their own meal and liquids.

## WHY I COLLECT BY MATTHEW HOPKINS

The very first model I ever owned was a dragster/rail that I got for Christmas in the early 70s. My dad built it and I still have it today. The model is 1:32 scale and looks like a Monogram but I couldn't be sure.

My dad built a number of model cars during my childhood and they were displayed in a cabinet that he built himself. It was hung on the wall in the passageway at home and I often spent time studying them but was never allowed to touch. I began to build model planes when I was about 7 or 8 and most of my friends did the same thing. Most of my collection was hung from the ceiling in my bedroom. Once I entered a model building competition run by the D.I.C in Dunedin.

I bought my first model car from the D.I.C and for the first time I used paints. It looked really good and I had high hopes of a prize, but it was not to be.

Unfortunately, some of the models suffered and early demise around Guy Fawkes night. Back in the good old days, many of my friends and I would launch various model cars and planes into oblivion loaded with Tom Thumbs, or for the best result, Pohas. WOW!!!

I continued to build models into my teens but stopped for a time until my mid-twenties when I found a really nice 1:32 Cessna Float Plane kitset in a great model shop in Wellington. I built the Cessna and my passion for modelling was rekindled. Before I was married, my future wife would occasionally buy me a model for my birthday or Christmas. Now when her or the kids run out of ideas, a model is a safe bet.

Now I don't build as many kitsets and tend to buy mostly 1:18 diecast, although I will buy any model I like the look of. I used to have mainly American cars, but have branched out into Aussie and European also. I am a fan of older vehicles and have a good collection of Corgi models and recently getting a few English buses. I love the character of them.

A number of years ago, I found a 1:18 diecast model of a Bob Jane 1969 Camaro on Trade Me for \$160, but even though it was missing the driver's door mirror, it was too good a price to pass up. Once I had bought it, I wondered if I had done the right thing. When it arrived and on opening the box, I found the missing mirror in the bottom of the box. A spot of glue and you'd never know. You have to win sometimes!

A few years ago, I sold some of my less favoured diecasts to concentrate on specific brands such as Auto-ART, Bianta, etc. While I have some very nice models in my collection, I have regretted selling some of them and have decided to keep all the ones I have and to continue to build on my collection. I think I may also start to build the odd kitset again.



I also collect Police cars – mainly older ones but bought my first more modern one from Eric a couple of months ago. A Camaro Police car from the Greenlight Collection. Like my dad, I have also built my own rimu display cabinet and proudly display part of my collection in the cabinet in our hallway. It is a nice piece of furniture with a great spot near the front door.

My dad passed away a couple of years ago and I have inherited his collection with some great kitsets from the 1960s. I also have 60 or 70 of his Road & Track magazines from the 60s, which I am working my way through. In one issue, I found an ad for three models in his collection. A really neat piece of nostalgia for me.

My own son has built models in the past and is very creative in building various dioramas and superhero figures. He is now in his teens and has one or two favourite models of mine that I am sure he will display in his own home in the future.

I have only been a member of the Otago Branch for a few months and I enjoy the meetings with like-minded people sharing stories and models.

**Matt**



## CARVILLE'S CAPERS

Perhaps I ought to rename this Capers as “News from Britain” as most of the information originates from there. The latest Ruby Toys model is another bus. The previous bus was a red London Transport Leyland; this one is the London Country Area equivalent, an AEC.

The model and a preserved example are illustrated.



Typical of all Ruby Toys, it is heavy, cleanly cast and well painted.

Those interested in Dinky Toys will know that Atlas Editions have been issuing reproductions of these classic diecasts for quite some time. A range of French Dinkys was the first to be available, followed by English Dinkys, Dinky Trucks and now Deluxe Dinkys. Many who took up the subscription for the English Dinky Collection were very disappointed that Atlas ‘contaminated’ the range by releasing as many French Dinky as they did those of English origin. Atlas has recently announced that this range has been completed, but are now promoting the new Deluxe Series. The (English) Dinky Aston Martin DB5 (No



110), complete with opening doors and bonnet has been extensively used in promoting this range, but once again, the website shows that the next five releases are all based on French Dinky dies. They are as follows:

1408	Honda S800
507	Simca 1500 Break
519	Mercedes Benz 230SL
1402	Ford Galaxie
530	Citroen DS19

It has been announced that Lyndon Davies, founder of Oxford Diecast, is now CEO of the ailing Hornby Hobbies. The controlling shareholders of Hornby were obviously impressed by Lyndon’s performance at Oxford, and decided that his skills were needed to turn round the struggling Hornby brands, including Corgi, Scalextric and Airfix, as well as the various model railway ranges. They were so impressed by Oxford that the majority shareholders in Hornby also acquired a minority shareholding in LCD Enterprises, the parent company of Oxford Diecast. The majority of LCD shares are still owned by the Davies family, and Lyndon’s daughter Eloise has taken over as CEO of Oxford Diecast. It will be fascinating to watch as the results of the current detailed reviews at Hornby start to emerge over the next few years.

Changes are also happening at another UK model producer, Brooklin Models, where new ownership is dictating a new direction for the company with an “aspirational” website, products with added detail, and with expensive packaging under discussion. All this means that their models sell for very much higher prices. Given that these white metal heavy-weights are already rather expensive, one wonders if this is the right recipe for continued success.

The modelling press broke the news recently that Base Toys had ceased trading. Base Toys competed strongly with Oxford Diecast in the 1:76 scale and 1:148 scale market place. Focusing mainly on coaches, trucks and lorries in recent years, they were aimed primarily at railway modellers and offered a budget priced product using a lot of plastic in their construction.

John Ayrey Ltd, a wholesaler of their products, confirmed that Base Toys had ceased trading but that as the brand and factory bookings still existed it was possible that the models will go back into production as there is a market for them.

I have just found out about a new range of diecast models, called GFCC Toys. They seem to be the registered brand of Tongbo Toys of Albany, New York, but it may be a trading company rather than a pure producer.

Two models have been released, a 1959 Pontiac Bonneville Convertible and a Jaguar SS1



The Pontiac is similar in size to a Neo model of the same car, but is more economical in finish. Although the other model it is called a Jaguar SS1, it should just be an SS1 as the name Jaguar was adopted by William Lyons after the production of the SS1 had finished. The SS1 is similar to earlier Dinky Toys with no glazing, suspension or interior, and has a simple pressed metal baseplate. However, the bumpers, wheels and lights are solid shiny silver metal which is quite different to Dinky. The two spare wheels just sit in depressions on the running boards. The GFCC ‘Jaguar’ SS1 is available in burgundy/red, cream and

dark green. Both of these models can be found on eBay at quite reasonable prices.



Dan-Toys continue to issue updated editions of old Dinky Toys, both British and French. They are often made more interesting as they don’t just copy the originals, but also use different liveries. Pictured is a Guy in Capstan colours –originally used by Dinky on the small Morris Commercial die, and a Bedford Truck in a colour scheme that I don’t think Dinky used. I hope that you will be able to see that the paint finishes are much better than original Dinkys, particularly around the grill and headlights.



*Carville*

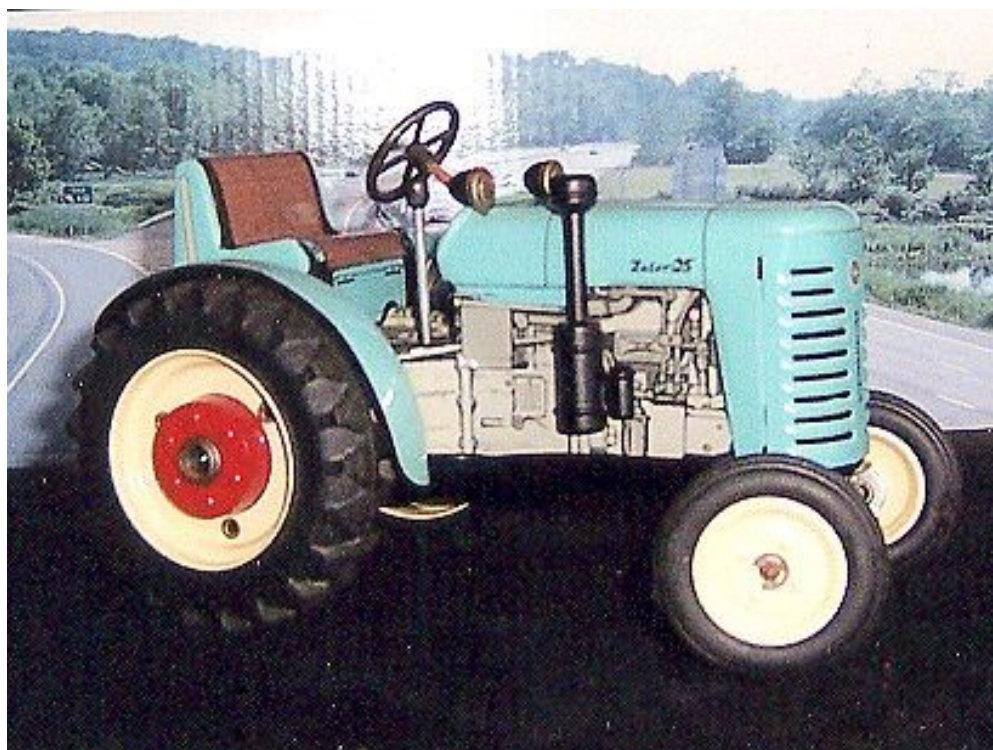


## KOVAP ZETOR 25A TRACTOR

I recently purchased from an auction, a model of a ZETOR 25A tractor. On the brochure enclosed with the model, it is listed as a mechanical tin toy, while on the box, it tells us that the model is clockwork and has shiftable gearbox with 3 forward gears and 1 reverse. It has functional handbrake and steering.

The tin-plate model is well presented with the grille being one-piece of metal with slots cut out to improve the appearance. The side-view has the motor painted in detail as is the floor in front of the driver and the front and back of the seat.

Even though the model is mint and boxed, I thought it did not have a key for the clockwork motor. I could not even find the hole for the key, but on reading the brochure, I realised that the key fitted into the wheel hub of the right side back wheel. It was certainly a well concealed place for the key. For a tin-plate model, it is a very nice example.



Now to the model manufacturer ????...The model itself has no markings on it, but the box has "Kovap" which could be the manufacturer but on the box, it also has "Jouetts Mechanical" (*I don't really know French, but I think that is simply 'Mechanical Toy' – not a trade name. I have heard of Kovap' Ed.)*....The model is made in the Czech Republic.



A brief history of Zetor Tractors: Tractors with the trade mark Zetor started to be built in series production immediately after WW2. The first prototype Zetor being finished by November 14<sup>th</sup> 1945....They were not the first tractors to be built in Czechoslovakia and joined the other makes such as Skoda, Svoboda and CKD.

*Kovap still exist and making the tin-plate toys such as Eric's. His Zetor is a model 25 and it's catalogue number is 0384 in their 2017 catalogue. They cost €48.75 (About \$NZ80) plus postage. Ed.*

The Kovap range not only includes tractors, but cars, buses and truck and even a traction engine.

Here are a couple more Kovap tractors: (pictures from the Kovap website.



**Eric Brockie**



## ***FUTURE OF THE CLUB?***

At the last AGM, Carville made some interesting comments about the future direction of the Club and asked us all to put our thinking caps on about what if any changes need to happen in how the club operates.... I think many of his comments were valid.... Albert Einstein once explained INSANITY as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.... Applying this to the NZMVC, and you can understand why our membership continues to fall.... After all it has been falling for a number of years and yet we continue to operate just as we have for year after year.... Despite the hobby seeming to be booming with far more models being available and sold we just don't seem to be able to attract any great numbers of new members.

So what should we do? Below are some ideas (in no particular order) and I see good and bad sides to most of them but hopefully they might start some discussion.... I don't presume to know what is best but I do know we need to have lots of discussion and hopefully some of you have some other ideas that have not yet been talked about.... Some of these ideas are mine, some come from talking to other members and some have been raised before but it is a starting point.

### **Do we still need a National body and Branch structure?**

This structure has served the club well for many years. In the past, the club has had up to approx. 200 members and up to 9 branches spread from Auckland to Invercargill. Now with only approx. 40 members, the majority of which are in Otago and only 2 active branches (sorry Wellington but each year you survive by the skin of your teeth and really are a branch in name only) is this structure and all the associated administration still required?

If we are to survive, a major change in thinking would be required. One advantage would be that if we were all just one club without branches.... All branch assets and funds could be transferred to the national body which would put the club in a secure position. But who would cover the costs of notifying members of meetings being held in their area or pay for the cost of storage of the considerable assets that the Otago branch own? A member from Christchurch may well feel aggrieved at helping support members in Dunedin, but then again if we are being realistic if it wasn't for the Otago branch then the Club probably wouldn't exist and certainly couldn't afford to financially.

### **Constitution**

We currently have a very complex constitution which evolved over time when the club had up to 9 branches and 200 members. For a club that now has approximately 40 members, it is way over the top. Look at how many remits it took to change a couple of simple things. Surely a club of our size should be able to operate with just a very simple set of rules. I would, in fact, be surprised that most members even knew or even cared about the rules that govern how we operate.

I propose that we completely rewrite the constitution in a simple form eg; 10-15 clauses or no more than a couple of A4 pages. As part of that I would get rid of Postal Voting. I know it was introduced to give everyone a chance to have a say at a time when there were lots of egos and personalities involved but for a number of years, the only people who have ever made the effort is the Otago Branch, so it is all sorted before the AGM and in reality 4 or 5 people are deciding who runs the club. Just go back to how the branches, most clubs and in fact our club used to operate for many years and nominate and vote at the AGM.

### **Miniature Auto**

First let me start by thanking Ron Ford for his massive efforts for so many years in putting together Miniature Auto. We all need to (myself included) support him so much more with supplying articles. Imagine the difference if we all contributed even one article each, every year.

Over the years there has been plenty of discussion about producing this electronically and I know that most of us have indicated we would prefer a hard copy but perhaps send it electronically which happens at no cost to the club and let members print their own if they want for one level of subscription but members who wish to receive it as they now do pay a higher level of subscription.

This would become a user pays situation and could help reduce the single largest cost to the national body.

### **Subscriptions**

At the AGM, there was much discussion about increasing the subscription. Easy to be wise afterwards but here are some options that could be considered for the future, Make subs cheaper for people who receive Miniature Auto electronically.

Drop the subs to a level that just covers the National Body costs. Then the branch could just levy members whatever it costs to operate their particular Branch. Members who live where there is no active Branch could just pay the National body sub but if they chose to be associated with a particular branch they pay whatever that Branch chooses to levy its members. Once again, a situation of user pays.

### **What the Club Offers**

In years gone past people joined the club to find out where to obtain models or even what models were available. I remember many club meetings where I purchased models and auctions and swap meets were very common place. But then along came the internet and suddenly both information and the range of model's available increases dramatically.

Nowadays I believe the club is more social than informative. I think the Otago branch does a great job of managing both and this is reflected in its strength so perhaps other branches could copy its example or even members where there is no branch start along a more social line than any to try and attract new members.

### **Widen the scope of the club**

Why not widen the scope of the club to include any sorts of collectors and collectables rather than just model vehicles. This has the advantage of allowing many new and wide ranging interests to join with us and greater numbers of members will make for stronger branches and perhaps let us reopen some branches that have been forced to close due to lack of numbers. Also hopefully it would encourage a lot more material for Miniature Auto which must make the editor's job easier.

### **Affiliate with other Model Clubs**

Another possible option could be to join up with other clubs. Over the years many other new clubs catering for our hobby have started up and survived. Now what do they offer that we don't? Should we look at affiliating in some way with them to form some sort of body of Model Vehicle Clubs. I would hate to see us lose our identity but perhaps something similar to motor sport where lots of clubs have their own identity rules etc but all affiliate to an overall body where lots of members help provide lots of information and strength and help the hobby prosper overall.



### Fold Up the Club

One member I was talking to suggested that I was talking to suggested that an easy way around any changes that may be required would just be to fold up the existing club and start a new club up straight away. Personally, I am very much against this idea for the simple reason that we lose all our history that has been amassed over 48 years. That would be a real shame.

I am sure that some of the above will have annoyed some of you and there are perhaps some ideas that you agree with. Plenty of you will also have ideas of your own so please no matter how far-fetched you may think your idea is make it known to other members via Miniature Auto or at least raise it at a local branch meeting.

Please think about all of these and look at the bigger picture. Yes some of these ideas if they were to progress any further may mean individual members or branches have to give up things they have worked hard for but we can and must move forward so let's start considering and discussing some ideas before it's too late.

### **Howard Brockie**

The Tip-Top promotional van featured in MA262 was number two in a series, and now I

## **TIP-TOP TRUCKS**

have details of number 1. It is basically the same model with different signage.

The illustration shows the number 1 model in the Tip-Top colour scheme but I only have one side photographed which shows a Tip-Top Trumpet ice cream cone along with other stick novelty ice creams.

The other side shows the Topnotch Macadamia ice cream. The roof has a truck full of ice cream with the slogan 'Make you feel Tip-Top' The roof of the cab and the back doors has another slogan; 'Feel Tip-Top'.



### **Eric Brockie**

MA264 p14

## **COPY RIGHT?**

With Carville's delving into the history of automotive toys made in New Zealand, it has encouraged me to look at some specific areas in this field. Some of the early toys locally made were obviously copied or at least inspired by overseas brands; particularly from the UK and the USA.

Some of the Brentware Toys were copied from contemporary Tootsietoy from the USA. I have just obtained a Tootsietoy 1954/55 Chevrolet Corvette convertible from the so called 4" range. As an aside, many of the American toy makers did not work to scale but to size, so firms such as Tootsietoy made the same toy in 3", 4" and 6" sizes; roughly translating to 1:64, 1:48 and 1:32 depending on how big the real vehicle was.



Tootsietoy Corvette (left), Brentware Corvette (right)

Back to the Tootsietoy Corvette: Brentware produced a Corvette which is considered to be a copy of the Tootsietoy, so how close is it? At a glance, they look pretty well identical, but going

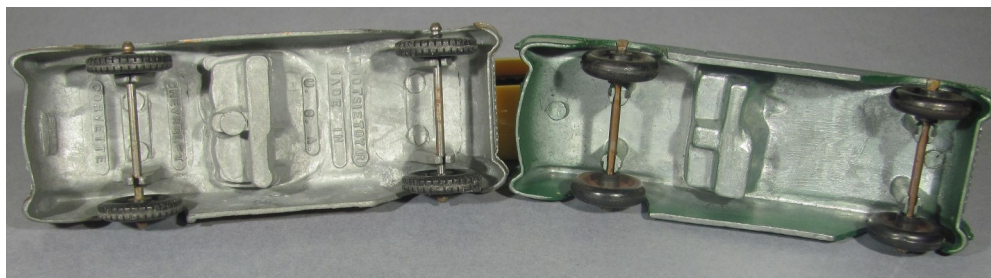
down to details, there are a number of discrepancies. The Tootsietoy is a more finely cast toy with narrower panel and shut lines. There is a 'crossed flags' emblem above the radiator that isn't on the Brentware version, but otherwise it is a reasonable duplicate. A clincher is the number plate on the rear with '3030' cast on both versions. However, Brentware has gone to the trouble of converting the cockpit to right-hand drive instead of the left-hand of the Tootsietoy, thus avoiding confusion for budding drivers!



MA264 p15



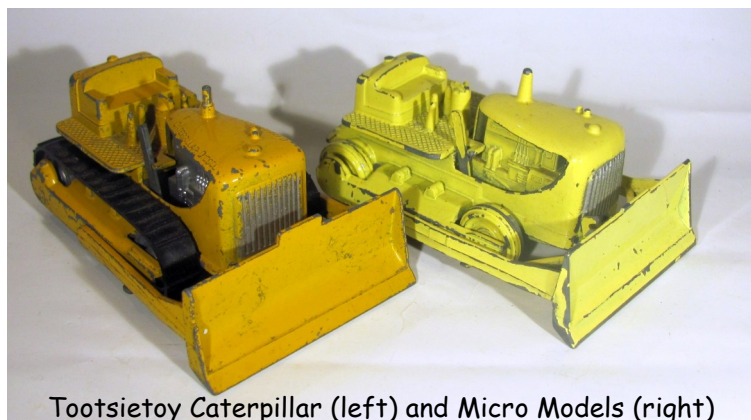
The simple one-piece moulding is the same for both examples with the axle pillars of the Tootsietoy being flat posts as opposed to the rounded Brentware type. The Tootsietoy is marked on the underside: 'TOOTSIETOY® MADE IN U.S.A' and 'CHEVROLET COR-VETTE' whereas the Brentware job has no markings at all; not even the tool number found on others in the range.



The Tootsietoy is fitted with-treaded black one-piece plastic wheels with tread pattern. Axle ends are peened over. The Brentware has the standard one-piece wheel/tyre with the axle ends being crimped. However, Brent has taken the trouble to do some mask spraying (lacking on the Tootsietoy) with the grille, headlights and cockpit picked out in silver.

Both versions of the Corvette are far from being considered as models, but they are recognizable as early Corvettes. Both feature recessed panel lines which are technically harder to achieve than the raised lines of makes such as Meccano Dinky Toys.

Brentware were not the only ones to copy Tootsietoys. Lincoln copied the Tootsietoy Caterpillar bulldozer and the Morris Fire Engine looks suspiciously like Tootsietoy's Mack L-Line Fire Pumper. Then there's that darned 'Brentware' articulated petrol tanker.



Tootsietoy Caterpillar (left) and Micro Models (right)

By the way, the missing tracks on the Micro Caterpillar can be replaced with Matchbox K3a ones.

**Ron**

## COPY WRONG?

Even though the English Atlas Editions seem to have floundered, the French equivalent is still booming release wise. The original Meccano French Dinky Toy range was smaller than the English one, so the copies by Atlas, CIJ and Dan-Toys represent a fair proportion of the original series.

However, two recent releases by Atlas have not quite hit the mark. One is fairly minor, but annoying and the other has missed one of the selling features of the original.

Firstly, there is #567, Mercedes-Benz Unimog Chasse-Neige (snow plough), which overall is almost an exact copy. That isn't the problem. It is the arm of the 'hydraulic actuator to raise the snow plough blade. In the original it is actually a split pin and the copy is a solid rod. Why does it make a difference? The split pin has a bit of spring between the leaves and that is enough on the original to provide friction to hold the blade at the set angle and the copy does not so the blade stays on the surface. Maybe a little blue pill will help? Whatever, it ruins the 'play value', and yes, toys should be played with!



Atlas Editions L

Original Dinky

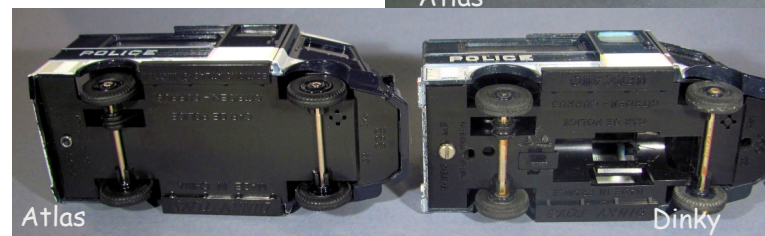
The second example is #566 Car de Police Secours (Citroen H) (Black Maria). This is where Atlas has ruined the play value by not installing the flashing light mechanism and the associated battery holder. It still has the 'siren' (pin-pon) simulator with the mechanism driven off the wheels. On the plus side, the copy has a much better paint job.



Atlas

Dinky

**Ron**



Atlas

Dinky

## CLUB'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY 2019

Whilst many members know of the history of our Club, others may not.

Our Club was formed in January 1969 as:

### *Model Car Collectors Club New Zealand (Inc.)*

And later the name was changed to:

### *New Zealand Model Vehicle Club (Inc.)*

At the last Annual General Meeting held in Dunedin in May 2017, the Otago Branch was appointed the Host Branch to organize the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and any other celebrations or displays to be associated with the meeting.

Our Otago Branch Executive have several ideas we are discussing, but we would welcome input from other Members of the Club.

We have also had some discussions on what functions we could organize but have not yet finalised any part of the celebrations, so we also invite Members to give some thought to the events.

If you would like to make any suggestions for the Otago Branch to consider, then please get in touch

Items for consideration are:

- Size of any display
- Duration of display
- Social functions to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee.
- The guest list (former Members, etc.)

If you have any ideas about the foregoing or any other ideas then please write to:

Eric Brockie  
Secretary/Treasurer,  
Otago Branch  
P.O.Box 1356  
DUNEDIN 9054



MODEL CAR COLLECTORS  
CLUB OF  
NEW ZEALAND

## SNIPPETS

Gazooks! That young fellow m'lud, Carville le Stewart has gawn and had an article published in the prestigious Dinky Toys Collectors' Association magazine "The Journal" (January 2018 issue #68). He wrote of the shenanigans of the post-war (II) toy market in New Zealand and how it affected the ability to easily collect Dinky Toys (and other makes such as Matchbox Toys). Well done that lad, even though he isn't a member of the association.

On the subject of the 1950s and 60s toy/model scene in New Zealand – what do you remember about the era? Even though imports were restricted; there seemed to be a much bigger selection available to the collector, across the counter as it were.

I recall and buying imported makes such as; Märklin, Gama, Tri-ang Minic and Spot-On, Budgie Toys, Corgi Toys, Solido, RIO, Mercury, Gamda Koor/Sabra (Israel), Norev, Majorette, Eligor, Politoys/Polistil, ERTL, Lone Star, Schuco, Joal, Tomica, Grip Zechin, Shinsei Brumm, Detail Cars and Britains. How many others can you nominate?

Do you need decals for Micro Models? There are two suppliers in Australia that offer a range of decals that replicate the tampo printed originals. The eBay names are:

*dirkton*

*geribus*

**Wanted wanted Wanted wanted Wanted wanted**

**Kitset News,  
Diecast News.  
Any Hobby News whatsoever!**

## TOY COLLECTORS FAIR



Including Railways, Tinplate Toys,  
Figures, Literature, Cards, Vehicles,

Comics & much more

### **Trentham School Hall**

**Cnr Moonshine Road &  
Fergusson Drive, Trentham**

**Sunday 18th March 2018**

**Time: 11.00am - 2.00pm**

### **Admission:**

Adults \$2.00 Children \$1.00 Family \$5.00



Table enquiries - Julian (04) 970 8654





**Christchurch**

# **TOY & HOBBY FAIR**

**10:30am to 2:30pm**

**Sunday May 6, 2018**

**Caledonian Society Hall**

**5 Michelle Road, Wigram**

**Christchurch**

**Supported by:**

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To apply for tables or for more information

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