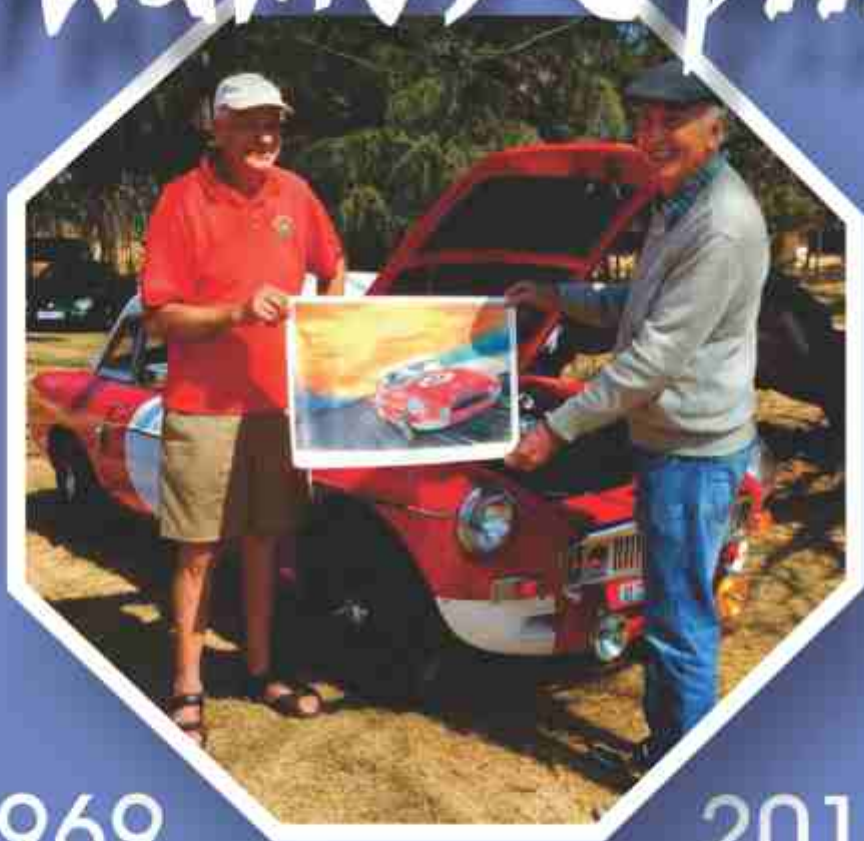


# Thumbs Up!!!



1969

2018

*Ian Cass & Bruce Dixon standing in front of Ian's recently acquired Paddy Hopkirk rally car replica, together with poster.*



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER   MG CAR CLUB   JOHANNESBURG CENTRE

SEPTEMBER 18

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# MG CAR CLUB Johannesburg Centre



PO BOX 52336 SAXONWOLD 2132 JOHANNESBURG

## COMMITTEE

Chairman/Editor	Bruce Dixon	082 457 8338	brucedixon@absamail.co.za
Co-Editor	Michael Trollope	072 976 5505	
Registers	Tom Kirkland	082 445 6770	kirk1@lantic.net
Treasurer	Tony Maybank	011 678 9267	tony@mgcc.co.za
Events Co-ordinator	Norman Ewing	083 654 5433	mgewing@polka.com
Secretary/Regalia	Jonathan Burke	083 788 2060	jonathanb182@gmail.com
	Claudette Dutilleul	071 612 2564	Claudette@thompsonwilks.co.za

Standard Bank, Rosebank branch 00-43-05: Account Name &# "MG Car Club" 00 203 458 1  
All Payments can be made directly into the MGCC Banking Account  
Remember to reference your deposit with your name and preferably state your Membership No.

**A Natter and Noggin is normally held on the first Thursday of each month at 8pm**

The Old Edwardian Club, Houghton.

For more details see Motoring Calendar in this issue of "Thumb's Up!"

Club Runs are normally held on the second Sunday of each month.

**AFFILIATED TO THE MG CAR CLUB — ABINGDON-ON-THAMES - ENGLAND**



### MG WEBSITES

Our Website: [www.mgcc.co.za](http://www.mgcc.co.za)  
Our E-Mail: [mgccs@worldonline.co.za](mailto:mgccs@worldonline.co.za)  
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#### INDEMNITY

*All members, their spouses, partners, participating family and friends are required to sign an indemnity form.*

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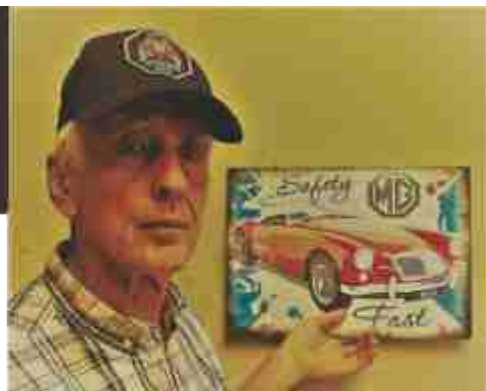
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# From the Chair



This edition of the Thumbs Up includes the sad news of Rudi de Groot's passing with tributes and memories from friends. I speak for the entire membership in passing condolences to Anneke and the De Groot family.

Backtracking to the August edition, I wonder how many readers spotted our attempt to confuse you with the front cover referring to Vrededorp! I hope that none of you thought we were trying to outclass Dan Brown and his Da Vinci Code. The only crater you would have found in Vrededorp is the pot hole on the corner of 14th St and Solomon St. Vrededorp has a fascinating history of its own (especially 14th St) but we can deal with that another time. No, the Dome is the centre of the meteor impact strike between Parys and the town of Vredefort, close to the provincial boarder bounded by the Vaal River. Apparently the impact was named after the farm Vredefort where it is located. The picture of a crater on the front cover is also a little misleading. At the centre of the crater which is 350km across (no mean pot hole!) the Dome that was formed was a mountain 10 000 m high that has eroded away leaving just the rim, the picture on the cover was taken at the top of the remaining part of the rim. The meteor strike occurred some 2,5 billion years ago long before Homo Sapiens

Last month we asked for suggestions for the 50th Anniversary of the club and I repeat that request here. Norman a founder member ( #5) of the club back in '69, has been tasked with organizing the event and we need our members to assist where possible. We believe it is fitting for Norman to do this and it is possibly another first for an MG Car Club to have a founder member to still be active an able to organize such an event after half a century!

Some news of another founder member Graham White (#1) who is recuperating in a facility having had a hip replacement. A friend of his has undertaken to look after his affairs and amongst other things he has sold of Graham's car collection which included a TC purchased by Graham in 1949. One wonders if there is any other one-owner TC in the world! This car was shipped to Durban on the Cape Town Castle in January '49 and was maintained by Graham who kept a complete service record according to the manual. The TC has been bought by John Hassal who is not yet a member of this club but he owns a number of very special MGs. This has prompted me to create a WhatsApp group specifically for TC.s. I have 9 TC owners on the group already.

We have published the guidelines for media etiquette in this edition. We need to keep posts free of abuse, sarcasm, politics and the like to avoid any offence being taken. Keep it MG Cars related and remember we have a cross section of members- old and young and of diverse religions and cultures- the common bond is MG. I ask that everyone just thinks before posting on FB and What'sApp.

Sunday 19th August took us to Uplands Farm, home of Ian and Daphne Cass. We had a good turn out and the weather changed from bitterly cold on Saturday to ideal for the Sunday run and braai. Thank you Ian and Daphne for hosting us.

In closing remember the combined centres Show Day is at the War Museum now called the National Museum of Military History on Sunday 30 September.



### **MG social media community guidelines**

**(This document has been extracted and edited from popular social media sites)**

The committee wants to create a safe place of inspiration and freedom of expression whilst also fostering a positive, diverse community. The social media channels (including but not limited to Facebook and the WhatsApp community group) are there to benefit all members with knowledge, fellowship and support.

The committee reserves the right to remove content that contains threats, hate speech, content that targets private individuals to degrade or shame them, personal information meant to harass members, destructive intentions, political agendas, and repeated unwanted messages. Messages used to attack anyone based on their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religious affiliation are never permitted.

The committee reserves the right to remove any content and individuals (from any platform operated by the MG car club) when the guidelines above have not been adhered to. Removed members may be re-added at a later stage upon review of the situation. The committee also reserves the right to remove any individuals without reason when that individual is not a member of the club (at that point in time).

Whilst the committee encourages members to provide constructive criticism when disparaging criticism is posted on public channels, it may be considered destructive in nature as well as harassment of members and therefore may result in individuals/content being removed. It is recommended that constructive criticism is done privately and in a respectful manner.

It is important to note that removal from the group does not constitute as removal from the club. However activities on the platforms may lead to committee decisions in line with our constitution to take such drastic actions.

Please remember that these platforms should not require any of the measures listed above as the groups are for comradery and fellowship, the MG family is there for support and encouragement. Safety Fast!

MG car club Johannesburg centre committee





## My Recent Restoration Projects

By Tom Kirkland

Apart from servicing and maintaining my own 1950 MG Y-Type over the past 32 years. It is still one of the better ones on the road today. My records show 44 Y Types were in the country 20 years ago, some have been shipped out of the country. But, only about 4 are running today. (Should anyone have more information on these cars - Please let me know).

Sometime ago I got a TC of Wilfred Mole's collection, to service. It needed rewiring, a good service and new upholstery etc. That is now running around Midrand and Sandstone.

Then he delivered a 1933 Morris 10 for me to "Get it back on the road again" This is a most interesting project. The speedo reads 25,704 miles. I believe that is true, as I removed a front stub unit, and was told by an experienced engineer, who tested it for me. I was told to 're pack it with grease' and put it back. All rubber seals and bearings needed to be replaced due to being 85 years old. I have made up a new wiring harness, the engine, cork clutch, gearbox and diff have now been serviced, and are now being re-installed. Our aim is to be able to drive it soon, then to decide on how we tackle the final paintwork and upholstery.

In the meantime a school mate of mine owns 16 old vehicles, Jags, Mercedes, a Rolls Royce and an MGA and MGB. So I work with him for 6 hours a day, and 4 days per week. Giving me time tinker at home with these other projects.

Sometime back I took on another interesting project: This person inherited his Dad's YT from Zimbabwe, and over 20 years ago I was asked to help him to get it on the road for him. Now recently his family have completed their schooling, so he has funds to get it driveable and wants to join a Club, and take part in MG events. As he lives in

Middleburg, the Northern's Centre will be his choice. Here again the main problems were the shocks, wiring harness and a jolly good service. He purchased all the necessary spares. So I just needed to, fit the harness and check the motor and mechanicals, the compression test revealed the psi varied in the 600s. So, the head was removed for a valve grind and new valve seals fitted. (The fuel conversion was done some years ago.) Now the psi test shows, 800, 800, 810 and 800. Encouraging. Then setting the TDC, fitting new coil, condenser, points and plugs. I noticed that on the exhaust manifold, in large lettering, the firing order: 1, 3, 4, 2. So, I religiously set it according to that. After a week of attempting to get it to start, without any success. I had a look at my own Y-Type motor -- It too had that same firing order on the manifold. I then wanted to remove the distributor cap with points, condenser and all, including the Coil, to fit it on the YT. While doing so, I noticed that the actual firing order on my Y was 1, 2, 4, 3. Then I went back to the YT, refitted the HT wires as on my "Y". Pressed the starter button . . . . It just roared into LIFE? And no further adjustments were required. After a new fuel tank was specially made, as Norbrake were unable to repair it, due to excessive rust and corrosion. Now this YT will be going home in a few days time.

Can any of our mechanically minded members explain this problem that I experienced with the firing order?

# CORROSION

by Deyan Barrie

the silent and invisible killer

## TECHNICAL Part 2

Submitted by Bruce

(The full text of the story on Corrosion, first published in TAT Issue 23, October 2011  
Text which was not published is shown in colour)



recently whilst getting a TC fired up after a long hibernation I noticed that the elbow from the cylinder head to the thermostat housing was weeping. When I removed it and cleaned off the paint this is what I found. (picture corrosion) This is a serious case of galvanic action where metals far apart on the galvanic scale corrode metal – the word of warning is that one should ensure that a good quality radiator protector/anti freeze/ rust inhibitor is used'

For example, when table salt is placed in water, the salt (a solid) dissolves into its component ions.

### Electrolysis

Electrolysis of water is the decomposition of the liquid (H<sub>2</sub>O) into hydrogen gas (H<sub>2</sub>) and oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>) due to an electric current being passed through the water.

Electrons can be removed from the outer orbits of atoms by various techniques such as chemical reactions, friction, light, heat, pressure and magnetism.

Electrons in a circuit of a conducting material under the influence of an electromotive force will move towards a point in the circuit that has a shortage of electrons.

In other words, the flow is from a place of excess electrons (negative terminal) to a place where there is a deficit of electrons (positive terminal). This cycle of electrons flowing from a negative terminal towards a positive terminal is known as **electroflow**.

Electrolysis can be created by using electrical energy, as in passing a current through it, in electroplating. This is the flow of electron movement from the anode to the cathode creating current flow when a load is applied.

varying strengths and directions. This does not mean that they create stray current, but it may aid in the decoupling and movement of electrons, aiding electron flow and electrolytic reaction

6. Stray current
7. Galvanic corrosion
8. Pitting corrosion



### Coolants – properties, functions and importance

Coolant contains antifreeze and inhibitors.

It is a fluid that flows through the cooling system to facilitate the transferring of heat produced by the engine friction and combustion through to the radiator and the heater core to dissipate the heat outwards.

Coolant has chemical compounds (inhibitors) that are involved in slowing down the degradation of dissimilar metals in the cooling system.

Antifreeze protection is an ethylene glycol solution, with a higher boiling point and it provides advantages for summertime use as well as during cold weather.

This higher boiling point is reached by keeping it under pressure which is what the radiator cap is for. Coolant assists in equalising the internal temperature.



**Electrolysis can also create a current and voltage (two dissimilar metals and an acidic liquid, as in a battery). The movement of electrons is minimal until a load is applied such as when a globe is connected**

**Consider how many ways electron flow can be assisted and electrolysis formed.**

- 1. Friction, due to internal engine component movement**
- 2. Heat, with the engine block and air conditioning system all contributing to the shifting of heat into the coolant**
- 3. Pressure – the cooling system is under pressure**
- 4. Flow and movement of coolant**
- 5. Magnetic fields which could vary greatly from vehicle to vehicle. Look at the number of things that take or make a charge that creates magnetism– alternator, starter motor, ignition dls, wiring looms– they all generate a magnetic field of**

What's wrong with water?

Straight water should never be used in a cooling system, especially long term.

Water freezes at zero degrees Celsius and boils at 100 degrees Celsius.

This temperature is close to the normal operating temperature of many engines and provides no corrosion protection whatsoever. Water assists electron flow and electrolysis begins to take a hold and corrosion follows.

There are specific corrossions that cause premature failure of cooling systems.

### **1. Pitting corrosion**

This is responsible for around 90 per cent of the corrosion affecting the aluminium radiator and heater cores and can destroy the cooling system quite rapidly.

Pitting corrosion occurs as a result of:

- (a) improper repair technique and poor work practices when replacing cooling system components and not flushing the system thoroughly**
- (b) diluting the coolant by just adding water when some coolant has been lost due to a leak or repair**
- (c) topping up the coolant system with a different coolant, creating a cocktail chemical mix**

The heat inside the engine is stabilised by the thermostat with the assistance of the radiator cap. Coolant also reduces the steam wall effect, allowing a fast transition of heat from the metal to the coolant.

An ideal coolant has high thermal capacity, low viscosity and is low cost, non-toxic and chemically inert. It doesn't cause or promote corrosion of the cooling system.

Traditionally, two major corrosion inhibitors are used in the coolant, silicates and phosphates.

Quality coolants give great heat transfer characteristics and provide electrical reaction inhibitors. Coolants also protect the inner walls of the cooling system from corroding and flaking by creating a protective film or skin that is constantly moving and regenerating.

The inhibitor is moved around in the cooling system by the glycol.

The coolant and its inhibiting properties can't reach the area where it needs to disperse this acid reaction.

In the smelting process to create aluminium alloy, a hard skin of oxide coating is created on the external surfaces and this protects the softer underside.

Corrosion is what breaks down the alloy oxide coating and this process starts eating away at the softer aluminium centre.

An aluminium radiator can be described as the anode, the sludge and scale deposits are the cathode. The radiator core becomes the sacrificial anode.

This is where pitting corrosion occurs due to localised galvanic reaction and the alloy/aluminium is depleted causing the pinholes.

### **Solution:**

Maintain a proper cooling system service regime, making sure the debris is not allowed to accumulate in the first place.

This is done by making sure the coolant is of the recommended type for the job and is still within its service life and not depleted. System flushing techniques and proper maintenance of the system are paramount.

### **2. Galvanic corrosion**

(d) ignoring timely coolant system servicing including flushing and replacement – coolant deteriorates and stops working as a protective element, can deposit a combination of materials and turn into a fine slime or sludge  
(e) sub-standard flushing after a major cooling system repair, be it a radiator, water pump, heater core or blown hose replacement – even though the coolant has been replaced after the repair, a catastrophic system failure is still possible

In all of these conditions, deposits of debris at the bottom of the radiator or heater core tubes, even if they cover a small area, may stop the new coolant from protecting the space in between.

This material mounds up and sits jammed between the tube walls and then the chemical reaction starts through hydrochloric acid being formed in those spaces

Coolant creates a protective coating on the inside of the cooling system and maintains it constantly, thereby stopping the electrochemical reaction.

If the protective layer begins to degrade, galvanic reaction can begin. This can affect the system very quickly.

If the coolant is not properly balanced the cooling system can basically become a low output wet cell battery with catastrophic results for the alloy components in the cooling system.

Most commonly, galvanic corrosion in an aluminium radiator is the direct result of failure to maintain the coolant at the correct levels and it follows that the upper portion of the radiator is deprived of the protective layer of the corrosion inhibitor.

#### **Solution:**

Keep the coolant system to the correct level and the coolant consistency correct and clean. Radiator caps must be in good working order.

You can't have system leaks because this allows air to be drawn into the system.

Where header tanks are used make sure they are at the correct level.

This is a very distant second to the pitting corrosion. Some quote it as being less than five per cent of corrosion problems.

Galvanic corrosion occurs when two dissimilar metals come into contact. Add moisture and off it goes and you have set up an electrochemical cell.

Galvanic corrosion is the process that occurs in a lead acid battery, principally for the generation of electricity, by having two dissimilar metals placed in a solution. This electrochemical reaction generates an electrical charge.

In a vehicle cooling system, the right ingredients are there to create this reaction if we are not careful.

This is why the correct type and consistency of coolant is so important. It is the coolant with its corrosion inhibitor that protects and keeps the cooling system clean and efficient.

This type of corrosion is created by the incorrect application of coolants.

Don't mix coolants, because this may create a cocktail that will inhibit cooling system performance.

Coolants can exceed their life cycle and their corrosion inhibiting properties become exhausted. Proper preventative maintenance and care will minimise this sort of problem.

#### **Solution:**

Best practice is to use only recommended coolants specific to the vehicle type.

Recommend to your customers that if the coolant system loses fluid and needs topping up, only use plain water until it can be fixed.

Advise them to bring the vehicle in as soon as possible when this happens.

The customer should not top up with a coolant even if they know it is the right type because, over time, the coolant structure may well have changed.

### **5. Stray current or voltage**

This is the most misunderstood of all forms of corrosion.

**To be continued**



**MG CAR CLUB  
COMBINED CENTER SHOWDAY  
SHOWDAY 2018  
WAR MUSEUM SAXONWOLD  
30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER  
ENTRANCE R50/CAR**



# A Classic Car insurance noggin with a difference



The plan was for Michael Brett to give a talk on classic car insurance at the August 2018 noggin. Michael pitched up for the event, but was so sick that he couldn't even stand, let alone talk. So Michael Trollope organised an Uber ride home, which was a first for Michael Brett. Hentie then drove Michael's car home to return to him that coming weekend.

So sadly, while at the noggin we never got to learn about the classic car insurance scheme that Michael has organised with Cross Country Insurance Consultants. However, Michael did send through some supporting notes, which have been summarised below:

- Classic car insurance is a niche product. Being a classic car enthusiast Michael has found an insurance product that covers most motoring eventualities.
- When searching for insurance cover for your classic car it's important to find the widest cover for the most competitive premium.
- Some of the key extensions that you should watch out for include:
- Full comprehensive cover for private, domestic and pleasure purposes.
- Vehicle value based on agreed written valuation, this is because the market value of classics vary so much based on condition.
- Avoid having the driver restricted to a named driver.
- Breakdown cover to include mechanical and electrical breakdown (not just accident) in South Africa (limits vary between R500 and R5 000 per annum)
- First option to retain the salvage in the event of a vehicle write-off. Because spares are so expensive these days it often makes it uneconomical to repair.
- Should you plan on taking your classic out of SA please ensure that there is a repatriation clause for the vehicles back to South Africa following an accident and/or mechanical electrical breakdown, together with hospitality cover.
- Each insurer has their own limits, excesses, conditions and exceptions so it is imperative to take a holistic view of the policy on offer. Please don't rely solely on the premium and excesses quoted. Finally, it's a good idea review the insured value of your appreciating asset(s) each year.
- There are many other features to consider. Best to:
- Look at the list included in the Cross Country advert in the magazine, and / or
- Phone Michael Brett on tel. (010) 140 1007 to discuss the specifics.

## Joburg Club Run to Uplands Farm

### Sunday 19th August 2018

The last time the Joburg club had a run to 'Uplands Farm' (the home of Ian and Daphne Cass) was in August 2012 when the Australians were here at the start of their 'great trek' from Cape Town to Cairo and beyond. Our Sunday run was definitely a long overdue visit.

Sunday turned out to be a lovely 'Springish' day, most welcome after a very cold Saturday the day before. Seven MGs and one plastic met at the Engen Block House for the short run to the Cass' farm where we were joined by Tom Kirkland, the Browns and the Brinks from the Vaal area. Ian had parked his MGs on the grass and together with our convoy this made for a colourful lineup. Ian's latest MG acquisition is a replica of Paddy Hopkirk's rally car; Bruce brought along a poster of the original car for a photo opportunity. (See the front cover of the magazine for a photo of the occasion.)

After catch-up chats and the obligatory engine inspections, Ian took the group on a tour of his garages and car collection, ranging from a Sunbeam to a very elegant Aston Martin DB9, which most of us 'oohed and aahed' over. Daphne's delightful garden, was also worth a tour, full of spring colours and a happy chicken pecking in the beds much to the annoyance of the locked away rooster.

The braai fires had been lit and our group settled under the leafless Syringa tree to chat, cook and eat. It's a farm with an interesting history and there can't be too many other farms where you can sit and watch both Reindeer and Springbok run in the garden. By three o'clock it was time for the group photo in front of the pond before departing for home.

Our thanks go to Ian and Daphne for their gracious hospitality in opening their home and garages for the run. We hope it won't be another six years before the next visit.

Jenny Loader



*MG Uplands group*



*MG folk gathered at the Engen Block house on the R59 prior to driving a few kilometres to Uplands*



*Some of the onlookers admiring the Flamingo*



*Ian Cass in his normal casual pose, telling stories about his Paddy Hopkirk replica*



*Some of the "super" surprises under the bonnet of the Hopkirk replica MGB rally car*





A Lexus V8 motor  
dropped  
neatly into a  
GSM Flamingo



Good to see  
Sandra &  
Graham Brown



Daphne Cass  
(thanks for hosting  
the event), Beryl  
Brink & Sandra  
Brown having a  
natter



The lunch time scene; fire  
going, good weather & good  
company



A collection of some of the cars  
at Uplands with Sharon walking  
towards her TF



Reindeer & two MGBs -  
you'll need to return in  
December to find Santa



Too many cars to fit into one photo; from L to  
R: Sunbeam, Ferrari, E-Type Jag, Austin  
Healey, MGA



Ian chatting to Tom Kirkland about his E-Type,  
the car that he has had longest in the  
collection

# The "Black Mamba" MGA Coupe Twin Cam

AMGAR INTERNET COORDINATORS on December 14, 2017



Africa's black mamba (*Dendroaspis polylapis*) is widely considered the world's most dangerous snake. It can grow up to 14 feet, is lethally venomous, and highly aggressive when threatened. They are fast, and strike with lightening speed.

It is appropriate, therefore, that a fast South African MGA racecar was named "Black Mamba". The story of this car is told by Stuart Grant and includes its modifications, its race history, its accidents, and its rebuilds.

"The hooter blasts, the flag drops and the hush explodes into a deafening crescendo of sound as thirty-odd cars embark on an

endurance test of man and machine lasting three-quarters of the way around the clock. This is the electric atmosphere of the start of the Rand's Nine Hour Race, one of the premier motor sporting events in the country."

This quote, found in Ken Stewart and Norman Reich's iconic book "Sun on the Grid" perfectly sums up the romanticism of the famous endurance events that we generally associate with Kyalami. This type of gruelling event format was in its South African infancy when the 9 Hour kicked off but it soon grabbed the attention of spectators and competitors alike.

Stuart Grant catches up with the Protea Triumph and Black Mamba, an MGA Twin Cam, that both enjoyed remarkable success in these early days.

In 1956 the first South African 6 Hour Endurance Race was held at Pietermaritzburg's Roy Hesketh circuit, but for the masses 1958 was the year South African endurance racing started in earnest. The biggest challenge laid out was to the two-wheeled fraternity with Grand Central (in today's Midrand) hosting a 24 Hour. For the four-wheeling crews Hesketh still held the 6 Hour, Cape Town's Killarney put on a 3 Hour and the first ever 9 Hour took place in November at Grand Central. With cars sporting names most of the public knew, heated on-track action and the excitement of hurried pit stops, there was always something on the go for the spectators. And the introduction of an Index of Performance award meant that even the humblest of cars could take home some silverware, so the teams and drivers arrived in bulk.

One such entry to the 1958 Hesketh race was a Triumph TR2 with John Myers and John Mason-Gordon at the wheel. Thanks to its low-revving reliability, reasonable speed and decent handling, the pair finished the race second behind the Horse Boyden/Alec Millea Alfa Romeo Sprint Veloce. Inspired by this result, they set out to improve the car. To them this meant keeping the TR2 reliability but shedding a few kilograms and moving the engine down and back a touch to make the car corner better. Myers had, of course, already designed South Africa's first production car, a tubular-framed sportscar with fibreglass body, so was adept at the design and construction of what was needed to reach the goal. In August '58 he sketched the plan of attack.



Into a tubular Myers frame went a TR2 rear axle with coil springs, trailing arm and a Panhard rod. Propshaft, gearbox and engine also came courtesy of the Triumph. So too did the likes of the gauges, pedal arrangement, master cylinders, front disc brakes and rear drums.

Steering and front suspension came from Ford. The former being an

upside down 100E Ford Prefect steering box because it offered less lock-to-lock (at 1.5 turns) than the Triumph, while the latter used a 1940s Ford CWT commercial van axle. Of course this wasn't left standard though and Myers cut down the centre and welded some eyes onto it to act as swingarms, located by compression struts that ran backwards to the chassis. True to the plan, the engine was mounted as low and as far back as possible relative to the wheelbase.



To clothe the new creation Myers favoured aluminium over fibreglass. Mason-Gordon called for a narrow streamlined rear. Myers had a Dinky Toy Jaguar D-Type. They put pen to paper with these two references calling the shots and gave the sketches to Geoff Collins, who hand-built the body. The car was finished in April 1959 and immediately driven by the two down to 'Maritzburg to compete in the 6 Hour. The race started at 14h30 and the Protea Triumph took up the lead, a position it held until the 20h30 finish, with the only real glitch being a mid-corner fuel surge that cut the engine mid-corner and sent the car on a slight off-track excursion into a verge. The car returned to the pits to top up the fuel and inspect damages before carrying on to win.



Second on the podium went to George Mennie/Dave Wright (No. 8) and Gordon Henderson/Clive Mitchell (No. 3) in a brace of MGA Twin Cams. Number 8 was a locally-built roadster while No. 3 was an early imported coupé finished in black paint. Enter Black Mamba, mentioned earlier, and the restored car pictured today with the Protea.



Black Mamba, sporting the chassis number YM2 554, was one of the first batch of four Twin Cam coupés built at Abingdon, England between June and September 1958, and was shipped with a full range of factory optional extras to Noel Horsfield, the managing director of McCarthy Rodway, the main MG agents in Durban. It was registered as ND118 on local plates and pressed into action as a dealer demonstrator, in the lead-up to the sale of the locally-built Twin Cam roadsters, which started at Motors Assemblies in February 1959.



Like the Protea Triumph, Black Mamba's racing career kicked off at the March 1959 Hesketh 6 Hour. It wasn't the only MGA Twin Cam though, with three SA-built MGA Twin Cam roadsters in the hands of privateer outfits joining the party. McCarthy competitions manager, Mike Compton, led the preparation of the car,

which included the removal of trim panels, heater, luggage rack, radio and bumpers. A close-ratio gearbox, competition oil cooler and competition shocks were added and various other modifications like a straight through side-exit exhaust, twin fuel fillers and a larger fuel tank found a home. The MG factory supplied a special Lucas D3AH4 distributor and a set of 2-inch SU HD8 carburettors.





Following a series of tests, a mixture of six parts aviation fuel, six parts premium petrol and one part union spirit (ethanol) was deemed to be the best for performance. Track time the week before the race revealed a misfire between 6000 and 6200rpm, which was then cured by the fitting of a Minor 1000 ¼ tonne truck distributor and setting the timing to 3° at top dead centre.

Following this test the name Black Mamba was applied – according to Bobby Olthoff, who prepared and raced number 7, due to the sound and speed the YM2554 made.

According to Compton's post-race notes, victory for Black Mamba looked likely for the first three hours as it tussled with the Protea and the number 8 roadster. But it wasn't to be as a ruptured brake line meant an unscheduled stop for a replacement, and a loss of 10 minutes relegated the car to third by the time the flag fell on the 6 Hour mark.

After the event Black Mamba was returned to road specification by McCarthy but it did enter the 1960 Hesketh event, finishing seventh. Sadly, on the way back from the event, it was involved in a fatal pedestrian accident. The damage to the right-hand side was repaired and the race engine was replaced with standard Twin Cam engine.

The car was then sold and subsequently disappeared and was not seen for many years thereafter.

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As an out-and-out racer the Protea's career carried on longer. Shortly after the '59 6 Hour win, the Sports Car Club of South Africa nominated Mason-Gordon and the Protea, along with Ian Fraser-Jones (Porsche Spyder) and Bill Jennings (GSM Dart Porsche), to represent the country at that year's Angolan Grand Prix in Luanda. Up against the likes of a Ferrari Testarossa, Cooper Monaco, Jaguar D-Type, Porsche 550 and a few of Maseratis, Mason-Gordon finished seventh and Jennings ninth.

Mason-Gordon recalled reaching 5700rpm at the end of the long sea front straight, which was scary because he never normally revved it past 5000 (he and Myers believed in racing as slowly as possible) but also because the calculated speed was 137mph, which you somehow had to scrub off enough to take a 90° right. Chris Fergusson borrowed the car for the 1960 East London 2 Hour where he finished third. Red Whitehouse bought the car and achieved some class successes leading up to the 1961 9 Hour – now moved from Grand Central to the purpose-built Kyalami. Whitehouse never got to drive in the race as his co-driver Pierre du Plessis rolled it at Jukeskei during practice.

Following a rebuild Ivan Weitzman bought and campaigned it before selling it to Jan van der Merwe, who raced it in historic racing events in the early 1980s. The Zwartkops Raceway proprietor purchased it 1982 and after years of badgering he moved it on to Triumph fan Alan Grant in 1995. Grant continued racing the car until a minor accident necessitated a rebuild. And as is life with a competition car, another prang in 2008 resulted in yet another restoration exercise, which was completed just in time for the 2017 Knysna Hillclimb.



Various enthusiasts started searching for Black Mamba in the '90s but it only surfaced in 2003, lying around in poor shape in Krugersdorp. The identity was confirmed by the stamped chassis number 554, the body number 61754, the competition oil cooler, the original black colour, various body modifications, and the ignition and door key number FP731, which was recorded by Mike

Compton in his practice notes. The new owner, Bo Giersing, carried out a full restoration with the cherry on top being the fitting of SU HD8 carbs and the original engine (16G202) – found in Durban last year.

In an amazing twist of fate and alignment of the stars, these two cars reside within just 2km of each other today. Even better is the fact that soon the recreation of the complete 1959 Hesketh 6 Hour podium will be possible as Giersing is nearing the completion of the George Mennie Twin Cam.



*Local Twin Cam launch, February 1959*



*Black Mamba with the MG Competitions Crew at McCarthy Roadway 1959*



*Protea Triumph (1) and Black Mamba (3) line up for the 1959 Hesketh 6 Hour*



*Black Mamba during the 1959 Hesketh 6 Hour NAMGAR wishes to thank Stuart Grant and [www.classiccarafrika.com](http://www.classiccarafrika.com) for permission to reproduce this article. Photography by Etienne Fouche.*

YM2 554 & YD2 2136



# RUDI DE GROOT

16 November 1935 - 17 August 2018

IN MEMORY –by ROY JONES

Rudi has been a member of the MG CAR CLUB for many years and both he and Anneke have been very loyal and active members of the Club.

Rudi had a wonderful collection of cars; Bugatti, Vintage +/- 1929 Moon, Hodgkiss, Bristol, and an unusual early American Racing Car, together with his MGB, and perhaps others. He was a very keen member of both the VVC and the MG Car Club. The Moon, to me, was really a wonderful car, and so much a part of his and his family's life.



His knowledge of Bugatti, the various models and his collection of books and magazines was in my view, pretty unique in the world, and I always pushed him to record of some of his unusual knowledge on Bugatti, but sadly to no avail.

One of my great memories of Rudi, was when he, Nigel Stokes and I, with our long suffering wives, were returning from Nairobi when Nigel's front suspension on the V8 MGB, literally fell apart. Rudi quickly took over the situation, and by chance, I had a few 3/8 inch high tensile UNF bolts with me, and within a very short time we were back on the road and no more trouble for the lucky Nigel.

In recent years Rudi's speech and hearing took its toll, and I know how frustrated he was to not have interesting discussions. He had such a good knowledge of matters motoring.

Janet and I have been privileged to have Rudi and Anneke as friends, and to meet Karen, Nikki and Neil and their hugely capable families. Rudi truly was a very proud husband, father and grandfather.

*We will all miss him very much.*





# Much Loved & Sorely Missed

*Pic by Glen Parker*

**Bruce Dixon:** With great sadness I have to tell you that Rudi de Groot passed away this morning. Our sincere condolences go to Anneke and family. Please hold them in your thoughts and prayers. The funeral service will take place at 14h00 on Thursday at the Fourways Memorial Park.

**William Kelly:** Dreadful news. Condolences to Anneke.

**Les McLeod:** This is a sad day. Condolences to Anneke and family. Have known and respected Rudi for 40 years. Les

**Derek Langsford:** May the light of the risen Christ guide you through the darkest hours and bring peace and comfort ☐

**Ian & Daphne Cass:** Condolences to Anneke and family.

**PJ (Peter John) Ryan:** Thoughts and prayers.

**Anita de Castro:** Our thoughts are with you Anneke, so sorry for your loss. Rudi was so special. We are in Namibia.

**Margaret and Stuart Hain.** Condolences to Anneke and family. Thinking of her at this time and know Rudi is at peace.

We are in Australia so sending our apologies for not being at the funeral.

**Pepi Gaspari:** Anneke my condolences and that of the Northern Centre.

**John MacKenzie:** A very sad day indeed, Rudi was lovely man, with wonderful sense of humour and an encyclopaedic knowledge of all things mechanical, he will be missed.

**Kenneth Duncan:** Dear Anneke, I am very sad to hear this. I worked a lot with Rudi when he was at Orbit Pumps. Lynda and I send our condolences. Regards Ken

**Clive Winterstein:** A very special man who was always happy to share his knowledge, we wish you and your family strength. Hugs Tania and Clive

**Hentie & Jeanne Erasmus:** We are sad to say goodbye to Rudi... a gentle man and a gentleman. You are in our thoughts, Anneke. Love from Jeanne and Hentie.

**Michael Brett:** Anneke we are sad to learn that Rudi's race is run but you can be proud of the legacy he left on the way. He left fond memories and he will be sorely missed. You are in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless love Mike and Lou xx

**Glen Parker:** Dear Anneke, together with you and Rudi we travelled the world for almost 50 years to destinations and experiences that will forever be in our memories. Rudi had the most sincere manner and ways about him, underlined with a wicked sense of humour and an eye for a good looking set of boobs. May his last trip remind us of the good times we enjoyed. Love Glen & Hilde

**Pierre van Hell:** We have fond memories of Rudi's warm smile. Rudi will never be forgotten. Anneke, our sincerest condolences. Pierre and Amanda

**Nick Parrott:** Rudi will be missed very much but wonderful to have so many memories left behind. Nick P

# NormanTalks!

## OUT OF THE BLUE

You know me – I don't text – I talk. That is what cell phones are for - but not whilst driving. So when on Wednesday my phone rang whilst driving home from Sandton, I handed it to Pat and there she sat chatting and telling me to pull over. I told her to take a message, but she was insistent; "Pull over. It's Mike Leckstein." Now Mike is a special guy and a wonderful friend, as those who have travelled with me to the USA will tell you. We met at Fox Ridge in 1984, on the Ocean-to-Ocean in 1986 and after that Dick Knudson lent me an MG Midget to visit my cousin in Cherry Hill, Philly. Taking Arnold Sammer with me, we visited Alison with the Leckstein's in Little Silver, where Bruce Springsteen lives. Mike, being the District Attorney for New Jersey, is well known and we were taken for a meal on the North Jersey shore seafront – lobsters the size of turkeys! What a night, as the Jersey Boys would sing.

In 1988 I took 28 South Africans to the UK, USA and Europe on a world trip. Months earlier I had gone over to give a talk on MG advertising at the Kimber Festival, where again I had met up with Mike, who lent me a Subaru to visit my cousin, however, in September, with all the others, Mike and Barbara had driven into New York in a MASSIVE Chrysler station wagon and with at least twelve of us crammed into the back we had toured Manhattan from Central Park to Chinatown, an experience those who went that night will never forget.

Pat and I stayed with Mike and Barbara when we sailed to New York in 2007 on the Queen Mary 2 and had a time of great hilarity with them. Mike had written and asked where I got the lube screws for the J2, so I asked Bob Wilmot as I was not having that on the car. He made them and instructed me to tell Mike not to fiddle with them as they had been set already. All we did was fit them before driving in to Little Silver in Mike's MGPB to buy bagels in the shop where Springsteen was buying his. My best memories, however, were of 1990 on the Tour of Britain which Mike and Barbara had organised for 100 people in 50 T-types and the Ewings in a Montgo MG. Fun? You had better believe it!

So did I pull over to talk to Mike for ages and ages outside of Marist Brothers Inanda? You had better believe it! That is what this club is all about.

Octagonally

*Norman*



*Seen at the entrance to Uppington*



*Club Members checking out the conditions and carrying out reconnaissance for the Bloodhound Land Speed record attempt*



*Congratulations to Pat & Norman and Carol & Bruce who celebrated their 49th wedding anniversaries in August"*



*Congratulations to Derek & Ivy Langsford whose daughter Nicole married Jonathan on Friday 17th August at Cradle Valley Guest Lodge.*

***All members: Please let us know of any happenings in YOUR lives***





# TRADING POST



## *Spares wanted & for sale*

Wanted by Bruce 082 458 8338: Early MGB steering wheel original of Motolita B



Original Generator for 1948 YT -- With fitting for Reduction Gear for Rev Counter.

Can swop for Good Condition Generator without the Reduction Gear fitting. 1 only Trafficator Unit, in reasonable working Condition, as found on the Y-Type. Contact Tom Kirkland 082 445 6770 or [kirk1@lantic.net](mailto:kirk1@lantic.net) Urgently. Thanks

Randall is downsizing his stock of MG bits and pieces. Please watch his posts on "Classic Car Parts in South Africa" on Face Book 0824140438 phone him or better still WhatsApp him.

## *Cars for sale*

**This MaGnificent 1980 MGB R/B is available complete with minilites etc . Call Gill Marguerite on 082 688 0733**



44 years of an Edwardian MG [built 1936 in King Edward 8th reign] - it is time to find a younger custodian of the elegant MG SA Tickford Coupe which lives in McGregor.

Extensive work history available. Formerly owned by the late Phil Howle and driven up Munro Drive by Phil Hill - see "Norman Talks" December 2017

R680k to the "right home" Keith Poole - [k-mpoole@lando.co.za](mailto:k-mpoole@lando.co.za) or 023 625 1306

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## ***Forthcoming Runs, Noggins and Events.***

### ***September Noggin 6 September***

Talk on Collector MG Books by Norman



### ***September run - SHOW DAY ! 30 September***

War Museum Saxonworld

### ***October Noggin 4 October***

Report back on Show Day

### ***October Run- Date to be confirmed***

Jacaranda Run in Pretoria organised by the Northern's Centre finishing up at their club house. We have to cross the Jukskei so have your passport ready!

### ***November Noggin-***

### ***November Run Sunday 8 November***

CHRISTMAS LUNCH AFTER THE RUN- route / lunch venue suggestions welcomed.

### ***December Noggin 6 December***

Theme to be confirmed

### ***December run 9 December***

Norman's Birthday - Venue to be advised





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