



# THE EVOLUTION OF The New Zealand Automobile Association Inc

1903 - 2022



**1903**

Auckland eye surgeon **Dr George Thomas Humphrey de Clive Lowe** forms the Auckland Automobile Association (**AAA**) with fellow motoring enthusiasts. The inauguration is celebrated with a "run" of five cars from Symonds St in Auckland CBD to Howick in East Auckland. The AAA pioneered the concept of driver's licences by issuing drivers who pass an exam a "Certificate of Competency". Today, the AA is contracted by the NZ Transport Agency to provide driver licensing products and services.

**1904**

The **AAA** launches its first campaign called "**Better Roads**" which advocates for road upgrades.

**1904 - 1915**

**Automobile associations (AAs)** form in Canterbury, Nelson, Otago, Wellington, Wanganui, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, Marlborough, South Canterbury, South Taranaki and North Auckland.

**1915**

The **AAA** begins marking routes with signposts. 70 signs and boards with road warnings are erected over the next eight years.

**1921 - 1923**

AAs form in Oamaru and New Plymouth.

**1924**

The **AAA** starts providing advice on mechanical matters and vehicle inspections - a precursor to WOFs.

**1925**

The first official **AA road map** is drawn by hand. The **AAA** produces an official campground booklet - the first accommodation guide.

**1928**

An **AA** forms in Manawatu. At this point, most of the country has a local **AA**. The **AAA** patrol system, a predecessor of **AA Roadservice**, is set up.

**1929**

The **AA** begins **road safety education** in schools and teaching teenagers about driving.

The **AA's Motoring Advocacy** team and **AA Driving School** are still instrumental in road safety education today.

**1935**

A national monthly publication called "**The AA News**" launches. It changes over the years, eventually becoming "**AA Directions**" in 1991. Today, **AA Directions** magazine is published twice a year in print and four times a year online.

**1964**

A secretariat is formed in Wellington to coordinate the services offered to Members and advocate on their behalf. The **AA's** lobbying, or advocacy, is still a cornerstone of the organisation.

**1980s**

Seventeen AAs merge to form **The New Zealand Automobile Association Inc.**

**1987**

**AA Finance** launches offering personal, car, motorbike and boat loans.

**1991**

All AAs merge into the **NZAA** under the leadership of **Brian Gibbons**. The **AA** head office is set up in Auckland.

**1993**

**AA PLUS** was introduced as the next tier to **AA Membership** with the addition of **AA Member Benefits**.

**1994**

**AA Insurance** launches as a joint venture between the **AA** and **Suncorp Group**.

**AA Insurance** has been voted Reader's Digest "Most Trusted General Insurer" every year since 2011.

**1998**

The **AA** introduces **AA Rewards with BP**, a points-based loyalty programme for **AA Members**.

**2003**

The **AA** celebrates its **centenary** and reaches the milestone of having **one million Members**.

**2003/04**

The **AA** replaces the 'Chevron logo' with the 'AA Badge'.

**2005**

The **AA Motoring Excellence Awards** are introduced to acknowledge excellence in new vehicles.

**2010**

**AA Battery Service** and **AA Auto Glass** launch as a joint venture with **Club Assist**. They offer battery replacements and windscreens repairs and replacements.

**AA Life Insurance** is launched as a joint venture with **Asteron Life**, offering **Members** a range of life insurance options. **AA Life Insurance**, now a partnership between **NZAA** and the **Suncorp Group**, has been voted Reader's Digest "Most Trusted Life Insurance Brand" nine times since 2013.

**2011**

**AA Smartfuel** is launched, replacing **AA Rewards**. Motorists can accumulate "cents per litre" fuel discounts when they shop at participating retailers.

"DOWNLOAD THE APP AND BE A SMARTY PANTS LIKE ME!"

The **AA Research Foundation** is established as a dedicated way for the **AA** to invest more into road safety research.

**2012**

**AA Motoring** launches **Car of the Year (COTY)**, replacing The **AA Motoring Excellence Awards**. **Members** can vote on their car of choice. The event has grown annually with more participation from car manufacturers and the support of The **New Zealand Motoring Writers' Guild**.

**SpecSavers** joined the **AA** as an **AA Member Benefit**.

**2013**

The **AA** rebrands to our current brand architecture which has been very well received in marketplace and most importantly with our **Members**. The introduction of the **AA Club Mark** to celebrate we are a club that has been "**Guiding life's journeys for over 120 years**".

**2014**

**AA Driving School** launches **AA Ignition**, a programme offering free driving lessons to learner licence holders who are **AA Members** or have a family member who is an **AA Member** - this could be your parent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister or grandparent.

**2016**

**AA Roadservice** launches an app enabling **Members** to provide location, car details and the nature of problem, without making a call.

**2016**

**AA Health** insurance launches, a partnership between the **AA** and leading health insurance providernib. Providing **Members** a range of health insurance options.

**2016**

The **AA** begins to offer **AA Smartfuel** in conjunction with **Countdown** loyalty programme **OneCard** so cardholders can benefit from both programmes.

**2018**

The **AA** and **AA Insurance** launch a new joint venture - **AA Home**. It is a service that connects you with expert and reliable joint venture tradespeople, 24/7, 365 days a year, for those things that go wrong around the house. There are two subscription options to choose from, **AA Home Response** and **AA Home Response Plus**, giving you access to our network of reliable and experienced electricians, plumbers, locksmiths and more.

**AA Pet Insurance**, a partnership between the **AA** and (now) **PetSure**, launches with a suite of products for cat and dog owners.

**2018**

The inaugural **AA Driven NZ Car of the Year** is held, heralding a new age in driving.

**2019**

**AA Membership** experiences unprecedented growth, reaching the milestone of having more than **1.7 million Members**.

**2019**

**AA Money** is an exciting new financial services venture offering motor vehicle loans.

**2020**

**AA Roadservice** launched the revised **Roadservice Vehicles** to aid the **Service Officers** with more accessibility to tools etc

**2020**

**AA** launched the first **Mobile EV Charger**. The **AA Battery Service** van carries a mobile **EV Charger** for **Members'** electric vehicles if they run out of juice giving a 15-20 minute charge so they can then drive to a charging station.

**2021**

**AA** launched **AA Rapid Recovery Vehicles** in Auckland on 3 November 2021 and then in the South Island on 21 September 2022

**2022**

**AA** introduced **Roadservice** for bicycles on 20 October 2022

**AA** launched **Roadservice** for e-scooters on 14 November 2022