

1961 DODGE SENECA

The Dodge, one of six imported to New Zealand new in 1961, was the firm's main hearse in Dunedin between 1961 and 1973. In 2009 we added an identical vehicle (from Auckland) and the Dodge is now fully restored to near original condition. It is a lovely choice for a traditional-style funeral.



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The Dodge arrived in Dunedin in May 2009 and was collected from Jeffs Haulaway's yard. It was found on TradeMe by Michael Hope, and had been parked in a garage on Waiheke Island, Auckland. It was in better condition than expected – very original and still set up as a hearse. Hope and Sons evaluated the engine and running gear, which were given a clean bill of health by K G McLeod's – other than a bit of brake work and a slight diff leak.

The panel and paint was surprisingly good so Hope and Sons elected to fix some screw holes in the front guards, remove the tow-bar, fix a mirror, re-chrome the air-vents and rear bumper, and paint the rear door. The rear door handle was fixed by Clements and Stephens. Cross adornments were removed from the front and rear of the car.

Inside, all internal carpets and door surrounds were replaced. And a new casket clamp added. The sheepskin front bench seat was replaced with beautiful black leather. Ultimately the Dodge was ready for use upon arrival and has been used for many funerals.

Six Seneca's were originally imported to New Zealand from Canada, where they had been converted to right-hand-drive. Although Hope and Sons were an original owner of one of these, the Seneca we currently have is not our original car. Hope and Sons sold the original Seneca around 1973 to Jim Forest in Palmerston, when we started using Valiant Regal station-wagons as hearses.



We are pleased to be able to return Dunedin classic to its former glory and make the Dodge available for our funerals.

