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## SPRING FLOWER

While paging through my piles of old photos, magazines and sales literature for information on the Peugeot 504 Coupé featured in this issue I got distracted. My distraction came in the form of a letter entitled 'Who remembers the Protea?' in a 1976 publication. The editor answered the post by recounting seeing the Protea prototype debut at a show at the Rand Spring Show on 4 October 1956. Unbelievably I read this on 4 October 2016 – 60 years later to the day.

So that is why we feature the Protea. And no story on South African fibreglass production cars is complete without a look at the GSM Dart, so there's a brief look at that too. These aren't the only fibreglass cars to make an appearance this month though, with a look at Eric Brockhoven's fearsome V8-powered Corvette Lolette race car and the tale of how he introduced us to the rough and ready go-anywhere Beach Buggy 50 or so years back.

And speaking of go-anywhere vehicles, I step into one of the best ever made – a Mercedes-Benz *Geländewagen*. Despite nearing the 40-year mark this 4x4 can outdo most off-roaders today. The formula is so spot-on that the modern version of the G-wagen, which is a favourite



curb-hopper with rock stars and actors, barely differs from the original boxy design.

Graeme Hurst also suffers a similar distraction, catching up with a non-South African collector of South African sales literature. If a car was sold in SA chances are he has some sort of brochure for it and can take you on a stroll down memory lane. Graeme continues the nostalgia trip by taking part in the 2016 Oily Rag Run, which is dedicated to unrestored cars 50 years and older.

Mike Monk takes us even further back with a story about a 1920s Rugby Tourer and Wolseley Hornet Special, before hopping forward to test a 2016 Fiat Abarth. Jake Venter continues his fictitious interview series by catching up with Soichiro Honda who, through his motorbike and car business, put Japan on the map.

There's a look at Goodwood Revival's motorcycle action by Ian Groat, a Reader's Ride Maserati, your classified adverts and your letters. Please enjoy and keep the correspondence and ideas for us to pursue flowing in. Your support is greatly appreciated and the reason we are able to keep publishing monthly. It is unreal; since June we have now produced the same number of publications as we would have in a year before. So thank you!

Stuart

# LEGENDS FUND RAISER

Two of South Africa's motor sport legends, Graham Duxbury and Giniel de Villiers, recently hosted a fundraising event at the Franschhoek Motor Museum, attended by members of the public keen to meet the two greats, and have a VIP tour of the museum and its facilities by curator Wayne Harley. Attendees were also taken on laps of the Plaas Pad circuit in Ford Mustang-lookalike V8 Masters cars piloted by Charles Arton and Marcel Angel, while some experienced a ride with Giniel in a Toyota 86.

Graham won the South African Drivers' Championship in 1982 driving a March 78B and March 822, both cars prepared by the renowned engineer Ken Howes. He also won the Daytona 24 Hour sports car race in a March 83G-Porsche, sharing the drive with fellow luminaries Sarel van der Merwe and Tony Martin, with sponsorship from Kreepy Krauly. Graham is the Chief Executive Officer of Duxbury Networking, a specialist networking distributor, and a motorsport commentator.

Giniel won the SA Touring Car Championship four times in succession from 1997 to 2000 with a dealer-backed Nissan Primera. He then switched

to off-road racing and made his Dakar Rally debut in 2003, finishing fifth overall. He took his first stage victory in 2004 on the way to seventh overall and won two stages in 2005, ending fourth. When Nissan withdrew its works team, Giniel moved to Volkswagen, taking another stage win and the runner-up position in the 2006 event. Despite four stage victories in 2007, engine trouble dropped him to eleventh. Then in 2009, Giniel took overall victory in the demanding event. He finished seventh in 2010 and second in 2011. Giniel joined the South African Imperial Toyota team for the 2012 and 2013 events as a result of Volkswagen's withdrawal, finishing third in 2012 and second in 2013 despite taking no stage victories. In 2014, Giniel won the final stage of the rally to secure fourth place overall. Emphasising his versatility, he is currently contesting the SA National Rally Championship for Toyota Gazoo Racing.

After the track experience everyone was invited to a fantastic lunch before Graham and Giniel entertained everyone with some fascinating stories and anecdotes about their Dakar escapades – Duxbury's company is a sponsor of

Toyota Gazoo Racing's Dakar programme.

The event was organised on behalf of the Motorsport Legends Benevolent Fund, the board members of which are Duxbury, Giorgio Cavalieri, Peter Labuschagne, Allan Trim and Les van Breda. The Legends are there for those drivers that have dedicated themselves to the sport of motor racing and then find themselves falling on hard times. The Fund also helps widows of the old guard in terms of funeral arrangements and support. FMM is the archive to the Legends, housing many historic documents and photographs. "It is always a privilege to work with the Legends Trust and help them in this wonderful cause," says Wayne.



## RUGBY IN THE SIN BIN

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a full report on the 2016 Oily Rag Run and the 1928 Rugby Tourer that was entered in the event by FMM and driven by Donny Tarentaal and Wenstley Witcomb. Sadly, the car did not finish – a fuel problem proved elusive to locate on the side of the road but was quickly resolved once back at FMM. The crew brandished a yellow card...



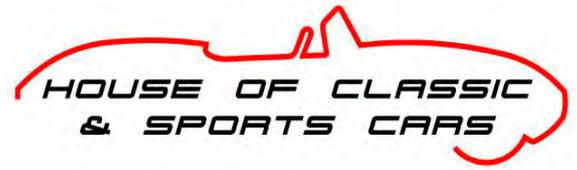
## ON TWO WHEELS

On Heritage Day, FMM curator Wayne Harley was invited by the Classic Motorcycle Club (Cape) chairman Howard Boetcher to give a presentation. The club meets regularly at the Tokai Library where the guys get together and kick tyres, have a beer and, naturally, have a braai. Wayne presented the museum's 1926 350cc AJ'S G3, a bike Cranley Jarman had bought for £4.10 in 1934 and converted into a racing machine that he then rode to victory in the 1936 Durban-Johannesburg race. After his death, the bike found its way to the Heidelberg Museum where the great motorcyclist Hew Hollard rebuilt it and rode it in the 2000 D-J Commemorative Run. This little bike may not have the pedigree of the AJ'S G6s that won the Isle of Man TT back in the day but it won over the guys at the CMCC in a very big way and will always be remembered as the bike that won the very last D-J in period.



## WHERE, WHAT TIMES AND HOW MUCH

For more information about the Franschhoek Motor Museum, view galleries of the collection and learn more about forthcoming events, log on to [www.fmm.co.za](http://www.fmm.co.za). The Franschhoek Motor Museum is situated on the L'Ormarins Estate along the R45 in the Franschhoek Valley in the Western Cape. Opening hours are: April to November – Monday to Friday 10h00 to 17h00 (last admittance 16h00), Saturday and Sunday 10h00 to 16h00 (last admittance 15h00). December to March – 10h00 to 18h00 (last admittance 17h00) every day. The museum is open on most public holidays except Christmas Day. Admission prices are R60 adults, R50 pensioners and motor club members (with membership ID), R30 children (ages 3-12). Guided tours are available upon request at no charge. An on-site delicatessen offers refreshments and tasting of L'Ormarins estate wines is also available.



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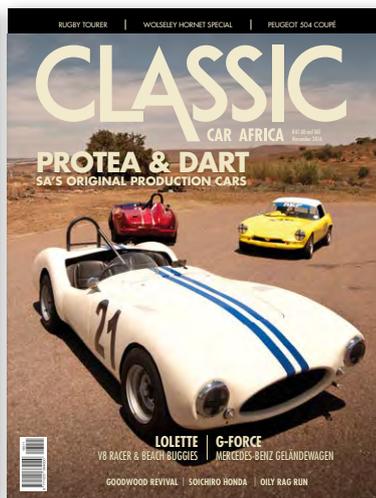
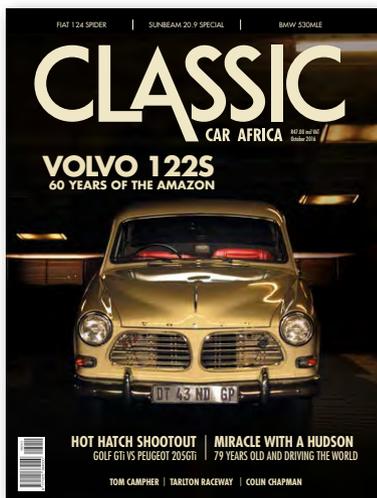
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# SPRING IN THE STEP

**Dino's Classic Restorations** continues to pull in the variety and turn around the projects with enthusiasm. When talking variety we are talking variety in brands as well as ages, condition and types of jobs. We've seen everything from show cars in need of minor touch ups to rust buckets that have required a lot of cutting and metal shaping to meet the grade. We will share what is on the go at Dino's, what cars have come in, how much progress has been made in a month, what have

gone out and what are on the waiting list. In the world of classic restorations you never know what you will find, so as and when any stumbling blocks occur, we will point those out too in the monthly updates. Progress on the various projects was good in October, with a number of completed projects being collected by the owners. Still the work goes on though, with a few more getting that bit closer to being finished and the stream of more classic projects continues to come in.



1980s Japanese cars are taking off with collectors. This Skyline came in, was stripped, repainted and now final assembly is being done.



A big project, this Jaguar E-Type suffers a bit in the rust department. The solution is lots of cutting and metal replacement and Dino has spent many hours doing lead filling.



A very complete Corvette arrived for a full strip down. The fibreglass body is midway through preparation before paint and re-assembly.



Final prep being done and panel fitment double checked before paint is applied. The client will assemble the rare droptop.



Initially this Valiant Barracuda just came in for a touch up but the decision was taken to do a full respray and the result looks brilliant. Re-assembly starts now.



Keeping a classic car as close to original is key. This Mini sports a new black over Old English White scheme, as per original, thanks to Glasurit's clour archive.



Progress on the BMW CS has been steady. New floors, with all the factory reinforcements have been fabricated and now exterior panels are getting attention.



Readers might not recognise this Charger as it has featured in previous issues. All the rot has been fixed and now paint shot. The RT stripe is painted and not a decal.



This early Volkswagen Beetle body has come in. As with most cars of this age there is some rust to cut out and replace with new metal. Then it will be primed and painted.

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# The

latest version of the Volvo S60 Polestar is now available in South Africa

in a limited run of just 45 units. Updated for the 2017 model year, the quickest road-going Volvo ever now sports a completely new drivetrain for enhanced performance and efficiency. Following in the footsteps of the original 3.0-litre version, of which only 28 were ever imported into South Africa, the new S60 Polestar acts as a halo model in the Volvo range.

Engineered by Polestar, Volvo Cars' performance arm, the new S60 Polestar shares even more of its DNA with the company's racing cars. The new 2.0-litre Drive-E turbocharged and supercharged petrol engine has been developed alongside a 1.6-litre version of the same engine which currently powers the Volvo S60 Polestar TC1 racing cars, which are piloted by Thed Björk and Robert Dahlgren in the FIA World Touring Car Championship (WTCC). Furthermore, the S60 polestar also shares its base chassis and engineering philosophy with the racing version.

Thed Björk elaborates: "While used in vastly different areas, these cars share more than just technology. The core philosophy is the same, developed by people with the same passion. It is about creating performance that can be used in all situations, no matter whether it's about winning a championship or being able to enjoy a safe, functional and fun-to-drive car all year round."

With 270 kW at 6 000 rpm and 470 Nm of torque available between 3 100 and 5 000 rpm, the Volvo S60 Polestar's performance has been improved and remains impressive - 0-100 km/h is now achieved in just 4.7 seconds and top speed remains electronically limited to 250 km/h. A vast increase in responsiveness has been achieved by the fitment of a new 8-speed Geartronic automatic gearbox which has been performance-optimised. A Haldex all-wheel drive system manages power output to all four wheels.

Extra responsiveness can be easily unleashed, along with more volume from the sonorous twin-

exit exhausts, by selecting the Sport driving mode. Coupled to launch control, which unleashes the car's full potential with rapid acceleration and punchier gear changes, the new S60 Polestar easily exploits its new Drive-E power.

The performance and output gains have been achieved thanks to a bigger turbo, new conrods, new camshafts, a larger intake and a higher-capacity fuel pump, compared to the same engine in a standard S60 T6 AWD.

Naturally, an improvement in efficiency is most notable with the switch to a Drive-E powertrain. Average fuel economy on the combined cycle has been reduced to 7.8-litres per 100 km, and carbon emissions have come down to 179 g/km - a significant reduction of 22.5 per cent.

On top of this new performance-optimised equipment, Polestar has also reduced the car's weight. The Volvo S60 Polestar is now 24 kg lighter over the front axle and 20 kg lighter in total compared to the previous model. Other new features on the car include new 20-inch lightweight alloy wheels, Polestar-calibrated electro-assisted power steering and new slotted front brake discs, measuring 371 mm in diameter.

Brake callipers are by Polestar/Brembo and feature six pistons up front and four at the rear, and the suspension continues to feature adjustable Öhlins dampers for the track enthusiast who really wants to get into finer detail with their car.

"This car is properly quick," says Niels Möller, Chief Operating Officer at Polestar. "But it's more than that. It combines Polestar's 20 years of racing pedigree with Volvo's inherent pragmatism and engineering heritage. This is a very fast car that you can use every day of the year."

The new Volvo S60 Polestar retails in South Africa for a recommended R749 500 which continues to include a 5-year/ 100 000 km full vehicle warranty, a 5-year/ 100 000 km full maintenance plan, laminated glass and Tracker Connect. The new car is now also available in four colours, including Rebel Blue, Bright Silver, Ice White and Onyx Black.

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## — MAKE A DATE —

2016 is nearing its completion but there are still classic events worth taking in listed below. In order to start filling the calendar for 2017 we welcome any event details you or your clubs have planned for the new year. Please forward any of these with a few details on the when, where and what as well as a picture or two to [stuart@classiccarafrika.com](mailto:stuart@classiccarafrika.com).

### NOVEMBER

6	Killarney Motor Show	Cape Town
6-8	Fairest Cape Tour	Cape Town
19	Midas Historic Tour – Redstar Raceway	Delmas
27	Blairgowrie Toy Fair	Blairgowrie

### JANUARY 2017

21/22	Timour Hall Classic Car	Cape Town
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### MONTHLY MUST DO EVENTS

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month

Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal — Bluff, Durban

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month

Classic Motorcycle Club Johannesburg — Germiston, Johannesburg

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month

Pretoria Old Motor Club — Silverton, Pretoria

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

Piston Ring — Modderfontein, Johannesburg

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month

Cape Vintage Motorcycle Club — Parow North, Cape Town

#### Last Sunday of the month

Vintage and Veteran Club — Athol Oaklands, Johannesburg

Southern Cape Old Car Club — Glenwood, George

The Crankhandle Club — Wynberg, Cape Town

The Veteran Car Club of South Africa — Kloof, KwaZulu Natal



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## METAL SHAPING

The Garage – Classic Custom Creations' Basics of Sheet Metal Shaping courses are fully booked for the remainder of 2016 but they have a few spots available for their January 2017 session, which runs from 19-21 January. Email [barry.ashmole@gmail.com](mailto:barry.ashmole@gmail.com) to secure your booking. If you can't make this one, there will be another opportunity in March.



# KNYSNA NOMINATION

The Jaguar Simola Hillclimb has just added to its growing list of award recognitions by achieving a nomination in a category of the 2016 International Historic Motoring Awards (IHMA) competition.

“It is a great honour for the Jaguar Simola Hillclimb to be nominated for such a prestigious international motorsport award, and especially for our *Classic Car Friday* segment which is only four years old and steadily building its own profile,” said Ian Shroshree, managing director of Knysna Speed Festival, the owner of the event. The Jaguar Simola Hillclimb 2017 will be the eighth running of the event and is set to continue the growth that it has shown since its inception, and build on the record-setting success of the 2016 event.

We'll keep you posted as to how the event fares in the awards department but be sure to diarise next year's run now. Scheduled for 4-7 May 2017, this event will be the fourth edition known as the Jaguar Simola Hillclimb following Jaguar's recent three-year extension of its title sponsorship from 2017-2019.



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# VESPA HITS 70

Vespa is an iconic brand known globally for being one of the most enduring symbols of cool. Adapting for South African consumers and the local landscape to duplicate the love and popularity it receives around the world has been Andy Reid, MD of Vespa SA's journey for the last 14 years. To celebrate 70 years of Vespa, Reid answers a few questions, explains the challenges the brand has experienced, how it overcame these and his vision for the brand over the next few years.



**Q: Anyone who knows you knows you're a master salesman. What's your business background?**

**A:** I'm a Scotsman. I'm stubborn. And I can't resist a challenge. After moving to SA, I started my own chemical analysis equipment business, Swiss Lab, at the age of 25. I sold it to the Ellerine Brothers in 2001 and retired at 40. But I was bored with retirement and began looking for a new challenge.

I fell in love with Vespa while travelling Europe and after returning to South Africa, wanted to buy one – subsequently realising modern Vespas weren't available here. So I hopped on a plane, headed for Piaggio headquarters in Italy, to secure exclusive distribution rights for Vespa in Southern Africa.

In 2002, I founded Vespa South Africa. I'm the majority shareholder and MD of Vespa SA, with six retail outlets and sixty staff members across the country. I'm actively involved in sales and marketing, and

have a passion for customer interaction. I believe in empowering my staff without limits, and enjoy mentoring and developing talent – both in my business and among other entrepreneurs.

**Q: Vespa has been the stylish mode of transport for Italians for decades. What do you think it is about the brand that stands out?**

**A:** The original Vespa was designed and manufactured by Piaggio (who initially manufactured aircraft and trains during World War II). After the war Europe was devastated, economically in the worst depression in history and the founders at Piaggio shifted their focus to building Europe up again. They set out to design the Vespa as an affordable mode of transport to get Europe moving and working again. 70 years later Vespa is still an icon for similar yet modern ideologies. It gives you agility and freedom. It looks amazing. It's conscious of your budget and the environment.

**Q: How has Vespa performed in South Africa?**

**A:** The local Vespa population is increasing year on year and at times we can't keep up with the demand. Limited edition models, such as the Emporio Armani colab edition, even see customers fight over the bikes. We've gone from one showroom to six and have plans for many more. Most South Africans know the brand now and most adults want one (even if they don't admit it to their spouses).

**Q: What's next for Andy Reid and Vespa SA?**

**A:** I want to change the way South Africans commute. I want to change policy. I want to make Vespas ubiquitous, with a showroom on every corner, special bike lanes for enhanced safety, and incentives for conscious commuters who switch from gas-guzzling cars to quiet, safe and efficient two-wheels. I want to see more Vespas on the roads than cars. Think it's impossible? Watch this space.

## GEORGE & THE GERMANS

The 21<sup>st</sup> George Old Car Show hosted by the Southern Cape Old Car Club (SCOCC) takes place at the P.W.Botha College on 11 and 12 February 2017 and 35 dedicated spots for Pre-1975 German cars have been allocated to the centre stage. With the aim of attracting a wide variety of German makes, organisers are calling on any readers with rare machines that meet the criteria to exhibit. If you own such a beauty contact Kobus Harris at [kobus@harrisscheltema.co.za](mailto:kobus@harrisscheltema.co.za) or Chris Langeveld via [cfm65@me.com](mailto:cfm65@me.com). Of course all the other makes are welcome at what is one of the land's largest shows.





## LEADING THE CHARGE

Automotive batteries are expensive items and the bad news is that, once installed, their longevity is very much up to the vehicle owner. From the very first time you fire up your car, right from new, its battery deteriorates.

The major cause is 'sulphating'. A standard car battery consists of a number of lead plates, connected to one another and hanging in a solution of acid and water inside a tough plastic case. Most modern batteries declare they are 'sealed for life' and 'low maintenance' – but that doesn't mean 'no maintenance'. The answer is an intelligent battery charger. Developed 20 years ago in Sweden by CTEK, these have algorithms that first read and analyse the state of a battery and then, through an automatic 8-step sequence, revive, condition and maintain it.

### THESE STEPS INCLUDE:

- 1. Desulphation:** Pulsing voltage removes microscopic sulphate crystals from the lead plates to restore capacity.
- 2. Soft start:** Tests the battery to ensure it can accept the charge; charging starts if the answer is 'OK'.
- 3. Bulk:** Charges at maximum current to about 80% of battery capacity.
- 4. Absorption:** Battery is ready for use. Charging continues at declining current until the battery reaches 100% capacity.
- 5. Analyse:** Test that the battery is holding its charge. If it fails, replacement might be necessary.
- 6. Reconditions:** Exactly that for a deeply discharged battery.

- 7. Float (maintenance):** Battery is fully charged and now maintained at maximum with a constant charge.
- 8. Pulse:** Maintains battery at 95-100% by monitoring voltage and giving a pulse when necessary.

The CTEK even has its own remote battery monitor with a free, easy to understand and use app for your smart phone. This allows the user to monitor multiple batteries' health and can report up to three months of battery performance. Suitable for all types of vehicle batteries, it is so 'smart' that if the battery has a problem, it will proactively send a notification.

The more the battery is being charged the happier it is and that charging can only occur when the car's engine is running. Many family cars, however, don't have that luxury and can idle in the house garage in between short runs to school or the shops. Such trips are barely likely even to replace the battery power used in cranking the car's engine, especially in winter on the Highveld. Batteries don't like the cold any more than their human drivers.

Which is why a smart home battery-charger makes a lot of sense. Not only to keep the heart of your car happy but also, in tip top condition. An unused battery gradually loses charge and is subject to battery cancer – the electrical for 'sulphating'. Essentially, tiny sulphate crystals build up on the battery plates and reduce the amount of charge the plates can hold. If left long enough the overall capacity of the battery will deteriorate until your car will not start.

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## LETTER OF THE MONTH

Over the last three months Jonnesway has offered a JOT679 10-piece spanner set to the winner of our Letter of the Month. Winners were Robin Hayes for his 'puddle jumper' motoring memories, Toy de Carvalho with his Alfa Romeo reliability bit and Tony Bruton, who recounted what it was like being a kid watching the F1 Grand Prix at East London. We've picked up the three boxes containing six open-ended wrenches, four ratchet ring spanners and a stubby ¼-inch drive ratchet and will have them couriered by the time this issue hits the shelf.

We kick off a new competition this month, which sees a *Classic Car Africa* T-shirt and cap package up for grabs. This time the prize goes to **Theo Odendaal** for his Volvo reminiscing. We'll package it up and send. For those not in the winners' circle yet, the very same merchandise is available for purchase from *The FloatChamber Speed-Shop* on [www.classiccarafrika.com](http://www.classiccarafrika.com).

## MANY VOLVO SMILES

Hello Stuart

I chanced upon your magazine in a bookstore yesterday, drawn by the beautiful photo of the Volvo 122S on the cover. Naturally I bought it and found it fantastic reading material. Congratulations!

The article about the 122S nearly brought tears to my eyes. I owned a B20B in the seventies, while working in South West Africa. I was determined to prove the praise-singers of this car wrong and I set out to try and break it. I fitted a tachometer and discovered that at maximum speed (100mph) the motor turned at 6000rpm. Yes, in 1970 the speed limit was already 120kph, but the vast distances and excellent open roads resulted in motorists in that sparsely populated country making haste in order to get to their destinations. Due to circumstances I was forced (I thought) to sell it after a year, by which time the car had done 42 000 miles, almost all of it at maximum speed. Of course, because of my love for the car, it was meticulously maintained and serviced. Far from being ruined, it was only beginning to loosen up by the time I sold it. It was without any doubt the best motor car I have owned and in 57 years of car ownership, I have had a few!

Stuart, please could you let me have the contact details of Tom Campher Motors. The glimmer of hope that I may once again own a 122S, possibly as good as new, or better, fills me with joy. In

all honesty, Motor Assemblers and Distributors who assembled the cars for the local market, worked shoddily and I think a lovingly restored specimen may be better than the original.

I shall continue to buy your excellent *Classic Car Africa*. For those of us who knew cars as they were, the material you offer is so infinitely more readable than the distasteful glamour that has become the norm in present day motor magazines.

**Thank you!**

**Yours,**

**Theo Odendaal**

*Hi Theo*

*Glad you stumbled across the magazine and thank you for the kind words and Volvo memories. Having spent some time behind the wheel of the immaculate Volvo that featured in the magazine I can see why the brand had so many South African fans in the 1960s and '70s. Besides the decent performance the build quality and specification blew me away. As mentioned Tom Campher Motors not only sells the latest from the Swedish brand but also specialises in restoring past icons and sourcing parts. Give Vic Campher a call on 010 593 3137. He'll be more than happy to help you out and talk Volvo.*

**Stuart**

## BG FORD FIRST

Hi Stuart

It is with interest that I read your article re the Capri in the September issue. As far as I am aware, and correct me if I'm wrong, but was it not Basil Green who converted the first Capris and Cortinas in South Africa to V6? Ford South Africa gave him the thumbs up and the Ford warranty was applied to the converted cars because the job was so well carried out!

Thanks for a great magazine.

**Warm Regards**

**Tony Campbell**

*Hi Tony. A good point and one that needs a bit of digging. On the Cortina front I am almost certain you are right with Basil Green's Perana outfit the*

*first on the planet to slot in a V6 – later the UK got this lump and badged the car a Savage. As for the Capri it seems likely Perana was again the world-leader, and I know of a 2-litre V4 that saw this conversion by the firm before the official launch of the 3-litre V6. Perhaps this was an early test mule for the setup.*

*I do however think that Europe beat us to a V6 in 1969, but this was initially the 2-litre Cologne V6 (later replaced by a 2.3-litre soon thereafter). The 3000GT 3-litre V6 Essex engine seems to have appeared in the UK at the end of 1969, which predates our 1970 launch by a whisker. But maybe the test mule I mentioned above predates this. Do any readers out there know the details?*

**Stuart**

## THE GOING RATE

I appreciate the placing of my letter of my BMW 2002 project in the September issue. I would like to make a suggestion: Is it not possible to list prices of classic cars that have been sold over the past few months or so? That would give us a good idea of what to pay for classic cars, and not to be ripped off. Thanks again for a great magazine.

**Regards**

**Pierre Jansen Van Rensburg**

*Hi Pierre. Thanks for the correspondence and suggestion. A pricing guide would be a welcome addition to the magazine and one we have looked into. With the vast majority of classics being sold privately though, it is very difficult for us to get enough information. With the likes of WH Auctioneers now hosting more frequent dedicated classic and collectable auctions we have started building a record of sales and hopefully will be able to offer a decent measuring stick soon.*

**Stuart**



## OLTHOFF MGA RACER

Hi Stuart

I am now back in SA and have read the September issue of *Classic Car Africa* – very interesting read and it must be hugely difficult to produce such high quality every month.

While I was in the UK I attended the Beaulieu Autojumble together with Edward Vandyk – allowing one day to visit 2 000 stands was not nearly enough.

Following your article on the TR3 vs MGA, and the brief mention of Bob Olthoff and his Twin Cam, I thought that the attached recent photo from the 2016 pre-1963 Historic Tourist Trophy at Silverstone would be interesting. Edward has a collection of classic cars

including several MGA Twin Cams and decided a few years ago to build an exact replica of Bob Olthoff's South African-built racer YDH5 929, which Bob campaigned with great success in the UK and Europe in the early '60s. Last year Edward managed to buy the original car in the USA and bring it back for restoration in the UK (registration YRX 310). The photo shows both cars being raced at Silverstone. I hope to talk Edward into bringing both cars out to South Africa for a series of pre-'63 races, if we can bring together a group of pre-'63 endurance racers here, many of which still survive.

Incidentally, the *Motor* road test of the standard Twin Cam in 1958 reported the 0 to 60mph acceleration at 9.1 seconds. The main problem with the standard MGA Twin Cam was that the SU carburettors were rigidly mounted, and that (some of) the Twin Cam engines were prone to vibration at certain rpms, causing the carb floats to hang, leading to fuel starvation, lean burning and burnt pistons. This was cured by fitting flexible mounts, or a set of Webers, as many racers did.

I have recently acquired a basket case

competition MGA Twin Cam (YDH5 1480), fitted with Bob Olthoff manifolds and a set of 42 Webers, bored to 1800cc with high compression pistons. The car was originally red with a white locally-made hard top. Do any readers have any recollections of this car, or any photos of the MGAs competing in the 1959, 1960 and 1961 3, 6 and 9 Hour endurance races?

**Best Regards**

**Bo Giersing**

*Thank you Bo, while the monthly magazine is a bit more work the amount of content available never ceases to amaze me and interesting stories like yours above keep the ball rolling. Getting an original Olthoff car, or faithful replica out for a pre-63 race here would be top prize and I am sure a number of Triumph, MG, Morgan and South African special owners would back the event and take part. Keep us in the loop as to any further developments. Having seen the feedback we get from even the most obscure machines, I am sure a reader will recognise your latest discovery and be able to shed some light on the history.*

**Stuart**

## FORD YOUTH LEAGUE

This is my 1969 Ford Escort 1300 Deluxe. I have now had the car for about 1 year. One Friday afternoon, chilling with a beer, I decided to go onto Gumtree. I typed in Ford Escort and there she was. She was only posted 3 minutes before I saw it. From the minute I laid eyes on her I knew I had to make her mine. The car had only one prior owner from 1969. It was an upcountry car so I knew there would be minimal or no rust. The car was originally from Bloem but made its way to Kempton Park in Gauteng.

When I got there and saw her for the first time, she sat on thin original 12-inch rims, gleaming chrome and a pin-straight body with no rust whatsoever. She was in immaculate condition. I was daring enough to drive her all the way from Kempton Park to Durban, although had full faith that she would never let me down.

She is in pristine condition and a few minor changes were made while still maintaining the originality of this gem. She still has all of the original chrome. All Ford badges throughout the car are original and so is her Antique Ivory paintwork. On the inside she has an oxblood red interior with original fighter jet seatbelts and a Sanyo radio that was fitted by Ford in 1970.

The original 1300 power plant drives a



4-speed gearbox and fuelled by the original FoMoCo carburettor. She only has 53 000 miles on the clock. The only changes made to this beauty are Ford Escort MKII Ghia wheels, which took me a long time to find.

Because this is a 1969 model, drum brakes are all round. I would like to convert the front brakes to discs and pads from a later model MK1. I am only 18 years of age and always had a love for old Fords. This rare gem is maintained to the most original spec.

I would love to one day start my own private collection of old Fords.

**Future Collector**

**Ashir**

*A beautiful looking car, Ashir, well done. With Fords often the go-to choice for aftermarket boy-racers it is extremely rare to find one in such original condition. Your enthusiasm for the car and keeping it original is not only refreshing but also a wise move in maintaining the value. Add your young age into the equation and it reinforces the belief that classic cars have a bright future in SA. Thank you for the hope and pics.*

**Stuart**

## BLEAK WITH A DEEK

I bought my first car in 1971, a rather drab green 1964 Auto Union 1000S with a white roof. I paid all of R350 for it. The car was from Springbok still sporting the CBU number plates, so needless to say, there wasn't a spot of rust on it.

The previous owner had however made a few modifications to the car. The rims had been widened the old fashioned way. They had been cut in half and a spacer was welded in between the two pieces.

I don't think there was much precision in joining the rims because it was almost impossible to balance the wheels.

I took the car to a company in Maitland where they shaved the tyres with spinning blades on a rather evil-looking machine to make them true. This worked well because it solved the problem.

It was converted to 12V with an alternator, but only 12V globes were fitted. The starter was still 6V so it spun at double speed. A ballast was fitted between the ignition switch and the 3 coils to reduce the voltage to 6V.

The original oil bath air filter was replaced by a pancake air filter, which allowed the induction noise from the carb

to drown out any decent conversation in the car. To make matters worse a Cobra exhaust system had been fitted, so it was deafening in the car. At idle it sounded like a Gatling gun.

I suspect a larger carb had been fitted because the oil feed pump had been disconnected and 2-stroke oil had to be put in the fuel tank. I used outboard 2-stroke oil because apparently it was of superior quality. Fuel consumption was horrific: something like 14ℓ/100km – I blame all the modifications for that.

Petrol being so cheap in the early '70s, under 10c/ℓ it made little difference. One weekend I took part in a mini rally that started in Cape Town and went through Wellington on to Ceres where we spent the night.

The next morning the Deek wouldn't start. I must have cranked it for at least ten minutes but still nothing. It must have been the moisture from being outside overnight.

No problem to find a few guys to help push start my Deek. Still nothing. After about twenty minutes we stopped for a smoke break, leaving the bonnet up while pondering what the problem could

be. So, lungs well covered in nicotine we tried again. That's when it struck me: I had forgotten to turn the ignition on!

With the power on she fired first time and once the two stroke smoke had cleared (which looked like a bush fire) we were on our way.

I never told anybody about my moment of stupidity, never ever. I sold her about two years later, also for R350, and bought what I thought was the best looking car ever – a Citroën GS 1220 Club – but that is another story. Keep up the good work on your fantastic magazine.

**Regards**  
**Gordon Stanford**

*Your secret is safe with us and the readers, Gordon – I'll admit I have done a similar move with my Renault R10, pushing it up and down the road to no avail. After about half an hour I stopped trying and looked into the engine bay, only to notice the fuel filter (and therefore tank) was empty. I too have kept this a secret until now. As a French car fan I think the move to the GS 1220 Club was an inspired one and look forward to some tales around that rarity.*  
**Stuart**

## WINDOWS FOR BOTSWANA

I am based in Botswana and I love classic cars. I read your magazine and I really enjoy it. I am having my Chevrolet 2500 1973 model restored at the moment and unfortunately the guys broke the passenger side window. I would like to know if you might know any company in South Africa who might be able to make custom car windows. All the best with the magazine;

I always look forward to your next issue.

**Kind regards**  
**Sethata**

*Hi Sethata. Glad to hear the magazine's footprint is stepping across the border and into the rest of Southern Africa.*

*As the title implies we are not only about South Africa, and want to record and inform*

*about anything motoring from our continent. There are some specialist glass makers and I am sure a solution is possible. I will hunt down the contacts and forward. As Chevrolet was the top seller in South Africa in the early- to mid-'70s you might find there are a number hiding in yards that can donate to your project. Will let you know what I hear.*  
**Stuart**



## BUMPER CAR

Hello Stuart

On a recent visit to the Eastern Cape I found the remains of this vehicle, as per photos, on a farm. I wonder if anybody can identify this car. Note the rear bumper design. As can be seen, it is a two-door cabriolet.

**Kind regards**  
**Kobus Harris**

*Kobus, you have me stumped on that vehicle. Let's see what the readers can drum up. The rear bumper is very distinctive and should trigger an old memory for someone.*  
**Stuart**





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# SAFARI SUITED

Peugeot's 504 production lasted 15 years but the average lifespan of the French sedan far outnumbers that, thanks to bullet-proof engineering and a solidness not matched by many manufacturers. It quickly earned a reputation as the machine to have in the rough African climate with its never-say-die attitude, decent performance and practicality. It was, however, never really seen as a beauty queen though, but as **Stuart Grant** finds out, there was a rose amongst the 504 thorns – the stunning Pininfarina-penned Coupé.

**Photography by Etienne Fouche**





**B**efore talking Coupé let's refresh the memory on just how remarkable the 504 sedan, wagon and bakkie were. 3 700 000 units were made between 1968 and 2006. Yes, that is right, 2006 – this was when Nigeria stopped its production. It is said to have killed off the camel as the chosen form of transport in northern Africa and if sales in South America are scrutinised, the same can probably be said for the donkeys and alpacas from that region. South Africa didn't have to wait that long for the 504 with the 1971cc petrol-powered 504GL version produced at a plant in Natalspruit hitting the showroom floor in March 1971. This model sold brilliantly with a total of 31 495 on the road by the time sales wrapped up late in 1980. These weren't the only 504s on the local roads though, with another 22 169 carburettor 1800L/GR (sold from 1976 to 1985) units trundling around, 4 693 of the fuel-injected 504TI and a further 2 102 diesel 504GLDs (1977 to 1980) bringing the total to just over 60 000.

A fair number indeed, and why so many of

**It is said to have killed off the camel as the chosen form of transport in northern Africa**

us recognise these machines as they continue being used around the country. The pictured Coupé on the other hand, although immediately identifiable as a 504 family member, is a thing of rarity. How rare? Well in total, only 27 000 of Pininfarina-penned Coupé and 8 000 of the equally beautiful cabriolet versions sold globally. And all, but those officially converted to right-hand drive by the UK-based company Hodec, had the steering wheel on the wrong side.

Like the 504 sedan, the Coupé can thank Pininfarina chief stylist Aldo Brovarone for its lines. Using the sedan mechanicals but by chopping out 19 centimetres from the wheelbase, a sporting GT aesthetic was achieved and it wowed the masses at the 1968 Geneva Motor Show. Added touches of genius, when parked alongside the sedan, were the use of 4 headlights up front and the rear tail lights being split into three individual Mustang-like items each side.

Although looking the part of a performance GT the initial 1796cc powerplant, which delivered less than 100 horses, didn't quite live up to the looks, so this was thrown out in favour of the 1971cc lump, good for 104bhp and a top

**Like the 504 sedan, the Coupé can thank Pininfarina chief stylist Aldo Brovarone for its lines**

speed of 180km/h in 4-speed manual guise. Still the Peugeot was more of a looker than a racer but to make it more suitable for cross-country touring, with the sedan differential ratios were changed for longer gearing.

And Peugeot took the cross-country travelling theme to the limit, initially using the 4-pot 4-door on the marathon rallies, where the likes of Ove Andersson and Hannu Mikoola excelled, winning the Safari and Morocco Rally in 1975. Following in these footsteps the outfit entered the Coupé version in the car-breaking East African Safari Rally. Choice of machine wasn't the proven bullet-proof 4-cylinder version though but rather the 2664cc V6 motor, a joint venture with Volvo and Renault, which had been launched as the range-topping road version in 1974. In rally guise the sedan was good for 170 horsepower, which although reliable, was starting to battle against the more powerful Ford Escorts and Lancia Stratos. The V6 on the other hand thumped out 250 reliable ponies. Teething problems like a non-waterproof distributor and clutch issues hampered the V6 initially but results



Pininfarina S.p.A. is an Italian car design firm and coachbuilder in Cambiano, Italy that has put pen to paper for the likes of Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Peugeot, FIAT, GM, Lancia, and Maserati. In more recent times a number of Chinese car makers have called on the company, as well as designers of high-speed trains, buses, trams, yachts and aeroplanes. A sideline Pininfarina Extra outfit started in 1986 and carries out industrial, interior, architectural and graphic design projects.

Carrozzeria Pinin Farina started in 1928 when automobile designer and builder Battista 'Pinin' Farina moved away from his brother's coachbuilding firm, Stabilimenti Farina, and with the financial backing from his wife's family and Vincenzo Lancia, employed eighteen staff and built bodies for 50 cars. It was this close tie to Lancia, a pioneer of monocoque technology that saw Pininfarina becoming the first coachbuilder to build bodies for this technique. The firm grew to 400 employees, generating 150 bodies by the outbreak of war in 1939, but the

plant quickly changed to ambulance and searchlight carriage manufacture for the war, which resulted in the Allied forces bombing the factory into the ground and ending all production.

Post-war, Farina moved back to coachbuilding with the Cisitalia 202 Coupé, the car credited for establishing Pininfarina's reputation and honoured in the Museum of Modern Art's landmark presentation 'Eight Automobiles'. In 1946, despite Italian products being banned from the Paris Motor Show on political grounds, Pinin Farina and his son Sergio, drove two of their creations (Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 S and a Lancia Aprilia cabriolet) from Turin to Paris, and parked them at the exhibition entrance – the press branding this display as the successful 'Turin coachbuilder's anti-salon'.

Publicity of this nature saw Pininfarina being called to collaborate with the Nash-Kelvinator and break into the American market and high-volume production. Ferrari came into the picture too with a meeting in 1951 where it was decided that Pininfarina should handle the overall design – since then the only road-going

Ferraris not penned by the firm have been the 1973 Dino 308 GT4 and 2013 La Ferrari. Pininfarina became a partner of Ferrari in 'Scuderia Ferrari SpA SEFAC', the organisation that ran Ferrari's race team; Pinin was vice president of Ferrari and Sergio sat on Ferrari's board of directors.

Despite a move to mass production, investing in new infrastructure and expanding over the years, Pininfarina was forced to hunt for investors to help fight three years of losses (totalling 115 million euros) in 2008. By late 2011 Pininfarina announced it was ending all automotive production to cut costs by focusing on design, a move that helped with them reporting a profit in 2012, the first since 2004.

On 14 December 2015, Mahindra Group acquired Pininfarina S.p.A. in a deal worth about 168 million euros. Together with affiliate Tech Mahindra, it has a 76% stake from holding and in addition to buying stock, will invest 20 million euros in Pininfarina and provide a guarantee to creditors of 114.5 million euros.



started trickling in from the 1976 Bandama marathon where the Timo Mäkinen/Henri Liddon Coupé led in a Peugeot top five with Jean-Pierre Nicolas/Jean-Claude Lefèbvre, Henri Pescarolo/Gerard Flocon, Christine Dacremont/Yveline Vanoni and Jean Guichet/Jean de Alexandris following in 4-door cars. It could have been a top six had the Hannu Mikkola/Jean Todt not broken a driveshaft after hitting a tree stump just near the finish line.

1978 proved to be the year of the African-conquering Coupé as the team scooped victories on both the Safari and Bandama

events, both now rounds of the World Rally Championship. When Peugeot took over Chrysler Europe in 1979 and relaunched the Talbot name, the rally crews moved into Talbot Sunbeam Lotus cars and parked the 504s. They were, however, wheeled out occasionally in 1981 as the wild Group B era, and Audi Quattro burst onto the world rally scene and the Talbot-mounted Guy Fréquelin/Jean Todt pairing looked likely title contenders. Of course the occasional events were the African rounds, and the old Pug soldiered on to top six finishes in both the Bandama and Safari. It wasn't enough though for the driver's title, as Fréquelin finished seven points shy of Ari Vatanen and his Ford Escort. Consolation came with Talbot winning the manufacturer honours for the year. Thereafter the French firm's rally programme shifted when Todt founded the Peugeot Talbot Sport and focused on building the mid-engine turbo-fed Group B Peugeot 205 T16, which went on to win the drivers' and manufacturers' titles in 1985 and 1986.

But we digress. This is no rally car you see here today. Sure, it exudes a solidity and reliability you'd want in a Safari winner, but it is by no means a rocket-ship sportscar. It is a stylish town cruiser that doubles up as an excellent cross-country tourer. Seating is comfortable, boot space good for the groceries or weekend away luggage and thanks to some soft suspension, wafts over road irregularities without a fuss. Hey, it even has electric windows like the fanciest GTs of its day.

But the best part... the styling! Who would have thought that king of the African hardships, the Peugeot 504 sedan and wagon could have spawned such a thing of beauty? Is this one of the ultimate classics? With reliability, ease of maintenance, usable performance, rarity and stylish lines it will not look the odd-one-out on any list of must-have machines. Whether in sedan, estate or coupé guise, the 504 is the leader when it comes to powering any African safari. 🇸

**Thanks to Executive Cars for the use of the pictured car.**

**Sure, it exudes a solidity and reliability you'd want in a Safari winner, but it is by no means a rocket-ship sportscar. It is a stylish town cruiser that doubles up as an excellent cross-country tourer**



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# FIBREGLASS —AND— FINANCES

General Motors boldly claimed its 1969 Ranger as the 'All South African car' and marketing material centered around how groundbreaking it was to have our own production vehicle. Of course experts were quick to point out that we had another, earlier production car in the form of the 1958 GSM Dart and how this too played second fiddle to the G.R.P. Engineering Protea when it came to being the first proudly South African production car. **Stuart Grant** catches up with a Protea and a pair of Darts 60 years after the former's launch date.

**Photography by Etienne Fouche**





**B**y the late 1960s it appears that the once-blossoming Protea had been forgotten, to such a degree that when throwing around names for its soon-to-be Ranger, GM even favoured using the national flower as a tag.

The brainchild of Dr Alex Roy, Bob Fincher and John Myers (whom we featured in the September 2016 issue), the yellow Protea prototype was first seen by the public on 4 October at the 1956 Rand Spring Show at Milner Park in Johannesburg. Without the cash to take the car into production the Protea future looked a touch rocky, but aid came in the form of Rob and Mick Hudson who, on seeing the prototype, put up £10 000 to get the ball rolling – the Hudsons' money made in the supply of cocopans to the mines.

This prototype, known as the Mk1, proved

too complicated to make and a simpler MkII chassis was penned. The whereabouts of the MkI are not known now, therefore all Proteas seen today are MkIIs. Myers applied his engineering and welding skills to make up a tubular chassis that housed Ford 100E running gear and breathed on the engine to increase the output from 36hp up to 90. The first body, made from fibreglass (revolutionary at the time) and formed off a chicken wire, wood and Plaster of Paris buck in a shack in Turffontein, was a collaboration between the three partners and Geoff Collins (who later set up Collins Fibreglass and has over the years made some beautiful aluminium bodies on his English Wheel).

With the cash in hand, premises under the name of G.R.P. Engineering Company (Glass Reinforced Plastics) were set up on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Booyens



Reserve. Fincher and Roy worked regular day jobs and would only come to work on the Protea project after hours but Myers was on it all day at the site – even sleeping there as security was a concern. Unsure if the creaking roof was an intruder or temperature fluctuation Myers got a watchdog from the local SPCA. The dachshund-like dog must have been traumatised, as it remained mute for months, only coming into its own when it hooked up and ran with the savage neighbourhood gang. Myers was also always on hand to extinguish fires that broke out when the wrong quantities of resin, catalyst and accelerator were added to the fibreglass process – remember, this technology was still in its infancy and as such very much trial and error operated.

Serious thought went into the 1.5-inch round tube chassis – not only for handling performance but also for ease of repair in the event of damage. Every section of the chassis was straight for easy damage repair. Independent front suspension came from a

Ford 10 axle, which was cut and pivoted in the middle, while the rear saw a standard torque-tube type from the same vehicle. Initially the idea was to use Coventry-Climax engines but as they required a minimum order of 100 units, the concern set up a deal with Ford South Africa, the only motor company sympathetic enough to supply new mechanical parts – almost all the gear ranging from engine (1172cc side-valve) and gearbox to brake and petrol pipes came from the Anglia/Prefect 100E.

Thanks to the engine being mounted 20cm to the rear of the front axle and an extremely low centre of gravity, the Protea handled brilliantly, somewhat overcoming the lack of power. A bolt-on Willment and Buckler close ratio three-speed gearbox was added to the mix and although no rocket, the Protea could hold its own, recording a cruising speed between 55 and 65mph on a 1956 test run to Lourenço Marques (Maputo). Consumption came in at 52 miles per gallon and a top speed of 90mph was recorded. Unlike the GSM Dart, which was bonded to a chassis, the Protea was bolted to the chassis. This meant that besides a fully-

built car on a G.R.P. designed chassis, bodies could be sold loose to be fitted to existing chassis like Volkswagen or MG. It appears that somewhere between 13 and 24 bodies were sold while 16 (14 plus the MkI and MkII prototypes) complete Proteas hit the roads and tracks before production came to an end, owing to tightening purse strings.

Financial woes were twofold: the first being the Hudsons moving to England, and the second thanks to the traffic department and registration office, who sent some custom and excise officers around to the factory. Although they were lenient, by deducting the weight of batteries and tyres, the officers still forced G.R.P to pay per weight for their manufacturer's permit. This meant that every £100 out of the £725 selling price was lost to red tape and there was no profit. In fact the only real profit the firm ever made was from a tender they won to produce aluminium canopies for the prison cooking facilities and from making fibreglass ducting for acid applications at Iscor and the mines.

Various owners took their fibreglass Proteas to the track with the most notable being Tony Fergusson, who competed at

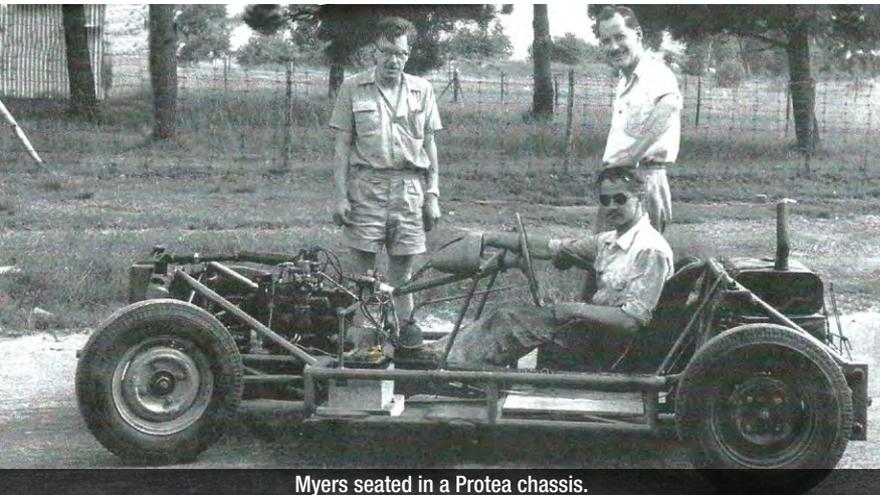
**This meant that every £100 out of the £725 selling price was lost to red tape and there was no profit**



The Johannesburg Protea factory.



GSM Dart chassis. Note the irrigation pipes.



Myers seated in a Protea chassis.



The Cape Town based GSM factory.

the likes of Grand Central with a 1200cc Ford engine. Without trying to confuse the issue, it is worth mentioning that a one-off aluminium Protea Triumph (that looks vastly different from the fibreglass moulds) was built using TR2 running gear, debuted and won the 1959 Hesketh 6 Hour in the hands of Myers and John Mason-Gordon before going off to compete around the country and in Southern Africa.

As the number of Proteas manufactured was so low they are a rare sight indeed today. Your best bet is to visit the Franschoek Motor Museum in the Cape, the James Hall Museum in Johannesburg or catch the one pictured on these pages at Zwartkops Raceway. That said, survival percentage rate is high and a book by Ian Schwartz that tells the full Protea tale and tracks the various complete cars and bodies is nearing completion. As soon as it becomes available *Classic Car Africa* will spread the word.

No local production car story is complete without mention of the GSM Dart. Not only because it is often incorrectly quoted as being the first SA car but also because a reasonable number were made. It is such a cracking car to drive, excelled on racetracks and looks the part too. Not wanting to steal

any thunder from the Protea's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, we'll keep it short and sweet.

Again three main names appear at the core of the Dart story: Bob van Niekerk, Willie Meissner and Verster de Wit. Van Niekerk and Meissner were both well ensconced in the Cape motorsport and special building scene when they met at Stellenbosch University and discussed their dreams of making an affordable production sportscar to sell. With the exorbitant cost and lack of aluminium working skills the idea never looked like gaining momentum though.

That was until Meissner paid a visit to England and came across the new fibreglass technology. He wrote to Van Niekerk and with the pros outweighing the cons, Bob quit his job, sold up his car and joined Willie in a fibreglass course at Mitchell & Smith in the UK. The pair then set to work on designing their own car from their flat in Earl's Court, but although both were confident in the engineering department, they felt that the final body design needed some tweaking by an experienced designer.

Enter Verster de Wit, a South African who had followed his wife Joan to London when she received a scholarship to continue her piano playing studies at the Royal School of Music. De Wit had studied fine art but more importantly held a job as a designer at the Rootes Group in Coventry.

With the trio combining forces numerous sketches and models were made up before a full-scale plug was made to make a mould. As this was nearing completion, Meissner headed back to Cape Town to escape the freezing conditions and set up a facility to manufacture their production car. With the mould complete but no funds available to ship it to Cape Town, Van Niekerk showed his ingenuity card by making two bodies to sell in England. The first went to Graves & Meuse and the second to Donald Parker,

These two main tubes came from an unlikely, but inspired source; 89mm 19-gauge mild steel agricultural irrigation tubes that met the light, strong and cost effective requirements



who used it to make a rear-engined hillclimb racer.

With Bob and the mould in SA a name for the operation (Glassport Motors shortened to GSM) was registered and production of a prototype could kick off. The need for simplicity and sound economics meant that a monocoque or space-frame chassis was out of the question and the crew opted for a two-tube ladder-type design. These two main tubes came from an unlikely, but inspired source: 89mm 19-gauge mild steel agricultural irrigation tubes that met the light, strong and cost effective requirements. When prototype testing revealed cracks in the tubing the decision was taken to up it to a thicker 16-gauge, which is what all Darts thereafter used.

For the most part mechanicals came

from the Ford 100E. In the front suspension department the McPherson Strut system employed by Ford was dumped in favour of a double-wishbone independent design by modifying the Ford parts and fitting a transverse leaf spring. At the rear Van Niekerk penned a twin trailing arm system that located to the Ford axle by means of brackets welded to the casing, which combined with long travel telescopic shock absorbers and coil springs to ensure that the tyres stayed in contact with the ground at all times and a limited-slip differential was not a necessity when driving hard.

Like the Protea the chosen engine was originally the 1172cc Ford 100E side valve but with racing a part of the marketing plan this was not going to be ideal. A solution at first came in the form of a Willment Speed Shop conversion that saw a clever cylinder head and carburettor upgrade added to a close-ratio gearbox from the UK-based Bucklers firm.

With a car ready a model name was the next step. While in the UK the trio had come up with 'Impala Sprint'

but trouble registering this in SA meant a new title had to be conjured up. Debret, GSM Mamba, Tyrojet, Simba, Zap, Kudu, Lynx, Dart and Tyger were thrown into the mixing pot. As we know Dart cracked the nod and is first recorded in Van Niekerk's journal entry on 26 November 1957 when he wrote: "The GSM Dart was today almost finished."

It was time to launch the Dart. A second car was completed and on 1 January 1958 both were entered in the False Bay 100 at Gunners Circle. Despite battling with bigger 1500cc cars the pair finished fifth and sixth in a capacity scratch race and then impressed against the old Grand Prix single-seaters in the False Bay 100 race coming home 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. The press and public took note.

In February 1959 press photographs were taken and promotional demonstrations put on, which together with numerous race successes around the country saw the orders coming in. This was further enhanced when practicality improved with a hardtop offering (De Wit had been persuaded to return to South Africa and was once again an integral part of the operation). Ford also replaced the 100E with the 105E Anglia,

As we know Dart cracked the nod and is first recorded in Van Niekerk's journal entry on 26 November 1957 when he wrote "The GSM Dart was today almost finished"



which meant a more powerful overhead valve engine was on hand. When the 1500cc Dart hit the road and track it became the must-have car for local sporting drivers. Of course the odd owner wanted more and Darts sporting Alfa Romeo, Peugeot and even Porsche can be seen high up in the period's race results – with legends like Dennis Joubert, Peter Gough, Tony Kotze and Bill Jennings the pilots.

Although fast becoming an icon the finances were not looking as good. De Wit left to try cut the overheads and the idea of exporting the Dart was put forward as a possible solution. Willie headed north to do the homework and find a suitable UK partner. With a potential deal done, Bob churned out another set of moulds and together with these joined Meissner in Earl's Court once again. It turned out that the deal was a no-go, with the owner of the given address where they were to report to in prison!

A few pensive weeks later a deal was done with John Scott of Windsor Garage – a crazy deal. Scott would put up the money to purchase the required parts and Bob had to buy the parts and build a car

in 10 days. Bob then had to race the car at Brands Hatch and win the 1000cc GT class or the car ownership would be passed to Scott and his partners. Unbelievably he did it! GSM Cars Limited was formed in England but as Dart was already registered to a bicycle manufacturer the model name was swapped for Delta.

Although 70 or so Delta units and 116 Darts hit the road the financial strain never lifted. Meissner, back in SA and tired of being cash-strapped, shut up the GSM shop and turned his attention to tuning engines at a service station, which later became Meissner Conversions. Bob returned to the stagnated GSM operation and following a season of working for the Wolman team, bought out Meissner's GSM shares. He set about developing a GT model, which eventually resulted in the GSM Flamingo, and then set sights on making a 4-door vehicle and bakkie to access some corporate funding. A share deal was done with Bonuscor/Midmacor but by 1964 Bob became unhappy with the route being taken, where overhead cutting meant not enough effort was being put into developing a Dart or Flamingo successor.

Added to this was the money strain – GSM were making more cars than they were selling, the overheads continued to escalate and like with Protea, government taxation took a whopping cut. Corporate strategy meant cutting this down, but with very little left to cut it was eventually Bob that was cut. He was called in to consult but declined, rather referring Meissner for the job – this being a V8-powered Flamingo. Only one example was made and the powers that be pulled the plug on GSM in 1965.

GSM went the way of GRP and the Protea, relegated to the history books as brilliant ideas but financially unsuited to the era. Did the Dart kill off the Protea? Not really. Taxation and legislation meant that small-time manufacturing stood no chance against the big gun assemblers. The hands-on approach needed to deliver a Protea or Dart cost a lot more than even huge production-run vehicles. Cheaper to make, less labour intensive mass-production units are to blame for the demise of both. I blame the likes of the Austin Healey Sprite – its cheerful froggy face possibly a little more sinister than meets the eye... 

# PURE & COOL



Motorsport is addictive. For most of us all it takes is one stint behind the wheel or the reward of hard work and late night spanner swinging sessions to fill our veins with the octane-induced high. Bruce Hewitt of Hewitt Racing is one such addict, and although his drug of choice is spannering his habit is so severe that he eats, breathes and sleeps motorsport and car preparation from his Malvern East speed shop.

**H**ewitt's passion for the game and understanding that knowledge comes from experience is so pure that in his formative years he worked for motorsport outfits for no pay at all. Having done his trade as a diesel mechanic Bruce took up work at Advanced Transmissions in Eastern Johannesburg. After work he'd head west, stop off at the Krugersdorp Nature Reserve for dinner and then made for Tarlton, where he'd work with the Van Rensburgs building dragsters late into the night. A quick kip was all he

needed before heading back to his paying occupation. Weekends were much the same and over the years hundreds, if not thousands of hours at Tarlton resulted in Bruce learning new skills and being directly involved in the majority of South African drag and land speed records.

When Daewoo arrived in South Africa and looked at the highly competitive local rally scene as a marketing tool, Bruce was called upon to help build the machine and engineer the necessary modifications required to last the test. Off the bat the Daewoos impressed when Sarel van der Merwe and Franz Boshoff took a debut victory at the 25<sup>th</sup> Castrol Rally in 1996 and three Group N Daewoos finished 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and third in class – the leading car being a Kenyan outfit. Bruce's rally car skills didn't go unnoticed

and he was approached to move to Kenya to help with car prep for the car-breaking Safari rally. This exposed him to how the world's leading factory teams operated as well as drivers like Carlos Sainz, Tommi Mäkinen and Colin McRae. McRae gave Bruce the ride of his life while on a recce to Kenya... with Bruce a touch larger than your regular navigator the safety harness didn't quite fit but this didn't deter McRae from giving it his all and mentally scarring Bruce for life.

A year on he moved back to SA and took up a role at Toyota South Africa in the R&D department, which also included doing technical presentations for the press. Come evening time he'd move across to Toyota Motorsport so he could, as he puts it "play, work, watch and talk" race and rally machines. Again he was not employed to do this and never received a cent but is quick to point out that he earned an immeasurable

Bruce's rally car skills didn't go unnoticed and he was approached to move to Kenya to help with car prep for the car-breaking Safari rally



amount in experience and knowledge.

After leaving Toyota Bruce took the gap to branch out on his own. He returned to his diesel roots by offering a breakdown/repair service to truck fleet owners from here to the DRC – promising to be at your vehicle within 24 hours of call out. He'd load up his bakkie and head across the border at the drop of a hat. Running parallel to this he set about servicing and upgrading Toyota Land Cruisers as well as dabbling in classics for customers wanting that hands-on experience. The job cards for Cruisers and classics rolled in to such a degree that he was able to hang up his truck breakdown gloves and this is where he sits today.

On our visit to his immaculate operation we spotted an E9 BMW 3-Litre CS, two BMW 850s (one being an extremely rare Alpina version), an E28 BMW M5

undergoing the full treatment, BMW 325is, a Mk1 Ford Escort, Golf II GTI 16 valve and a Mercedes-Benz 280E that he prepares (and ingeniously engineers) for historic racing. He also has his own Datsun 260Z and Mercedes-Benz 280CE that are partway through rebuilding (when work commitments allow for personal vehicle time), a warmed up ratty old Land Cruiser and a 2-owner 1955 International Pick-Up – his daily run-about.

While this is an awesome shop full of old cars, the real excitement lies in the assortment of tools and machinery used by Hewitt to add that special touch and skill. He is a dab hand at machining, milling and finding solutions to problems that we mortals battle with. Need new

bushes for your old jalopy but can't find them at your local spares shop? No problem, he will turn out the right thing. Want adjustable rose-jointed suspension? Job done here. Or how about a custom-made 8 ball gear shifter? He can do that too.

Like the legendary 'speed-shops' of the past brain power, skills and personal attention mean that Hewitt Racing can make it all happen. And there's a step towards the future too, with accessories now available via [www.hewittracing.com](http://www.hewittracing.com). 

**While this is an awesome shop full of old cars, the real excitement lies in the assortment of tools and machinery used by Hewitt to add that special touch and skill**

# CLASSIC





When talking oval track racing and beach buggies in South Africa, there is no name more iconic than Eric Brockhoven. **Stuart Grant** delves into this legend's story and focuses on the often forgotten circuit racer that drew inspiration for its moniker from his wife's name.

**Photography by Etienne Fouche**

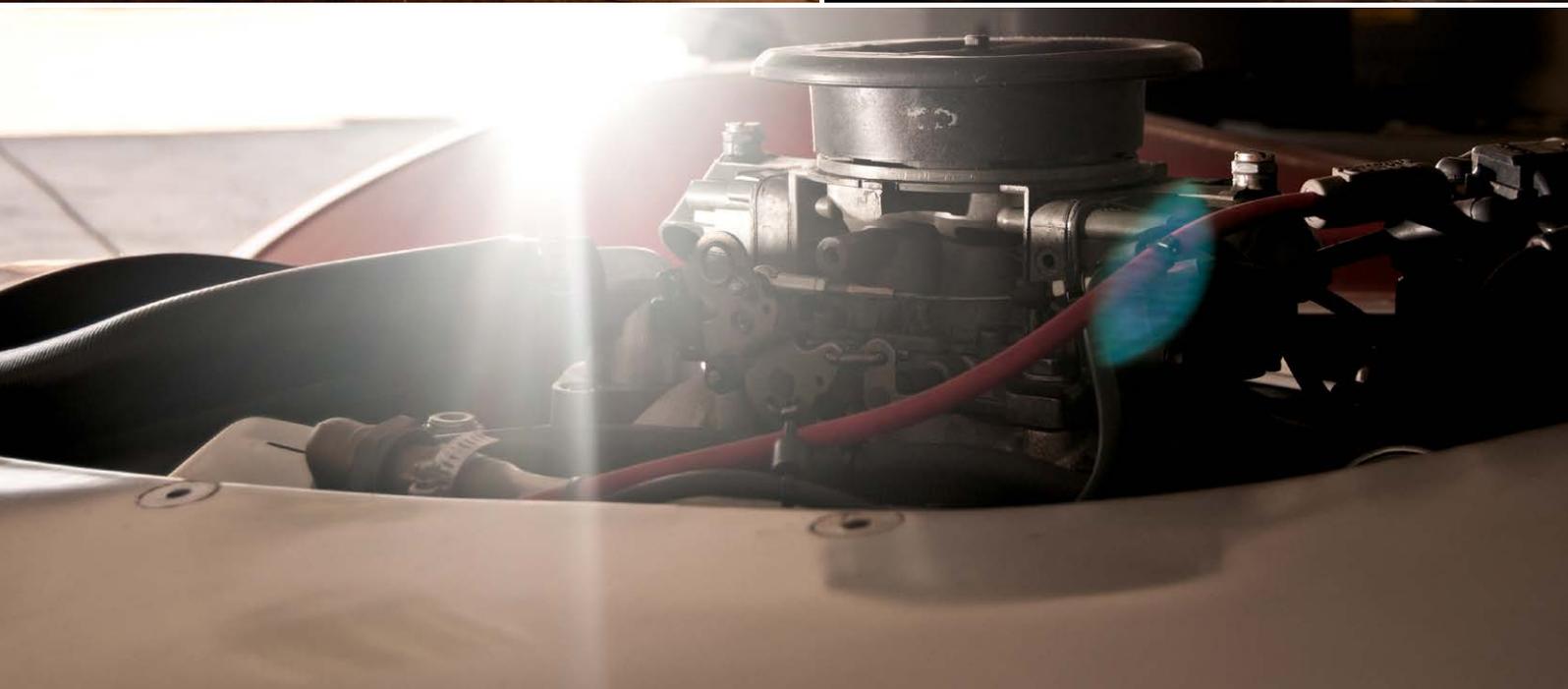
**A**s with so many South African motoring tales, a few well-known names crop up in the Brockhoven-Lolette tale. The first of these is legendary speedway racer and promoter Buddy Fuller and the second is, of course, John Myers of Protea fame.

For Johannesburg residents no early-1950s summer Friday night was complete without a visit to Wembley Stadium for some two-wheeled action – especially if you caught the international test match tussles between the South African and English outfits. By the mid-'50s race promoter Fuller looked for new ways to pull in a crowd and this came in the way of oval track stock car racing. Former Speedway riders like Roy Bester, Doug Serrurier and Syd van der Vyver took to the track in the stripped out and modded 'jalopies' of the 1930s

and '40s. But it wasn't only the ex-bikers that took the plunge as a new breed of hot-rodder emerged when guys like Peter Jardine, Frank Rundel, Dave Herbst, Clive Brooker and our man Brockhoven emerged. With the goal of going round an oval faster and faster, specially-built hot rods soon hit the track and Fuller (who was always quick to see a good thing) set about promoting these alongside the stock car racing.

Bedfordview-based Brockhoven took to the formula like a duck to water and his

**When stepping into regular circuit racing he applied these skills – evidenced by his entry to a 1959 event at Grand Central, where he drove an MG TD powered by a Chevrolet V8 unit**



affinity for shoe-horning V8s into unlikely chassis took off. When stepping into regular circuit racing he applied these skills – evidenced by his entry to a 1959 event at Grand Central, where he drove an MG TD powered by a Chevrolet V8 unit. A V8-powered GSM Dart also crops up under his name in the record books before he debuted his own Lolette in June 1962, built to his exacting requirements. The name Lolette was derived from ‘Lol’ (the first part of his wife Lola’s name) and ‘ette’ from the Corvette V8 that powered the projectile.

**Myers supplied what was essentially a Protea chassis to Brockhoven, who then set about adding mechanicals and his own bodywork**

Where did Myers and the Protea come into the equation, you ask? Simple: Myers supplied what was essentially a Protea chassis to Brockhoven, who then set about adding mechanicals and his own bodywork. Like the Protea Triumph raced by Myers and John Mason-Gordon in 1959 the front suspension came from a Ford Thames commercial van, the solid axle being cut and then pivoted in the middle to operate independently (known as Buckler suspension and often employed on Lotus cars of the time). The axle, this time borrowed from a ‘37 Ford saloon, was cut off alongside the diff and modified into a De Dion-type system. Power derived from a 283ci Chevrolet Corvette motor went through an Alfa Romeo gearbox to the rear

wheels, while stopping power came from Jaguar discs. An open-top, two-seater body was built by Brockhoven from fibreglass moulded off a cement former.

With a few local events under his belt Brockhoven shipped the car to England where he shackled up with Bob Olthoff, and together with his Lolette tagged along with the Wilment Cobra driver, competing in events through 1963. Constant modifications and upgrades were carried out, with the first being in the suspension department where he used Alfa parts to make it a fully independent setup. But the most notable change was the addition of the roof, which not only made racing in the inclement weather more comfortable, but also made his and Lola’s life more bearable while using the Lolette to tour.

For 1964 Brockhoven and the Lolette



Lola at Kyalami.



The Lolette after returning from the UK, now sporting a roof. Image by www.motoprint.co.za.

were back in SA, taking in local sportscar races and setting sights on the 9 Hour where the Lolette was classed against the likes of the Willment Cobra Coupe and Ferrari 250GTO. Entered as part of team Scuderia Los Amigos with Frank Rundle as his partner, the Lolette got off to a good start. But technical gremlins soon kicked in; the car got stuck in 4<sup>th</sup> gear and they had to limp it home. Brockhoven's focus then moved to oval track and the Lolette was sold *sans* engine.

He did however continue his car building, churning out a second Lolette in 1967, with thought inspired by legendary American designer Chaparral. Again it saw Corvette power but this time the unit was mounted in the rear. The real wizardry appeared in how to get the power to the wheels – here Brockhoven cast his own

transaxle casing and filled it with Chevrolet Powerglide two-speed automatic internals. Suspension was fully independent all round, brakes came from Girling and the body was shaped in aluminium.

Unfortunately the car proved rather unsuccessful due to its diabolical handling. Brockhoven had hung up his helmet and put Peter de Klerk into the driver's seat and despite the pairing's vast knowledge and engineering skills, the project was canned after a year and the car was sold off to a gent intent on building it into a road car. It was recovered in the 1980s by Jannie van Aswegen, who then sold it on. A few steps down the line and it is now owned by John McKercher, who plans to restore it.

A trip to the States saw Brockhoven tie up a deal to

introduce the first Volkswagen Beetle-based Beach Buggies to South Africa. Again the name Lolette was applied... but there is a touch of controversy surrounding the tale. Word on the buggy forums is that royalties were meant to be paid to the American-based Meyers Manx company for use of the fibreglass design but no money was offered. The reason given for this was that the profile of the South African cars differed slightly and that it was therefore not necessary. Regardless, Lolette buggies became an icon of South African summer holidays

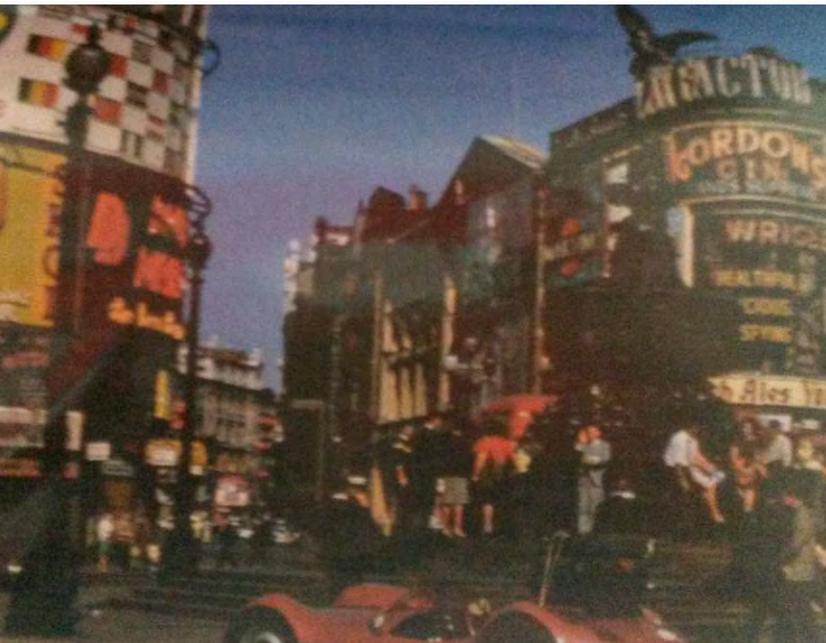
**A trip to the States saw Brockhoven tie up a deal to introduce the first Volkswagen Beetle-based Beach Buggies to South Africa**



An early race meeting before the Lolette went abroad and gained a roof.



Image by [www.motoprint.co.za](http://www.motoprint.co.za).



The Brockhovens touring the UK in the Lolette.



Image by [www.motoprint.co.za](http://www.motoprint.co.za).

and Brockhoven even produced extra bits like cast split-rim wheels, inlet manifolds for IDA Weber carbs, steering wheels and aluminium tappet covers for the cool cars. They were more than just recreational machines though, with William Ferguson and C. Pearce driving a Lolette to overall victory on the gruelling 1968 Roof of Africa.

With fellow Scuderia Los Amigos member Pierre du Plessis setting up camp in the UK, the South African Lolette Beach Buggy became the vehicle of choice for those

wanting something other than a Mini Moke as a recreational vehicle – although the name changed to GP Buggy and they were sold from Brockhoven's GP speed shop.

Du Plessis, who spent time developing Paul Hawkins' Lola T70, Hugh Dibley's Camaro, Ed Nelson's Ford GT40, Jackie Epstein's Ferrari and Roy Pierpoint's Falcon as well as being part of Lola's 1965 Indy outfit, is our second Protea and Lolette link – at one stage he was a partner/driver of the 1959 Protea Triumph.

With buggy and accessory production powering ahead Brockhoven built his third Lolette racer, an oval track machine based around a replica Brabham BT7 chassis that he got from Barry Neunborn. Like the Indy cars of the time offset suspension was added, and again a

Chevrolet V8 provided the go. With Jurgie Bauer at the wheel this Lolette was so successful that it was banned. After being sold it passed through a few hands, with the last owner recorded being one Kas Els in Pretoria.

The next step in the buggy business was taken when Brockhoven took a mould of the Dr. Gous Porsche RSK Spider's nose and combined it with one taken of Doug Serrurier's Lola T70 rear. In between these two a Karmann Ghia roof section was added and the pretty body either mounted to a Volksie pan or sold as a kit to DIY clients. This kit, although in roofless guise, lead to the next racer – the Peco Lolette Spyder – a car built for the 1968 9 Hour where Stan Taylor and Frank Rundel drove the 4-pot Porsche-driven car in 15<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in class. Following the race this car was sold to a lady in Angola – and this is where the trail goes cold.

**The next step in the buggy business was taken when Brockhoven took a mould of the Dr. Gous Porsche RSK Spider's nose and combined it with one taken of Doug Serrurier's Lola T70 rear**



The English number plate indicating that this was a GP Buggy. A branch of the Lolette outfit run by Pierre du Plessis.



Brockhoven in an early Lolette Beach Buggy.



Image by www.motoprint.co.za.



Du Plessis showing how easy it was to convert a Beetle into a Buggy.

## LOLETTE

S.A.'s Most Buggy wins "Roof of Africa" again

Fergusson and Pierce win buggy class again and finish 2nd overall. This sort of performance cannot be had from cheap imitation or inferior buggies available at lower prices.

**LOLETTE VEHICLES**  
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PHONE 24-3280



The fifth and final Lolette race car was built for straight line dragging and featured a heavily worked 1800cc air-cooled Volkswagen in the backend. Running the quarter-mile in just over 10 seconds, it was hugely successful. When the second owner fitted a turbo-charged NSU RO80 engine it dipped below the 10 second barrier, but reliability proved an issue. It was sold off to another drag racer but fell off the radar and has not been seen since.

Brockhoven then set about building a yacht to sail the world with Lola. Of course this was a success, culminating in the pair ending up in Australia in the 1980s, where they took up residence. His legacy remains in SA though with Volkspares still selling Lolette Buggies and as pictured, the first Lolette still hits the track from time to time.

In the '80s Jannie van Aswegen tracked down the chassis and suspension to the West Rand and managed to strike a deal by

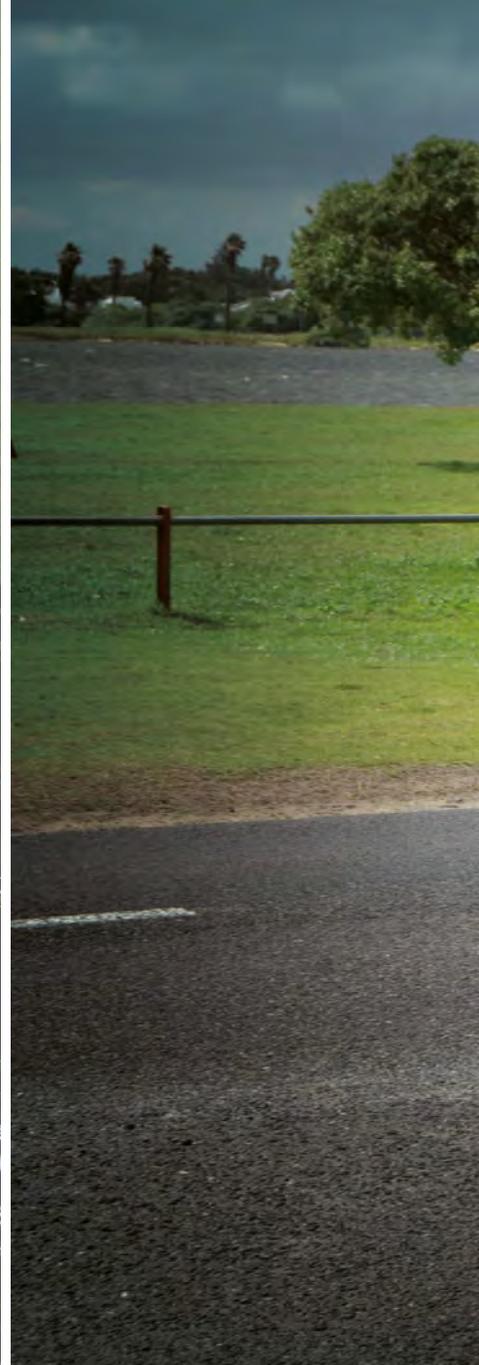
swapping some wheels for the remains. It sat for a while before moving on to Zwartkops Raceway proprietor Peter du Toit. Du Toit rebuilt the car to the roofless appearance in 1992 and competed in various historic events. With the front going light at speed it proved a real handful, especially in the faster sweeps like Kyalami's Sunset and Mine Shaft corners, and thanks to a modified rear axle (which saw a Jaguar XJ6 axle replacing the De Dion setup) the inboard brakes would cook a few laps in. Bobby Olthoff tried his hand at historic racing with the Lolette, sharing in the 90-minute races with Du Toit on two occasions, but again the brakes (or lack thereof) made it a frightening experience. When the previous generation Zwartkops closed in 1994, the Lolette went into storage and only came out occasionally to practise.. It was on one of these practice days at Midvaal that the Lolette and Du Toit struck disaster.

Approaching the brake markers at full

chat down the long back straight, Du Toit went for the brake pedal and it hit the floor. He attempted to slow the projectile by gearing down but this shot him into the Armco barrier and flicked him back across the track with such impact that he sat stunned, unable to switch off the ticking petrol pumps.

Eventually he managed to switch the pumps off and crawled out of the car – straight into the path of oncoming motorcycles. It was then that Du Toit took the decision to rebuild Zwartkops Raceway and run the circuit in a safe and professional manner. Rebuilding the Lolette back to the look it had in 1962 took a little longer but 15 years later it was back on the track, taking part in the 2013 David Piper Passion for Speed Festival. And it continues enjoying the odd hair-raising track outing today. 🏁

**Thanks to Zwartkops Raceway for supplying the Lolette and venue for photography.**

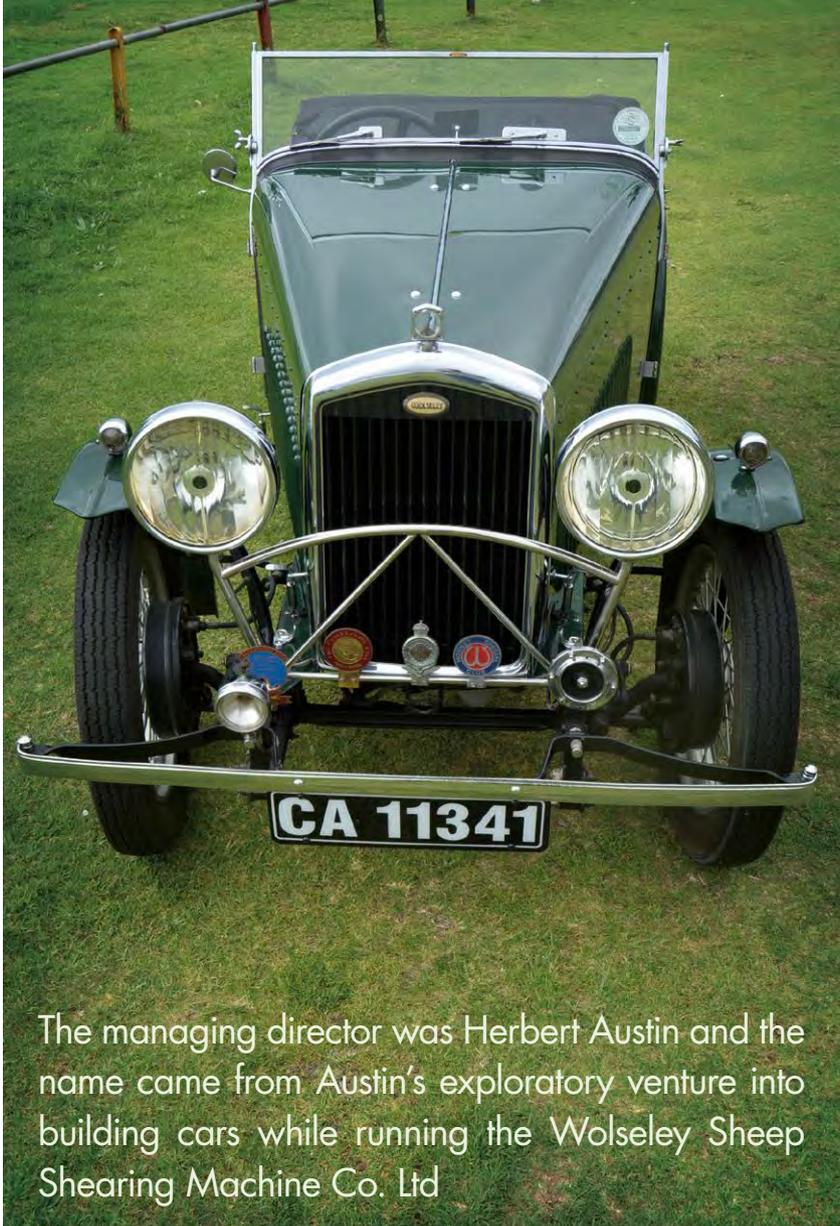


# BUZZING AROUND

Powered by one of the world's smallest capacity six-cylinder engines, what started life as a saloon became a coachbuilt four-seater – and started a trend. **By Mike Monk**







The managing director was Herbert Austin and the name came from Austin's exploratory venture into building cars while running the Wolseley Sheep Shearing Machine Co. Ltd



**T**he Wolseley Motors Tool and Motor Car Company was established in 1901 by Vickers, Sons and Hiram Maxim to manufacture motor cars and machine tools. The managing director was Herbert Austin and the name came from Austin's exploratory venture into building cars while running the Wolseley Sheep Shearing Machine Co. Ltd. Wolseley made a full range of cars and dominated the market in the Edwardian era and became the biggest motor manufacturer in Britain – in 1921 it manufactured 12 000 cars. However,

The motor's design stemmed from an Hispano-Suiza aircraft engine built by Morris during WWI

over-expansion led to receivership in 1927 when it was bought from Vickers by William Morris (later Lord Nuffield) and the company became part of the Morris Motors conglomerate, thus beginning Wolseley's standing as a badge-engineered product. Nevertheless, in late April 1930 the company introduced the Hornet, which, although effectively a two-door four-seater Morris Minor, was an interesting car in its own right for a number of reasons.

The Hornet was based on the Minor chassis, but lengthened by 12.5 inches (317.5mm) to accommodate a six-cylinder engine based on the Minor's four – *Motor Sport* magazine described it as a 'miniature six'. The motor's design stemmed from an Hispano-Suiza aircraft engine built by Morris during WWI, but far from being an early

'hot rod' type of substitution, the engine had a capacity of just 1271cc, making it one of the smallest mass-produced automotive sixes. Its format helped overcome the inherent imbalance of a four-pot that unsophisticated engine mountings of the time did not outweigh. Not only that, the motor featured a single overhead cam, driven off the front of the block by a vertical shaft that doubled as the generator armature.

With a single SU carburettor gravity-fed from a four-gallon (18-litre) tank mounted on the scuttle, power output was 26kW at 4500rpm – peak revs were 5000 – and it had an RAC fiscal rating of 12hp. Torque values were not given, but the long-stroke configuration did provide plenty of pulling power right from low revs. Initially, it was mated with a three-speed non-synchro gearbox but a 'silent third' four-speed was introduced at the 1931 Olympia



Motor Show. Cooling-wise, the radiator featured thermostatically-controlled vertical shutters and a gauge atop the header tank. In late 1931 chain drive for the camshaft was adopted with the 12-volt dynamo moved to the side of the engine. This move made the engine shorter so that it could be moved further forward in the chassis which allowed for a larger, roomier body to be fitted. Another improvement was the adoption of a crossflow head with twin SUs in 1933.

The chassis was basic to say the least and criticised for being too flimsy – it was later strengthened – and the suspension “followed modern practice” said *The Light Car* magazine, with both front and rear axles suspended on semi-elliptic leaf springs. Four-wheel Lockheed hydraulic brakes were something of a novelty, especially on this class of car, as were hydraulic lever-arm dampers. Wolseleys were a step up from the norm at this time.

Despite the narrow front track, there were complaints of a poor turning circle but the lightness of the steering was praised along with the cornering ability.

Remarkably, the 1931 Hornet Special featured here has had only three owners, and is thought to be the only example left in SA. Apparently, it was originally ordered by the CEO of the local agent for his wife. The car was purchased as a saloon but, amazingly, the body sold back to Wolseley in order that a two-door four-seater convertible body be built and fitted by Eustace Watkins, located in Croydon. The April 1931 catalogue lists the fabric saloon at £185 and the custom body at £220. Eustace Watkins was a dealer of Wolseleys and at one time was the make's largest distributor in the world. It acquired the old Wolseley works when Morris relocated the company and offered custom

Remarkably, the 1931 Hornet Special featured here has had only three owners, and is thought to be the only example left in SA

coachwork, in particular on Hornet chassis. In 1932 Wolseley realised the potential of this kind of deal and the Hornet chassis became a best-seller, with numerous coachbuilders rising to fame as a result, including Swallow (later to become Jaguar). All of the coachbuilt cars were known as Hornet Specials.

However, there is a little bit of intrigue surrounding this car in the form of a plaque on the dashboard denoting British and Colonial Motors Ltd of Long Acre in London, which was a prolific used car sales operation at the time, but its relevance to this car is unknown.



In 1948, architect Dave Hoskin bought the car and used it as his daily transport for the next 25 years, during which time fellow Capetonian Brian Kuyk spotted the car and tried to buy it, to no avail. But Brian did persuade Hoskin to give him first refusal should he ever want to sell. Brian kept in contact but the car fell into disrepair and eventually was abandoned in a wooden garage in Kalk Bay, where it lay for 21 years before Brian got the call. After removing much rubble and cutting a large branch off a tree that had grown across the garage doors, the forlorn but mostly intact Hornet Special was saved.

It took six years to bring the Hornet Special back to life during which time Brian used his woodworking skills to completely remake the bodywork frame from ash. He also made a superb dashboard out of teak. Charlie Hatton – surely one of the finest fabricators of bodywork ever born – reproduced the body panels. While this was going on, the chassis was sandblasted and welded where rot had set in. All the other mechanical components were stripped and rebuilt, bushes replaced and the braking system completely overhauled. Only two wheels came with the car, but friend Viv James supplied some identical MG M Type three-stud wire-spoke rims

to make up the set, which carry 4x19 tyres. The seat frames were missing so new ones had to be made up, which perhaps was just as well because Brian is tall and doubtless would have had to make modifications to the originals in order to fit into the car. Once upholstery and spray painting was complete, the Hornet was ready to roll...

Except that the worm-and-wheel steering wandered all over the place. But a Datsun steering box solved the problem, a tried-and-tested remedy found on many an MG TC. The only other improvement was the fitment of a four-speed gearbox with an MG remote gearshift. The well-defined gate shows the 1-2 and 3-4 planes to be the opposite way round to normal practice – 1-2 is on the right, 3-4 on the left. Oh, and the famous illuminated radiator badge? That only appeared in 1932.

Getting into the car is no real hardship as the front seats are set well back, to the detriment of rear seat legroom. Pedal layout has the accelerator in the middle, and the handbrake is a tiny lever sprouting through the floor. The car starts easily – there is no key – and once on the move its relatively strong torque

**When launched in 1930, it was claimed that the car could start from standstill in top (third) gear**

characteristics are apparent. When launched in 1930, it was claimed that the car could start from standstill in top (third) gear, while the four-speeder was said to be capable of running from 6mph (8km/h) to a maximum speed of 60mph (96.5km/h) in top. The engine is certainly smooth and emits a sporty crackle from the exhaust. “Looks like an Austin and sounds like a Bentley,” is an oft-used quip, says Brian. The ride is characteristically a bit jiggly but typical of the period and the overall experience is really pleasurable, the windscreen directing air flow over the passengers’ heads.

In the middle of June 1935 it was announced that William Morris had sold Wolseley to Morris Motors and the transfer of ownership would take effect on 1 July 1935. The Hornet was replaced just twelve months later by the Wolseley 12/48, which was a badge-engineered Morris Twelve. The Hornet Specials made their mark during the 1930s and Brian’s patience and enthusiasm have been rewarded with a Hornet that keeps on buzzing. 📷

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# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FINE PRINT

Collecting car brochures lit the fire for many a young petrolhead's love of cars but while most of the colourful sales material ultimately ended up in the bin as we grew out of the phase, some of us continued trawling sales floors and now boast enviable collections. **Graeme Hurst** met one such collector who's got a strong focus on local cars thanks to spending his formative years over here.



**BESTUUR MANS BETER AS VROUENS?**  
— nie in die Triumph Herald nie!



Bestuur mans beter as vrouens? Nie in die Triumph Herald nie. Dis die manlike motor waarvan vrouens hou. Hulle kan met groter vertroue om die draaie glip, want die onafhanklike vering hou die motor stewig op die pad. Hulle kan die moeilikste hanteertaak verrig, want die Triumph Herald



Car brochures make up quite a bit of trade (both online and at shows) in the classic car world abroad, and it's not uncommon for collectors to have thousands stashed away. Some focus on specific marques or eras while others

have a specific bent based on the cars they recall from their childhood. Collectors such as Englishman Ian Hancock, who lived here as a kid and became fascinated by local cars – so fascinated that he has amassed around 2 000 South African automobile brochures over the last four decades. “My father was an engineer and took a position with Iscor in Vanderbijlpark in the early 1970s,” says Ian, who was four years old at the time and now lives in London. “We were there until I was 14, when we moved back to England,” adds Ian.

shaped his interest in local cars, many of which had model nomenclature specific to South Africa at the time. His earliest memories of the collecting bug are of cycling around Vanderbijlpark to the various car showrooms at the time to ask for any literature. And he did the same when the family went away: “I remember we stopped over in Kimberley and the first thing I did was look in the phone book to see where all the car showrooms were.”

His earliest finds were brochures on Chevrolet's 2500/3800/4100 sedans, mainly as his father had a few as daily drivers, while others included material for the more upmarket Kommando, Constantia and

His earliest memories of the collecting bug are of cycling around Vanderbijlpark to the various car showrooms at the time to ask for any literature

Ian's formative years here



Caprice Classic range. When Ian learned that these same cars were marketed over in Australia as the Belmont, Kingswood and Statesmen his fascination for local, South African derivatives grew. Others that intrigued in those early years were the Dodge Avenger (sold in the UK as the Hillman Avenger) and the Austin Marina (which wore a Morris badge overseas).

Sadly a fair amount of his collection went astray during the move back to Blighty but his knowledge of our market meant he could seek out replacements both here and abroad. "A lot of collectors in Europe weren't familiar with South African models so the brochures weren't coveted but whenever

I saw some I generally bought them." That was back in the days before eBay, which put a chunk of the trade online and opened up the hobby. Before that Ian also contacted car manufacturers and dealers directly: "I would call or email the marketing departments and they were usually very helpful and sent out whatever they had at the time."

Ian's interest in brochures isn't limited to South African models and, decades after the first trips to showrooms around the Highveld, he boasts a 65,000-strong collection from all over the world but he's remained fascinated by what was available here and, if

the model did vary in specification and name, why it did so.

He's also intrigued by the use of dual language: "Back in the 1970s and early 1980s brochures were normally available in both English and Afrikaans, or occasionally they were bilingual. By the early to mid-1990s that changed and car makers such as Mercedes and BMW started adapting

**I would call or email the marketing departments and they were usually very helpful and sent out whatever they had at the time**

# Citi Features, Citi Specs

The time has come to brighten up the city. And there's only one way to do it.

In Volkswagen's street smart 1.3 litre Citi Golf Sport and the new 1.6 litre Citi Golf Sport. Designed for the heart of the city. Designed to set the city alight.

With a pile of Citi features:

- New Citi Golf Sport features a new 3 spoke sport steering wheel, rev counter, digital clock, while the stereo radio tape deck and twin rear speakers are optional, from your dealer only.
- Citi Golf seats are very comfortable, very supportive and fully reclining, covered in plush Donegal cloth.
- Citi Golf Sport features special sport seats with Citi graphics, and headrests in black cloth.

1.3 litre Citi Golf Low on gas, low on price, but high on style.

**ENGINE**  
Cylinder 4  
Capacity (l) 1.297  
Bore (mm) 75  
Stroke (mm) 75.4  
Compression 8.2:1  
Output (kW @ 5000) 48/58 (66)  
Torque (Nm @ 3000) 95/100

**TRANSMISSION**  
4 speed

**BRAKES**  
Diagonally linked dual circuit brake system with discs in front, drums at rear. Servo assisted

**INTERIOR FEATURES**  
Rev counter  
Sport seats  
Leather covered 5 speed gearshift  
Imported Donegal cloth seats  
Door trim panels and storage compartments in matching cloth  
Matching removable headrests  
Cut pile carpeting throughout  
Fully reclining seats  
2 speed windshield wipers  
3 speed heater fan  
Digital clock  
Quarter clock  
Cigar lighter  
Turned alloy  
New 3 spoke sport steering wheel  
2 spoke padded steering wheel  
Fold down and removable rear seat  
Inertia reel seatbelts  
Locking compartment light  
Chockproof locks

**EXTERIOR FEATURES**  
Twin headlights with halogen bulbs  
Tinted front windscreen  
Rear wiper/wiper system  
Twin exterior rear view mirrors adjustable from inside  
Citi Golf graphics and custom paint  
White grille and white VW badging  
Colour-keyed rear Citi Golf badging  
Sport badging  
Washable moulding  
Lockable fuel cap  
Reverse lights  
Towing hooks front and rear  
Hazard warning lights

**DIMENSIONS**  
Engine width (mm) 2815  
Exterior width (mm) 1610  
Height (mm) 1410  
Turning circle (m) 10.5  
Tyres 165 SR13

**CAPACITY**

European brochures and they were English only." And the language choice didn't always mean the material was compiled here; Ian has a 1960s brochure for Triumph's Herald range which was printed in Coventry, despite being in Afrikaans.

Ian is also fascinated by models that were made here after production ceased elsewhere in the world – models such as the De Soto Diplomat. "The De Soto name lasted 18 months longer as a brand than anywhere else and the Diplomat, which must have been

In the world of brochure collecting condition is crucial, and material that's been stapled to price lists or annotated is usually worth less

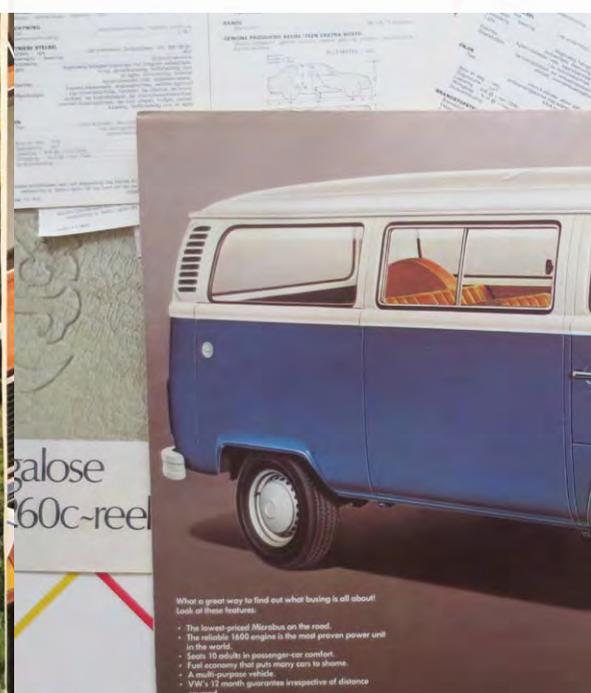
available around 1961/2, was a SA only re-badged Dodge Lancer."

He also enjoys the aesthetic intrigue of the artwork. "I can look at a brochure and instantly tell if it's South African." A lot of that is down to the use of TJ or often CB registration plates (those letters being old Johannesburg or Port Elizabeth registration prefixes) but backgrounds play a part, as does the way the shoot is choreographed: "I have a brochure for an early 1970s Mitsubishi Colt pickup which features a man in a safari suit looking down on the pickup as it's loaded by labourers."

In the world of brochure collecting condition is crucial, and material that's been stapled to price lists or annotated is usually worth less – but that

doesn't worry Ian. "Because I lived there, the inclusion of sale room details or prices makes it more interesting." The sales literature he picked up for a Chevrolet Kommando is one such example with a business card from salesman David Wemyss of Kempster Chevrolet in Umgeni Road, Durban, attached and some carefully written figures revealing the base price for a manual variant. That was marketed by David as having 'synchromesh gearing' and was on offer for R5 585, with the automatic spec'd car coming in at R6 078 and power steering available for around R700 more.

Those mid-1970s prices are quite lofty compared to more run-of-the-mill fare such as the 1974 model year VW Beetle which, as Ian's brochure for that reveals, could be yours for as little as R1 998. That was assuming



# ng THE ITTLE CHEV CAN

... climb mountains, cross country, carry loads, breathe dust, grip dirt, take a beating, pack half a ton, absorb shocks, plough through scrub, and carry you in comfort. All in a day's work.

There's never been anything like the Nomad in South Africa before.

A rugged steel body that's been rust-proofed so less than three times. A 2.1-litre V4 engine that's as useful on economy as it is on power. A limited-slip differential that won't let you lose your grip in the dirt.

And, most important of all, passenger car comfort. Because when you've been driving all day you don't want to feel like you've been riding a horse.

The Nomad has a windscreen that can be dropped down to a horizontal position. For easy loading, the tailgate can also be opened wide.

There is literally nothing that the Nomad can't. Think about it. Then, whether you farm, build, fish or just lead a nomad's life, take a good hard look at this tough little Chevrolet. As soon as you can.



# VW 1974

1300  
1600  
D/L  
S/L

25/10 Sep balance 30  
at 11/11 f



you settled for the poverty spec 1300, while R2 285 would get you the keys to a 1600 variant, boasting a 'deluxe' finish.

Material for unique-to-South Africa cars is a big part of his collection and Ian covets items such as an original GSM Flamingo brochure (which is in black-and-white) while other examples include launch literature for the well-known and colourful Citi Golf series, Ford's Sierra XR8 and the Alfa Romeo 3.0 GTV6. The latter two boasted limited production runs as they were homologation exercises to support racing activity.

In the same vein are the brochures for BMW's 333i and range-topping 745i saloon, both of which Ian has brochures for. Other SA-only fare includes foldout artwork for our answer to the American Jeep, the Chevrolet Nomad. In that case

the seller knew what he had as the brochure cost Ian the princely sum of £12.50 at a show although most of the material, "sells for around £3 or £4 per brochure," explains Ian.

He has other rarities such as material for Kit Car Centre's AC Cobra replica, a hugely popular DIY, fibreglass option for V8 sports car fun in the early 1990s, and his SA interest isn't limited to cars: among the many archive boxes is a two-pager for a RG-12 Nyala, the 7.4-tonne 4x4 military transporter. Built by Reumech OMC it was powered by a 6-litre diesel engine which, in case you're curious, could do 0-80km/h in a heady 34 seconds!

Are there any SA-specific omissions in his collection? "Absolutely! I don't have any for the Mini Van den Plas series or BMW's

1800 and 2000SA saloons which were Glas designs that were re-badged here. And one of the Cheetah, the 1800 that was assembled in (then) Rhodesia and sold here would be the ultimate find." BMW's much later 530MLE, the precursor to the 535i and later M5 series, is another one that's eluded him.

He does have literature for a few rare 'oddities' such as the Microdot, a small electric runabout designed by William Towns of Aston DBS and Lagonda fame that was going to be built here by Mercury Engineering. "My parents took me on a shopping trip to Johannesburg and there was one on display in the Carlton Centre." It was those sort of by-chance experiences that upped the variety of his collection and fascination for our home-grown fare, even though he's now 6 000 miles away. 📍



## Daar's volop fyn vernuf in 'n klein motor só deftig.

Die Ascona se deftigheid behels meer net 'n paar ekstra eienskappe. Of 'n pragtige verfafwerking.

Dit lê in die sierlike lyne van die motor. In sy slanke, aantreklike profiel. Sy gerieflike binneruim. Sy anatomies ontwerpde, ten v verstelbare holruitsplekke voor. Sy temperatuur-regulerende 2-spoed-verwarmer/ontwasemer en deurvloei-event. Sy sportiewe stuurwiel met 'n stuurslot en 'n positiese stewige 4-gang ratwisselaar.

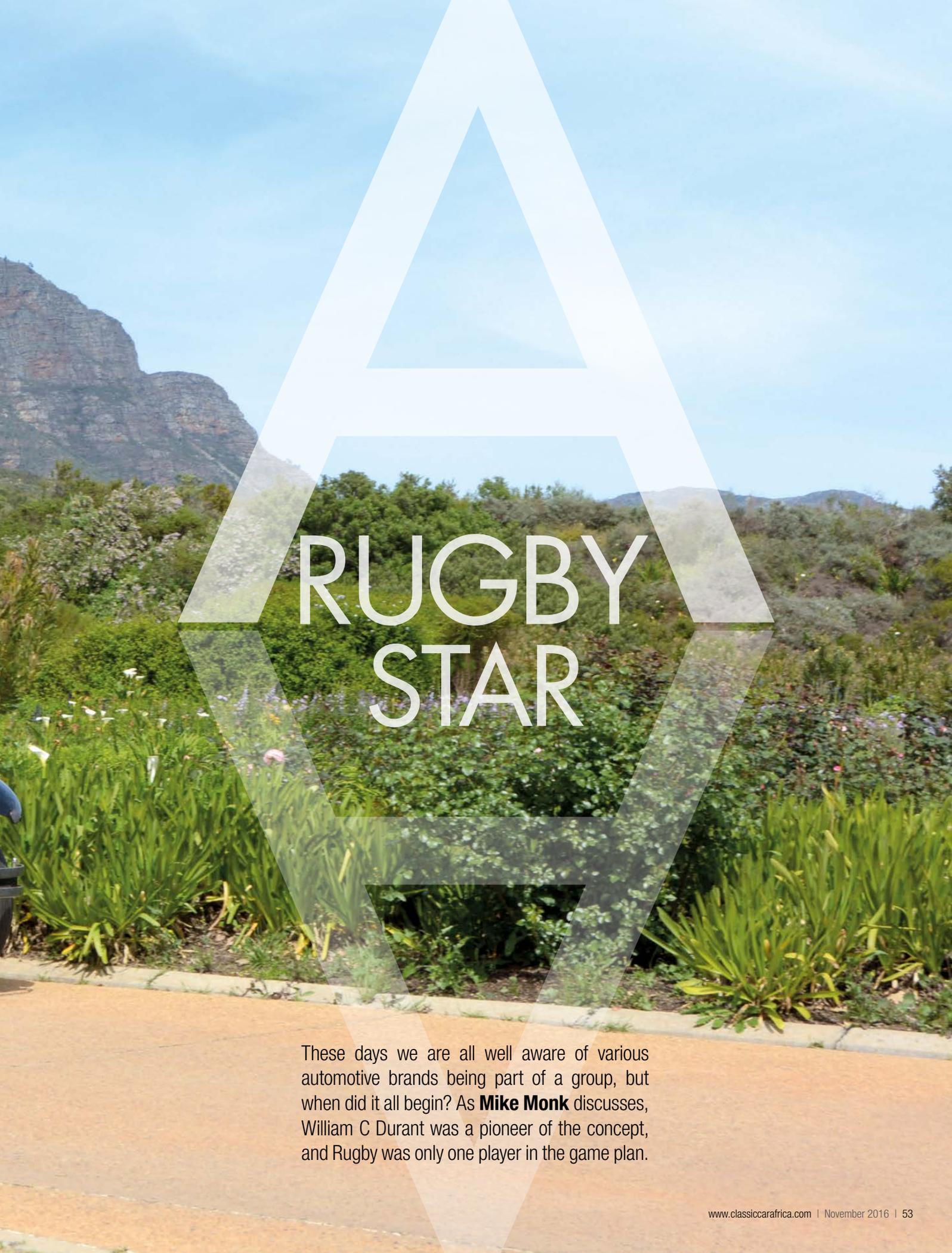
Nog belangriker is dat dieselfde toewaan volmaaktheid aanwesig is in die dinge die oog nie sien nie.

Soos die vakuum-versterkte, dubbele hidrouliese remstelsel met skyfremme voor groot trommelremme agter. Die verborge geluid-isolering en beskerme korrasierende Tektillaag.

### TOERUSTING

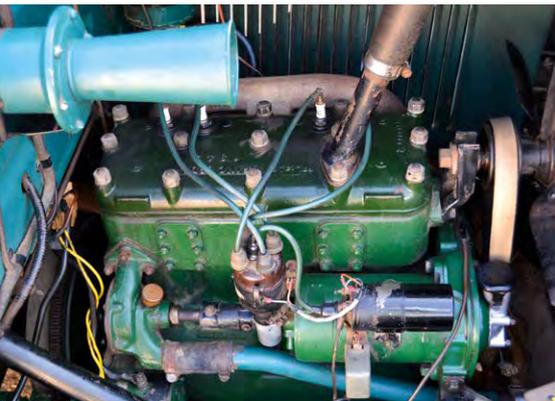
- Tappie reguleer
- Stuurslot
- Stuurwiel
- Koplamplisser
- Noedlammers
- Verwarmer/ontwasemer
- Temperatuurmeter
- Tappie in bagasielak
- Straalhande
- Vloerplaatjies (ruitsiel inspekte in "S"-model)
- Deurarmleuning (voor en agter)
- Twee spoed ratwissel met afwissel aksie en ruitspuit
- Parkerremme-oorwagting
- Sigaretaarsleutel
- Kleerwaker
- Deurspanner





# RUGBY STAR

These days we are all well aware of various automotive brands being part of a group, but when did it all begin? As **Mike Monk** discusses, William C Durant was a pioneer of the concept, and Rugby was only one player in the game plan.



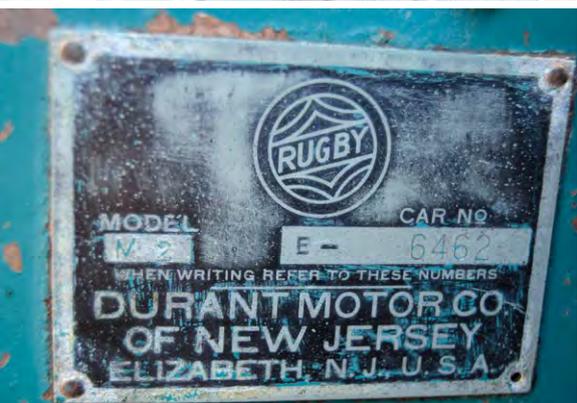
Within the next five years the Durant-Dort Carriage Company had become America's – and some believe the world's – leading manufacturer of horse-drawn vehicles

When it comes to multi-brand automotive conglomerates, General Motors will doubtless immediately spring to mind as one of the longest-running organisations to have numerous brands under its control. In fact, it was the first. It all began with William Crapo Durant, who had a stormy relationship with General Motors before leaving the company and taking them on with his own short-lived brands that included Rugby, a Star by any other name. But before describing the Franschoek Motor Museum's Rugby Tourer, it is worth recounting Durant's business history.

'Billy' Durant was born on 8 December 1861 to wealthy Massachusetts couple William Clark Durant and Rebecca Folger Crapo. By the age of 24 he had dropped out of high school to work in his grandfather's lumberyard before partnering Josiah Dort to create the Coldwater

Road Cart Company. In 1886 he founded the Flint Road Cart Company with \$2 000 in start-up capital, turning it into a \$2-million business with sales around the world. Within the next five years the Durant-Dort Carriage Company had become America's – and some believe the world's – leading manufacturer of horse-drawn vehicles. It was during this time that Durant conceived the system of dealer franchises.

Despite initial scepticism of horseless carriages, in 1904 Durant was approached to become general manager of Buick, the Flint-based car company with few sales and large debts. Durant displayed his sales skills by exhibiting Buick (which had only built 37 cars to date) in a New York auto show, returning with orders for 1 108 cars, and his business acumen led to him becoming president. Durant and Samuel McLaughlin of Canada signed a 15-year contract to build Buick powertrains before, on 16 September 1908, Durant founded General Motors Holding Company with \$500 000 in Buick stock that Durant traded McLaughlin for \$500 000 of McLaughlin stock, making McLaughlin one of GM's



biggest shareholders. That same year, GM bought both Buick and Oldsmobile and started an automobile conglomeration on a major scale. In 1909 Durant bought Cadillac, Oakland (later called Pontiac), and many component- and paint-manufacturing companies, merging them with GM.

An \$8-million deal to buy Ford was turned down by the bankers and as Durant had become financially overextended, he was forced from management of GM Holding Co. He immediately set out to create another GM, starting with the Little car – named after its founder, William H Little – to compete with the Ford Model T. But this was not to be and in 1911 he went into partnership with Louis Chevrolet to establish Chevrolet. However, a disagreement with Chevrolet resulted in Durant buying out his partner in 1914. Durant went to McLaughlin in 1915 to put Chevrolet in Canada and the two men set about buying enough shares to regain a controlling interest in GM. Durant was made president in 1916 and GM Corporation was formed two years later, but in 1920 he was ousted once more after the new car market collapsed.

Undaunted, Durant lost no time in

establishing a new corporation to take on the likes of Buick, Oldsmobile, Oakland and Chevrolet with three model lines: the premium Flint (that originally was going to be called Eagle), mid-range Durant (reportedly based on a Sheridan, a stillborn make that Durant had promoted while at GM) and entry level Star. In 1922 he also acquired Locomobile to compete with luxury brands such as Cadillac. Durant Motors started exporting the Star to markets outside of America in 1923, the company's best year with sales of 178 000, but for countries that were part of the British Empire the name had to be changed because the Star Motor Company of Wolverhampton had registered the name, and was already successful in overseas markets. Consequently, Durant's Star became known as a Rugby for affected markets, the only differences being a switch to right-hand drive and the Rugby badge.

Rugbys were sold in South Africa, and in Bob Johnston's book *Early*

*Motoring In South Africa*, at the beginning of the chapter covering the 1920s he states: "By far the most popular make was the Chevrolet, with six cylinders. Next came Ford in four-cylinder Model A form, followed by Dodge, Chrysler, Buick, Hupmobile, Rugby-Durant, Essex and Studebaker before the first of the non-American cars, Austin." The book carries two period photographs: one captioned 'A cruelly-twisted Rugby driven around Johannesburg on three wheels. The object of the demonstration is not clear', and the other shows 'Two new Rugbys crossing the Umlalazi River en route to a customer in Zululand.'

The Rugby was an assembled make originally based on the Star Model F. The

**An \$8-million deal to buy Ford was turned down by the bankers and as Durant had become financially overextended, he was forced from management of GM Holding Co**



engine was a 130.4ci (2137cc) side-valve inline-four made by Continental, a producer of automobile engines for numerous independent companies from the 1910s through to the 1930s, but Durant was by far its biggest customer. Unusually for the time, the Warner three-speed non-synchro 'box was mounted separate from the engine. Warner, incidentally, was owned by Durant. At launch in 1922, Timken beam axles front and rear were suspended on leaf springs and Spicer universal joints were employed, but in mid-1923 Durant bought and switched to the Adams Axle Company in order to protect supply.

In 1926 the Model F was replaced by the improved specification Model M, by which time the engine had been upgraded to 152ci (2491cc) realising 27kW at 2400rpm. In 1928, the Model M2 was introduced as a stop-gap model but four-wheel mechanical brakes were now standard and a 60mph (96km/h) was 'guaranteed'. The chassis

plate on FMM's four-door five-seater Torero shows it is based on an M2, the only anomaly being the body having no exterior door handles, which photos of other Rugbys of the time suggest should have been the case. Nevertheless, it was supplied by D H Saker & Co. Ltd, a company founded in 1902 by brothers D H and Charles Saker that in 1957 merged with G K Lindsay to form Lindsay-Saker.

The car is unrestored – a so-called 'oily rag' example, a term denoting a vehicle that has not been renovated. Its looks are typical of the period, the green paintwork and wooden artillery wheels highlighted with gold pin-striping that is fading only in places, adding much revered patina to the car. Opening the interior door latch and stepping up onto the seat straightaway reveals a driving position that is a bit cramped and distinctly 'knees up'. Push and turn the key, depress the floor starter button and the motor fires up with a quick and steady idle.

Depress the clutch, wiggle the wand-like gear lever to the left and back into first, release the adjoining handbrake and the Rugby kicks off with typical immediacy before quickly running out of revs. The central accelerator has short travel but once into second the car pulls with ease – it is pretty much a 'do anything' gear. Once up to speed,

top gear comes into play and the car cruises at a comfortable gait.

Considering the rudimentary chassis and simple springing, the car provides a very pleasant ride on its 4.75/5.00x18 balloon tyres. Directional stability is excellent, and sitting close to the 16-inch four-spoke steering wheel helps with arm-twirling in tight confines. But to be fair, the effort required to operate the worm-and-gear mechanism is not unduly heavy. The thermometer atop the radiator is a little loose on its mounting and gently rotates due to wind and vibration, a forgivable quirk given the car's near 90-year lifetime, an age it carries very well.

With sales starting to fall, in 1928 the Rugby ceased to exist as a car brand although Durant marketed trucks in the US and Canadian markets under the badge Rugby Trucks. The Great Depression that began in 1929 wiped out Durant Motors' sales as well as Durant's personal fortune, leading to the demise of the company in 1932 (only 1 132 cars built) and him being declared bankrupt in 1936. Thereafter, *Time* magazine claims he happily ran his own cut-rate food market in New Jersey. Billy Durant died on 18 March 1947 in New York, an automotive star that shone so brightly before slipping into a black hole. The Rugby was just a part of his life's game plan and today's proliferation of multi-brand automakers is a legacy to his brilliance. 📌

With sales starting to fall, in 1928 the Rugby ceased to exist as a car brand although Durant marketed trucks in the US and Canadian markets under the badge Rugby Trucks



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# G - FOR ROCK

The following words come to mind when thinking of a Mercedes-Benz G-Class (nicknamed the 'G-Wagen'): badass, gangster, cult classic... generally not descriptions one would associate with this somewhat staid and rather traditional manufacturer. **Sivan Goren** takes a look at this unlikely German hit that, despite being launched way back in 1979, has changed surprisingly little over the years.



**T**he story, though, begins a few years before that – in 1972. Apparently it was the Shah of Iran (back then a pretty major shareholder in Benz) who suggested developing an off-road vehicle for military use – and so began a joint venture agreement between Daimler-Benz and Austrian military vehicle manufacturer Steyr-Daimler-Puch, based in the Austrian city of Graz. Thus the *Geländewagen* ('off-road vehicle' in German) was born. Mercedes-Benz engineers in Stuttgart were in charge of design and testing, while the team in Austria put together

Rumour has it that initially Mercedes had no intention of producing a 'layman's' version – it was meant to be a military vehicle only

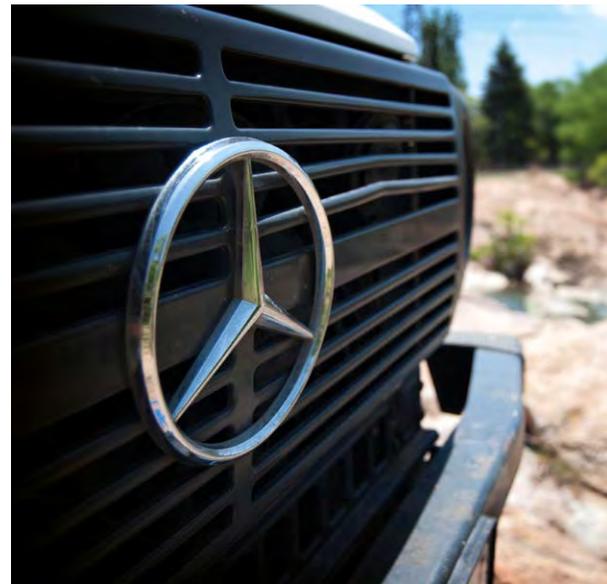
the production plans. The first wooden model was presented to Daimler-Benz management in 1973, and by 1974 the first drivable prototype began being tested in several diverse terrains including German coalfields, the Sahara Desert, and the Arctic Circle.

Rumour has it that initially Mercedes had no intention of producing a 'layman's' version – it was meant to be a military vehicle only – and that it was only when a wealthy individual saw an ex-military *Geländewagen* working on a farmer's land that such a model came to be. Story goes that this chap persuaded Mercedes to throw in a few luxury options such as cushier seats and a stereo. His wealthy mates liked the end result and eventually word got out and interest skyrocketed. Company officials decided it might be a good idea to mass produce a civilian edition.

In 1975, a new production

facility in Graz was built for the G-Class, with production beginning in 1979. The original 460-series *Geländewagen* was launched to the press in February 1979 and then went on sale to civilians. There was a choice of three body styles: a two-door short wheelbase convertible, a two-door short wheelbase wagon and a long wheelbase four-door wagon. The two wagon versions were also available as windowless two-door *Kastenwagen* ('vans' in German). While always assembled in Graz, the car was sold as the 'Puch G' only in the Austrian, Swiss, and Eastern European markets.

The first major refinements were introduced in 1981, including an automatic transmission, air conditioning, an auxiliary fuel tank, protective headlamp grilles and a cable winch, and fuel injection became available in 1982. For 1985, differential locks, central door locking and a tachometer became standard and by 1986 over 50 000 G Models had been produced. The G-Wagen received a facelift



in 1990 and in 1992 the 100 000<sup>th</sup> G Model was built in Graz. In 1994, the model line was officially renamed the G-Class and ventilated front disc brakes and a driver's air bag became standard. A new version was expected for 2007, but the new GL-Class did not replace the original G-Wagen, and it continued to be built in Graz at an annual production of 4 000 to 6 000 units. 2009 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the vehicle, with over 200 000 units having been manufactured in Graz since the first vehicle rolled off the line in 1979.

It's not surprising that a G-Wagen takes several days to complete when you realise that each vehicle is almost completely made by hand: its sturdy ladder frame and galvanised steel body are hand-welded and even its wiring harnesses are hand-loomed. The 'G' is easily the longest-serving passenger car series in the more than 120-year history of Mercedes-Benz. Continuous model updates keep it in line with all the latest technological development and

guarantee a superior drive system, but without diluting its essential character. And thanks to all of this, the G-Class is equal to any off-road challenge while ensuring the handling safety expected of a traditional Merc on the road.

From the very beginning the G-Class was designed for operation in extremely difficult terrain. A sturdy base provides extraordinary rigidity against bending and distortion, the frame carries rigid axles for off-road operation, it uses three fully locking differentials (one of the few vehicles to have such a feature), has a full 21 centimetres of ground clearance, full-time four-wheel drive and what is essentially an armoured undercarriage. So whether it is navigating the roads of your local suburb or crossing the Arctic tundra, the G-Wagen pulls it off with effortless, eye-catching style – a bit like a tank wearing designer clothes (but a lot less silly). Some things in life get better

## The 'G' is easily the longest-serving passenger car series in the more than 120-year history of Mercedes-Benz

with time, and the 'G' seems to be one of them.

### THE G-CLASS AS A CELEBRITY AND CULT STATUS SYMBOL

In 1980, the G-Wagen got its first nod towards 'cool' when the Vatican took delivery of a custom-made G230 which served as the Popemobile. With a transparent superstructure and elevated viewing position, it made crowd surfing with the Pope look good. The aptly named 'Papa G' now resides at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, Germany.

Introduced to the United States in 2002, the G-Class has become the vehicle of choice for wealthy celebrities, who use



the luxury vehicle as a symbol for their success and social status because it is comfortable in off-road conditions as it is on the Los Angeles highway. But why the obsession with the G-Wagen? For one thing it is unmistakable: not only is it huge, it has unique military-esque styling and looks unlike any other vehicle on the road. It's also extremely powerful (useful for

evading those pesky paparazzi) and priced right (okay, maybe only if you're a famous celeb in Hollywood!). It is a favourite with sports stars, musicians and actors alike but interestingly, it seems to have become especially popular with young up-and-coming female stars, who are perhaps looking for that edginess that oozes off the G-Wagen.

Amongst those celebs who have one parked in the garage are Sylvester Stallone, Diane Keaton and boxing star Floyd Mayweather.

#### **THE G-CLASS IN MILITARY VEHICLE GUISE**

The military model which began production in 1979 is still being produced to this day, where the production line at the Graz factory averages only 15 vehicles a day. These vehicles are designed to

give a million miles of service for military use with nearly all of the components being fully serviceable and able to be rebuilt.

All specially ordered and military models use the 461 designation; these include vehicles for fire corps, police and army. Military G-Wagens come in three variants: the 'basic' light utility vehicles (four doors and four seats), Command and Reconnaissance (C&R) models (rotating gun-mount in the centre of the roof) and the military police version (with blue and red rotating lights). The vehicle is not armoured but can be fitted with armour modules replacing body panels to protect against rifle fire or grenade fragments. The G-Class vehicle is now regularly used by more than 63 armies worldwide and this includes the German Armed Forces, Canadian Army and also the US Marine Corps. 

**Thanks to Carcol Executive Auto for the use of the featured vehicle.**

**It is a favourite with sports stars, musicians and actors alike but interestingly, it seems to have become especially popular with young up-and-coming female stars, who are perhaps looking for that edginess that oozes off the G-Wagen**



**1951 Jaguar C Type Replica**  
British Racing Green with Green leather seats, built by Nostalgia Cars UK, Fibreglass body, space frame chassis with Aluminium panels, 4.2L XJ6 Motor, 5 speed manual gearbox, disc brakes. **POA**



**1990 Jaguar XJS Cabriolet**  
Dark Blue with cream interior and blue soft top, genuine 70,000km, lots of history, stunning condition. **POA**



**1947 MG TC Midget.**  
Restored more than 30 years ago and is still in exceptionally good overall condition. Just completed a front to back mechanical restoration including a complete engine rebuild. She is now purring like a kitten and is ready to go. **R495 000**



**1984 Mercedes Benz 230CE**  
Red with cream interior, 146,000km with FSH and all books, sun roof, A/C, electric windows, excellent overall condition. **R265 000**



**1956 Buick Roadster Coupé**  
This car was restored in Cape Town about 10 years ago and is in great driving condition. One of only a few genuine '56 Buick Coupés in SA, the car looks and drives extremely well. **POA**



**1967 Citroen DS21**  
2.1-liter with 5-speed manual. UK built car with rare pre-face-lift headlights and Marcel fog lights. Mechanically excellent, performs well and hydraulics work perfectly. New leather interior. A few exterior nicks but lovely driving car. **R250,000**



**1984 Ferrari Mondial QV Spider**  
One of only 26 RHD QV Spiders built, 3 owners from new, FSH, owner's manual, recent cam belts replaced, new soft top. Lovely original car. **R1,350,000**



**1956 Ford Thunderbird Roadster**  
A very nicely refurbished T Bird. Came in from the USA and all paperwork is up to date. New soft top and ultra rare hard top included. Original motor was replaced with a 289ci Mustang V8. **R950,000**



**1988 Porsche 911 Carrera Cabriolet LHD**  
160 000km. Genuine J code (1988) Carrera Cab in fantastic condition. Recent minor refurbishment due to lack of use includes new tyres, paint touch up, A/C regass. **R850 000**



**1960 Borgward Isabella**  
2 Door Sedan, Salmon with Cream roof, tan and brown interior, recently refurbished, in great driving condition, sold with COR. **R125 000**



**1994 Mercedes Benz 500SL**  
Midnight Blue with Tan leather interior and blue soft top. 51,000miles, UK spec, 3 owners from new, absolutely immaculate. **R325 000**



**1971 Mercedes Benz 280SL Pagoda**  
Silver with black interior, excellent recent respray, completely original interior, genuine mileage with books and service history. **R2 150 000**



**1962 Pontiac Parisienne Convertible**  
Very original car, imported from the USA a few years ago and all papers are in order. Paint job is good as is the original interior. New soft top is new. All the chrome and glass are good. A great cruiser. **R375 000**



**1989 Porsche 928S4**  
Red with black interior, 175,000km with FSH and Books, lots of recent invoices, sunroof, electric seats, immaculate interior. **R295 000**



**1971 Fiat 124 Sport Coupé**  
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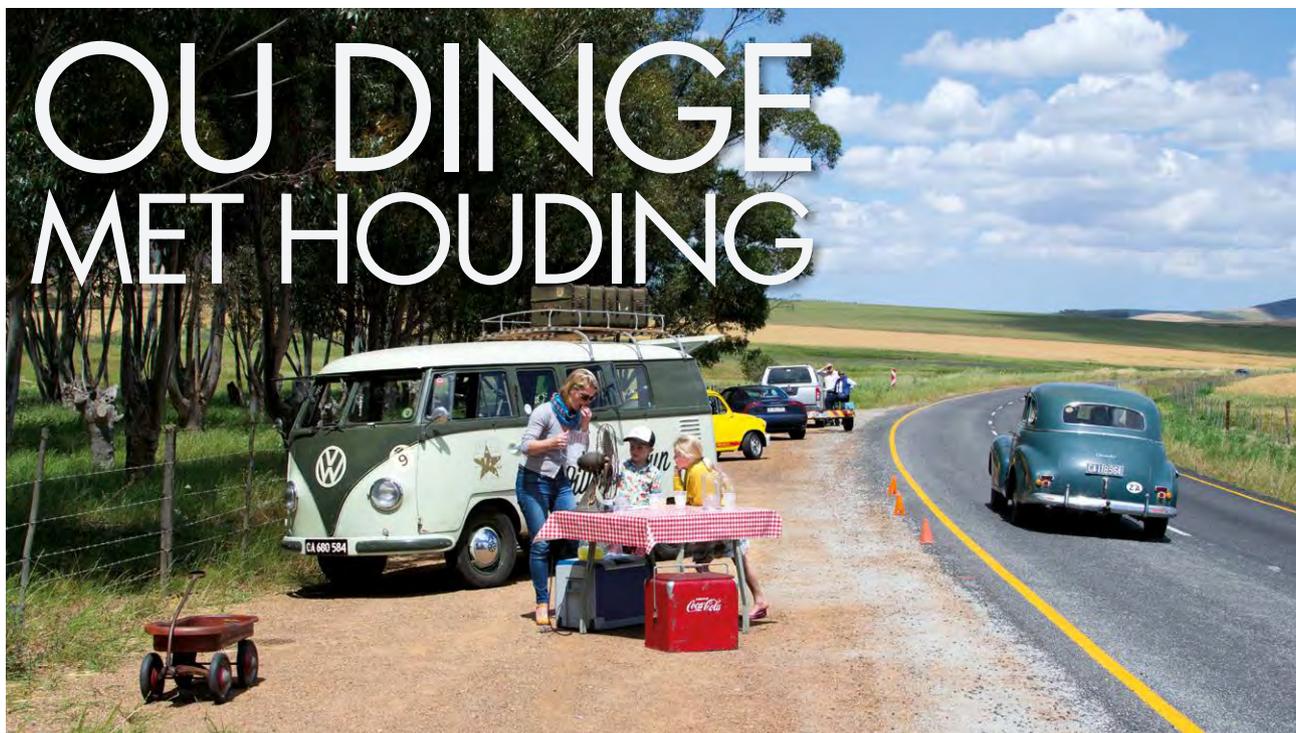
1982 Maserati Merak SS RHD

1979 Maserati Kyalami RHD

1971 Mercedes Benz 280SL Pagoda RHD

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# OU DINGE MET HOUDING

The classic car world has plenty of concours events where owners can show off their restoration efforts but, while hugely admirable, many a car's originality has been forever lost in the process. As a result, the international concours and rally circuit is increasingly recognising the efforts of owners to preserve and celebrate unrestored cars. And it's not just abroad... the South African classic community has joined in, thanks to the Oily Rag Run. The annual 120km+ run down in the Western Cape is restricted to unrestored cars that are 50 years and older says **Graeme Hurst**, who met some of this year's participants.

**Photography: Graeme Hurst and Crossley & Webb**

“Remember that a car is only original once.” It's a strap line that Oily Rag Run organiser Dickon Daggitt – a well-known stalwart of Cape Town's old car scene – regularly trots out. And it highlights the fact that once a car has been subject to a rebuild, however fastidious it may be, it's simply no longer original. That's not to detract from any restorer's efforts or the fact that refurbishment has brought many a wreck back into the public eye for all to enjoy. Rather the emphasis on being unmolested is that a car appearing as it left the factory simply enriches our hobby as it perfectly represents the era in which it first saw use.

What's more, years of careful (or not-so-careful) use give a car a patina that reflects how it's been treated, with each scratch or dent telling a story. Those, and the degree of paint fade and wear to things like the upholstery and carpeting, add a

'fourth dimension' to its existence. Original paint and trim colours also represent the automotive palettes of the day, something that's so often lost when cars in colours like Cotswold Blue or Pacific Green (1950s Jaguar and Austin-Healey colour options) are re-sprayed in 'retail red' to make them more saleable. Or when all of a car's chrome plating or upholstery is redone in one go.

To make the run competitive, entrants are scored and a car's age is weighted to reflect the fact that it becomes increasingly harder for it to remain unmolested as the years roll by. “The starting point total is derived by subtracting the car's year from the year 50 years ago – in this case 1966 – and multiplying the result by two. Points are then deducted for things that aren't original,” explains Dickon. “The car with the highest number of points remaining wins.”

So what gets points taken off in the judges' assessment? The engine, gearbox and back axle should be original, i.e. 'matching numbers', while accident repairs

are okay as long as they are done to match the car. Complete 'body off' rebuilds are out as are colour changes, while new upholstery and new wiring will see an owner lose points. The exception is the tyres, which must be serviceable. And the car must be licensed and roadworthy, with a SAVVA (South African Veteran and Vintage Association) indemnity.

“In theory the oldest car should win if it's original, provided it completes the route,” explains Dickon, who came up with the idea of an 'originality run' after reading about similar events abroad in *The Automobile* – a popular international magazine dedicated to pre-war cars.

This year's Oily Rag Run took place on the second Sunday in October, starting at Franschoek Motor Museum with a 120km+ route through the scenic winelands and Boland to event sponsor Crossley & Webb's showroom in Cape Town. Thirteen cars and one motorcycle entered and these are some of our favourites.



## 1957 MORRIS OXFORD

It was Adrian Denness's student years that inspired him to acquire his Morris 21 years ago. "I had the same model when I was studying and used to see this one on the road regularly. It was bought new in '57 by Clive van Ryneveld, an attorney in Rondebosch. It was later taken over by his widow and I told her I'd like to buy it if she ever decided to sell." The Morris had 48 000 miles on the clock when it came his way and has been totally reliable. It shares a garage with a 1919 Ford Model T which won the first Oily Rag Run three years ago.

## 1927 DODGE

Michelle Hambly-Grobler is a woman of eclectic tastes. Doris – as she calls her Dodge – shares a garage with a Citroën Traction Avant and a Porsche 911 Turbo, among others. The Dodge came her way after she fell in love with the Oily Rag Run last year. "I took part in my Citroën and Dickon said he'd find me a proper barn find for this year which he did. I bought Doris from John Horn, who'd owned it for 20 something years. He last used it 14 years ago for his daughter's wedding." After that the Dodge sat under a tarpaulin in a lean-to in Constantia. "The deal was that if he could get her going we would buy her!" says Michelle. Evidently that only involved a new set of spark plugs, fresh fuel and oil and a little work to the Autovac. That was earlier this year and the run was Michelle's first proper stint behind the wheel. "Before that, the furthest I'd driven her was from Dickon's house in Hout Bay to the local fuel station." The Dodge's incredible originality and age helped it scoop the 1<sup>st</sup> prize after the Franschoek Motor Museum's highly original, but four years older, Rugby failed to finish the run.



## 1934 FORD V8 SEDAN

"It's the exact same car that Bonnie and Clyde went ballistic in," says owner Richard Middlemann, who inherited the Canadian-built Ford from his godfather around seven years ago. "It was original but in a bad way. The radiator had been cut off at the mounting points and the distributor and various odds and ends were missing." All that wasn't a problem for Richard who also owns a 1934 Phaeton, which features the same engine and radiator, meaning he could switch parts over to see if it would run, which it did. "It fired up easily and runs perfectly with no sign of smoke," adds Richard who has no plans to tidy up its looks. "It's going to stay this way although we plan to bring in a new wiring loom from the States soon so we can get all the electrics working," adds Richard who picked up the Skorokoro trophy which is the Oily Rag Run's people's choice for the car that 'most epitomises the Oily Rag concept.'

## 1958 VW KOMBI

Jason Furness has owned this Sand-over-Palm Green 1100cc bus for nine years. "It was originally in Durban and most of the paint and the entire interior is original. It was built in Germany but as a South African export spec so it has larger air scoops on the sides and safari windows at the front," explains Jason who runs Rock Star Cars, a movie hire business in Cape Town. "At some point it found its way to the Cape and belonged to a church in Noordhoek," adds Jason who bought it from a subsequent owner. "He only did 300 miles in 10 years and it's only just been clocked for the first time." The Splittie shares a garage with other air-cooled icons including a trio of Fiat 500s and a '56 single cab VW transporter.



## 1959 AUSTIN-HEALEY 100/6

This Big Healey has been part of the Mills family since it was a year or two old. "It was owned by Ralph Rohr who ran Rohr Roads and he sold it to my father Denis when he wanted to upgrade to an E-type," says current custodian Roddy Mills. Boasting just 74 000 miles on the clock, the Healey is wonderfully original apart from a replacement wiring loom, which Roddy recalls installing in the 1970s. The Healey was recently re-commissioned by well-known Healey enthusiast Derek Hulse after being off the road for more than 30 years following a noise in the engine. "When Derek got it running the noise was still there so he took the head off and found a piece of a piston ring lying on top of a piston." The 100/6 needed plenty of cleaning and mechanical re-commissioning but its paintwork is untouched. "Ralph was apparently a difficult customer and insisted on regular inspections during its assembly but the assembly guys still managed to drop a spanner on the rear deck. The paint patch to fix it is still there."



## 1936 ARMSTRONG SIDDELEY 17hp

Crankhandle Club chairman Peter Truter's has had his Armstrong-Siddeley two years but it's only had a handful of owners to date: "It was despatched from Coventry on 28 February 1936 to a Johannesburg dealer and bought by a Dr Friedman in Parys." When he died in the early 1960s it passed on to his son who stored it on its built-in on-board jacks for the next 20 years before an estate agent, Mike O'Neil, who was a VVC member, acquired it after spotting it during a valuation. It was then in storage until 2005 when a fellow VVC member convinced him to get it running. "More than 50 of her 79 years have been spent stored on her built-in on-board jacks and with just 71 000 miles on the clock, she's barely run-in!" adds Peter.

## 1948 CHEVROLET FLEETMASTER

Prof Peter Spargo's father bought this Chev on 14 September 1948. "It cost £568 from Williams Hunt in Johannesburg." Named Mordecai, it was part of his family for 60 years and has racked up more than 230 000 miles. In that time it's done everything from trips to the Kruger Park towing a caravan to going on Scout camps and taking people to vote. Over the years, it's been stolen and recovered, suffered a broken rear axle and springs and had several minor accidents, yet it's only picked up one traffic fine: "That was for parking illegally in Windhoek," explains Peter. In 2008 Peter sold the Chev to fellow Crankhandle Club member Hilton Franz for R1 so that it could be preserved and enjoyed by others. "It's still wonderfully original, with a log detailing every service and receipts for the bits and pieces it has needed over the years." The Chev wears its years well although there's plenty of evidence of use on the bodywork, including a large dent to one of its rear fenders. "That followed a night of too much alcohol that still embarrasses me. It was back in the early 1960s and I reversed into the garage and caught the pillar."



# 1959 VESPA

With just 150cc, Crossley & Webb's entry was never going to beat the rest of the field into Cape Town but its wonderful patina was hard to match. Much of that is down to having one owner. "We purchased it from a dentist in Clifton who owned it from new after he sold us his Triumph Spitfire which he had owned since 1963. His son painted it in the colours of Camps Bay High School shortly after the family bought it and it has remained like that ever since." The Vespa is still on its original plates and is complete with its owner's handbook. It also came with a copy of a 1960 newspaper article, showing the owner Pat, his wife and the family dog riding pillion! Fifty-six years on, Crossley & Webb's Alex Dunford completed the Oily Rag Run with it in four hours without skipping a beat. 🏆



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## TRANSPORTING BACK IN TIME

When it comes to iconic transporters they don't come more dominant than the Mercedes-Benz 'Blue Wonder' of 1954. This machine is well documented for carrying the same running gear as the 300S racer of the era. Less well known however, is how the German company transported its legendary pre-war Silver Arrows racers. Here, thanks to CMC models, we have the answer.

Enter the CMC Mercedes-Benz Racing-Car Transporter LO 2750. Simply put, it is a mind-blowing rendition of the 2.75-tonne truck produced by the Mercedes factory in Gaggenau, which with a low-lying floor and a low loading-platform was ideal for carrying the Silver Arrows. Power came from a reliable and economical 4-cylinder diesel engine with an output of 65hp on tap. Paint was in the iconic Mercedes blue with the lettering 'Mercedes-Benz Rennabteilung' and the truck became an integral part of the factory transport-and-supply chain. When returning to Stuttgart as race winners the tarpaulin was removed and side boards and tailgate dropped to show off the cars to the crowds lining the streets.

In 1:18<sup>th</sup> scale by CMC the LO 2750 transporter is no less evocative thanks to amazing attention to detail.

It is a handcrafted unit that comprises 2 365 individual parts, of which 1 991 are metal. Although supplied without a race car in the back, any one of the various pre-war Silver Arrows by CMC will fit. True to the original, wood lines the loadbin and the grain scale is just spot on. The canvas tarpaulin looks like the original that has shrunk in the wash, as do the eyelets and roping that pull it together. More impressive is the attention to getting things like the side panel hinges to the correct scale, and furthermore making them operate as per the original. The Mercedes-Benz tri-star hood ornament even unscrews from the stainless steel radiator shroud and the semaphores operate as per period indicators. The interior features real leather, the handbrake lever is movable and the two toolboxes mounted to the frame open. Under the bonnet the detail continues with even the likes of the brake fluid reservoir cap graphic



being considered. So too are the brass fuel lines and accelerator springs. And just in case you go out and buy a CMC racer to load into the back, the transporter comes with wheel chocks and tie downs to secure the load.

Never before has an old diesel truck model been so desirable. The man that brought out his model for us to see is Bunny Wentzel of Sportique Collectable Models. An out-and-out car man, Wentzel has collected both models and the real things for decades. His home-based office/shop is filled with the latest from the likes of CMC, Minichamps and Auto Art with his personal collection of Shuco, Dinky and Corgi nestled in between. Oh yes, and whatever make or scale it is, if it is to do with any land speed record, he must have it.

At 1:1 scale he has owned machinery such as Renault R8 Gordini, Austin Healey, Alfa Spider, Ford Escort Mexico and Jaguar XK120. He's taken to the track too, having started racing in 1964 with a Ford Cortina and then moving through Alfa Romeos, Renault, Volvo and eventually a one-off South African special called the Turner Healey.

When he sold up and retired from his butchery work close on 12 years ago he set about trading models, and can often be seen long before the sun rises at classic car shows throughout Gauteng as he unpacks his wares for the day. 📺

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Mike Farrall (25) splashes his rigid-framed 1933 Rudge TTR past the Ian Bain/Steve Brogan 1954 BSA Gold Star.

# AGE DEFYING

Barry Sheene, who would have been 66 on 11 September, was twice 500cc World Champion and one of Britain's greatest motorcycle racers of all time. Sadly he passed away in 2003 but was an enthusiastic competitor at the early Goodwood Revival meetings. The Revival continues to celebrate Sheene's memory though and this year was no different, as **Ian Groat** reports.

**W**ith a two-part Barry Sheene Memorial Trophy, the races were for machines up to 1000cc that raced up to 1954. Fittingly, Barry's nephew Scott Smart was one of the leading competitors. Race 1 was held in the pouring rain, conditions in which the leaders positively revelled. In the event, it was the pairing

of Charlie Williams and Mike Farrall who saw off the chasing post-war Nortons with the latter's rigid-framed 1933 Rudge TTR. John McGuinness had been the early leader on a Manx Norton, his initial rival, double World Superbike champion Troy Coser falling foul of the conditions when, having clipped the chicane with his elbow, he and his BMW ended up in a puddle next to the pit wall and he uttered the words "the bike



TT legend John McGuinness aboard a 1953 Manx Norton.



Duncan Fitchett tucked down on the Peter Bloore Manx Norton.



The BMW Group Classic 1939 R51 being passed by Scott Smart on a Manx Norton.



Michael Hose, 1953 Manx Norton.

turned into a bloody jet ski!"

Scott Smart was the next to challenge John, overtaking him with a cheery wave and then falling back again. By now the rain was falling hard and Norton 30M rider Steve Brogan was moving up fast, and this time John received a friendly pat on the back as the pair swapped places at around 110mph. Charlie Williams was now up to third.

As is the way with such races, it was all

change after the pit stops. Steve stayed out as long as possible, pitting with seconds to spare before the end of his allotted time in the saddle; Scott was in just behind him. The former's stop was quick enough for partner Ian Bain to still be in the lead. Up to second now was a hard-charging Mike Farrall, who had taken over the Rudge from Charlie. He and Ian then swapped the lead back and forth, the two trying their hardest

As is the way with such races, it was all change after the pit stops



A pit stop for the Ewan Cameron/Arthur Browning 1926 Brough Superior SS100R.



Celebrated Isle of Mann TT star John McGuinness made his Goodwood debut, took some silverware and was blown away by the atmosphere.



The 1953 Woden-Jap of Clive Ling and Andy Reynolds receiving some attention.



What Goodwood is all about... recreating an era and the right spirit.



Troy Corser and Sebastian Gutsch before the former crashed their 1937 BMW R5SS.

John successfully maintained the gap back to the scrapping pack, thoroughly enjoying his first weekend competing at the Sussex track

before the worsening conditions brought out the red flag. It was a remarkable victory for the elderly Rudge, the next seven bikes being mere youngsters from the 1950s.

Race 2, a 25-minute race in dryer conditions saw an emphatic victory for Goodwood debutant John McGuinness sharing Fred Walmsley's 1953 Norton Manx with Glen English. Glen set off like a terrier, establishing a substantial lead to hand over to the 23-times Isle of Man TT winner. John successfully maintained the gap back to the scrapping pack, thoroughly enjoying his first weekend competing at the Sussex track.

"It's in my diary for next year," he said.

Star of the weekend, though, has to be 1933 Rudge TTR that won in the wet. Rider Charlie Williams, himself a veteran and winner of eight TTs, the first of which was back in 1973, reckoned matters would be very different in the dry, but he and owner Mike Farrall defied the bike's age and its primitive handling by finishing third. Second, for the second day running, after another fine ride, was the 1951 Norton Manx ridden by Duncan Fitchett and, standing in for former World Champion Kevin Schwantz, Sam Clews. **C**



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# ABARTH 500C 595 TURISMO

**Mike and Wendy Monk** take a whirlwind spin in Fiat's small town car with a sting in the tail.

**B**efore the days when motor manufacturers brought performance car development in-house and began using acronyms to denote the sportier derivatives in a model range – such as Audi RS, BMW M, Ford RS, Mercedes-Benz AMG, Opel OPC, Volkswagen R – companies often lined themselves up with an established tuning house to develop hot versions of their products. Think the likes of Cooper versions of the original Mini, Autodelta Alfa Romeos, Alpina BMWs and you will get the idea. In Fiat's case it was Abarth, a race/road car maker/tuner established in 1949 by Italo-Austrian Carlo Abarth, who acquired the assets of the defunct Cisitalia company for whom he worked. Carlo's astrological sign was Scorpio, and a stylised scorpion on a red and yellow background became

**In Fiat's case it was Abarth, a race/road car maker/tuner established in 1949 by Italo-Austrian Carlo Abarth**

Abarth's logo. The company began making performance parts for Fiat, Lancia, Cisitalia, Simca and, later, Porsche, while on the racing front, Abarth had such luminaries as Tazio Nuvolari, Franco Cortese and Piero Taruffi as drivers.

Abarth eventually sold out to Fiat in 1971 and the company became the Fiat Group's racing department. Ten years later the company ceased to exist in its own right and the name was spasmodically relegated to denote some 'sporty' versions of otherwise run-of-the-mill road cars. But in February 2007, Fiat re-established Abarth as an independent unit with the launch of the current company, Abarth & C. SpA. In 2015, following a merger with Chrysler, Abarth's parent company was renamed FCA Italy and its name is once again being thrust into the limelight as a sub-brand. So much for the background. Today, in South Africa, four versions of the Fiat 500 carry the Abarth name and it is the grandiosely-titled 500C 1.4T 595 Turismo that is featured here. (The Abarth 124 Spider is due to be released before the end of the year.)

Sparkling in its Red Cordolo Tri-coat

metallic paint – one of 10 colours to choose from – the car certainly drew admiring glances everywhere it went, especially from owners of Fiat 500 models. This particular car was in 500C guise, the C (for Cabrio) denoting its fully-retractable fabric roof that offers either snug or *al fresco* motoring in equal measure.

Upgrades over the Fiat 500C include a more sporty suspension system featuring Koni shock absorbers with Frequency Selective Damping technology, and upgraded brakes with ventilated and perforated front discs. Other standard improvements consist of a new 7-inch TFT instrument cluster, leather upholstery, Xenon headlights and 17-inch alloys. This car is fitted with an optional 5-petal design, shod with 205/45 rubber: a 10-split-spoke is standard and a 5-spoke is another option.

The engine, too, is uprated, the turbocharged, twin-cam, 16-valve inline-four delivering 118kW at 5500rpm and a healthy 230Nm of torque at 3000. Gearbox is a five-speed manual (an MTA auto is available) and the claimed benchmark 0-100km/h time is 7.4 seconds with top speed pegged at



210km/h. From outside, it sounds throaty through the twin exhausts. In normal use there is an economy driving meter to show how environmentally conscious you are being, but press the Sport button and the car adopts a more responsive accelerator, stiffer steering and activates Torque Transfer Control (TTC). The instrument readouts and displays liven up, too. Official combined cycle fuel consumption is 5.4 litres/100km but over a 1 512km round trip from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth with the air-con operating at all times, the Abarth achieved a real-world consumption of 7.78 litres/100km. However, the 35-litre fuel tank does necessitate frequent fill-ups.

Depending on the size of the front seat passengers, the Abarth is more a 2+2 than a four-seater, but for those up front the seats are comfortable and supportive, hugging the torso. The all-leather upholstery is available in black or one of three two-colour combinations, depending on the exterior colour. Boot space is a meagre 185dm<sup>3</sup> but with the split back seats folded down, space increases to 550dm<sup>3</sup>.

On twisty roads, the Abarth exhibits

superb handling traits, grippy without quirks, offering a real fun experience. For such a small car, though, the turning circle of 10.6 metres makes it less manoeuvrable than one would expect. The suspension is firm but without being harsh, so although the car bobs and wiggles over bumpier surfaces the effect does not jar the passengers, although the fidgeting can become tiring over time.

Abarth prices start at R362 900 for the tin-top 500 manual reaching to R430 900 for the 500C MTA. A 3-year/100 000km maintenance plan is included in the pricing. Abarth badging comes at a premium, but it is on par with competition and for enthusiasts or anyone looking to be a little different, it has lots of appeal – and a name to be proud of. **C**

## TECH SPEC

### ABARTH 500C 595 TURISMO

**PRICE: R414 900**

<b>Engine</b>	1368cc inline-4, sohc, 16V, turbocharged petrol
<b>Max. Power</b>	118kW @ 5500rpm
<b>Max. Torque</b>	230Nm @ 3000rpm
<b>Drivetrain</b>	5-speed manual, front-wheel drive
<b>Brakes</b>	Ventilated discs, front and rear
<b>Suspension</b>	<b>Front:</b> MacPherson strut, coil springs, lower control arm, stabiliser bar
	<b>Rear:</b> spring strut, coil springs, stabiliser bar
<b>Steering</b>	Electric
<b>Performance</b>	0-100km/h 7.4secs: top speed 210km/h
<b>Economy</b>	5.4ℓ/100km combined cycle
<b>Servicing</b>	3-year/100 000km maintenance plan



# TAKEN FOR A RIDE

By Racey Lacey

**F**or me, daily driving through traffic is a necessity rather than something I choose to do; just as I cook to survive, I drive because walking everywhere would be as impossible for me as making the perfect soufflé. I would be perfectly happy to live in a congested European city where most people use public transport, arriving at their workplaces feeling relaxed after having spent a leisurely 20 minutes sipping their espresso and browsing through the morning paper on the train. No such luck in South Africa though and with road rage, broken robots and traffic that backs up to your doorstep, weekday city driving is a pretty stressful exercise and takes its toll (even if you take our much loved e-Tolls out of the equation).

So with this ever-present, underlying stress already lurking, driving alone is enough of an ordeal, but add a passenger and you have a recipe for disaster. Well, at least in the case of that dreaded beast – The Backseat Driver. Having driven a number of these around over the years, I have accumulated some valuable information on the types of backseat drivers and their typical behaviour whilst in their natural habitat – in the passenger (or back) seat of someone else’s car.

### THE EAGLE-EYED GASPER

This person is clearly convinced that, despite having passed your driver’s licence eye test, you are blind or unable to see everything they can because they insist on pointing out every potential obstacle: red light, stop sign or granny crossing the road – usually about 3km before you even get anywhere near them – and always in a total panic. Their distinctive call usually includes loud gasping, followed by a shrill series of cries of either “CAREFUL!” or “WATCH OUT, cat/lorry/apple tree!” When encountering one

of these types, it’s best to keep calm and talk in a soothing manner as this is a slightly jittery creature that shouldn’t be startled.

### THE DASHBOARD HUGGER

This breed of backseat driver is particularly nervy and has huge control issues, so approach with caution. Their behaviour involves grabbing at the dashboard every time you even so much as tap the brake, lest they go hurtling through the windscreen when you come to what they perceive to be a sudden stop (note: to anyone else this could be as simple as pulling into a parking space from a stationary position). It’s best not to make any sudden moves with this one. Keep your hands on the wheel and drive slowly to your destination, making sure you brake as gently as humanly possible. \*

\* *Author’s note: This type of backseat driver is often mistaken for the equally common “Phantom Pedal Pusher” (see point 3 below).*

### THE PHANTOM PEDAL PUSHER

A closely-related species to the Dashboard Hugger, the Phantom Pedal Pusher’s *modus operandi* is one of pumping an imaginary brake pedal in the footwell of the passenger side, as if one will magically manifest before them if they push hard enough, often accompanied by a death grip-like clutching of their armrest. They are just as jumpy as their cousins, the Dashboard Huggers, and should be approached in a similar fashion. Packing a bag or two of shopping at their feet might also act as a deterrent, though just be sure to keep the eggs and other breakables safe.

### THE PROFESSIONAL NAVIGATOR

Google Maps has nothing on these navigators of note. They know the best/fastest/shortest/most fuel-economical route to anywhere and their way is the

only way. These super humans do not even need piffing little things like map books or Garmins. Nay – they have a built-in direction-finding prowess that even porpoises would be in awe of. Suggestions of using navigational tools are not only to be scoffed at – they are downright insulting. They have been known to utter such expressions as: “Oh, are you going *that* way?” or “I know this place like the back of my hand.” Whatever you do, do not engage – this will just encourage them. Just smile and nod politely – and continue the way you were going in the first place. They will most likely lose interest quickly and move onto the next topic, which will inevitably involve what a phenomenal sense of direction they have.

### THE EMBARRASSINGLY AGGRESSIVE PASSENGER

These passengers clearly have residual rage from their last encounter with a taxi and it doesn’t seem to matter that they are not the one in the driver’s seat. While most passengers let the driver do the driving (and everything that goes along with it), this person feels it is his/her duty to get involved in the process. Common displays include shouting, hand gestures (often involving the middle finger) and winding the window down to instruct fellow road users, in colourful detail, what to do and how to do it. It’s best to ensure that these types are kept fed and hydrated (to eliminate the possibility of becoming ‘hangry’) for the duration of the drive. Locking windows and doors also tends to be helpful.

So there you have it: a field guide to the commonly-spotted Backseat Driver. It’s a jungle out there, but knowing what to look out for could at least help you navigate through it. 📖

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**BODGE**  
ENGINEERING



# THE ULTIMATE DOG?

By Ron Wheeldon

Those who follow the BBC's *Top Gear* and its now-fired presenter, Jeremy Clarkson, will probably know that he bought a very nice RHD example of the Maserati Biturbo and had a rubbish skip dropped on it from a dizzy height.

And the boy was very pleased with himself for ending the existence of what he called "a truly awful car. One of the worst cars ever", he claimed. To him it was not worthy of the famous Maserati name. In truth it might have been better named a De Tomaso, but if that well kept example had been my car, which he had bought from me, it is likely I would have at least fantasised about ambushing him with a cricket bat to the head (in my defence he's bigger than me, and reputedly given to punching people in the face).

So, as scuttlebutt would have it, the Maserati Biturbo is a truly horrible car, the ultimate dog. One of my employers at the first law firm I worked for in South Africa (I'll not mention them as they compete with me – if you need a trademark wallah I am the one you should think of!) bought one new

So, as scuttlebutt would have it, the Maserati Biturbo is a truly horrible car, the ultimate dog

in about 1984 – the original 2-litre model. I remember that he thoroughly enjoyed it, but complained that it "blew up" every 8 000km with monotonous regularity. This did tend to annoy him and eventually the Maserati was sold.

Back then I used a 1964 3.8-litre fixed head coupé E-Type as my daily and wrote articles for various motoring magazines as a means of supplementing my very meagre income. It was that fact that persuaded the purveyor of used vehicles helmed by one Clive Broadhead (assisted by Sean Feeney who is still a force in classic car sales) to let me drive a Biturbo – in fact Clive egged me to drive it as I had told him they were horrible. I took up the offer with some reluctance. It erupted from a standing start and seemed to spin through the gears with amazing speed which had me grabbing for the next, and the next, and the next with great haste to prevent busting into the red zone on the tachometer. I brought it back to them trembling from sheer exhilaration.

As much fun as the E-Type was, the sheer immediacy and nippiness of the Maserati was a revelation. The E would take it in a straight line after a while, but the bursts of acceleration certainly felt much quicker and swapping cogs with

the 5-speed ZF gearbox in the Maserati was a doddle after the slowness and grumbles of the E's Moss 'box. Perhaps luckily, I could not scrape together the shekels to purchase the Biturbo, and it moved on to some other lucky soul and I never sat in another for about 20 years.

Then 12 years ago, the late great Doug Brodie persuaded me to buy a LHD Biturbo out of a deceased estate. The engine was in bits (who said "of course?") and I had to rebuild it. This is where the learning began since I am attracted to facts and read a lot. A lot of what I have read is contradictory, so here goes my version of 'the truth'.

The Maserati V6 engine was designed originally by Guilio Alfieri, chief engineer of Maserati for many years, for the Citroën SM. Known as the 'Tipo C114' the V6 was unusual in having a 90° V, the same as a V8, and was designed to be produced on the same tooling as the then current V8 engines, to minimise production costs.

It may have been the development of the engine that resulted in the purchase of Maserati from the Orsi family, as it was a gem of an engine. In its original form it had twin overhead cams per bank, 2 valves per cylinder, a bore and stroke of 87mm x 75mm, a capacity of 2670cc and produced 170bhp at 5500rpm (62.9bhp/litre) with 170ft/lb



of torque at 4000rpm while weighing only 140kg. Breathing through 3 twin-choke downdraft Weber 42 DCNF carbs it allowed the big SM to cruise at 200km/h and was known for its reliability. This engine then formed the basis of the engine for Maserati's answer to the Ferrari Dino, the mid-engined Merak, in which it was fitted originally in 3-litre (2965cc) form – bored to 91.6mm while retaining the same stroke – where it generated a claimed 187bhp at 6000rpm. The engine was then developed two ways: a higher powered 3-litre with larger carbs and a higher compression ratio for the Merak SS (217bhp – 72.3bhp/litre) and a smaller 2-litre engine for the Italian market with smaller bore and stroke 80mm x 66.3mm for 1999cc. This engine made its maximum 168bhp at 7000rpm (84bhp/litre) and a respectable 134ft/lbs of torque at 4000rpm. This was the ultimate development of the engine by Alfieri.

When Citroën collapsed and was bought by Peugeot, the new owners were swift to dispose of Maserati which, in order to save 800 jobs in Modena, was bought by a consortium of the Italian state and Argentinean businessman Alejandro De Tomaso, who already owned Innocenti (which made Minis in Italy) and De Tomaso's own sportscar company. There was no love

lost between Guilio Alfieri and De Tomaso – Alfieri having been instrumental in blocking De Tomaso's efforts to acquire Maserati in 1968, so Alfieri was infamously dismissed the very day De Tomaso took over.

De Tomaso had great plans for Maserati, plans that revolved around boosting production and making an 'affordable' Maserati aimed to compete directly with the BMW 3 series and Mercedes 190. The Modena factory was producing around three cars a day, and De Tomaso was looking to see 35 a day made. His first step was to match a new Guigaro-designed body with his own De Tomaso Deauville chassis and the then current 4.9-litre Maserati V8 engine to make an Italian luxury saloon to carry on the tradition of the Orsi era Quattroporte. He quickly axed Alfieri's Citroën-inspired V6 Quattroporte II and launched the Quattroporte III, one of which (until recently) sat in my driveway, and which was the most successful V8 Maserati ever, with over 2 000 built. I really didn't like it much.

At the time, the Innocenti factory needed work given the slumping sales of the BMC clones being produced, so the lack of

manufacturing capacity at the main Maserati plant was not a problem – Innocenti had more than adequate capacity. Here came the next step in De Tomaso's plan – take the marque's fabulous V6 engine and design a new sporting two-door around it. The design work fell to Pierangelo Andreani who had designed other De Tomaso cars, and the C114 engine was redesigned with single overhead cams, while the chain-driven valve gear changed to a rubber cam belt driving De Tomaso's patented 3-valve per cylinder valve gear to become the world's first production twin turbo engine. Turbos were of course all the rage in 1979 with Renault's Formula 1 turbo success, but turbo lag had become a byword for evil manners in contemporary cars. The redesigned engine's 82mm x 63mm bore and stroke for 1996cc yielded in normally aspirated form 150hp at 6000rpm, which was less than the

De Tomaso had great plans for Maserati, plans that revolved around boosting production and making an 'affordable' Maserati aimed to compete directly with the BMW 3 series and Mercedes 190



Merak 2-litre and not lusty enough to allow the car to compete with its Teutonic targets, but this did not faze De Tomaso at all as he planned to cash in on the 'turbo' craze.

He proposed the use of two small turbos to minimise lag while cumulatively providing as much boost as a single large turbo. With the twin turbo set up, power was boosted to 180bhp at 6000rpm (90bhp/litre) and 187ft/lb of torque at 4400rpm, while the export markets later got the less stressed 2490.9cc 2.5-litre version of the engine which made 192bhp at 5500rpm (76.8bhp/litre) and 220ft/lb at 3000rpm. Money was tight, so a conventional rear wheel drive layout was chosen, with a 5-speed ZF S5-18/3 gearbox, with a dog leg first gear. Weight was kept down to 1 080kg. While intended to be quick and a fast *gran turismo* car in keeping with Maserati traditions, De Tomaso put the emphasis on practical performance, so concentrated on overtaking performance and high speed cruise rather than 0-100 times and ultimate top speed. Nevertheless, with a 0-100km/h time of 6.5 seconds and a standing quarter-mile at 14.8 seconds the car was quick although its maximum speed of 215km/h seems quite pedestrian 35 years later. In short, the car was exciting. Indeed its

overtaking acceleration from, say, 80km/h to 120, was in the same bracket as the Ferrari 308 GTB at around 4.6 seconds and the Maserati, with its full 4 seats and useful boot was quicker on every other measure.

The sales hype was great – it was sexy and the lineage was played up with the launch timed for 14 December 1981, the Maserati company's 67<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pricing was keen, the car's twin turbo engine as intended caught imaginations fired by the success of Renault and more importantly Ferrari turbocharged F1 engines, styling looked understated but elegant and the launch was a triumph. Thousands were ordered before any were delivered. De Tomaso's plan had worked – the Maserati for the 'common' man was a dizzying success.

For about 60 seconds.

The Italian motor industry had bought a large amount of steel from Russia and used to make – among many others – Maserati Biturbo cars. This steel, in keeping with Italian custom then, was not galvanised and, unknown to the Italians, was a particularly poor steel obtained by scrapping legions of WW2 Russian tanks. The Biturbo was a rush job, with too little money, too little development, dreadful electrics and a catastrophic material choice. If you park a

Biturbo near the sea and listen carefully, you will hear it fizzing. Enthusiastic drivers thumped the cars and discovered that over-revving killed them, failing to cool the turbos killed those, differentials burst, fuse boxes melted, the live rear axle was good on a smooth road but not

ideal on bumpy ones, reliability and service levels were appalling and the car became the darling of the 'backwards through the hedge' brigade who learnt the hard way about turbo power increments. Journalists absolutely loathed Biturbos and the word certainly got around in a hurry.

*TIME* magazine voted it one of the worst cars ever and it made No.34 on the BBC's list of awful cars. It has to be said that the BBC list includes the VW Beetle (No.1 most awful car) and the MGB (No. 10 most awful car) so the Maserati is really not in such bad company!

The sad thing is that Maserati learnt fast, but it was too late. The Series II Biturbo, launched in 1985, had overcome the majority of the early cars' problems. The 2.5-litre engine was standard, the differential was the vastly improved Sensitork, the turbos were water-cooled and bulletproof, and the interior materials were much better. The famous Lassale clock, which inspired much controversy, compared to a Dali painting and many thought more suited to a bordello than a sports car, had made its appearance – but the dog had a bad name and sales were few and far between. Bad news for Maserati and De Tomaso, but, a few years on it became very good news for me – an Italian exotic I could actually afford to buy. Due to the number built (some 38 000 of all derivatives) and the low esteem in which they are held, parts are relatively easy and cheap to come by. I bought a complete engine and gearbox for US\$700 a few years ago – shipping it here and clearing customs cost more than the engine had.

The one I got via Doug has the engine I

The sales hype was great – it was sexy and the lineage was played up with the launch timed for 14 December 1981, the Maserati company's 67<sup>th</sup> birthday



rebuilt, with two rebuilt IHI air-cooled turbos, a new carb, and still sits immobile in my garage. The reason? Two fold: 1. The fuel pump will not work and auto electricians have been unable to solve the problem. 2. When people learn you have a Maserati Biturbo and like it, they assume you are insane. The corollary is that you keep being offered more of them, so I bought a cream RHD Series II – one of 189 RHD Biturbos.

It had been with two previous owners and had covered less than 62 000km. It worked, was fun to drive, but seemed quite slow – i.e. faster than a lot of cars, but with none of that crackling exhilaration I remembered from 30 years previously.

The Maserati Automatic Boost Control ('MABC') may be to blame; I bought a new one and was going to fit it, but then I hit a large dog, a boerbul, to the effusive gratitude of the couple it had rushed across the road to attack, unwisely ignoring the Maserati quietly minding its own business. Not sure what it is about dogs and this car. That shattered the front airdam and bumper, which seem to be made out of plastic. The dog, for those who think me heartless, picked itself up and rushed back home chastened but not injured.

I was looking on eBay for the part when I spotted a gold Biturbo for sale in the UK, quite cheap. So I bought it. I was thinking I'd take the front part I needed and sell the parts to other people, maybe even at a profit. A friend of mine, and fellow Maserati fan (a Khamsin owner), had taken delivery of it for me at his Buckinghamshire farm and phoned to tell me he had inadvertently parked it in a lake. This, it emerged, was a

fabrication, but he told me the car was "too good to scrap". I arrived at his door and took it for a canter around the Buckinghamshire lanes – and came back with that slight tremble I had been missing. Indeed I had come close to putting it backwards through a hedge, which would have rounded off the Biturbo experience, I suppose, but it is one aspect of it I am happy to miss.

I felt obliged to ship the car here and it has turned out to be a gem. One of the last RHD Biturbos built, it was sorted out by Bill McGrath Maserati in the UK, and features on their website. Although afflicted with a fair amount of rust, it drives like a Biturbo should. Yes, there are modern 'hot hatches' which are quicker now, but with 35 years worth of water under the bridge, that is not really surprising.

I think the appeal of the Maserati as a classic is that, despite its faults and foibles, it was so very *nearly* a great car. If Alessandro De Tomaso had tried a little harder and insisted on decent steel, decent electrical fittings, fitted inter-coolers, gone with fuel injection at the start and ventilated discs on the front... well, I think his creation would have garnered a whole lot more praise. It would be spoken of today in the same hushed tones as the (somewhat slower) Lancia Integrale which made its debut seven years after the maligned Maserati.

My eBay Biturbo is a wonderful car, because it is properly sorted out. It is a RHD Series 2 2.5-litre model built, it seems, in 1987 and delivered to some happy soul in the UK. It

has the carburettor through which the twin turbos blow and seems to be more or less stock. It was looked after though by Bill McGrath Maserati in England and someone there obviously had mastered the arcane art of tuning these cars properly. It is not quite as fast as I would like, it still has no intercoolers, but it starts, it drives, handles and stops very well indeed and is hugely satisfying to drive. In short it is 'fun'. That to me is what owning a classic car is – or ought to be – all about.

I have acquired, from Croatia of all places, the penultimate development of this engine series, the 2-litre 24-valve quad cam unit from a 1992 Ghibli. This engine retains the bore and stroke of the original Biturbo 2-litre, but has fuel injection, improved electronic management, improved turbos and intercooling. When launched it was the most powerful 2-litre engine ever featured in a production car, at 306 bhp at 6250rpm (153bhp/litre) and 275ft/lb of torque at 4250rpm. I intend to rebuild this as a 2.5-litre and install it in my very pretty and almost rust-free but relatively slow cream Biturbo. That should make it into quite a vicious dog (okay, I don't really agree with that sobriquet). I am looking forward to it.

Meanwhile I bought the Spider version of this underrated car, but that's another story... 🇬🇧

I arrived at his door and took it for a canter around the Buckinghamshire lanes – and came back with that slight tremble I had been missing

— STUART GRANT —

- 1974 Alfa Romeo Alfetta
- 1965 Renault R10
- 1984 Peugeot 205GTI
- 1984 Mercedes-Benz 190E

# IF THE SHOE FITS...



During the mid-1990s a fashion trend swept through my circles. The trend was the military-inspired Dr Martens boots and shoes. Known as Docs, they were the must have for the 'in' bunch. The number of lace holes in your Docs was how high on the cool ladder you would climb. Sporting 24-hole knee-high boots put you at the top, 8-hole midway and 3-holes just got you onto the ranking.

At around R300 they were seriously expensive and only those who excelled at newspaper delivery or waiter jobs could afford them. Clearly my neighbourhood was too small or my slot car hobby too expensive because I couldn't afford a pair. But by negotiating some loot instead of a Christmas present I was able to head out and buy a single set of Docs. These had to multi-task as school shoes and going out on the jol kit, as the uniform khaki shorts couldn't hide knee-high units. The yellow stitching wasn't within school rules but if you steered clear of prefects, and for inspection pulled out old Bata Toughees, you could beat the system.

I thought I had it made until my mother pointed out that I would never be able to double up school and party shoes – once they become school shoes in my head, they would not hold the same 'coolness' factor for going out in. I denied this but a few months in

realised her words were wise indeed. To me it looked like I was going out in my school attire, which was seriously uncool and the thought couldn't be reversed.

Fast forward to June 2016 and the decision to sell my 2012 Fiat 500 daily and replace it with a classic – a 1974 Alfa Romeo Alfetta. With an 1800cc twincam engine, 5-speed gearbox, 4 doors and a large boot it was the obvious choice. Sure it doesn't have aircon but with the quarter-light window opened it pumps fresh air into the cabin for acceptable cooling without messing your hair up. It is just perfect, except for one thing... my mother's Doc Marten multi-tasking niggling in the back of my head.

Would my weekend toy be sacrificed as it became a workday tool?

3 months in I can gladly say no. It has done the job with aplomb, comfortable at speed and even happy trundling along in town traffic. I haven't measured fuel consumption, but the petrol drunk by the double Dellorto carbs seems acceptable – heavier than the 6.5 litres per 100km that the Fiat averaged but the saving in not paying a monthly instalment on the new car makes up for it. That's my justification and I'm sticking to it.

A friend pointed out that it isn't very responsible in the eco-friendly department though, but as I see it any carbon footprint calculation takes into account the number

of years the vehicle is in service for and therefore the longer the lifespan the greener it is. Add to this an image of the old Alfa plant in Brits that shows humans working on the line negating the need for energy sapping robots and exorbitant coal-generated electricity bills, it is greener than many moderns in that department.

The old Alfa thrills to drive, not only because of its sporting nature, but also because it gets thumbs up and smiles from other road users every day. The same happens on the weekends; whether taking in a breakfast run or attending a classic car show there is always appreciation. The daily grind is good for the old banger too as you end up repairing issues immediately and carrying out preventative servicing or maintenance more than you would if it was only pulled out of the garage every other weekend. It is a win-win all round.

Unlike my old school shoes, not everybody in the circle has an old Alfa banger to drive, which is more than likely why multi-tasking it doesn't bring on the Doc Marten syndrome.

As far as the rest of the fleet goes it has been a stable month for the French pair while the Mercedes suffered an electrical issue while racing at Redstar recently. Piston number three punched a hole in the block and took out the alternator while coating the track in oil for the other racers – apologies.

— ETIENNE FOUCHE —

- 1969 Valiant Barracuda
- 1964 Dodge Polara (customer car)
- 1969 Valiant Barracuda (customer car)
- 1968 Valiant Barracuda (customer car)
- 1967 Plymouth Sport Fury (customer car)
- 1960 Renault Caravelle (customer car)

# GETTING HOT IN HERE

**W**ith summer upon us the garage days are heating up, making productivity harder but time is money. The Plymouth Fury has returned from its custom tubular exhaust build, now running a full 3-inch dual exhaust with balancer pipe and dual electric cut off valves. This means two things: it will be loud, and then it will be obnoxious.

Black '68 Cuda is still awaiting funds from its owner before anything happens.

A 1964 Dodge Polara has since joined the party for a full restoration and two tone black/white paint job. Original steel wheels have been widened with new trim rings and rubber all round. The push button Auto is fighting me a bit but the finish line is in sight. The 318 'Polypheral' V8 now runs once more with all original wiring,

mechanical voltage regulator and stock point and condenser setup in the distributor. Quite amazing that all still functions as it should.

The Blue '69 Cuda is back for an electronic voltage regulator to keep the excessive overcharging from bombing the battery, lights and fuses and the Renault Caravelle's bodywork is complete, wearing a shiny base/clear coat of deep metallic blue. This did wonders for the bodylines. Interior upholstery is also complete with new carpet and vinyl throughout. Most of the wiring has been done, leaving only brakes and a small transmission oil leak in need of attention. The owner is ecstatic. On my own fleet the '69 Barracuda is working really hard as a daily runner – some suspension creaking noises being the telltale signs. Luckily most of these parts can still be obtained locally if you shop carefully. 

# DUMP STRUCK

One man's junk is another man's treasure. We only have to look at the massive prices being reached for rusted old signs and memorabilia at the moment to realise this. Yes, those artefacts that you once picked up from demolition sites and then left unloved in the garden shed are now sought after bits of patina in any designer lounge. But as **Stuart Grant** discusses, content is the key to top dollar and the same goes for ropery old cars. Does this mystery car bring the right 'content' to the party or is it best left to rust in peace? Most importantly, what is it?



**W**hen talking memorabilia 'content', it is clear that motoring products hold the greatest value, with Coca-Cola perhaps being able to better it. If you have something like a Shell, Mobil, Michelin, Castrol Service/Diens sign you are in the money. Even better, a period petrol pump in good unrestored condition or the flag-waving Sasol Man that topped them. The smaller motor oil cans too command prices far higher than the liquid that once filled them, but for whatever reason, an old olive oil or biscuit tin of the same age doesn't quite measure up on the desirability hierarchy.

Similarly in the world of barn/garden find cars some are seen as winners and others as scrap. A farm fresh 1960s Ferrari will let you retire while a 1000cc Mini is probably not worth the money it costs to sweep the rust away – unless of course it sports some fancy Cooper S VIN plate or international race or rally pedigree. Other hot commodities include Porsche 356s, split window Kombis, Jag E-Types, Porsche 911s and the odd Bugatti of course. Once rescued, the owners generally like to fix them up mechanically but leave the coachwork and upholstery 'as-found'. Unfortunately for me Alfa Romeo Alfettas, Volkswagen Jettas and Toyota Corollas haven't quite reached the right 'content' level yet.

But I live in hope.

What has been a reality in Southern Africa though is the possibility of finding a forgotten sports car with a competition

history. This is made possible thanks to our motorsport obsession where hotting-up or building a car to compete in an international event was plausible. Circuits here in SA, Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique also drew in teams from around the globe at the end of the season, thereafter competing cars were often sold to locals instead of shipping them home. In the past few decades, stories of raced Austin Healeys, a lightweight E-Type Jaguar, Tipo 33 Alfa Romeo and others being found have been told. There is even the incredible story of a Porsche 550 Spider buried in Johannesburg and word has it that a Lancia Stratos and Peugeot 205 T16 rally machines are still lurking in Tanzania. So they are out there.

So did one just surface here? Okay, so it is fibreglass so won't rust. But is it worth saving? It's a good thing it is fibreglass though as the salty air of the KwaZulu-Natal coast is where it currently sits. It appears to have never been fitted to a chassis as things like the door gaps or lighting apertures have never been cut. All the information we have to hand is that it was found at a rubbish

dump in Durban about fifteen years back, loaded and moved to the garden where it sits today. It appears very well made and presumably has been moulded off another body or a well made buck.

Searching for similar body styles online hasn't turned up anything conclusive but there are similarities to the likes of Rochdale, Buckley and Mistral cars that went onto either custom-built tubular chassis or modified British assemblies like Triumph TR, MG TC and TD.

If you have any ideas on what it could be please write to [info@classiccarafrika.com](mailto:info@classiccarafrika.com). Whatever the outcome, whether or not the body has some sort of high-class breeding, this is our latest *Classic Car Africa* project car. Our project is to work out what it is, and then to mate it to suitable underpinnings. As you will have seen, project cars always take longer than estimated and we won't fall into the trap of making a completion date this time.

For now, and in the tradition of 1950s and '60s specials it needs a name, so please send your proposals, with justification, through. 📧

## THE NAMING GAME

1. Infinity The length of time it will take to find out what the car is. And finish building it.
2. Mfezi Zulu for Mozambique Spitting Cobra prolific in KZN, where the car sits today.
3. Inyoka Zulu for snake/legless reptile alluding to cars of sleek look, lack of underpinnings and location.
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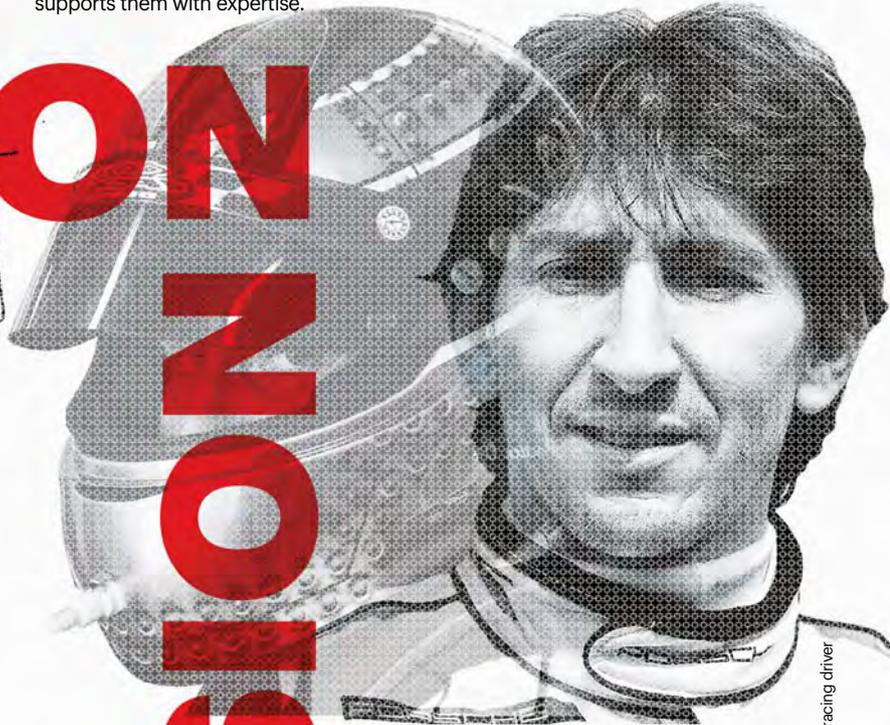
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