

THE **IWVCC** JOURNAL



SPRING 2016

EDITORIAL

Dear Fellow Motoring Enthusiasts,

Welcome to the latest issue of the IVCC Journal. Many of you have been enjoying your motors over the course of the season. Some of you have been abroad to motoring events too. I would like to ask you if you participate in any show, or are a visitor please share it with the rest of our members through the Journal. In this way your experiences will be recorded and other enthusiasts might even go along to that event in the future.

Regarding articles, I would be interested in doing a series on members motor cars and if you would like your motor featured perhaps you could contact me and together we could write up an article.

Kevin Herron has written about his Plymouth Belvedere in this issue. Hard to believe that these cars and many other American cars were in everyday use in Ireland. Not alone that but they were assembled here too. Alan Donaldson had one of these limousines when he was 'young and dangerous' and has written about it

in a previous issue.

The RIAC Show was a great success and holding it every two years will keep the interest up. Many of our members helped out at the IVCC stand over the two days and they and the organisers of our stand, particularly Paul Noctor, Tommy Sheridan and Shane Houlihan deserve our appreciation. Our thanks also to the members who allowed their motors to be displayed on the stand.

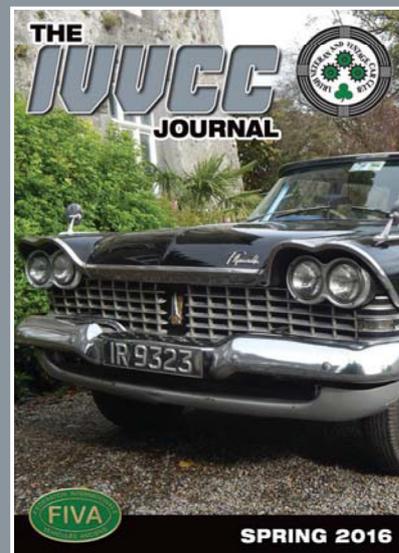
We are at an advanced stage in the design of a new website and members will be updated in due course regarding the launch date.

I wish you all a happy summer season.

Until next time,

Happy Motoring!

TOM



FRONT COVER:

Kevin Herron's
1959 Plymouth Belvedere
Photo by: KEVIN HERRON

IVCC JOURNAL SPRING 2016

President:

SHANE HOULIHAN

Tel: 087-2520787

Email: Shane.houlihan@gmail.com

Editor:

TOM FARRELL

Knockrose, The Scalp, Kiltarnan,
Dublin 18. E: editor@ivcc.ie

Membership Secretary:

JEAN MORTON

Rockwood Cottage, Mount Venus Road
Woodtown, Dublin 16
Tel: 01-4931794/087 2565211
E: rockwoodcottage@hotmail.com

Club Meetings:

Every first Monday of the month
(second Monday if first falls on a Public Holiday)

Venue:

West County Hotel, Chapelizod, Dublin

Time: 8.00pm

Website:



www.ivcc.ie

Photos:

All photos, unless otherwise stated,
by Tom Farrell



CONTENTS

4	20
President's Report	ARM Outing - April
6	By Denis Dowdall
Secretary's Report	22
8	Motor Notes
'Stretched Out'	By Alan Donaldson
By Kevin Herron	23
11	IVCC Calendar of Events
Vintage and Classic Car	25
& Memorabilia Auction	News Flash –
By Colm O'Neill	IVCC Proposed French Visit
12	25
About the Plymouth	For Sale/Wanted
By Tom Farrell	26
14	IVCC Membership Application Form
Memory Lane	27
By Colm O'Neill	FIVA
16	By Peadar Ward
RIAC CLASSIC CAR SHOW	28
19	All About the Daimler Motor Company
Spring Rally	By Tom Farrell

'Stretched Out'

The story of the Plymouth Belvedere

It is hard to imagine that motor cars were ever assembled in plants throughout Dublin city centre. It is even harder to imagine that full-sized American cars were assembled in some of these plants.

One such plant was F.M. Summerfield Ltd. They were located at 138 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2. This is a Spar shop today!

Summerfields opened for business in these premises in May 1923. They took over the Maxwell franchise for Ireland, the company having been recently acquired by Walter Chrysler to save it from bankruptcy.

In 1925 Chrysler gave Summerfields the franchise for Chrysler cars. These cars were imported through Britain, fully built and it was not until 1935 that Summerfields started to assemble Complete Knocked Down Units (CKD Units). These CKD units included Plymouth models PJ, P2, P4, P6, P8, P10 and P12 and Chrysler models C6, C7, C16, C18, C22 and C28.

The Plymouth models used names of Irish race courses, Curragh, Baldoyle and Leopardstown depending on the specification.

The Chrysler models were Chrysler Six and Eight. Interestingly all Plymouth and Chrysler models were badged



as Chrysler to boost the brand name.

These products were assembled until the Emergency in 1941. Summerfields assembled a total of 707 cars in this time including 50 seven-seater limousines.

Assembly resumed at Summerfields in 1945 with six Plymouths that had been in stock since 1941. New model cars arrived to Ireland in 1946. These were Plymouth P15 and Chrysler C38W. This was the first time that they were badged as Chrysler and Plymouth separately. These cars were produced until the end of 1948, during which time Summerfields had assembled 270 Plymouths and 122 Chrysler Windsors, including 18 seven-seater limousines.

In 1949 the British Government devalued the pound. This led to other currencies becoming devalued against the dollar, an increase in prices, a decrease in sales and consequently staff in Summerfields being let go. This resulted in only 66 Plymouths being assembled in 1949 and no Chryslers at all. The

following year saw an even further decrease with only 24 Plymouths and the same number of Chryslers being assembled. 1951 saw a slight increase in Plymouth production to 36 cars but Chrysler had dropped to 12 cars. The lowest point arrived in 1953 where no cars were assembled at all. However, in 1954 there were 12 Plymouth Savoy's assembled. Also in 1954 F.M. Summerfield Ltd. was taken over by McGee's of Ardee. The Baggot Street plant still operated under the Summerfield name and in 1955 another 12 Plymouths were assembled but production ceased for a further four years.

In 1959 12 'Forward Look' four-door sedans were built. In addition to these cars there were also 24 seven-seater limousines assembled, all RHD. The car featured in this article is one of these seven-seater limousines. It would have been sent CKD from Canada as a pillared sedan to 'Societe Anonyme Chrysler' in Antwerp, Belgium where the shell was stretched into a 142" wheelbase limousine. It was



Plymouth Belvedere

fitted with heavy duty front and rear suspension including a front anti-roll bar and the chassis had six extra cross members fitted. The rear axle was also fitted with a larger crown wheel and heavier half shafts. It would then have been sent to Summerfields for assembly.

This seven-seat limousine was not available in America and was particular to Europe. It was marketed in Belgium as the Plymouth Colorado, however, in Ireland they used the American model name Belvedere. The last Plymouths assembled by Summerfields were 1959 model limousines assembled in 1960, there

Continued next page





“Frank Hoysted, the long-time chauffeur to the sixth Earl of Rosse featured the car in his autobiography ‘Reminiscences of a Chauffeur’ which contains some excellent period photographs and some very amusing stories.”

were only 12 and were all left hand drive. Summerfields assembled a total of 626 cars between 1945 and 1960 - 468 were Plymouths and 158 were Chryslers including 54 seven-seater limousines.

The car featured here was registered on June 21st, 1959 to the Earl of Rosse, Birr Castle, Co. Offaly. The Earl of Rosse used this car as his personal transport for approximately twelve years. In this time it was used to make several trips to Britain and across Europe. It was used to transport many notable people including Princess Margaret and her husband Lord Snowdon when they stayed at Birr Castle. This was during the incident where the IRA cut power lines and chopped down trees blocking the road in protest near Birr.

Frank Hoysted, the long-time chauffeur to the sixth Earl of Rosse featured the car in his autobiography '*Reminiscences of a Chauffeur*' which contains some excellent period photographs and some very amusing stories. It is also featured in the 1965 episode of RTE's '*Reeling in the Years*' programme. The footage shows Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon being driven away from Abbeyleix House in the car where they were visiting Viscount de Vesci.

This Plymouth is powered by Chryslers tried and trusted flathead six cylinder engine that was introduced in 1938. It is mated to a three-speed manual gearbox and has no power steering. It has single circuit drum brakes all round and a bellows type servo unit. It is 230 cubic inches, 3772cc and develops around 132bhp. It is a very reliable unit but needless to say it is extremely underpowered for the size of the car. 1959 was the last year that Chrysler used this engine in their products before switching to the much more efficient OHV six cylinder engine in 1960.

Being an export model it also features some oddities such as a 1957 Dodge dashboard that all RHD '59 Plymouths that

were assembled here had fitted, the LHD cars had the correct '59 Plymouth dashboard. It also has 1956 Plymouth 15" wheels and hubcaps. '59 Plymouths should have 14" wheels as standard. Also being Irish assembled, it has a leather interior that was made here and has the small shamrock etched into the corners of the flat side glass.

I first heard about this car from a friend of mine who saw it about twenty years ago sitting outside a garage in Tullamore looking very sorry for itself. It had been owned for a few years by a hotel in Tullamore that used it for weddings.

I then came across the car myself about five years later while visiting a friend in Cork. I thought it was a fine car with an excellent history. When I mentioned the car to my father he told me about another '59 Plymouth limousine that he had looked at for sale many years previously in a garage on Prussia Street in Dublin. It was a RHD car but the block was cracked and had been welded, he regretted not buying it. Some time passed and due to ill health the owner of the Plymouth in Cork was unable to look after the car properly. I wanted to give the car a good home, so an offer was made and accepted. It was in a sorry state. It needed recommissioning, a new set of tyres, some bodywork and a full rewire! It was also converted to alternator, although not correct for the period, it makes night time driving much easier.

I only know of two other '59 Plymouth limousines that are left, neither of which are on the road. A few others seem to have been scrapped as late as the nineties. The first is UZC 723 is a left hand drive car that has been mildly customised. This car was famous for being painted pink and parked outside 'Crazy Joes' nightclub in the Eighties. The other is WYI 542 that was fitted with a Toyota engine! I would love to hear of more survivors.