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Be sure to join us.

Sunday, 28 April 2019 | 09:30-16:00 | High School Sports Fields, Waterfront Drive
www.grmc.co.za or  /knysnamotorshow

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CAR AFRICA
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ISO 12647 compliant

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THE BIG CHILL

As I write this, it strikes me that already a quarter of the year has gone by... is it just me or does it seem like we are only just shaking the New Year's confetti from our hair? Already the mornings are dark and getting cooler, and the crispness of approaching winter is in the air. Soon the jerseys, blankets and gas heaters will come out (particularly with the... er... unreliability, shall we say, of a certain power utility that shall remain unnamed). As the warm weather gradually moves on, some of us might start spending more time in the garage tinkering and less time actually using our old cars. But it's now that time of the year when the rain has subsided (or not yet started, depending on where you live) and we are experiencing that not-too-hot-and-not-too-cold weather that ensures the perfect ambient temperature for driving your classic. However you choose to spend your time, be

sure to get comfy on the couch and tuck into the latest serving of your favourite magazine.

This month Mike Monk samples a bit of American with a 1930s Buick and Marquette, while Graeme Hurst tries out something with a bit more of a European flavour with a V12 Jaguar E-Type and the iconic Mercedes-Benz Fintail, which turns 60 this year. I try out the moreish Maserati Ghibli and a late 1990s BMW Z3 M Coupé, a car that despite being initially disliked by many has recently skyrocketed in the popularity and value stakes. If you've still not had enough, there is also a Renault Alpine GTA and a Dodge Monaco on the menu, and for those of us who have a hankering for something on two wheels (I know I do), there's always room for a trio of Moto Guzzi Le Mans.

Relax and enjoy the latest issue. Please remember to keep your letters coming in – we truly appreciate them.

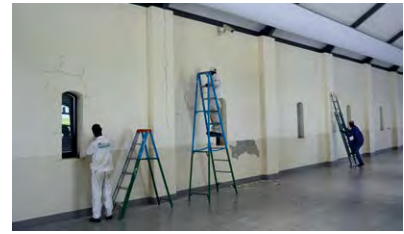
Stuart



HALLS UPGRADE & DISPLAYS

By the time you are reading this, the project to upgrade the museum's display halls' dehumidifying system will be nearing completion. The previous system had been in operation since 2006 but had become unserviceable, so a whole new system is being installed, together with an enhanced air-conditioning system. In addition, an improved fire security system has been fitted. While the halls have systematically been emptied out, the opportunity to repaint and generally freshen up the interior of the buildings was taken. Vehicle display platforms have been refurbished and all memorabilia items that decorated the walls have been given a spring clean. When finished, an exciting new chronological display sequence will come into effect.

While the halls were being upgraded, parts of the cobbled parking area that have been made uneven by growing tree roots have also been attended to. The offending roots have been cut away and the cobbles re-laid. FMM is now looking its best.



OPENING TIMES CHANGE

Please refer to the 'Where, What Times and How Much' section elsewhere on this page to see the April to November opening times, which are slightly different from the December to March summer season times.

TRIPADVISOR AWARD

Now in its eighth year, the international travel agency TripAdvisor celebrates businesses that have earned great traveller reviews over the past year. Certificate of Excellence recipients include attractions, restaurants and accommodations located all over the world that have continually delivered a quality customer experience. The Franschhoek Motor Museum was proud to receive the 2018 Travellers' Choice Award, which cited FMM as "the very best of museums".

"This recognition publicly honours businesses that are actively engaging with customers and using feedback to help travellers identify and confidently book the perfect trip," said Heather Leisman, Vice President of Industry Marketing, TripAdvisor.

The Certificate of Excellence accounts for the quality, quantity and frequency of reviews submitted by travellers on TripAdvisor over a 12-month period. To qualify, a business must maintain an overall TripAdvisor bubble rating of at least four out of five, have a minimum number of reviews and must have been listed on TripAdvisor for at least 12 months.

SLOT CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

At the March meeting of the FMM Slot Car Championship season, Mark Venske won the highly competitive Carrera class round with his BMW M4 DTM, setting the fastest lap of the class in the process. Second, two laps behind, was Jackie van Wyk (Audi RS5 DTM), with Phil Monk third in a similar car a further two laps down.

In the challenging non-magnet class, Jackie van Wyk topped a good night, finishing first with the fastest lap with his Alfa Romeo Tipo 33, a comfortable five laps ahead of Andre Loedolff's Porsche 956, with Regardt Loedolff's Porsche 936 another lap behind.

The Formula Libre race was won by Thys Roux with his Maserati MC Trofeo just seconds ahead of Franklin Smit's Ford Mustang, with Boelie Smit's Mustang third.

SASOL LAB

FMM is currently preparing a display for a Yamaha FZR1000 that was used by local fuel and energy giant Sasol to develop racing fuels. Adding to the excitement, plans are afoot to have a Hart 3.5-litre V10 engine as used by the Sasol Jordan F1 racing team to join the bike. As part of the growing cooperation with the museum, during March Sasol invited FMM to its laboratory in Capricorn Park, Muizenberg to view the testing facilities. Curator Wayne Harley, together with workshop personnel Lorenzo Farella, Deon de Waal, Donny Tarentaal, Wentsley Wicomb and Stefan Klein, along with media consultant Mike Monk, took the opportunity to tour the plant with Sasol's Senior Technical Advisor Andre Velaers and Research Engineer Tiaan Rabie. The tour gave a fascinating insight into the development of automotive fuel and much was learnt from the Q&A interaction that took place throughout the morning.



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 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 and Good Friday. 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. (NB: Motorcycles and buses larger than 23-seaters should park at Anthonij Rupert Wyne from where visitors will be transported to and from the museum by charabanc.)



70, Main Road, Knysna (N2)
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Cars dating from the 1920's to the present day will be on display with a further 30 vehicles available for sale. If you're passing through Knysna, please call in to see what's on offer at

KNYSNA CLASSIC, SPORTS & VINTAGE CAR MUSEUM

Browse... ask questions... and enjoy going down Memory Lane!



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1983 Alfa Romeo Spider – R280 000



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1965 Pontiac Parisienne - POA



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Classic Car Africa is the only dedicated historic motoring magazine in the country. From racing, to personalities, to some of the most special vehicles ever produced, we are continually unearthing great stories, illustrating them with a mixture of old photos and new, and helping bring back the memories of

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KEEP IT REAL

In recent times we've noticed an upswing in classic car restoration trends... and it's a shift in the right direction. We're talking paint colours here. In the past, clients often wanted their older cars spruced up with modern metallic and pearl paint jobs but now it's all about period-correctness. This is a good thing. A fashion statement is short-lived and the time and money put

into our old cars deserves more than just a fleeting moment's glory. The Glasurit paint library we use has an extensive list of correct manufacturer paint codes, so we can get the mix spot on. Occasionally we have to think out of the box though – like with some locally assembled Alfas that history tells us shared a factory and paint codes with Datsun.



This Mustang took a lot of work to get into the spray booth. Severe rot on almost every panel has been cut out and replaced with newly shaped metal. The underside has been tidied up, primer and prep done and it's now ready to be shot in a dark green as per the customer's request.



This Mini 1275 Clubman was in the shop a few months ago but has returned for the fitting and painting of some tasteful wheel arch extensions. Although in theory the items are bolt-on, they still take a decent amount of fine-tuning to achieve a factory fit.



A new arrival, this Cobra replica is in for a strip and colour change. With fibreglass flexing it is imperative that the preparation and paint quality is of the highest standard. It's moving into the shop now to start the process while the owner chooses a colour.



The Triumph has had minor rust issues repaired and initial panel alignment done. It is now in the primer and paint preparation bay from where it will go into the paint booth. Next time you see it, this TR will be a shining example of one of the most attractive British sports cars made.



As mentioned last month, this Beetle had suffered at the hands of the dreaded tin worm and botched repairs in its lifetime. These areas of concern have been removed and replaced. A light coat of primer has been put on to stop any surface rust appearing while panel fettling continues.



The Chevrolet is ready for collection. Besides lots of metal work, we also remade parts of the wooden body frame. The fresh paint looks spectacular and is being kept under wraps until the owner collects it for assembly. The wheels were refurbished too and are off for tyre fitment.



The Mercedes SL Pagoda that had plenty of damage hidden by heaps of filler has now been taken back to bare metal so we can repair the wrongs. We will grind paint, primer and filler off the bodies as the use of industrial stripper often causes issues with the new paint down the line.



This VW Kombi takes the cake as the coolest air-cooled, thanks to millions of rust-manufactured holes in the roof. It gets even worse when you look at the rails and pillars. Our initial plan was to repair the pillars and rails and then re-skin the roof. But the owner managed to find a reasonably solid donor roof so we'll be carrying out some Frankenstein-like surgery grafting it on. We'll do this midway up the pillars.



MAKE A DATE

We will continually update the 2019 events calendar. To submit your club event for publication in the magazine as well as on our website (www.classiccarafrika.com) please submit details, along with an image or two, to stuart@classiccarafrika.com.

APRIL

04	Stars of Sandstone	Sandstone Estates
07	Angela's Picnic	Delta Park
13	Ceres Blind Navigators Rally	Ceres
14	Italian Classic Rally	Lanseria
27	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	Phakisa Freeway
28	Knysna Motor Show	Knysna

MAY

2-5	Jaguar Simola Hillclimb	Knysna
11	Kuilsrivier Blind Navigators Rally	Kuilsrivier
12	BNRC/Lions Rally	Pretoria
18	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	Zwartkops Raceway
25	Just Wheels Annual Show	Brakpan
26	Cars on the Roof	Pretoria
26	Cars in the Park Pietermaritzburg	Ashburton

JUNE

01	POMC Mampoor Rally	Pretoria
09	Vryheid Cars in the Park	Vryheid
09-13	Milligan Rally	Port Elizabeth
13	RSA-Eswatini-Moz Rally	RSA/Mozambique
22	HRSA Historic Racing	Red Star Raceway

JULY

06/07	1000 Bike Show	Germiston
07	Scottburgh Classic Car Show	Scottburgh
27/28	Concours d'Elegance Durban	Durban

AUGUST

03	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	East London GP Circuit
04	POMC Cars in the Park	Pretoria
14	Austin-Healey 100 Rally	Benoni
14-17	Magnum Rally	Hazyview
31	Worcester Blind Navigators Rally	Worcester
31	Concours South Africa	Steyn City

SEPTEMBER

01	Concours South Africa	Steyn City
07	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	Zwartkops Raceway
21	POMC Diamond Run	Pretoria
21	Maluti Car Show	Bethlehem
21-24	SAVVA National	Freestate

OCTOBER

05	Classic Car Endurance Series 2 Hour	Phakisa Freeway
12	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	Midvaal Raceway
13	Peter Arnot Memorial Rally	Zwartkops Raceway
26	Paarl Blind Navigators Rally	Paarl

NOVEMBER

10	Portuguese Trial	Johannesburg
12-14	Fairest Cape Tour	Rawsonville
16	HRSA/MHCC Historic Racing	Red Star Raceway

MONTHLY MUST-DO EVENTS

1 st Saturday of the month	Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal – Bluff, Durban	3 rd Sunday of the month	Piston Ring – Modderfontein, Johannesburg
1 st Sunday of the month	Classic Motorcycle Club Johannesburg – Germiston, Johannesburg	Last Sunday of the month	Vintage and Veteran Club – Athol Oaklands, Johannesburg
2 nd Saturday of the month	Vintage Sports Car Club of Natal – Oribi Rd, Pietermaritzburg	Last Sunday of the month	Southern Cape Old Car Club – Glenwood, George
2 nd Sunday of the month	Pretoria Old Motor Club – Silverton, Pretoria	Last Sunday of the month	The Crankhandle Club – Wynberg, Cape Town
3 rd Saturday of the month	Cape Vintage Motorcycle Club – Parow North, Cape Town	Last Sunday of the month	The Veteran Car Club of South Africa – Kloof, Durban

STARS OF SANDSTONE

If you are into vintage trains, planes, cars, agricultural equipment or just fascinated by history then Stars of Sandstone, which takes place from 4 to 14 April, is a must-do event. Very rarely do we get to see such a large variety of period-correct machinery in one place, but even rarer is the sight of these past icons in fully operational condition doing the jobs that they were intended to. For photographers, the soft Free State autumn light is sure to deliver some exceptional imagery. Accommodation is on hand and day visitors are welcome. For more information and booking details, visit www.starsofsandstone.com.



TAYLOR MADE HALL OF FAME

East London-born Wayne Taylor, who won the 1986 South African Formula 2 championship before leaving SA in 1989 to compete internationally, was inducted into the South African Hall of Fame at Sun City on 24 February. He joins Sarel van der Merwe, brothers Jody and Ian Scheckter, and Ferrari designer Rory Byrne as the only motorsport inductees.

The induction ceremony was most impressive and included a host of video snippets from motorsport luminaries wishing Wayne well on his achievement – these included Fernando Alonso, Roger Penske, Chip Ganassi, Mark Reuss and multiple NASCAR champion Jeff Gordon.

A highlight of the evening for Wayne was being reunited with his two race engineers, Rob Snyders and Alan Hughes, after a period of 33 years. Wayne has already been inducted into the Sebring Hall of Fame and has a street named after him in that city, too.



OPEL CELEBRATES 120 YEARS

In celebration of Opel's 120 years in the vehicle industry, a special-issue Opel Corsa 120Y is now available countrywide. Based on the ever-popular Corsa, this commemorative model boasts many extra styling and specification features, as well as fuel economy that will save you some much-needed cash. Priced at R259 900, it lives up to the core brand characteristic of giving customers more than they expect.

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GREAT NAMES HEAD FOR KNYSNA

Choosing a headline act at this year's Knysna Motor Show on 28 April is going to be all but impossible with so many examples of motoring's great marques set to grace the lawns of the Knysna High School sports fields. The organisers, the Garden Route Motor Club, are expecting close to 400 cars and classic motorcycles this year and because this show is by invitation only, each and every one of them will be special.

Here's a taste of what is in store...

How about a Pagani Zonda 7.0 S? The only one in SA – only seven of them were built for global release. Or maybe a homage to a Maserati A6GCS53 Berlinetta, or one of only three Lexus LFAs and a Rossion Q1? Then there's a Mercedes-Benz 300 SL, 1934 Aston Martin Mk2 and 378GT Zagato.

There are some big birthday celebrations too with Bentley hitting 100, Morgan 110 years and the mighty Mini 60. Some 20 Bentleys ranging from the early 1920s to the 1950s will be on display, a full range of

three- and four-wheeled Morgans will be seen and you can expect a massive turnout of Minis ranging from humble versions to the Cooper 997 and 998cc models and the immortal 1275 Cooper S.

Plenty of pre-1945 cars including Ford Model Ts and Model As, Chevrolet Phaetons and Rolls-Royces will find a space on the scenic grounds and the big display of large American classics from the 1950s is sure to dominate.

Have we left anything out? Better add classic names like Sunbeam, Porsche, Austin-Healey, Triumph, Lotus, Mustang and Jaguar to your list. The Parnell Bruce Collection, based in Knysna, will this year concentrate on vintage cars dating from 1910 to 1936 and there will be a large contingent of classic motorcycles once again, dating back to the 1920s and running through to the classic superbike era of the 1970s and '80s.

For more information, go to the Garden Route Motor Club's website on www.grmc.co.za.



A DECADE OF THRILLS



The Jaguar Simola Hillclimb, which runs from 2 to 5 May, is celebrating 10 years of being South Africa's leading motorsport lifestyle event. Whether you are a petrolhead, speed lover or just someone who loves a good time, you will leave satisfied and enthralled at the spectacle. On Thursday 2 May, the Classic Car Display and Parade in Hedge Street will get things started. The hill action kicks off with Classic Friday and from then it is non-stop entertainment for the rest of the weekend. For ticketing options and bookings go to www.speedfestival.co.za.

THE PERFECT STOPOVER

There's nothing better than a classic cross-country road trip, and one of the best routes has to be the N9 route through the Camdeboo district. Graaff-Reinet is ideally placed for an overnight stopover, and its historic architecture provides a perfect backdrop for your classic car photoshoot. And now for that bit of extra motoring magic you can stop in at Recollection Rides car museum and take in the wonders of yore. Take a stroll through its vintage village and grab a bite to eat. You can't miss it as you drive down the main road.



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A NEW EXPERIENCE

After more than three years in the making, the world's biggest Jaguar Land Rover Experience facility is now open in the heart of Johannesburg's northern suburbs.

What was once a rustic venue in the middle of a 14-hectare Lonehill veld is now a state-of-the-art lifestyle destination where families are welcome to visit and enjoy the many memorable experiences on offer. A wide variety of activities for any age group are designed to showcase not only the entire range of Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles, but also the lifestyles that go along with them.

The reception area of the Welcome Centre is divided into two separate brand display zones for Jaguar and Land Rover respectively. Here visitors can get up close and personal with Jaguar Land Rover's latest products, technology showcases and branded goods ranges. The beauty of the Johannesburg facility, however, is that the range can be trialed on a variety of test tracks through a selection of Experience drives.

The property is home to 3km of off-road tracks, a series of tailor-made obstacles, a 70-metre-diameter skidpan and a 185-metre-long and 30-metre-wide Dynamic Handling Platform, and all driving courses are hosted by Jaguar Land Rover's team of instructors.

There's no need to book driving courses to enjoy the Experience, as TLC on the Track restaurant is open to the public, serving South African-inspired dishes for breakfast and lunch seven days a week. Kids are catered for too with a host of free activities including a miniature racetrack where tiny electric Jaguar F-TYPEs and quarter-scale Land



Rover Defenders take to a purpose-built off-road track.

Jaguar Land Rover Experience Johannesburg is situated at 1 Capricorn Drive, Lonehill and can be reached at 010 023 0462, info@experience.jaguar.co.za or info@experience.landrover.co.za.

HIT THE ROAD

The Durban Dash is back – but it goes a little further than Durbs and ends at the Scottburgh Classic Car Show. Cars will leave Randburg on Friday 5 July with an overnight stop in Newcastle and then on to Scottburgh for a further two nights. The route runs on the old Durban road, seeing a day one distance of 372km and 449km on the second day. R500 per vehicle fee gets a rally plate, printed route schedule, GPS route file and entry to the show, with a percentage going to a charity of the Scottburgh Classic Car Show's choice. Various accommodation packages are available to suit all budgets. For a weekend of fun, join the Durban Dash in July 2019. For more information, contact Roger at Classic Car Events on roger@afriod.co.za.



DURBAN JULY

Concours d'Elegance Durban, which takes place at the Durban Country Club on 27/28 July, is taking it up a notch with the inclusion of the Vintage Motors auction and calling on enthusiasts with vintage, classic and modern classic vehicles to take part. Contact admin@vintagemotors.co.za for more information. Concours d'Elegance Durban looks set to host 200 of the most elegant collectors' cars competing for the 'Best of Show' and you can take part by registering at www.concoursdurban.co.za.

FORMATION LAPS

Can you recall the epic four-wheeled moments that shaped your love of the classic hobby? **Graeme Hurst** reckons most of us can. But few can brag about those memories as much as one Grand Prix enthusiast.



Like most classic enthusiasts, my passion for all things petrol was instilled at a young age: my late dad rebuilding cars, the car shows and club events he took me to, copies of *CAR* and *Classic & Sports Car* lying around the house and so on all helped shape it. As did trips to the SA Grand Prix, initially as a member of our scout troop selling hats at the gate (or umbrellas when the heavens invariably opened) but later as a young spectator, there to drink it all in from the grandstand at Kyalami.

I was there in October '85 for (what would be) the last 'proper' GP at the circuit and can recall Nigel Mansell and Keke Rosberg's epic 1-2 finish as Rosberg outgunned Alain Prost's McLaren five laps from the chequered flag and gave Mansell a run for his money. The memories were made more special when I saw Mansell's Williams FW10 up close 20 years later at the Donnington Collection; here was the very car that tore through Crowthorne to the roar of the spectators clutching their boerie rolls and cans of Castle.

That race was 34 years ago, which seemed like a lifetime... until a chance phone call with John Myers a week before the South African Historic Grand Prix Festival late last year rather put that in perspective. While catching up on all things automotive, I mentioned how exciting it was for local racing fans to get up close to the pre-war racers taking part in the historic event, including the Maserati 8CM that won

the first SA GP back in 1934.

Thanks to a lifetime of building, tuning, racing and selling cars, John is never short of an anecdote, but his comment "Oh yes, I saw it race at Crystal Palace when I was 16 years old" rather stopped the conversation. I knew John celebrated his 96th birthday two months before, which meant that was 80 years ago. Before the war. We're talking about the Silver Arrows/Auto Union era... when great names such as Dick Seaman, Raymond Mays and Prince Bira thundered around the South London circuit. And the latter is exactly who John saw behind the wheel of the 8CM when he stood on the side of the track as young lad in August of 1939.

John was a regular at both Crystal Palace and Brooklands at the time and has a remarkably vivid recollection of his trips to each – he can even quote the number of the respective buses he boarded to get there from his home in North London! And, although Brooklands was the scene of many exciting track dices, John reckons that "only cars doing over 150mph were worth looking at". Crystal Palace was a more interesting proposition as the 2-mile circuit's layout was determined by the roads surrounding the magnificent glass-and-iron-girder Victorian exhibition 'palace' which was razed by fire in 1936.

The first London Grand Prix took place on the 17th of July the following year and was won by Prince Bira (or Prince Birabongse Bhanudej Bhanubandh to give him his full name). The well-known, Eton-educated racer was a member of the Thai royal family. Bank-rolled by his cousin Prince Chula, Bira famously campaigned ERA R2B (nicknamed Romulus) and later R5B (which he called Remus) under the White Mouse Racing stable, with his cars wearing the Siamese flag.

For the '36 season, Chula wrote out a cheque for the very Maserati 8CM that Whitney Straight drove to victory in the first SA Grand Prix here in East London in December '34. Fast-forward five years and Bira was behind the wheel for the Third Imperial Trophy Meeting at Crystal Palace on August 26th, complete with John as a spectator at his favourite view point, Stadium Dip: "I could see both the start and finish lines from there and it had an off-camber bit that made the racing quite entertaining."

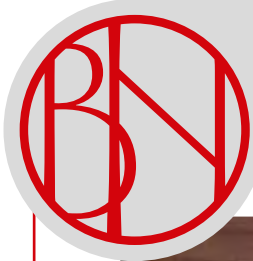
John still has the programme that he bought at the gate that day. It's complete with his pencilled annotations recording the results for each heat in the four races that preceded the final at 5:30 that afternoon.

Sadly, the Maserati was unable to replicate its chequered-flag result back here from '34 and in fact it didn't make the final after losing an earlier heat, which resulted in "Bira going home in a huff," as John recalls. But, much like my own recollection of Mansell's Honda-powered Williams, the sound and sight of that Maserati thundering around Crystal Palace has remained with him for all these years.

But where I merely got to lay eyes on Mansell's car, John's memories were re-kindled by *hearing* the car in action when the Historic Grand Prix Festival came to Val de Vie in the Cape in the first weekend of December last year. The demonstration run was a chance for John to chat to owner Chris Jaques about that fixture at Crystal Palace.

A chance to hear from someone who saw a pre-war GP car in action in period doesn't come around often, given that we're almost two decades into the 21st century. Or that's what I thought, and said as much to Chris. His reply? "It's amazing but I have to tell you that in East London a 97-year-old lady came up to us to say she'd seen Whitney race the 8CM here in 1934." I wonder if she still has the programme? **G**

I was there in October '85 for (what would be) the last 'proper' GP at the circuit and can recall Nigel Mansell and Keke Rosberg's epic 1-2 finish



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HELP — OR — HINDER

By Gavin Foster

It was a lovely story, it really was. It popped up in 2012 and described the furore that top British rally driver Mark Fischer had triggered when he confessed that he had absolutely no idea what his long-term co-driver, Gethryn Davis, was communicating to him during races. In an interview, Fischer said that the pace notes that co-drivers read out to drivers to help them navigate around, through or over obstacles in their path were all just gibberish. "The regulations say that there must be two people in the car at all times during the race and Gethryn was a good mate so I always took him along for the ride." When later told that Davis was deeply upset by this dismissal of his usefulness, Fisher remained unapologetic. "Oh, come on," he exclaimed. "I mean, '50 five-left and stop 2-right half minus braking into K-right 90 maybe and absolute crest 500'. What the hell am I supposed to make of that when I'm flat out over a jump sideways at 90mph?"

According to the story, Fischer had a reputation for dissing his racing partners who he didn't think were essential in any way, other than to comply with the rules. In 2009 he reportedly arrived at a rally in Finland to find himself short of a co-driver, so he lured a homeless man into the car, forcibly strapped him into the passenger seat and set off in his usual single-minded fashion. The ruse was only exposed when post-race scrutiny of the in-car video footage revealed that the unhappy co-driver was not shouting out the usual 'gibberish' in Finnish but letting fly with "Oh s**t!" over and over, interspersed with things like "WATCH OUT FOR THAT HOUSE!" and "SLOW DOWN,

YOU MAD BASTARD!"

It was, sadly, all an early version of the fake news we're regularly fed today. There was indeed an up-and-coming British rally driver called Mark Fisher, but he died in a helicopter crash in 2001, and there's no record ever of a rally co-driver called Gethryn Davis.

Another driver/co-driver combination that went viral at about the same time was the YouTube video of Indian navigator Vivek Ponnusamy and driver Samir 'Sammy' Thapar in the 2013 Indian National Rally Championship. This daring duo were driving a Mitsubishi Evo X-Car in the round at Coimbatore in July 2013, and the car was fitted with an on-board video camera that recorded 40 minutes of their Day In The Office. After the dust had settled, Thapar posted the whole video on YouTube under the heading 'The Lighter Side of Rallying', where it attracted the attention of rival team manager Yohann Sethna. Sethna downloaded the whole video and edited it to just 3.5 scintillating minutes before reposting what he considered the highlights. Boy, was that a hit! Here's a taste:

Ponnusamy: You have to listen to my calls, Sammy. Please. I beg you!

Sammy: Yeah, alright. Yeah, yeah.

Ponnusamy: You have to turn the wheel, Sammy! Fast medium left...

Sammy: Shaddup – yah!

Ponnusamy: Fast medium left! Fifteen downhill. TRIPLE CAUTION! TRIPLE CAUTION! STAY CENTRE! TRIPLE CAUTION!!! Medium left. Nice and easy turn!

Throttle! Medium left! MEDIUM LEEEEEEFT! Listen to my calls! You're not concentrating, Sammy. You're watching out and you're driving...

Sammy: Shaddup. Yah!

Ponnusamy: Sammy, you have to listen, Sammy, otherwise it is not working! You have to be easy, Sammy, otherwise we won't finish! You have to be

easy, Sammy, I'm telling you... You are not listening...

Sammy: Shaddup, yah!

Ponnusamy: No – I'm just giving you advice, Sammy. INTO DOUBLE CAUTION – JUMP!! DOUBLE CAUTION JUMP! NO! STAY ON THE ROAD! Sammy, Sammy, please. FAST MEDIUM RIGHT! LISTEN TO THE CALLS! SAMMY, PLEASE LISTEN TO THE CALLS! Sammy, you will break the car. We will not finish. YOU HAVE TO STAY ON ROAD, SAMMY, PLEASE!

Sammy: Ok, OK, OK...

Ponnusamy: OH F**K! Sammy, Sammy, what are you doing man?


Sammy: STOP IT!

Ponnusamy: F****G HELL!!!!!! Sammy, Sammy, you are wrecking the car! YOU ARE WRECKING THE CAR!!!!

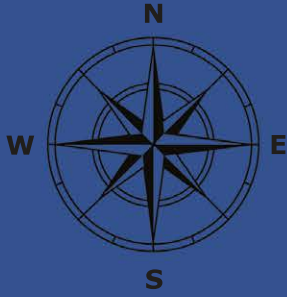
Sammy: SHUT UP! Don't tell me how to drive.

You'd swear they'd been married for 20 years. Search for 'Crazy Indian Rally Driver Video' and enjoy!

Anyway, the joke turned sour soon after Sethna posted his edited version of the video on YouTube, showing only the highlights of the steep downhill curve in the relationship between driver and co-driver. The jokester had scarcely booked into his room at a hotel in Chennai, where his team was racing in the next round of the National Championship series, when the cops came banging on his door. He was arrested and later released on bail to face charges of posting the video with 'malicious intent' and destroying Vivek Ponnusamy's international rallying career. And, believe it or not, Ponnusamy sort of had one. He, as co-driver to Karamjit Singh, had won the FIA Asia-Pacific Cup Championship for two-wheel-drive cars in 2012.

There's no further news about the case on the Internet, so we can presume that some sort of settlement was reached. There's also no record of anybody in this story winning an Academy Award, but the video has deservedly been viewed millions of times. And it's real! 





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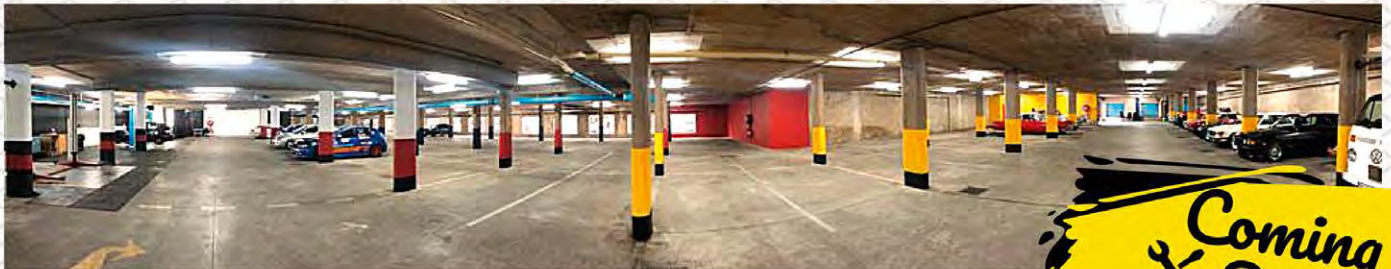
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LEKKER JAMMIES

Firstly, let me congratulate you on a fantastic magazine – a super read, well done and keep up the good work.

I am 83 years old and have been a petrolhead forever. What prompted me to drop a line was when Keith Andrews, my friend and neighbour, passed on a copy of your Jan/Feb magazine in which your article on his museum appeared. I also knew his dad from years back in the old days.

I have been fortunate in my lifetime to have owned some great motor cars and I thought I would share some of these with you, for what it's worth.

My first vehicle was a Willys Jeep CJ2A, which I bought in 1955 while doing my ACF training in Potchefstroom. It was used for military parades and was in pristine condition with only 3 000 miles on the clock, and I paid 70 quid for it. Sadly, as a third-year apprentice I couldn't afford to keep it and as a result I only had it for six months. A friend of mine bought it and subsequently he and two friends travelled from Joburg up through Africa to finish up in the UK.

The first car which I then bought was a 1936 Morris 8. At some stage everything packed up but that was the start of my learning to repair cars. Thereafter there were a few run-of-the-mill cars not worth mentioning.

Next of note was a 1950 MG TD which I partially restored. Great fun those years. Then my first new car – my absolute pride and joy: a 1958 Austin-Healey 2+2 in red with black trim from Stanley Motors in Joburg for the scary price of 1 400 quid. I spent many thousands of miles touring SA and Rhodesia. I also spent many Sundays in Springs where we did some serious drag racing with Dave Charlton, who was a good mate of mine. After selling the Healey I couldn't find happiness and then bought a new 750 Fiat Abarth – great fun, especially as it was in the era of the MGAs which I was happily able to leave in my dust when it came to performance.

Then a new 1961 Volvo 144 – also a great car. Then my first Alfa Romeo, a 1961 Giulietta. There were very few agents in the country at the time, so I and other Alfa owners serviced, repaired and maintained our own cars. Ernie Pieterse (a well-known name in the motor industry/sport at the time) was the owner of Continental Cars in Joburg, the then Alfa agents.

As a consequence, I ended up joining Alfa Romeo SA as their first technical rep.

My territory covered SA, SWA, Rhodesia and Mozambique and my duties were to establish dealerships and train their technical staff.

We also started the Alfa Romeo Club in Joburg. I was talked into entering my Giulietta in a concours event at Milner Park (in price categories). My Alfa was off the road for a month in preparation for this competition. My vehicles were always kept in all round pristine condition. This was a huge feather in my cap as this concours included factory entries from Mercedes-Benz. I still have the trophy which I received, plus a bronze medal from Alfa Romeo in Italy for my success. For me the absolute highlight was the statement by the two international vintage car judges who intimated that my car was of international standard.

Next came the real love of my life – a 1961 Alfa Giulietta Sprint Veloce (it had 20 000km on the clock). In 1962, I was offered a job in Cape Town as service manager for Wilman Motors, the then Alfa agents in the Cape. My folks were still in Joburg and as a result I had 19 weekend trips from Cape Town to Joburg and back – average time was 10 hours for both. Petrol cost 33 cents a gallon at that time and my average fuel cost for this trip came to R28.

I also raced this Alfa at the old Grand Central track (between Joburg and Pretoria). I entered the 10-lap club events – but those results were never great. My best result was a 2nd finish. The surface on that old track was a nightmare and after 10 laps I'd have gone through four new Pirelli tyres. Other than fuel from Shell and oil from Castrol, I had no sponsorship.

The new GT series Alfas were coming so I sold my beloved Sprint, and to tide me over until they arrived, I obtained a Mini Cooper S – magic. The new Alfa never happened... I got married.

Next, however, came a real classic – a 1958 Lancia Aurelia Series 3 with a 2.5-litre motor (the last of the series). These Lancias were totally and completely hand-built and what made this coupé very special was that it was RHD. Rare and very scarce, it had the best road-holding and cornering I have ever experienced (including the hot Minis). With



some TLC, the end result was great. I sold it to a doctor who was a vintage car guy. He also owned a Spider version of my Aurelia. He ended up shipping both of these cars to the UK (I sold it for R5 000) and subsequently, due to scarcity of these Lancias, he sold the Spider for the equivalent of R15 million and my ex-vehicle for R8 million. Too late for tears – I should have done the homework!

My final car of note was a 1955 MG TF 1500 with wire wheels (the last of the T Series). It was in a shocking state and in need of a total restoration but fortunately all the original bits were still on the car. Then a COMPLETE restoration followed, which took me two years and about 11 000 man-hours of labour. At completion I had the finest TF ever, including those that came off the assembly line. I say this in all modesty but it was spectacular, and I improved and modified wherever possible to make it a more workable and drivable vehicle. In *Motoring Mirror's* December 1966 issue there was a road test on the TF. After I sold it, I was told it ended up in East London and sadly I lost track after that.

Thereafter my interest turned to my passion for 4x4s and off-roading. Now I've come full circle since my first Jeep all those years ago. We started the 4x4 Club of the Western Cape in 1975, which as a club enabled us to see and explore areas of our beautiful Western Cape that were not accessible to the normal public.

In 1984, I opened the first 4x4 centre in the Cape (Ron's Off Road Centre). Sadly, due to financial restrictions I couldn't continue with this project... and look at the market today. At the end of the day I ended up with over 50 years in the motor trade that covered every sector of this industry, and I certainly experienced some interesting, frustrating and exciting times.

Well folks, just the ramblings of an old motoring enthusiast which I wanted to share

with you. I have been very fortunate, and I look back with pride and joy at having owned and driven some really 'lekker jammies'.

**Kind regards and best wishes,
Ron Joubert**

Hello Ron, thank you for the compliments and taking time to share your wonderful motoring

tales. The variety of machinery and genres is impressive as so many of us get tunnel vision for one brand. Your petrolhead pedigree shines through with some 'real drivers' like the Alfas, Lancia and Mini Cooper S, and no motoring enthusiast is complete without a rebuild project and off-road vehicle on their resume.

I would bet that your vehicles would make it

on to most people's list of top 20 cars today. If only we could have kept them to this day, but alas, time, money, family commitments and space generally see the stock moving out and fresh toys moving in.

Thank you for sharing the passion and keep on- and off-roading.

Stuart

THE PROCESS OF ELIMINATION

Stuart,

I have been meaning to write to you about the photo with the Sunbeam, Darts, Healey and Triumph on the start line. The photo was captioned as being at Gunners Circle. This cannot be as the last race at Gunners Circle was on 1st January 1958, and the only Darts there were the first two ever built.

That would leave either Eerste Rivier or Fisantekraal. Eerste Rivier was abandoned after the incident of a car going into the crowd. This was, I think, 10th October 1958. I am fairly sure that the Sunbeam Alpine was only introduced in 1959, so that leaves Fisantekraal. You say the photo is captioned 1958 but I would put it at more like 1960. I remember a Sunbeam Alpine being raced but not who was driving it. For much of 1960 Killarney was out of action as the current track was being built, so the only places for racing were Sacks Circle in Bellville and Fisantekraal. Fisantekraal was always a good day out as the gliding club operated out of there, so we had demonstrations during the lunch breaks and novelty events like cars being flour-bombed from the club Tiger Moth, as well as racing.

If you cannot find the Hanning article, I know I have it somewhere and I can scan it and send it to you. The sports Austin Jaguar shown never raced as such. The racing one was a single seater with a body modelled on the Maserati 250F. When Austin Jaguar became obsolete (1½-litre SA Championship) the car was converted into a touring sports car using an experimental Austin-Healey body Ralph Clarke had stashed away somewhere.

John Hanning always drove his racing cars to the track. On race days you could see his car going along Camp Ground Road (then

the main road to Milnerton) with a number plate hung on each end. He even drove the car to East London for the SA Grand Prix, needing a battery change in Grahamstown (no generator).

As ever, thanks for a super magazine.

**Regards,
Peter Owen-Smith**

Hi Peter, thank you for this. After having a think (and doing some frantic research around the matter) I agree that it is unlikely that it was Gunners Circle in 1958 – three GSM Darts are visible (not just two as listed in the 1 January 1958 event) and as the Sunbeam Alpine is celebrating its 60th this year, your memory of its 1959 arrival is spot on. So if your 10 October 1958 Eerste Rivier closure date is correct, that track also falls out of the picture. I have looked for archive images of the Sacks Circle start line but am unable to find any, and being of the wrong generation I can't comment on this. I therefore put it out to any readers as to whether they can clarify the date.

Fisantekraal sounds like it was a fabulous place for a family outing and is perhaps a good case study on how to get the masses back to motorsport. Out of interest, a recent drifting event was held at Fisantekraal. From the images I have seen, there was a large expanse of old concrete surface – could this perhaps be the remains of the original facility?

The John Hanning story is one I will hunt down and if I'm not successful I'll be in touch with you. The car is currently being restored with the sports car bodywork – most likely as recreating the 250F-inspired body would make the car less practical as a usable car and cost the earth. It will be fantastic to see it back on the road.

Thank you for all the info and support.

Stuart

IDENTIFYING CLASSIC TIN

Hi Stuart,

Further to Zack Lombard's 'Model Citizen' letter in the January/February 2019 issue, I can identify the models as follows – from left front in a clockwise direction:

- Off-white with grey top: Opel Kapitän ± 1953 to 1955
- Greyish-brownish: Austin A55 Cambridge ± 1957 to 1958
- Greenish: Austin A40 Somerset saloon ± 1952 to 1954
- Greyish: Morris Oxford saloon Series 2 ± 1954 to 1956
- Yellow with grey top: Hillman Minx

Mark 8 ± 1954

- Maroon: Vauxhall Velox ± 1954
- Dark greyish with off-white top: Ford Zephyr Zodiac (Zodiac Mk1) ± 1954 to 1956

Thanks for the great magazine, I look forward to it every month... except December when there is not one!

**Regards,
Eugene Birkholtz**

Brilliant Eugene, from my cross-referencing on Google I think you have 7 out of 7. Although the cars mentioned span only five years, it is amazing to see how each



one is identifiable thanks to unique design attributes and embellishments. Will we be able to separate and identify current modern saloons 50 or so years later with such ease?
Stuart

SAAB WAS BAAS

Good day,

On the outskirts of Kroonstad, where the Ventersburg and Welkom roads separate, uncle Nok Wilken had a fuel station and sold Saab motorcars. Either because of the reputation of the car, or because of the owner's abilities as mechanic, he sold a lot of these cars. It was rather a status symbol to own a Saab.

After a year in the army and as a first-year student, I needed a car. Rather than allowing me to take a job for the summer holidays, my father bought the 1959 Saab 93 that I had in mind for R200. It had been standing in the sun for some time, but Johnsons Rally Polish put the shine back. The car had 20 000 miles on the clock but was actually in good shape. Being a two-stroke, the plugs needed regular attention, but the distributor only needed the points to be filed and adjusted occasionally. Due to Saab's ring-ting-ting sound it was called the 'Hoep-Hoep' by the students.

The electric petrol pump however was a problem. As soon as I headed for Potchefstroom, the pump stopped working – while crossing the Potch/Klerksdorp road from Stilfontein. It was after dark on a Sunday night, so to illuminate the engine compartment I unclipped the headlight bulb from the reflector. The air cleaner covers were then loosened and the pump cover too. Bridging the pump, petrol was poured into the air cleaner cover so the pump's moving parts could be washed with a paint brush. This repair did the job well, until crossing the exact same bridge on my return later.

In the late sixties, the garage closed down and getting spares became difficult. My nephew had a Saab station wagon which he used to transport his children to school.

I swapped it for two heifers to solve the parts problem. The car had a 750cc engine and three-speed gearbox while the wagon featured an 850cc and four-speed. I swapped the mechanicals across and it made a definite improvement in the performance – possibly because of the bigger displacement, but more likely because of the gearbox.

Then it started running on only two cylinders. I checked the fuel and spark supply over and over but soon discovered that the thread of the number 2 plug had been stripped and fitted with a Helicoil, which did not seal well, and compression was lost. After fixing this, the car was sold. It was then moved on another time and, to my shame, I lost track of it. The station wagon was stripped, and the remains are still under the trees – this is the only Saab station wagon I know of.

An interesting fact, and I would think strange for a car from a cold country like Sweden: the Saab had no heater. The radiator mounted at the back of the engine had a fan pushing hot air towards the firewall, so a hole was made in the firewall and a Cobra Polish tin fixed over it. For heat, the lid was removed and then in summer it was fitted back in place.

Being nearly two metres tall, I always need space in a vehicle and the Saab had plenty of this for both my legs and head.

Regards,
Jan Delpont



Hi Jan, lovely story about an often forgotten classic. I think I can count the number of two-stroke Saabs I have seen on one hand. And I have never seen a station wagon version locally. But my favourite part of your story has to be the heater system you engineered – ingenious. I might employ this on my Renault 10 as the water system that fed the original heater box has long been disconnected and rotted away. The Renault radiator fan also pulls in air from the rear and passes it through the radiator before warming the engine bay and rear firewall.

*Thanks for the memories and Saab reminder.
Stuart*

WHERE ARE THOSE SA SPECIALS?

Hello Stuart,

Welcome back from a well-deserved holiday. Two queries that you may be able to help me with.

1. What has happened to Manny Kightly's Red Line Special?
2. What progress, if any, has been made on the Deon Hattingh/Daw/Universal Products Protea project?

With thanks and kind regards,
Graham Ash

Thanks for the mail, Graham. The first question is one that I often ask myself when driving through Kensington B. My route to school

went that way and I would often spot an Alfa-badged 1950s-looking sports car in a driveway. It was only when reading an early issue of Classic Car Africa that I realised what it was. I'm sure someone in the Alfa Romeo circle will be able to help us out.

Progress on the mentioned Protea has gone very well. In fact, Deon debuted the original car in a Pursuit race at Zwartkops Raceway last year and will be back in the championship this year. Mention was made of a few more 'new' Proteas being made by Universal Products, but I haven't heard of any more as yet.

*Will keep you in the loop if and when we get any more information.
Stuart*



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MINI TO THE MAX

CCA's December 2017 issue featured the annual Gumtree find-inspired road trip by a group of like-minded Cape Town-based petrolheads. Calling themselves the Journeymen, these guys' collective passion for all things motor-related and inspiring sense of adventure has rewarded them with friends, epic experiences and the odd cool purchase on what has become an annual event over the last four years. **Graeme Hurst** caught up with the Journeymen on their home turf: a shared workshop where they bring their respective wheels to life.

Photography: Graeme Hurst & Adam Mays







The story of getting to know your best classic car mates is often as amusing and unusual as finding your classic car. In the case of Harley Nash and Graham Webb, it was a chance encounter followed by the sale of an iPhone on which Graham had left all his photos, that sealed it. Ordinarily someone's cell phone pics being handed over to a stranger would be a serious no-no as far as data privacy goes, but when Harley – being a like-minded Mini enthusiast with several examples to his name – flipped through snaps of Graham's efforts to buy and restore Minis, he knew he'd met a partner in crime for his hobby. "I grew up with Minis; my grandfather had a Mini Moke and my brother, sister and parents all had Minis as their first cars," says Harley, who had one too – although by all

accounts it was a beast. "I put a twin-cam Toyota engine in it with a flip-up front!"

Five years after that phone purchase, the hobby includes six good mates, around half a dozen Minis of various models and four BMW 2002s, plus other assorted wheels. Oh, and a dedicated workshop in which they can all hang out and spanner away – in between their legendary annual Journeymen forays into South Africa's hinterland. It's a loosely defined enthusiast community that's centred around a shared passion for tinkering with old cars. And it falls within Harley's background: he's the managing director of Dennes Engineering, a business his father Don started in 1984, shortly after the family left Zimbabwe. "My dad did his engineering apprenticeship in the mid-1970s, and back in those days when you did so you were called a journeyman as you were on a 'journey' to your profession," explains Harley. "The name seemed right to describe what we do as we learn while fixing old cars."

And it was fixing old cars that really sowed the seeds of the group, particularly the fascination with BMW 2002s. "I lived with a mate who has one and it kept breaking down a lot and I helped

him, so I learnt about them and realised that they're great cars to work on. They're well-built, with a lot of space to get at things," explains Harley. The mate he refers to is photographer Adam Mays, who soon joined the group, which by then consisted of Harley, Graham – who is a property developer by day – and another Mini-focused mate, Arthur Logan, who runs a bespoke metal fabrication business and is now focusing on classic cars.

The early days kicked off with Harley and Graham rebuilding a Mk1 Mini 850 and an English Austin Mini Moke on a platform above the shop floor in Dennes Engineering's Ndabeni premises. Although they enjoyed access to the workshop's tools when they needed, space was super tight. But, much like the way in which the pair met, that changed following an unusual twist of fate. "There was a break-in one night and I was called out by the security company at 4am, only to discover it was for the building next door. I was on the roof and could see straight through a hole that the place next door was totally empty," explains Harley, who got in touch with the landlord to strike a deal to put the place to use.

With added space, the group kitted the building out with a two-post lift and various tools and started advertising for 'members'

Five years after that phone purchase, the hobby includes six good mates, around half a dozen Minis of various models and four BMW 2002s, plus other assorted wheels



to help fund it all and join in on the fun of fixing up old cars. Word soon spread of their efforts and led to mate Sascha Ruppert – a creative director in the advertising world – joining their ranks, along with videographer Alex Sims. A few others have since joined and are involved to various degrees but Harley, Graham and Arthur currently represent the core who meet three times a week religiously. “We get together here a minimum of Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and all of our girlfriends know not to organise anything on those nights,” laughs Graham.

Setting ‘sessions’ also allowed the group to take on projects, which currently include bare-shell restorations on a pair of 2002s, owned by Harley and Graham respectively, and a rat-rod take on Arthur’s Mini Mk3 – Arthur being into unusual versions of cars. His isn’t the only Mini in the shop as the group is currently in the build-up phase for a ground-up restoration of a rare 1071cc Cooper S. The work is being done for a customer and, although it was never the intention to go that route, the project was too good to pass up, as Graham explains: “This guy found us. The car was totally untouched and unmolested with no rust, and it was such an opportunity to save a good car we couldn’t say no. And we were worried some other

bonehead would’ve done whatever to it.”

Despite being free of the dreaded tin worm, the Mini needed a lot of work, starting with a new front end. But the guys’ complementary skills – Arthur’s adept at steelwork, Graham has an affinity for re-assembling the mechanical bits and Harley “joins all the dots in the process” – meant they were well up to the task of sorting it, and the result is simply exceptional in terms of attention to detail. The project was aided by the agreement with the owner. “We’re doing it on our terms. Anything we need he buys. We decided on the colours and he doesn’t mind as he just wants the car right,” adds Harley.

The project’s been a labour of love and, while they may consider another joint restoration, it’ll likely involve something they own and then sell or – more likely – keep forever. That’s in the longer term; right now, the team is itching to get back to work on the ’02s, both of which needed serious metalwork despite being seemingly sound and on the road when bought. “We blasted them and basically each car was rotten. We imported second-hand doors from Germany, but they turned out to be just as rusty,” explains Harley. Undeterred, the guys ended up fabricating a set of door skins from scratch, complete

with factory-spec swage lines.

The results are impressive and the work generated plenty of material for their series of YouTube uploads on car restoration, something they aim to do on a twice-monthly basis to promote and share their experiences. The restoration skills acquired are also standing them in good stead for one of their workshop dreams. “We want to restore four Mini Mokes in a row,” explains Harley who, along with Graham, has been stocking up on the model (and other Mini derivatives) for a while to sustain the project. Then there’s an early Series 1 Land Rover in need of restoration and a few other Mini projects in the wings.

All this, of course, will happen in between their annual Journeymen Road Trips, when the group typically hits the road in an array of daily drive classics in varying states of repair, with the inevitable breakdowns and resultant spanning fuelling the content of their online activity.

Their roadside antics may seem at odds with the standard of their collective effort back at the workshop but it perfectly describes their ethos, as Arthur explains: “We appreciate building perfection but we like driving ratty cars.” 📷

See: www.journeymen.co.za for more or follow them on Instagram: @journeymen_.



12-BORE GRAND TOURER



Jaguar's E-Type must surely rank as one of the most sensational cars of all time. Whether it was looks, performance or technology – or just the column inches generated by its Geneva launch – the E was simply peerless when it hit the streets in early '61. Fast-forward ten years and the company's quest for safety compliance and extra seating had diluted the model's beguiling looks and agility. But what the E-Type lost in aesthetics and athletic ability it made up for in GT character in Series 3 form, thanks to a magnificent V12 engine, something only Ferrari and Lamborghini could offer. For **Graeme Hurst** that put the big cat in a league of its own.

Like most petrolheads I've a few movies I coveted as a kid for their car content. Naturally ones like *Bullitt* and *Cannonball Run* were firm favourites but a standout, and one of my earliest car-in-film thrills, was the E-Type 2+2 in *Silver Streak*. Not seen the film? It's a 1976 action-packed comedy-cum-thriller centred around a hijacked runaway cross-state express train. It has a complex plot centred around the murder of a dodgy fake art dealer but (for me, as a six-year-old anyway) the highlight was when two of the lead characters (played by Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor) stole a red 2+2 E-Type which they drove through the night to catch up with the train.

The E-Type is really just a supporting act but the combination of its eye-catching looks and evident high-speed transcontinental abilities meant it made a huge impression as it sped across the screen. As a result, the 2+2 variant – long seen as the step-child in

the range – has always been top of my list when it comes to considering what makes an exotic mile-eating coupé. Whether it's chasing trains to bring villains to justice or blasting across Europe to make breakfast in Monaco, a 2+2 E-Type just seemed like the right set of wheels for a well-heeled GT man in the 1970s. More so in V12 form, which was the only engine option for the Series 3 when it debuted in 1971, a decade after its younger sibling first wowed show-goers at Geneva.

The 1960s was an interesting time for sports car makers, with many coming up with recipes for products that would ultimately shape their brand beyond measure. Just think of Porsche and its iconic 911... a model that would cement the rear-engined, air-cooled format for the next 50+ years. Or Mercedes-Benz's 'Pagoda' which would propel the SL nomenclature into our automotive lexicon. And, of course, Jaguar which – to trot out a cliché – went back to



the drawing board to create the stunning E-Type. A car that capitalised on both Jaguar's racing image and its competition-inspired technology while being clothed in a lithe and simply eye-catching body. One that became so iconic, it arguably personifies our image of 1960s Britain on the automotive front as much as Twiggy's mini skirt does in the fashion arena.

The E-Type's reception is well-documented; it's the car that was in such demand at its Geneva launch that company

test driver Norman Dewis was pulled off the MIRA test track and instructed to drive a second prototype (77 RW) overnight to make the Swiss show. The same show where the great Enzo Ferrari paid marque founder Sir William Lyons a compliment by proclaiming his prodigy to be "the most beautiful car in the world". And then there was the demand fuelled by Lyons's marketing strategy of ensuring that celebrities such as racing driver Jim Clark, footballer George Best and Beatles band member George Harrison were seen in one.

Naturally, orders outstripped supply in the first two years and Jaguar no longer had a need to prove itself on the track as it had done in the 1950s with its 'win on Sunday, sell on

Monday' strategy. Ongoing research and development at Browns Lane saw some quiet evolution under the E-Type's skin as the E gained better brakes, a gearbox with full synchromesh and extra cockpit space two years in. That was followed by a boost in performance with the addition of the 4.2-litre XK engine, which had been developed to improve torque to cope with the heft of the marque's range-topper, the MKX saloon.

The upgrades kept the E-Type current and at the top of its game but – as with the history of many an automotive product – it wasn't long before the company's bean counters had the inevitable impact. Jaguar's marketing division wanted to expand the E-Type's appeal to people with young children or a need to load up a set of golf clubs. Cue the 2+2, a stretched take on designer (and aerodynamicist) Malcolm Sayer's original lines, along with a taller windscreen.

The new look wasn't to everyone's taste, but it still sold well; one in every three E-Types to leave Coventry was a 2+2 and the model co-existed when the Series 2 was launched in '68



The new look wasn't to everyone's taste, but it still sold well; one in every three E-Types to leave Coventry was a 2+2 and the model co-existed when the Series 2 was launched in '68. The second-generation E was a response to increasing pressure from US lawmakers for Jaguar to meet safety-driven legislation in the all-important American market. Headlamps had to be uncovered and turn signals and brake lights had to be within a specified height off the road. And specific sizes. That meant the E-type's elegant indicator units that sat discreetly above the quarter bumpers front and back were superseded with heavier items below the chrome line.

And concerns over cooling – particularly on the US West Coast – meant the E's iconic 'mouth' was widened out of proportion but the aesthetic changes were just one half of the story: under the hood (as US owners

call it) various pieces of emissions-related equipment had sapped performance and the famed 150mph headline that flowed after *Motor* magazine famously road tested the first production E-Type in '61 was but a distant memory by the end of the decade. Jaguar urgently needed to restore the E's reputation and to do so it returned to its old tactic: borrowing race-inspired technology.

And that technology was from the still-born XJ13 or, specifically, the V12 engine that powered the mid-engined sports racer. Designed for Le Mans, the XJ13 never got beyond prototype stage after endurance racing regulations capped engine capacity at 3 litres, rendering the 5-litre DOHC-powered car obsolete. It was a blow to the engineers at Browns Lane but, not wanting to let a good idea go to waste, the design for the all-alloy engine was quickly picked up by the E's product planners as a way to inject a

new lease of life into the company's sports car prodigy.

And inject it certainly did, thanks to the heady 272bhp the all-alloy V12 cranked out, now in SOHC form (to reduce engine width and allow for a reasonable turning circle in a road car). And thanks to its 60° V-format, fitting it didn't require serious structural changes to the E's front spaceframe, although the big cat needed wider rubber to handle that power, along with steel wheels to cope with the engine's whopping 410Nm of torque. That led to styling changes to accommodate the E's wider footprint but they came as part of a resolved package that arguably packs more gravitas, thanks to a squatter look. And both roadster and 2+2 derivatives now shared the latter's longer wheelbase. The changes also extended to a 'cheese cutter-style' grille to bring the E-Type into the 1970s. All in, it was a



more resolved proposition than the looks of the outgoing Series 2. And the changes arguably complemented the out-of-scale cabin lines that marred the 2+2 when it first debuted in Series 1 form.

The changes worked, as showroom traffic showed, and just over 15 000 E-Types rolled out of Coventry before the model gave way to the XJS in 1975. It's a sizeable number when you consider that Jaguar built 57 000 E-Types in the preceding decade and when you factor in the timing: the V12 E-Type was launched just two years before the fuel crisis. And the car's 146mph and 0-60mph-in-6.3-seconds ability made it rather thirsty; around 12mpg!

But the Series 3 (especially in coupé form) had an ace up its sleeve: over in the UK it was a cheap way to get the keys to

something boasting 12 cylinders. Seriously cheap when you consider its £3 370 price tag against 12-cylinder alternatives such as a Ferrari 365 GT 2+2. One of those would've set you back (a then colossal) £8 750.

A comparison to something with full-blooded Maranello pedigree might be seen as a bit of a stretch – certainly given the contrast in values these days – but getting behind the wheel of this big feline is a chance to appreciate just how exotic it feels. The long bonnet with its erotic power bulge gives the car enormous presence, both outside and when you take in the view once behind the wheel. It's a comfortable place with a dropped floor that makes you feel more ensconced than the airy, all-glass cabin might suggest. And the blend of the central bank of old-school Lucas gauges and acres of leather adds to thoroughbred feel of something decidedly upmarket.

The addition of power steering as standard softens the car's heft and lends an air of refinement as you engage with the controls in an arms-out, legs-out driving position.

And refinement is really the name of the game; fire up the big V12 and the initial shrill whine of starter ring gear and churning, unlubricated valve train quickly dissipates as the engine settles into a deliciously creamy idle. The smoothness is complemented in this example by its three-speed gearbox (a popular option) which soaks up the colossal torque and translates into simply turbine-like urge as you hit the loud pedal.

All in all, a few miles at the controls translates to a rarefied experience, particularly in closed-cockpit form with the roof and glass insulating you from surrounding road noise and the elements while in traffic. Finding a stretch of open road is a chance to explore the performance and see the scenery blur as this 1.5-tonne coupé accelerates like its namesake after its prey. Prey that would've been just an overnight blast away on the French Riviera, if a GT man's pockets were deep enough for the resultant fuel bill in the early 1970s. **C**

Thanks to: Clinton Laurens of Laude where the featured car is for sale (www.laude.co.za).

The long bonnet with its erotic power bulge gives the car enormous presence, both outside and when you take in the view once behind the wheel

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SOMETHING SPECIAL

Buick's entry-level model helped turn the company's fortunes around in the mid-1930s.

Words and pictures: Mike & Wendy Monk

Ever since the first horseless carriage appeared some 133 years ago, there have been numerous notable turnarounds in the fortunes of motor vehicle manufacturers. As the industry grew, so did the number of companies and individuals who wanted to be part of the burgeoning world of automobiles. But not all would be successful, particularly in the early part of the last century. Some rose to stardom as others fell by the wayside, not all as a result of factors within their control. Buick was one of America's earliest manufacturers and a ground-breaking contributor to the automobile world. And yes, its history

contains ups and downs for reasons both self-inflicted and outside its control, one of the most famous taking place in 1936.

Founded by David Dunbar Buick, the company's origins date back to 1899, first under the name of the Buick Auto-Vim and Power Company and then as the Buick Motor Company from May 1903. In 1904, Buick was the first company to offer an overhead-valve engine, which was originally designed by chief engineer Walter Marr but patented in the name of Buick by his replacement Eugene Richard. The same year Buick established itself in Flint, Michigan but the company ran short on capital, so in came millionaire William C. Durant as a



controlling investor and general manager. Durant spent the next four years turning Buick into the biggest-selling automobile brand in the US. After garnering 1 100 orders at the 1905 New York Automobile Show, Durant promoted the brand and by 1908, Buick was the best-selling automobile in America, outstripping earlier leaders Ford, Cadillac and Oldsmobile.

Fuelled by this success, Durant then founded General Motors Holding Company in September 1908 and the following year bought Cadillac, Oldsmobile and Oakland (later called Pontiac), as well as many parts, paint, varnish, axle and wheel manufacturing companies and suchlike, and merged them

with GM. The General had taken charge...

Back to Buick and, more specifically, the model featured here. In 1929, as part of GM's corporate rationalisation programme – it was a bit more than just 'badge engineering' – Buick launched the Marquette brand to bridge the price gap between Buick and Oldsmobile, but this turned out to be a one-year flop. And the US stock market crashed. Coupled with the unpopular bulbous-looking Buick models, the company badly needed a boost and it was the 1930 six-cylinder Series 40 that did just that. More stylish and compact,

the Series 40, which was the base model in the model line-up, provided the platform upon which Buick's existence took an upswing.

Although the model's role was replaced by the Series 50 for the next couple of years, when the Series 40 re-emerged in May 1934, it caused something of a sensation. In the Depression year of 1933, Buick production accounted for only 2.9% of the

Durant spent the next four years turning Buick into the biggest-selling automobile brand in the US



industry but following the appointment of Harlow 'Red' Curtice' as general manager that year, sales rose every year from 1934 to the outbreak of WWII, except for the 1938 recession, by which time Buick's share was up to 8.8%. During this period, the Special was the brand's leader.

Built on a slightly longer wheelbase than that of the Series 50, it now boasted Buick's eight-cylinder 'Fireball 8' engine, weighed less and, crucially, was less expensive. By now the model featured a synchromesh gearbox with helical gears, and automatic starting. There was also an octane selector that altered the spark timing so that standard or premium fuel could be used. For 1935 there was little significant change save for the adoption of dual windscreen wipers.

There was also an octane selector that altered the spark timing so that standard or premium fuel could be used

Then the 1936 Series 40 was introduced, which, for the first time in Buick's history, took on the additional moniker of 'Special' rather than relying on a series number. Its arrival earned the universal accolade of being the model that began a Buick renaissance. Its stylish Harley Earl-influenced Art Deco looks incorporated 'Turret Top' bodywork (so-called because of the insert-less steel roof), rakish V-shaped windscreen, bullet-shaped headlights and twin taillights, while mechanically the independent front suspension was improved, and hydraulic brakes were fitted. The cast-iron block, straight-eight, overhead-valve 233ci (3818cc) engine boasted aluminium pistons, and a better water-cooling system was adopted. Max power was 93hp (69kW) at 3200rpm.

Gearbox was a three-speed manual with a floor shift.

Initially, the Specials rode on a 118-inch (2 997mm) wheelbase, but for the next model year this was increased to 122 inches (3 098mm). The entire Buick line was restyled

for 1937 by Frank Hershey, a rare move after only one year, but Curtice was breaking all the rules. The headlight shape was more graceful, and the centre section of the die-cast vertically divided grille was painted to match the body colour. Overall height was lowered but the floor was dropped to compensate and actually increase interior headroom. The engine, by now tagged 'Dyna Flash', was increased in capacity to 248ci (4064cc) which helped raise peak power to an even 100hp (74.6kW), still at 3200rpm. Other changes included modified inlet valves along with quieter-operating valve gear, an oil pump was fitted, and the cooling system was again improved.

For the 1938 model year the rear suspension benefitted with the ground-breaking adoption of coil springs and a redesigned channel section (rather than I-beam) chassis X-member was introduced. The shape of the fender-mounted side lights now mirrored that of the headlights. Moving the battery to under the bonnet followed a new trend amongst the manufacturers. A



higher compression ratio helped increase peak power to 107hp (79.8kW) at 3400rpm.

Franschhoek Motor Museum's Buick Series 40 Special is a 1938 Convertible Coupé (style number 46C), one of eight body styles on offer – and one of the rarest, as only 2 473 were produced out of 130 838 Specials built during the model year. It certainly is an attractive, flowing design with some interestingly detailed brightwork, and this car's dark blue paintwork topped by a beige fabric hood adds a touch more elegance. It also has the optional spare wheel carrier in each front fender.

It is spacious inside with only a mild propshaft tunnel running through the cabin. There is enough fore-aft seat adjustment to cater for most body sizes. The polished wood-effect dashboard is stylish with a smattering of '30s bling, and the sprung three-spoke steering wheel is not overly large. Despite the relatively small glasshouse, the view forwards and to the sides with the hood erect is fine. The backrest of the full-width front seat is split

and each half tilts forward to give access to a large storage space under a fixed shelf, the storage space doubling up as the footwell for the dickey-seat. Getting into the dickey-seat is not so easy; the backrest folds out from the rear bodywork and, typically, there is a single foot plate on the passenger side fender, but it is quite a high knee-bend to step onto. Once aboard it is a tight but comfy fit for two, with a panoramic view.

To the uninitiated, starting the car is fascinating inasmuch as you turn the key and a small lever pops out from the switch housing. Turn the lever and the ignition is on. Simply press the accelerator and the straight-eight gently rumbles into life: it makes starting up a bit of an occasion.

As its 1 625kg kerb weight suggests, the Buick feels as solid as it looks. The long, straight gear lever selects the gears easily enough while the steering is naturally on the heavy side. But with coil springs all round, ride quality is excellent and the anticipated

lean through corners is controlled and far from severe. Performance is best described as leisurely, but then when cruising the highways with the hood down – the folding mechanism is complex – speed is not the key, especially if there are passengers sitting high up in the dickey.

The name 'Special' represented Buick's entry-level model for many years, but by 1970 was no longer offered as a standalone model, rather being used for the entry-level derivatives of the 1975-70 and 1991-96 Century models. However, the 1930s Series 40 Special did a lot to secure Buick's existence in the between-war years and helped the company survive, so that today it stands proud as one of the world's oldest motor car brands. 📌

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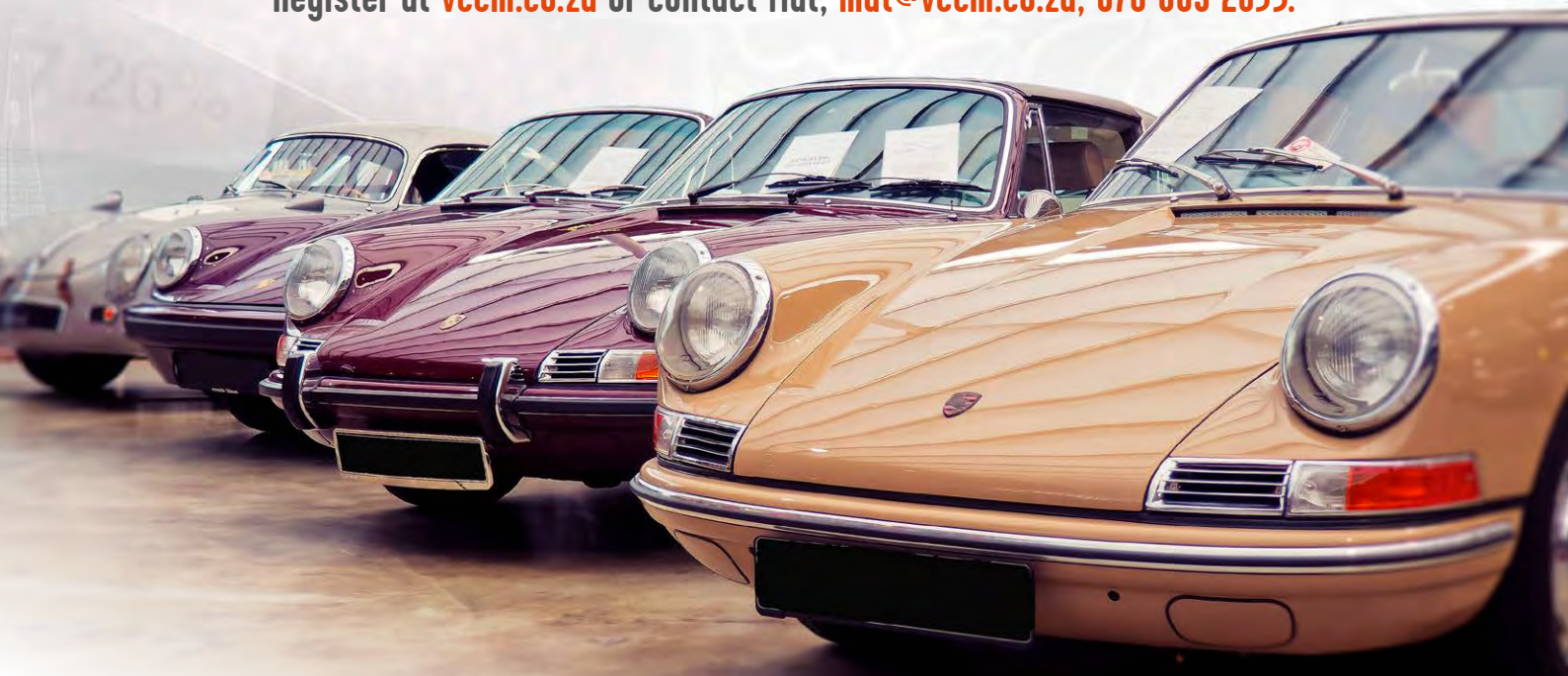


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N A W A Y

Giorgetto Giugiaro, the man behind Italdesign – one of the most successful automotive design firms of all time – can list the likes of the Alfa Romeo 105/115 Series Coupés, De Tomaso Mangusta, Iso Grifo, BMW M1, Lotus Esprit S1 and Maserati Bora on his CV. And let's not forget the DMC DeLorean, Alfasud, Volkswagen Scirocco and Golf Mk1 for that matter. It's no wonder he was named Car Designer of the Century in 1999. Choosing his greatest design achievement is no easy task, but after a first-hand encounter, **Stuart Grant** reckons he has made his choice: the Maserati Ghibli built between 1967 and '73.

Photography by Mike Schmucker





At launch, the Ghibli was the fastest and most expensive series-production sports car in the world, epitomising sophisticated late 1960s style.

It was for the well-heeled, priced in the same league as the Lamborghini Miura and later the Ferrari 365 GTB/4 (Daytona), and offered everything a discerning driver could want from a GT with purposeful elegant lines, a luxurious cabin and plenty of grunt.

A young Giugiaro, who only branched out on his own in 1968 when he set up Studi Italiani Realizzazione Prototipi (Italian studies in prototypes), was working for Carrozzeria Ghia in Turin when he penned the two-seater Ghibli coupé. It took him just three months to complete and when it was first shown at the 1966 Turin Motor Show, the sleek, low,

shark-like steel-bodied prototype stole the show. Two rear seats – just a cushion with no backrest – were added to the production run, which allowed the Ghibli to be marketed as a 2+2 fastback coupé, and deliveries started in March 1967 – perfectly timed to celebrate 41 years of Maserati being an independent company. Ghibli grabbed the attention of Henry Ford II, who purchased the first production unit to reach America for \$19 000 (a new Thunderbird was a quarter of the price) as well as Sammy Davis Junior, Peter Sellers, Jean-Paul Belmondo and Frank Sinatra.

As was Maserati's way in period, the Ghibli was named after a wind. In this case a hot, dry, south to south-easterly dust-bearing desert wind which occurs in Libya. Coincidentally, Ghibli is a local name for the Scirocco and, as mentioned, Giugiaro later designed a sporting Volkswagen hatch bearing this badge.

As was Maserati's way in period, the Ghibli was named after a wind. In this case a hot, dry, south to south-easterly dust-bearing desert wind which occurs in Libya



The Ghibli body was fitted to a tubular frame and front suspension came in the form of double wishbones and coil springs, while the rear was a live axle on semi-elliptic springs and single longitudinal torque arm. Where it differed greatly from its supercar countrymen was in the power-generation game, with Maserati opting for a V8 rather than a twelve. This, unlike the Miura, stayed with GT tradition in its placement, being slotted upfront underneath the expansive bonnet. Initially, the four-Weber-carb-fed 4.7-litre dry-sumped lump produced 330bhp but to counter any competition from the front-engined Ferrari Daytona (launched in 1968), the capacity was enlarged to 4.9 litres for a special SS version in 1970. The extra capacity saw a slight increase in ponies but the real benefit, especially for the marketing guys, was that the Ghibli became a 170mph tar-guzzling machine. But the black stuff wasn't the only thing the SS consumed...

fuel consumption was heavy, even by the supercar class of the day, and to counter this Maserati fitted the car with a pair of 50-litre tanks.

Like the Daytona, the Ghibli was offered in drop-top (known as Spyder) format from 1969, further preventing the pair from being direct Miura competitors – Lamborghini never offered a production soft-top. So here comes the obligatory comparison. Remember, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Daytona is brutal, highlighted by dominant wheel arches and a muscular body, and although it features a massive bonnet and short rear, it still makes for a balanced visual. The Maserati, although still powerful, is fall-on-your-knees beautiful; the seamlessly flowing lines running front to rear only interrupted when you flip the switch on the pop-

The extra capacity saw a slight increase in ponies but the real benefit, especially for the marketing guys, was that the Ghibli became a 170mph tar-guzzling machine



up headlights. Inside the cabin the Ghibli tends towards the more conventional feel, with practicality the focal point, while the Ferrari cockpit just makes you want to drive enthusiastically. Both, however, offer ample comfort on any journey.

In the performance race, where the numbers tell the truth, it's a Ferrari victory with the V12 powering the imposing vehicle to a 1-second win in the zero-to-60mph sprint and on to a top speed of 174mph to steal the Ghibli's title as fastest series production car – a title it held until the Porsche 911 Turbo arrived on the scene 10 or so years later.

It's possibly the weight of this powerful engine that sees to the Daytona losing a little in the way of ride comfort. Despite its all-independent suspension system, the ride is firm and uneven surfaces cause the Daytona to meander nervously all over the road. The Ghibli, on the other hand, is super smooth

and tracks straight, and feedback to the pilot is instantaneous. Sure, there is a lot more body roll than the Ferrari, but on a narrow mountain pass the Maser is the safest bet without being boring.

As it was in the period it's a

difficult decision, as a glance at the sales figures at the end of their lifespans in '73 confirms: 1 320 Ghiblis to 1 391 Daytonas – of both coupé and cabriolet format.

Maserati replaced the Ghibli with the Khasmin in '74, continuing with the front-engined V8 theme alongside its mid-mounted Bora, but with Bertone's designer Marcello Gandini adding a more contemporary feel to the aesthetic with hard folded paper-like edges.

The Ghibli name was shelved until 1992 when the Maserati Ghibli II, known as the Tipo 336, was launched. It was an evolution of the boxy, poor-quality Biturbo designed in collaboration by Marcello Gandini and Maserati's in-house studio. Production lasted five years before the name was once again sidelined, only reappearing in 2014 when Maserati applied it to a four-door sedan aimed at the likes of BMW, Audi and Jaguar saloons.

Performance and luxury remain key aspects in the modern Ghibli, but neither this model nor version II come close to the astoundingly beautiful lines put down by Giugiaro in the 1960s. Seeing the master of wind's creation in the flesh will have any fan of art blown off their feet. **G**

Sure, there is a lot more body roll than the Ferrari, but on a narrow mountain pass the Maser is the safest bet without being boring



1963 VW Karmann Ghia Coupe
Matching numbers, original car with owners manual.
R265,000



1947 MG TC
British Racing Green with Tan leather interior, older restored car in immaculate condition.
R450,000



1934 Rolls Royce Phantom II
Midnight blue with Magnolia leather interior, hand made aluminum body by David Royle in the UK.
POA



1969 Jensen Interceptor
White with black interior, 383ci V8 with auto trans, mini lite rims, long term ownership.
POA



1999 Mercedes Benz SL500
Silver with Saffron interior, 98,000km, FSH and Books, immaculate overall condition.
R395,000



1960 Daimler Dart SP250
Midnight blue with leather interior, new soft top, new chrome wire wheels, engine recently rebuild.
POA



1957 Ford Thunderbird Roadster
Excellent original car with matching numbers V8 and Auto box, new soft top and 'Port Hole Window' hard top. The best of all the T Birds.
POA



1972 Jaguar E Type Series 3 V12 Roadster
Midnight Blue with Ox Blood leather interior, Stainless steel wire wheels, books, tools and hard top, concours restored car.
R2,950,000



1999 BMW M Coupe
Black with Black leather, 155,000km with history.
R350,000



1968 Jaguar E Type S2 FHC, just completed ground up restoration.
R1,650,000



1960 Mercedes Benz 190SL
Maroon with Tan leather interior, ground up restoration with all new part from Germany.
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1969 VW Beetle Karmann
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FINS FOR FINESSE

'Built up to a standard, not down to a price' is an often-quoted maxim that describes Mercedes-Benz's ethos post-war. And it's generally seen as the reason for the brand's stellar success across a wide range of products since the onset of peace in 1945. Products which were engineered to be as safe as they were long-lasting. **Graeme Hurst** reckons that unrivalled perception came thanks to one model, the W111 range of Fintails which was launched 60 years ago.

The driveway of our family home in Cape Town has seen a variety of cars grace its tarmac over the last six decades, as the family photo albums attest.

Standouts include a bright red Borgward Isabella (bought new from Wolman Motors in 1958) and a 1300 GT Junior Alfa, which is technically the first car I drove after holding the steering wheel when I was around a year old. There was also a visiting Lotus Seven that ended up wrapped around a pole on Pinelands bridge after a dice and – many years before – Dreamboat, a friend's

Plymouth Savoy that fulfilled bridal car duties when my parents were married back in '67.

But an equally memorable four-wheeled visitor which my grandmother once spoke of arrived a year after the wedding bells rang.

An out-of-the-box Fintail Mercedes-Benz, owned by her brother-in-law (a bigwig with Santam at the time), glided in for the first time one weekend afternoon. Complete with his family attired in their Sunday best, the visit was to show that he had 'arrived' – not literally but metaphorically speaking – thanks to the three-pointed star's reputation as a maker of premium luxury cars.

Back then a Fintail or 'Heckflosse' in German (to use the colloquial term for the Mercedes W111 series of sedans boasting distinctive fins at the rear) was a pricey acquisition that made a statement as soon as you turned out of your drive. The perception was partly due its unique blend of European and trans-Atlantic styling but also thanks to the price one needed to pay to enjoy Mercedes-Benz's engineering.

For 1959, that styling combination represented a step-change in looks and size from the decidedly conservative lines of Merc's outgoing Ponton saloon. In

For 1959, that styling combination represented a step-change in looks and size from the decidedly conservative lines of Merc's outgoing Ponton saloon



comparison to the W111's older sibling's rather dumpy lines, the Fintail's profile – embellished with generous chromework – was almost a taste of the jet-age. But the model wasn't just about conveying its owner's position in society; it was also a ground-breaking design when it came to ensuring the well-being of its occupants and achieving economies of scale on the assembly line.

Launched at the Frankfurt show in late '59, the Fintail was the first model delivered out of Mercedes-Benz's strategy to streamline its engineering and production operations which had (until then) consisted of a monocoque unit for the Ponton, a chassis-based format for the hefty Adenauer saloon and a spaceframe design for the super-desirable 300SL roadster. From then on, all the company's products would be based on the same floor pan and swing-axle rear end to some degree.

But, more importantly, the Fintail was a

turning point for the Stuttgart carmaker in terms of promoting passenger safety through advanced engineering. It was a desire born in part out of the company's association with the horrific Le Mans tragedy in 1955 and the increasing need to lessen the resultant injuries sustained in accidents that had steadily increased as vehicle performance evolved during the 1950s. The focus on protecting passengers resulted in the advent of the passenger 'safety cell' along with other safety-related design solutions, both inside and outside the car.

In many ways, the Fintail's development pre-empted that famous 1980s ad strap-line 'Engineered like no other car in the world'. It certainly looked that way, thanks to the crisp 'fin' treatment to its rear which echoed the looks of products from Detroit's

But, more importantly, the Fintail was a turning point for the Stuttgart carmaker in terms of promoting passenger safety through advanced engineering



big three, although Stuttgart management – not wanting to be seen as emulating other car makers – was quick to explain the fins away as ‘parking aids’. Believe them or not, the styling flourish quickly became a signature look for the brand and clothed a raft of clever thinking.

Top of the list was the adoption (for the first time) of front and rear ‘crumple zones’ – basically portions of the monocoque structure that were designed to give way in the event of a serious collision and absorb the kinetic energy that would otherwise be passed on to the vehicle’s occupants.

The safety focus extended to a collapsible steering shaft which used a section of expanded metal to allow it to ‘concertina’ and so absorb an impact instead of translating the movement by shoving the steering wheel into the driver’s chest.

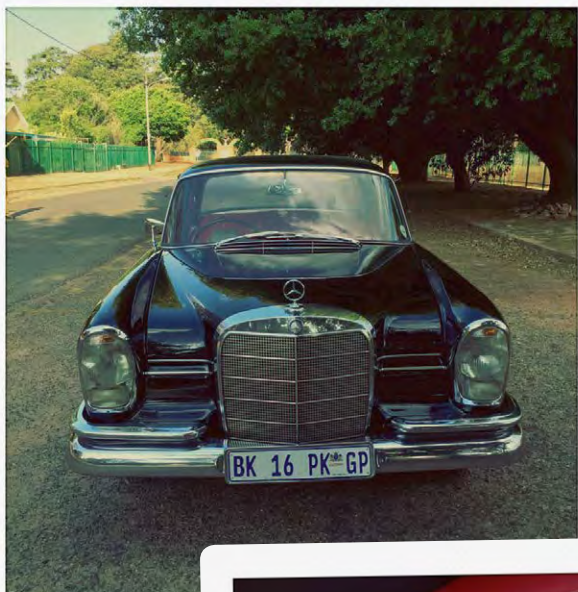
The same steering wheel featured a wide, softly padded centre boss in case the driver’s

face made contact, while the dashboard featured a leather-covered soft ‘roll’ from side to side to protect your legs in a similar fashion. Aiding it all were burst-proof door locks and, of course, front seatbelts – a novelty back then when marketing types in the automotive industry feared their fitment as standard would make cars look unsafe.

To start, the Fintail range comprised three models, all boasting the 2.2-litre, overhead-cam ‘six’ that powered the premium variants of the old Ponton. First up was the regular 220, boasting single round headlights and twin, single-choke carburettors which made it good for 96mph. Next up was the 220S with true 100mph ability (thanks to dual twin-choke Solex carbs) and additional brightwork. The latter, and the fact the model had leather seats in place of vinyl, meant it gained an ‘S’ for ‘Super’. One of those would’ve set you back R3 531 in March 1965 when CAR magazine’s editorial team got their hands on one.

That was R300 more than the regular 220 but around R500 less than the range-topper (here in SA at least), the 220SE,

Aiding it all were burst-proof door locks and, of course, front seatbelts – a novelty back then when marketing types in the automotive industry feared their fitment as standard would make cars look unsafe



with the 'E' standing for 'Einspritzung' (or injection). All three models boasted servo-assisted front disc brakes and optional automatic transmission while the range was made more accessible in 1963 with the intro of the 190 model. Featuring two fewer pots and just 1.9-litres of cylinder capacity, the 190 (which later became the 200) was also available as a diesel, for the man who wasn't in a hurry. All the four-cylinder versions were technically referred to as W110s in factory parlance and were identifiable on the road by a shorter bonnet and reduced external trim. The range expansion was the start of attempts by Mercedes to broaden appeal to the first-time customer, with a 200 Fintail costing R2 943 here in SA in August 1966.

At the other end of the spectrum, overseas buyers with deep pockets could opt for the 300SE with air-suspension on the rear axle. Badged in-house as the W112, it was the equivalent of today's top-line S-Class and featured the company's M189 six-cylinder motor, power steering and substantially more chrome. It was developed to bridge

the gap left by the Adenauer saloon until the new 6.3-litre, V8-engined 600 limousine was ready and, for that reason, was available in long-wheelbase 300SEL form – with the 'L' standing for 'Lang' in the SEL moniker... one which Mercedes still uses today for stretched versions of the S-Class.

The 300SE and SEL shared showroom floors with another premium Fintail take: a two-door variant, sporting much-reduced fins and a pillar-less design. Also known as the W111/112 series, it came in coupé and convertible form. To start with, the 'two-doors' were available with the same 2.2-litre engine or 3-litre (also with the air-suspension) but soon evolved into the 2.5-litre and 2.8-litre variants before Mercedes added a 3.5-litre V8 option, badged as the 280se 3.5. The latter was hugely expensive and was regarded as the ultimate statement in four-wheeled opulence, whether you were brushing shoulders with movie stars in Hollywood or pretending to

The range expansion was the start of attempts by Mercedes to broaden appeal to the first-time customer, with a 200 Fintail costing R2 943 here in SA in August 1966



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turn in a six-cylinder performance, so the 230 is not only one of the safest cars around – it's one of the most comfortable too.

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MERCEDES-BENZ



General representatives for South Africa: United Car and Diesel Distributors (Pty) Ltd., P.O. Box 1717, Pretoria.

CAR August 1966



Space, comfort, economy – or to put it another way, the Mercedes-Benz 200 D

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cated successor to the highly successful 190 D that we made for 8 years. You can see a lot of 200 D, 190 D, and other Mercedes-Benz diesel cars around. In fact, if you want proof of the long-life and economy of Mercedes-Benz – you'll find more than 450,000 lively pieces of evidence. Because in 1966, over 90% of all Mercedes-Benz diesel cars made and registered since 1936 are still on the road.

MERCEDES-BENZ



General representatives for South Africa: United Car and Diesel Distributors (Pty) Ltd., P.O. Box 1717, Pretoria.

CAR February 1967

be one as you soaked up the sun along the French Riviera...

And there's an air of that opulence in the more humble Fintail saloon. Slide in behind the wheel and the thick leather (on the S and SE models) adorning the generously proportioned and softly sprung seats imbues a sense of luxury, as does the white-rimmed steering wheel and the padded dashboard. The perception is further fuelled by the multitude of chrome finishes of the controls – with their well-engineered action when you engage with them – while your eyes quickly clock the unusual vertical 'strip' speedometer, which

relies on a colour-calibrated ribbon to convey your speed.

Along with the rear styling fins, that instrument must've looked seriously avant-garde back in 1959, but both were a step too far for conservative Stuttgart; the lines and interior of the W108 series that

followed just six years on were a lot more restrained and traditional. Ditto those on the W114/115 saloon series that followed in '68.

Representing the start of the premium S-Class and more mid-tier E-Class parallel product approach, these two later variants would help sow the seeds of Mercedes-Benz's success in the luxury saloon segment for the next fifty years. And their launches, and the many W-prefixed saloon models that followed, would generate plenty of marketing material about the safety features incorporated into their design.

Today the company is still perceived as being at the forefront of both automotive safety and the luxury car segment, with a string of clever safety feature-related designs under its corporate belt. Designs that first broke new ground when the Fintail 'arrived' 60 years ago. **[E]**

Thanks to marque specialist Steffan Liebenberg. Look out for a future feature on this year's Mercedes-Benz Club of South Africa's 60th Fintail anniversary celebrations.

Along with the rear styling fins, that instrument must've looked seriously avant-garde back in 1959, but both were a step too far for conservative Stuttgart

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ONE-YEAR WONDER

Introduced to bridge a gap between Buick and Oldsmobile, the Marquette, as **Mike Monk** discusses, failed to make the mark.

Pictures: Wendy & Mike Monk

In the late 1920s, a number of American automobile manufacturers – especially GM – were on a mission to produce ‘companion cars’ to some of their established brands. The trend began in 1925 when Nash introduced the Ajax-Nash, followed in 1926 by Oakland with its Pontiac. Then, in 1927, Overland began production of the Whippet, Reo announced the Wolverine, Cadillac brought out the LaSalle and Studebaker launched the Erskine. In March 1929, Oldsmobile offered the Viking and three months later, on June 1, Buick presented to its dealers the Marquette that was aimed at bridging the price gap between Buick and Oldsmobile. It was not the first automobile to carry the name, but was without doubt the most successful, albeit for a very short period.

Buoyed by the success being achieved

by Pontiac, which was destined to become the only GM companion to outsell its parent, and LaSalle, Buick had high hopes for the Marquette. A six-model range of cars was offered, namely a Model 30 two-door Sedan, a Model 34 Sport Roadster, a Model 35 Phaeton, a Model 36 Business Coupé, a Model 36S Special Coupe and a Model 37 Sedan. Billed as a 1930 model year, with prices ranging from \$990 to \$1 060, the Marquette appeared nearly two months ahead of Buick’s 1930 model year offerings.

The marketing effort was strong: ‘You need only drive the new Marquette to realise that Buick has created an entirely new standard of performance by which all moderate priced cars must be judged’. Press reaction was positive. While its looks were Oldsmobile-like, one reporter billed it as “a small edition of the Cadillac”. The



herringbone-pattern radiator grille was immediately highlighted as the car's most distinctive feature. On the day of the launch, *The Literary Digest* wrote, "In appearance, the Marquette expresses the tempo of the age without conforming to accepted pattern. In every phase of performance, it demonstrates abilities that set it apart entirely from all cars of comparable price. In basic value, it embodies the added margin that Buick's experienced craftsmanship and great production facilities make possible."

Built on GM's B-platform, the Marquette was smaller than Buick's entry-level Series 40 and rode on a 114-inch (2 896mm) wheelbase, which was 4 inches (101mm) shorter than the Series 40. Also different was the engine, which was a slightly modified Oldsmobile F-28 six-cylinder, the only Buick-built car to have a side-valve engine. With

a single Marvel VM-3 carburettor and a compression ratio of just 5.2:1, the 212.8ci (3487cc) motor developed 67.5hp (50kW) at 3000rpm and 198Nm of torque at a low 1200. Mated with a sliding-gear three-speed gearbox with a floor gearshift, the Marquette was quite a performer in its day, with 5 to 25mph (8 to 40km/h) taking 8.8 seconds and having a top speed of 70mph (112.6km/h). The marketing claim was that the car offered great performance at a price that was within the reach of millions. In America, a Marquette was driven from Death Valley to the top of Pike's Peak with no problem – a notable feat at the time.

Suspension comprises a Reversed-Elliott I-beam front axle with over-slung semi-elliptic springs, and a semi-floating axle with under-slung semi-elliptics at the rear.

Lovejoy lever-arm shock absorbers

The marketing claim was that the car offered great performance at a price that was within the reach of millions



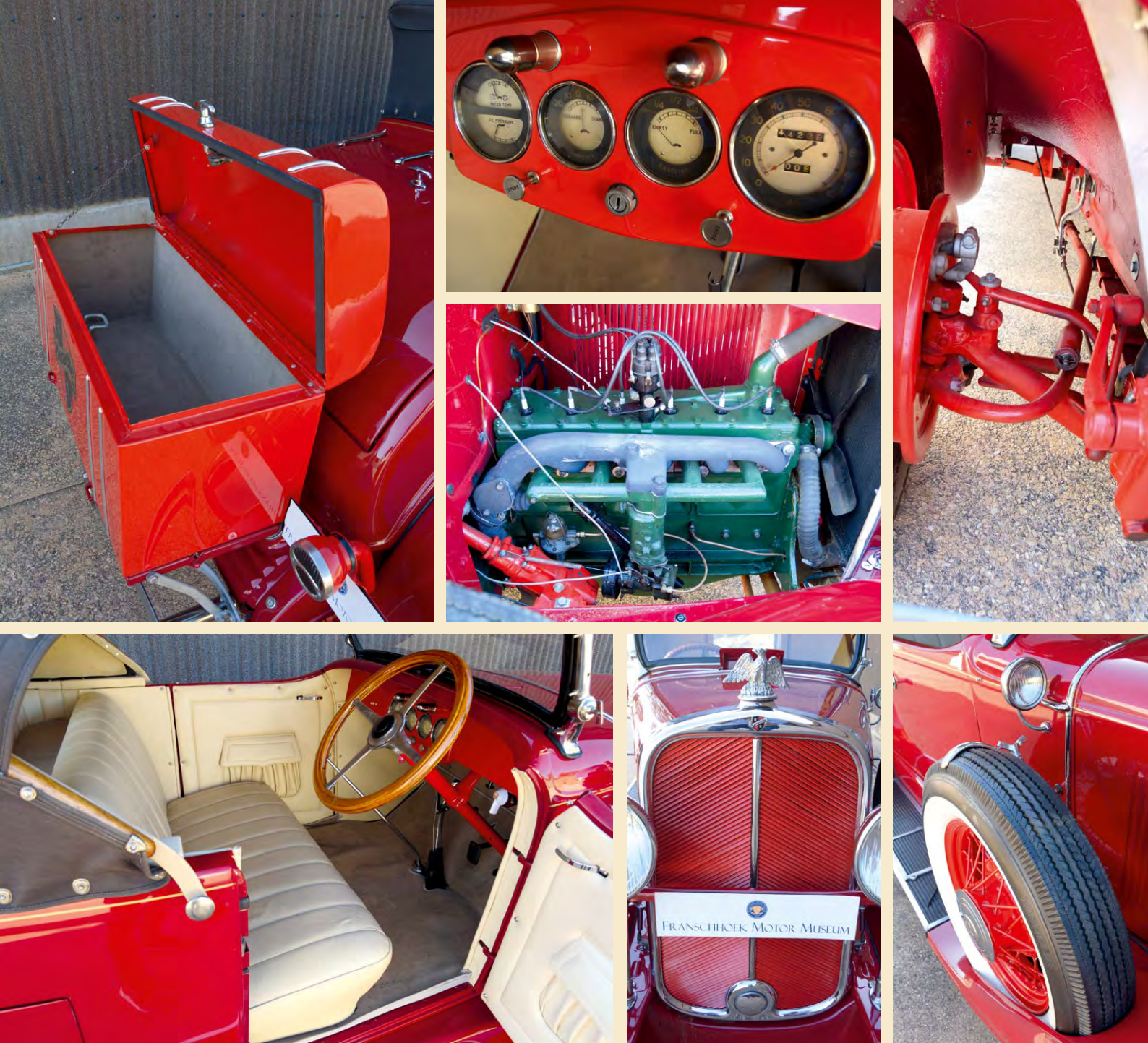
The seat and driving position are comfortable enough and the floor and footwell are flat

are fitted all round. Steering is a Jacox worm-and-nut system that provides an 11.76-metre turning circle on 18x4-inch wire-spoke wheels shod with 28x5.25 tyres. Brakes are mechanical duo-servo drums at each wheel.

The gleaming red Marquette Sport Roadster that is part of the Franschhoek Motor Museum's collection is a superb example of the marque. Even though its looks are typical of the period, the painted grille is certainly eye-catching. With spare wheels carried in each front fender and a massive boot box mounted at the rear, its profile is far from streamlined – and even

less so when the dickey-seat backrest is erect.

Stepping off the running board into the Marquette, its smaller size is soon apparent: whereas interior space is reasonable for average-sized cockpit passengers, the dickey-seat is a tight fit for two. When erect, the folding hood is low and care is needed to duck under the outer rails when getting in or out. But the seat and driving position are comfortable enough and the floor and footwell are flat. It's only when having to wrap the left leg around the gear lever and handbrake to depress the floor-mounted starter pedal that the layout gets awkward



in this right-hand-drive car. Oh, and the accelerator is the middle pedal.

The engine fires up with a healthy rumble and even sounds powerful. In fact, the whole car has an air of strength about it. It pulls away with ease and although the first two ratios are noisy, once in top the Marquette serenely bowls along. As the figures suggest, engine torque is strong from low down the rev range and throttle response is excellent. The 17-inch four-spoke wood-rimmed steering wheel sits high and at an angle to the column, and takes considerable muscle power to twirl at any speed. Given the basic nature of the suspension, ride quality is also

A MARQUE DIFFERENCE

The name Marquette was applied to a number of vehicles prior to the Buick era. It was first used for an electric car manufactured by the Berwick Auto Car Company in 1904. Soon afterwards, William 'Billy' Durant began buying up companies for his rapidly expanding General Motors corporation. In 1909, he bought the Rainier Motor Car Company and established the Marquette Motor Company in Saginaw, Michigan to continue building the upmarket Rainier, which lasted until 1911. At the same time Marquette, which was controlled by Buick staff, produced parts for GM's Welch and Welch-Detroit models. In February 1912, Marquette was renamed the Peninsula Motor Company and it manufactured two four-cylinder Marquette model lines, but production ceased by the end of the year with the last of the cars thought to have been badged as a Peninsula.



There is something about vintage motoring that defines the era yet reflects the particular model's origins

good and the brakes are well up to their job once given a firm push on the pedal.

When it comes to a driving experience some cars feel immediately 'right', and the Marquette is a typical example. There is something about vintage motoring that defines the era yet reflects the particular model's origins. This Sport Roadster oozes pre-Depression American appeal and simply begs to be shown an open road to demonstrate its charm and ability. And I want to be the driver.

The Buick-built Marquette was a medium-priced automobile that successfully met both congested city and open country motoring. After a cautious beginning, 35 007 examples were produced in the USA within the model year, with a further 6 535 made by GM Canada, which on the face of it was an excellent start. (By comparison, Oldsmobile's Viking sold only 7 224 examples between 1929 and 1931.) So the future looked promising, but it was not to be.

Two issues worked against Marquette.

First was the Great Depression that began with the US stock market crash on 24 October 1929 – 'Black Tuesday' – which wiped out millions of investors. Consumer spending and industrial output dropped immediately, and by 1933 some 15 million Americans were unemployed. Naturally, automobile manufacturers were badly affected – including Oldsmobile, which had lost sales to Marquette, and the company's management did not feel that enough Marquettes were being sold to warrant the extra burden on the bottom line given the depressed state of the economy. The resolution was fast and clinical; just four months before Buick shut down Marquette without any warning, 4 000 Marquette signs had been shipped to dealers in the hope of better days ahead.

A sad case of what might have been, but surviving Marquettes have a strong following around the world and this example is one of the finest around – a classic vintage American automobile with a short-lived yet fascinating background. 📌



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Measuring in at 5 579mm long and 2 032mm wide and fitted with a hulking great 6276cc V8 under the hood, this 1966 Dodge Monaco is one serious bit of American kit. By why then is the steering wheel located on the right? The answer, as **Stuart Grant** finds out, is that it is South African, of course.

Images by Mike Schmucker

A photograph of a railway yard. In the foreground, several parallel steel tracks run diagonally across the frame, set on a bed of dark gravel. In the middle ground, a long, light-colored concrete or metal wall runs horizontally, topped with a single strand of barbed wire. Behind the wall, there are dark, dense trees and a building with a corrugated metal roof. The scene is lit with bright, direct sunlight, creating strong shadows. The text "OFF THE LOCAL LINE" is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font, slanted to follow the angle of the tracks.

OFF THE LOCAL LINE



There is no complete Dodge story without mention of Chrysler. Horace and John Dodge founded the Dodge Brothers Company in Detroit in 1900, and by 1920 the maker was listed as the second-largest in the USA. But that year both passed away, resulting in various ownership changes until 1928 when the Chrysler Corporation took control. Although Chrysler was only established in 1925, it hit the ground running immediately with a Maxwell Motors-built machine. Maxwell-

Brisco Motor Company was founded by Jonathan Dixon (who'd worked with Ransom Olds) and Maxwell Benjamin (who ran a stamping plant and owned 97% of Buick) in 1904. Despite reaching large sales figures, the post-war recession of 1920 saw the firm up for auction and it was swallowed up by the newly formed Chrysler Corporation.

South Africa's Dodge tale also stems back to the Maxwell brand with at least one car listed as being imported here in 1910. On the Chrysler front, one Gerry Bouwer broke several intercity speed records with Chrysler cars and even set the Cape to Cairo benchmark of taking a 1928 Chrysler 72 through the roadless bush in just 93 days. For good measure, accompanied by his wife, he brought the same car down from

London to Cape Town in just 40 days.

Imported Chrysler Corporation products trickled in over the coming years but battled to compete against the locally assembled Fords and Chevrolets on pricing. The remedy for this started when, in 1941, an assembly plant was built at Elsie's Rivier in Cape Town to manufacture military materials. Following the war, car assembly started and in 1960, Chrysler Corporation took up 50% ownership of the Cape Town plant and changed the name to Chrysler South Africa. The Valiant brand became the mainstay, but Chrysler also put together and flogged the likes of Plymouth, DeSoto and, of course, Dodge alongside them.

In order to meet local content rules and keep pricing competitive, items such as glass, paint, tyres, batteries and upholstery for all the Chrysler products were sourced

South Africa's Dodge tale also stems back to the Maxwell brand with at least one car listed as being imported here in 1910



locally. This often meant that South African cars differed in material finish from those overseas but the biggest giveaway as to the origins was the fitment of a right-hand-drive steering wheel.

Chrysler cars that rolled out the Cape in the early 1960s included the Lancer, Rebel and Valiant 170 sedans, Valiant V200 and Barracuda, DeSoto Diplomat, Dodge Lancer and Dodge 330. It was the Dodge 330 that the pictured Monaco replaced here in 1966.

Stateside, the badge had appeared in late 1964 and was intended as a Pontiac Grand Prix competitor in the personal luxury market, but ended up filling the full-size, luxury line role for Dodge. It was essentially a restyled Custom 880 two-door hard-top with different badging, taillight and grille treatment, a tarted-up interior and 383cu in (6.28-litre) lump fitted. Two years in, the

basic Monaco was available in coupé, four-door pillarless sedan, station wagon and a conventional four-door pillared saloon like our South African model.

The Monaco went on sale locally for R3 798 and enjoyed its highest sales that year, with 612 units leaving the showroom floors. With its 6.3-litre V8 thumping out 201kW at 4400rpm and a stonking 528Nm of torque at 2800rpm, it was ideally suited to eating up the wide-open expanses this country offered. The ratios were handled by a three-speed auto and wallowing ride by an independent set-up at the front and semi-elliptic leaf springs at the rear. The power-assisted recirculating ball steering proved surprisingly good, but the drum

brakes on all four proved woefully ineffective at slowing down the 1 840kg projectile – as our contributor Roger Houghton found out. “I was working for Chrysler at the time and was tasked with shuttling some of Chrysler America’s top-brass to see the deepest mine in the country. We headed out west of Johannesburg on the back roads. I was pushing on a bit and soon felt the pedal

With its 6.3-litre V8 thumping out 201kW at 4400rpm and a stonking 528Nm of torque at 2800rpm, it was ideally suited to eating up the wide-open expanses this country offered



going soft. I eased off the pace and luckily the executives were none the wiser."

Clearly, he wasn't the only one who had encountered this, and 301mm front discs were soon added to the Monaco.

In '67 the grille was redesigned, the price increased to R4 260 and sales dropped marginally to 590 units. For 1968 there was another grille facelift and at the same time the rear lights were made smaller and electric windows added. The price was hiked to R4 600, but this didn't reverse the downward swing as only 473 sold. A year

later, production moved to a newly built Chrysler plant near Pretoria and with just 93 heading to customers, the Dodge Monaco name faded from the scene.

It only left in name though as Chrysler South Africa, perhaps trying to fulfil the government's requirement for manufacturers to have fewer models, rebadged the body as a Chrysler 383. In this guise production carried on until 1974. 353 units sold in 1969 and 294 in '70. Some changes were made to the side trim in 1971 and for 1973 the rear lights were increased in size and the quarter-vent windows (a must for cooling any car without aircon) were deleted. Feeling the heat of the fuel crisis, sales dropped to 186 in 1973 and the 383 petered out, with only eight going to new owners in 1974.

Those loyal to the brand found some comfort in the Dodge SE released in

November 1972, which thanks to a 3689cc six-cylinder consumed less petrol and cost significantly less than the Chrysler 383 (in 1974 the 383 would have set you back R7 278 while the Dodge SE cost R5 996). This cost-cutting was done as the SE shared its platform with the cheaper Valiant VIP. A year later, the Dodge SE was reworked into the Chrysler SE (which sported such niceties as aircon) and the South African Dodge name was relegated to small cars like the Avenger (inherited when Chrysler took over the Rootes Group) and Colt (a Mitsubishi product).

Chrysler then pulled out of the country and it wasn't until 2007 or so, when the Dodge Caliber arrived, that the Dodge name reappeared in SA. With a front-wheel-drive layout and four-cylinder engine, it was a far cry from the luxury line set up by the aptly named Monaco. 📷

Thanks to www.vintagemotors.co.za for the pictured 1966 Dodge Monaco.

It only left in name though as Chrysler South Africa, perhaps trying to fulfil the government's requirement for manufacturers to have fewer models, rebadged the body as a Chrysler 383



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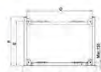
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Model	408-P	409-P	409-HP
Capacity	8,000 LB	8,000 LB	8,000 LB
Platform Size	52" x 72"	52" x 72"	52" x 72"
Platform Height	18" (18.5")	18" (18.5")	18" (18.5")
Platform Width	52" (52.5")	52" (52.5")	52" (52.5")
Platform Depth	72" (72.5")	72" (72.5")	72" (72.5")
Platform Weight	1100 LB	1100 LB	1100 LB
Platform Material	Steel	Steel	Steel
Platform Finish	Black	Black	Black
Platform Color	Black	Black	Black
Platform Type	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Use	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Location	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Orientation	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Position	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Status	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Function	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Feature	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Detail	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Note	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Remark	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Comment	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Information	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Description	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Specification	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Requirement	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Recommendation	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Instruction	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Manual	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Guide	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Help	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Support	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Contact	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Feedback	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Review	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Rating	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Price	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Value	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Cost	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Budget	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Finance	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Loan	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Lease	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Rent	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Buy	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Sell	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Trade	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Exchange	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Return	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Refund	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Warranty	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Guarantee	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Policy	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Term	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Condition	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Status	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Location	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Orientation	Standard	Standard	Standard
Platform Position	Standard	Standard	Standard
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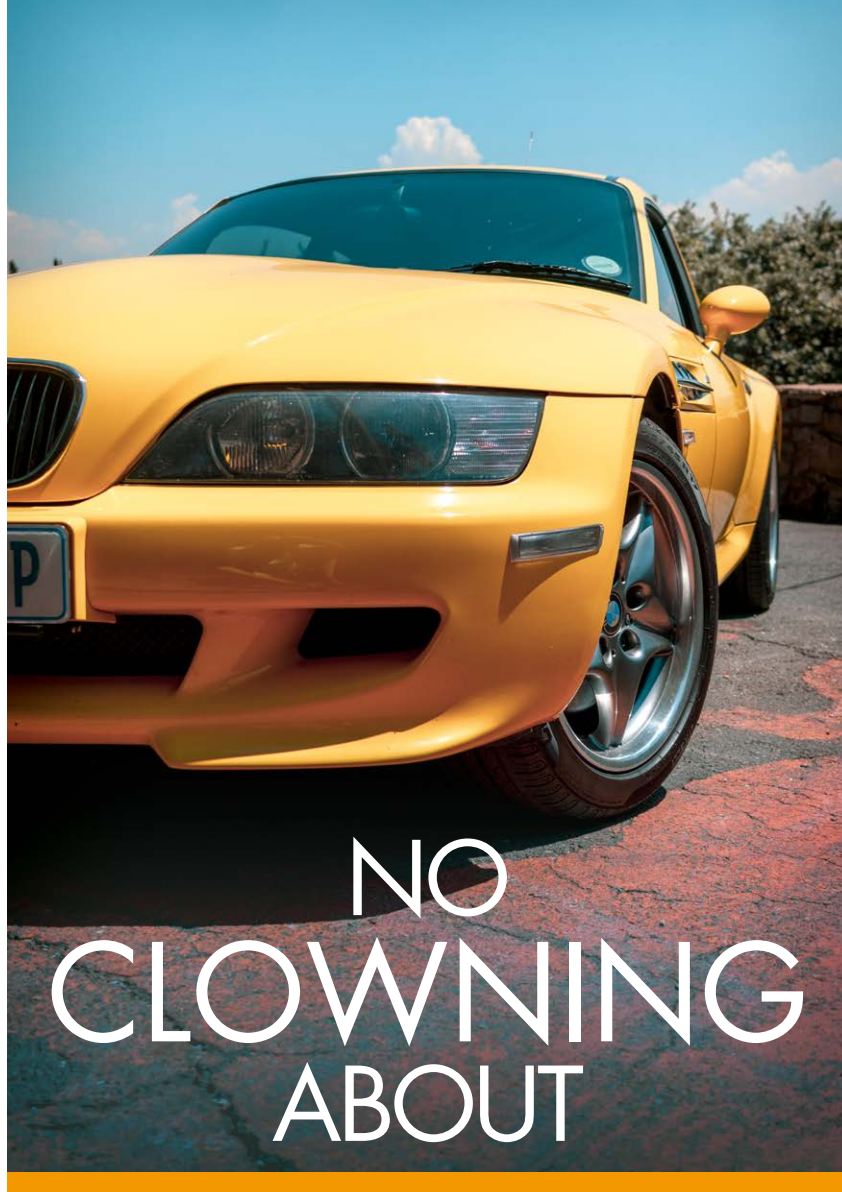
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ROGARY

LIFTING EQUIPMENT





Clown shoe, clog and hearse... not exactly the complimentary nicknames you'd expect to be associated with a leading cult car, but these are what BMW's Z3 M Coupé is often referred to by those in the know. **Stuart Grant** gets to grips with one of the most controversial-looking cars to come out of Munich and discovers that South Africa added even more specialness with batch of AC Schnitzer units.

Manufactured from 1998 through to 2002, the BMW Z3 M Coupé is a leading light in the world of car fan polarisation. Thanks to the shooting-brake look that earned the nicknames, one either loves it or hates it – and there's nothing in between. Chances are that those who hate it haven't driven it, and those that have will shell out obscene amounts of loot to own one. I fall into the latter, a sucker for sheer driving pleasure and a background story that defies the corporate red tape. Sadly, my bank balance

keeps me in the hater sector.

The legend goes that engineer Burkhard Göschel and his team of development engineers set about creating the ultimate driver's car by adding torsional rigidity to the existing Z3 Roadster chassis. This meant the addition of an ungainly structural roof. This didn't sit well with the bean counters and board of directors, and it took some serious convincing to get the go-ahead for production. When it was finally granted, the condition stipulated was that its manufacture had to remain cost-effective.

To meet this requirement the doors,





everything from the A-pillar forward and majority of interior goodies were borrowed from the Roadster parts bin. A car with such a brief needed some extra go too, and for this the engineers put the 3.2-litre S50 engine from the E36 into the mixing pot. Unveiled at the 1997 Frankfurt Motor Show, you'd have thought that with 236kW at 7400rpm and 350Nm of torque driving the rear wheels, that the recipe was just right for the 'real' driver. However, when production units went on sale in April the following year, the performance on the spreadsheets was anything but stellar – and the fact that it resembled a melted station wagon was the problem.

Orders didn't really speed up with the release to the American market (here the less powerful S52 engine was used to meet more stringent emission regulations) and the M Coupé ambled on, selling just 5 179 by June 2000 – 2 178 LHD and 821 RHD S50s, and 2 180 LHD S52s.

Six months of nothingness followed before

BMW launched a more powerful version powered by the S54 engine from the E46 M3. In European guise this saw an increase to 239kW and 354Nm, while the Americans got 235kW and 341Nm – the difference due to the American catalytic converters being located closer to the engine, which allowed them to heat up faster and reduce cold-start emissions. With the arrival of the new Z4 on the horizon, Z3 M Coupé production ceased in February 2001 with a total of just 1 112 S54-engined cars – 269 left hookers for the Europeans, 678 for the States and 165 right-handers for the rest of us.

With just 986 of both generations made in right-hand-drive guise, it's impressive to see a decent percentage of these in South Africa. But, as with the international trend, sales of the initial S50-powered cars were a little slow. So our well-known resourcefulness and marketing

smoke-and-mirror skills came to the fore when approximately 40 of the new S52 cars landed on our shores. Off they went and were fitted with goodies from well-known German tuning house AC Schnitzer – these included a more sporting suspension package, exhaust, short-shift kit, gear knob, grey dials and 18-inch Type III wheels.

It's confession time. Until a week ago, I had never driven a Z3 M Coupé. Even so, I have always been smitten by the machine. Is it only me who thinks it has a combination of

However, when production units went on sale in April the following year, the performance on the spreadsheets was anything but stellar – and the fact that it resembled a melted station wagon was the problem



Volvo P1800ES and Reliant Scimitar lines? And those aren't ugly by any stretch of the imagination, so why all the BMW haters?

Fearing that I'd built up my expectations too high, it was with a bit of trepidation that I took the keys to one of only 42 RHD Dakar Yellow Coupés. Sliding into the supportive bucket seats, there's not much other than the roof to tell you that you're not in a regular Z3 roadster. Glance in the side mirror and the sight of the child-bearing-sized hips starts to give you a hint though. Then you turn the key and the fruity six-cylinder tells you that you're in something special.

It's a short notchy throw on the lever to get the manual five-speed ZF Type C into first, and the M moves off effortlessly to one of the best soundtracks known to man. With

the amount of torque on hand there's not a huge need for gear swapping, but thanks to one of the best-feeling change action ever and the cogs matched perfectly to the power curve, you'll find you want to get in as many changes as possible – just for kicks. Did I mention the sound? The tune from the exhaust just gets better and better as the revs pick up and each downshift gives you the chance to play that heel-and-toe tune.

The M Coupé might be getting on a bit, but it was the leading protagonist in the acceleration game back in the day and is still no slouch, with a sub-6-second zero to 100km/h sprint. However this is not all that makes the car so great, there's also the tightness, obedience and response. It's the way that it inspires confidence with its

E36 M3 brakes – not only stopping well but also giving exceptional feedback. The steering is perfectly weighted and instantaneous, and the car turns into a corner and then exits with a decent amount of grip from the stocky rubber. Minimal understeer can be cured with the addition of some loud

pedal, and the resultant oversteer is quickly tamed thanks to the rapid steering action.

But be warned: when pushing on you need to keep your concentration at peak level as the short wheelbase and semi-trailing arm rear suspension has a tendency to toss inconsistent throttle users backwards into the scenery with disgust. But hey, it's a driver's car after all.

Built more with the heart than the business in mind, the result is a car that you'll never get bored of driving. As for the looks... who cares? You won't once inside and you've cranked the key. The story of the BMW Z3 M Coupé is the personification of the Ugly Duckling story: initially spurned but now highly desirable.

Rarity and the driving experience have put them at the forefront of the appreciating modern classic fraternity, but good examples are now difficult to find. When one does pop up, it usually comes with a relatively hefty price tag. It's at time like these that it is best to repeat the mantras 'you never pay too much, just too early' and 'you get what you pay for' to ensure you make the correct decision. **C**

The tune from the exhaust just gets better and better as the revs pick up and each downshift gives you the chance to play that heel-and-toe tune



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FROM THE SCHOOL OF

○ HARD KNOCKS ○

In the October 2012 issue of *Classic & Performance Car Africa*, as this publication was then called, **Gavin Foster** told the story of 1970s Pietermaritzburg bike racing star Mike Grant and his love for fast cars with V8 engines. In the decades since he retired from motorcycle racing he's built a few V8 racecars, including a Ford Falcon and two very perky Chev Can-Ams. The red truck you see on these pages fell into his clutches about nine years ago, when he was looking for an engine for the very same Can-Am that graced these pages seven years ago.



His old mate, KZN V8 fundi Mike Egan, called him to say he'd stumbled across an American NASCAR series race truck with a five-litre V8 engine that was rotting outside a homeless shelter in Cliffdale, between 'Maritzburg and Durban. "Kids had been bouncing on the bodywork and rats had taken over the inside, so it looked like an absolute pile of crap, but it was all there and it was too good to be cut up as scrap, so I bought it and left it alone while I finished the Can-Am with another engine."

All Mike knew about the truck was that it was built by American Race Trucks for Durban businessman Archie Sinclair, who

intended to start a class for trucks on South African circuits. "Zane Pierce was involved at some stage and raced the truck at Zwartkops. The engine hurt the bearings, and due to a lack of interest from local competitors the project was cancelled."

It seemed appropriate for me to give Archie Sinclair a ring. He remembered the truck well and was surprised to hear that it was once again up and running. "I wanted to start a national series here so contacted somebody in the USA – I forget his name – and he built one for me," Archie says. "I had a partner for the project in Monaco – Monte Carlo – but after I brought the truck here the deal fell through, and I didn't have the time to do it all on my own. There was too



much on the go business wise, so I laughed it off. The truck stood around for a while until Zane Pierce became keen on it. He took it to Kyalami, where he messed up the bodywork and blew the motor before sending it back. It eventually ended up at a school somewhere for the kids to play in and I lost track of it. I'd raced it myself once at Richards Bay but the track was too short and that truck was a helluva handful. In the USA the class went well, though."

Anyway, that's how American Racing Truck serial number 1125 built in Tempe, Arizona by CRC Manufacturing Inc. under licence from American Motorsports Inc. suffered the indignity of becoming a children's plaything in Durban. "That was, I think, in the early '90s," remembers Archie. "The truck didn't cost huge money – I think the exchange rate was about four to one, and it set me back about \$15 000 at the time."

Let's get back to Mike Grant to fill in the next chapter of this saga – the 3½-year restoration project. Was it a big job? "Yes and no," he says. Stripping and assembling was easy enough, with the hardest part being keeping it proper – making sure all the little things were as they should be. "The bodywork is mostly fibreglass, with a plastic Dodge Ram nosepiece and tailpiece. The way it worked in the USA was that you could

use any of three different five-litre V8 engines – Chev, Ford or Dodge. The bell housing was drilled to accept all of them, and the gearbox is a five-speed Tremec manual. The Chev motor it came with was bugged – locked solid, with blown big-end bearings – so I rebuilt it. There's a mob in the USA called Klein Engines and all the internals were from them, so I used their stuff again and built it exactly as it was. It's beautiful, with a steel crank and a three-stage dry-sump lubrication system. It came with a little 380 CFM twin-barrel Holley competition carb, and the engine was reckoned to be good for 500 miles at Indianapolis or Daytona at 7000rpm."

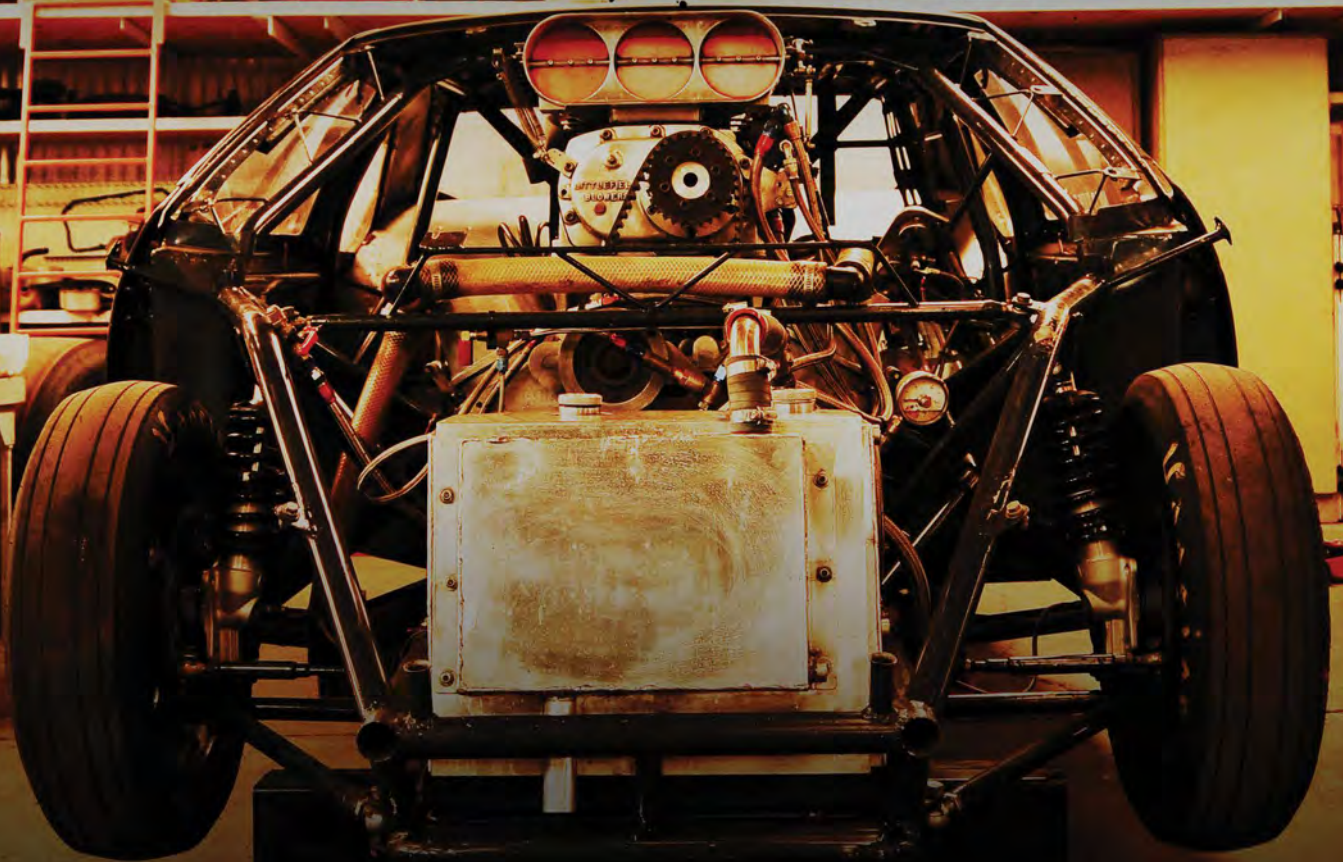
When I spoke to Mike he'd just finished the initial rebuild and had driven the car only once, on a section of private road. "It's very scary to drive," he says, "so I'll leave the engine as it is for now. As soon as I've sorted out the handling and worked out how to drive it, I'll stick on a four-barrel carb. These things can be pushed to 700hp and I have a need for power! The brakes are terrible, tiny little things designed to slow you down when you come into the pits for a tyre change or fuel refill. My very good friend Rory Nesbitt (SA 250ccc motorcycle GP champion in '76 and '77) recently arrived with a brand-new set of genuine Wilwood NASCAR front callipers and discs, so they'll

be going in soon. The suspension is very lekker but there's no front anti-roll bar and there's a lot of body roll, so I have to sort that out." The designers probably intended the trucks to be raced mainly on banked ovals, so the niceties of road circuit handling could have escaped them!

The fibreglass truck isn't the easiest thing in the world for a 72-year-old racer to come to grips with, with the first hurdle being ingress and egress via the driver's side window. To make this possible, the steering wheel has to be removed. The day after interviewing Mike about the truck, I met up with him at Dezzi Raceway near Port Shepstone, where he had his first proper drive in it during practice for the first KZN Road Racing Club meeting of 2019. The outing was more of a shakedown than anything else, and the truck reportedly felt good – apart from excessive body roll because of the lack of an anti-roll bar, and inadequate brakes. These matters are now all facing urgent attention.

Mike also found the large-diameter steering wheel to be too much to wrestle with on the tight circuit. And power? Suddenly 350hp no longer feels like enough, so for the next meeting we can expect to see another 150 or so ponies tucked under the hood. **G**

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HOWZIT MY GUZZI?

If you have a two-wheel fascination, chances are you have picked up a copy of *Bike SA*. Once you manage to tear your eyes away from the classified section, you will probably stumble across content written by one Charley Cooper. **Stuart Grant** got an introduction to real biker lingo while reading up on the fascinating Moto Guzzi Le Mans.



“Boredom happens even to us biker okses and it can sometimes turn into a *moer* of a dangerous thing. Us okies who grew up in Primrose in Germiston were hardly ever bored as lighties because there were always new things to scheme about, like how to open a locked cabbie door or how to hot-wire a boney, while the other lighties in our neighborhood who were more verbally gifted than us technical okes were always busy practising their linguistic skills by scheming up new stuff to tune traffic cops if they got stopped without a licence.”

More often than not, Cooper's stories would revolve around impressing a 'cherrie', evading a *klap* or even arrest. And for the most part it seemed this would be done using his 'Guzzi'. Of course, the 'Guzzi' was a Moto Guzzi, and the fact that he saw

himself as one of the cool kids means it must have been an 850 Le Mans version.

The first 850 Le Mans was a sporting bit of kit styled in the café racer fashion, with clip-on handlebars and bikini nose fairing, and went head-to-head with the sports offerings from BMW, Ducati and Laverda – not to mention the onslaught from Japan.

The story goes that back in '71, Dutch-based Jan Kampen set out to build a Moto Guzzi to compete in the Zandvoort 6-hour race. Kampen's bike was developed from the existing 750 V7 Sport, but with the capacity bumped up from 748cc to 810cc. While putting in the long build hours he was in constant comms with Moto Guzzi engineer Lino Tonti and, inspired by the idea of a bigger-capacity

performance bike, Tonti set about designing his own competition engine.

And bigger Tonti went with an 844cc version of the V-Twin, which was entered in the 1971 Bol d'Or 24-hour race at Le Mans. Ten hours into the gruelling race, the Moto Guzzi held first place but then slowed with a broken rocker and eventually limped home 14 hours later in an impressive third place.

Riding the wave, Tonti set to further improve the race bike while at the same time developing a road bike with the racing

Ten hours into the gruelling race, the Moto Guzzi held first place but then slowed with a broken rocker and eventually limped home 14 hours later in an impressive third place



technology at its core. His design thoughts were shown in '72, and by 1973 the concept matured to such a degree that a full works prototype was entered in the 1973 Barcelona 24-hour. The new bike rode in fifth and the design was ready for production.

But it wasn't to be just yet as Argentinian businessman Alejandro de Tomaso threw a spanner in the works. De Tomaso owned both Moto Guzzi and Benelli brands and had decided that the Benelli Six was his chosen attack on the sport bike market. Tonti's project was put on ice, only coming to light at the Milan Motorcycle Show in November 1975, and production finally got underway in '76.

It was an interesting time in the motorcycle world with the British and American bike

industry crumbling and Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha rising in status. But the Japanese didn't have it all their own way, with a resurgence from Italian and German manufacturers. In fact, the top three on the list of fastest bikes were all Italian, namely the Ducati 900SS, Moto Guzzi Le Mans and Laverda Jota. And the BMW R90S was a close speed contender too, but led the ranks as the best all-rounder, mixing sporting abilities with touring comfort. With a large-bore, air-cooled twin and shaft drive layout, the BMW was on paper the closest to the Le Mans. While the R90S was regarded as better finished and offering a suppler ride, the Guzzi was considered hairier-chested with a stronger frame, stiffer suspension and ability to trounce the German in the acceleration and top-speed department, thanks to the brutish 71hp enabling a max of 130mph.

Fire up a first-generation Le Mans and you'll notice that the exhaust note is surprisingly quiet. But like any good Italian bit of

motoring, blip the throttle and the induction noise is very notable and addictive – this due to the fact that the 36mm Dellorto pumper carburetors are only protected by a wire mesh. Thanks to a heavy crankshaft running in line with the wheels, this same throttle action results in the whole bike twisting sideways. It might all seem very agricultural – the notchy five-speed gear action doesn't help – but once up and running, the Guzzi gallops.

Cornering and stopping ability impressed the press, who referred to the former as confident with sure-footed handling, and the latter, provided by Brembo calliper/discs, as excellent. Oddly, the handlebar brake lever operated the front right disc while the foot brake pedal operated the left front disc and single rear brake. It is plenty feasible that Charley Cooper, tucked in behind the original Le Mans small bubble fairing and holding his knees out to prevent them being sucked into the carbs, was telling the truth about outrunning the coppers...

The first 2 000 or so 850 Le Mans featured a round rear light but soon changed to a De Tomaso-designed

But the Japanese didn't have it all their own way, with a resurgence from Italian and German manufacturers. In fact, the top three on the list of fastest bikes were all Italian



rectangular unit and new mudguard. At the same stage the seat was stepped to allow a pillion passenger a better view, and black fork sliders were added. Paint was usually red and black, but some were done in a metallic blue with orange nose, and a very small number left the factory in white. Production of the 850 Le Mans seems to have topped out at about 6 000 when the 850 Le Mans II launched in 1978.

Le Mans II was essentially the same bike as the '76 model but with a front fairing redesign. The petite first-generation fairing that many said only protected the ignition keys from the wind was replaced with a larger unit that had been developed in Moto Guzzi's wind tunnel (used to test race bike fairings in the 1950s). Also notable was the change to a rectangular headlight and fairing-incorporated indicators, as well as a lower half-fairing that wrapped around the exposed cylinder barrels but covered the carburettor intakes – perhaps to quieten them. A new seat was added and the gauge cluster was modernised.

On the mechanical side, front suspension became air-assisted, the Brembo callipers

were moved to the back of the forks and the cylinder bores were coated with Nigusil. Short for 'Nickel-Guzzi-Silicon', this was Moto Guzzi's patented nickel-silicon alloy that was applied to act as a better surface than chrome and enabled the use of lighter pistons and rings with closer tolerances.

Le Mans II enjoyed a five-year run before it was phased out for the 850 Le Mans III, which was more than just a facelift. The 80 or so adjustments included changes to cylinder heads and barrels, the pushrods being moved outwards in preparation for a later increase in bore size, and changes to carb and exhaust designs resulting in more power and more torque. Minor modifications were made to the rear suspension and to the front forks, with provision of linked air-assisted damping. In the styling department it was back to the wind tunnel and the result was a smaller, even more angular fairing and the dumping of the lower unit as seen on the II. The gauges kept up with fashion, dominated by a

large white Veglia tacho and 1980s car-like warning lights. In response to some perceived quality gripes the tubular frame was painted in a thicker and glossier finish.

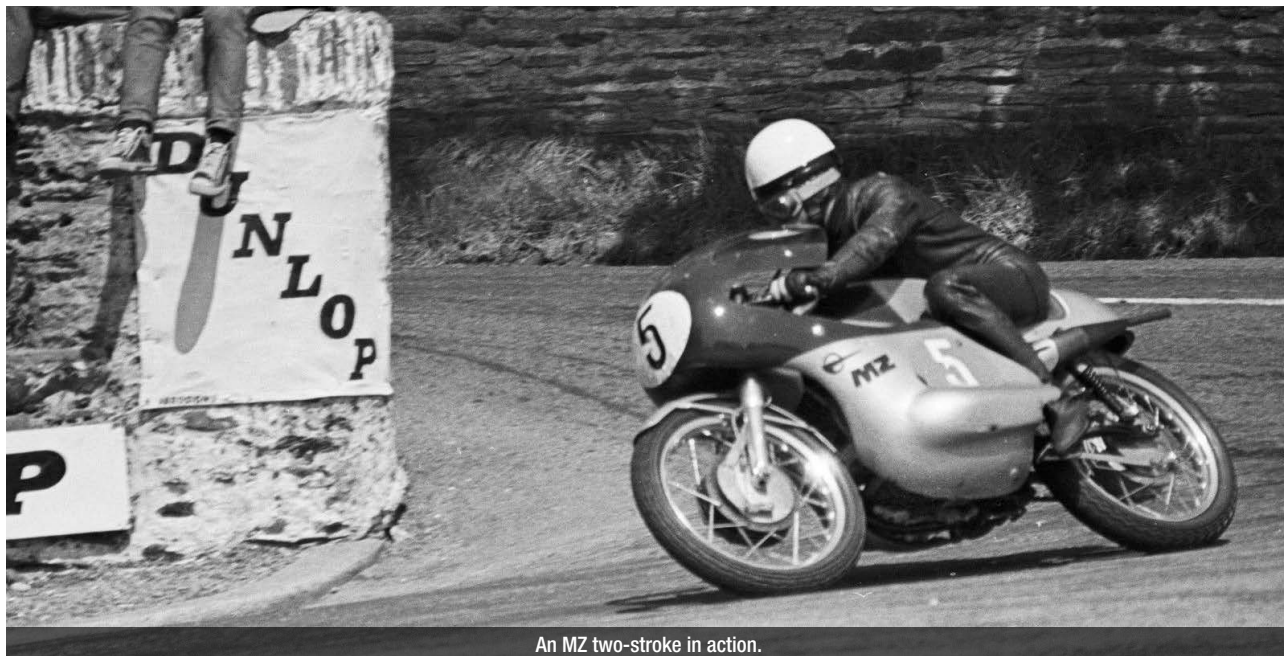
Le Mans III sold well, contributing brilliantly towards making the Le Mans series the most popular and commercially successful Moto Guzzi range. The tag didn't end there; the firm continued using it for its 1000cc sports bike that sold from 1986 through to 1993.

So did Charley have an early bikini fairing Le Mans or a II or III? Hard to tell as you can bet he customised it after scribbling it down Main Road in Fishers Hill, did some sort of lightening for the Pure & Cool Roadhouse dices and cut the effective standard silencer off with a hacksaw – just to let the world know he was around. 📍

Le Mans III sold well, contributing brilliantly towards making the Le Mans series the most popular and commercially successful Moto Guzzi range

THE UPS & DOWNS

Two-stroke engines have long been fitted to motor vehicles, but the ride has been a wild one as the technology falls in and out of fashion for various reasons. It's sad, says **Jake Venter**, that putt-putt engines have become unfashionable in recent times. But thankfully, while we are unlikely to see the evocative-sounding mills in cars anytime soon, there is somewhat of a resurgence in the performance-driven off-road motorcycle world.



An MZ two-stroke in action.

The first practical two-stroke engine was built by Sir Dugald Clerk (1854-1932), a Scottish engineer. He was knighted in 1917 for his contribution to the war effort while he was the Director of Engineering Research for the Admiralty. His engine, patented in 1881, differed from modern two-strokes by employing a piston inside a separate cylinder to force the fresh mixture at practically atmospheric pressure into the working cylinder. He initially tried using this cylinder as compressor but was unsuccessful. Currently, two-stroke petrol engines employ crankcase compression

but in the 1930s, the DKW company used pumping cylinders as compressors on their very successful racing two-stroke motorcycles.

Modern two-stroke designs date from early 1891 when Joseph Day (1855-1946) invented and started to produce what he called a valveless two-stroke engine. The first production batch employed a flap valve in the inlet port and another in the crown of the piston. He only introduced a transfer port a couple of years later when one of his workmen, Frederick Cock, came up with the idea that the piston skirt could control the inlet from the crankcase, and so made valves redundant.

In such an engine the crankcase is made airtight and a carburettor is mounted on the outside of the crankcase wall. This supplies a mixture of air, fuel and oil to the crankcase where a downward movement of the piston

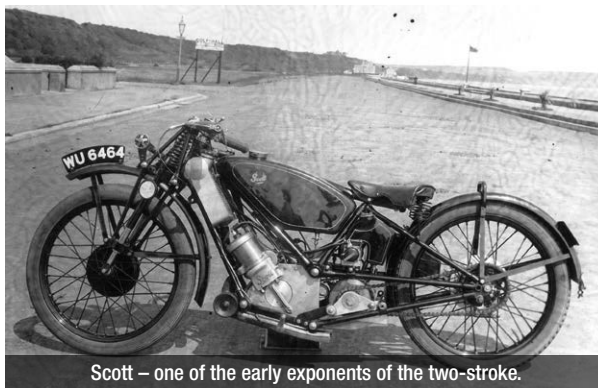
pressurises the mixture. This is released as soon as the top of the piston uncovers the top of the transfer port and causes a rush of mixture into the space above the piston. The piston closes this port on its upward stroke and compression starts, followed by combustion. There is a piston-controlled exhaust port on the other side of the cylinder barrel, situated so that the exhaust port opens before the transfer port, but some fresh mixture is inevitably lost down the exhaust pipe. This is a major reason why two-strokes are less efficient than four-stroke engines. However, they develop more power per litre by having a power stroke every time the piston descends.

Two-strokes have the major advantage that the piston, con-rod and crankshaft are the only moving parts. Mechanical noise is virtually eliminated but the exhaust noise often makes up for this feature. The convoluted path that the mixture has to take in order to get to the combustion chamber limits the breathing capability, but it does

Modern two-stroke designs date from early 1891 when Joseph Day (1855-1946) invented and started to produce what he called a valveless two-stroke engine



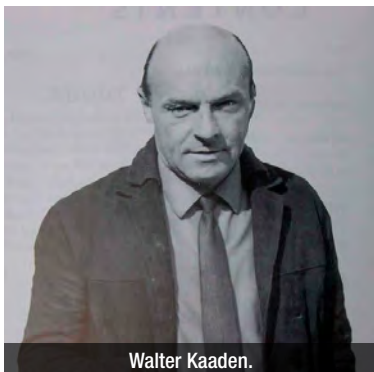
Sir Dugald Clerk.



Scott – one of the early exponents of the two-stroke.



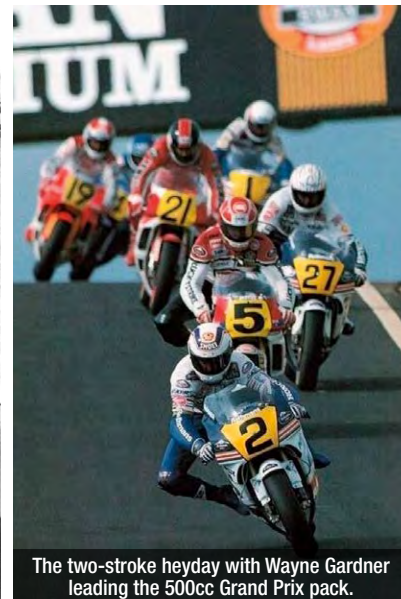
Two-stroke Saabs excelling in the rough and tough world of rallying.



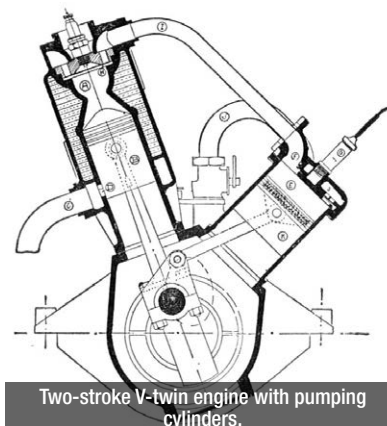
Walter Kaaden.



Barry Sheene on his Suzuki RG500.



The two-stroke heyday with Wayne Gardner leading the 500cc Grand Prix pack.



Two-stroke V-twin engine with pumping cylinders.

mean that these engines cannot easily be over-revved. If you keep the throttle open with the gearbox in neutral, the engine will simply run out of breath and refuse to go any faster. Their good power-to-mass ratio and ability to work at any angle (due to the absence of an oil sump) makes them ideal for use in portable equipment.


Piston-controlled mixture entry is obviously symmetrical, and this reduces the engine's efficiency. Many modern designs employ a reed valve or even a rotary disc valve at the entrance to the crankcase to make the timing asymmetrical and more in line with what the engine needs to become more efficient.

Before WWII, Scott and DKW were the major players that made two-strokes popular. The Scott Motorcycle Company, founded by Alfred Scott (1875-1923), operated from 1908 to 1969 and produced high-quality two-stroke motorcycles in limited quantities during most of that time. In the early 1930s, the DKW motor company

started to produce cars like the two-cylinder model that Mike Monk drove in a recent issue. After WWII they concentrated on three-cylinder models, but the much-respected two-cylinder engine soldiered on in East Germany in the form of the Trabant and Wartburg. The first Saabs were also based on the DKW.

It's likely that the post-war three-cylinder DKWs and Auto Unions were the most refined two-stroke-engined cars ever made. The boot lid carried the equation $3 = 6$ to remind the public that the torque curve of a three-cylinder two-stroke has the same shape as that of a six-cylinder four-stroke engine. This becomes clear when you drive the car. The combination of smooth torque delivery plus a freewheel unit in the transmission results in uncanny smoothness. The freewheel, which prevents the drive wheels from rotating the engine on the overrun, is necessary. The roller-bearing crankshaft was lubricated by oil mist derived from a petrol/oil mixture in the fuel tank, and

a closed throttle would not deliver enough oil for high engine speeds.

After WWII, the slow economic recovery created a market for small two-stroke motorcycles, but most British designs were temperamental and underpowered. In Italy the Vespa scooter introduced millions of people to two-stroke engines while Germany took the lead in developing reliable two-strokes, spurred on by motorcycle racing development. At the time, one person – Walter Kaaden – made a breakthrough in two-stroke design by combining disc-valve induction with an expansion chamber exhaust system. By this means he utilised exhaust system resonance to increase the power output, but only in a restricted range of engine speed. He worked for the East German company MZ and succeeded in improving the output of their racing engines from 100 hp/litre in 1954 to 200 hp/litre by 1961. 

NEXT ISSUE: The Japanese takeover plus two-stroke diesel engines.



MAKING A MIRACLE

By Roy and Jenny Acutt



In my early life I was a motorcycle enthusiast (and still am) but I often felt very selfish, as my wife had to stay at home while I was out enjoying myself. I felt it was time to make amends and went in search of a suitable sports car. Alas, they were out of my financial means – even if I sold my vintage bikes. So plan B was to build my own sports car. But what donor vehicle should I use which would make it possible to build it?

Before I emigrated from Rhodesia in 1981, I owned a Mazda F1000 pick-up and was quite impressed by it as it was reliable and easy to maintain, so I decided to use this as my donor vehicle. Unfortunately I had to leave the car behind in Rhodesia, so the plan was shelved for the time being.

Ten years later, while living and working in Kempton Park, I came across an

advertisement in the local newspaper selling a 1972 Mazda F1000 for spares. I phoned the seller and found it was an assortment of spares complete with a rolling chassis, engine, gearbox and other spares. Still having the idea to build my own sports car, I purchased the lot.

That was the beginning of a five-year project. In the first year, I had to strip the chassis completely and measure and decide where to cut and shorten the chassis. Once that was done, I had to fabricate brackets to accommodate a quarter-elliptic spring system for the rear suspension and rear axle mounting and radius arms. I then turned my attention to the front suspension which only needed to be stripped, cleaned and reassembled, and I replaced the front shock absorbers.

With the chassis completed it was time to design the body, and I decided to use a space frame design. Once I'd designed and planned the front grille, I used the expanded metal from an old fireplace guard. I had already

formed a good impression of the shape the car would take. Next, I worked on the seating area, which was accomplished by having my wife Jenny sitting next to me on the chassis and measuring the basic design. With that done, it was a case of bending and shaping some 12mm steel tubing and welding it to the chassis. From then on it was pretty much plain sailing, but I had to take into account the area for the column gear change on the scuttle and dashboard.

Now I turned my attention to the design of the rear, which would be a boat-tail shape that also had to incorporate the fuel tank mounting detector. Sadly, I had to put my project on hold at this point as we moved from Kempton Park to the small town of Greytown in KwaZulu-Natal. Once we had settled there, work resumed on the car. Fortunately, I had not mislaid any of the spares, so it was basically a case of assembling and painting the chassis and framework.

Sadly though, my son Andrew, who had helped me with the initial design, tragically passed away at the age of 18, so once again it was shelved for a short period while we came to terms with his sudden passing.

So plan B was to build my own sports car. But what donor vehicle should I use which would make it possible to build it?



This was a difficult time for our family – we were practically living hand-to-mouth while I started up my plumbing business once again. There was a lot of work to be done, and I had just lost my second son. Furthermore, I had two small children that I also needed to take care of. I felt very helpless and hopeless at this point.

After some time, I threw myself back into my project. I had decided to sheet the car with aluminium, which turned out to be a long job, requiring immense patience. I had to make cardboard templates to mark out each sheet of aluminium, then cut it out accordingly, shape it and pop-rivet that to the frame. This seemed to take an eternity but eventually I managed to complete it.

It was then time to turn to the mechanics. I found the diff and gearbox to be in good condition but the Mazda F1000 PB four-cylinder OHV was already stripped. I sent the crankshaft off to the engineering works to be re-ground, with the big end and main bearing supplied. The engine is an aluminium block fitted with wet sleeve lining and thankfully the wear was minimal, the pistons were fine and only new rings were

required. After a valve grind, I was able to reassemble the engine. A new clutch assembly was fitted, gearbox and engine mated, then installed into the car. The prop shaft had to be shortened and new universal joints fitted. Once I'd done that, I turned to the nitty-gritty work of making brake pipes, sorting out the electrics, fitting the headlights (sourced from a car club member in Harrismith), mounting cycle-type mudguards, and then priming and painting the body. I made the two seats from scratch and placed the battery and small toolbox under the passenger seat.

With the car finally functioning, I took it for a drive down the road. It was pure magic – what a ride! The culmination of years of blood, sweat, and tears was now on the road... my dream had become a reality. This little car had started off as an idea back in Rhodesia, and I carried it with me throughout much of my later adult life. Together, we had travelled across much of eastern South Africa while I tried to settle down. I dedicated every spare

hour I had to it, and to actually be driving it on the road was a moment of utter bliss and joy.

I took it to the COR department to get it licensed and it's now been on the road for 21 years. My youngest son Phillip, who'd been just a small child when I first started building the car, rebuilt the engine just over a year ago. It has given my wife and me such joy and has been such a reliable little car. Our family nickname for the car is 'Miracle' and looking back on it, it really was a miracle!

I've since built another single-seat car and had started building yet another sports car until health issues put a stop to that. But nothing will ever come close to the feeling of accomplishment and joy I had when I first started Miracle's little engine and heard it purr to life. 🐾

I dedicated every spare hour I had to it, and to actually be driving it on the road was a moment of utter bliss and joy



A BREATH OF FORCE-FED AIR

Pop quiz: name a late 1980s European 2+2 sports car that employs a turbo-charged six-cylinder engine in the rear. That's easy, I hear you say – the Porsche 911 Turbo, of course. But wait... the French quarter had something up its sleeve too, in the form of the Alpine GTA. Compared to its German rival it might have flown under the radar, but it came close in the performance stakes and sported some of that oh-so-French flair that **Stuart Grant** finds simply irresistible.

Images by Douglas Abbot

Let's get the comparison out the way. In 1988, if you'd pulled up alongside an Alpine GTA in a Porsche 911 Turbo, you would have won the zero-to-100km/h race by 1.4 seconds with a sprint of 6.1 seconds (the Porsche with heaps of turbo-lag followed by a flurry of wheelspin and opposite-lock, while the Alpine is somewhat more subdued – perhaps even bordering on boring). With a claimed max of 260km/h you'd also win the top speed race by 10km/h, but scanning some local test reports reveals that the Alpine took the cake with a real 247km/h, while the Porsche managed 228.

Your Porsche would have also thumped the Alpine in the numbers game, with 221kW at 5500rpm and 412Nm at 4000 versus 147kW at 5750 and 285Nm at 2500rpm. Those are seriously different figures, and the only way the Alpine could compete was thanks to weighing in at 1 180kg (120kg lighter) and being aerodynamically superior, with a drag coefficient of 0.28 and cdA of 0.48; at the time it was the most streamlined production car in the world.

But on the twisty bits is where the Alpine came into its own – perhaps not as stimulatingly as the Porsche's tail-wagging tendencies, but far safer and faster through the passes. Testers called the handling and balance a pleasant surprise; on the open

road it proved stable at any speed and despite the V6 lump hanging out the back, serious provocation was needed to get the car to oversteer. When it did, there was no Porsche-like snap but rather progressive and predictable sideways action that could be easily corrected by inputs on the well-weighted manual rack-and-pinion steering set-up. Climb on the anchors and the Porsche came back fighting again, with more feel and stopping ability.

Verdict time... Porsche or Alpine?

Clearly the number of 911 Turbos we still see in South Africa today shows that the people's choice was Porsche. An interesting one when you see that a top-spec Alpine GTA V6 Turbo would have cost R150 000 at the time and Stuttgart's 'widowmaker' was a whopping R331 700. Why, then, were there only a few GTAs around?

Firstly, Alpine production of the largely handmade car was anything but speedy, at just three cars per day and a total of 7 500 over the entire lifespan. Further to this, a quick scan of the local sales lists shows that the Alpine was the only Renault listed because the French firm had, like a few other manufacturers, pulled out of the country due to the political situation. So the few GTAs that made it here

But on the twisty bits is where the Alpine came into its own – perhaps not as stimulatingly as the Porsche's tail-wagging tendencies, but far safer and faster through the passes



were in fact independently imported and distributed by Genuine Parts, a division of the Midas Group.

It shows you what a bit of brand building, advertising, dealer support and stock can do in the sales figures department. Sad, as the Alpine had what it took to take on the Porsche.

Alpine had some legs when it came to a marketable brand, though. Like so many motoring greats, one man was behind the name – Jean Rédélé. He was born into a motorsport family; his father Emile was a mechanic for Renault factory GP driver Ferenc Szisz and after WWI was tasked by Louis Renault with opening a Renault dealership in Dieppe.

Jean studied business and economics during WWII, which included work experience at Renault. Despite his young age he was very vocal, and his thoughts attracted the attention of Pierre Dreyfus, the Renault CEO. As a result, Jean Rédélé was appointed Renault's official dealer in

Dieppe at the age of 24. He decided that the best way to test and market a vehicle was through motorsport and took a Renault 4CV to the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally. He fell short of a time restriction and was barred, but, unperturbed, he then entered and won the Rallye de Dieppe.

Chuffed with the result, Renault senior management gave the go-ahead for a souped-up version of the 4CV (special bodywork and five-speed gearbox) and successes flowed in, with a highlight being class win on the Mille Miglia.

The Société des Automobiles Alpine was founded on 25 June 1955, and a month later Rédélé unveiled three A106 Coach models ('A' for Alpine and '106' in relation to the reference number of the 4CV, which acted as a donor car). With Renault's top brass backing the idea, the cars and the Alpine brand were launched at the 1955 Paris Motor Show.

Competition successes followed in rallying, at Le Mans and in Formula 3, and

Alpine also built an F1 prototype which was used as a test mule prior to Renault entering F1 in 1977.

But we are talking Alpine GTA here. It stands for 'Grand Tourisme Alpine' and this story starts in 1971 at the Geneva Motor Show when Rédélé revealed a completely new car, the A310, developed hand-in-hand with the research department at Renault Engineering. Although a cracking car the timing was shoddy, and the 1973 fuel crisis saw sales of such sporting machines plummet. This put Alpine in some financial dwang and the only option was to sell a 70% stake in the company to Renault.

By 1984 the market had recovered somewhat, and Alpine launched its first car under the ownership of Renault – the Alpine GTA. On the surface it appeared to be an updated version of the A310 but there were no body panels in common between the two cars, and the construction methods were vastly different, cutting the manufacture time from 130 hours to 77. Instead of a one-piece



fibreglass body, the GTA was built from a series of fiberglass and polyester panels, cut using a water jet and then bonded to a Lotus-like central backbone chassis. Glass C-pillars eliminated the A310's large blind spots and 70mm extra wheelbase gave decent legroom to the 2+2.

Suspension came in the form of independent double wishbones on all four corners and the power, developed by a normally aspirated 2.8-litre V6 borrowed from the Renault 25, was sent to the rear wheels via a five-speed transaxle gearbox. Sales were not exactly brilliant but improved slightly with the arrival of the 2.4-litre V6 Turbo GTA in late 1985.

In most markets the car was sold as the Renault Alpine V6 Turbo, but the UK went for just 'Renault GTA' as Sunbeam and then Chrysler/Talbot already had the Alpine badge in their arsenal. America's lucrative market was the target, however, and it was hoped that the GTA would restore the French car brand name stateside, which

had taken a beating as a result of lacklustre dealer networks and questionable corporate acquisitions in the past. But it wasn't to be: the assassination of Renault CEO George Besse saw the company leaving the States with fewer than 20 pre-production Alpine GTAs being delivered across the pond.

With Renault battling to convince the world that it was a bona fide sports car maker, sales were poor and the initial production volume of 10 units per day soon dropped to three. At the close of play in 1991 the maths was done, and the average (for both GTA and GTA V6 Turbo) annual delivery was 1 000 per annum. The firm launched one more sporting rear-engined car – the A610 – but with its demise in 1995, the Alpine brand was shelved.

Until February 2016, when Groupe Renault's chief Carlos Ghosn unveiled the

Alpine Vision show car and announced a 2017 relaunch for the Alpine marque. In February 2017, images of the production version of the Vision was released, looking the part of the iconic rally Alpine A110 and carrying the same name.

Whether we will get any of these new Alpines in SA remains to be seen – they were launched in the UK last year, so potentially private individuals could import a few, even if Renault SA doesn't. Hopefully, like the few Alpine GTAs that made it here, they'll provide a breath of fresh air at any motoring event. **Q**

It was hoped that the GTA would restore the French car brand name stateside, which had taken a beating as a result of lacklustre dealer networks and questionable corporate acquisitions in the past





SMALL BUSINESS, — BIG ADVENTURES —



If you are a typical Joburger, you probably moan regularly that there is absolutely nothing to do in this city – other than walk around the mall or go out for breakfast/lunch/coffee/dinner/drinks somewhere. And while it's true that we can't take a quick drive to the beach or take in spectacular mountain passes like you Durbanites or Capetonians, we do have our fair share of cool stuff – although often our gems are a well-kept secret. Take the example of a little company called Micro-Adventure Tours run by a man with a big passion for the City of Gold. **Sivan Goren** went along to one of these tours to check it out.

Micro-Adventure Tours was started in 2017 by a young Malawian called Kennedy Tembo. When you meet Kennedy, apart from the fact that he is a dynamic and impressive guy, what strikes you most about him is his love for all things Joburg. When he speaks about his passion, and how he began his business, it is inspirational. It's not surprising, therefore, that even in this short space of time his little company is already flourishing, and he is busy – really busy. Not only because of his passion for what he does, but because clearly there is a need and a desire for what he provides.

I came across Micro-Adventure Tours by chance while browsing through my Facebook feed and, on the spur of the moment, decided to book a place on one of the tours. The reason for my choice was mostly that I loved the name of the grand old house in Parktown: Northwards. But also because this house, built in 1904, had a story that sounded too intriguing to pass up and which made *Days of our Lives* sound tame. With camera and water bottle in hand, I met up with the other participants and the

tour guide, who is also the curator of this historical building (more about him later), in the parking lot in front of the building – an area large enough to allow horse-drawn carriages to turn around comfortably.

Northwards was built by Herbert Baker, the well-known architect responsible for various beautiful homes and buildings including the magnificent St John's College in Johannesburg, the Union Buildings in Pretoria and Groote Schuur in Cape Town. Baker liked to use local materials and craftsmen, and the house was built from quartzite stone quarried from the site of the house, so it almost looks like the house has actually grown out of the ridge on which it stands. Despite being from the Northern Hemisphere, where south-facing houses are desirable, Baker understood that houses this side of the equator had to face north, and this one does just that – hence its name. (As an aside, the panoramic view of Johannesburg from the balcony is unparalleled and will give you chills.)

Baker subscribed to the Arts and Crafts movement, the philosophy being that everything from buildings to things should be both useful and beautiful, and that

everything should be handmade where possible. He also believed that design affects society and wanted a return to making things by hand – a protest against mid-Victorian mass-made architecture – and there are several exquisite examples of handmade details throughout the house. He also liked to use an eclectic mix of styles but somehow managed to tie together the almost hotchpotch combination beautifully.

Northwards was built for a couple called John Dale Lace, a mining magnate, and his wife Josephine (José for short). Born Josephine Cornelia Brink in Richmond in the Karoo, José was a spirited and colourful personality who met John while she was an actress and socialite in London. It is rumoured that not only was she the mistress of several married men, including King Edward VII himself, but that she had an offer of marriage from none other than Cecil John Rhodes! When her affair with another married man ended badly and he abandoned her and her illegitimate son, José and John returned to South Africa where they married, and he accepted her son as his own.



Aspects of Northwards, like the double-storey ballroom, which has a small balcony and a first-floor landing area where the minstrels would play during dances, illustrate José's outgoing personality – including the fact that the ballroom was deliberately lightly furnished so that furniture could be pushed back to make space for dancing at the many parties held there. She was famous for antics such as using zebras (housed in the stables on the property, which incidentally cost half of the total building costs) to pull her carriage and sending a bugler (yes, bugler!) ahead of her when she travelled into central Joburg to signal her arrival... as one does. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, the vivacious but headstrong José was not the most popular with the other ladies of Johannesburg and her antics were severely frowned upon.

Sadly, the house was partially destroyed in a fire in 1911 and this, along with the couple's eventual bankruptcy, forced them to sell it. It was bought by the founder of General Mining (later Gencor), George Albu,


and his wife Ginny, who had it restored by German architect Theophile Schaerer. The house stayed in the Albu family until 1954, when it was bought by the SABC. After that it was used as a university residence and an office block and was horribly neglected. But in my mind, the saddest part is that the eight hectares of garden that once surrounded this impressive mansion had to make way for the M1 motorway and that the magnificent stables were demolished.

Dr Neil Viljoen, apart from being the curator of the house and our tour guide, also happens to live at Northwards – and has been for the past 29 years. It is clear that he is vastly knowledgeable on the house and the history of Joburg in general but apart from that, he is a most excellent story teller and had us all riveted, despite the fact that the tour was almost 4 hours long!

Northwards has been carefully restored over the years. Using old photos, elements such as gates, pillars and even wallpaper and curtains have been

carefully replicated in order to keep true to the original look of the house. Viljoen is adamant that even when old and in a state of disrepair, restoration and not replacement is absolutely key, and that original is always best. I think that we, as classic car people, would agree...

Much like Herbert Baker's feeling that a return to the old ways of doing things was needed, my feeling is that in today's hectic, fast-paced lifestyle there is a need for a return to our history and heritage; a reflection on and appreciation of the past as we move into the future – and judging by the number of people attending these tours, I am not the only one.

For a fantastic day out, do yourself a favour and book yourself a place on one of these tours. Northwards is just one of a variety of tours offered that include bicycle and coffee tours of Joburg, hikes through The Wilds and runs up the Westcliff Stairs. 

For more info, check out www.microadventuretours.co.za or contact Kennedy on info@microadventuretours.co.za.

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FULL BODY WORKOUT

It's amazing how things work out when you ask the classic car fraternity for help. This much became evident when **Stuart Grant** put out word that the CCA Alfa and Marauder project cars were missing a few bits.



The first call for help was made to replace the Alfa grille section (found in a box of bits inherited with the car) that was seriously damaged. No less than a week after publishing the post, the phone rang with an offer of a suitable replacement – not only one that would just fit the aperture, but the exact year and model-correct part for the 1600 DeLuxe. Fitting it is a long way off though as the stripped car still needs to head to a panel beater for extensive rust repair, preparation and paint.

For now, the grille is packed safely alongside the brake boosters, carbs, and master and slave cylinders that have already been revamped and will soon be joined by four brake callipers. While the bodywork is being done, there's still an almost infinite list of jobs that need to be carried out simultaneously: off the top of my head the cracked dash needs to be repaired, all the perished suspension rubbers and joints need replacement and with the engine coming out, a full gasket set should be fitted. Trim, door/window rubbers, interior, lights and fasteners are (for the most part)

accounted for but will need hours of spit and polish to look presentable. Oh yes, and there is a seriously brittle electrical harness that I will attempt to duplicate in fresh wire, not to mention the hours that will need to be spent on Google trying to work out how to repair the cable-operated window winders.

The Marauder too has a job list longer than both my arms, but the call for help in finding a mould to repair the cut-off nose didn't fall on deaf ears and brought much excitement this month. There is a strong Marauder 'club' that operates via a WhatsApp group. These enthusiasts heeded the plea and put the word out. In December I got the call that there was an unused body near Cullinan and the owner was happy to let me mould the required section. Armed with a trailer, I headed out to borrow the body. On arrival, though, I realised that the deal involved buying the body, complete with an original rolling chassis and a spare duplicate of the chassis. The internal tub, bulkhead, body plate, dash board, gauges, seats and fuel tank were included.

Space is a problem, but I couldn't say no (with only 43 or so cars known to still

exist, the chance to double our ownership percentage wouldn't come up again). So, just like that, we have 2½ Matador Marauders. The seller had inherited an Alfa-engined Marauder from his uncle but as it had been slightly bent, he ordered new MkIII body to fit. But it was never fitted.

The 'new' body is now ready to go to a fibreglass expert to pull a mould of the front section – anyone have any contacts in this department? Then we'll graft it onto our damaged body and ship it off for finishing and paint. Another cry for some period wheels has seen the arrival of some widened Ford Rostyle rims that will be stripped and painted at the body shop. With the body out of the way, the wiring harness and chassis will be tidied up and all the overly long suspension bolts and fasteners will be replaced with the correct ones.

Progress and the hours spent doing small jobs isn't always visible, which can lead to a drop in motivation levels, but the arrival of these parts from enthusiasts lifted my spirits dramatically. Our local little classic car niche is a wonderful place and helps preserve our motoring heritage, so thanks to you all. **C**

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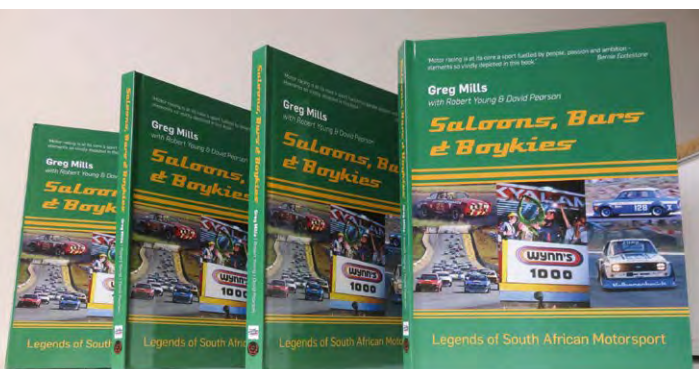
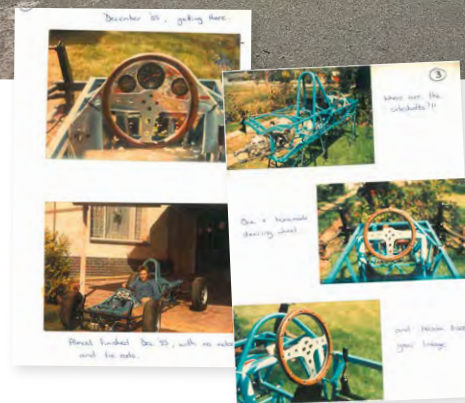
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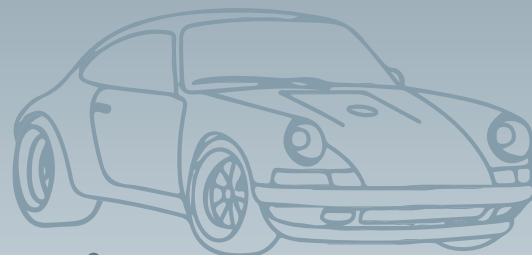
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