

# MINIATURE AUTO

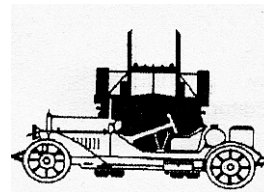
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A publication for and by collectors and builders of model vehicles

*37th Year of publication*



*1/12 scale Motormax Ford GT Concept*



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

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**DEADLINE FOR MA 225 - 30TH NOVEMBER, 2006**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all Members.....

Yes, I know, I know – late again! And yes – it is all my fault this time. I've been plagued with a strange affliction – RBS – Renovate Bathroom Syndrome!! No, no – it's OK - I'll survive! It would be totally unfair of me to expect any of you to jump to my assistance!!

Anyway – congratulations to the Ford family. Don't know about this new model though, - the Ford Grandson! Never heard of that one before! I suppose this type of thing is always in the 'Product Development' stages for a good few years. I guess they start with the 'conception' of an idea, working and preparing for about 9 months until you have a 'Working Prototype'! After that I guess all the fine details and features are developed until it evolves into the 4WD version, and then through, and into the final 2WD stage, no doubt being subject to all manner of 'Crash Testing', suspension and drive-train development, and fuel economy tests!. I suspect it'll be environmentally friendly too – totally organic 'Emissions'!!..... (Somebody please stop me!!).

The Otago Branch were privileged to be asked by the Otago Museum to be part of an exhibition held recently called – 'Speed - Science in Motion'. The Club was asked to supply Models representing cars which famous New Zealanders either drove or owned. Also in the display were some motorcycles, - the Britten, and some of the Bert Munroe bikes, - one original, and one as used in the film. Check out the photos in this issue.

I trust all your Branch AGMs have all been successfully held and that the results will all be sent to Eric in due course.

Yours in Modelling

**Shayne Spicer**



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## EDITORIAL:

Recently there was a model train show in Lower Hutt. The exhibits and trade tables managed to fill two big halls and the annexes. When I made a visit; I was impressed with the number of people crowding the halls. I was also quite jealous as no model car show would attract such a crowd. Why is that? I know they had very good publicity (a key factor) but the public still won't turn up unless there is an intrinsic interest in the subject. So what is different about model railways? Movement of course! It seemed the more that was going on, the greater the audience.

A couple of the layouts had moving road vehicles. One quite fascinating display had an HO scale bus negotiating a complex course including dodging around 'road works'. I assume it was following a cable under the roadway (there was quite a lot of wear on the road surface showing the 'track' was a predetermined one) as there was no other obvious way of guiding the model.

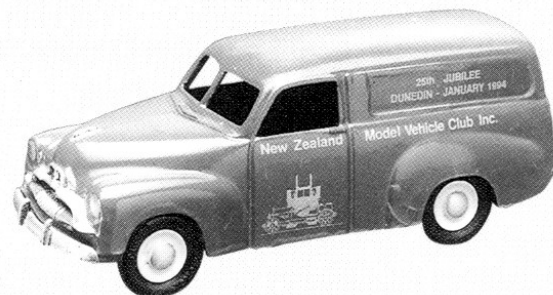
Slot cars, the traditional 'no-no' of model collectors, have certainly come of age. Gone are the racing blobs of the 70s and now they seem perfect scale models. Does anyone collect and race them? How about a run-down of the current scene? They would be perfect to add motion to any display.

Ian Cousins has written a synopsis on why we collect. I make no apologies for publishing it in full. Have you any views on this? I have a couple which can be found in my Ronbling On piece (page 7)

It won't be long until Christmas, so I hope you have all been good and receive something 'collectable' (or buildable) in your stocking.

After Christmas, there is the national Annual General Meeting. Even though you might have little interest in the business of the Club; there are other great attractions that make it most enjoyable to attend. Not the least is meeting up with like minded people and sharing experiences and opinions....

Cheers



## BRANCH NEWS

### OTAGO:

Although we did not have a large number of members present for the August Club Night, it was an enjoyable evening with plenty of discussion amongst those who attended.

Competitions for the night were on a theme of 'Three of a Kind' and there was a great variety of models entered.

Results were as follows:

#### DIECAST:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Shayne Spicer with three Toyota four wheel drive vehicles
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Robert Jopp with three Holden V8 Supercars
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Shayne Spicer with three different cars but they all had six cylinder engines with triple carburettors.

Shayne, on many occasions, enters models into the competitions that don't seem to fit the theme, but he always has the answer, as illustrated with his three cars with they same type of engine. Keep it up Shayne as it helps the rest of the members keep busy trying to work out the reason for the entry.

The lucky door prize for the night was won by Graeme O'Brien and he then went on to win a complimentary ticket to the 'Speed Exhibition' at the Otago Museum. Graham Patterson also won a ticket to the same show.

Members also spoke briefly about their favourite that they brought along.

*Eric Brookie.*

### SOUTHLAND:

The meeting was held at Russell and Marie Corbetts home on Matua Road, Otatara on Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> August Thanks to both. Thanks also to Fred Hawkes for providing details of this meeting.

Matters arising: Fred Hawkes has established that E-scape Glass in Forth Street are able to mould Perspex for dust covers for the display turntables. Contact Ralda or Carey McDowall

Russell Corbett has discovered Phil Newbury via Invercargill Glass channels, is able to make dome shaped glass covers. More enquiries need to be made here as I have a feeling that since they would be made in small quantities; the cost would be huge.

General discussion to place re. competition certificates. Russell has come up with prices for different grades of paper.

**Competition results:**

**Kitset (any convertible)**

|                 |                  |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Brett Dronsfield | Chevrolet SSR    |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Owen Dickson     | Viper SRT 10     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Fred Hawkes      | White half-track |

**Diecast, large (whitewalls)**

|                 |                 |               |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Paul Thompson   | Chrysler 300  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Roger Larsen    | 1941 Plymouth |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Russell Corbett | Lincoln       |

**Diecast, small**

|                 |                 |                                |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Paul Thompson   | Chevrolet tow truck            |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Russell Corbett | 1949 Ford Single Spinner Woody |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Roger Larsen    | Ford Woody.                    |

**Competition results for the September meeting:**

**Kitset:**

|                 |                  |                    |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Brett Dronsfield | Nissan Skyline     |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Owen Dickson     | Boyd Aluma Coupe   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Fred Hawkes      | Morris fire engine |

**Diecast, large**

|                 |                    |                              |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Barry McCorkindale | Ford Escort rally car        |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Russell Corbett    | Willys Jeep                  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Alan Graves        | Holden SS Commodore road car |

**Diecast, small**

|                 |                 |                     |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Paul Thomson    | 'Supercheap' Holden |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Alan Graves     | Holden Monaro CV8   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Russell Corbett | Triumph Dolomite    |

## LETTER (FROM THE WEB)

Hi, Just recently I got a 1/43 scale Intercars 67 -68 ford Thunderbird. All there but in need of a little cosmetic restoring. I was doing research on this model as didn't know much about this make and came across the article on your site. Very interesting and informative. Didn't realise they were assembled in NZ.

Anyway I noticed in your listing that you don't have a picture of the Thunderbird, which I think is special as there's not many of the 67's made in that scale. The only other I could find was an Israel brand which doesn't have opening hoods, doors etc. Johnny Lightning makes a 1/64 scale but that's all I could find. Anyway if you would like a picture of mine for your listing, I would be happy to send, Great site would like to join as well.

Regards Lloyd Wilson

*Will follow this up—RLF*

## RONBLING ON!

In Ian Cousin's treatise on model collecting; he mentions buying and selling on the Internet. While some aspects of this have been covered in MA previously, it is worth noting a few developments. Bogus Lots have been offered by sellers, mainly in the Far East. They simply lift photos and descriptions from genuine lots and offer them as their own. They are quite easy to spot as they are usually new sellers (no feedbacks) and the items offered are usually very rare, so how would they end up in the East anyhow. I don't think the scam is too successful as they don't have any bids anyhow.

Another 'new' aspect is a program called E-Snipe (I think) that allows you to put in a bid at the last possible moment; so gazumping any other bidders. I wonder what happens if two or more bidders use the system at the same time for the same Lot? I had wondered how people managed to be there at the moment of the sale closing ~ hovering over their keyboards (how sad!). The one time I tried it; the system managed to slow down so much that the sale closed before I could get the bid in. Besides, most 'interesting' Lots seem to close at unsociable times for New Zealand (2am to 4am for instance).

Having seen the Corgi catalogue for 2007, I was amazed at the volume of product being produced. Several new ranges are being introduced. However, I wonder who is going to buy them? In the 'good old days', I would buy just about every model they produced, but now due to the volume and most of all the price, I hardly buy any. Many of my fellow collectors are the same, with most having stopped collecting Corgi altogether.

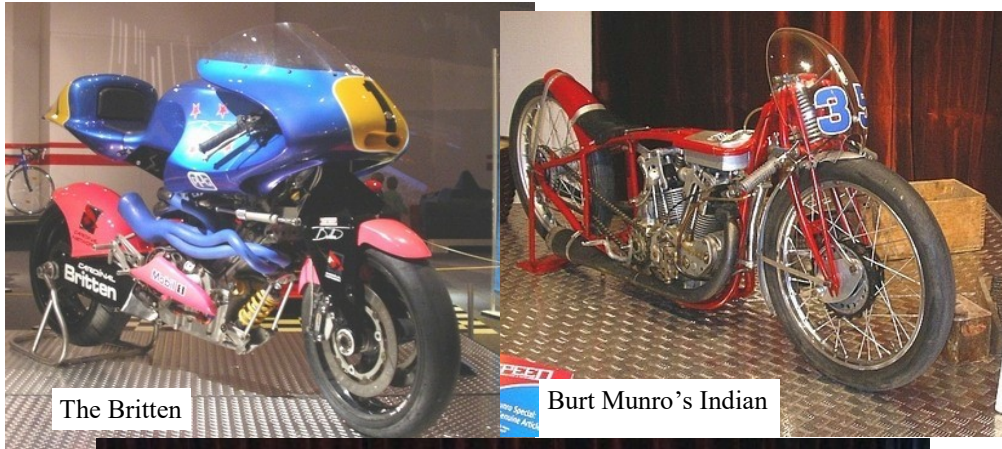
Touching on the train show I mentioned in the Editorial. When it comes to road vehicles on layouts, they very seldom fit the theme. They are either; the wrong scale, wrong era or wrong type. Just about every New Zealand 1/64 'set' had American prototype cars instead in English which were the norm for the era depicted. I guess in one way there aren't many 1/64 English car models, although there were some good chops on the Lledo Bedfords, Fords and Leylands. Railmaster in Auckland do produce some 1/64 kits, but once again, American prototypes dominate, as they are also marketed in the USA.

Eric comments on some UK auction prices for Matchbox 1 ~ 75s. They certainly have skyrocketed, especially when you convert them to the NZ\$

Diecast toy makers are quite innovative. One of the latest ideas I saw at The Warehouse was a Road Champs 1/43 Custom Garage set where when you buy it, the toy is covered with what looks like badly applied primer. A 'buffing tool' is supplied which is used to remove this paint to reveal a fancy finish. Some customisation can then be done with the extra parts supplied. That means a mint boxed toy is rougher than a played with one! Cars available are a 1949 Ford Woody, '70s Pontiac, 59 Chev Impala and 78 Chev Corvette. Neat, eh?

*Ron Ford*

## MUSEUM PICTURES FROM SHAYNE SPICER

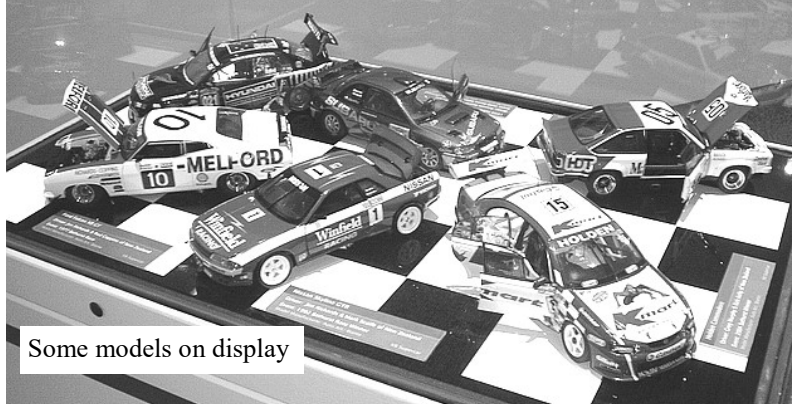


The Britten

Burt Munro's Indian



Burt Munro's "Fastest Indian"



Some models on display

## ERIC'S PAGE

Eric's Photo Captions (see pages 10 & 11)

1. 1.1/12 scale Motormax Ford GT Concept in black. Also available in this scale is a Mercedes Benz SLR McLaren. Both cars are available in several colours. *See front cover*
2. How would you like this motorcycle model entered into your branch kitset class? One of the first to be brought into the country; this one belongs to Trevor Bellaney of the Otago Branch and was entered into the Alexander competitions in 2005. *No scale given by Eric ~ perhaps 1/3?*
3. Models on show at the Ashburton Model Show earlier this year.
4. As per #3
5. As per #3. Of the models in the pictures, many were scratch built, but you would not think so to look at then and credit must go to the builders for their workmanship. The exhibition in Ashburton is well worth a visit.
6. This is the Tow Truck mentioned in my article back in **MA218**.
7. Another toy truck mentioned in my article in **MA218**.
8. Yet another toy from my article in **MA218**.

### AUCTIONS:

I received a copy of an auction from England earlier this year. While models sold for a 'good price' in general, none could match the Matchbox Toys 1 ~ 75 series.

One example caught my eye. Listed as Matchbox regular wheels 13d, Dodge BP Wreck Truck, green cab and jib, yellow base and back, 'BP' decals, silver grille and trim, grey plastic hook and rounded axles. Generally near mint but corner of one decal missing. It was in a fair condition correct issue 'New Model' box illustrating the correct colour model (*unlike this picture Ed*). Very rare issue. Prior to the auction, it was estimated that it may sell for between three and four thousand Pound. The actually selling price was £3,800! Not bad for an original 40 or 50 cent model.



There were 2,662 Lots in the sale and it was held over three days.

Some other recent auction prices for 1 ~ 75 Matchbox Toys were:

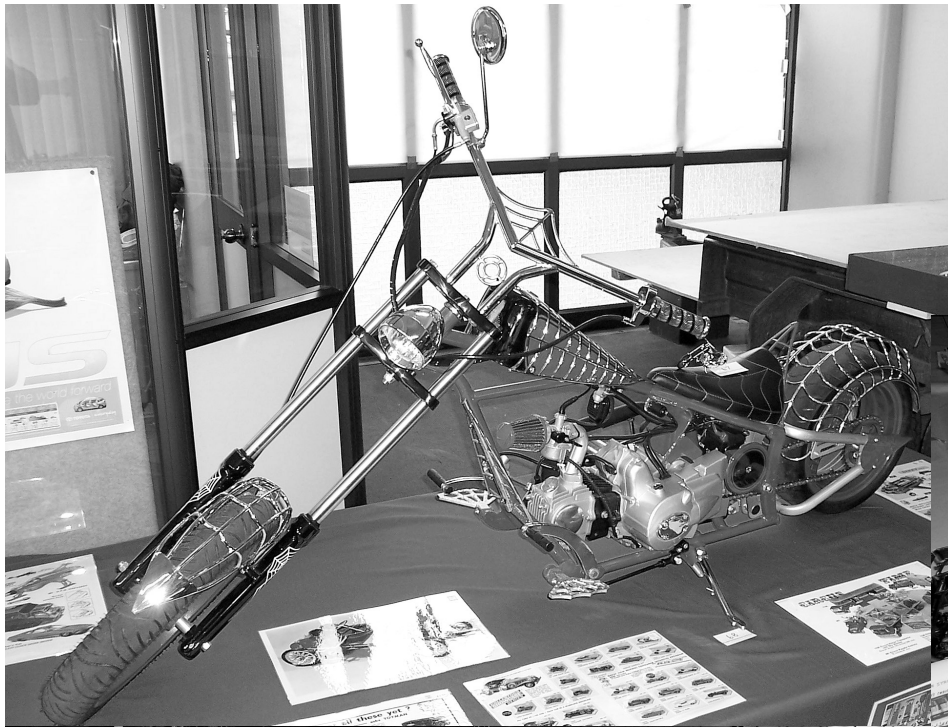
53c Ford Zodiac, metallic green, regular black wheels £3,500  
38b Vauxhall Victor 101 Estate in turquoise blue £3,010

12b Land Rover smooth grey plastic wheels £500

11a ERF Tanker in red with side decals instead of rear £1,690

*Eric Brockie*

# ERIC'S PHOTO PAGES



◀ Fig 2

Fig 3 ▶

Fig 4 ▼

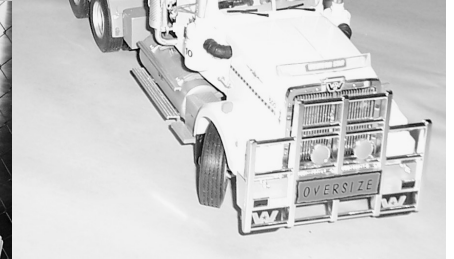


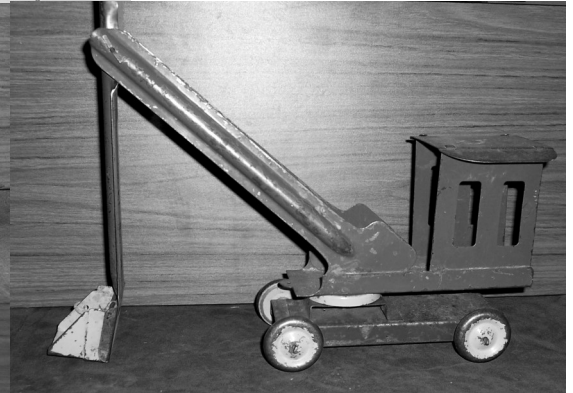
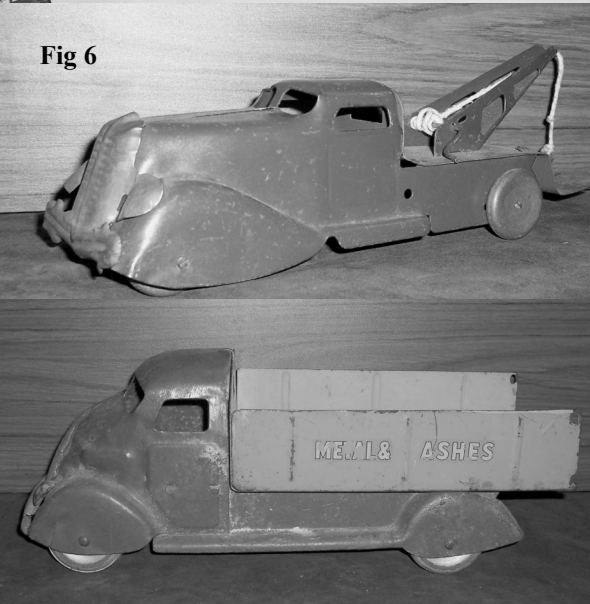
Fig 8 ▼



Fig 5 ▲

Fig 7 ▶

Fig 6



## COLLECTIVE THOUGHTS

Collecting is a really personal activity... one person's collection may not be to the liking of another person. Each person has a different motivation for collecting – some people (like myself) collect for the enjoyment of collecting – sometimes it's the 'chase' (locating that elusive, hard-to-find item) – sometimes it's because they have an interest in a particular type of item. Some people have wide-ranging tastes, while others stick resolutely to a narrow range and sometimes a single item. There are those with large, seemingly unlimited budgets and those who have a limited budget.

In the toy collecting world things can get even more complicated. Some folk collect toys they could not have as a child but can now afford; while others collect toys they had as a child. Some collect toys according to Toy Manufacturer; some according to vehicle marque. Some are 'in it' for the money (a little nest egg for their retirement – they hope!) and some are merely bargain hunters who see toys as a cheap source of collectibles (who was it said today's junk toy is tomorrow's collectible?).

So what is it that makes you a collector of model vehicles? I assume you are because this article has been rewritten for the New Zealand Model Vehicle Club's magazine! In my own case it started because I saw some Yesteryear items I used to have as a child. From there it expanded to cover all Matchbox, Corgi, Dinky and Budgie items. When I became a travelling auditor (with corresponding salary and expenses) it became any darn thing that took my fancy! When I became a self employed security consultant it expanded again to encompass all those expensive items that could only be found overseas (generally). Lately though I have developed a passing interest in battery operated moving/singing/dancing figurine toys and a desire to include in my collection some examples of the early diecast toys and those from little known manufacturers in the USA, UK, NZ and Australia.

After almost forty years of collecting I have amassed a HUGE collection that sadly spends most of its time in storage. For the last three years I have been slowly working my way through making sometimes heart-breaking decisions on whether to keep or dispose of items or whole 'mini-collections'. Two years ago I decided not to keep my 1/100<sup>th</sup> scale Majorette models and sold off some three hundred of them – I originally paid \$9.95 each for them and sold them at \$10.00 each after holding on to them for almost twenty years! I guess we can say I'm not 'in it' for the money. My smaller collection of Majorette 1/50 – 1/60 scale cars and vans went the same way.

For the last year it has been a case of 'search and remove' all duplicate items from storage – not an easy task when you consider none of the boxes were catalogued or itemised in any way. Still I have managed to find and sell more than 1500 duplicate, triplicate and, in some cases, septuplicate (7) items! Over the years my biggest interest has been the replacement of a scrappy item with a better one – leading to the ownership of multiple items that are now being cleared out. Almost all my surplus has been disposed of via TradeMe ([www.trademe.co.nz](http://www.trademe.co.nz)) under the username 'lyncus'

With the benefit of hindsight I wish I had known to limit myself or to restrict my range right from the start. The best piece of advice I give to intending collectors is 'choose ONE thing – be it a Marque such as Jaguar, or a Manufacturer such as Dinky – AND STICK TO IT! Determine WHY you want to collect and keep that reason to the front whenever considering a purchase'.

To that end, here are some thoughts on what to consider once the reason and basis for your collection has been determined.

### COLLECTING RESOURCES.

Do you actually know enough about your chosen collectible? There is a wealth of information available for collectors, both in terms of magazines, books, and reference material held on web sites, search engines and news groups and email lists that focus on collecting. Toynutz ([www.toynutz.com](http://www.toynutz.com)), Malik Shabbir ([www.shabbir.com](http://www.shabbir.com)), The Matchbox Collectors Community ([www.mboxcommunity.com](http://www.mboxcommunity.com)) and, of course, your own local Club are all valuable sources of information. Yahoo ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)) hosts a lot of newsgroups and focus groups dedicated to the various aspects of diecast collecting and, with some careful choice of search words, Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) can bring to light some interesting information. In general, I have found people on these sites and lists to be mostly pleasant and helpful – although there are always the 'bad eggs' among them who only deserve to be ignored.

### STORAGE.

Now this really is critical – often over a period of years and with the fluctuation in the size of a family, space becomes a limiting factor. It then becomes a personal preference as to how the individual deals with the storage and/or display of a collection. Some say 'what's the point of collecting something if it resides in a closet, spare room, basement or attic'? Personally I like to have some models on display, but with thousands in my collection there is no way I could house them all in the 'tiny' 1960s house I now own in Wellington. At least in Dunedin I had half a chance with a 4000 square foot mansion complete with billiard room!

Assuming sufficient space, one has to consider how to display the collection. There is a wide range of specialist dust-free display cases on the market and various publications run advertisements for a range of suppliers. As an alternative, and sometimes cheaper, are the store display cabinets, which while not always dust-free in design, are at least more 'dust-restrictive' than open shelves. There are wide ranges of finishes available in both types of cabinet, or you could chose to design and build your own – it really depends on your preference and budget!

Four facts that have to be considered when using display cases, particularly for older toys, are:

- There is potential for models to succumb to 'corrosion'. I've written on this before for the Club magazine [but cannot remember which issue it was printed in] so I'll simply reiterate that with old models you have to ensure sufficient air movement through the

cabinet and you have to avoid particle boards, oak and various other timbers that give off gases that react with the metals used in the diecast toy.

- It is important to avoid ANY direct light and in particular direct sunlight in the New Zealand situation. Due to New Zealand's 'clean, green' environment, we suffer from less pollution than our Northern Hemisphere counterparts. Unfortunately the side effect of this is New Zealand has a much harsher light (also in part due to the 'Ozone Hole') that can and will, over time, cause colour changes to both models and packaging that are irreversible. These colour changes can occur unnoticed over time and the damage is not noted until a model, or its packaging, is turned and the fading or discolouration is noticeable. This happened to me with some of my Matchbox Dinky Collection. They were displayed in an older china display cabinet (Rimu and clear glass), on the North side of my lounge, in the darkest corner, but exposed to a large (4m x 2m) south facing window. Within one year of being displayed in that position, the boxes had faded to a very light blue, the window cellophanes had gone a faint brown and the models themselves have probably faded slightly. I 'rescued' them in time, I think, and cannot discern any obvious fading to the paint but I am assuming it has happened. The fading was so subtle that it was not noticed while it was happening.
- Direct exposure to sunlight can cause high temperatures in display cabinets that may damage models. These higher temperatures can also precipitate the release of the gases mentioned above and thereby lead to early deterioration of older models.
- A final critical point is to ensure models with soft tyres or 'rubber' tracks are not placed directly on the display shelves. These soft compounds are more sensitive to pressure (a by-product of the weight of the model). After some time resting on the same point, the tyres or tracks may flatten out – an undesirable side effect that is all the more common when the display is exposed to external light sources. Mount your models on a central clear plastic or wooden block just thick enough to keep the tyres or tracks off the shelf. Another adverse effect of light is the hardening of older compounds that become brittle and crack over time.

If in doubt, treat your models like mushrooms – KEEP THEM IN THE DARK!

### **MODEL VALUES – WHAT'S IT WORTH?**

I am often asked what a particular model is worth. The answer, of course, is 'it depends....'. I have seen identical models, in similar condition for sale at the same swapmeet for widely different prices, simply because of the sellers' different views of value.

On the retail side, I frequently see shops sell new models for different prices, again for a range of reasons. Some models are oversupplied – released at a higher price, only to be 'discounted' later at bargain prices. There's nothing quite like the frustration of seeing your expensive new model appear a few months, or even weeks, later on the clearance table! Some models are under-supplied, due to the importer or distributor mistaking the appeal of a certain model, leading to the appearance of these models on the secondary market at inflated prices.

My advice is to be patient – yes, you may want to buy that model when it appears, but more often than not you will find another will come along and, especially in the case of the more common models, you can often find a bargain later. For older models you might want to lower the 'acceptable' quality where high price is an issue. Whatever your motivation:

- Learn the local market. Find as many online listings as you can for an item and develop a sense of price relative to condition.
- Use price guides, listings and swapmeets as a reference to availability, and remember you will never get the best price every time. I'm like every other collector I know...I admit I have paid a premium (higher) price for items simply because I wanted them right then – and saved on others when I was willing (or forced) to wait.
- Ultimately it comes down to what it is worth to YOU? You know the reason why you are a collector of the things you collect. Consider these questions when deciding the value of a particular model to you:
  - Are you buying retail, wholesale, at a swapmeet, or from another collector? Remember that a retailer is operating a business and so will attempt to buy for lower than 'book value' and sell for a higher price. Ditto wholesale although this really only affects new toys. At a swapmeet you will find people who will often sell at a price lower than 'book value', sometimes at a price less than they initially paid for the item and often they are willing to haggle over the price. The latter comments also apply to purchasing from other collectors.
  - What condition is the model in? [see also my comments on 'gradings'] What is the condition relative to most of the other models like it that you have seen? Why are you interested in THAT particular model – do you intend to chop it, restore it, modify it or use it as a 'filler' until you can afford a better one?
  - What do the price guides think that it's worth? These are the 'book values' oft quoted by sellers. Be aware that most of these price guides are written with other countries in mind (usually the UK or USA) and they bear no relation to the New Zealand situation. Even the Australian guides bear no relation to the New Zealand situation. For New Zealand your best guides to 'value' are the local swapmeets in your area and the prices asked on TradeMe ([www.trademe.co.nz](http://www.trademe.co.nz)) and Zillion ([www.zillion.co.nz](http://www.zillion.co.nz)) and other 'auction' sites that are based here – forget eBay ([www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com) or [www.ebay.co.nz](http://www.ebay.co.nz)) as these sites do not reflect the local value.
  - What is the availability of this model? Is there a high demand for it? Does demand and availability for it vary by location within the country? [i.e. is it easier to find in Auckland than Wellington, or cheaper in the South Island than in the North Island?]

### **GRADING – CODE 1, 2, AND 3; MINT, GOOD AND FAIR.**

When assessing the value of an item something to consider is its 'code' and 'condition'. In the 1970's, a code system was developed by Ray Bush. This code was adopted widely and is used today to denote models manufactured, approved or not produced by any given manufacturer. There are three commonly used codes, although some collectors' associations have proposed and defined more for use in their particular field of collecting.



- ‘*Code 1*’ is generally accepted as a model that was produced by the manufacturer and has not been modified in any way.
- ‘*Code 2*’ refers to a model that was produced by a manufacturer and later modified, with the assistance (or at least permission) of the original manufacturer.
- ‘*Code 3*’ refers to models modified without the participation or explicit permission of the manufacturer. Some are one-of-a-kind models, others may be produced in small batches. There's nothing wrong with these models – many are truly wonderful. I have a Dinky Generator Truck done in Pickfords livery that started its life as a lorry mounted crane and another Dinky Continental bus that a hobbyist modified to include steerable front wheels, modified side window arches and a new paint scheme. Just remember that valuing a Code 3 model is very much ‘what it’s worth to you’.

There are a number of grading scales available, which apply to both a model and, if available, its packaging. Although these scales vary in terms of their range, all agree that ‘mint’ or ‘10’ is exactly that – literally in a brand-new state, without imperfection. Many use the shorthand designation MIMB to indicate a mint model in a mint box, the top grade possible.

Sadly, I often see models (especially in the online auctions) where the terms ‘mint’ and ‘excellent’ are liberally applied to models that are not. At one time I was pedantic enough to hate adverts or listings where the item was described as ‘mint except for...’. An item missing a tyre or decals, no matter how nice the rest of the model is, is not mint. Over the years, however, I’ve found the tolerance to accept such descriptions as a means of describing the overall condition of an exceptionally good item – especially since high quality replacement parts and decals have become available.

Many people like to purchase poor quality models for restoration...and as I mentioned before, it's common to compromise on quality when it's the only way to purchase a model within your budget. That doesn't mean you can't buy and enjoy one of these models...just set your expectations within the bounds of the model's description and preferably its condition as shown in the photo. If the photo is blurred, email and ask for a better photo to be listed or emailed to you.

### ***SOUND TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?***

It's the dream of many collectors to find a seller who has little or no idea of what they have to sell. We see these dreamers all the time on Antiques Roadshow – they buy an item at a boot sale, flea market or from an antique dealer in the hope that it's really worth much more than they paid. Yes, it can happen, but then people also win Lotto and raffle prizes and what are the chances of that?

As a general rule, I find that most sellers are at least somewhat aware of an item's value. The proliferation of price guides, swapmeets, and online auctions provides even the most apathetic seller with some idea of what a particular item goes for. If you see something – particularly a scarce or rare item – at a greatly discounted price, just make extra sure that you inspect it thoroughly for defects or tampering so you know what you're really getting. Remember the old maxim: ‘Caveat emptor’ – Let the buyer beware – a legal term from the doctrine of Caveat Emptor, where the buyer could not recover from the seller for defects on

the property that rendered the property unfit for ordinary purposes. The only exception was if the seller actively concealed patent defects. The modern definition, however, is one of an implied fitness for purpose or of quality.

### ***THE IMPORTANCE OF PACKAGING.***

Originally diecast models were meant to be toys for children. This meant that they were expected to be played with and usually meant all packaging was quickly thrown away. For this reason the value of older models is increased by the existence and condition of the original packaging. In some cases this can lead to a doubling or tripling of the unboxed value!

Today almost all of the quality models are targeted at the adult collector, meaning that MIMB is nearly always assumed, since many of these models may never be taken out of the box. As with the models, keep in mind that packaging in mint or excellent condition is just that – no rips, tears, scuffing, stains, etc. Also keep in mind that consistent with the ‘too good to be true’ concept, it is unlikely you will find a 50 year old box that looks brand new, although as more estate collections come on to the market this is becoming easier.

Not only are reproduction boxes available, but some old boxes can be soaked, cleaned, and reformed to look like new. There have been some interesting articles in the diecast magazines showing how reproduction boxes (and models) can be aged to look authentic.

Another thing to consider is the original life span of the packing. Since early models were sold as toys and it was expected that the packaging would be thrown out, manufacturers did not concern themselves over the use of high acid content papers and cardboard. As some of you may be aware, archival quality tissues, papers and cardboard are ‘acid-free’ and therefore unlikely to cause any chemical reaction with the item they wrap or contain. The older tissues, papers and cardboards were not ‘acid-free’ and therefore will, over time, fall apart. High acid papers and cardboards become yellow with age and eventually quite brittle. They can also increase the likelihood of ‘corrosion’ and rusting on older models if they remain stored for a period of time in their original packaging – in such cases also watch for dampness and high humidity conditions. Modern packaging of high quality items is less likely to use high acid papers and cardboard but remember a lot of items are produced in China where contracted manufacturers are less concerned about such issues.

### ***BUYING ON TRADEME, EBAY OR OTHER ONLINE AUCTIONS.***

The good side of looking at TradeMe, eBay and other online auctions is that you can see a wide variety of products in one place. The bad side is there's a lot of rubbish on these auction sites and unfortunately the listings don't say ‘rubbish’ or ‘stuffed’, they tend to say ‘rare’, ‘unique’, and ‘one of a kind’.

Here are a few suggestions for participating in online auctions:

- Don't get caught up in the excitement of the auction – know your own top price and stick to it. Search for similar items in completed sales as a means of determining price range.

- Be completely certain about what you are buying – if there isn't enough information in the auction description for you, email the seller and ask your questions.
- Be wary of any listing without a photograph. The best case is to have multiple, high quality photos – especially side and front shots and of a reasonable size.
- Remember Caveat Emptor – if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Although people will sometimes list an item at a low price because they don't really know its real value, more often than not they do know what they're doing... ripping you off!
- Try to buy from reputable sellers with appropriate positive feedback scores. I take the time to read any negative comments. Having said that, note that all transactions do not result in feedback and some do not result in appropriate feedback. I have seen situations where people don't leave neutral or negative feedback for fear that they will get undeserved retaliatory feedback from the other party. Personally I don't care about retaliatory feedback – you should see my eBay feedback record – over 99% positive with a few negatives due to my comments on poor seller behaviour. Big Deal!
- Understand, in advance, the payment terms and shipping costs. There are cases where I will not deal with a seller because I consider their shipping charges to be excessive – recently a European seller on eBay tried to charge me €30.00 to send out a Matchbox sized item... I complained and he eventually sent it airmail letter rate – at €5.00!!
- Just because someone says something is 'rare' that doesn't necessarily make it so. I see a lot of 'rare' Dinky Toys on eBay that are actually common items (and they are usually in poor condition). I've also seen items referred to as 'rare' on TradeMe – but hardly ever do the sellers refer to an authoritative guide such as 'The White Book' – MICA's guide to Yesteryear variations and value. Some people refer to recent Corgi, Matchbox and Vanguards models as 'hard to find' – probably true if you live in the Falklands or (forgive me Otago) Oturehua, but less so elsewhere.
- Make sure as best you can, especially on 'rarer' models, that the model is 100% original – it's very easy to get replacement parts these days. The same rule applies to the packaging. Also, make sure that any other inserts or associated items such as figures are present.
- Make sure that the item will be packaged properly – keep in mind the expected distance and mode of transport.

That's all I have to say on the subject at present. Any questions or comments can be sent to me at [nzmvwgtn@nzmvc.in-newzealand.com](mailto:nzmvwgtn@nzmvc.in-newzealand.com) or to the address listed in the Club's magazine.

**Happy Collecting! Ian Cousins**

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## THAT'S NEWS? - THAT'S NEWS!

- ⇒ **BIANTE** of Australia have announced that they will not be producing any of the V8 Supercars for the 2007 season.
- ⇒ Have you seen the 'security screws' used to fix models to their bases? This is to conform with the new EC regulations that children can't undo the screws and swallow them. Must be really frustrating for the young collector! Actually, a suitable screwdriver can be obtained from the dealer who sold the model.
- ⇒ **CORGI** will be announcing the models for the whole year in 2007 instead of having a six monthly catalogue. *See page 20 for latest news*
- ⇒ **OXFORD DIECASTS** of Wales (former Corgi employees) are picking up where Lledo left off with their promotional 'toys' and now some true scale 1/43 offerings including variants of the original Mini (sedan, van and pick-up) [although they look suspiciously like the Cararama Minis complete with the wrongly shaped grille, but no opening features], Ford Anglia (Thames) van and ice cream wagon, Morris Minor van (and Austin variant) with a Morris J2 and Austin Omnivan. Oxford Diecasts don't seem to be imported into New Zealand at present.

### ARCURIO 1/12 MODELS

Arcurio of Germany have been producing models made from wood for 75 years. They are quite expensive from around €300 plus freight. More information can be found at [www.arcurio.de](http://www.arcurio.de)

### SPARK 1/43 DIECASTS

Alfa Romeo ES30 1989  
 BMW 320si WWTC 2006 (various)  
 Dodge Caliber  
 Lotus 23B 1960  
 Porsche 962 Daytona 1989  
 Porsche 996 (various)  
 Bizzanni LM66 #11  
 Volkswagen W12 Spyder  
 Volkswagen W12 Nardo  
 Austin Healey 100S LM55 #26



Kremer K8 TBF LM97 #6  
 Triumph TR4 IRS

### NOREV 1/43 DIECASTS from China for France

Peugeot D3A (same as IXO?)  
 Peugeot 207  
 Borgward Isabella Limousine  
 Alfa Romeo Alfetta 1800  
 Renault Fluence concept car  
 Renault Wind concept car  
 Peugeot 206 Esquisse Auto 1/18

Cadillac SRX 4x4  
 Citroen DS21 Cabriolet  
 Borgward Isabella Coupe  
 Citroen 2CV prototype 1936  
 Citroen C-Airdream  
 BMW R60 with sidecar  
 Renault Dauphine 1/18

## **THAT'S NEWS - CONTINUED**

I have just been on the Corgi Website and the 2007 catalogue has been put up on it. Some catalogue it is too with 172 pages of PDF (Adobe Acrobat), but be warned, it is over 30Mb. Some of the highlights are:

- A big increase in the number of Aviation Archive models including a; Vampire, Junkers JU-52 (civilian and military), Albatross DV, RAF SE5A, Spad XIII, Handley Paige Halifax, P51 Mustang (first versions), Fairchild A-10A Thunderbolt, MIG 29 Fulcrum A, Westland Wessex, Sikorsky CH-34 Choctaw, JU-87 Stuka, Grunmann Hellcat, Grunmann Avenger, Douglas Dauntless, MIG-21 and F-104 Starfighter.
- 1/50 Modern Trucks: DAF 105 tractor unit, Volvo G740B grader, Volvo EC210 excavator, JCB back-hoe, JCB JS220 excavator, Scania P Tipper and Nooteboom step trailer.
- 1/50 Modern Vans: Ford Transit 2006, Mercedes-Benz Sprinter, Vauxhall Vivaro, Renault Traffic.
- 1/76 Roadscene Modern Trucks: Scania R, Volvo FH and Mercedes-Benz Actos. All come with a selection of trailers and liveries
- Tinplate 1/36? Austin FX4 taxi, Open top Routemaster
- 1/50 buses; London Transport RT and RTL with Leyland or AEC chassis
- OOC 1/76 buses: Plaxton Panther, Plaxton Paragon, Scania Irizar P8
- Trackside 1/76: Ford Anglia (Thames) van, Bedford HA van, Morris Minor 1000 van, Vauxhall Viva HA sedan, Ford Anglia, Morris Minor 1000 and Maudslay horse box (a la Dinky)
- Drive Time 1/43; Ford Capri III, Triumph TR7, Morris 1000 van high-top, Morris J2 minibus, Morris J2 van and MGB convertible.

It seems as if existing ranges are getting somewhat neglected with very few new releases outside the new ranges and Aviation Archive.

The range that most interests me is the Drive Time which includes the Vanguards as before but the range has been split up into MOTORSPORT, EMERGENCY MOTORS, VANGUARDS and ROAD TRADERS. The Vanguards now only cover the cars in civilian format. Can't say their selection is inspiring. Duplicates only! Why another MGB? The Ford Capri III has been done as has the Triumph TR7 and the Morris high-top and Morris J2s are also being offered by Oxford Diecasts. Very strange. So it's going to be a cheap year for buying Corgi for me ~ ZERO!!

### **WANTED:**

- \* **More articles**
- \* **More pictures**
- \* **More Buy, Sell and Swap**
- \* **More everything!!!!**

**HAVE A GREAT CHRISTMAS!**