

Packard returns to Chateau Tongariro after 70 years

Story and Photos by Debbie Adding, daughter of Connie and Henry Rynbeek

Back in July, Rob and I took Mum and Dad away for a few days, down south, ostensibly to take the 745 for a run to the Chateau Tongariro. There is a bit of history to this car, and I wrote to the manager of the hotel, explaining the link between this car and the Chateau, during the years of the 2nd World War.

Letter to Manager of the Chateau:

“As you are aware, during the 2nd World War, the hotel was commandeered by the government as a sanatorium. During this time, a very special car, a 1930 Packard 745 was also requisitioned by the government, to be used as a supplies and delivery vehicle for the Chateau. This car was custom built by Packard motor car company for Robert Laidlaw, the founder of the Farmers Trading Company. At the time it was a very special car, and only a few of this model were ever built. The hotel (sanatorium) converted the car by cutting the top half off so that it could be used for delivering crates of supplies!

After the war, the car ended up on a farm near Te Kuiti. My father bought it several years ago, and has had it fully restored back to its 100% original condition (see photos attached). This is a very rare car, and has taken several dedicated people untold hours over five years to bring it back to this state. The restoration is only just complete. My husband and I drive the car for my father as he is nearly blind and has had strokes, so his health does not allow him to do so. We are planning to take my parents in the Packard for a “jaunt” and thought it would be very special to take it all the way to the Chateau, for nostalgia’s sake, and get a photo or two while there.”

We went to Taupo on Sunday 5 July. The next morning we went to the Chateau – the 6th. We were royally welcomed, and left the 745 out the front until the early evening where she was admired by many. Tony Abbott, the manager suggested we park the 745 in their garage/workshop overnight to keep her warm and dry. This is the same garage where it used to go to ‘bed’ during her service to the Chateau in the war years! The Packard drove very well, although as we climbed in altitude for



the last few miles approaching the Chateau she had a few wee splutters. Mum and I wondered whether she was having some bad memories of her time working there! She is really a very grand lady! On Tuesday morning she drove smoothly again, pleased to be making her way home to Auckland!

Photo of Henry Rynbeek with his 1930 Packard 745



Above: 1930 Packard 745 in front of Chateau Tongariro

Below: 745 in Hotel garage where it used to live 70 years ago! Robert, Henry and Connie.



The cars shown below are all for sale ex-USA. I thanks to Robert Duncan for sending these.
If anyone is interested, please contact Robert Duncan (Robert's contact details on page 1 of magazine)



1931 Packard Dual Cowl Phaeton. Price unknown



1936 Packard Super 8 Roadster. Price approx' US\$180,000-\$200,000



1936 Packard 120B Conv' coupe. Approx' US\$75,000



1937 Packard 120C Conv' coupe. Approx' US\$100,000



1929 Stutz Aluminium bodied speedster. Approx' US\$100,000—\$120,000



Below is a copy of the inspection sheet for new Packards and their 1000 and 3000 mile checks.

Photocopy this page and use it as your checklist when servicing your own Packard.

PACKARD NEW CAR RETAIL DELIVERY INSPECTION

1000 AND 3000 MILE INSPECTION

R. O. No. _____

Owner's Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____ Promised _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____ Delivered _____

Vehicle No.	Engine No.	Body Dash Serial No.	Paint Code	Trim Code	Ignition Key No.	Comp. Key No.
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Instructions to Packard Serviceman: Check mark (✓) all operations and tests performed.
 Service operations printed in light face are to be performed on all cars as indicated.
Tests printed in bold italic are to be performed on all cars as indicated. Perform service operations only if necessary.

1000 Mile Insp. R.O. _____

3000 Mile Insp. R.O. _____

	New Car	1000	3000		New Car	1000	3000
PRELIMINARY INSPECTION				ENGINE			
Engine oil—Up to level. Change if ordered by owner.	•	•	•	Cylinder head and manifold—Torque tighten.	•	•	•
Radiator—Water up to level. Antifreeze protected to.	•	•	•	Fan belt tension.	•		
Battery sp. gr. 1. 2. 3. Up to level.	•	•	•	Clean and adjust distributor points and spark plugs.			•
Terminals and nuts tight.	•	•	•	Set ignition timings.			•
Oil lines and connections. No Leaks.	•	•	•	Adjust valve tappets.			•
Water hose connections—DRAIN COCKS. No leaks.	•	•	•	Fuel pump bowl—Clean and tighten.	•		•
Fuel line connections. No leaks.	•	•	•	Adjust idling—Adjust.	•	•	•
TIGHTENING				Oil in air cleaner. Oil up to level.			
Steering pitman arm nut.	•			ELECTRICAL			
Spring U bolt nuts.	•			Horn and horn ring.	•	•	•
Bumpers—Tight and lined up.	•			All lights and switches.	•	•	•
<i>Propeller shaft bolts and locks.</i>	•			Arm headlights.	•	•	•
Axle shaft nuts.	•			Electrical connections—Tighten.	•		
Wheel hub bolts.	•			<i>Generator output—Regulator.</i>	•		•
Spare wheel.	•			BODY			
CONTROLS				Windshield wiper. Blades—Cable tension.			
<i>Clutch pedal free play. Adjust if necessary.</i>	•	•	•	Window regulators.	•		•
<i>Brake pedal free play. Adjust if necessary.</i>	•			Electro-Hydraulic System—Fluid up to level.	•		
Master cylinder—Fluid up to level.	•	•	•	Door locks and handles.	•		
<i>Brake adjustment—Not dragging.</i>	•		•	Front seat adjustment.	•		
<i>Hand brake adjustment.</i>	•			Bonnet locks.	•		
<i>Gear shift linkage.</i>	•			Floor mats and carpets—In place.	•		
<i>Electromatic operation—Complete adjustment.</i>	•		•	LUBRICATION			
STEERING				Complete Lub. Owner pays on 1000 & 3000 Mile Insp.			
Steering linkage, locks and clamps.	•			Steering gear—Transmission—Rear Axle. Up to level.	•	•	•
<i>Toe-in—Adjust if necessary.</i>	•			Tires—Inflate to proper pressure.	•	•	•
<i>Caster, camber and toe-in. Adjust if necessary.</i>	•		•	APPEARANCE			
Front wheel bearing adjustment. Cotter pins.	•			Wash.	•		
Bracket at wheel, tight. Wheel straight.	•			Polish.	•		

ROAD TEST

Operation of Speedometer.	•	•	•	<i>Engine Performance—Idling—Low speed.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Ammeter—Generator output.	•	•	•	<i>Engine Performance—Acceleration.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Oil Gauge.	•	•	•	<i>Steering—Stability—Ease.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Temperature Gauge.	•	•	•	<i>Brake operation.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Fuel Gauge.	•	•	•	<i>Electromatic operation.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Clock.	•	•	•	<i>Overdrive operation.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Windshield Wipers.	•	•	•	<i>Operation of all Hydraulic Controls.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Accessories.	•	•	•	<i>Operation of Top on Convertible.</i>	•	•	•
Operation of Radio, Antenna, Heater.	•	•	•	<i>Squeaks and rattles.</i>	•	•	•

List all additional operations on reverse side of this sheet, if required by road test or ordered by owner.

FINAL PREPARATION

Fill out Owner's Service Policy and Card.	•			Demonstrate car operation to owner.	•		
Owner's Manual in glove box.	•			Demonstrate Over Drive operation to owner.	•		
Final inspection of appearance.	•			Demonstrate Electromatic operation to owner.	•		
Final check for all accessories ordered.	•			Demonstrate Accessory operation to owner.	•		
License on new car.	•			Explain Service Policy to the owner.	•		
Fuel in tank.	•				•		

Work performed by _____

OK By _____ Service Manager