

Benz Friends



MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA
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From the Desk ...

Attending the 15th Annual Presidents' Meeting during October in Stuttgart was again an experience that I will cherish for many years to come. An absolutely fascinating aspect of the visit was a tour of the Mercedes-Benz Global Logistics Centre in Germersheim, which is situated on a peninsula in the Rhine River and has roof area in excess of 1 million m².

From this "Island that supplies the world" - more than 220,000 parts are distributed around the globe, on a daily basis, with true Mercedes-Benz precision.

On the local front there has, over the past few years, been quite a number of "Model specific" outings. This practice has given rise, in the minds of some members, that they are excluded from attending this category of event.

I would like to use this opportunity to stress to all Regional Chairmen, Event Organisers and fellow members that such practice should not be encouraged at all.

It is totally acceptable that model specific events be arranged, with the clear understanding that no members are to be excluded. Regional Chairs and Event Organisers are advised that the wording on invites must reflect this policy without exception!

The above does not apply to "Approved Model Register" groups, which are exclusive for that specific Model, and members of that group only.

I had the opportunity to visit the Northern Region's 2-Door day display - held for the first time at Monte Casino. It was a spectacular and very well attended event, as can be seen on the front cover, as well as an article inside this issue. I have it on good authority that this event will be bigger and even better next year!

My annual meeting, early in November, with the Head of Marketing Department at Mercedes-Benz in Pretoria went extremely well. General Sponsorship Agreements and related issues were discussed at length and indications are positive that sponsorship of the MBCSA will be continued. (There is even a chance that it might be increased!).

Thanks again Frikk for being my Chauffeur for two entire days. I really appreciate all your effort. From the National Committee of the Club, I would like to wish every family a very enjoyable Festive Season, lots of good health and happiness in 2015, and safe journeys.

All the best until the next time.

Club President : Dirk van der Westhuizen □

Editorial

Pat Smythe - The Editor



I was one of the first to arrive at the rendezvous point - Sandown Motors - in preparation of the convoy that would parade 'The Pride of the Three Pointed Star', en route to Monte Casino - the new home (hopefully) of 'Two Door Day' - it certainly won't be my last!

The setting, the cars, the restaurants, the crowds - all combined to make the day a majestic success - Well Done Northern Region!

Sixty - Two Doors, many with Tops Down, is a sight that certainly gets the adrenalin running a little faster...

I also had the pleasure recently, of attending the Northern Region Concours @ Mercedes Menlyn in Pretoria. I was literally blown away by the intense effort that is put into the preparation of a vehicle in order to stand a chance of your entry being chosen as the very best on display, either by Model or Overall. I left Pretoria with a thought in my head that kept saying to me that we should open this event to the public. I am certain it would enhance the Brand, it would certainly give the Dealership an opportunity to showcase their very slick operation and I am convinced it would allow the public to experience the diverse fun and friendship that can be gained through membership of a club such as ours!

SAPO is an anagram - it used to be a Post Office. I sincerely hope that you receive this copy of Benz Lens in time for the festive season and that you find time to relax over the holiday period. The New Year will see 'Dassie' moving from a Scrap yard to a COR Testing station and a new life filled with the hope of seeing the world once more under her own steam.

I certainly hope that next year will see me going 'walk about', in this beautiful country of ours more regularly - in the interim may I wish you all good cheer over the festive season and good health in 2015!

- Pat da Editor.



Central Region

THE MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR...

Having enjoyed a very successful August Cars in the Park and a wonderfully entertaining 'September Run' to The Cabin roadside stall near Clocolan, we decided to leave the fate of our October function in the very capable hands of Prof. André Venter and Dr. Pieter Pienaar.

They accepted their role as our Tour Guides for the day with great enthusiasm and gathered us together in 10 cars on a beautifully sunny, 25th of October, at the Shell Pitstop on the N1.

“Roll up for the mystery tour – we are waiting to take you away...”

Waiting to take you away...take you away!”

With trust running strong and belief as a guiding beacon, 23 hope filled souls guided by two seemingly intelligent men, were led mysteriously astray.

We started off at the Bagamoya Wildlife Estate, about 30km north of Bloemfontein.

This amazing lion shelter began its existence in 2002, as a shelter for a seven month old lion cub named Bongani (Let us give thanks). Today they have over 28 tame, hand-raised Lions (most of them White Lions) as well as 5 Tigers.

They also have a Zoo with animals from all over the world including a Fenix - which is the smallest Jackal in the world! We spent the morning among these magnificent animals and then retreated for a wonderful lunch on the verandah.



Our next stop took us, by a circuitous route to the south of the City to the Anglo-Boer War Museum and Women's Memorial which commemorates one of the most significant events in the history of South Africa.

The Women's Memorial was erected after a meeting of the Dutch Church's and political organizations from the four Colonies', which took place in Bloemfontein on 7 February 1907.

It was decided at this meeting, that a Monument be erected to honour the memory of the mothers, women and children who had perished in the Concentration Camps and on the farms during and as a result of the War.

A guided tour of the Museum where the history of this period was depicted with amazing historical treasures and photographs, allowed for some deep introspection of the awful conditions and circumstance that war brings upon





humanity – particularly the women and children of that time. Our last destination for the day was most certainly the proverbial cherry on the mysterious cake!

The Naval Hill Planetarium is the first digital planetarium in sub-Saharan Africa and it opened its doors on 1 November 2013. It is the first component of a proposed Centre for Earth and Space and has a state-of-the-art projector system in which three-dimensional images are shown on a huge screen inside the dome roof.

Here we tipped back our chairs and spent an awesome 45 minutes among the constellations and planets – many millions of light years into space. Unfortunately we were not allowed to take any photos and you will just have to believe us that we mysteriously travelled that far - our own beauties waiting patiently outside the Planetarium in the meantime.

Truly a day well spent and our sincere thanks to André and Pieter for all their efforts with the arrangements and the skilful unraveling of a wonderful mystery tour!



Follow us on





Eastern Cape

Editors Note:

"A lack of sound and thoughtful preparation, when planning of an outing, is very often a crucial catalyst to the lasting and happy memory thereof." Spyker Koekemoer 2014:

This was as true in the early 'eighteen hundreds' as it is today. In fact, had a perfectly forgettable chap named Thomas Bentley, planned his desertion from the Van Der Kemp Mission based near King Williams Town in 1801, a little more carefully – he might never have been killed by a poisoned arrow whilst crossing a river... and the very same river would have never and forever become known as the Thomas River.

His careless preparation, has bequeathed to South Africans a wonderful, resort-village, created by a fellow MBC SA member, Jeff Sansom that is truly worth a visit - as was recently enjoyed by a group of our robust Eastern Cape Members..!

A JOURNEY TO THOMAS RIVER... By: Andrew Hempel

Jeff Sansom kindly offered a group of us some superb accommodation, which belongs to the Wardle family on a farm adjoining the picturesque historical village of Thomas River.

The house, on the farm Granta, which was the home of the late Neil Wardle, is roughly 2 kilometres from the centre of the village and has recently been renovated by Jeff as part of his usage agreement with the Wardle's and despite my busy schedule I was determined to take advantage of the opportunity!

There were a couple of occurrences which conspired very hard to 'scupper' my plans, but I remained adamant and so it was to be that on the Friday afternoon of the 24th October, my son Adrian and I set off in 'Eleanor the 219' in search of a river called Thomas.

(She – Eleanor, needed a run, as she had been standing for a couple of months, and the only time she moved during this time was when I took the 'blanket' off to wash and wax her.)

The doors of the Thomas River Pub were a welcome sight and we were well met by Jeff, who along with Erald and Lawrence were most helpful in their efforts to 'relieve the drought' that we might have suffered en

route. It always amazes me how time, in the company of good friends, seems to fly by at great pace and with everyone's arrival accounted for we were soon enjoying the view of the large dam in front of the farmhouse that was to be our home for the weekend.



"A farm, a fire, a braai – an African sky, with stars burning bright – there can be little that is wrong and much that is right." Spyker Koekemoer:

As the night drew on and digestion and consumption found a compatible pace, my younger brother 'Stormin Norman' took the opportunity of presenting Jeff with a Newspaper Billboard that had a special connection, both to

Jeff and Thomas River.

Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer, arguably one of the most famous South African Marine Biologists and Museum Curators, who was closely linked with both the discovery and subsequent research on the Coelacanth, (a fish thought to have been extinct for many millions of years), passed away in 2004.

Her belongings and important artefacts relating to her life were stored in a room of a relative's home, where she had spent her last years and days.

After her passing the well meaning relative packed all Marjorie's belongings and artefacts into one room.





Alarms clocks, early morning and early coffee, where the passion starts.

"Teach them young..."





When, however the same relative passed on, the remaining family took the decision to consign all of Latimer's belongings and artefacts to the 'junkyard'!

Thankfully a friend of Jeff's, became aware of this and fortunately managed to intercede. He contacted Jeff, who immediately set about rescuing what he could, including a 'book' which Marjorie had kept of her 90th birthday celebrations, which included letters from many famous people from all around the world. (Amazingly this book was recovered from a 'dustbin' which had already been put out on the sidewalk for collection!)

Jeff has subsequently provided space for Marjorie's artefacts on the walls of the entrance to the reception area of Thomas River Village.

by Jeff in the barn's on Granta, created a day of robust conversation, exclamation, laughter and the inevitable replay of Friday night's programme which ended punctually the next morning.

Sunday had a slow beginning – a somewhat foggy start with visibility that improved remarkably during the course of the day...

Breakfast in the village, followed by a hunt for much needed car keys, saw the beginning of an orderly retreat to East London preceded by farewells and promises of a return to the lovely village of Thomas River.

(Editor's Note: Should you decide to stay over on a Sunday night – simply repeat the process above from... Saturday had a slow beginning... through to the end. It is really a great deal of fun!)

Below: "Stormin Norman – Enjoying the Starter Breakfast @ 7am, to keep him alive long enough to enjoy The Full Breakfast @ 9:30am."



An interesting fact that only came to light, after Jeff had completed some further research into the subject, was that Courtenay-Latimer had spent her early years in Thomas River. Her father had been the Station Master, which in those days, was on the main line to the interior and ultimately the Orange Free State and Transvaal.

A sumptuous supper followed the presentation and activities finally dwindled to a halt in the early hours somewhere before dawn, when finally, the last bastion of resistance, put up by some very stubborn bottles of strong liquor was overrun!

Saturday had a slow beginning - a somewhat foggy start with visibility that improved remarkably during the course of the day. Breakfast in the village, followed by a hunt for much needed motor spares amongst the many stored



Follow us on





Western Cape

30 YEARS S CLASS ...
By: Pieter Venter

I have always liked S Class Merc's – the leather, the Aircon, Headrests and Rev Counters - as well as those that came with a Sunroof and had Electric Windows Fitted - they dazzled me when I was little.

In the 70's and even the early 80's they were truly high spec and state of the art cars that were driven by VIP's and had VIP's driven around in them!

My first love was the 450 SEL 6.9 - once I realised they existed. The 350 SE was magnificent but the SEL version with 6.9 badge and engine was the one to have..... very scarce and extra special!!

Having tried Jaguar's, a Daimler and a Rolls Royce or two - I soon came to appreciate that my heart and passion lay with these over engineered, Teutonic and safely beautiful Mercedes-Benz Luxury Cars.

Having lucked out in finding a 1990 one owner 560 SEL with 27 000 km on the "clock", my collection began its formation from the end of the era in the 1990's - BACK WARDS - to the 1960's.

Today, some 15 years later, I am the proud owner of the 3 SEL cars I have always wanted to own, ever since I can remember.....in the late 1970's!

After the 560 SEL came the 300 SEL 6.3. It was a car that I really felt wanted me to own it and as it happened, the owners eventually gave it to us - George and Duncan Shipway and I.

It was a mess, mechanically (thanks Jannie G....) and took all of what it was worth to make everything work as intended and add some reliability and utility.

Without Fred it would have cost a lot more than it did. It literally required a major overhaul of everything and since then, it is, many years later, still a reliable and enjoyable CAR!

Magical today and surely INCREDIBLE in 1960's - when it could out pace and outrun most sports cars from any manufacturer over 1km to 1000 km's – Our car still delivers 191 KW on rear wheels and 519 NM of Torque – the only modification made, was to install direct fuel injection via a management system and electronic ignition.

The last car (after the 6,3 and 560) - that completed the collection was an absolute surprise as none have ever shown up in any decent state in South Africa, from the late 80's, when I started looking out for one, until this particular example.

This one was better than decent and probably (as per Mercedes Enthusiast UK in the article 2009 that got to myself and Brett a fellow member who first brought

the car into SA before I bought it off him) THE BEST 450 SEL 6.9 in the world. (Or at least one of the very best!!)

What makes this car so incredible is that it smells new and has never had any mods done i.t.o. Radio, Aircon, telephones or alarms. It is, as it left the factory and now at less than 29 000 MILES since 1978 – it is the perfect MIDDLE BROTHER to the 6.3 and 560 SEL. We fitted new Michelin XWX 215/70VR14's made NEW back then, by Michelin, specifically for these cars and some others, including Ferrari.

All three of these cars have very unique characters. Characters that are more in keeping with the age they came out of and the technology of that time – the 6.3 is pure hooligan and feels the quicker.

The 6.9 is more together when driven- particularly when driven after the 6.3 – It feels slower on the initial pull away and then relentlessly keeps giving.

The 560 feels and is very rapid! At over 200 kph it becomes a modern car in terms of road holding and confidence, whereas the other two become "old" cars at high speed in respect of body roll and wind noise.

It is such a pleasure owning these three, as they are truly usable and enjoyable to own and use – they remain ahead of their time and were definitely engineered to outlast this Boertjie.

450 SEL 6.9

Produced between 1975 and 1981. The 6.9 was the first Mercedes-Benz to be fitted with the hydro pneumatic self-leveling suspension system. Each hand-built V8 unit was bench-tested for 265 minutes, 40 of which were under full load.

Bosch K-Jetronic electromechanical fuel injection was standard at a time when fuel-injected cars were uncommon.

6.9 l (6834 cc or 417 in³) power plant was conservatively rated at 286 hp (213 kW) with 405 lb•ft (549 NM) of torque helping to compensate for the 2.65 to 1 final drive ratio necessary for sustained high-speed cruising, the suspension system gave the 4200 pound (1900 kg) car the benefits of both a smooth ride and handling that allowed it, in the words of automotive journalist David E. Davis, to be "tossed about like a Mini." The car also featured a model W3B 050 three-speed automatic transmission unique to the 6.9 and a standard ZF limited slip differential both for enhanced road holding performance on dry pavement and





enhanced traction in inclement weather.

Four-wheel disc brakes and four-wheel independent suspension were standard across the W116 model range.

Top speed was factory-rated at 140 mph (225 km/h), but some journalists testing the car saw speeds approaching 150 mph (241 km/h)



Production	World	North America
1975	474	0
1976	1475	0
1977	1798	462
1978	1665	437
1979	1839	576
1980	129	317
1981	4	0
Total	7380	1816

299 PS (220 kW; 295 hp) | 456 NM (336 lb•ft)
250 km/h (155 mph)

The W126 carried forward the self-leveling hydro pneumatic suspension of the W116 450 SEL 6.9 model. There were two versions of the self-leveling suspension for the sedan: a rear only hydraulic suspension using two nitrogen ballasts to automatically level the car, and a four-wheel hydraulic leveling system that could be set in three positions

300 SEL 6.3

A private venture in 1966 by company engineer Erich Waxenberger, produced between 1968 and 1972. Powerful 6.3 liter V8 Mercedes-Benz M100 engine from the luxurious 600 limousine, and fit it into the regular Mercedes-Benz W109 S-Class model. The result was a nearly 2-tonne saloon with performance similar to most dedicated sports cars of the era.

What set this car apart from its contemporaries in the late 1960s though, was that it could cruise at over 200 km/h (124 mph) with 5 occupants in complete comfort within the body styled by Paul Bracq

6.3 Liter V8 with Bosch fuel injection, 250 PS (184 kW; 247 hp), 300 HP SAE

Performance

- 0-62 mph (100 km/h): 6.3 seconds
- 0-100 mph (160 km/h) : 14.6 seconds
- Standing 1/4 mile (~400 m) : 14.2 seconds
- Top Speed : 229 km/h (142.3 mph)†, 6,526 of these vehicles were produced between 1968 and 1972

560 SEL

1985–1991 | 560 SEL | W126.039 | M117.968 5.5L V8
75,071 | 5.5 16V RÜF | V8

Four-speed automatic transmission

The W126 model 380 SE was the Wheels Magazine Car of the Year in 1981,[4] the W126 was awarded the U.S. Highway Loss Data Institute "Safest Passenger Car of the Year" in 1988 and 1989,[1] and the W126 was the third-ranked luxury vehicle in J.D. Power's 1990 Initial Quality Survey (IQS).[16] In 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990, with the W126 S-Class leading its sales, Mercedes-Benz received the highest customer ratings in the J.D. Power Sales Satisfaction Index.





THE MIDDELVLEI BOEREBRAAI:

By: JB Wiese

It is often difficult to find a venue for Club outings that are fresh, never been done before, that falls within the budget and will be enjoyed by everyone.

We are an active region and we do a lot of 'weekend runs' - following the Three Pointed Star. I am often amazed that it is still possible to find and or organise somewhere/something different!

When one finds a winner the obvious choice is to do an "encore run" to those places and venues that were really special.

Sometimes, however, the way to go is to return to basics... and so it was - for our run on 21 September 2014. We decided that a simple "Boerebraai" was exactly the right thing to do! We met at Middelvlei, on the outskirts of Stellenbosch, nobody was late.

We sat at a long table, which was beautifully set up for us on the stoep, overlooking a rolling lawn and the mountains.

'Ons het lekker vars plaasbrood met konfyt gevreet, asof die einde van die wêreld skuins na ete gaan plaasvind!

We were treated to a proper "Boerebraai" - followed by desert and coffee brewed on the fire.

...Daar was bottels Middelvlei Wyn... Sonskyn ook!

It was truly a great way to spend a Sunday – a wonderful way to rediscover simplicity and the supreme pleasure it can bring.

There were moments to catch up with everyone. There was time to think about all things over a glass of Middelvlei wine.

Time to walk around and admire each other's cars – time to watch children run, jump and play on the large lawn and spend time with the variety of farm animals around the venue.

A simple day – all in all, a 'family day' with Mercedes friends, good food and great cars!

Humphrey Bogart was hanging around in the corner – I am sure I heard him say, "Play it again, Sam."





A PONTON ADVENTURE IN THE KLEIN KAROO

By: Kurt Stassen



During one of our regular visits to the Keppler's, we discussed the creation of an adventure – which expanded into a Ponton Adventure.

Ideas began rolling and before we knew it, the gentle ingestion of fine wine had created both decree and agreement, that the adventure needed the backdrop of a journey through beautiful surroundings.

A further frolic through the vineyard cemented agreement that the journey should take more than an hour to complete and include a rest stop where a lunch of high quality would be served in order to set the stage for our arrival at our final destination – a destination that would be of the type and stature that would accommodate, a night away from home in style!

We decided to go to the Barrydale Karoo Hotel. Certainly a much longer run than the usual ones that we undertake... and most definitely, as Wayne described it, an adventure for the adventurous.

The organising was left to Lydia and I. That was the easy part. Bookings were confirmed and paid for in no time at all and we met and departed at the usual place of embarkation on Saturday morning the 11th of October.

From there we took the scenic route over Du Toit's Kloof Pass where we met up with Mauritus Coetzee and Ben Klopper who had coffee on standby. This was of course the time to take out the cameras and get a couple of pictures of our 'Pride and Joys' against the backdrop of the Paarl Valley. While everyone enjoyed

the coffee and the stunning scenery, Lydia handed out goody bags with sweets, nuts, chips, juice and water for the stretch to Robertson where we were having lunch.

Christina's at Van Loveren Wine Estate proved to be a beautiful venue with great food. We parked the Pontons in a manner that showed their best profile and this immediately attracted a lot of attention.

After lunch Dirk van der Westhuizen and Stephan du Toit organised a parking area in Montagu for a Benz Lens photo. There were 9 Pontons and 2 - 190SL's. We then set off at a leisurely pace through the valley of peaches, apricots and vineyards and arrived at our destination just before sunset.





The Barrydale Karoo Hotel is situated in the middle of the town and after some major renovation and refurbishment recently, it is now very attractive destination with every room having a different theme.

As the Club had booked the entire Hotel for the adventure -some of us checked in and others took a leisurely stroll through the quiet, verdant streets of Barrydale whilst the rugby fans occupied the bar area for the afternoon's game.

After pre-dinner drinks in the bar, we went to the hotel restaurant where the warm fire welcomed us. A superb Karoo dinner was enjoyed by all and was followed by Lydia and I thanking everyone who had joined us on the run and presenting them with a bottle of wine with a Ponton on the label.

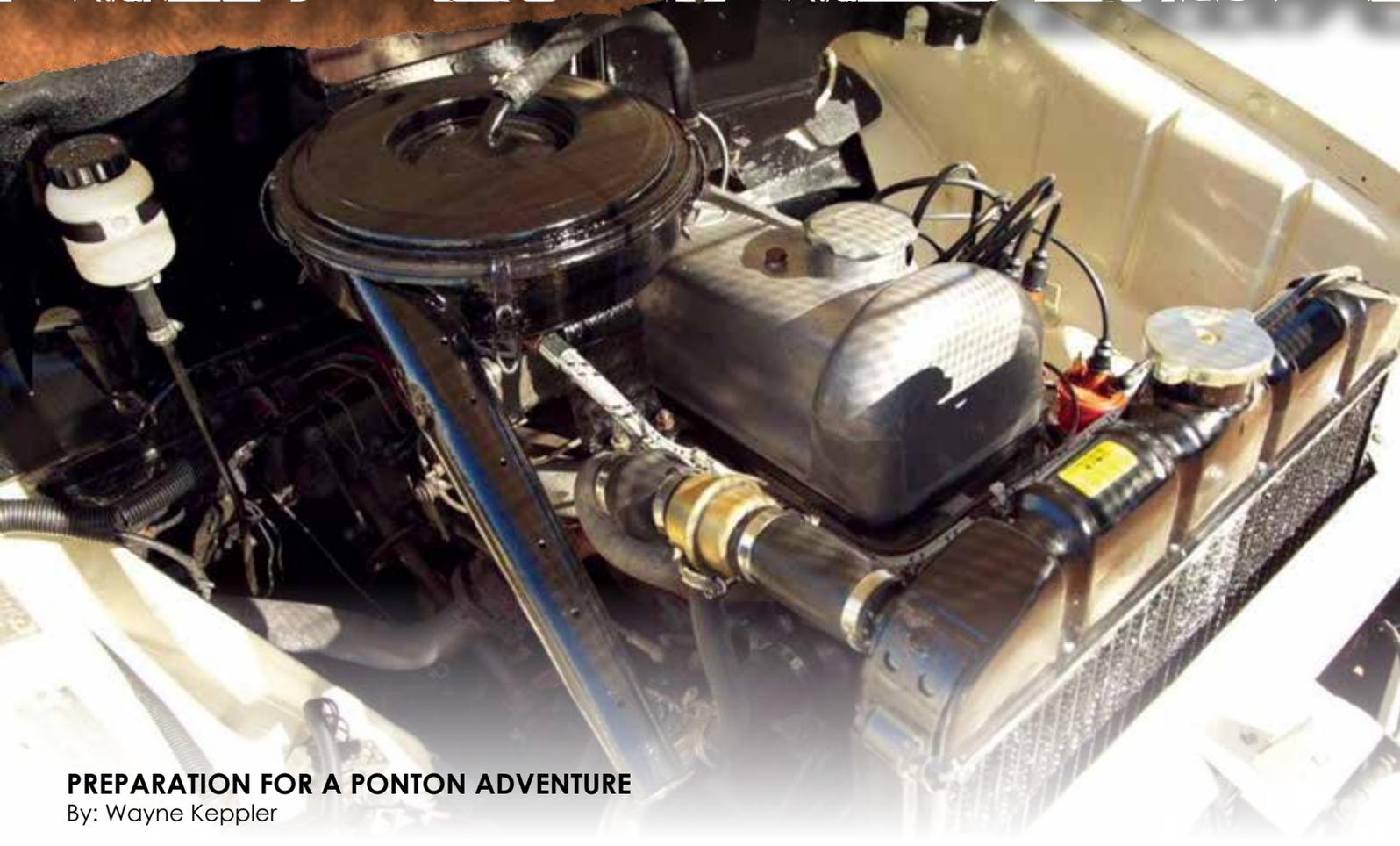
By this time, the smooth sound of a Jazz band performing in the bar, got the feet tapping and joint jumping -to the delight of many. After a hearty breakfast and fond farewells on Sunday morning, we split into different groups and took various routes back home with good memories. For me personally, this was a very special, relaxing event, which I enjoyed thoroughly. Beautiful cars, great company, good food and wine, but most importantly an adventure!



HISTORIC RACING

Pieter B is back!
Be afraid.. very afraid!





PREPARATION FOR A PONTON ADVENTURE

By: Wayne Keppler

It was the best idea ever to create a Ponton Adventure! An adventure is not the usual neighbourhood trip for lunch and back -not exceeding 60km – an adventure implies a challenge, for both man and machine, this in turn defines the reason why so many of us own a Classic Mercedes-Benz!

The Ponton Adventure to Barrydale was born out of good food and fine wine. The idea came about out of a dinner table conversation, early in January, between my wife Lydia and Kurt Stassen and from that point on their attention to the preparation was both single minded and excellent. (They even arranged a reconnaissance trip to prepare and look at stopping points for photo opportunities, rest stops and lunch along the way.)

The Ponton Adventure to Barrydale was however, not a one way – one time walk in the park.

Our lovely 1958 Ponton 190, who at the time was running nicely, needed her own period of 'inspection and reconnaissance' that goes with undertaking a trip of about 600km return. I found the following needed some attention:

- Water Pump leaking.
- Master Cylinder seeping brake fluid.

- Carburettor in need of servicing.
- General Service and top up of all fluids.
- Greasing all the grease points (as you all know there are plenty of these!)

To be on the safe side - I installed an electronic ignition and replaced new main fuel lines and filters. Following this I continued with a process that had been ongoing since January. I took the radiator out and sent it for cleaning and testing. I ordered and installed a new water pump and engine mountings, which I imported from Niemoller in Germany and installed a present bought for me by my lovely wife, Lydia, - a brand new brake fluid reservoir bottle, (the old one was all yellow and dirty, the new one looks great!)

At this stage I discovered that there was that one thing that had always bothered me about the car - the state of the engine bay. It was not up to scratch, it always looked tacky. It was painted black and most of the paint was coming off and looked terrible when compared to the rest of the car.

I thought to myself I would like to re-spray the engine bay, to match the original exterior colour of the car.

How hard can it be I thought? I remembered a visit



to Kurt, I remembered seeing how wonderfully good his Ponton looked when he pulled a similar move and that convinced me to run with the idea. I started stripping the inside of the engine bay. I came across the skeleton of a dead rat that must have been there for many years.

It wasn't a hard job – it just consumed time like one cannot believe!

The stripping carried on and on:

- Master Cylinder and pedal assembly removed - not a nice job.
- Master Cylinder sent for refurbishing, comes back looking like new.
- All the Wheels removed. All rims refurbished and sprayed. New White Wall tyres fitted.

(They look great, and what a difference in the drive.)

Preparation before Spraying of the Engine Bay:

- Sanding and prep work never ends!
- I buy a small electric Spray gun - not fancy at all - really works well considering my spraying experience.
- Get some good advice from Balco Paint Coatings.

Their man Ockert, is extremely helpful. By this time we were already in June and going for July, remember I work in Retail and only really have Sundays to get to other things such as Cars and outings and family etc, so not much time available to work on cars, but I do enjoy it. Some of you will have heard the Afrikaans

saying – “Om 'n perd op te saal wat te groot is” - This was truly how I felt!

After many weekends of prep work and covering and sealing off the rest of the car from the area that required spraying - the fun began! It is not the best time to spray, in the middle of July and with winter very cold and wet. We did and it came out fine, not perfect, but 110% better than what it looked before. See the before and after photos attached.

Now the fun part, the rebuild and putting together, with time running out quickly, fitting all the new parts she came together slowly, eventually I took a few days leave in early September to complete her as panic was starting to set in as time was really running short.

As ek moet terug kyk – was die perd wragtig 'n Groter en die 'op te saal' was moeilik – maar sy lyk pragtig en hardloop soos die wind!

(I was going to post a complete list of what was done... but just reading it made me tired.)

I really enjoy my classic cars and the company that goes with them, really great people and great cars.

Ponton Pedigree: 1958: Ponton 190. One family owned, she started life in Simons Town, belonged to the Mother. She then moved up to the Nelspruit area, from there down to Pieter-maritzburg and back to Cape Town where she spent some time with the son. I bought her and she now lives in Simons Town again. She has completed a Full Circle. She is rust free and a very strong solid Ponton. I enjoy her every time I take her out.





Natal Region

Follow us on



The life and times of 'Dassie' (final chapter)

A 1956 Mercedes-Benz Ponton 180D

(Inspired by Spanner Day –3rd May 2014)

It is very, very difficult to put into words how I really felt about my release from that dreary scrapyards. Not only a place of confinement and gross inactivity, but an existence devoid of any meaning and purposefulness! To slowly and inexorably come to the frightening conclusion that the real reason of my very being - to move, explore, transport and give pleasure to my 'family' was over for ever!

And yet, here I was being carried on top of a smart shining trailer along highways the like of which, could never have been imagined in my early youth!

I was on the lookout for some of my three pointed star cousins – not one to be seen! The sleek, silent and fast moving vehicles that came rushing by bore no resemblance to my kind. In the twenty five odd years of my residence with old 'Scrap Yard Jack', the whole world had changed to something almost unrecognisable.

I suddenly felt naked and exposed atop that rig. The relief and elation of escaping from the breakers yard was slowly being infused by a sense of confusion. What did the bright and knowledgeable fellow, my new





party consisting of – a Black 220S Ponton, Maroon 220S Ponton, Cream 220S

Ponton, Ivory 190 Fintail and

an Ivory 220SE Fintail! Wow, I was home amongst kith and kin!

Could I once again have a place and a purpose in this fast and furious 'new' world that I had suddenly being thrust into?

Why, even the trucks and trailers were juggernauts at 22meters long and 56 tonnes, travelling at speeds that in my heyday would have been nigh on impossible!

In part these nagging concerns that were infiltrating my kop were to be allayed by the behaviour of the same said sleek modern cars that were overtaking us on our journey to a new beginning. Every so often one would slow down next to us and the occupants would wave, blast their hooter and give the thumbs-up sign. At first I thought that the man who was hauling me to places unknown, he must have an awful lot of friends.

Not so! The real attraction was me! Perched atop that smart rig I was the one causing and drawing all the attention! The children eyed me with glee, giving me confirmation that yes; my day was not yet done!

We made a brief stop at Villiers, and then crossed the Vaal River soon to approach the Toll Gates where we would have to pay in order to proceed. Just before the Toll Gate I observed a road sign that proclaimed 'Alternative-Route', then Vrede! Vrede, I became so excited, mustering every ounce of strength, straining against my holding straps, I convinced myself that I was going home to Mooihoek!

Alas it was not to be! The Toll Gate was negotiated and we journey on into the south east towards our final destination, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

In the late afternoon we arrived at our destination. An old style compound with an entrance arch that proclaimed – Oribi Village! This residence, like me had seen better days. However, when we approached the off-loading yard, there lo and behold a welcoming

In time I was to learn that Oribi Village had a long history as a place of compassion, hope and renewal! During the second World War (1939-1945) it served as a Military Hospital, where badly wounded soldiers from 'Up-North' would be brought for healing and rehabilitation – I was indeed hopeful that I to would one day experience the 'spirit' of Oribi!

My new found companions were a cheerful lot even though some were in various stages of decline and/or repair. They wasted no time in enlightening me as to the kind of future I was likely to face! I was introduced to the concept of becoming a 'donor' car rather than a 'crushed' car! This they believed was infinitely better than being completely wasted – recoverable parts would be used to restore the same model and once again it would become the pride and joy of its owner.

Early one beautiful autumn morning my owner Chris arrived with a number of friends in tow. Unlike the gang at the scrapyard these fellows were a happy animated lot. Although from very different backgrounds, nevertheless, they had one thing in common, the love of Mercedes-Benz Cars and were dedicated to the restoration and preservation of my marque in all it wonderful variations and models down the ages!

Much to my surprise they were making a bee-line for me. Over the next few months I would come to know all these men intimately – what a dedicated lot!

Dave the determined one who did not suffer fools easily roared "where's George, tell him to get a move on"! "George" interrupted Warren, "you mean Avish"! When George-Avish appeared he quickly wound Dave up by asking him why he forgot to bring the spanners with him!



I was dumb struck, George-Avish spoke with the same lovely lilt as my last family in Johannesburg, the ones who moved to Durban – surely this has to be the same good people, my spirits lifted as the banter increased! It soon became apparent that I was to be resurrected to a working state and would be taken to a major classic car show in Pietermaritzburg, there to be introduced to the public!

Recovered to Chris's factory, the fellows set to work – the first objective was that my engine would be started for the first time in 25 years and that I would be driven on a lap of honour at the forthcoming show! In preparation for this I was given a four vessel 'by-pass' operation! All my old clogged fuel lines were replaced and a diesel 'drip' was set up as a temporary arrangement to deliver life giving fuel to my old 'oil burner'! A few other minor odds and ends were attended to and I was all set for the BIG show day.

The great day arrived and I was given pride of place under a Gazebo where a story board was erected telling a brief history of my life. However, more importantly it also announced that at 13h00 I would be started and driven for the first time in 25 years!

The goggled eyed public looked at me with a mixture of pity and distain; after all I looked like I had been dragged through a thorn hedge backwards, left in a rancid pond for a very long time! Things were getting interesting!

Over the loudspeaker system the message boomed forth – the hour had arrived, I was to be started! By this time the crowd had swollen to hundreds, many had come to mock and scoff; none believed that I would come to life. George-Avish, Chris and Dave connected the battery and charged up the starter motor – I refused to start. How could I tell them that two of my glow plugs were burnt-out! The decision was taken to attempt

a push start. Robert, Des, Dave and Chris gave the order for the crowd to make a way – they parted like the Red Sea!

Just in the nick of time appears a very familiar tractor, could this be 'Deere John' from Mooihoek, sure looked like him! A rope was attached and I was on my way round the Cricket Oval much to the delight to the following hoard that had by now swollen to some four hundred! And then it happened, a moment of great glory, I burst into life, the rope was removed, I was under my own power, the cheers went up and I went forth on my first lap of honour!

That triumphant happening was the day my fate was sealed, from thence forth my journey was to be one of a remarkable return to a world that had almost written me off! Thanks to the passion, commitment, dedication and hard work of a 'band of brothers' from the Mercedes-Benz Club SA - KwaZulu- Natal Region! I was returned to the factory late in the evening where the silence was golden and as the sun began to set over the rim of hills that surround Pietermaritzburg, I fell into a deep happy sleep! In my dreams I was once again on the winding gravel road that leads to Mooihoek. The dust was swirling out from the rear and I watched once again with glee as the wind lifted this 'stof' and rolled it into a streamer before depositing it onto the open veld. The Cosmos lined road drew me onward to the beautiful old sandstone house!

And as I approached two little children ran towards me screaming at the top of their voices – "Ma, Pa Kom kyk, Kom gou! It's Dassie, its Dassie she has come home!



Footnote: *The story of Dassie is essentially the story of all of us. We are brought into this world and all have a unique journey – like Dassie it has its twists and turns. Some were fortunate to grow up with Mercedes-Benz in their lives, others come to appreciate, restore and enjoy this remarkable Marque later on in their journey!*

All have one common objective and that is to create an environment where great dreams are made through life's up and downs shared with like-minded people who have a great love for all the intrinsic values that Mercedes-Benz stands for!

Dedication: *The story of Dassie is dedicated to the two beautiful children of Avish and Mira Maharaj, Kush and Kashmir. Almost without exception the children participate in all the Club outings! The writer of Dassie is privileged to read and tell stories to these lovely children – they are our future!*

Desmond Armstrong - November 2014



Northern Region

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB NATIONAL CONCOURS: (SEPTEMBER 2014) - By: Hans-Rudolf Bosch.

My father, Hans Georg Bosch, introduced me to the Mercedes-Benz Club of South Africa seven years ago. It has been a wonderful experience and I have enjoyed the company of amiable people sharing a common interest, at numerous events and functions. One of these recent events was the National Concours of the Mercedes-Benz Club which was hosted by the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Menlyn, Pretoria.

The National Concours is the premier event on the Club Calendar and attracts entries from right across South Africa. This grand event started with the registration of the Northern Region Concours D'état entries and the experienced panel of judges were soon hard at work evaluating the individual attributes and adherence to standards of each vehicle on display.

It was a real pleasure to see the lengths to which the owners had put themselves through to get their vehicles to the condition they were in. The day was one filled with interesting conversations, inspecting vehicles and, of course, outstanding catering. I found it wonderful, that so many Club members, from other regions, had travelled long distances to attend this event. It showcased for me, the strong sense of unity which the members of the Mercedes-Benz Club share.

The day ended with an early evening braai, which was put on by Hein Lorentz and his very slick, Mercedes-Menlyn Team! It was an excellent evening, reuniting old friends who were soon - 'in the mood', as the wine flowed smoothly and followed the food.

Sunday brought the opportunity for entrants from the other regions' to contest a Concours D'état and a Tops Only Concours, of their own.

The 'Mercedes-Menlyn Team' got the day started in exactly the right way, with an exquisite breakfast, as the beautiful cars were tastefully arranged on display. Keen interest and healthy inter-regional competition, saw a large number of entries presented for scrutineering and it was wonderful to see the large variety of Classic Mercedes-Benz models on display.

Prize giving was eagerly awaited and took place directly after a lovely 'Themed Lunch' that showcased other fine attributes and traditions of Germany. We then gathered, in front of a table laden with trophies, certificates and shared the laughter and pride of the winners as they received recognition for their fine efforts. These were the winners of trophies awarded:

Category	Entrant	Car
Class W110/111/112	Juan Moller	1966 230S
Class W113	Yousuf Mahomed	1969 280SL
Class W114/115	Thasvir Premrajh	1972 220
Class W123	Carika Aucamp	1983 200
Class W116	Leon du Preez	1977 350SE
Class W107	Nico Boshoff	1989 500SL
Class W124	Johann Lottering	1985 300D
Class W201	Hein Lorentz	1986 190E 2.5
Class W203	Chris Cloete	2003 C32
Tops Only	Warren Watters	2010 SL63
Prix D'Etat Modern (overall winner)	Chris Cloete	2003 C32
Prix D'Etat Classic (overall winner)	Carika Aucamp	1983 200
Prix D'Honneur (Grand overall winner)	Fanie du Preez	1985 280E
Ladies' Choice	Theo Pienaar	1972 280SL
Oldest Car Entered	Fred Swanepoel	1952 170DS

I am absolutely amazed by the sense of community within this Club. The sincerity and cordiality amongst the members is always something to look forward to in a get-together.





REGOLIA

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Grille badges available from 2011 AGM.
 If interested, please call or contact Waldo Scribante.
 Normal Colour R300 ea (9 available)

Please note that there has been a price increase for the MBCSA grille badges. They will now cost R250 a piece. Still worth every penny!



NAVY MONZA SHIRT
R250



STITCH SHIRT
R250



FUSION LOUNGE SHIRT
R250 to R300



NAVY JACKET (SOFT)
R300



FLEECY TOP
R300



3in1_Jacket
R500 to R600



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SUN SHADE R130



CLUB GRILLE BADGE
R250



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R60



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R10
REGION
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LICENSE
DISK
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