



Top. By the late 1980s, Mount Cook was coming under pressure from its largest customer, Australian Pacific, to do something about what it saw as the increasingly dated styling of the Mk I & II MCDs. The outcome was the 600 series. Between 1989 and 1995, nine Mk I's were put through a programme involving major chassis upgrades, and a new body above floor level. They were given new fleet numbers starting with 600. Pictured here is No. 600, which had previously been No. 543. The design was based on the Mk III, with the inward taper reduced to increase passenger comfort. **Michael Jarka.**

Above left and right. During 1980-1981 MCD bodied four Bedford BLP2's (also referred to as VAMs). Nos. 3 and 10 (left) were coaches built especially for the company's popular daily Ninety Mile Beach excursion. This service involved a lot of running through water and sand, hence the high mounting of the body on the chassis. Although generally similar in external appearance, Nos. 14 and 15 (right) were built for the company's Napier suburban services. Their bodies were mounted at a conventional height and urban-style seating. They also had inward-folding front and rear doors, whereas the coaches had a single outward-opening door at the front. **Garth Stewart (left), Michael Jarka (right).**

Right. An oddity in the story of MCD is this 1962 Albion Chieftain, No. 17 in the fleet of Wylde's Motors of Runanga on the West Coast. Its original NZMB body was destroyed in an accident, with MCD being commissioned to build the replacement in 1982. **Garth Stewart.**

