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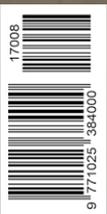
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**CLASSIC**  
CAR AFRICA  
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## CATCH OF THE DAY

In a motoring sense South Africa has some pretty big fish. One only has to look at the number of local homologation legends to realise this: try the Chevrolet CanAm, Alfa Romeo GTV6 3-litre, Ford Sierra XR8 and Cortina Interceptor and of course BMW SA's 530MLE, 745i, 325is and 333i. What differentiated these from regular hot-rodded racers elsewhere in the world was the manufacturer backing and dealership involvement. This issue we celebrate 50 years of the firm that not only kicked off the trend of manufacturer involvement in track-modified machines but also produced such well engineered machines that they've become the most desirable models of the brand the world over. We are, of course, referring to Basil Green's Perana story – the biggest fish in the pond.

It's a double dose of SA homologation specials this month, but the second comes from the other end of the time scale, with what many regard as the last of the bunch – a sad fact brought on by racing rule changes. Production cars became more complicated and stricter safety and emission rules meant getting manufacturer go-ahead for such wild projects was all but impossible. Did they leave the best for last? That's a heated debate but we can tell you that this car, the Opel Superboss, is one serious bit of kit and still able to give modern

machines a run for their money.

While Perana might be the most famous South African Ford there is another Ford that the world goes nuts for – if you don't believe me, just mention Y151 in the blue oval circles. Gerrie van Heerden goes through the timeline of how Peter Gough's famed race number came into being – it's a simple formula:

$$(2 \times \text{Ford Cortina}) + (2 \times \text{Ford Escort}) = \text{Y151}$$

The theme of factory-hotted daily runabouts, albeit not local ones, continues with Sivan Goren looking at the aesthetically-understated Audi RS2 Avant and Mercedes-Benz E500 offering engineered and built by Porsche, while Mike Monk tracks an Abarth-built Fiat 2300S Coupé that worked its way from Italy, to Lebanon, the UK and eventually SA.

Jake venter conducts a fictitious interview with the BMW 328 engineers while Gavin Foster catches up with Tommy Robinson, a former international motorcycle and car racer whose scariest moment came while swimming on the South Coast. Our other features include a look at a 1920s Chevrolet Superior pick-up workhorse and how best to keep your classic safe, reliable and on the road.

Hope you enjoy.

*Stuart*

## LEXUS LAUNCH PAD

Over a few days in mid-June, Lexus launched its new GT, the LC 500, in Franschhoek – first to dealers and then to the media. Much of the event centred on FMM's PlaasPad, from where each group participated in a number of activities in rotation. These included driving on the track, driving over the Franschhoek Pass and back, participating in a beginner's class in the Japanese art of kintsugi and finally, lunch provided by L'Ormarins caterers before departing.

The LC 500 is the new Lexus flagship sports coupé built upon an entirely new GA-L floorpan that will underpin future front-engine/rear-wheel-drive models. It is powered by a 5-litre, 32-valve V8 delivering 351kW at 7100 r/min and 540Nm of torque at 4800. The engine is mated with a

10-speed automatic transmission with manual override and no less than six drive modes. Top speed is 270km/h and 0-100km/h takes 4.7 seconds.

On some of the days, continual rain and thick mist put a damper on the driving programme, although all of the affected journalists appreciated the wet-weather driving experience carried out in the safe environment afforded at PlaasPad under the trained supervision of FMM's Wayne Harley and Lorenzo Farella. "It certainly brought home just how much traction and control a modern car can offer, even in such adverse conditions," said CCA contributor Mike Monk. FMM curator



Wayne later had a chance to drive the car in drier conditions and commented on just how solidly the car performed.

The fully-equipped LC 500 is priced at R1 729 600.

## STREET RODS VISIT



Indicative of the attraction FMM has for all aspects of the motor enthusiast fraternity, the Cape Town Street Rod Club recently made a run out to the museum. The customised cars make for quite a contrast with the museum's collection and represent a very imaginative art form of vehicle restoration. A colourful mix of American and English saloons, pickups and a muscle car gathered in the car park while their owners and friends toured the museum's exhibits. "We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves," said club chairman William Moore, who added that the club would like to make an annual outing to FMM as part of its schedule.

## DAMSEAUX DELIGHT

Early in July, South Africa's multiple title-winning rally champion Serge Damseaux was at FMM to reacquire himself with a car he once owned. Serge won 74 national rallies between 1985 and 2007 driving for (predominantly) Toyota and Ford, taking 10 SA Drivers' Championships in the process, but started his career driving privately-entered Alfa Romeos in the Western Cape. Now retired, his long-standing passion for the Italian cars continues and he has built up a small



collection of classic Alfas. One car he once owned but regrettably sold was a rare 3-litre Alfetta GTV6 which the new owner, Roderick Ketterer, later put into the care of FMM. The car is in pristine, unrestored condition and Serge quickly felt at home powering the car around PlaasPad, afterwards enthusing about just how good the car was – and still is.

## AUBURN HEADS UP

Serge arrived at FMM with one of the Motorsport Legends Benevolent Fund administrators Allan Trim, with whom Serge worked when he was competing for Toyota while Allan was the company's motorsport consultant. Today, apart from his Legends activity, Allan does CNC machining for specialist projects and is currently busy manufacturing a new cylinder head for the museum's 1936 Auburn Speedster straight-eight Lycoming engine. Allan flew in from Johannesburg with one part of the head, which was machined out of a solid block of aluminium, for a trial fit on the engine. This proved successful and the end of the Auburn's rebuild is in sight.



## WHERE, WHAT TIMES AND HOW MUCH

The Franschhoek Motor Museum is situated on the L'Ormarins Estate along the R45 in the Franschhoek Valley in the Western Cape. Visiting is currently by appointment only – phone (021) 874 9002 to make a reservation. Opening hours until November are – Monday to Friday 10h00 to 17h00 (last admittance 16h00), Saturday and Sunday 10h00 to 16h00 (last admittance 15h00). The museum is open on most public holidays except Christmas Day. Admission prices are R80 adults, R60 pensioners and motor club members (with membership ID), R40 children (ages 3-12). Guided tours are available upon request at no charge. An on-site Deli offers refreshments and a selection of wines produced by Anthonij Rupert Wyne.



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# MAKE A — DATE —

We will continually update the 2017 events calendar. To submit your club event for publication in the magazine as well as on our website ([www.classiccarafrica.com](http://www.classiccarafrica.com)) please submit details along with an image or two to [stuart@classiccarafrica.com](mailto:stuart@classiccarafrica.com).

## AUGUST

4	HAGI VCCM Conference	Sun City
4-6	Concours SA	Sun City
5	Historic Tour – Dezzi Raceway	Port Shepstone
6	POMC Cars in the Park – Zwartkops	Pretoria
9	Cars in the Park – OFS Vintage Car Club	Bloemfontein
9	Prowl – Durban Early Car Club	Durban
12	Xtreme Festival – Zwartkops Raceway	Pretoria
13	CMC Winter Rally	Germiston
13	Parkhurst Heritage Day	Parkhurst
16-20	Magnum Rally	Hazyview
19	SA Endurance Series 3 Hour – Dezzi Raceway	Port Shepstone

## SEPTEMBER

1-3	Kyalami Festival of Motoring	Kyalami
2/3	Wheels at the Vaal	Vanderbijlpark
3-7	SAVVA National and Rendezvous Tour	Fouriesburg
16	Historic Tour – Zwartkops Raceway	Pretoria
17	Piston Ring Swap Meet	Modderfontein
23	SEFAC Ferrari 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Kyalami
23	4-Stage – Zwartkops Raceway	Pretoria
24	National Drive It Day	National
24	Blairgowrie Toy Fair	Blairgowrie
30	Xtreme Festival – Kyalami Race Track	Kyalami

## OCTOBER

1	POMC Aircooled Show	Pretoria
1	Classics in the Bay	Cape Town
14	SA Endurance Series 3 Hour – Aldo Scribante Race Track	Port Elizabeth
15	Killarney Classic Car Show	Cape Town
28	Historic Tour – Red Star Raceway	Delmas
29	Studebaker Club Show Day	Irene

## NOVEMBER

4	Xtreme Festival – Kyalami Race Track	Kyalami
4	SA Endurance Series 9 Hour – Phakisa Freeway	Welkom
12-15	SAVVA National and Fairest Cape Rally	Cape Town
25	Xtreme Festival – Zwartkops Raceway	Pretoria
26	Blairgowrie Toy Fair	Blairgowrie

## DECEMBER

2	Historic Tour – Kyalami Race Track	Kyalami
16	Mossel Bay Wheels Gathering	Mossel Bay



## 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
Last Sunday of the month	Southern Cape Old Car Club	Glenwood, George
Last Sunday of the month	The Crankhandle Club	Wynberg, Cape Town
Last Sunday of the month	The Veteran Car Club of South Africa	Kloof, KwaZulu-Natal

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# GOODBYE DOLLY

If you live or have lived in Joburg, you will know The Doll House. It's been around for 85 years, used to be open 24/7 and was the go-to post-party spot after a trip to Rokeby Street or clubs out in Hillbrow. Of course it was also a hotspot for some frowned-upon street race meetings and at times in its life was so popular that parking was impossible to find.

Sadly over the years the number of visitors has dwindled to such an extent that on 31 August 2017 the neon sign will be switched off for good. A notice of proposed demolition is also circulating, so chances are that the land will take on a new role very soon.

If you want to say goodbye join *Classic Car Africa* for one last artery-clogging toasted chicken mayo sarmie, some slap chips and a milkshake at 2pm on Sunday 13 August.



## MOSSEL BAY

## HOLIDAY FUN

The second Mossel Bay Wheels Gathering is set to take place on 16 December 2017 at the banked Municipal Park across the way from Mossel Bay Mall, on the corner of Melkhout & Seder Streets, Heiderand.

Offering an informal gathering of motoring enthusiasts, it promises to be a show packed with classic and vintage cars, motorcycles, the odd vintage tractor and, to celebrate the seaside holiday season, a number of beach buggies.

No entry fees are charged but donations will be taken for various charities. Stalls selling vehicle-related products will be on hand and picnics are welcome – but for safety reasons no open fires or braais are allowed.

Registration is compulsory and can be done by contacting Dirk van der Merwe on 084 774 7300 or [dirk.dirxworx@telkomsa.net](mailto:dirk.dirxworx@telkomsa.net).



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# LEAPS & BOUNDS

Despite some seriously fresh winter mornings, July was one of those months where a number of projects suddenly looked the part, shining in some fresh paint. For days, weeks and occasionally months we sit cutting and hammering away at metal, putting in huge hours, but to the passer-by it looks like little progress has been made. But add a lick of paint and straight away they think the project is all but complete. We take any comments about how slow the progress has been in our stride as we know that the unglamorous and hard preparation work is the most vital aspect in the entire bodywork equation. Without this happening correctly the paint finish and even longevity will be sub-standard.

That said, we do get a kick from seeing a beautifully painted shell and the excitement on a client's face when they collect their newly-painted project shell or restored and assembled classic.

Each brings us a new challenge and something new to sink our teeth into. Each month 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, which cars have gone out and which 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.



This fibreglass legend came into the shop a while back, was stripped and a list was made of what parts to refurbish and what to order in. Spare parts have arrived from the USA and a brilliant black coat of paint has been applied. Before this was done there were numerous repairs that needed to be made to the fibreglass. We are now assembling the car for the client.



A new arrival that has come in for a full makeover. The car has been stripped and is being taken back to basics to establish what sort of condition the structure is in. Sadly, like any car of this age, there is a fair amount of rot that had been hidden with filler and the like. The plan is to get it into the shop to cut and replace this before carrying out a paint job and assembly.



If there is one car that has taken a massive step in the right direction over the last month it is our own BMW 3.0CSI. Although the shell wasn't bad we did do a bit of metal work before prepping to paint. It is now ready to go into the spray booth – most likely back to the original colour as matched with the Glasurit Classic Car Colors library. We can't wait to add all the trim and details back to the beauty and drive it.



This well-known BMW 2002 race car has spent some time on track and was understandably looking a bit tired when the new owner brought it in. Any issues with the metal were sorted and the fibreglass body kit tidied up before shooting it in a crisp white. It's partly assembled and in our mind looks too good to race. But we all know the call of the track is very strong.



Last month we started stripping this rare Dodge Polara. The brightwork has been sent off to see what can be re-used, what needs to be restored and what we will have to order from the States. Next on the list is taking the body down to metal, rectifying the hidden flaws and then painting it in a period-correct colour. Dino's will assemble for the owner.



A stint on the rotisserie revealed that this Jaguar E-Type was a solid base on which to start a restoration. Some new metal and lead filling was required, and with the new nose section having just arrived from the UK, we can start lining that up. As we've said before, even the best replacement parts require a bit of work to get a perfect fit.



Progress on the super-rare Maserati Indy has been good and if you stand back from the car you can now see the brilliance of the designer. One of very few right-hand-drive versions this is one rare bit of kit and deserves to be saved. It's taken a lot to save it but we are getting there. Dino's has made new floors, sills, door skins, rear wheel arch sections and the spare wheel well. It will be a beauty once again.



Seeing how this Lancia Aurelia has turned out makes all the hard slog worth it. It arrived in a stripped-down fashion, complete with bucketloads of filler hiding plenty of gremlins. We cut out the rust, put in new metal and reshaped many parts of the body. If that wasn't enough the entire nose panel was changed to the correct profile too.



Occasionally old school techniques are required in the modern bodyshop department. Case in point being this Mercedes-Benz SLS that suffered some front-end damage. An abundance of aluminium meant the years of experience working this material came in handy, and it looks like new.

# KAWASAKI CROWD PLEASERS

A pair of Kawasaki motorcycles took top honours at the Classic Motorcycle Club's annual 1000 Bike Show, held in early July. Henk van Heerden's 1974 Kawasaki Z900 was judged Best on Show in the Classic motorcycle section and Sean McGlead's 1979 Kawasaki Z1300 won Best on Show in the Custom motorcycle category.

This year's show was staged at a new venue, the Germiston City Sports Club, and proved very suitable and the ideal venue going forward. There were plenty of motorcycles on show – many painstakingly restored to original or better condition – to keep visitors entertained for hours. In addition, the visitors parking lot was packed with even more bikes and trikes, providing interest and entertainment to those of a classic or modern bent.

## CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE – CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES

Classic Best on Show	Henk van Heerden	1974 Kawasaki Z900
American	Louis van Eeden	1942 Harley Davidson 5/7
British Pre-War	Gavin Walton	1936 AJS Model
British Post-War	William Viljoen	1960 BSA Gold Star
British Classic	Ken Jones	1962 BSA Gold Flash
Japanese over 250cc	Henk van Heerden	1974 Kawasaki Z900
Japanese under 250cc	William Norris	Kawasaki KR250
European	Trevor David	Ducati 600 Pantah
2-Stroke Racing	Leon van der Berg	1968 Yamaha RD05A
Off-Road	Ian Couper	1989 Kawasaki KX250
VMX Racer	Gareth Ireland	1981 Maico MC 490
Street Scrambler	Ian Couper	1981 Honda XR 500
50cc	Nico Erasmus	Yamaha RZ50
Italian	Trevor David	600 Desmo Pantah
Sidecar	Willie Stuckmeyer	BSA
Ladies' Choice	Janusz Gruszka	Excelsior Super X
Stand	Velocette	
Custom Best on Show	Sean McGlead	1979 Kawasaki Z1300



# ALFISTI HEADS UP

Gauteng fans of the cross and serpent brand are in for a treat on 24 September as the Alfa Romeo Concorso De L'Afrique takes place on the terraces of the Mall of Africa. This means that all three major Alfa Romeo (Johannesburg, Pretoria and West Rand) clubs will come together for the ultimate show of the brand and well over 100 entries are expected. Keep an eye on [www.classicarafrika.com](http://www.classicarafrika.com) for more information in the coming weeks.



# TANZANIA REVISITED

55 years ago Christopher and Francis Carlisle-Kitz, aged 17 and 16 respectively, climbed Mt Kilimanjaro and reached the summit, known then as Kaiser Wilhelm Spitz, on 23 August 1962. And on 23 August 2017, exactly 55 years later, they plan to be on the mountain again. But unlike in 1962, when they hitchhiked from Iringa in the Southern Highlands to Kili in the north, in 2017 they plan to drive from Johannesburg to Kili in a 55-year-old car. This car, a 1962 Ford Consul Classic 315, is in virtually unrestored and original condition. Just as they did in 1962, they will travel light and camp along the way, visiting places of interest. The plan is to ascend Kilimanjaro by the same Rongai route that they climbed years ago. There are also two more historic hills in Tanzania to revisit and climb again: the first is a hill behind the secondary school, St. Michael's and St. George's in Iringa, which they attended in the 1950s and 1960s. The second is situated behind Lushoto School in the Usambara Mountains, the preparatory school which the brothers attended prior to Iringa. Watch this space for the continuation of the brothers' story.



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# LEGENDS AT SA FESTIVAL

The South African Motoring Experience powered by the SA Festival of Motoring will provide a thrilling interactive experience with both on- and off-track action. Motoring and motorsport fans will be treated to an unforgettable experience of both sight and sound with top-level activations from the secondary pit upper platform area.

Both current and past motorsport legends will be honoured at the show. Show goers will be able to interact with icons of motorsport such as Sarel van der Merwe, Ian Scheckter and Arnold Chatz, to name only a few. Commemorations on track will include tributes to Tony Viana, Eddie Keizan and other legends of motorsport. Cars celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of both the Perana and Gunston sponsorship will also take to the track. The sight and sounds of iconic race drivers and cars are sure to stir the passion and history of the past.

On-track parades will include a celebration of 50 years of AMG and 70 years of Ferrari. Modern supercars will also participate in high-speed track demonstrations. Legends of local V8 racing will be present both on and off track to add to the rolling thunder of the day.

55 years of endurance racing will be commemorated with three evening track displays with a vast array of historic sports and saloon cars providing spectacular track action. High-powered race cars in a high-speed evening demonstration will bring back great memories of classic endurance racing at the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit.

Various car clubs will showcase their cars in static displays, adding to the atmosphere of the area. Fans of classic cars will be able to move amongst club displays and engage with enthusiastic owners.

See you at Kyalami from 1 to 3 September.



## MAGICAL MAGNUM



Explore some of the Country's best roads and scenery as a competitor on this year's Magnum Rally. Running from 9 to 12 August the regularity event bases itself around Numbi Hotel in Hazyview, takes in the stunning roads of Mpumalanga and features a decent amount of socialising with like-minded motorists. Don't forget that

the 9<sup>th</sup> is Women's Day – a public holiday. Accommodation and meal specials have been put together by the hotel and it promises to be one of those must-do events. For bookings or enquiries please email Sandra Linley ([linley.sandra@yahoo.com](mailto:linley.sandra@yahoo.com)) or contact Leo Middleburg on 083 677 2334.

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# MONGOL MAYHEM



Goodwood has seen its fair share of rare cars grace its track, but on Sunday 16 July the most outrageous gathering of motor vehicles ever seen at the famous race track set off on the 2017 Mongol Rally.

Touted as 'The Greatest motoring adventure on the planet', The Mongol Rally has been running since 2004, and this year's edition promises to be the best ever. Finishing in the depths of Siberian Russia, with parties planned on a Romanian beach and a secret location in the Czech Republic along the way. This year's Rally is set to be the biggest to date, with a total of nearly 950 people taking part, in around 330 vehicles of all shapes and sizes (including the event's first ever fully electric car). There are a whopping 44 different nationalities represented, including folks from Paraguay, Bosnia, Malaysia, Japan and Chile.

The aim of the rally is simple: travel from Goodwood to Ulan Ude in Russia, with a drive through Mongolia and a few organised 'pit stops' along the way – for one couple there's a particularly important stop at Lake Bled in Slovenia, for their wedding! There is a slight twist, or two, however.

For starters, there's no backup, no support and no set route; just you, your fellow adventurers and a car; with past teams having travelled as far south as Iran and Pakistan, and others venturing into the Arctic Circle.

The fact you're likely to get lost and end up in a few sticky spots is all part of the experience though, as The Adventurists, the organisers of the event (and a whole host of other incredible adventures including the iconic Rickshaw Run in India, the world's longest horse race and the first long-distance Paramotor race) explain.

The real spanner in the works is the fact you have to do The Rally in the 'crappiest' vehicle you can find, with any engine size no bigger than 1000cc (you might twist the organisers' arms to allow you 1.2 litres if you find something 'really special').

If you think all this sounds a little too silly to be a real adventure, think again. With the Rally travelling around 10 000 miles across the mountains, desert and steppes of Europe and Asia, the nature of the route and the vehicles used force participants to

really experience the land and cultures they're travelling through. It's hard to find another organised event that guarantees adventure and mishap on such an epic scale.

The Rally also gives back to some of the countries and environments it travels through and The Adventurists, through The Mongol Rally and other adventures, have so far raised over eight million pounds for charities worldwide. This year's participants in the Mongol Rally have already raised £58 000 for Cool Earth ([www.coolearth.org](http://www.coolearth.org)), The Adventurists' official charity, and tens of thousands more for other charities close to entrants' hearts (particularly noteworthy is terminal cancer survivor Adam Alderson raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Support and the Steve Prescott Foundation after having survived a 17-hour operation and multiple organ transplants).

To track the teams and keep up to date with their mishaps, head to: [tracking.theadventurists.com](http://tracking.theadventurists.com). For more details or to sign up for next year's Mongol Rally head to: [www.mongolrally.com](http://www.mongolrally.com).





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# GO GRANNY GO

80-year-old Julia Albu from Jakkalsfontein in the Western Cape and her 20-year-old Toyota Conquest embarked on a road trip across Africa through to London on 13 June. At the time of going to print she'd reached Tanzania.

Not only is this her bucket list trip but she's also doing it for charity. Shine Literacy will benefit from her epic trip when she raises awareness about the work the Cape Town-based organisation does. "It has been a lifelong dream of mine to drive through Africa. When I realised that my trusty Toyota Conquest, Tracy, would be 20 years old this year and I would be 80, there couldn't be a better time to fulfil my dream, together with 100 years of life's experiences. I have decided that it's time to be the master of my own destiny and what better time than to set off on the adventure of a lifetime? People look at me in horror when I tell them I'm venturing forth across Africa in a 1997, 1600 Toyota Conquest with close to 400 000kms on the clock. But who else would I choose as my partner in crime?"

Tracy was fitted with big tyres, new shock absorbers and even new upholstery in a fancy palm pattern. Albu, a mom to four and grandmother to nine, is heading up to London via the East African coast, taking turns to drive with her kids and distributing books and conducting lessons with children along the way. And just to keep it real, the plan is to stay away from fancy accommodation and set up a tent and camp on most nights.

At the time of going to print the pair had suffered a starter motor issue but made it to Dar es Salaam. Keep up to date with the expedition on [www.MyAfricanConquest.com](http://www.MyAfricanConquest.com).



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**1982 Ford Cortina LDV 3,0 V6**, 28 000km, original never been restored. R165 000



**1971 MGBT**, fully restored to perfection R175 000

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**1-3 SEPT 2017**

# A GAMBLE OR NOT

**G**lobal classic, vintage and collectible car market values have improved significantly over the last decade or so with record prices being regularly reported on auction results and private sales around the world. But what drove this market into a significant economy over such a short period, on the back of very little quantifiable or reliable information?

It was this lack of data that prompted Dietrich Hatlapa to found the Historical Automobile Group International (HAGI) in 2007 – now a leading investment research house and think-tank with expertise in the rare and classic car field. The purpose is to lend transparency to the sector and enable market participants to make informed decisions based on data-

driven fundamentals. In this endeavour, the HAGI Indices track this alternative asset class accurately by using financial methodology usually associated with more traditional investments.

Further to this, HAGI created the Value in the Classic Car Market (VCCM) conference, a platform encouraging conversations and information sharing relative to a complex economy driven by emotion, passion, curiosity and a desire to make a return on investments. VCCM conferences facilitate the flow of information on trends, benefits and pitfalls, and equip delegates with the tools to make informed decisions. Conferences were held in 2014, 2015 and 2016 together with the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College and Center for Private Equity and Entrepreneurship

at Tuck in Hanover, US with attendance typically ranging from the experienced collector, investor and service providers, to the novices and enthusiasts.

The South African classic car market is in itself very complex and deals with supply and demand constraints and prices unrelated to international values. With the VCCM conference taking place on 4 August 2017 at the Gary Player Country Club in Sun City, the VCCM will form part of South Africa's premier Concours d'Elegance and aims to bring meaning and insight to this market in local context. A speaker line-up of local and international industry experts will provide content never before experienced in South Africa. Below are just some of the planned speakers and topics that promise to take the classic car game in SA up a level.



**DIETRICH HATLAPA**  
Founder – Historic Automobile Group International (HAGI)

#### Introduction – HAGI and the HAGI indices

Prices have clearly dropped from recent peaks. Is it a time to be worried? What's an investment anyway and how do you measure performance? This talk will provide some insight into how the market is measured by the HAGI indices, what the HAGI indices track and what has changed since the boom in 2013/2014.

#### Restoration cost vs. value

Rising prices and a growing number of enthusiasts have had a massive impact on restoration activities across the globe. Does this mean that you should also be considering a project to restore your classic car?

#### Spotlight on supercars! Instantly collectible?

Manufacturers love them and the marketing machines are on a roll. Many traditional classic car investors ask themselves if they

should get involved. Like it or not, they very much form part of the wider collector's car market – but are they investments?



**ANDREW SHIRLEY**  
Knight Frank – Editor of The Wealth Report

#### Luxury Investments and the HNWI

The latest results of The Knight Frank Luxury Investment Index and some key trends from the latest edition of the report.



**JOHAN KRAUSE**  
Founder and Director – Auto Creations

#### To restore or preserve?

Local case studies on how, with originality and authenticity in mind, this key decision to restore or preserve can affect the intrinsic value of a classic car for years to come.



**JP LANDMAN**  
Analyst – Nedbank Private Wealth

#### Politics and growth

2017 is a tumultuous year for SA politics and the economy. The presentation updates



**LEON STRÜMPHER**  
Sanlam Private Wealth – Portfolio Manager & Classic Car Investor

#### Adaptable facilities assisting HNWI to diversify their portfolios

Insights into how a customised and adaptable credit or lending facility that is linked to a share portfolio can assist HNWI in managing a portfolio of investment cars or luxury investments.



**STEVE LINDEN**  
Co-Founder and CIO – Chrome Strategies Management

#### Collector car funds: an investment approach

Recent years have seen a noticeable increase in allocations to alternative investment funds by private bankers and asset managers that have led to the rise of collector car investment funds. Why it is important not to confuse 'collecting' with 'investing' while discussing what to look for in a collector car investment fund manager. 

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# VALUE 2017

# IN THE CLASSIC CAR MARKET

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# 4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2017

## SUN CITY, GARY PLAYER COUNTRY CLUB

### BE A PART OF THE CONFERENCE

#### TOPICS INCLUDE

- The HAGI Indices
- Manufacturers Perspective
- Restoration, Cost & Value
- Classic Car Investment Funds
- Comparing "Collectable" Assets
- Investing in Historic Racing Cars
- The Psychology of Collecting
- Supercars! Instantly Collectable?
- Insurance View Point & Valuations
- Market Regulation
- Cars, Art & Preservation
- Car Display at Concours SA

Topics may be added and changed in due course.



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# OLDEST BEETLE IN SA SHINES

The oldest Volkswagen Beetle in South Africa has been entered for Concours South Africa 2017, which takes place at Sun City on 4-6 August. The fawn-coloured People's Car is a 1949 model sedan, built in Germany, and imported to South Africa by a private owner a good two years before the very first Beetle was produced here.

What makes this Beetle entry even more interesting is the fact that it is owned by AutoPavilion, the official Volkswagen Museum in South Africa, located at the factory in Uitenhage, Eastern Cape.

"We have been very excited about Concours South Africa, and we will evaluate this year's event to see if it makes sense to bring a bigger selection of vehicles from Uitenhage in 2018 and use this opportunity to profile our AutoPavilion," said Matt Gennrich, General Manager Communications for Volkswagen South Africa. "An event like this plays an amazing role in increasing awareness of our rich motoring heritage in South Africa. This is our first big show outside of the Eastern Cape and we decided to go ahead and enter one of our best restorations in Concours, which happens to be the oldest known surviving Beetle in the country. And make no mistake, we aren't entering Concours 2017 with the idea of simply showing the car. We want to win it!"

The car in question has had an interesting history, as befits a 68-year-old car. It was built just three years after the Volkswagenwerk in Wolfsburg, Germany was rescued from ruin after sustaining severe Allied bombing between 1939 and 1945 in World War II.

This 1949 Volkswagen sedan – the name 'Beetle' was not used by the factory – surfaced in South Africa in Middelburg, Mpumalanga in 1971, after a national competition run jointly by the magazine *Wheels* and Volkswagen South Africa to find the country's oldest Beetle. The car was at this time owned by a Mr David Rubin, who was then given a brand new 1300 Beetle in exchange for the classic.

Christened simply as 'Jan', the 1949 bug went on display around South Africa before coming home to rest at Uitenhage, where it went into storage and eventually fell into a state of minor disrepair.

Just over a year ago, Jan was rescued by a man of the same name, a certain Jan Schiedeck-Jacht, who also happens to be

Head of Product Engineering at VWSA in Uitenhage. Mr Schiedeck-Jacht organised a team of enthusiasts from Product Engineering at Uitenhage to embark on a restoration project.

In an amazingly short time of just seven months, the fully-restored 1949 Volkswagen sedan was back in showroom condition with a power capability from its 1100cc air-cooled boxer 4-cylinder engine registering all of 18kW, just as it had in 1949, where the stated top speed was a shade over 100km/h.

Paying tribute to the efforts of his product

engineering team, VWSA managing director Thomas Schaefer said he was "humbled by the dedication, passion and love of our automotive heritage that this team has shown during the restoration."

Now, at Concours South Africa, the team's work will come under the stern scrutiny of a top international panel of judges, led by Wayne Harley, Curator of the Franschoek Motor Museum. And the humble little 1949 Beetle will be up against some of the finest veteran, vintage and classic cars in South Africa.





**1947 MG TC**  
British Racing Green with Green interior, lovely restored car in excellent overall condition. Comes with many extra's and loads of history. **POA**



**1974 Jaguar E Type Series 3 V12 FHC**  
Cream with dark blue leather interior. Auto, A/C, P/S, wire wheels. Completely restored over 20 years ago. **R1,500,000**



**1990 TVR S3 Cabriolet**  
Dark Metallic Blue with Tan interior, recent rebuild in 2015, excellent overall condition. **R295,000**



**1992 Porsche 944S2 Cabriolet**  
Ice White with Dark Blue interior, 139,000km with books and service history, fantastic overall condition. **R295,000**



**1953 Jaguar XK120 DHC**  
British Racing Green with Green leather interior, matching numbers, concours restoration. **POA**



**1988 Porsche 928S4**  
Auto, 124,000 miles, Ice white with dark blue leather interior, excellent condition. **R295,000**



**1984 Mercedes Benz 230 GE Gelandewagen**  
Tan with Tan interior, immaculate condition, 159,000km. **R295,000**



**2003 Ferrari 360 Spider**  
F1, 33,000km, immaculate condition. Lots of extras. **R2,150,000**



**1974 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV**  
Recent complete repaint in the original colour, original interior, engine rebuilt by local specialist, new wheels and tyres fitted. Lovely condition. **R295,000**



**2004 Porsche 911 996 Turbo Cabriolet**  
Silver with black interior, rare 6 speed manual, 89,000km with FSH with agents only, Sat Nav. Excellent condition. **R1,050,000**



**1962 Porsche 356B T6 LHD Coupe**  
Cream with brown interior, bare metal repaint and recently completed mechanical restoration. **R1,650,000**

**NEW STOCK COMING SOON:**

1947 MG TC  
1963 Jaguar E Type S1 FHC  
1969 VW Beetle Convertible (in restoration)

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would love to hear from you. Based in Cape Town, South Africa, we operate locally, nationally and internationally and have a tried and tested network of service providers to assist with all your classic car requirements.



# GRAND DESIGNS

Located a stone's throw from Kramerville, Gauteng's hotspot for home decor and design, you can be forgiven for thinking the rather multi-layered building at 17 Dartfield Road, Wendywood churns out the latest in couch fabrics and upholstery finishes. You would, like **Stuart Grant**, be wrong as behind the business-like facade of this address, PL Motors specialise in sales, servicing and the restoration of grand motoring icons.

**D**ecoding the firm's name (P is for 'Pyms' and L for 'Lane') gives a hint as to what the business had at its core when founded in 1993.

No idea? Have a Google. The British government built a shadow factory in Pyms Lane, Crewe, England in 1938 for Rolls-Royce. The purpose was to build its Merlin and Griffon engines used in the likes of the Spitfire and Hurricane warbirds. In May 1946, with the country reverting back

to a peacetime economy and aero-engine production ending, Rolls-Royce moved its then Derby-based Motor Division to the Pyms factory.

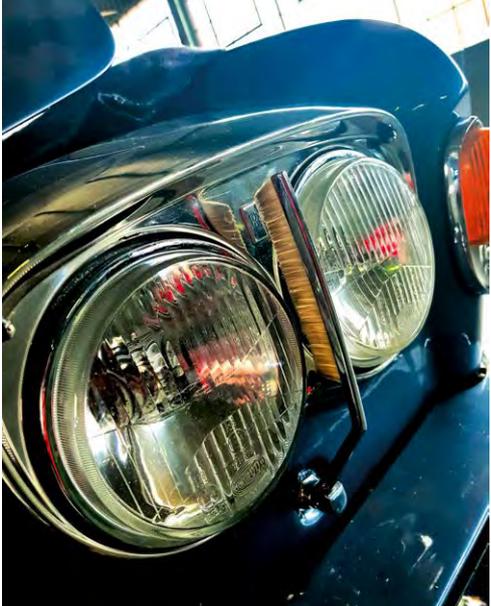
So yes, PL Motors started out with a heavy focus on catering for the needs of South African Rolls-Royce and Bentley owners. Nine years ago, while having one of his own vehicles worked on, Keith Burford heard that the PL Motors founders were planning on retiring and a deal was struck whereupon Burford and his partner, Hein Lorentz took over the setup.

Sales, services and restoration saw the need for not only a showroom but also a workshop, competent staff content and reliable parts supply. With all these boxes ticked and a fine approach to detail employed it became apparent to owners

of other vehicles sporting pedigree and heritage marques that PL Motors were capable of applying the same way of thinking to all sorts of machines. Besides Rolls and Bentley the doors to the tidy facility have opened up for everything from Aston Martin, Alfa Romeo, Mercedes-Benz and Jaguar to American icons like the rare Packard One Sixty I spotted the day I stopped in for coffee. Oh yes, I also caught a glimpse of two smaller Brits – an Austin Apache and Morris Minor, hidden behind the late president of Gabon's behemoth Rolls – about to undergo a full restoration.

Mechanical work is carried out in-house by Mark Jutan's team. Mark is the workshop manager and joined PL Motors nine years ago. In the event of a restoration PL strip off trim and then outsource the panelbeating and painting – the theory being that a master of one gets better results than a jack of all

Sales, services and restoration saw the need for not only a showroom but also a workshop, competent staff content and reliable parts supply



trades. The same goes for chrome work and upholstery before re-assembly commences at PL.

A selection of the best suppliers SA has to offer have been selected and the resultant authenticity of the finished product bears testament to this. It also goes to show that we have the skills locally. A nearby tannery will work the leather thickness, grain and colour to replicate the exact original finish and even the woollen carpets so often found in luxury British cars can be made. Pattern cutting and stitching of this is carried out in the Joburg CBD while wood (and there's a lot in some of these cars) is expertly done by an artisan in Pretoria.

Managing member Burford has a serious motoring pedigree. Not only has he successfully operated various car dealerships since 1982 but also spent his time watching his father Collin preparing and racing cars for

decades, before he finally took to the track himself. His first foray into the action was when he purchased a Group 1-specification Hillman Avenger, one of the cars used in the Avenger-only celebrity/press races at Kyalami. From there it was into a Mazda Capella (which he shared with his father in a 9 Hour), a Mitsubishi Tredia Turbo and Opel Kadett GTE. He was the first racer to put the legendary Opel Kadett GSi onto local circuits and eventually worked his way up into a Toyota works drive, scooping a Group N Championship in the much-loved Conquest. Today he occasionally takes to the track in a Mercedes-Benz 190E Cosworth.

Winning isn't only for the track though and numerous Rolls-Royce and Bentleys that

have gone through a PL Motors restoration or detailing session have scooped top honours at the Rolls-Royce and Bentley Owners Club Concours over the years.

Preservation and heritage are, like exemplary customer service, at the core of the business strategy. And the coffee is worth the trip too. For more information visit [www.plmotors.co.za](http://www.plmotors.co.za). 📍

Not only has he successfully operated various car dealerships since 1982 but also spent his time watching his father Colin preparing and racing cars for decades, before he finally took to the track himself

## BUGS & MORETTIS

Stuart,

Once again thanks for an interesting magazine, or I should say, series of magazines. I see that you have been driving a Bugatti 35B. You would therefore appreciate the feat of one of the lady racing drivers omitted from Jake Venter's July 2017 article titled 'The Fast and the Feminine'.

It was in the 1928 Targa Florio, run over five laps of the medium Madonie circuit in Sicily (lap length 105km), not all of which was tarred. This race attracted the top drivers of the time, Chiron, Divo, Campari etc. The lady concerned was Mrs Elizabeth Junek, an independent from Czechoslovakia, and she drove a Bugatti 35B. She finished 5<sup>th</sup> at an average speed of about 72km/h, having had overheating problems on the last lap. She was ahead of the entire field for at least one lap. In that era it was unthinkable for a woman to beat the men! You can read the full race account on a magnificent website called The Golden Era of Motor Racing.

Mrs Junek's racing career was relatively short as she gave up racing after her husband was killed in the German Grand Prix when he rolled their Bugatti, which the couple was sharing in that race.

On another topic, I enjoyed reading about the Moretti in the June issue. In the late 1950s some neat looking little coupés were imported. I think Emmot Barwell was the agent in Cape Town. They had the DOHC 750cc motor and featured at Killarney, particularly in the early 3 Hour races. Are any of these still around here?

Regards

Peter Owen-Smith



*Hi Peter, thanks for the kind words and encouragement.*

*Yes, I was extremely lucky to have had the opportunity to have a real blast in a Type 35B replica up the hill in Knysna. Keeping my foot pinned to the accelerator as the car bumped and tracked over the hill's irregularities made for a white-knuckle ride and I must tip my hat to anyone brave enough to do this for an extended period of time. The climb I did was only 1.9km long and it took me at least 10 minutes to recover after each run. My average speed was 112km/h but the route had no real corners where braking needed to be done – I thank my lucky stars for this as I hadn't really mastered coming down through the gears under braking. Mrs Junek clearly had it dialled in and would have left me in the dust.*

*I haven't heard of the Moretti coupés in South Africa but am sure there are readers that will remember some sort of info and detail. Let's see what rolls in over the coming weeks.*  
Stuart

## MARVELLOUS MARCOS SAVE

I just want to congratulate you on this article in the latest edition on the stolen Le Mans Mini Marcos. What an amazing story and the trouble one would go through to save historical racers. Some fantastic reading.

Johan Maritz

*Thank you Johan, yes it's an amazing story. The dedication and perseverance shown by the author/owner/locator Jeroen Booi in tracking down the stolen Le Mans Marcos is commendable. And the best part is a very special car will be preserved and its all-important history will continue to evolve and be documented.*

Stuart



## FINDING 6<sup>th</sup> GEAR

Hi Stuart,

I'm busy with an article for the Alfa Romeo Club of SA magazine *5<sup>th</sup> Gear*, on the Alfa Romeo 33 racing family, that will include a section on the cars that raced locally in 1968 and 1970. I recall reading somewhere, possibly in a CCA issue, that the drivers (Dave Charlton/Paddy Driver) of the 33/2 that raced during the 1970 Springbok Series were not aware that the car had a 6-speed box. Can you or anyone confirm this?

Kind regards,

Toy de Carvalho

Hi Toy,

*That's a fascinating bit of info and I can't remember hearing it anywhere before. If it was in CCA I would think it would have been in the 2005 to 2007 era as a lot of 9 Hour stories were published then. I will pull out my set and see what I can find. If any readers are able to confirm this I will be sure to pass on the mails to you.*

Stuart

## EARTH TO CORVETTE

Hi Stuart,

I have been browsing through the July issue of CCA and the Corvette article. I used to work for Raymond and David Cohen in the diamond industry many years ago. Raymond told the story of the first Corvettes to roll off the production line. When the workers tried starting them, not one would kick over. Of course they called the floor foreman, and he couldn't tell what was wrong. Eventually the chief engineer was called in and after a little while found the problem – the earth was connected to the fibreglass body! The earth was then connected to a metal part of the car and *voilà*, the car ran like a dream. I have had many an ale over that story.

While reading the article on the Gordini in the June issue, something else sprang to my old mind. Those wheels were a copy of the 'Delta Migs' which were imported from Italy and were really costly at the time. Enter stage left, one Angelo who had a small engineering shop in Craighall. His business was called Angelo Metal Works, hence the 'AMW'. He made a copy of the Delta and riveted it to the outer 13-inch rim, and these

sold for a hefty R350 per set. It was costly at the time, but better than the imported product.

**Tony Campell**

*Hello Tony,  
Brilliant little tale about the Corvette needing some grounding. Poor earthing is the Achilles' heel of many a fibreglass car. I have lost count of how many Cobra replicas I have followed and the rear lights seem to do as they please because of this. While photographing a fibreglass Protea years ago we kept breaking down with fuelling issues – an aftermarket electric fuel pump had been fitted and its earth wire was also fixed to the non-metal part of the vehicle.*

*On the AMW front: I would give lots to own a set of those wheels now. Not only would they look the part on my own R10 but South African 'maak 'n plan' mentality showcased is special and proves we have the skills and manufacturing ability. Just the other day I saw some locally-cast split-rim wheel centres that were used on our Formula Atlantics and wondered why we aren't doing more of this for our classic car niche these days.*

*Thanks for all the support.  
Stuart*



## BIG 6 QUESTIONS

Sir,

I was most interested in your article about the Citroën Big 6 as I owned a 1949 Slough-built model. I would love to contact Mr Callige to talk about some unusual features my car had. Do you have an email address for him?

**Many thanks**

**Tony West**

*Hi Tony*

*I have forwarded your mail on to Graeme Hurst (our Cape Town-based deputy editor) as he put together the article on this particular Citroën. He will put you in touch with the current owner. We look forward to hearing from you about the unusual features your car sported.*  
*Stuart*

## RENAULTS DOWN UNDER

Hi Stuart,

I have read a number of your *Classic Car Africa* magazines – they are absolutely great and I love all the articles and cars covered. I have just read the 50 Years of Renault R8 Gordini article, it's very good indeed. Would you give Carvel Webb my email please, as I am trying to make contact with Ian Schwartz mentioned in his article, and think he may still know him.

I build classic Renaults in Perth, Western Australia, now (Gecko Engineering) after a long time building road and track Renaults in Rhodesia, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.

**Thanks,  
Ray Watson**

*No problem Ray, I have copied you in on a mail to Carvel. I will also send Ian a mail and copy you in. Ian is currently rebuilding a Protea and somehow in between this and a demanding work schedule has managed to finish a book on the full history of the Protea. The Protea is a Joburg-built car that can lay claim to being the first South African-designed and built sportscar (just beating the GSM Dart). Glad to hear the passion for Renaults continues Down Under.*  
*Stuart*

## CROSSING BORDERS

Dear Stuart,

I have been reading *Classic Car Africa* for many years (through its various formats and editors) but only when I could buy the hardcopy in SA or friends purchased a copy for me. Postage is expensive to Zimbabwe and at one time the mail was very unreliable (it is better now). Generally I get a copy from Exclusive Books at OR Tambo when leaving SA.

I recently travelled overseas and to my great disappointment, the June issue was not available (sold out I guess). I returned via ORT on Wednesday 5 July and to my delight the July issue was available. Then disappointment set in when I realised what I had missed in the June issue – a feature on the R8 Gordini! I see how many others have relished this article. The last article I have on the Gordini is from the October/November 2011 issue.

I am currently restoring an original Gordini (at this stage a slow process as other projects are also on the go). I still have my original 1965 R8 purchased in 1977. I previously had a 1965 R8 1206 Alconi which brought me many miles of excitement and pleasure. This was replaced with an R12 which was modified with an Alpina cam and other mods to create a wonderful all-round car as I travelled a lot in those days. Two Dauphines and a Floride have also passed through my hands over the years.

The July issue did bring me a lot of pleasure however – I have both a 1965 and a 1971 Corvette, so thoroughly enjoyed

the article on the Corvettes. In addition, I enjoyed the article on the Mini Marcos. Bruce Glasby, mentioned as another Le Mans Marcos owner, is a friend of mine.

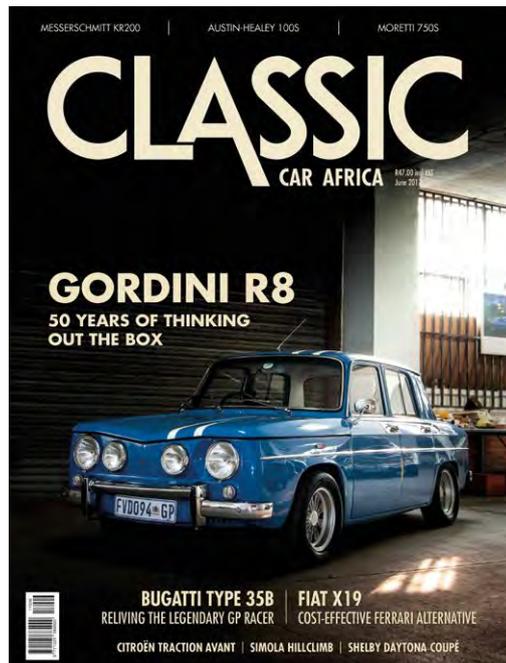
Is there any chance of obtaining a hard copy of the June issue? I can pay online for a delivery in SA or delivery to Zimbabwe. I would also like to receive the two articles referred to in the article if this is possible.

Just so I don't miss any more great articles, I would like to take out a digital subscription. Can this be paid for online?

Thanks for such a great magazine. I have been involved in motorsport in Zimbabwe literally all my life and really enjoy the memories you recall on the Southern African car and motorsport scene. Please don't burn yourself out – keep going!!

**Best regards,  
Ralph Stead**

*Hi Ralph, thanks for the cross-border support and keeping check of how our distributors are doing with stocking the airports. This is a major selling point for the publication and knowing if and when we sell out helps us allocate more copies to that store. You are correct in assuming the June issue sold out at OR Tambo International Departures. We have requested more to be put on the shelf from now on. We will post the missing Gordini issue to*



*you. Payment for this can be done at the same time as you subscribe to the digital magazine. If you have any problems doing this please mail tracy@classiccarafrika.com and she will be able to help.*

*Thank you for the kind words, support and taking time to make the contact. We depend on letters like this to point us in the right direction and to trigger old memories. Without input from those that have been there, done that and got the T-shirt we wouldn't know where to start.*

*With so many interesting tales making work so much fun there is not much chance of burning out.*  
Stuart

## RENAULT REBUILD DOCS

Good day Stuart,

In the article on the Renault Gordini in the June issue, there is a note that says you can be contacted to obtain a copy of the article on the rebuild recommendations on a Gordini engine. When convenient could you please forward the article to me?

**Regards  
John Cunningham**

*Hello John,  
Carvel Webb, author of our Gordini story, has the information and mentioned technical articles on building the high performance giant-killing engines. I have mailed him and copied you in. He will send you what you need. We will also be adding these articles to our website soon as numerous overseas Gordini fans have requested them.*  
Stuart



## CORSAIR PARTS BIN

Hi,  
I'm looking for someone to help me with obtaining spares for a 1963 Ford Corsair I have just purchased. I subscribe to your mag and think it is world-class. Keep up the good work.

**Regards  
Mike Smith**

*A great car, Mike, congratulations.*

*I would start by chatting to Alan Poulter of SA Swiss Tune-Up Centre (011 314 2006). Alan has built and prepared a number of Corsairs for both road and race use and will more than likely have a donor car you can get parts from. Alternatively, he should be able to point you in the right direction as far as where to find them.*  
All the best  
Stuart

## SCC MEMORIES PLEASE

Dear Stuart & readers,

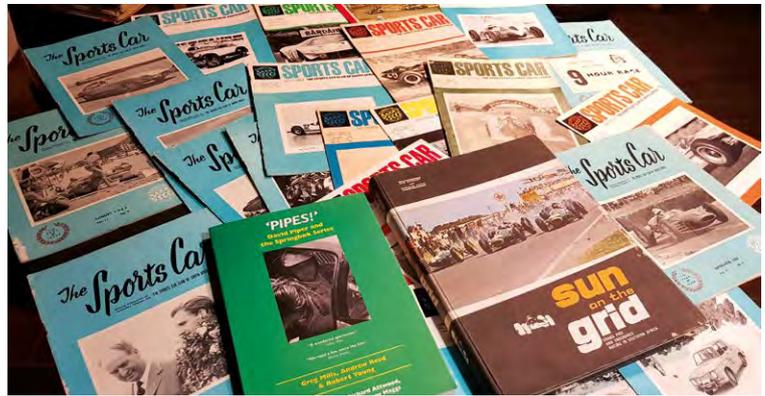
Despite South Africa having a great motor racing heritage it has very little written history and regrettably there appears to be a general lack of interest from the current motor racing fraternity in adding to or maintaining that which already exists. This general malaise also exists in the running of many clubs and associations. It is very difficult these days to find people who are willing to give time and effort to form working committees for the benefit of its members.

Notable scribes include Brud Bishop, Ken Stewart and Norman Reich with *Sun on the Grid*, Robert Young, Patrick O'Brien and Greg Mills who each wrote several excellent volumes, Adrian Pheiffer for Killarney's history and Gary Kegel with his wonderful book *Sunset on Kyalami*. I have penned volumes on Doug Serrurier and a potted history of historic racing. There may be others... I would be delighted to know.

There is also a complete demise of club magazines. Years ago there were many of these prepared and issued with much pride. I have a large collection of the *Sports Car Club of South Africa* magazines, one which contains its own history.

This brings me to my current project, for which I need the input of every South African motor racing enthusiast: The history of the SCC of SA since its formation in 1955. This was never a lightweight club; at one time it owned the Kyalami Circuit – its manipulation and eventual loss is a subject on its own. I would like you to scratch your memory banks and provide information, stories, officials, dark secrets and publications of the SCC (which even appeared as official newsletters in a succession of commercial magazines including the AA monthly, *Drive* and others).

The SCC was probably the most well-known national club in the world as host of the 9 Hour Endurance Races and the South African



Grand Prix, both of these events being top of the drivers' wish list! If you can assist please contact me on [heritagecars@icon.co.za](mailto:heritagecars@icon.co.za).

Regards  
Brian Tyler

Hi Brian,

*Indeed, with such a large motor racing history one would think there would be more publications on the subject – especially in the motorcycling department. The ones you mention above are brilliant and must-have collectables. I'd add in André Loubser's KYALAMI – a reflection on the history of the original circuit 1961-1987 into the mix too. There are also a few other authors I have met with volumes written up but the cost of printing and distributing such volumes is holding them back for now.*

*I am sure you will be flooded with SCC memories from 100mph club days to prize givings, organisational successes and hiccups, to copies of the magazines that published the newsletters. I know I have a stash of old SCC magazines that I often turn to for old race reports and information.*

*Please keep us in the loop as to how your research goes.*  
Stuart

## INSTAGRAMMING FIATS

Hi Stuart,

Last year I bought your magazine where you test drove a classic Fiat 500. Funnily enough I used it as a prepared reading at school recently. I sent you a message on Instagram, but would you please send me all contacts that you have of owners of Classic Fiat 500s in Johannesburg. I'd really appreciate that. Thank you.

Regards  
Cameron Jenks

Hi Cameron,

*Glad you were able to use the article as a prepared reading. We (ClassicCarZA) have recently started following your classic\_fiat\_500sa account on Instagram and are glad to see another youngster getting involved in classic cars. Your Fiat 500 looks brilliant, well done. Get in touch with Fuel Customs as they have restored a number of 500s and would have a list of owners trundling around town in them. It's worth popping into their shop too as there is always a cool project on the go there – at the moment a few more Fiat 500s, a Fiat Multipla and Alfa Romeos are dominating.*  
Stuart





# WOODY WORKHORSE

Light commercial vehicles have played vital roles in the development of countries around the world, not least on the African continent where South Africa stands proud amongst its fellow nations. Pick-ups in particular have been perennial workhorses in helping to build and expand the country's resources, both human and material. We even have our own name for them – bakkies. **Mike Monk** gets to grips with a Chevrolet Superior pick-up from the 1920s and discovers that simplicity is the key.

**Images: Peet Mocke**



**E**arly pick-ups were generally very basic in concept and construction, bearing only a windscreen-forward resemblance to the passenger vehicle they were based upon. But chassis were relatively robust items and whatever configuration of load bed they carried generally withstood use and abuse over predominantly poor roads, far beyond their original design intent.

Chevy pick-ups have historically met with high favour among buyers of light commercial vehicles, whether for business or private use. In fact, Chevrolet was one of the early manufacturers to establish roots in SA, entering the market way back in 1913 with imported vehicles before a limited

amount of local production began in 1925 in Port Elizabeth. It was at this time that the bakkie featured here first turned a wheel in anger, and although now a showpiece at the Franschoek Motor Museum, it still has that solid, dependable nature that attracted hundreds of buyers some 90 years ago. But back to the beginning...

It is believed that Chevrolet built a few Model 490 pick-ups in 1916 primarily for its own use, but some were converted into ambulances and shipped to France. The first production model was built in November 1918 and left the Flint, Michigan factory in December. In its first year, the company made less

**Chevrolet was one of the early manufacturers to establish roots in SA, entering the market way back in 1913 with imported vehicles before a limited amount of local production began in 1925**



than 1 000 examples in both half- and one-tonne capacities, but the following year was a success when more than 8 000 were built. Two 4-cylinder models were offered, both as chassis with a metal cowl, bonnet and front fenders. Buyers generally added their own wooden cab and cargo box or a panel van body.

The half-tonne model was actually a Chevrolet 490 car without its body, but with beefed-up rear springs, and was priced at \$595. The one-tonne pick-up, called the Model T for 'truck,' was priced at \$1 125, again without a body. Although it was based on the FA-series car, the pick-up was built on a truck frame and was both longer and stronger than the half-tonner. A 37hp (27.5kW) engine boosted the pick-up's power and load capacity, but a governor limited its top speed to 25mph (40km/h). The lineage of Chevrolet pick-ups had begun.

In the early-1920s, Chevrolet installed a variety of outside-sourced bodies on its chassis-cab pick-ups in plants despite

sales declining in 1921 as part of an overall economic slump. For instance, in 1922, the company offered a ¾-tonne Model G at \$650 for the chassis-cowl without the rest of the body. In January 1923 a new model was introduced based on a facelifted 4-cylinder 490 chassis. As well as being designated Type B, the model carried the Superior name.

The Type B Superior was powered by a 171ci (2802cc) inline-four with a single-choke Carter carburettor and produced 19kW at 2000rpm. Designed by Arthur Mason and first introduced in 1913, the block was cast iron and the crank ran in three main bearings fed by splash lubrication. The engine featured exposed pushrod-actuated valves in a detachable crossflow cylinder head, which Chevrolet referred to as a 'valve-in-head' design. This drew considerable publicity at a time when most rivals' engines were flatheads. The engine was mated with a 3-speed sliding transmission with a cone clutch and shaft drive. Wood-spoke wheels were standard and external contracting brakes acted upon the rear wheels. Wheelbase was 103 inches (2616mm).

In 1924, Danish-born William S Knudson

**In the early-1920s, Chevrolet installed a variety of outside-sourced bodies on its chassis-cab pick-ups in plants despite sales declining in 1921 as part of an overall economic slump**



(Henry Ford's former production manager) took over as president and general manager of Chevrolet. To digress a little, he soon ordered the recall of the disastrous 'copper-cooled' Chevrolets. Charles Kettering's singular vision of a copper-cooled engine seemed to fulfil GM's quest for a low-cost, lightweight, high-performance engine with fewer parts and easy maintenance. While the new air-cooled engine had originally been intended for Oakland, scheduling pressures caused it to be released to Chevrolet instead. From its debut at the New York Motor Show in January 1923, the 135ci (2212cc) engine, which developed 15kW at 1750rpm, was met with public indifference. The engine's realisation fell short of its concept, and uneven air distribution throughout the engine continued to be a problem.

So, on 1 August 1923 the 1924-model-year Superior was introduced, pioneering a trend towards annual model-year updates within GM. Also dubbed as the Series F, the model was virtually unchanged save for a switch to slightly bigger 'non skid' tyres. In January 1925 the next iteration appeared, labelled Series K, which was fronted by a new radiator design. Construction of the

engine block was changed to encompass a new crank and conrods. A disc clutch was also adopted. And, at last, the 'Chevrolet hum' caused by the bevel-gear rear axle inherited from the 490 was eliminated, thanks to a new banjo-type rear axle mounted in a carrier connected with a torque tube. An all-steel cab was also offered and a panel van was added to the range. As an aside, this was the year that Henry Ford introduced the first Model T pick-up.

In keeping with tradition, when the 1926 Superior appeared in the middle of the year, it was coded as the Series V. It was essentially the same as the Series K but boasted a belt-driven generator and different tyres (again). Visually, a tie-bar connecting the headlamps was an obvious styling difference.

The FMM car is a 1926 model and from the shiny wooden dashboard rearwards has an open-sided cockpit with a fabric screen enclosing the rear of the cab. Behind, there is a bespoke flat-bed body with extended sides, also made from wood, with the

An all-steel cab was also offered and a panel van was added to the range. As an aside, this was the year that Henry Ford introduced the first Model T pick-up



Chevrolet pulled ahead of Ford in terms of sales in 1927 with the best-selling truck in America, and so the long-running Ford versus Chevrolet rivalry began

same marine varnish finish that glistens in the sunlight. On each side, metal running boards connect the mudguards that cover wooden artillery wheels – the overall effect is certainly attractive.

The wood-rim – what else? – steering wheel sits atop the long steering column, which sprouts from the floor between the brake and clutch pedals, with the small, central accelerator lying beneath them. A stout handbrake is a long reach away but the spindly gear lever falls readily to hand, topped by – you guessed it – a small wooden knob.

The 4-pot fires up with ease and the Chevy pick-up, bakkie, truck, ute – you name it, endearing terms all – pulls away with no fuss. First gear in the typically American 3-speed manual gearbox proves to be load-lugging low, while second is the workhorse ratio, allowing the Chevy to roll from walking pace to near-cruising speed without hiccup. Top is almost an overdrive and, certainly when unladen, maintains momentum without labouring.

The bench seat is surprisingly comfy; in fact, the whole driving position is relaxing. The ride is not as harsh as I had expected and the steering, too, is nicely weighted.

It is a classic example of early American ‘simple yet strong’ auto technology and its robust nature was instrumental in Chevrolet’s sales success.

Chevrolet pulled ahead of Ford in terms of sales in 1927 with the best-selling truck in America, and so the long-running Ford versus Chevrolet rivalry began. For its last year of manufacture, 1928, the Mason 4-cylinder gained a revised carburettor, a higher compression ratio, aluminium pistons and larger valves that helped raise maximum power to 26kW at 2200rpm. In 1929 Chevrolet produced its half-millionth truck but the Wall Street Crash happened in October of that year and devastated America’s economy.

Superior in name, practical in nature, the pick-ups of the Roaring ’20s cemented the foundation for Chevrolet’s now century-old pick-up legacy that had been created by the 490 – one of the bow-tie brand’s unsung heroes. 🚚

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# LEAVING A MARK

Piranha: A small fish species that, relative to body mass, produces one of the most forceful bites measured in all vertebrates. This immense power is generated by large jaw muscles and combines with finely serrated teeth to make them adept at tearing up flesh. It's also the most fitting of names for a small vehicle building outfit that, founded 50 years ago, started generating immense power and status by shoe-horning in muscular engines to create the ultimate at tearing up tarmac and putting South Africa on the international performance Ford map. **Stuart Grant** celebrates Basil Green Perana's golden anniversary.

**Photography by Etienne Fouche**





**M**yth number one is that the name 'Perana' was a misspelling of the word piranha. In reality it was rather a clever way of getting around licensing issues as another company had already sewn up the rights to use it. Myth number two is that Basil's surname is Green. It is, in fact, Greenstone. The name Green, that he still uses today, stems from his boarding school days at Marist Brothers. Again it was a simple solution to a problem. With the seniors at school referring to juniors by surname it became difficult to differentiate between Basil and his brother. In a random selection process Basil took on the name Green and his brother, Stone.

Green left school in Standard 8, joining a trade school and earning a certificate in engineering. From there it was off to take up a job in the then Rhodesian mining field in the late 1950s. While there he read an English newspaper and stumbled across an advert

that not only set him on a different path but also led to his changing the face of South African motoring for good. The advert sought to fill a spot as race manager on a privateer Formula 1 team using Cooper Climax cars. He applied for the position and cracked the nod on condition he went and spent some time learning the ins and outs of the motor at the Climax factory.

Although being part of a team of this nature meant Green filled the role of everything from mechanic to transporter driver he had time to get to grips with the details of the Climax engines and became an expert in their building – often even freelance building for other operations using the same mill. A move back to South Africa initially saw him employed as service manager at Lucy Motors Fiat in Joburg before buying his own BP service station in Commissioner Street, where some extra service bays meant he could modify race engines and develop what would become his BG Speed Equipment business.

With casting patterns by Bobby Leishman, Basil cast a wide range of bolt-on performance parts for street cars, ranging from cylinder heads and manifolds to alloy wheels. These together with the obligatory Speed Equipment louvres enjoyed a massive following, and were even exported to Rhodesia and the UK, where they were retailed by Winkelmanns.

As a testbed for so many of these modification products Basil took to the track himself in the early 1960s – if you are battling to find his name in the race programmes, add the 'stone' to his name in the search engine. His initial car was an 850cc Mini bored to 1000cc but this was soon followed by a Ford Anglia. Of course this too was modified, with a 1500cc Cortina engine added. Not a standard one though – the capacity increased to 1640cc and it was fitted with an inhouse-designed and cast twincam head. Although seriously quick the reliability was an issue as the head was porous – this was later solved by adding a Wynn's radiator repair additive to



the water system. No amount of Wynn's could fix the car during the 1966 9 Hour at Kyalami, though, when a massive crash left the Anglia a pile of mangled scrap. Unscathed, Green figured the best thing for the car was to rip out the mechanicals and fit them to a Fiat 600 he'd had lying in the yard and go drag racing. Of course this proved a success and the gutted out Fiat took the Top Eliminator class win at Rainbow on debut.

Willie Hepburn, Corrie Potgieter and George Gordon were employed to continue the shoe-horning (a favourite being the squeezing of Chevrolet V8s into Austin-Healeys) while Basil focused on growing the business and developing new performance engineering ideas. One such idea he experimented with was the fitment of a Ford Zodiac V6 engine into a Cortina Mk1. This proved an issue in the weight distribution department but salvation came in 1967 when Ford unleashed its MkII version of the popular sedan. With some extra room in the engine

bay the team could move the engine further back than with the Mk1. They took it racing, and although blocked by the rule makers as a saloon entry, it showed some good form in the sportscar class against the likes of the Dirk Marias Sunbeam Tiger.

Ford South Africa took note and when it realised Bobby Olthoff didn't have a competitive ride for the new season, turned to Green. Motorsport and marketing went hand in hand and Ford wanted to sell its new Cortina saloon, so competing in the sportscar class was a no-no. What happened then was a masterstroke: build 100 road-going units to homologate the V6 Cortina! Add a name to the car (Green can't remember if his wife or daughter came up with Perana). Trounce the opposition on track. Job done.

It was a job done so well that Ford offered full backing and warranties on the Peranas, which were sold at R2 950 via the Grovesnor Ford group. On track the Olthoff/Green exploits didn't go unnoticed with Joe Putter,

the Gunston F1 team manager, concluding a deal to run a Gunston Perana Cortina V6 for Olthoff. An added bonus was that Gunston ordered a bunch of V6-powered Cortinas for its reps – these were however based on the Ford Cortina XL rather than the GT like the rest of the Peranas.

In 1968 Ford UK sent a bunch of its new RS1600 Escorts down south but the complexity and strain the Highveld altitude can put on engines had the execs a bit worried about the reliability of the performance twincam engine. Green and Perana stepped up to the plate, removing the highly-strung motor and replacing it with the new 2-litre Pinto engine. This, the Perana Escort Mk1, became the first Pinto-engined Escort, a move soon followed overseas. Green sold off the RS1600 engines to local enthusiasts for R695, and a large portion of these landed up in single-seater race car.

Ford was on a winning streak with new models at the time and the next one to



receive the Perana treatment was the Ford Capri in 1969. The first conversion was to fit the Essex V6 into the stylish coupé but this was a short-lived offering as Ford launched its own V6, and Ford SA's head honcho Ron Scott felt that Ford needed something a bit stronger to trounce the powerful Australian-derived cars General Motors were selling. Of course Green's answer was to wedge a 5-litre Windsor small-block V8 under the hood and added a few well thought out modifications like a high-rise manifold four-barrel Holley carb, 280° camshaft and limited slip diff. This rapid growth meant the Commissioner Street workshop had become a touch cramped and necessitated a move to new premises in Plantation Road, Edenvale.

Road Perana Capris were good for a claimed top speed of 140mph and a zero to 100km/h sprint in 6.1 seconds. No manufacturer number padding was needed back then and Green proved the honesty of these figures running his own Capri to 139.717mph during a Kyalami speed day. Ford UK's top executive Walter Hayes was so impressed upon driving a Capri Perana that he ordered his own and shipped it to England, while Jackie Stewart gave one a burn around Kyalami before the 1970 South African Grand Prix and gave it a thumbs up.

Of course they hit the track in anger, with the most famous being the Gunston versions run by Green and piloted by Olthoff. Despite only competing in half the season, the Olthoff Group 5 car finished third overall for the year and set a new lap record at every track the circus visited. In 1970 he took the title with 12

wins from 13 races. When the rules reverted to a more road-going Group 2 format in 1971, Peranas became the way to go with Olthoff joined by similar machines driven by Basil van Rooyen, Peter Gough and Koos Swanepoel. The same year, the South African Guild of Motoring Writers awarded Basil the Achievement of the Year in the South African Motor Industry.

In 1972, Perana got hold of the new MkII Cortina and ramped it up by removing the 2-litre 4-cylinder and slotting in a 3-litre V6, and a year later the Granada V6 was removed and the trust 5-litre Windsor added. This gave the Granada Perana South Africa's Performance Car of the Year and Tow Vehicle of the Year title in '73. Ford Germany ordered two units as test mules with future plans for releasing such a product to the European market, and Ford International President Lee Iacocca loved it so much he shipped it stateside – even sending his personal pilot to sit and watch the conversion from right- to left-hand drive.

The worldwide fuel crisis that same year dented Perana production, with the number of units being completed dropping from 60 or so down to 6 or 7; Green and Perana were in trouble. He approached Ford's Spence Sterling for advice, who offered a Ford dealership where Basil and his team could buy, sell and service Fords. Showroom windows were knocked into the Plantation Road facility and Green set about making the dealership into a star performer, scooping numerous Dealership of the Year titles.

He kept his hand in the performance game though, churning out a few more Perana cars over the years. The Escort XR3 Perana, based on Ford's front-wheel-drive hatch, differed from previous Green projects as it did not get a performance engine swap but was rather improved on by the fitment

of a pair of twin-choke Weber 36DCD carbs and BG-designed air filter and inlet and exhaust manifolds. Simple but effective, the Perana had a top speed 16km/h and a 0 to 100km/h sprint 1.6 seconds quicker than the regular XR3.

In a similar fashion the Ford Sapphire Perana was a case of re-engineer the existing engine rather than swap it for a bigger capacity lump – although it did come in both 3- and 3.4-litre guises. In both it featured a BG twin carburettor downdraft inlet manifold, camshaft with increased lift and the full exhaust system, including manifold, was reworked. The 3.4 was something really special, with JT Development mods to the sub-assembly seeing an increase in bore and stroke, offset ground crank journals and custom-made conrods. Kolbenschmidt pistons made by Kolbenco were added to suit the increased bore and the results were spectacular, with *Car* magazine calling it the most powerful V6 and fastest Ford they had tested to date – 236km/h and a 0-100km/h time of 7.56 was seriously impressive in 1991.

With the Basil Green Ford Dealership becoming part of Motorlink (now Super Group) the Perana story took a bit of a break. The name resurfaced in 2009 with the unveiling of the Perana Z-one (a Zagato-styled supercar, built in South Africa on Corvette running gear) but with only 10 pre-production units completed, AC Cars partnered with the project and the cars were renamed AC 378 GT Zagato.

But as with anything Perana, there is still more than meets the eye. Watch the press in the coming weeks as there are some new products that are not only tagged with the Perana badge but also go back to its 50-year-old roots of shoe-horning and re-engineering production vehicles for more go.

Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Perana! Here's to many more tarmac-tearing memories. 🏁

**Ford International President Lee Iacocca loved it so much he shipped it stateside – even sending his personal pilot to sit and watch the conversion from right- to left-hand drive**



FIAT ABARTH 2300S COUPÉ

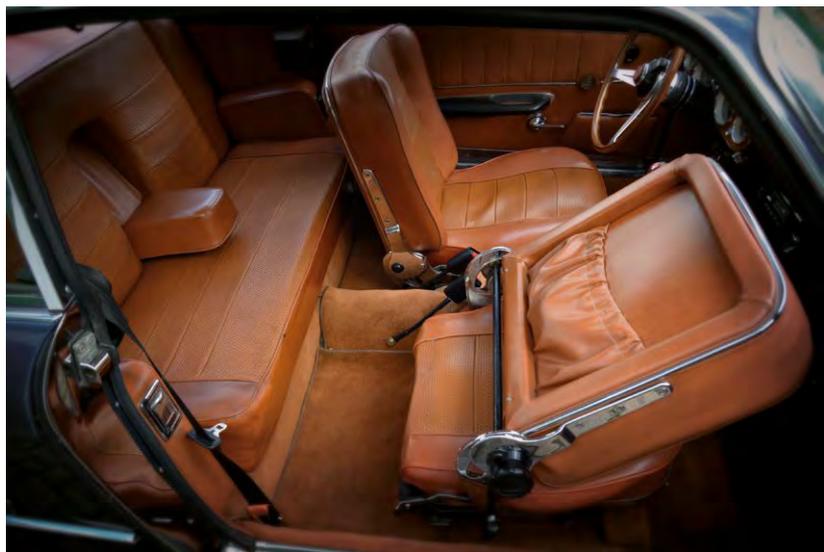


# SCORPION'S TALE



An escape run from Lebanon to London is the highlight of the remarkable history of this 'poor man's Ferrari'. **Mike Monk** tells the story.

**S**ome cars have a history that beggars belief and the story behind this Fiat 2300S Coupé is one such example. From Italy to Lebanon to England and – finally – South Africa, the early exploits surrounding this car sound like something out of a thriller. The coupé was based on the floorpan of Fiat's 2100/2300 6-cylinder executive car styled by Pininfarina but for a company better known for its smaller, family-orientated products, the 2300 was not destined to be a success. However, the platform did provide the basis for a stylish 2+2 coupé that was built from September 1961 to June 1968 with body parts supplied by OSI, an Italian product development company belonging to Olivetti. When improved even further with performance enhancements by tuning wizards Abarth, the resultant 2300S version was a thoroughly practical *gran turismo* that was dubbed a 'poor man's Ferrari'.



This Fiat's extraordinary history began in 1968 when a young Lebanese man fell in love with the car while in Italy, bought it and shipped it to Beirut. Unfortunately for him he could not afford the bill for import duties so the car sat in the customs yard for six months. It was there that the general manager of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), a Mr Sinclair-Roads, spotted the car and bought it. He kept the car for a year before selling it to Bill Smith who in 1972 sold it to a colleague, Ricky Reid, for £1 000. Both men were involved in the building of a refinery complex but by then Lebanon was in the early stages of conflict that led to the outbreak of civil war in 1975, and they had both made plans to return to England.

Before doing so, Ricky set about having

all the car's mechanicals checked over, before turning his attention to the paint. At the time Fiat used an acrylic paint that, when subjected to cold-water car washes, 'cracked like crazy paving' in the country's harsh sunlight, so the car was stripped to bare metal and resprayed with a two-pack epoxy, plus a lacquer coat for durability. However, strict curfews for the locals limited the time that could be spent on the car, thus delaying the process to the extent that the car was only finished the night before Ricky, his wife and four children (one a baby) were due to sail from Beirut. By risking his life and breaking the curfew, Ricky collected the car and began packing in earnest, filling the boot and packing suitcases onto a roof rack. After three hours of sleep, the Reid family finally departed.

The heavily-laden Fiat made it on time but, unbeknown to the family, the 2300 Coupé was popular amongst drug runners because of its size and massive boot, so they were forced to unpack and repack everything at the

customs house, only to have to repeat the process shortly after when the Fiat was presented as deck cargo on the Adriatica cruise liner. Finally, they set sail across the Mediterranean and managed eight days of deserved relaxation while the car sat under a tarpaulin tied down with ropes – which left marks on the still unhardened paint. Fortunately, 14 coats allowed for the marks to be subsequently cut back.

After watching the car being craned 10 metres from deck to dock in Vienna, the Reids headed for an overnight stop in Innsbruck, followed by a run through Germany with a further overnight stop at an autobahn motel. The following morning, there was an early start to the 700-mile (1126km) journey to England and they arrived in time to celebrate their baby daughter's first birthday. Despite six-up and luggage, the Fiat covered 500km in three hours on the autobahns – but fuel consumption was 23.5 litres/100km. The planned route through Belgium was aborted in favour of travelling through France, from where the cross-channel ferry took the exhausted crew back to England – and home.

**By risking his life and breaking the curfew, Ricky collected the car and began packing in earnest, filling the boot and packing suitcases onto a roof rack**



After replacing the front tyres in the months that followed, the global fuel crisis allowed Ricky to make a deal (quite a story in itself) to officially register the car as a personal import and pay only a nominal £120 in taxes. Not surprisingly, the trusty Fiat remained in the family for more than 30 years and was given another ground-up restoration between 1991 and 1994. In 2008 it was purchased by retiree Michael Moss to be used for classic car events. Then late last year, a friend of prominent Cape Town enthusiast Dave Lyons tipped him off about the car coming up for sale, and after reporting on the car's condition and provenance, Dave bought the car sight unseen and imported it into SA. It is in really superb condition and, typical of Dave's purchases, has a wealth of paperwork to support its history.

Perfectly proportioned, the 2300S Coupé was a genuinely practical 4-seater – although the four Reid children were too young to contest the validity of that statement. The design was credited to Sergio Sartorelli of renowned design house Ghia, although there appears to have been some minor input from

fellow Ghia stylist, American Tom Tjaarda. The wraparound rear screen was distinctive and, together with the slender pillars, this feature helped make the cabin light and airy. It first appeared as a prototype on the Ghia stand at the 1960 Turin Motor Show, after which Fiat quickly stepped in and took over the project, revealing a production version at the Geneva Show in 1961 prior to it going on general sale in 1962. It shared the same wheelbase as the saloon, 2650mm, but front and rear tracks were increased to 1348 and 1331mm respectively.

The engine was a 2279cc in-line 6-cylinder with a cast iron block and aluminium cylinder head, overhead valves and hemispherical combustion chambers. Developed by Aurelio Lampredi (who was responsible for Ferrari's first successful grand prix V12), it was effectively Fiat's 4-cylinder motor with two extra cylinders and ran on a 4-bearing crankshaft. With a single twin-choke carb, the engine produced 86kW but for the S version Carlo Abarth

engineer Klaus Steinmetz adopted dual twin-choke Webers, a reprofiled camshaft and a higher compression ratio that helped increase power to 112kW at 5600rpm and 179Nm of torque at 4000. Each engine was bench-tested and driven on the road before sign-off. A few even hotter 2323cc versions with triple carbs were also produced that helped develop 123kW, and formed the basis for a successful 72-hour speed record-breaking attempt at Monza in April 1963, averaging 180km/h over three days. Transmission was an all-synchro 4-speed manual with a floor shift, and a split propshaft taking drive to the rear wheels. Different final drive ratios were used – 3.9:1 for the 2300 and 3.63:1 for the 2300S.

Front suspension was courtesy of

Not surprisingly, the trusty Fiat remained in the family for more than 30 years and was given another ground-up restoration between 1991 and 1994



wishbones and longitudinal torsion bars while leaf springs did duty at the rear with the aid of an anti-roll bar. Dual-circuit, 4-wheel Girling disc brakes with twin servos were standard, a feature usually only found on luxury cars of the time. Worm-and-roller steering controlled 15x5-inch wheels shod with 165-section tyres.

There is a lot to enthuse about with the 2300S. Inside, the fascia top is padded to prevent reflections in the windscreen, and the wood-faced instrument cowl well-stocked with Veglia dials is complemented by a superb – and expensive – wood-rimmed Nardi aluminium 3-spoke steering wheel. There are warning lights for the choke and handbrake, a gong to warn if going too fast before the oil pressure and coolant temperature are up to required levels, and variable-speed screenwipers. No cruise control, but there is a hand

throttle. Windows are electrically operated while a revolving knob in the door panel controls the quarter-lights. A latch releases the rear quarter-vents. Other delights include separate town and country horns.

The Fiat possesses an elegance that was a characteristic amongst Italian GTs of the time. First impressions are of a solidly-built and luxuriously-equipped vehicle, but the use of cheap steel and a lack of adequate body protection have seen many examples rusting away. This one is in fine fettle though – just under 35 000km on the odo – and I soon settle into the left-hand driver's chair. The comfortable tan-coloured seats have adjustable armchair-like backrests and the front seat passenger gets a grab handle on the tunnel and a foot rest.

The motor swings into an easy rhythmic idle and, after I release the rather incongruous umbrella handbrake, sets the Fiat on its way with ease. Despite a long wand, the gearbox is a delight to operate and the car pulls strongly in each gear. But once the revs pass 3500, the straight-six opens its lungs and the induction roar combines with a gruffly resonant exhaust note that stirs the spirit and widens

the grin. The unassisted steering is on the heavy side at low speeds – the turning circle is not great – but well-weighted once up to speed. The ride is remarkably supple, without any wallow, and only if pushing hard will fail-safe understeer reveal itself. The 2300S ticks all the GT boxes and then some; a drive-all-day capability for more than two people and all their luggage.

Apparently the target for the Abarth-tuned engine was a 0-60mph (96km/h) time of around 10.5 seconds, but with a running weight of 1 500kg this was not easily achieved. UK magazine *Autocar* achieved a time of 11.6 seconds and a top speed of 190km/h, which are still respectable figures, but it was the car's ability to cruise all day at 160km/h that mattered more.

Accurate build figures are unknown but best estimates suggest between 7 000 and 7 200. The cars were relatively expensive – when new, cost twice the price of the admittedly bargain-priced Jaguar E-Type – but oddly there was not much difference between the 2300 and 2300S, so unsurprisingly the former was dropped after a couple of years of production.

Dave's Beirut Abarth has a remarkable history and the fact that it is as appealing today as it was almost 50 years ago makes it an exceptional classic. **G**

Apparently the target for the Abarth-tuned engine was a 0-60mph (96km/h) time of around 10.5 seconds, but with a running weight of 1 500kg this was not easily achieved



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# ILLEGIT



# ILLEGITIMATE HEIRS



In the late 1980s and early '90s, German manufacturer Porsche was in a bit of trouble. Finances were tight and new models were sitting in showrooms gathering dust. Then inspiration and collaboration came from two rather unexpected sources... **Sivan Goren** unpacks the story of Porsche's two 'illegitimate children', the Mercedes-Benz 500E and Audi RS2.

**Photography by Etienne Fouche.**



In the late 1980s Porsche was still feeling the pain of a strong Deutsche Mark and a worsening global slowdown. The 959 assembly line sat idle after its final production run and as a result, there was spare production capacity – and management was eager to fill it. Fellow German manufacturer Mercedes-Benz had several new model launches on the horizon and order books bulged. However, competitor BMW had successfully launched the second-generation M5, which set the

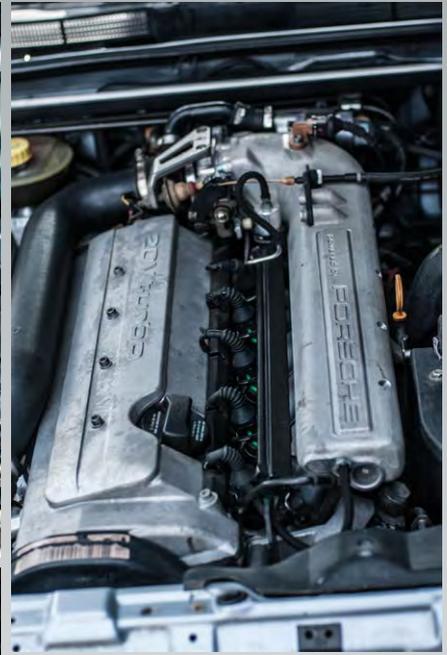
The 959 assembly line sat idle after its final production run and as a result, there was spare production capacity – and management was eager to fill it

standard for the mid-sized super sedan category and Mercedes-Benz needed to come up with a car to compete in this category. Necessity is the mother of invention – and in this case collaboration – and Porsche's Rössle Bau factory in Zuffenhausen, Stuttgart is where an unlikely partnership would begin.

A historic agreement between Mercedes and Porsche was reached and in 1991 the 500E was launched. It began its life as a plain old W124 300E Mercedes saloon – that is until Porsche got hold of it. Cars would leave Mercedes-Benz to spend time at Rössle Bau, where Porsche strengthened the W124 chassis and widened the standard transmission tunnel in order to fit the much larger and heavier 4973cc aluminium block 5-litre V8 that

would be dropped under the bonnet. The cars would then be sent back to Mercedes-Benz for rust proofing, painting and final trim installation. Following that, each 500E would return to Porsche for final assembly. With all this back and forth between the Mercedes plant and Porsche's Zuffenhausen plant, and the fact that these cars were largely hand-built, it is not surprising that it took a full 18 days to complete each one.

The rear-wheel-drive 500E had a naturally-aspirated engine, derived from the 500 SL roadster, with a 4-speed automatic transmission. External design changes were subtle but effective: the front and rear wheel arches were widened to allow for the larger tyres and track of the 500E which, combined with its lower stance, gave the car a mean, shark-like appearance. Inside, the car was replete with luxury features that came standard, including four heated, leather-



trimmed Recaro bucket seats, Becker radio/cassette/CD, driver and passenger airbags, traction control, ABS and an automatic rear sunshade. All this would explain the astronomical price tag: when the car arrived in the US in 1992, its selling price was set at a cool \$80 000! Despite this, it is said that Mercedes-Benz lost money on each car that was produced. But for the German manufacturer, this car was not really about profit as much as it was about making a statement to the rest of the motoring world – and in all likelihood thumbing its nose at rival BMW.

The car was nicknamed the ‘Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing’ by the press after it attained impressive results for the time. It would stay in production until 1995, when it was renamed ‘E500’, when all Mercedes models changed their naming convention to alphanumeric. Apart from a face lift in 1993,

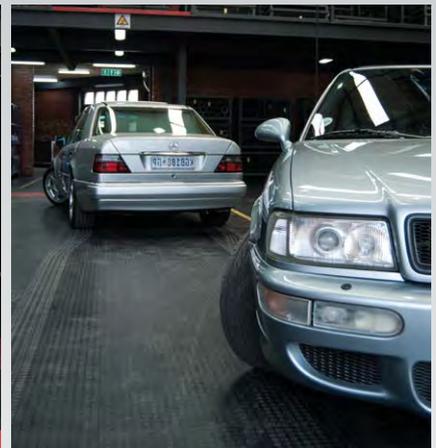
under the bonnet things remained largely unchanged. Only 10 479 of these cars were ever produced.

This vastly underrated car is becoming more and more sought after. Why? After all, it is not ostentatious or showy – in fact, if anything, its subtle design cues make it hard to differentiate it from mainstream E-Class models. It takes a keen enthusiast to know that this isn’t just any old Merc. But this was the car that set the tone for the hotted-up AMGs that followed and in truth, modern hot Mercls haven’t actually deviated from the winning 500E formula all that much. This is a car that, every time you get behind the wheel, gently yet forcefully reminds you that it is no ordinary car – and has a history to

prove it. Even the grand house of Porsche acknowledged the 500E by granting it the official Porsche name of ‘Type 2758’ and a 1995 E500 Limited is on display in the new Porsche Museum in Zuffenhausen.

Perhaps inspired by the success of the Mercedes-Benz 500E, Audi then asked Porsche to help transform a mundane Audi 80 Avant into one of the world’s quickest sportscars a few years later. The agreement between Porsche and Mercedes-Benz

Perhaps inspired by the success of the Mercedes-Benz 500E, Audi then asked Porsche to help transform a mundane Audi 80 Avant into one of the world’s quickest sportscars a few years later



had been one where Mercedes essentially outsourced production to Porsche. But when Porsche collaborated with Audi, they formed a joint-venture called Arge – and this time profits made were split. The Audi RS2 Avant was launched in March 1994. Although much of the car's underpinnings were manufactured by Audi, assembly was handled by Porsche at the Rössle Bau plant, which had become available after discontinuation of the Mercedes-Benz 500E.

The RS2 Avant was Audi's first 'RS' vehicle and the first of the high-performance Avants (Audi's name for a station wagon). The 'RS' stands for RennSport, meaning 'racing sport' in German. It was powered by

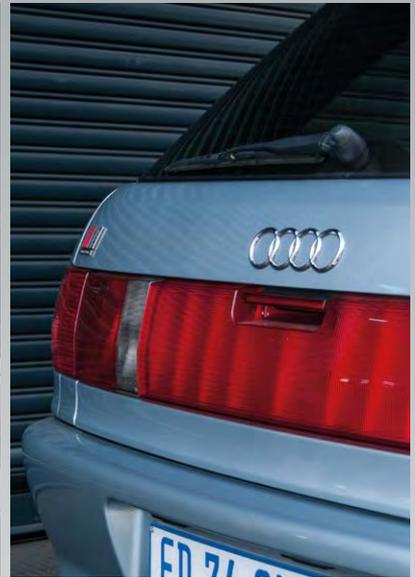
a Porsche-tuned 2.2-litre 5-cylinder engine fitted with a high-capacity turbocharger and an upgraded intercooler. Power was sent to all four wheels via 6-speed

manual transmission and a sport-tuned version of Audi's quattro all-wheel-drive system equipped with a manual differential lock. Porsche-designed braking and suspension systems replaced the standard Audi 80 equipment.

Porsche designers added a front bumper with large air vents, a black radiator grille and aerodynamic 911-sourced door mirrors. RS emblems on both ends, red brake callipers and 17-inch Porsche alloy wheels mounted on low-profile tyres completed the external updates. Inside the cabin the sporty look was carried through, with electric Recaro bucket seats for the front passengers and an RS2-specific instrument cluster with white-faced gauges.

The RS2 could accelerate from 0 to 100km/h in 4.8 seconds, and achieve a maximum speed of 262km/h, despite weighing over 1 600kg. In a road test conducted in 1995, British car magazine *Autocar* timed the RS2 from 0-30mph

The RS2 could accelerate from 0 to 100km/h in 4.8 seconds, and achieve a maximum speed of 262km/h, despite weighing over 1 600kg



(48km/h) at just 1.5 seconds, faster than both the McLaren F1 road car and Jacques Villeneuve's Formula One car of that time. To put the statistics into perspective, a 1994 Porsche 911 Carrera took 5.1 seconds to reach 62mph (100km/h) from a stop. These figures aren't exactly jaw-dropping today but they were downright impressive in the mid-1990s. In spite of being pricey, the RS2 immediately sent shockwaves through the automotive world and it proved massively popular all over Europe. Audi initially announced just 2 200 examples would be built but demand was so strong that eventually a total of 2 891 RS2 Avants were manufactured by the time production ended in July 1995.

Although it was not widely exported outside of Europe, except for a few to Hong Kong, South Africa, Brazil and New Zealand, the RS2 has an impressive cult following worldwide, and it is often regarded as being the vehicle that finally established Audi as a producer of practical high-performance

vehicles: its sturdy station wagon body, with enough room for the whole family – even space to take the dogs to the park, and Audi's trademark quattro permanent 4-wheel-drive system as standard made it usable as a comfortable daily driver, even in poor weather conditions.

This is a car that despite its unexciting, slightly nerdy aesthetics and the fact that it is suitable to use as a soccer mom runabout, packs a sneaky punch and has that understated uber cool factor that might not be obvious at first glance – a bit like Superman in Clark Kent disguise. The Audi RS2 Avant, like the Mercedes 500E, possesses this X factor in spades. And this, together with their relative rarity and interesting bloodline, makes these two dubious heirs to the Porsche throne definite sleeper classics. 🏎️

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# WHO'S THE BOSS



In their September 1989 issue, *CAR* magazine gushed excitedly about the latest Opel Kadett GSi 16V offering that had just been launched, saying: "In ride and finish, this latest most potent GSi is where the original one really should have been." This new kid on the block was dubbed the 'Big Boss', but the world had not seen anything yet because, as **Sivan Goren** discovered, a year later an even more exciting car came into being – one that would become a South African homologation legend.

Images by Jan van der Walt



Headed by Michael Briggs, a group of drivers challenged the Class A BMW 325i and a fierce rivalry soon developed between Briggs and BMW driver Tony Viana, much to the delight of frenzied fans that camped out on the sidelines

When the original Opel Kadett GSi was launched, although it was considered the biggest challenger to other hot hatches like the Golf GTI as far as top speed, the 1.8-litre offering lacked low-rev pulling power and had a tendency to understeer when on the limit. Enter the 2-litre GSi around two years later. But despite an extra 200cc being added which resulted in the GSi competing admirably with the Golf GTi 16V as far as low-down and mid-range grunt, it still lacked grip, particularly as compared to Golf. But that all changed with the arrival of the 16V 'Big Boss'. *CAR* magazine's road test gave this glowing report: "Opel engineers have managed to build what is surely the world's finest four-cylinder production engine to date, with this new 16-valver how they have managed to give the engine the bottom-end power of a conservatively-crammed eight-valve motor, the mid-range of a turbo and the top-end of a cammy multivalve, without resorting to any variable induction length or

cam timing tricks, as other manufacturers have done in the recent past."

But it wasn't just on the road where the new arrival made an impression. Up to this point, both the Golf GTI and BMW 325i had been the dominant players in the South African production car formula called Group N, but with the arrival of the Big Boss that came armed with a double overhead camshaft, Cosworth-developed cylinder head and Brospeed exhaust system, suddenly the usual winners started to feel a bit nervous – and rightly so. Headed by Michael Briggs, a group of drivers challenged the Class A BMW 325i and a fierce rivalry soon developed between Briggs and BMW driver Tony Viana, much to the delight of frenzied fans that camped out on the sidelines, waiting for the inevitable on-track melee that would ensue.

But with Opel's success, BMW SA went on the offensive and began to step up their local motorsport programme. At the time, the only way a manufacturer could make a model eligible to enter Group N racing was to get it homologated, which meant producing a certain number of road vehicles (500) and selling them to the general public. With BMW snapping at their



heels, the powers that be at Delta knew that in order to remain competitive in Group N, they would have to go the homologation route – and that is exactly what they did. Rolf Mentzel, the then manager of product engineering and quality assurance at Port Elizabeth-based Delta Motor Corporation (now General Motors), was the man tasked with this project – his brief was to make sure that driver Mike Briggs would retain his 'A1' race number for the 1990 season, and so he headed overseas with a plan...

He returned with tuned suspension from Irmischer, updated camshaft profile by Schrick and a performance-management chip courtesy of Promotec. The addition of 5-spoke powder-coated Aluette wheels meant the wheel arches had to be rolled to house these wider wheels, and to accommodate the ride height being dropped by 20mm. Local innovative engineer André Verwey designed a limited slip differential – the first of its kind on a front-wheel-drive production car at the time. It was an 18% torque-biased differential for road-going models but the torque bias was bumped up to 80% for the race car version, which helped to put more power on the track. The exhaust system was also developed locally because German

regulations demanded lower noise levels. After hours and hours on the dynamometer, a four-into-one exhaust header was designed, which had an even bigger and noisier bore system than its predecessor.

The Superboss was launched at Tarlton, with press delegates lucky enough to have cracked an invite gleefully dicing one another down the drag strip. One such participant was celeb Michelle Bruce, who some might remember as Miss South Africa 1989. Not just a pretty face, though, as she managed 16-second runs over a quarter mile. But celebs and launch parties aside, the birth of the Superboss was about one thing only – and that was the race track. And being a car that was built to win on the track, niceties like aircon, power steering and electric windows were not included – the opening mechanisms for the rear windows were removed entirely – all in the name of reducing weight. Even the sound deadening material was left off, which amplified every squeak and rattle – and there were lots of those.

But you did get cool stuff like front brake cooling ducts in the spoiler – achieved by removing

Local innovative engineer André Verwey designed a limited slip differential – the first of its kind on a front-wheel-drive production car at the time



Farouk Dangor's Group N racer.



Mike Briggs in his Superboss office.



The Opel Team with Briggs at the front.

Although smaller in capacity, its superior power-to-weight ratio kept the likes of BMW and Tony Viana on their toes and allowed Michael Briggs to win the championship three years in a row

the front bumper-mounted driving lights and building in air ducting to the front discs – where a run-of-the-mill Kadett would have just had boring old lights. And if you were really lucky you also got a head that was hand ported by Cosworth. I say 'lucky' because although Delta Motors claimed that all Superbosses came with hand-ported Cosworth heads, in reality only around 20-50% of the models produced between 1990 and 1992 actually did. The rest received a Kolbenschmidt casting which was possibly not as well finished, but the truth is that only an expert would be able to tell the difference. But maybe the coolest thing is this: an 'S' appears at the end of the string of letters that prefix the chassis number on the VIN plate – proof that this is no ordinary Boss.

Refinement was certainly

not a quality of the Superboss. Its hard and rattly ride – even when brand new – became famous. But then again, so did its monster of an engine, not to mention its incredible performance on the track. What it lacked in superior interior build like its German counterparts BMW and VW, it more than made up for in pure guts and tenacity. Despite battling with larger-engined rivals in Group N, the Opel Superboss was extremely competitive. Although smaller in capacity, its superior power-to-weight ratio kept the likes of BMW and Tony Viana on their toes and allowed Michael Briggs to win the championship three years in a row.

Show anyone who grew up watching racing in the '90s a picture or video of this feisty little bruiser and their eyes will light up with excitement and then glaze over with pure nostalgia, because this was a car with no equal – the Superboss was simply unstoppable. **C**



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# SAFE MY MATE

The way your classic car looks and goes is all part of the pleasure of ownership, particularly if it's a car that you've devoted hundreds of hours to restoring. But, while it may scoop up trophies at the club concours or get the thumbs up while on a Sunday cruise, it's important that it goes, handles and stops as well as it looks too. Here's Graeme Hurst's 10-point guide to help you make it do just that.

**C**lassic cars appeal for many reasons – whether it's looks, driving pleasure or the fact that they're mechanically simple enough for DIY maintenance – but the reality is many have been home-restored or are in long-term ownership, covering a lot fewer miles per year than they would've done in period. And many simply aren't subjected to the service regime offered by the dealer when the car was relatively new.

What's more, with no compulsory annual roadworthy (as with many European

countries) it's all too easy for components to become unsafe without the owner (who's often only driven that particular example) realising. It might sound like a chore but voluntarily putting your classic through a roadworthy, or at least on a set of brake test rollers, from time to time will help highlight any issues. If you belong to a marque club then getting another member or classic specialist to drive your car could also highlight any issues. And taking time to service it according to the correct, original mileage and time-based schedules will also

help keep it in tip-top shape.

Also, the reality is that most classic cars – certainly pre-1980s examples – simply can't rival the braking or handling ability of today's cars that they share the road with, which is an added reason for ensuring that everything works as it should.

And, lastly, USING your classic REGULARLY is first prize when it comes to safety; that way the fuel in the tank remains fresh, the rubber components are kept supple and the hydraulic systems will likely remain leak-free, with less chance of seizing.



# 1 BRAKES

An obvious starting point for any safety-related check, particularly for cars not used regularly. The state of the brake fluid is paramount as it's hygroscopic and so absorbs moisture. Water content won't stop the brakes working but can corrode the pipes and hydraulic cylinder bores, giving rise to leaks. Worse, added moisture lowers the brake fluid's boiling point which means, if there's enough heat generated through heavy braking, you could end up with air in the system and suddenly have no brakes.

If your car has single-circuit brakes then you'll have no way to retard your speed except the handbrake. Changing the fluid every other year is the solution or replacing it with silicone-based fluid which isn't hygroscopic, although that requires a brake overhaul to clean out the existing incompatible fluid. Drum brake systems need regular adjustment and don't like lack of use which can cause the slave cylinders to seize, while flexible hoses need to be just that: flexible. If they're more than 10 years old, renew them regardless. Again, it's another critical aspect on single-circuit systems.

Brake pads and/or shoes are wearable items that need inspection according to your car's service schedule while discs that are over-skimmed can cause vibration under braking. Over-skimmed drums will wear out shoes more quickly than standard items.

It might sound like a chore but voluntarily putting your classic through a roadworthy, or at least on a set of brake test rollers, from time to time will help highlight any issues



# 2 TYRES

The February/March 2016 issue of CCA covered all you need to know about tyres but, in summary, tyre safety starts with age as rubber is an organic product that continues to harden from the moment it's made, albeit slowly. Lack of use and prolonged exposure to sunlight makes that worse. Any hardening will eventually lead to hairline cracks. The loss of suppleness can also generate heat which, along with the crack defects, could result in the tread coming off at speed or – worse – failure of the tyre wall. Look for the four-number date code to see when they were made – the first two are the week number and the last two the year (so 4215 is the 42<sup>nd</sup> week of 2015). If they're older than 10 years replace the tyres. Regular balancing and checking that your classic's wheel geometry is spot on will ensure longevity too while optimising the car's handling. Ensure the tyres are the correct speed and load rating for your car.



# 3 STEERING & SUSPENSION COMPONENTS



Steering components (particularly steering boxes) and suspension joints can each harbour wear or tolerances that, collectively, result in excessive movement and poor handling – often identifiable when you drive a low-mileage or freshly restored example of your classic as a comparison. Ensuring every item is to specification (racks can be shimmed and steering boxes usually adjusted) and correctly lubricated will keep it in order, as will replacing any worn ball-joints or tie-rod ends. On cars with leaf spring rear axles, worn shackle bushes can result in axle tramp which detract from the car's handling. A switch to polyurethane bushes on those and other components using bushes will ensure longevity. If your car was originally fitted with crossply tyres then an upgrade to radials will improve handling and braking but it will place added stress on the suspension components, so they need to be in good order.

# 4 WIRING

Most pre-1960s classic cars had fabric wiring sheaths which are particularly vulnerable to ageing as the fabric insulation deteriorates, allowing moisture in (particularly in humid climates). That causes the inner copper core to oxidise which increases the resistance. And added resistance means more amps flowing through and the potential of a melt-down at the weakest point, which is likely to be the point of most deterioration – often in inaccessible areas where wiring is exposed to heat and dirt. And a lot of British classics used a shared fuse-system, making the circuit more vulnerable to damage. If your car's wiring loom is fabric and original then renew the loom as a matter of course. And fit a battery master switch so you can cut the power quickly without having to dig out a spanner if the sparks start to fly on the roadside.



# 5 COOLING SYSTEM

It may not sound like a safety issue but a dodgy cooling system could lead to a breakdown at an inopportune time. A coolant change and flush every other year will help slow any corrosion (a particular problem on cars with alloy 'heads and cast-iron blocks) and scale build-up while hoses need careful inspection during servicing. Thermostats need to operate as specified and don't consider leaving one out; on a lot of classics that simply means the water doesn't flow correctly and you'll get an uneven (and excessive) heat pattern through the cylinder head and block but a 'cool' reading on the gauge.

Aftermarket alloy radiators are popular and often effective thanks to added capacity but they are less thermally efficient than a copper-cored radiator of the same dimension.



# 6 FUEL SYSTEM

Leaking fuel is an absolute no-no for obvious reasons, particularly at speed when it can occur undetected and under pressure. Checking and regular (every 10 years) replacement of any flexible piping is advisable, particularly for any stretches subject to heat in the engine bay. It's advisable to limit the use of rubber tubing anyway as it's only needed to transfer fuel between the feed mounted on the inner wing or bulkhead to the carburetors or injection system on the powertrain, which is subject to some movement on its mounts. The feed point itself should be mounted above the height of the top surface of the fuel tank so that any leak doesn't drain the tank. Place any aftermarket inline filter on the tank side of the fuel pump so that any filter-related leaks won't occur under pressure.



For cars with electric fuel pumps (most pre-1970 British makes), consider wiring in a fuel inertia cut-off switch which will cut the power supply in the event of an accident or the car rolling. Refurbishing the inside of your fuel tank every five to 10 years will help prevent rust-related blockages which could strike at an awkward time, particularly on cars not seeing much use.

# 7 WHEELS

If your classic's got wire wheels then pay attention to both the splined hubs and the wire wheels themselves. The hubs translate both drive and braking force so examine carefully for wear typically noticeable as dark patches or asymmetrically-shaped teeth. An audible clunk when letting the clutch out is a sign the wear is drastic and any failure is likely to occur during braking.

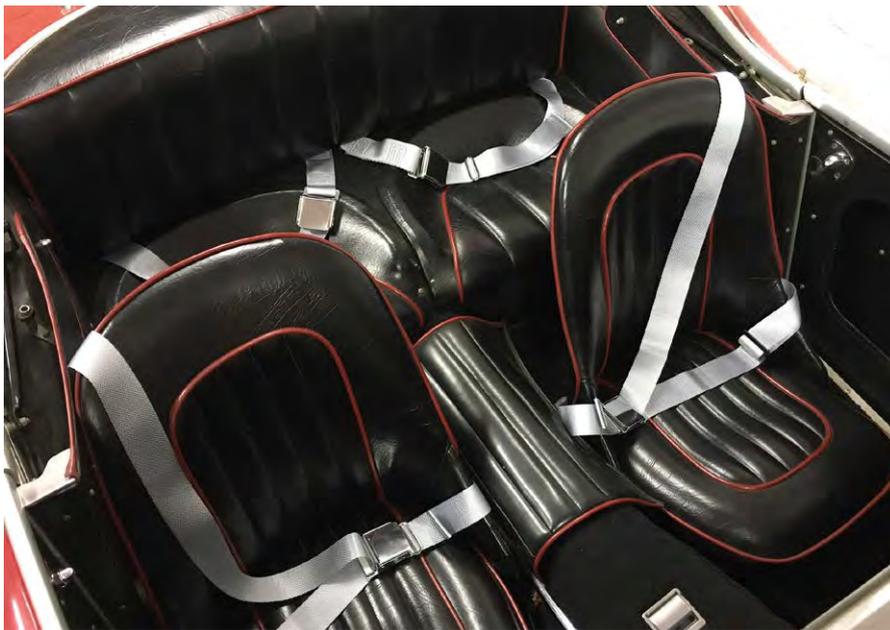
Wire wheels have multiple components and need to be checked for trueness. Spin the wheel with it raised while holding a wax crayon to the rim to check trueness. A wheel that's suddenly come out of balance may well have loose or broken spokes. Upgrading to double- or triple-laced wires is a safer bet that usually allows for wider tyres.

Pressed-steel wheels need to be inspected for cracks and any period magnesium alloy wheel should be professionally tested to detect latent deterioration of the metal.



# 8 DRIVE TRAIN COMPONENTS

Worn or broken engine or gearbox mounts will promote vibration (usually detectable at specific engine revs) as will worn universal or constant-velocity joints on the drivetrain (which will vibrate at specific road speeds). Any of these could affect the car's handling and, in extreme cases, lead to catastrophic failure. Keep all universal joints well lubricated for longevity. Ensure the clutch system is bled and correctly adjusted to avoid it slipping unexpectedly. Balance the pressure plate and flywheel as a matched unit when replacing the clutch to lessen the chance of vibration.



# 9 SEAT BELTS

Seatbelts only became standard in the 1960s so a lot of earlier classics don't have them. If yours is one, consider fitting some. And that won't necessarily mean compromising classic looks as period-style webbing and chrome seatbelt hardware is available in both adjustable and inertia reel forms. Ensure that any existing or new anchor points are robust and use a load spreader (metal tab) for the latter.

# 10 FIRE EXTINGUISHER

An electrical or fuel-related fire is the biggest threat to a classic as, apart from the potential physical harm to you or your or passengers, it can result in the car being an unrestorable write-off in minutes. Carry a suitable extinguisher (either powder or foam) and ensure it's accessible from inside the car. Replace it or service it every two years. A regular manual, trigger version (preferably 2-litres) should be sufficient but plumbed in options (which release the media where needed via a heat-sensitive tube) are available too. Carrying a fire extinguisher is now a requirement with a lot of insurance companies offering classic car cover. 





# Silent Design

An Extractor fan with low noise levels and stylish finish to bring world class silence to your bathroom



## Silence ... to relive the moment ...



# MODEL RACER



In 1982 Desiré Wilson teamed up with Emilio de Villota and Alain de Cadenet in a Grid S1 sports racing car to compete in the Le Mans 24 Hour. Despite the car only managing seven laps, it was enough to etch her name into the history books as the only South African female racer to have ever taken part in the gruelling event. Not content, she returned a year later with the Obermaier Racing Porsche 956 and together with Germans Axel Plankenhorn and Jürgen Lässig ran in an impressive 7<sup>th</sup> overall. Following a few years away from the Le Sarthe circuit she went back in 1992 as part of an all-star female crew, driving a Spice SE90C, but failed to finish with technical issues 47 laps in.

**T**o celebrate her 1983 exploit Bunny Wentzel of Sportique Collectable Models has run a set of just 20 signed Porsche 956 models decked out in the Obermaier Racing scheme of that year. At the core of the scene is a 1:18<sup>th</sup> scale Minichamps item, so the quality and attention to detail is out the top drawer. It sits on a custom-built base where Wilson has signed and the dust is kept out with a Perspex case. It's a must-have for any collector of South African-related racing models and autographs.

Desiré is widely recognised as one of the most accomplished female racing drivers in the world. To date, she is the only woman to have been licensed to drive in a CART Indycars event or to hold an FIA Super Licence, which enabled her to race in Formula One World Championship events. In 1980, she won both the Monza 1000km and the Silverstone 6 Hours World

Championship for Makes races – the first female to have outright victories in any FIA World Championship race.

In 1967, at the age of 12, Wilson came second in the South African midget car nationals. She moved on to full circuit racing in 1972 with a Formula Vee, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the South African Vee Championships in 1973 and '74. In 1975 she won the South African Formula Ford Championship, and repeated this in 1976 to secure the 'Driver to Europe' award. As a result, Wilson moved to Europe for the 1977 season, competing mainly in Formula Ford 2000 races, in the Benelux and British Championships, where she finished third and fourth respectively, winning races at Zandvoort and Colmar-Berg.

She took another huge step forward in 1978, racing a Formula One March 751, updated to 761 specifications. After impressing many team bosses, she signed up to race in the Aurora AFX F1

Championship for Mario Deliotti Racing. Driving a Cosworth-powered Ensign N175, her best finish was a third place at the Thruxton Circuit. In 1979, she became the first woman to lead an F1 race when she headed the field at Zolder in the Melchester Racing Tyrrell 008 – she finished third after spinning on the penultimate lap and claimed the fastest lap of the race.

For 1980 Teddy Yip and his Theodore Racing team put Wilson in the seat of its Wolf WR4, again competing in the Aurora series. Two rounds in his choice of driver paid off as Wilson won the Evening News Trophy at Brands Hatch and became the first woman, and so far the only woman, to win an F1 race. She recorded two more podium finishes, before the team ran out of money.

1980 was also the year she teamed up with Alain de Cadenet and shared the driving duties of his De Cadenet LM1. The pair took third in the Brands Hatch 1000km



before going on to win both the Monza 1000km and the Silverstone 6 Hours races. For 1981 Wilson accepted a drive with Tyrrell Racing in the South African Grand Prix – and although a non-championship race because of an ongoing FISA-FOCA war in the F1 offices, it still attracted a strong field. She qualified 16<sup>th</sup> and moved through the field to 6<sup>th</sup>, before spinning out her Tyrrell 010 with gearbox troubles. But she had managed to impress Ken Tyrrell, and was offered further drives. However, due to lack of sponsorship and South Africa's political situation, she was unable to take up Tyrrell's offer.

Wilson's career in American single-seaters started in 1982. Back with Teddy Yip's Theodore Racing, she passed her Indy 500 rookie test without a problem, set the fastest ever lap by a female racer (191.042mph) in qualifying but failed to qualify for the event, with repeated engine failures. She did race eight other Indycar races, with a best finish of 10<sup>th</sup> in the Grand Prix of Cleveland.

Now living in America, Wilson is still heavily involved in motorsport, with her South African-native husband Alan L. Wilson a renowned circuit designer. She keeps her head in the game with the odd driving appearance at Goodwood where she still shows the boys a thing or two. 🇳🇵

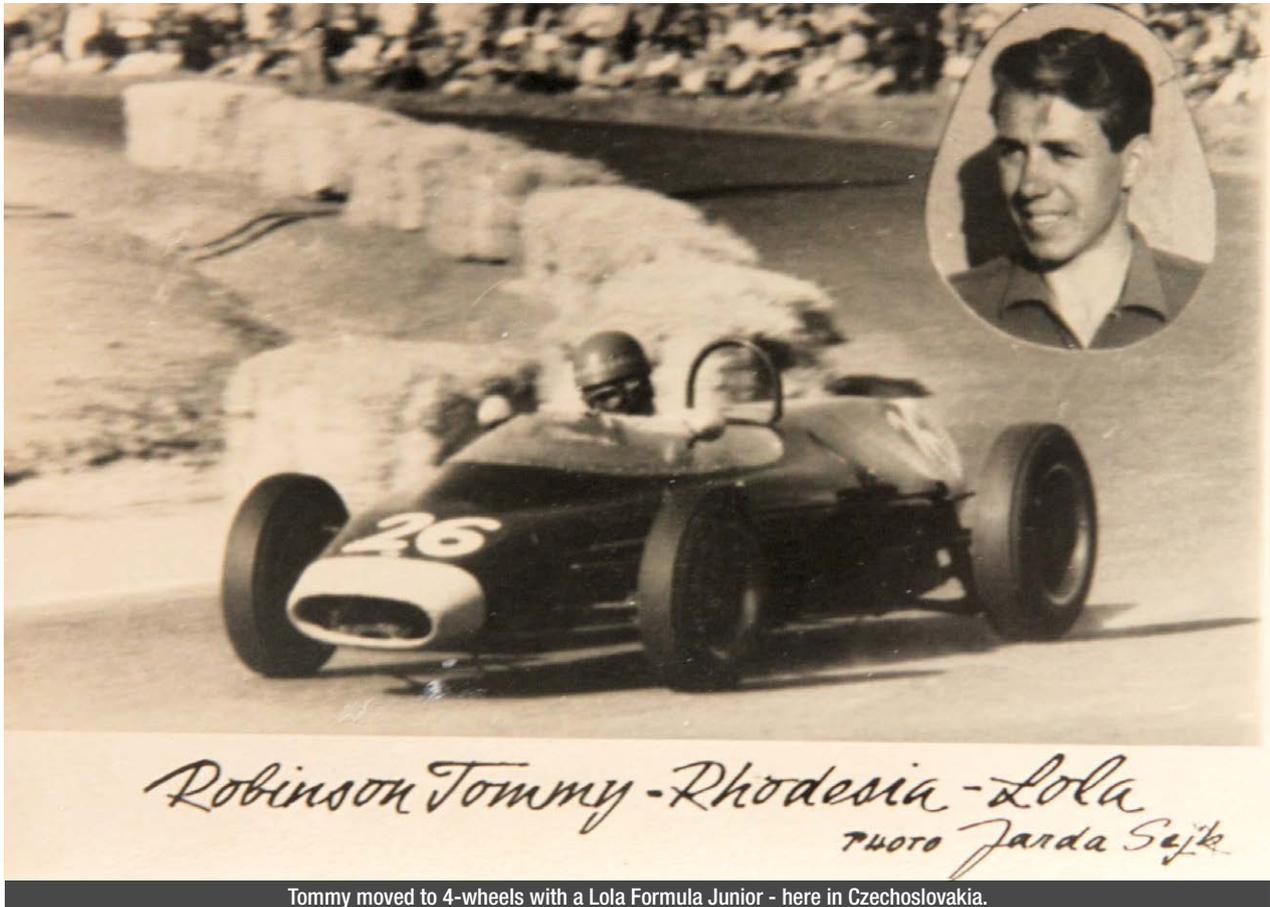
In 1979, she became the first woman to lead an F1 race when she headed the field at Zolder in the Melchester Racing Tyrrell 008

### THE ONLY SOUTH AFRICAN LADY AT LE MANS

Make:	Minichamps
Scale:	1:18
Details:	Signed by Desiré Wilson
Model:	Porsche 956 L 'Boss' Team Obermaier Racing – 24 Hours of Le Mans 1983
Packaging:	Custom-made base in Perspex box
Total made:	20 units
Price:	R3 000
Available From:	Sportique Collectable Models +27 82 923 0512

# TRACK ATTACK

Tommy Robinson risked life and limb on racetracks in Europe and Southern Africa, but the greatest threat to either (and his bravest moment) involved not a motorcycle, but a killer shark. **Gavin Foster** talks to the man who set off to earn a living racing motorcycles in Europe two years after retiring from the sport at the age of 23.



Perhaps Tommy Robinson gained his need for speed during his school holidays, when the journey between Grey Junior School's hostel in Port Elizabeth and his parents' home in Rhodesia took four days out of each end of his school

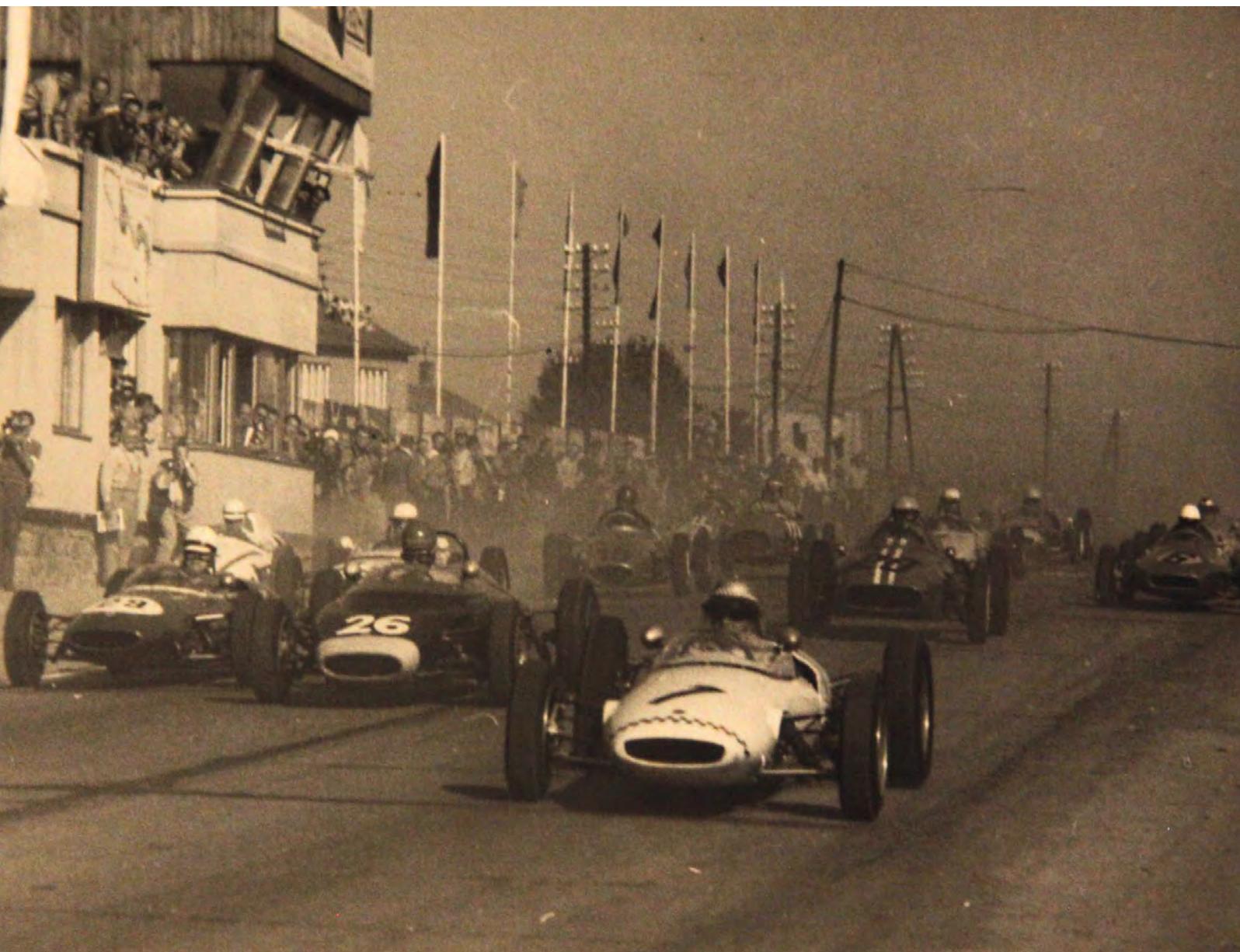
holidays. Those trips seemed interminable, and his appreciation of alacrity really took hold a decade later when the apprentice electrician started helping out a neighbour, Geoff Lacey, with his racing motorcycles. "I helped clean his bikes and so on, and went to a few races with him. He eventually let me

ride his Velocette KSS 350 and I won my first two races on it, so I got more involved." In those days, Rhodesia used to have what they called 'speedway' races that were very different to the European idea of the sport because they involved fast motorcycles with gears and brakes racing around combined tarmac and dirt tracks at high speed. "The Silver Helmet was

the big trophy for the day at the Umguzu circuit," the 82-year-old racer remembers, producing the one he still has, salvaged from the Zimbabwe ruins. Riders would often use the same bikes there as they did in pure road races, which is quite likely the reason that Rhodesians generally fared so well when they went to Europe, much as the Americans did in the late '70s; they knew all about sliding the back wheel.

After about six years of having fun on motorcycles Tommy chucked it in. "I sold my bike and retired," he says. Tommy doesn't propose that what happened in Margate on Monday 23 December 1957 reinforced his decision to stop racing, but it's pretty fair to assume that the death of his friend Vernon James Berry made him sit back and

Riders would often use the same bikes there as they did in pure road races, which is quite likely the reason that Rhodesians generally fared so well when they went to Europe



Tommy (No.26) getting off to a good start in the Lola. Europe in 1962.

take stock of his life. "We'd driven down via Durban on our way to Port Elizabeth for the PE 200." Tommy was going, not as a racer, but to help his friend out as a mechanic. They stopped at Margate at lunchtime and went for a swim, along with the third member of their party, Fred Norman. "I heard people calling 'Shark! Shark!' and saw Vernon seemed to be in trouble. He couldn't swim very well so I went to help him. When I got close I saw the blood. The water was so red that I couldn't make out if the shark was still there. I leaned over and grabbed his head, pulled him closer and lifted him up. Only then did I see the damage. His one leg from the thigh to the knee was just bone, his left arm was gone, and his right arm was shredded. Fred and I got him out of

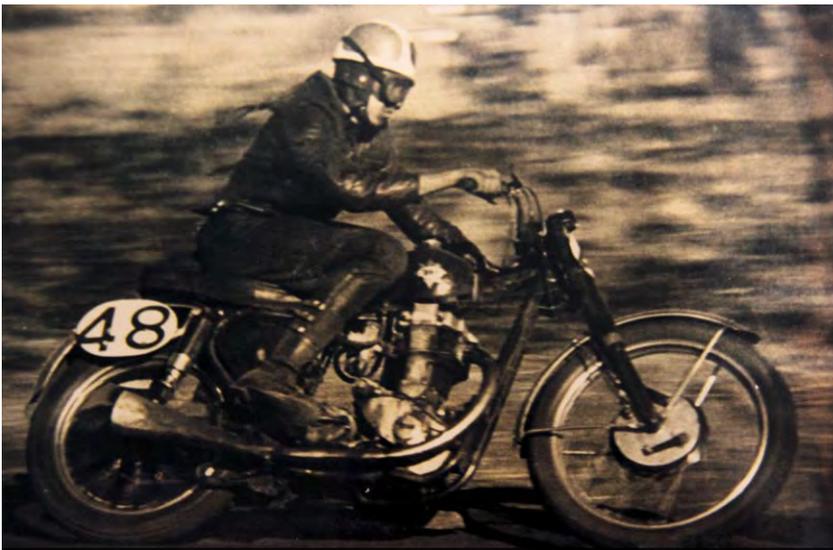
the water and rushed him to hospital in the back of our truck but he didn't make it." The remaining two youngsters, shaken, carried on to Port Elizabeth, where Tommy decided that he'd ride Vernon's bike in the PE 200. "After we'd cleared it with the organisers I changed my mind, and didn't," he says.

Less than four hours after arriving in Margate, Vernon had become the third shark-attack victim on the South Coast in a week, and two more died before Easter the next year. The government reacted as governments do – foolishly. They sent out the navy to drop depth charges, which killed loads of fish, which attracted more sharks. Eventually sanity prevailed and the

Natal Sharks Board was formed.

"I didn't race at all in '58 and '59, but my brother Shaun started and did rather well," says Tommy. "At the beginning of 1960 him, me, and a friend called Willie van Leeuwen decided to race overseas. We were at a loose end and we'd heard you could make a living at it so off we went." The trio were

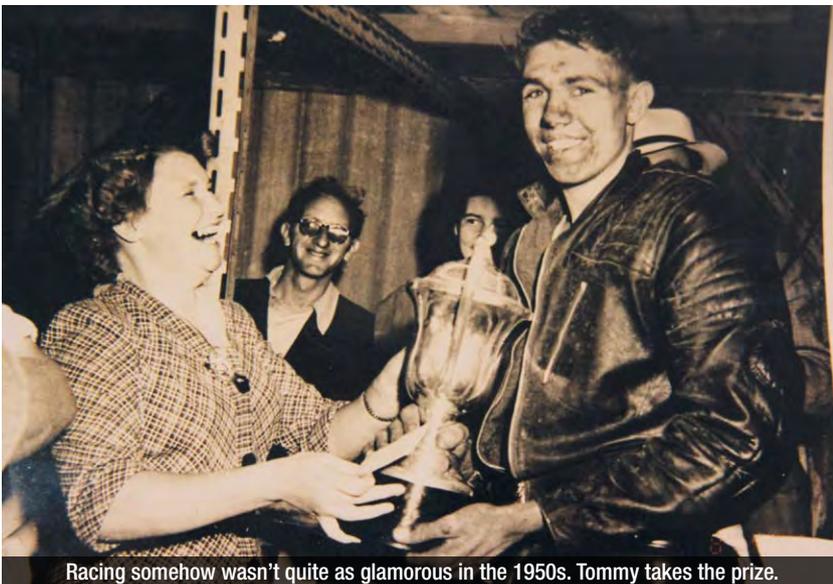
**Less than four hours after arriving in Margate, Vernon had become the third shark-attack victim on the South Coast in a week, and two more died before Easter the next year**



Rhodesian racing on the tar and dirt. Dripping oil probably helped with the dust!



Tommy (No 1 Jawa 350) chasing Šťastný in 1962.



Racing somehow wasn't quite as glamorous in the 1950s. Tommy takes the prize.



The shark attack report in a local paper.

lucky. By pure fluke, they'd booked on the same passenger liner as Paddy Driver, Jim Redman, Bob Anderson, Jannie Stander and Dickie Dale – all great riders in their own rights. "We had twelve days and nights to talk and learn, and learn we did. Dickie Dale offered to put us up and when we arrived in England arranged for Avon tyres to supply us in Europe. He told us to run our campaign like a business. We had stationery made, bought a typewriter and pecked out letters to the race organisers."

The Rhodesian youngsters bought second-hand Nortons and went racing.

**We used to take the same bike through scrutineering twice so we could get double the start money in two different classes**

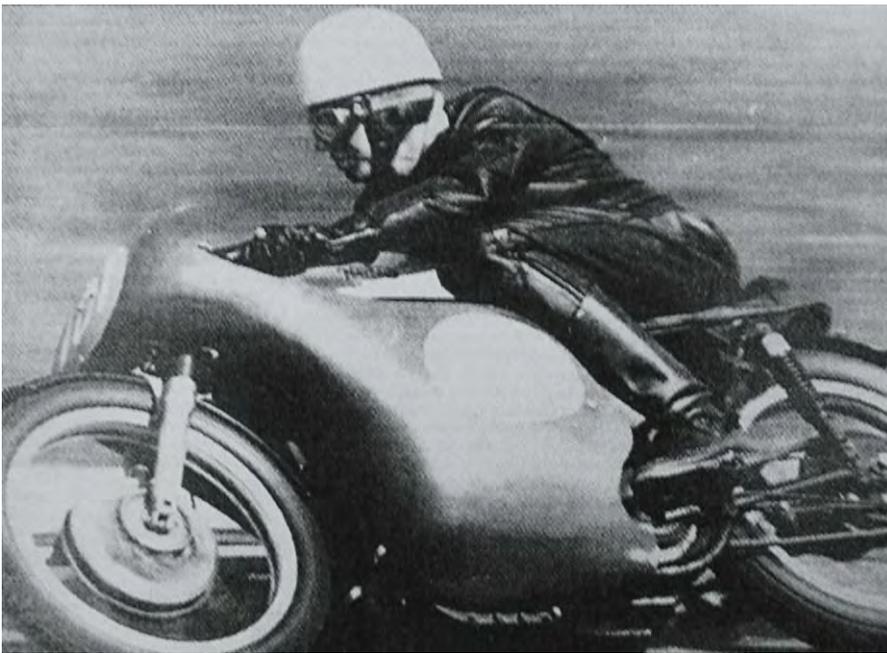
"I had my first race at Silverstone, having not raced for two years. The flag drops and you're up against 50 of the world's top riders. It wasn't easy but I got a 15<sup>th</sup>, so that was a good start."

Getting a start, good or otherwise, was all-important. Apart from prize money, organisers paid start money irrespective of finishing order, so riders commonly qualified and then did a few token laps in a class that they weren't serious about contesting, just to pay the rent. "We used to take the same bike through scrutineering twice so we could get double the start money in two different classes.

We'd get the 350 checked out, take it back to the pits, and change the number plates and exhaust pipes. Then we'd take it back as a 500. When they wanted to check the engine number we'd get our hands

in the way and read out some fictional number to help them." Because they were all in the same boat other riders also didn't mind if a competitor entered his 500 in the 350 race, as long as he just did it for the start money and then retired. Woe betide the idiot who took advantage and raced properly with an unfair advantage though. "I only once rode my 500 in a 350 race, in East Germany. The only guys who knew were Jim Redman and a New Zealander called Johnny Hempleman. They tucked in behind me and I towed them away from the rest of the field. We got further and further ahead, but I didn't dare finish up front because they'd have been the first to protest. Two laps from the end I pulled into the pits and everybody wanted to know what had happened. 'It's the gearbox – the gearbox!' I complained."

Tommy won a fair number of international races and took lots of podiums in his



Tommy today.



Racing in Europe on a shoestring. Tommy and Robbie Norman in 1962.



Lola – Czechoslovakia.

2½ years of European racing, making a fair living while he was at it. “The money wasn’t huge, but I could live comfortably and spend a couple of months loafing on Durban’s beaches during the off-season,” he remembers. There were also races to be won in South Africa. “At the end of ’61 there were five of us who were classified as overseas riders, which meant the races at home were internationals. Jim Redman, Gary Hocking, Paddy Driver, Phil Read and I used to race against the locals every week.” Being seasoned professionals the five were, of course, generally much quicker than the local racers. “The five of us had an arrangement whereby we’d put up a show, stay together, changing places for the lead until the last couple of laps, when the racing would get serious,” remembers Tommy. “It worked fine as long as none of the locals got amongst us. At Westmead it all went wrong in the Natal GP though. A chap

called George ‘The Greek’ Georgeades came past us on a Matchless G50. He was pulling big slides all over the place and we were battling to stay with the guy. Eventually he overdid it and that was him. He came up to us in the pits afterwards and said: ‘Hey you guys – thanks for letting me lead for a while back there. Hell, I enjoyed that!’ – we’d been really trying but we didn’t tell him we couldn’t keep up!” Tommy ended up second in that race, behind Paddy Driver, and 4<sup>th</sup> in the 350cc event.

Like all good things, Tommy’s racing eventually came to an end. In 1962, while enjoying the race of his life in Finland against František (Franta) Šťastný on the works Jawa – the quickest 350 around – he crashed out and badly damaged his hand. He experimented with racing cars for a while, but when a

new car that had been promised fell through he returned to the African sunshine. He’d won international events and non-world-championship Grand Prix all over Europe, and taken dozens of podiums. He’d made many new friends, and lost more than a few. “Before my crash I’d been approached by Tom Arter to ride the works AJS in England. There was more prize money to be made in Europe, but I could race for him only in England, and he wanted a third of the takings. I was still thinking about it when I had my crash. But I saw so many people killed that I realised that if you carry on long enough it’ll probably happen to you.” 📌

He experimented with racing cars for a while, but when a new car that had been promised fell through he returned to the African sunshine

# GARAGE

A few years back, The Driver and I decided it was time to take the plunge and buy a house together. During the week we would trawl through property websites and each Sunday we would dutifully set off, equipped with a file of domestic abode prospects neatly printed out and colour coded, and loaded down with enough provisions for a three-week trek through Nepal. We became seasoned property-searching pros, able to decipher even the most cryptic estate agent speak like 'cosy' (so tiny a double-jointed contortionist couldn't sit up in bed), 'conveniently located' (right next to a bustling nightclub and the N1) and 'a renovator's dream' (wear a hard hat and/or hazmat suit if you value your life).

There was the usual barrage of generic questions from over-eager realtors at every stop and we became adept at shooting off rapid-fire responses. Three bedrooms, two bathrooms – check. No pool, medium-sized garden – so far so

good. But here is the part where things got a bit tricky: the car stuff. Most typical families have two cars – one for each adult in the home. Not so with us. So when we would nonchalantly slip in that we needed space for six cars, the agent in question would go pale, swallow nervously and repeat: "Six, um, *six cars*?", his/her commission hopes disappearing faster than a toupee in a hurricane. You see, there are not many family houses (unless your surname is von Trapp) that make provision for that much parking space, let alone garaging.

And just parking space is not enough. It needs to be covered parking, especially when it comes to older cars that are as waterproof as the sunken *Titanic*, just as rusty and – let's face it – could just as well be a gargantuan passenger liner, complete with Celine Dion warbling 'My Heart Will Go On' on its prow, for the amount of space they require. Classic cars also need to be worked on pretty frequently so it is not just parking that is needed, it is garage (or workshop) space too. This, of course, would need to be large enough to fit professional workbenches, compressors, hydraulic lifts,

And just parking space is not enough. It needs to be covered parking, especially when it comes to older cars that are as waterproof as the sunken *Titanic*

# GET SALE

BY RACEY LACEY

industrial lathes, multi-tray tool trolleys on wheels and all the other basic stuff a Saturday mechanic needs to potter around on an engine.

Oh, and did I mention the spare parts that go hand-in-greasy-hand with old cars? No? Let's just say that a garage the size of the Smithsonian Institution would not be large enough for the extra bonnet, wheels, windscreen, seats, gauges and various other car body parts that have been collected (read: hoarded) over the years. There are even parts for cars we don't own and never have, but well, apparently you just never know. *Of course* we have to keep those two sad Minilites we have had for 10 years because they will be perfect for that elusive Cooper S that is bound to come along somewhere down the line. Obviously. Silly me.

So finally, after months of fruitless searching, we eventually found the perfect house, at the right price, in the right area and with everything we could possibly want. Well, except for the parking, garaging and workshop space bit. Actually, the fact that it is a house that was built in the era of outhouses means that we are lucky that

we have even a single garage and tandem carport ('tandem carport' being estate agent speak for what is actually no more than an uncovered driveway that can fit two cars). Three cars can just about squeeze in, but this means they are parked one behind the other, which makes for fun mornings of playing musical cars – inevitably the one who needs to leave first will be the one parked in. Any weekend tinkering has to take place in the aforementioned tandem carport in the blistering heat or freezing cold, because there simply isn't the space in the 'cosy' garage. As for the rest of the cars, they have sought refuge in garages and carports of kindly neighbours, friends and family and we take them out for the occasional spin, dividing our time (and petrol) like doting foster parents.

So no, things didn't exactly work out the way we had planned, but we have got used to it and it works for us. Well, mostly. Actually, if you're selling a three-bedroom, two-bathroom house with six or so garages, let's talk... 

Any weekend tinkering has to take place in the aforementioned tandem carport in the blistering heat or freezing cold, because there simply isn't the space in the 'cosy' garage

# ONE STEP AHEAD

This month **Jake Venter** conducts a fictitious interview with three engineers at the nucleus of the team that created the pre-war BMW 328. They are Fritz Fiedler, Rudolf Schleicher and Wilhelm Meyerhuber. Many experts believe the 328 was the first car built using what eventually became post-war technology.



**T**he Bayerische Flugzeugwerke was established when the Rapp Motorenwerke, an aircraft manufacturing company, was reorganised in 1917. The company quickly made a name for superior aircraft engines but in 1918, when WWI ended, the Versailles Armistice Treaty forced the company to stop production. In 1922 the company's name was changed to Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW) and in 1923 production of its famous line of flat-twin motorcycles began. In 1928 the company

bought the Dixi works at Eisenach and a year later started production of a licensed version of the Austin Seven. It was called the BMW-Dixi and the venture was so successful that it put the company on the road to fame.

In April 1939 I went to the Berlin Motor Show to see the new KdF-wagen (later called the Käfer or Beetle). Afterwards I wandered around and stopped to admire a new 335 saloon on the BMW stand. I started talking to Fritz Fiedler, a senior BMW engineer, and the moment he discovered that I am an automotive engineer-turned-journalist he

invited me to come to the factory and meet some of his senior co-workers. At that time the cars were produced in Eisenach, while the motorcycles were produced in Munich. I gladly accepted because BMW was constantly in the news at the time, mainly due to the BMW 328's unbelievable success in sportscar racing.

A few weeks later I headed for the factory. Upon arrival I was shown into Fritz Fiedler's office. He welcomed me in, ordered his secretary to make some coffee, and the interview began.

**JAKE:** How nice to see you again. I must start by thanking you for talking to me about your career and the happenings at BMW.

**FIEDLER:** I'm glad that you're here. I'm in charge of car development and your visit will give me a chance to tell you about the progress we've made in automotive design over the last five years.

**JAKE:** Were you always interested in cars?

**FIEDLER:** Always. I was born in Potsdam and studied at the Charlottenburg Technical College in Berlin. I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested in mechanical devices and especially cars and trucks. I was lucky enough to spend my early working career first at Stoewer and later at Horch.

**JAKE:** It must have been quite a shock to move from the more technically advanced products of Horch to the simple side-valve Austin Sevens.

**FIEDLER:** It was, and I was even more horrified to find that the little 749cc 4-cylinder engine had only two main bearings!

**JAKE:** Why did you move from a well-known brand to a new company?

**FIEDLER:** I was enticed away from Horch in 1932 with the brief to design a range of more modern cars. When I arrived at Eisenach I found that the company was on the point of producing a pushrod OHV engine for an upgraded Dixi. They also had an experimental 1173cc 6-cylinder pushrod OHV running on a dynamometer. All I had to do was build on this promising change in technology. I asked Rudolf Schleicher, a very capable engine designer who worked with me at Horch, to join me and together we brought out a range of new engines and more modern cars. You'll meet him later.

**JAKE:** What was your first all-BMW model?

**FIEDLER:** It was the 303, produced in 1933 and 1934. It used a production version of the 1173cc six I saw on the dyno, fitted into an all-new steel body. Front suspension was independent by means of transverse leaf springs and there was a lightweight beam

axle resting on leaf springs at the rear.

**JAKE:** Why did you produce such a small 6-cylinder engine?

**FIEDLER:** Multi-cylinder engines were all the rage in the early '30s. One of the French companies was selling 1.1-litre straight-eights! People were still terrified of changing gear; this attitude only changed in the middle of the '30s when synchromesh arrived on the scene. A large number of small cylinders would at least ensure smooth power delivery in top gear, even if it killed any chance of developing respectable torque.

**JAKE:** What followed next?

**FIEDLER:** The 303 was well received by the press and the public, but we replaced it towards the end of 1934 with a smaller-engined version, the 309. This used an 845cc pushrod OHV conversion of the Dixi engine but it was not a success, and was quietly dropped after two years. We also



produced a larger-engined version, the 315, by changing the bore and stroke of the 303 to get a displacement of 1490cc. Other models followed at regular intervals, available in a variety of sporting or utilitarian body types. There was the 319 and the 329, fitted with 1911cc versions of our by now well-established six, followed by the 320, 321, 326 and 327 fitted with various versions of our 1971cc engine, which was a bored-out version of the 329 engine. This brings us to the 328, our present pride and joy.

**At the 1936 Eifelrennen, held at the Nürburgring. Ernst Henne won the 2-litre class with the 328 at its first appearance. Since then it has had more than 100 class wins in 1937 alone**

**JAKE:** This model is continually in the news at the moment. I know its engine also displaces 1971cc but it must differ in a number of ways from the other engines of the same displacement.

**FIEDLER:** Yes, it has a totally new cylinder head design, in order to achieve a cross-flow hemispherical combustion chamber. You must ask its designer, Rudi Schleicher, to tell you more about it when you see him.

**JAKE:** I certainly will. When was the 2-seater 328 introduced?

**FIEDLER:** At the 1936 Eifelrennen, held at the Nürburgring. Ernst Henne won the 2-litre class with the 328 at its first appearance. Since then it has had more than 100 class wins in 1937 alone. Last year it won the 2-litre class at Le Mans, the RAC TT, the Alpine Rally and the Mille Miglia.

**JAKE:** Why is it so successful?

**FIEDLER:** I think it is because our team has spent a lot of time tuning the suspension and sorting out the brakes. Rudi (Schleicher)

has spent a lot of dyno time to get the engine to deliver a reliable and consistently high power output.

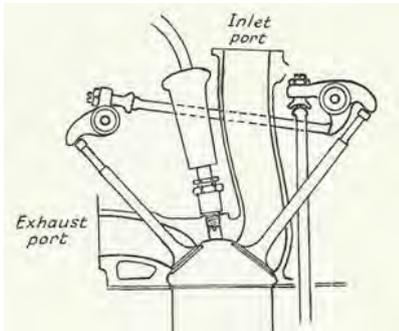
**JAKE:** Are you able to tell me about any future plans for the 328?

**FIEDLER:** I can't go into any detail, but Rudi is trying to get more power from the engine and our styling department is cooperating with aerodynamicists to clothe it in a more streamlined body. Our head stylist Wilhelm Meyerhuber, who you'll meet later, will tell you more about this project.

**JAKE:** I saw your new 335 at the show. It looks like a bigger version of the 327.

**FIEDLER:** That is essentially what it is. It has a 6-cylinder 3.485-litre engine and is our first venture into the sort of car that can be cruised all day at 160km/h. At the moment we're producing only a handful every week, but hope to increase production in the future.

*The phone rings, and Fiedler speaks to the caller.*



**FIEDLER:** That was Rudi Schleicher. He's available to talk to you now.

*I thank Fiedler once more, we say our farewells and a secretary takes me to Schleicher's office. We exchange greetings, and start a conversation.*

**JAKE:** It's kind of you to make yourself available. What are your duties at BMW?

**SCHLEICHER:** We have to keep the press happy. I'm in charge of engine design as well as our racing efforts.

**JAKE:** You must be thrilled that the 328 is regularly beating other cars in its class.

**SCHLEICHER:** It is very rewarding, but we have a very good team.

**JAKE:** I believe that in the early '20s you worked with Max Friz at the BMW motorcycle division. You must have been on the team that designed the famous flat-twin engine.

**SCHLEICHER:** Yes, I worked under Max, and I feel honoured to have had that experience. I suppose you know that he has since become one of our most successful aero-engine designers.

Yes, but painters have a good grasp of the interplay between shape and colour, and that's a talent that stylists also need

**JAKE:** I certainly do. You were responsible for all the 3-series engines. What feature of an engine do you regard as most important?

**SCHLEICHER:** Ruggedness and reliability. We test all our engine designs at full throttle for hours on end to ensure that they will last.

**JAKE:** Don't all manufacturers do that?

**SCHLEICHER:** No. I can tell you that the construction of *autobahnen* has embarrassed quite a number of manufacturers; some of their engine designs have suffered high-speed failures when cruised at speed without any let-up.

**JAKE:** The cylinder head design on the 328 engine is unique. Where did you get the idea from?

**SCHLEICHER:** It came to me in a dream. (Laughs.) No, not really. I wanted a cross-flow head with angled valves, just like on most twin OHC engines, but we couldn't go to the expense and complete redesign necessary for such a layout. I remembered seeing a sketch somewhere of an engine that employed angled pushrods to achieve this aim, and I developed a similar design. A single camshaft is carried in the cylinder block. The cams operate vertical pushrods that move rockers on top of the cylinder head. The inlet valves are angled about 40 degrees from a vertical line, and the rocker shape is designed to operate these valves directly. The exhaust first-stage rocker is shaped to accommodate a second near-horizontal pushrod that transmits motion to a second-stage rocker on the exhaust side which in turn operates

a similarly angled exhaust valve. A cross-sectional drawing will make it clear.

*He shows me a drawing.*

**JAKE:** Wow. It's quite complicated, but obviously works well, to judge by the results.

**SCHLEICHER:** Yes it is, but this layout, plus three carbs instead of two, and a raised compression ratio, is responsible for changing the output from 55PS (40kW) in the 327 to 80PS (59kW) in the 328.

*A secretary appears at the door, and informs us that Wilhelm Meyerhuber, head of the styling department, is now ready to see me. I thank Schleicher for his time, and follow the woman to the styling studio. I smile when I notice that some models are hidden from view under cloth covers. I greet Meyerhuber and my third interview begins.*

**JAKE:** Are you related to August Meyerhuber, the famous painter and sculptor?

**MEYERHUBER:** Yes, he's my father and in fact, I also trained to be a painter.

**JAKE:** But now you're designing cars.

**MEYERHUBER:** Yes, but painters have a good grasp of the interplay between shape and colour, and that's a talent that stylists also need. During the Depression I started to work in the Opel styling department. General Motors had just taken Opel over, and they sent me to Detroit for training. Upon my return I worked at Opel for a few years, until 1937, when I moved to BMW. Last year they



asked me to head their newly-formed styling department. I appointed the very talented Peter Szymanowski as head stylist and together we started to build a number of very aerodynamic prototypes in cooperation with specialist aerodynamicists such as Wunibald Kamm and Reinhard von Koenig-Fachsenfeld.

**JAKE:** Who designed the production version of the 328?

**MEYERHUBER:** It's always a team effort, but most of the credit must go to Peter. He also designed the 319, the 326 and the 327.

**JAKE:** These cars are very similar in shape.

**MEYERHUBER:** That is because they were the first BMWs to be tested in a wind tunnel.

**JAKE:** That seems to be a technique that could become very popular in the future.

**MEYERHUBER:** Yes, it is a way to improve fuel consumption and reduce wind noise.

**JAKE:** My time is up. Thank you for spending some time with me. 📷

It's always a team effort, but most of the credit must go to Peter. He also designed the 319, the 326 and the 327

- A few months later WW2 started. After the war it took BMW a long time to recover. The Eisenach factory was located in the Soviet zone, and this produced a few pre-war models, initially under the name BMW, but later they were called EMWs.
- The Munich factory started to produce the 500-series in 1949, but they were too expensive to sell well. A licence to build the Italian Isetta was then acquired, and this was moderately successful. In 1959 the company ran out of money, and in the subsequent reorganisation the Quandt family bought about 45% of the shares. The company has never looked back, and last year it sold 1.66 million vehicles.
- In 1945 the Bristol Aircraft company acquired a licence to build a modified version of the 328. Fritz Fiedler came across to work on the project. The car was called the Bristol 400, and later models followed. These put the company on the map as a producer of quality cars, but they later switched to Chrysler engines.
- In 1949 Fritz Fiedler returned to Opel in Germany, and a year later he was back at BMW where he became the chairman of BMW AG in 1955/56. He retired in 1971.
- The BMW 328-derived Bristol engine was used by Bristol and Cooper in a number of racing ventures, and outputs of over 140HP (104kW) were achieved. The Bristol 450, developed for Le Mans, won its class and the team prize in 1955 and 1956.
- During the war Rudolf Schleicher was put in charge of motorcycle production. Afterwards, he established an automotive components company.
- Wilhelm Meyerhuber is credited with the design of the BMW Mille Miglia roadster that inspired the shape of the Jaguar XK120. After the war he went back to painting.
- Wunibald Kamm is famous for developing what is known as a Kamm-tail on a car. In 1934 he published a research paper to the effect that if a car's tail is cut off at just the right point it will reduce drag and increase the downforce. Kamm and Reinhard von Koenig-Fachsenfeld built two famous BMW 328-based coupés with Kamm tails.



# THE MATHS OF

2 Cortinas + 2 Escorts = Y151, according to teacher **Gerrie van Heerden**.

**T**hrough the years South Africa has produced many talented racing drivers. Many could hold their own against the best in the world. Often these speed merchants would build their own cars and take on the best that the rest of the racing fraternity could produce. Others had engineers that built the cars that took them to fame. Be it F1, sportscars, saloons, rallying, 4x4, two or four wheels, our boys built and raced them – with excellent results.

Many petrolheads still remember the name of a race or rally driver and some may still recall the car that they drove. Very few can recall the racing number as it appeared on the car of their hero. Who can recall the race number of the Bobby Olthoff Capri Perana or the number on Chris Aberdeen's

Audi Turbo? Not many I guess. But every now and then motor racing is gifted with a driver that is a cut above the rest, an engineer that thinks outside the box and a manufacturer that produces a car that ticks all the right boxes.

One such driver was Peter Gough and the engineer was Willie Meissner. Ford produced the Escort while Colin Chapman from Lotus fame and Cosworth Engineering designed and built engines that had no equal. When Peter Gough took to the track in the blue Meissner Escort powered by a 1600cc FVA motor, the car had race number Y151 on it. Mention Peter Gough, Meissner Escort or Y151 and many race fanatics will recall the picture of a blue Escort with a white flash down the side with the words 'Meissner Escort' across it. The picture of



# MOTORSPORT

this Escort three-wheeling around Quarry Curve at the old Roy Hesketh circuit must be one of the most published pictures of an Escort in South Africa. Gough, the Meissner Escort and Y151 were one. Yet race number Y151 did not only appear on the blue Escort. There is much more to race number Y151...

When Koos Swanepoel and Basil van Rooyen were given the Ford Mustangs to race in 1966, Peter took over the ex-Swanepoel Lotus Cortina. The powers that be created new classes for saloon car racing and the Cortina was placed in class Y. Peter was allocated race number Y151. The photo of the Lotus Cortina with Peter behind the wheel and with race number Y151 is a very rare one that comes courtesy of Robert Young. Towards the end of 1967 Peter flew to PE to collect a Mk2 Cortina 1300cc. He

drove the car back to Meissner's workshop in Cape Town where it was stripped of all unnecessary parts. With the build of the Mk2 Cortina, nothing from the Mk1 Lotus Cortina was used. The Mk1 was passed on to Adrian Pheiffer, who raced it for a while.

From the very start the Mk2 was built with the Cosworth FVA motor and when it hit the track for the first time it beat the pair of Alan Mann Racing Mk2 Cortinas by a few days, making it the very first saloon car to race with an FVA motor (a motoring scribe wrote that the Mk2 had an FVC motor, which I do not agree with).

Cosworth list the FVC

When Koos Swanepoel and Basil van Rooyen were given the Ford Mustangs to race in 1966, Peter took over the ex-Swanepoel Lotus Cortina. The powers that be created new classes for saloon car racing and the Cortina was placed in class Y



Again Peter flew to PE, this time to collect an Escort 1300cc GT that was white with red upholstery. The FVA was taken from the Cortina Mk2 and fitted into the Escort

(2000cc) as being built from mid-1969, by which time Bernie Podmore was racing the Mk2 but fitted with a Lotus Twin Cam. In his book *The Sporting Fords*, Graham Robson quotes figures which would make the Mk2 almost 100kg heavier than the Mk1. That amount of mass makes a big difference if you are competing against a monster Galaxie or a highly modified Alfa GTA. This second Cortina also raced with the Y151 number but being heavy and somewhat less competitive, did not race for very long.

Again Peter flew to PE, this time to collect an Escort 1300cc GT that was white with red upholstery. The FVA was taken from the Cortina Mk2 and fitted into the Escort. It raced for the first time in 1968 at the Kumalo Circuit in Bulawayo in the then Rhodesia. Still with its maiden white paint, the car was numbered

Y152 when it raced for the first time. With survivors from that period getting fewer by the day, I asked Basil van Rooyen and Geoff Mortimer if they could recall why the car was numbered Y152, but unfortunately neither of them could give an answer.

At a later stage the cover picture on the Meissner catalogue shows the Escort still painted white but with the correct race number Y151. Sometime later the car was painted blue with the white flash along the waistline, the wording 'Meissner Escort' and sporting race number Y151. With its FVA motor the Escort won 27 races on the trot and set new lap records at all the circuits in South Africa and Rhodesia. The rule makers then decided to ban 16-valve technology, which put an end to the FVA motor. It was then that the real genius of Willie Meissner came to the fore. With the help of Bill Steyn, he designed and built a 2000cc twin-cam engine using sand castings supplied by Colin Chapman and machined his own version of the Lotus Twin Cam. Two engine blocks were cut and welded together to make the engine 2000cc. With this car Peter won the 1969 SA Saloon Car Champs. Towards the end of 1969 Willie got word that Basil Green had conspired with the Americans to build a Ford Capri fitted with the latest V8 technology.

Meissner played with his slide rule and came to the conclusion that the Escort would be no match for the Capri. Knowing that the Escort had a well sorted chassis



Meissner negotiated with Ford. A second Escort was made available, which Peter once again collected from the factory and drove back to Cape Town. With this second Escort Willie tried his hand at turbo charging. The 1300cc engine was enlarged to 1400cc and the turbo from a massive diesel truck bolted on. In the boot was a big plenum chamber which would build up pressure to overcome turbo lag. Towards the end of the Escort's racing career the normally-positioned radiator was replaced by an intercooler – what appears in pictures as a massive air scoop to keep the nose down was in fact a horizontally-placed radiator.

This car also raced with the number Y151. I once asked Peter if the tiny pushrod engine could match the Capri on performance. His reply was yes, provided they could get the blow-through carbs to work. He stated that the Escort was very quick and handled extremely well. However Willie did not have the time to develop the Escort to a level where it would be competitive. At the end of 1970 the National Saloon Car Championships came to an end and it became provincial production car championships. Willie Meissner decided to

call it a day and retired from motor racing.

When working for Willie Meissner, Peter raced two Cortinas and two Escorts – all with the same race number. What happened to the Mk1 Lotus Cortina and Mk2 Cortina is a story for another day. The first Escort was sold to the Fekken clan and then went through a series of different owners. It has since been restored and is now part of private collection in South Africa. The second Escort was converted to a drag racer before it was sold off to a collector in the UK. It is uncertain as to what engine the car had in it when it left our shores as the English believe they have the original Escort. I scanned and emailed Peter an article that appeared in *Classic Ford* magazine on this car. Peter's comment was: "I enjoy reading fiction every now and then. It made me smile to read the article."

I have to agree with the bumper sticker on the pristine white Mk2 Escort RS2000. It simply states 'Y151 forever'. For me Y151 is not a number or a particular car or a name. It is all three. **C**

With this second Escort Willie tried his hand at turbo charging. The 1300cc engine was enlarged to 1400cc and the turbo from a massive diesel truck bolted on

# DREAM WHEELS

What is the appeal of classic car rallying? What is the appeal of any classic motorsport for that matter? With few weeks' break and no rally to take part in, **Terry Illman** ponders these questions.

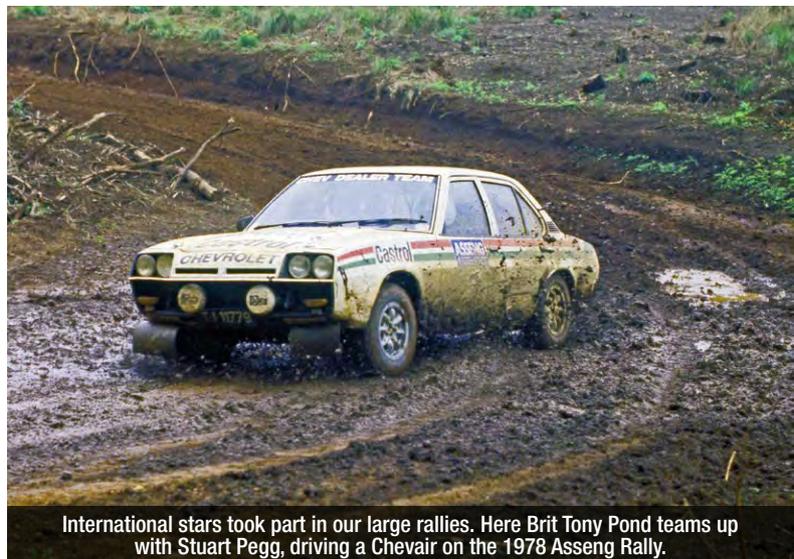
Images: [www.motoprint.co.za](http://www.motoprint.co.za) – Roger Swan collection.



The Per-Inge Walfridson/Kassie Coetzee Volvo 144 makes a splash on the 1974 Total Rally.



The 1976 Duckhams Rally enticed some different cars out to compete like this Austin Marina of Eric Sanders/Richard Leeke.



International stars took part in our large rallies. Here Brit Tony Pond teams up with Stuart Pegg, driving a Cheair on the 1978 Asseng Rally.



Spectacular scenery and driving made rallies addictive. Point proven here with the Hannes Grobler/Mike Gillam Datsun Stanza hanging it all out on the 1981 Castrol Radio 5 Rally.

Being the age I am, I guess I am biased. Maybe my bias lies with the generation of cars that was competitive at the time of my auto awakening, when I first began driving and taking an interest in motorsport.

To say that my favourites come from the era of the hasty rear-wheel-drive cars that somehow seem to define the maturing of rallying both as a sport and the technology attached to this sport we love so much, might be to state the obvious.

The 1969 to 1977 period saw rallying evolve from regularity marathon-style rallying to stage rallying as we know it today.

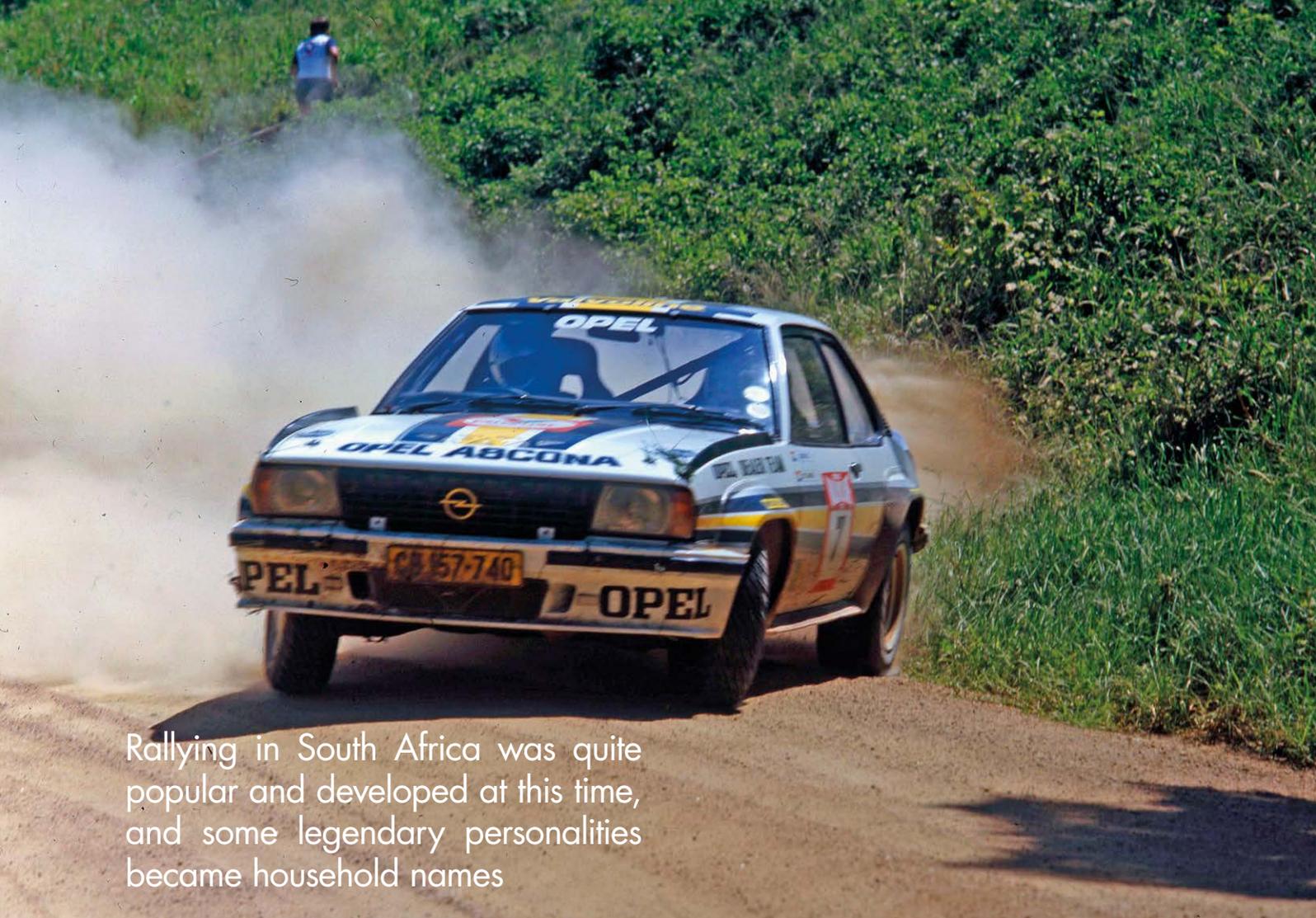
The machines of that period seemed to evolve faster to a superior technology that produced some spectacular rallying and some of the never-to-be-forgotten heroes of the sport.

In the years prior to '69, some of the most unlikely cars ever to be termed rally cars were in the vanguard of the evolution – cars that took on London to Cape Town, The East African Coronation Safari Rally and the British and European Rallies – and included the Ford Consul Mk1, Ford Zephyr Mk2, Vauxhall Velox, Mercedes-Benz 190, Austin A30, Sunbeams and even a Steyr-Puch Haflinger.

Oh, there were some specialised iconic

English, German and Italian sportscars too. Legends like Ian Appleyard in a Jaguar XK120, Eugen Bohringer in a Mercedes-Benz 230SL, the Morley brothers or Pat Moss (sister of Stirling Moss) in Austin-Healeys, Porsches, Alfa Romeo Giuliettas... the list goes on, all heady stuff.

We were entertained by 16mm films of rallies with names that evoked visions of wonderful exotic locations far away. For a 14-year-old boy, watching the derring-do of the drivers on events such as the Coupe des Alpes, Tulip Rally, Midnight Sun Rally and Spa-Sofia-Liege was enough to plant a seed that germinated into a desire to compete in this wonderful discipline of motorsport.



Rallying in South Africa was quite popular and developed at this time, and some legendary personalities became household names

Eric Sanders/Stuart Pegg drift the Opel Ascona through the 1983 Valvoline Rally in style.

The era of the big 6-cylinder cars seemed to end when Paddy Hopkirk won the Monte Carlo Rally in a Mini Cooper S. Here were cars like the ones we had purchased ourselves as 18-year-olds as our first entry into motoring. Tiny but serious 1300cc rally cars with big hearts that took on the Alps, the elements and the competition and fired up the imagination. The public could identify with these cars that looked as though they had come off a showroom floor and just had some spotlights fitted, racing numbers put on the doors and some go-faster stripes added.

Next came the Lotus Cortinas, Toyota twin cams, Datsuns, Renaults and Volvos, all of them 4-cylinder models; lighter, nimbler and beginning to develop power that made them spectacular to watch, both on loose gravel and on snow and ice. Rallying in South Africa was quite popular and developed at this time, and some legendary personalities became household names here thanks to newspapers, periodicals and word of mouth

– we had no TV before 1976.

And then rallying here and elsewhere seemed to turn the corner. Possibly the most loved rally car of all time leapt off the pages of motorsport articles all over the world. The Ford Escort BDA had arrived. Dominating the sport for many years to come and still rallied in huge numbers all over the world, the Escort Mk1 and then Mk2 with forest arches, rose-jointed suspension, Atlas 5.1:1 rear axles, homologated rear disc brakes and brake bias adjustment took on the world and raised the bar for everyone. It was a rip-snorting little beast and my first ride in one came when I assisted the legendary Roger Albert Clark in trying to find some tools for his effort on the 1973 Total Rally. In his words: “You don’t drive this car, you aim it and squirt.” Van der Walt Street in Pretoria has never been the same for me since.

Don’t get me wrong: the Datsun SSS, Toyota Celica, Renault Gordini and others all enjoyed a place in the sun too and added to the spectacle. Heck, we even had some

SA rally legends who took on the local rally scene in Fairmont GTs, Chevrolet Monaros and Constantias.

Not convinced yet? The NRC Classic Class is the official support class of the National Rally Championship in 2017. With three rounds behind us, the tour moves to Port Elizabeth in July where we are hoping to see more of you encouraged to dust off your pre-1985s and join the party.

After three rounds we have Escort Mk2s in first and second place in the standings. Let’s get some more Datsuns, Minis, Toyotas, Golfs, Jettas, Alfettas and Volvos involved. You know who you are. The eligibility cut-off date for cars in the classic class is 31 December 1985 which means besides the obvious Escorts, Corollas and SSSes, there are other noteworthy cars that were rallied in SA and could hit the gravel – think about the likes of the Datsun Skyline and Stanza, Chevrolet CanAm, Renault 16TS, Opel Manta, Chevair and Alfa Romeo Giulia.

Let’s keep the dream alive and rally on. 🏁



Nissan/Datsun built up a reputation for fast and reliable machines on the local rally scene. The 6-cylinder Skyline, like this one driven by Kassie Coetzee/Wiley Harrington on the 1988 Algoa Rally, was an instant hit.



With a 50/50 weight balance Alfa Romeo's Alfetta handled exceptionally well and often rallied long after the model's introduction. This shown on the 1988 Total with the Borman/Van der Merwe car.



Watch collecting, like the hobby of amassing classic cars, is an incredibly addictive pastime that is also thankfully justifiable by the line 'it's an investment'. **Stuart Grant** combines the best of both of these worlds with a look at REC Watches' latest offering, the 901, a limited run Danish-designed timepiece that is not only inspired by the iconic Porsche 911 but also makes use of the parts from one.

**T**he REC concept is a clever one...  
**RECover** – salvaged Porsche 911 wrecks (1963-89) are found and recovered from all corners of the globe.  
**RECycle** – the scrap is used to create a watch, both in terms of design and also by donating some material to the construction. In the case of the 901 pictured here, part of a Porsche 911 was cut out and used to form the watch's dial. All original spare parts (which can be reused) were donated to the original owner or local Porsche club.  
**REClaim** – the metal of the salvaged Porsche wreck is given new life as a completely unique timepiece; transformed from scrap into functional artwork. Each watch varies slightly as the imperfections and patina found on the recycled metal remain and the nature of hand making the product comes to the fore. The salvaged vehicle's identifying VIN number



finds a home, and by scanning the code on the card that comes with the package with your cell phone, you'll be directed to a video showing the history of your donor car.

Quality is of utmost importance and the 115g, 44mm diameter watch sees classy leather strap options, glass, metal and a top Japanese movement in the form of the Myota 9100 Automatic. Additional functions include date/day/month. Just 1 200 of these 901 series watches have been released for 2017, of which only 300 are the 901-01 (as seen here) version, 300 the 901-02 and 300 the 901-03. In reality these only differ in colour combinations though. A batch of 60 units will be heading to South

Africa and retail at R24 500 each.

Although REC products are in no way associated with Porsche AG, the 901 takes a whack of styling cues from the ultimate Porsche range – the most obvious aspect being the scaled-down Fuchs wheel on the back surface of the watch. Behind this the rotor used to drive the automatic timepiece resembles a drilled brake disc. Seen in profile the watch echoes the wide hips of a proper 911; next to the strap lugs there's a visual reference to the Porsche's rear lid air intake grille; the clock hands resemble early 911 gauge needles and the crown wheel adjuster alludes to early Porsche hooter buttons.

Of course the 911 was originally given the title '901' but Peugeot claimed the rights to all cars with badges comprising three numbers with the middle one being a zero. Porsche was forced to change its number and swapped out the 0 for a 1. If Porsche is not your thing then have a look at [www.recwatches.com](http://www.recwatches.com) – the small company does the same thing with a range of classic Mini Cooper and Ford Mustang models, and even allows subscribers to vote for the next icon to pay homage to... currently the question is out as to whether to build an Alfa Romeo Spider, Willys Jeep, BMW M3, Supermarine Spitfire or Triumph Bonneville wristwatch next. 📺

# DANGEROUS

If you were considering motoring across the Sahara Desert, **Cam McKie Thomson** suggests a wise move would be to factor in one Donald Bruins as co-driver. He hails from Germiston – and Germistonians maak 'n plan!

# DON



**B**orn in 1939, Don went to C.B.C. Boksburg and then qualified as a diesel mechanic, serving time at the JHB City Council Bus Depot. He went on to become a specialist valve engineer at IES Engineering and in later life ran his own business manufacturing penstocks for the hydraulics and mining industries. His involvement in motorsport kicked off in 1962 when he assisted Doug Bennet with the preparation of his Cortina GT.

The temptation to race was too great and Don persuaded his very understanding wife, Jeanette, to allow him to use her Anglia for a bit of fun at Kyalami. Since then, Don has been a regular at circuits around the country. The Anglia was raced in the Onyx Championships and Don has memories of great battles against the likes of Barry Flowers, Brian Rowlings, Kenny Gray and Roy Klomfass in their Anglias.

During this period, he also competed in an Alfa in endurance racing. In 1968 he entered a Cortina GT in the 1968 Nine Hour with Barry Flowers but 'Blommetjies' wrote

The temptation to race was too great and Don persuaded his very understanding wife, Jeanette, to allow him to use her Anglia for a bit of fun at Kyalami

it off at Sunset in practice. Incidentally, this Cortina also came from his wife's 'stable'. Following this, Don started afresh and built an Escort 1300 for Modifieds with which he enjoyed reasonable success up to 1975.

Up until this time Don had financed all his racing activities himself, but for 1976 the perseverance and dedication paid off when he was given a sponsored drive in the Cornright Motors Fiat 128. With sponsorship, a good car and determined driving, Don became a regular winner and only pure bad luck stood between him and the Star Modified Saloon Car Championship. For two successive years he finished 3<sup>rd</sup> overall, having dominated his class. The next Cornright car was the perennial Mazda 323, which he built and campaigned in Modifieds. This car also took part in the Kyalami Nine Hour events in the 1980s, once scooping the class win – and this very machine continues to race in various historic events at the likes of Zwartkops, Kyalami, Phakisa and Midvaal.

The Cornright association is one of the longest standing racing relationships, with Don always respectfully addressing Aldo Senior as 'Mr Corna'. Recently, Don called Aldo saying: "Mr Corna, I have retired from racing, do you want the trailer back?" The answer was yes, and Don duly returned the 40-year-old item to its owner at the Cornright works in Midrand.

To 'Dangerous Don', as he

was affectionately known, a spade was always a shovel. Typical of his driving zest, when passing Phil Adam's Renault R10 down the Kyalami straight, having timed his slipstream to perfection, Phil would get the thumb-between-fingers salute from our man, celebrating his accomplishment! This 'robust' driving style led to two incidents, pictured above.. After the Dave Charlton/Ford Cortina XR6 roll over at Roy Hesketh, Don and Dave became good friends, with Dave always pretending to give Don a wide berth when they met each other off the track. The Simon Grobbelaar spectacular crash at Crowthorne when Don and Simon were aiming for the same piece of track is one from the furiously contested Star Modified Saloon Car races.

One of Don's finest traits was his selfless giving and helping whenever a fellow competitor required assistance. His talent for diagnosing problems and being the quickest at assembly of any make of engine, gearbox or diff was simply outstanding and he would do it for anyone at any time. When I was a first-time competitor I remember Don putting together my Mini engine after work one evening – in his suit!

Now 77, Don has held a competition licence for just over 50 consecutive years but has not applied for 2017 as the helmet has been put on the garage shelf. No doubt much time will be devoted to Jeanette, wildlife and his grandchildren.

We salute you Don – go well. **C**

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**MOTUL**

# LOST AT SEA

It's 61 years since the tragic sinking of the SS *Andrea Doria* – and with it went Chrysler's hopes of producing a car to rival the Corvette and Thunderbird, says reader **Bill Buys**.



Still smarting from the successes of its GM and Ford rivals in the early 1950s, Chrysler knew it had to produce something really special – and at company president Virgil Exner Junior's urging, came up with a coupé of striking design called the Norseman.

The 2+2 fastback was a beauty, unlike anything else of its era, and was the result of more than 50 000 hours on the drawing board. When Exner was satisfied with the car, called Norseman because of his Norwegian heritage, the expertise of the Italian house of Ghia was then enlisted to turn the concept into reality in time for the 1957 auto show circuit.

It was a structural challenge for Ghia that took 15 months to build. The Norseman had a unique cantilevered roof with a huge retractable rear window and it also housed the car's interior air vents. Also, there were no A-pillars. Instead, the roof was attached to a vast wraparound heat-treated glass windscreen, which became an integral part of the futuristic car's structure.

Other unusual features were concealed headlights and door handles, a full-width

concave chrome grille, a thin bumper with parking lights in pods on either end and long, shallow rear fins. The powered front bucket seats could swivel to allow easier entry to the back, where there were two more powered bucket seats – and a pull-out writing desk. All were finished in leather with contrasting inserts and each pair of seats had a console with a glovebox between them.

Under the bonnet was a Hemi V8 and the suspension was by torsion bars up front and leaf springs in the tail. Below the sleek coupé was a full underpan to improve its aerodynamics.

The finished product was loaded aboard the *Andrea Doria*, Italy's first grand ship produced after World War II – and named after the legendary admiral of the Genoese fleet in the 1500s.

The car was said to have been placed in a wooden container in the ship's number two hold and, on 17 July 1956, *Andrea Doria* set off from her home port of Genoa on the nine-day crossing to New York. It was to be her 51<sup>st</sup> crossing to the USA.

But on the night of 25 July 1956, she collided with the MS *Stockholm* off the coast of Nantucket, Massachusetts, and sank 11

hours later. There was a serious death toll too with 51 lives lost, 16 of them divers trying to reach the sunken ship. The top-heavy *Andrea Doria* had immediately listed to starboard, leaving half of its lifeboats unusable, but rapid response from other ships resulted in 1 660 passengers and crew being rescued.

So the Chrysler Norseman was never seen by Virgil Exner or anyone else, barring the coachbuilders at Ghia and the few dockworkers who loaded it. The car was apparently never photographed in colour and the negatives of the few photos taken in monochrome got lost.

Virgil Exner Jr was stunned by news of the disaster but his ailing father, though disappointed by the loss of the car, thought it was great that it would become a part of world automotive folklore.

*Andrea Doria*, by contrast, has for centuries been part of Italian folklore. He was the first person in the world to discover how to sail against the wind and used his maritime expertise to fight off French, Spanish and Turkish pirates through the mid-1500s. He fought, and won, his last battle at sea at age 84, lived to be 90 and his surname remains one of the great family names of Italy. **Q**

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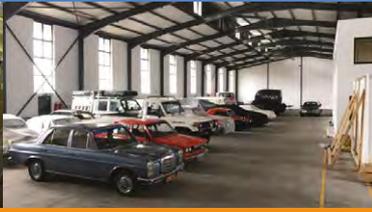
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