

## **A Day in the Life of.....Roy Hobson**

I first met Roy Hobson, and his delightful wife Marianne (a friendly, kind and chatty person, with a perspective and something to say on most things), when my (then soon-to-be) husband Brian took me to a Mercedes-Benz event.

It was obvious that here was a man who knew something about Mercedes.

But let me go back a while and tell you what I already know.

Roy, who was born in Bognor Regis, came out here from Harrow with his family when he was five years old. Roy and his wife Marianne did their OE together as a young married couple, in the typical way many of us did, by travelling around Europe in a van, with young children in tow.

Roy was not always a Mercedes man, but was always involved in things mechanical. Well, he probably was always really a Mercedes man but there is a time when he and Marianne had a different occupation as owners of a lawn mower and cycle shop at Raumati Beach . Selling and repairing lawn mowers and cycles plus maintenance of equipment for the local golf and lawn bowls clubs, as well as the Kapiti Borough Council, and I'm sure a host of repairs to other things too – he's a very handy man. Roy was taught to build and re-spoke cycle rims by non other than cyclist Sarah Ulmer's grand-father Ron. Just to add to this they were building their house at the same time – ever the hard workers.

A spell at Cable Price was followed by a transfer to Auckland where he first met my husband Brian, and his mate Ken Williams, at Bill Zed's, when travelling north for this new career.

And so Marianne and Roy arrived at the big smoke!

Roy .... Tell me about ....

Q: Where you did you do your training in motor mechanics and the qualifications you have?

A: I served my apprenticeship at Moeller Motors in 1962. I hold Advanced Trade Certificate in Motor Mechanics.

Q: What prompted you to take us this trade?

A: Mechanical things have always interested me.

Q: Did you ever teach night school?

A: Yes, I ran a Car Maintenance at Hutt Valley Memorial Tech.

Q: Was it Fords you first worked on? Tell me about this?

A: No, I worked on Hillmans and Humbers, followed by Holdens.

Q: When did you first work on a Mercedes?

A: Bob Packer employed me as a Service Manager for Cable price Corporation in 1975.

Q: Where was this?

A: I was Service Manager at the Lower Hutt Branch.

Q: What was this like compared to working on a Mercedes now?

A: The cars were more simplistic then, and parts were interchangeable between cars. Today, cars are equipped with computers, which are locked into the chassis number of that vehicle, and are not interchangeable.

Q: What did your job with Daimler Chrysler entail?

A: My job was technical representative for passenger cars for NZ, and also did introductory training for the new models.

Q: How long ago did you leave them?

A: I semi-retired in 2000.

Q: What are you doing now?

A: I sell second-hand Mercedes parts and do some servicing at home in my own workshop.

Q: Do you have a favourite model Mercedes?

A: 230SL Pagoda.

Q: Why is this your favourite Mercedes model?

A: Jeremy Clarkson has rated the 230SL sports car "Supercool" and I agree with him.

Q: List the Mercedes have you owned in the past and have you restored any.?

A: I have rebuilt or restored about 10 different models of Mercedes. Models I have owned are 1972 250CE, 190E (NZ new), C250 Diesel, C240, 230SL Pagoda, 500SL 1992 w129.

Q: When did you join the Auckland Mercedes-Benz Club?

A: I joined about 1991, not long after we came to live in Auckland .

Q: What positions have you held on the committee (when and for how long)?

A: I have been club Captain for I year, Vice President for about six years, and President for the last four years. I have been Technical Adviser for about 10 years. Marianne was secretary for about four years, and also local magazine editor for two years, so I was also involved with these jobs as well.

Q: Do you use your Mercedes for any other car club events?

A: We are members of the Auckland Branch of the Vintage Car Club, and attend some mid-week events. We also enjoy the AA Classic Car Rallies.

Q: What sort of club events do you personally enjoy most?

A: I enjoy social events, where I meet other members. I like to dine out at Club events.

Q: Where do you see the role of Car Clubs in people's lives today?

A: Members seem busier in their own lives than ever before. We are organizing fewer events, but try for better quality and interest.