

Goodbye Pork Pie

The first film made by New Zealanders that proved that we could tell stories about ourselves.

Synopsis

Two young men set out on a thousand-mile escapade in a tiny, yellow, stolen car.

GOODBYE PORK PIE is the exciting story of two very different young men - and of their incredible (and often very funny) thousand mile journey in a very small, stolen, yellow car.

Gerry is young and restless and unemployed. He lives in an isolated small town in the far north of New Zealand, so when the car gives him the chance to head to a big city, he moves fast and starts looking for excitement.

John is older and slightly more conventional. He also has employment trouble - in his case he just doesn't like looking for work. And his girlfriend has just dumped him. She's gone off to stay with her sister in distant Invercargill, way down the other end of the country. John yearns to pursue her but he doesn't have any money.

Gerry has the car...so together they hit the road.

A misunderstanding over paying for petrol pushes them past the point of no return, with the police on their trail. They head off for adventure and excitement. They keep one jump ahead of the law, but this is due as much to good luck as good planning. Their exploits make them the heroes of the news media, with headlines following them as they hurtle south. The whole country follows their reckless game of hide and seek.

Along the way they pick up Shirl whose frequent protestations of virginity are obviously fantasy. At first unpopular, she turns out to be good company.

Gradually the three become committed to the common cause - of reaching their destination and avoiding the police.

But a brand new yellow car with three irrepressible occupants cannot be easily hidden. They become involved in an extraordinary chase through the streets and buildings of Wellington city. It culminates in a hilarious escape, and the trio start a new life inside a railway freight wagon as they begin the second stage of their journey.

The police, as usual, are left empty handed and by now, more than a little confused. The gang seems unstoppable; they leave one police car sinking in a lake and a second nose-dives over a cliff as the pursuit continues.

Hard up, the travellers are forced to sell pieces of their car as they head further south. They meet an eccentric collector who wants to add pieces of their car to his collection. Successful negotiations are completed. No sooner have they left when he rings the police, claiming that they are armed and heading south.

The film climaxes as they hurtle towards their final appointment with the law.

Trivia

- According to a piece Geoff Murphy wrote for "Film In Aoteara New Zealand", it would have cost too much to get stunt drivers out for the shot of a police car flying off a bank and into a lake, so Murphy himself was the driver of the car for this shot.
- Most of the audio for the chase scenes had to be re-recorded in post-production. This was due to the noise made by the numerous gravel roads.

- The beginning title card mentions driving your car whenever you pleased. This is a reference to 'carless days' that were introduced by the Muldoon government in 1979. With carless days, unless you had a exemption, you were not supposed to drive your car on the day of the week displayed on your windscreen or you could face a hefty fine. Ironically, they were phased out before Goodbye Pork Pie even reached the cinemas.

For the Maps:

The story begins in [Kaitaia](#) in Spring 1978. Nineteen-year-old Gerry Austin opportunistically steals a wallet (although only after trying to return it) accidentally dropped by a wealthy woman named Lesley Morris. Finding her driver's licence inside it, he takes on her name of Lesley, and uses the licence to rent a then brand new yellow mini, which is nicknamed "Pork Pie" after the name on his bright yellow sun hat and t-shirt. With no particular aim in mind, he drifts down to Auckland.

Meanwhile in Auckland, the middle-aged John, has just received a "Dear John" letter from his girlfriend, Sue, who has left him after six years to go home to Invercargill. After a night on the bottle, John telephones Sue at her sister's house and says he is coming down. She tells him she won't be there, but he says he is coming anyway. The film cuts to John walking apparently aimlessly through the city, with hopeless thoughts of getting to the other end of the country.

Gerry is stopped by a traffic officer for failing to wear a seat belt, but rescued when a passing John intervenes and insists Gerry was wearing the belt. Gerry gives John a lift although he doesn't know where he's going.

By this time, the real Lesley Morris tries to rent a car from the same Kaitaia rental car agency after her car breaks down. She finds her wallet and driver's licence missing, and promptly reports it to police. Meanwhile, Gerry and John stop and fill the Mini with petrol at Pokeno in the northern Waikato, just south of the Bombay hills, and accidentally drive off without paying, drawing more police attention to the duo.

Further down the road Gerry and John pick up Shirl, who she says is heading for family in Wanganui, "maybe", and within minutes is casually informing Gerry and John that she is still a virgin. Immediately, behind Shirl's back, Gerry and John have a \$2 bet in which Gerry says he will be "hanging out of her before they reach Wanganui".

They again stop for petrol in the central North Island, and as Gerry lost the cash that he found in Lesley's wallet, again drive off without paying. Shirl is horrified that they left without paying and states she would have paid, Gerry says he would have refused this as then he would have had to listen to her talk. Shortly, they are pursued by a motorcycle cop, and end up avoiding him by hiding in the nearby Horopito Smash Palace (car wreckers). On the road to Wanganui, the trio discuss about whether Gerry had sex with Shirl or not when he tried to silence her in the chase beforehand. However, the discussion ends in a stalemate.

Shirl doesn't leave at Wanganui, and decides to stay with the guys and go to Wellington. In Wellington, the trio meet Mulvaney, an old associate of John's, who gives the trio overnight

accommodation at his garage in Wellington, and supplies them with money and drugs in return for parts of the car. Rather than use his real name, John introduces Gerry to Mulvaney as "Blondini", a moniker that Gerry readily adopts.

The next morning, the trio leave and head to the inter-island ferry terminal. Gerry gets distracted, and accidentally runs a red traffic light, drawing the car's attention to the police car behind him. The trio are pursued by police through central Wellington, and are almost caught after spinning out outside Parliament, but Gerry evades them by driving through a pedestrian subway into Wellington Railway station.

In the railway yards, John notices a empty boxcar destined for the inter-island ferry, and the trio stow the car in it. Before the police notice, the ship leaves port for the South Island. On the ferry Gerry and John have a confrontation - they now need to go together to Invercargill - "all the way". Anything less would be "half-arsed."

Getting off the inter-island ferry, they notice the police checking a family in another yellow Mini coming off the ferry. Returning from the liquor store, Gerry overhears a police radio wanting him for stealing the Mini, and promptly returns to the train. The trio enjoy a leisurely ride down the rail line to Christchurch, decorating the wagon with the name Blondini and other items found in the train's wagons. After a night of partying, Gerry finally wins his bet.

Arriving in Christchurch in the morning, they find out that their wagon is destined for the West Coast freight train leaving 9:00pm that evening, and decide to spend the day on the town. While drinking in a pub, the guys notice their erratic driving incident in Wellington is featured on the front of The Press. Returning to the train, they find the wagon even more decorated from Shirl, but she herself is not there. Gerry goes looking for her, but in the meantime almost misses the train as it is pulls out of the station. They decide to leave the wagon down the line, and head down the West Coast towards Invercargill.

On the coast, a policeman pulls up his girlfriend for "exceeding the speed limit and for having inoperable windscreen wipers". Having sex in the police car, the cop notices the Mini streaking past, and starts to pursue them, not realising he buckled his seat belt through the steering wheel. The police car fails to take a corner and ends up driving into a lake.

Gerry and John stop at a tearoom further down the coast. They find out from the television that Shirl was arrested for shoplifting, and that they're wanted in a national man-hunt of the "Blondini Gang". Soon after, the family in the other yellow Mini turn up, and Gerry and John are forced to serve them with the help of a few disguises in the tearoom. Noticing police coming, Gerry beckons to John that they are getting out of there. The police notice the family's yellow Mini outside, and interrogate them, not noticing the true Mini they were after pulling out from behind the shop.

Later in Central Otago, the duo are caught by a policeman who 'knows how to drive', and pursues them. He almost catches them, but accidentally loses control of his police car and slides down a bank. By this time, John's former girlfriend Sue is noticing John's movements, and how close to Invercargill he is getting. The duo sell most of the car's trim and battery in Cromwell, taking a full oil can in the process.

On the approach to Dunedin, the duo meets up with Snout, who helps them out by avoiding the cops on the motorway, and then takes them to his house and the (supposedly) tetraplegic

Alice. He buys parts off the car at Alice's request, including flags collected from their travels, of which Gerry is reluctant to give away. He also finds out they are heading to Invercargill, and after Gerry and John leave, telephones the police over the information he got from them.

Further down the road, they decide to stop to lose more weight off the car (the exhaust and Gerry's bladder). John goes to a dairy for a milkshake, but notices police in the shop, and promptly runs off back to the Mini. Gerry is under the Mini, and when it drives off him, he is arrested by police, but escapes the police car. Hopping onto the exterior of the Mini, John continues towards Invercargill, with the police in pursuit. The police try to stop the Mini, but Gerry falls off and is hit by the pursuing police car. John says goodbye to Gerry, and then returns back to the car: the police blocked by Gerry's body and a truck.

The police are ready for John, and have set up a roadblock at the entrance to Invercargill, and call in assistance from the Armed Offenders Squad (AOS). John, noticing the roadblock, turns into the cemetery to avoid them, but not before the AOS has shot out a window, and a hole in the fuel can.

Driving to Sue's house, the improperly secured exhaust creates sparks, igniting the spilt fuel and setting the Mini alight. John jumps out just seconds before the car ploughs into Sue's sister's car and greeting Sue with an explosion. John reunites with Sue, and the two promptly head for the bedroom. Meanwhile, police and the fire service gather outside the house, waiting for John to come out with 'his hostage'. John finally admits defeat, walking out of the house naked for all to see. The burnt-out Mini is towed away, and John is arrested.