



DIE
THE **BENZ LENS**

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA

Stargazing



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Editorial

Stephen Kaalsen



One might think that it is common for Porsche to manufacture luxury family cars, but in previous years, it wasn't quite as obvious. It wasn't so likely to spot a Cayenne, because there weren't any. One might think that the first ever sedan Porsche made was the Panamera? Well think again. It was the Mercedes-Benz 500E.

Dear reader, your time to read this outstanding 'digizine' is quite valuable, and as promised, we are Stargazing! This year we are looking at the rare and the collectable, the scarce and the valuable. In this very special edition, there is no exception as we are featuring the king of the W124, the 500E.

When the production of the 928 and the 959 Porsche were brought to a halt, Porsche needed to keep the doors of their Rossle-Bau plant open in Zuffenhausen. It was a coincidence that Mercedes-Benz wanted to build something special, something unique. Something that was not meant for a chauffeur or

housewife. The answer was a Porsche inspired W124 – the beefiest of beef sport sedans.

The 500E, whose proper code number is W124.036, could reach 100km/h in 6.1 seconds. Propulsion comes from the M119 engine which is a 5.0-liter V8 renowned for its ability to cover half a million kilometres without skipping a beat, as long as it's maintained properly. It produced 240kW power, and 480Nm torque. Remember, this is the era when Mercedes-Benz over-engineered everything. Variable valve timing on the intake side helps to make 322 hp. Its top speed clocked 260km/h.

Each car was handmade to perfection, and it literally took 18 days to build one, compared to the three days for completion of a regular W124. Mercedes-Benz's Sindelfingen plant made the basic bodies in white, and it then headed to Porsche's Rossle-Bau line at Zuffenhausen, just to the north of Stuttgart, for structural mods. Then it went back to Sindelfingen for painting and rustproofing. Finally, it was

enroute back to Rossle-Bau to receive the drivetrain, chassis, and interiors.

To sit in one of the four leather-covered Recaro seats (the fronts are heated) is to enjoy a serene wood-trimmed cabin where one could almost be oblivious to the quickly gathering momentum if one neglected to check the speedometer. Only slightly worrying is the fact that some early versions didn't have any airbags. E500's had a 10-speaker Alpine system that was definitely a step up.

Over ten thousand examples were produced. If you ever see an E500 Limited with an even plusher interior - that was the final run of 12 cars made for Switzerland. The name went from 500E to E500 for the 1994 model year face-lift that applied to the whole E-Class range.

Having a clean unmarked W124 500 in today's collection, might become one of the most expensive sedan Benz's to own, along with the M100 powered sedans and others.

Dear reader, we are stargazing in our club too with this edition of the Benz Lens. We are gazing at our very successful AGM, the tremendous Benz Essen Safari, regional gatherings, and special outings. The aim and purpose of this digizine, is for you to participate in the club through the lens of the magazine. After all, it is our club which keeps us as friends and cars, together...

Credit: www.superstreetonline.com



from the President

Waldo Scribante



34th National Gathering and AGM

Our National Gathering and AGM is always a highly anticipated, highly enjoyable event. This year proved no exception!

The Central region hosted the Mercedes-Benz Club of South Africa's 34th National Gathering and AGM at the Golden Gate Reserve in the Eastern Free State. A wonderful event, in a truly breath-taking environment. My congratulations and sincere appreciation go to Theo Potgieter, Fanie and Anita du Preez, the van Pletzens and Kachelhoffers. They did an incredible job organising what was a thoroughly enjoyable weekend, running from Thursday to Saturday.

In the absence of Theo Potgieter, who departed on a new life adventure in the USA, Louis and Hermien Coetzer hosted us over the weekend on behalf of the Central region. We are incredibly grateful for their hospitality.

A successful AGM meeting was held on the Thursday afternoon, and I once again extend my congratulations to Chris Carlisle-Kitz – Vice President, Annalie Kachelhoffer – National Secretary, and Johan Kemp – National Treasurer, for unopposed re-

elections for another term on the National Committee. And together with our regional Chairmen, it is a great honour for me to once again lead our Club into 2020.

On a motion from Louis Coetzer, and the approval of the National Committee, the members at the AGM awarded a special membership to Fanie du Preez, Vice Chairman of the Central region. The unanimous decision bears testament to Fanie's commitment to the club on a regional and national level. His ongoing financial support, as well as his support of various events throughout the country, are recognised and appreciated by all. Thank you, Fanie, for your significant efforts to promote and grow the MBCSA.

Fanie has taken over the Chairmanship of the Central region. We thank him and wish him and the region all of the very best.

At the Gala evening, I had the honour of presenting a Hero award to Annalie Kachelhoffer, our current National Secretary. I once again thank her for her superb efforts and service to our club, and of course, I once again unashamedly acknowledge my favourite team member... my wife, René! Without my "first lady", I simply would not be able to fulfil my role as President. Thank you for joining me on this journey, for allowing me to live my passion, and for being at my side with your constant support.



Benz Essen Safari

Two weeks after the AGM, a group of 30 club members joined René and I on the Benz Essen Safari 2019. Our adventure began with a weekend of visiting the Dr Carl Benz Museum in Ladenburg, as well as the MB and Porsche Museums in Stuttgart.

Monday was a busy day, starting with a guided tour of the world known Kienle Restoration to see the specialists working on the 300SL's and 600's. We then visited the Sindelfingen plant, where the latest S-Class is built. That evening, we visited the MB Classic Centre in Fellbach, where we learned about the prestigious history of our beloved Mercedes-Benz cars.

Tuesday, we visited the Sinsheim and Speyer Technic Museums, staying over in the historic town of Worms.

On Wednesday morning, we arrived in Essen. Immediately after checking in, we set out to explore the Essen Techno Classica 2019 exhibition. We were greeted by a spectacular Mercedes-Benz display of the legendary C111.

On Friday morning, I had to attend a webmaster meeting of the MB Classic Clubs Management. The rest of the



from the **PRESIDENT**

group had a choice of returning to the show or visiting the Volkwang Gallery. That afternoon, the group visited the Dusseldorf Classic Remise, a historic roundhouse for locomotives, which was converted into private storage garages of classic cars!

What a fantastic time we had. Amazing camaraderie, and a trip we will never forget.

regional chairman. I once again thank editor Stephen Kaalsen for a brilliant publication.

Benz Lens Annual

The 2018 Edition of the Benz Lens Annual is now available from your



Knysna Motor Show

The Southern Cape hosted a very successful 190SL and 300SL weekend, with 5 x 300SL's on display at the 2019 Knysna Motor Show. Together with the 190SL's, Pagodas and 2 x 300SE Fintails, I can proudly say we had one of the best displays of all the Motor Shows I have recently attended.

A huge thank you to everyone who joined and helped us, creating yet another weekend of motoring fellowship. As we always say, "the best or nothing" – and ours is truly camaraderie at its very best!





Hero **AWARD**

By *Waldo Scribante*



She “married” into the club when she and hubby came into each other’s lives. Together they have built up a beautiful collection of cars and memorabilia at their museum on the outskirts of Bloemfontein.

Annalie Kachelhoffer – our very own madam Secretary.

Not knowing her W’s from her R’s or V’s did not deter her from becoming the first female chairperson of a region in 2012 - the year she joined the club. Her passion for life and all things Star related, is contagious and the region flourished under her reigns. Even organizing an AGM at Black Mountain Resort, 60km from Bloemfontein was no problem for her.

She and Jaco also turned the club regalia shop into the profitable business it is today.

She climbed the club ladder and has been serving on the National Committee as secretary since 2015.

She inspires with her boundless enthusiasm for the job - always on time with the necessary documents, and always willing to go the extra mile.

Making full use of the power of WhatsApp to keep me in line with her reminders.

Congratulations Annalie on receiving this award and a huge thank you for all the time and passionate effort you put into the club on a daily basis.





Special **MEMBER**

By Waldo Scribante



Fanie was born into the Mercedes-Benz family with his father driving Pontons and Fintails when he was a youngster. This would explain his special love for the Ponton and Fintail models. He and Anita even went on honeymoon in his 220S Fintail which he still owns to this day. He has built up a very special collection of Mercedes saloon cars over the years. He finally realized one of his dreams two years ago by building a museum at his house and can now enjoy his collection on a daily basis.

Fanie does not see himself as the owner of these cars but rather as caretaker to preserve them for future generations. It is exactly this amazing humble quality that makes him such an admired and loved

member of this club. He served on the Central region's committee for years helping to arrange national gatherings, register events and the annual Cars in the park in Bloemfontein of which Dups towing is the main sponsor. He will leave no stone unturned to help his friends and even strangers out of very difficult situations due to the nature of his business. With Anita by his side they have travelled all over and even across the borders of the country, covering countless miles in their classic Mercedes cars. He is a true ambassador for the club and mentor for the younger generation starting their journey as custodians for these wonderful cars and club. *We salute you!*



BENZ Essen Safari 2019

By Sven Krassnokutski



WhatsApp has become a very effective tool for sharing information. When our Club President created the Benz Essen Safari 2019 WhatsApp group on 6 September 2018, I don't think any of us had any idea of the mammoth event this would become. So much so that the group of 32 members of the Mercedes-Benz Club of South Africa including some spouses, attending the event had bonded long before the trip even began. Waldo kept everyone up to date with arrangements as they were being finalised and teasers of what was to come.

Members shared their various ways to Frankfurt airport, which was to be the starting point of our tour. Members travelled via Amsterdam, London, Paris, Lisbon and other exotic destinations. Unfortunately, the Central Region attendees got slightly confused, travelling via Parys to Frankfurt where they couldn't find any other members of the group...

Day 1 dawned and everyone made their way to bus parking lot P36 at Frankfurt airport, which was our designated meeting point. Everyone gathered and we proceeded to wait, both for our tour guide and our tour bus. A most un-German start to what would be a very thoroughly German tour. But arrive they did, and Ekki and Roger bade us all a warm welcome. All face-to-face introductions being done, the bus was boarded and we were on our

way to the first stop – the original Benz & Cie works in Ladenburg, which is now the Dr. Carl Benz Museum.

Although this was one of the smaller museums we visited, it quickly became clear that the quality and quantity of cars and other historical artefacts we would see during the week ahead was going to be something quite breath-taking.

We spent a happy few hours working our way through the museum and exploring



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Ladenburg, admiring Benz's home, the world's first planned garage and the old city. Bratwurst, pizza (why, when in Germany?) Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte, Bretzel and plenty of beer were all part of our first collective experience of our culinary week ahead. For the energetic amongst us, a walking tour of the old city walls, Roman ruins and old-world cathedral took us back into a much older history than our South African cities offer.

After an afternoon's drive to Stuttgart and checking in to our hotel, supper at the well-known Paulaner am alten Domplatz was an education in German efficiency and a delight in German cuisine. Some ground rules for the remainder of the week were established: beer in anything less than a 0.5l serving was too small and no Eisbein was too big!

Day 2 – Sunday dawned with great anticipation for what I expected of be one of the highlights of the tour – the

Mercedes-Benz Museum. I can confidently say that none of us, even those who had visited it before, were disappointed. One has heard and read much of the history of the marque about which we are so passionate, but the trip through time and the richness with which the company's and the world's history were conveyed was incredible. The story-telling, the perfect exhibits, the unusual (and sometimes seemingly random) historical items which have been dug out, lovingly restored and included in the narrative take more time to fully appreciate than the visit allows for and are only fully realised with the benefit of a great deal of reflection and looking at the thousands of photo's taken. What an experience! Many kilometres of walking were fittingly concluded with a sumptuous lunch and some retail therapy in the museum shop, as well as some further oogling at the All Time Stars exhibits for sale. Consensus was that the "new" W111 Coupé priced at a cool 400,000€ would

have been the pinnacle of many a collection.

But the assault on our senses (and the resultant euphoria) was not yet done – after a brief drive across town, we got to start all over again at the Porsche Museum. Despite not having the length of history or as much to exhibit as the Mercedes-Benz Museum (I know, I am biased – unashamedly so!), it was another enlightenment in quality and storytelling. From a Porsche tractor to the one millionth 911, it certainly made for another impressive display. A typical Brauhaus dinner rounded off the day perfectly.

Day 3 – Monday morning heralded another much-anticipated outing, this time to Kienle Automobiltechnik – one of the most well-respected Mercedes-Benz restorers. It very quickly became evident why. Jam-packed with 300SL roasters and gullwings, 600's, 300Sc's, a 540K and many other exotics, the workshop was a sight to behold.



BENZ Essen Safari 2019



We were taken on a guided tour and were able to observe work being done on bodywork, upholstery, electrical, mechanical and pneumatic specialist divisions which all go into making the cars that come out of a restoration process in this workshop better than new. Kienle estimates that a full restoration takes up to 5,000 man hours. At 140€ per hour, we suddenly understood why there were no “ordinary” cars, such as Ponton or Fintail sedans to be seen – it is simply not economically viable to restore these. But to watch the masters of their trades at work was mesmerising. Due to the primitive tooling of the time, the variations from car to car on, for example, a 300SL, are so great, that body panels or a set of beadings has to be hand-fitted and adjusted for each individual car. Once this has been painstakingly completed over many hours, the car is stripped down and panels sent for painting and beading sent for chroming before the whole car is reassembled. One begins to understand why 5,000 hours are required...



Highlight built upon highlight, with a visit to the restoration for old cars being followed by a tour of the birthplace of new ones. In the Sindelfingen factory, we were taken through the S-Class assembly line. Each car is made to order and built to specification, so all parts arrive at each station in the correct sequence. One of the first components installed into the painted bodywork is the dashboard, which contains many of the computer modules for the car. Including options chosen, finishes selected and in left- or right-hand drive, there are over 600,000 variations of dashboards, each of which has to be matched to the correct body version (short-wheelbase, long-wheelbase or stretch Maybach version) and all the other unique trim parts, engine variants and other options



BENZ Essen Safari 2019

selected for each car. Incredibly, much of the work is still very manually supervised and workers change stations every two hours to ensure continued attention to detail. What a contrast between the old and the new! While each beading needs to be moulded to an individual car at Kienle, the new S-Class – a car of over five meters in length – is assembled to within a tolerance of 0.5mm. Unreal.

As if we had not seduced our senses enough for one day, we proceeded to the Mercedes-Benz Classic Centre where we were again amazed by the restoration, repair and maintenance work done on historical Mercedes-Benz cars, including those still raced by Mercedes-Benz, such as the famous W25, which Avish and John could not resist posing with for a very special photo.

Day 4 – Leaving Stuttgart behind us, we travelled to Sinsheim Transport Museum. By now it was becoming evident – the Germans do

museums. Very well. This is a vast museum which includes a history of transportation of all kinds. On display and accessible were a Concorde and a Tupolev, steam locomotives, military history, Americana and a display of German cars (again, predominantly Merc's and Porsche's) to rival any we had seen up to that point. After another couple of kilometres of walking to try to take in as much of the displays as possible, it was most welcome to sit down for 45 minutes and watch a 3D IMAX documentary, even if it was in German – without subtitles! We knew our walking for the day was not yet complete – the Technical Museum Speyer was our afternoon's outing.

By this point, many of this group of die-hard Mercedes enthusiasts were starting to walk past YET ANOTHER pristine 300SL without even so much as a sideways glance. Maybe it was that we had seen so many of them already. Maybe it was that people's feet were too sore

from walking at that point to care. Such was the quality and quantity of exhibits we were privileged to have seen up to that point. Despite being transport focused, these museums also included other displays of everything imaginable, from fashion, agricultural instruments, musical history – and even a space shuttle. Many people again gladly stopped and put their 1€ into the slot to listen to the Glockenspiel or self-playing organs, which are in themselves, marvels of engineering and decorated with exquisite care and attention to detail.

A short drive further, we were in Worms, our overnight stop. Worms is an ancient town full of history and legend. It is said to be the site on which much of the historical Niebelungensage played out and this is evident in the effigies of dragons and warriors which were evident and it was incredible to have stood at the cathedral where Griemhild and Siegfried were supposed to have married. After much



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walking, driving (and beer), a good night's sleep was in order!

Day 5 - Transfer to Essen for the Techno-Classica Messe. We had early bird tickets and were right at the front, waiting for the doors to open. It was certainly busy, but Germanic order prevailed and everyone waited patiently for the official opening time. It is just as well that two-and-a-half days were allowed for the Messe, but we soon found that even this was insufficient to fully work our way through all the items on display. More perfect 300SL's, books, parts, accessories, cars on auction... the fair was completely overwhelming and it takes many passes of all the stalls and much patience to take in everything on offer and a sense of curiosity to seek out the unusual bits and pieces which people were looking for - Chris's spot lights, Pieter's voltage regulators and 8mm tapes, Christopher's R107 soft-top release handle... you name it! Among one of the most curious things on display was a Fintail... but without the fins. Which makes it a what? Many members got lost in the vastness of the fair. Avish and John got lost to the point that we didn't see them all day and they didn't even make it for supper with the group. They must have misunderstood the directions to the restaurant because they were sending us pictures of biryani and butter chicken instead of Bratwurst und Bier!

After one-and-a-half days of trawling the stalls at the Messe, some members decided to catch up on some culture of a different sort and on Friday morning accompanied René to get their dose of Van Gogh, Monet, Cezanne, Picasso, Gauguin and other work by illustrious artists at a local art gallery.

We braved the Friday afternoon traffic to Düsseldorf for a brief visit to the Classic Remise,



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an old shunting yard which has been converted into garages for hire and includes workshops and a showroom... and some more 300SL's!

On Friday evening after dinner, sadly, some of the members started saying their goodbyes, as some were to go on to various other destinations instead of catching the bus back to Frankfurt Airport on Saturday morning. Berlin, Dortmund, Paris, Munich, Faro, Cologne and Braunschweig were some of the destinations that people were moving on to before heading home.

One can delay the inevitable, but can't get away from it. Sooner or later, everyone has to head home, but we are so much the richer for an unforgettable experience with a group of very special people, some of whom

were and others of whom have become friends. I think it says much for the bonds that were made that no-one has left the Benz Essen Safari 2019 WhatsApp group, which is still abuzz with much chatter and sharing.

I am sure I speak on behalf of all members in saying a big and heartfelt "Danke Schön" to Waldo for all the organising which went into an exceptionally well planned and executed tour. Thanks also to Ekki and Roger, whose friendly conversation and unending helpfulness made the week even more memorable.

We are also extremely grateful to all the sponsors for the weekend - Anna-Lee Dos Santos, Jaco and Annalie Kachelhoffer, Waldo and René Scribante and Harvey World Travel. Your contributions to making this

amazing experience possible are something for which all attendees are deeply grateful.

We are waiting with bated breath for the next President's Tour. Waldo, what's it to be?

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SOUTHERN CAPE REGION



KNYSNA MOTOR SHOW

By Aldo van Zyl

HOLD THE PRESS! HOLD THE PRESS! – This just in, the greatest 300SL & 190SL gathering, plus a winner amongst the Benz’s.

Yes, you heard me a, great gathering of 300 & 190SSL’s. But let me start at the beginning, which is a really good place to start. A group of us set forth from George and Cape Town, most notably Andre and Dennis, who were all the way from Cape Town with their SL’s. At their arrival at Waldo’s, we set our sights to Plettenberg Bay where

we all would be gathering for the weekend. Rene channelled her inner Sophia Loren and looked the part with her beautiful 190SL, whilst I drove the “kos kar”! All were gathered in Plettenberg Bay for the weekend and festivities started the Friday with a dinner at the Fat Fish restaurant. We had a great time and a lot of laughs with old friends.

Saturday morning was quickly upon us and we all gathered for a photo session at the lookout point in Plett and again wow! What a sight to behold. A great collection of 300SL and 190SL’s together with the vistas on the

beach and ocean made for spectacular photographs.

When all was done and dusted at the photo session we took a leisurely walk up the hill to “The Plettenberg” hotel and restaurant, where we were in for a lunch treat of note in the company of each other and as usual the talk went to the SL’s that was the star attraction, don’t pardon the pun. Saturday was winding down and Waldo arranged for dinner at the very popular “Enrico’s” restaurant at Kearbooms where again everybody was in anticipation awaiting the motor show on Sunday.



SOUTHERN CAPE REGION



Sanlam was a main sponsor and brought with it some gravitas to the event as most of the cars there could be also seen as an investment.

All were up early in Plett and we were off to Knysna to set up our stand which looked rather fine accompanied by the fantastic cars on show.

The Knysna motor show is an exclusive motor show, and the vehicles are handpicked by the event organisers. This year was no different, the motorcars in attendance were of exceptional quality and standard, ranging from bespoke Bentleys to Italian muscle cars such as Lamborghini and Ferrari. Yes the bar was set to extraordinary levels, but

alas, the three pointed star always shines bright and brought some winning delight for Team Mercedes. The winner of the most beautiful car of the day was the 300SL of Rick Garrett, what a beautiful piece of machinery and engineering, no wonder the judges chose the car as it was in such great nick. Our stand was also graced by the attendance of a very rare and exclusive Mercedes McLaren SLR, and this needs to be said, that it has a throaty gurgle that can in seconds change to a menacing guttural growl to scare off any unwanted predator. It even made the Lamborghini sound civilised.

We had in all five 300SL's and it must be some new record for

our region, once again for all that came from far and wide, Neil Schreibe, Japie Vos, Connie Oosthuizen and Andre Fourie, thank you very much for all your trouble. To all the other owner's of Mercedes's thank you very much for being there and taking such good care of your investments.

After much banter, "ooing and aahhing" of the vehicles that were on display the day and weekend was drawing to a close and it is with a bit of sadness that we all said our farewells, until the next time that the three pointed stars will gather again to show off their magnificent beauty and strength.



SOUTHERN CAPE REGION



SOUTHERN CAPE REGION





CENTRAL REGION

KUIER, KUIER MAAK ONS NUWE VRIENDE

Deur Johann Smit

Die Sentrale Streek is geografies seker een van die grootste streke in Suid-Afrika. Van Upington in die Weste tot in the Noord-Oos Vrystaat is dit rofweg 800 km.

Dit is dus moeilik vir lede om altyd saamtrekke by te woon en daarom het lede van die Noord-Kaapse gedeelte van die streek besluit om sogenaamde "Breakfast Runs" te hou. Lede ontmoet mekaar in die middel en kuier heerlik saam. So kry die ou motors 'n geleentheid om 'n hele paar kilometers af te lê, maar bo alles kom entoesiaste bymekaar en word ongelooflike vriendskappe gesluit. Daar word gepoog om almal wat 'n passie het vir 3-punt sterre en ander veteraan voertuie saam te trek en sodoende ook ons streekskomitee by te staan deur te help met kuiergeleenthede.

Ons eerste ontbyt is op 30 Maart langs die N12 op Windsorton gehou wat deur 13 persone bygewoon is, onder

andere ons voorsitter Fanie du Preez en sy vrou Anita. Dankie ook aan nog 'n Bloemfonteiner, Louis Coetzer, wat ook daar was. (Ek glo hulle wou kom kyk of die klomp Turke nie kwaad doen nie.)

Die entoesiasme het so posgevat dat daar met die tweede ontbyt by die Border Hotel op 5 Mei 20 persone opgedaag het. Terloops, die Border Hotel is in 1879 opgerig waar die grense van die destydse Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek, Betsjoeanaland en die Griekwalandwes Kolonie bymekaar gekom het. Nadat Rhodes die spoorlyn in 1890 na Betsjoeanaland en later Rhodesië voltooi het, is daar 'n stasie regoor die hotel opgerig. Voor die eerste koppie koffie het 6 van dië wat nog nie klublede is nie, besluit om aan te sluit want "Hier

kuier ons lekker"!

Vroeg in Junie word 'n saamkuier op Groblershoop beplan waar die Upington manne by ons kan aanhaak.

In Julie sal die streek se jaarlikse ete in Kimberley gehou word en sal dit gekombineer word met 'n toer van die geskiedkundige geboue in Kimberley asook 'n besoek aan die Groot Gat.

Die foto's weerspieël die manne se trots met dit wat vertoon word. Wat baie verblydend is, is die aantal jong manne wat entoesiasties na vore tree.

Ons vertrou dat ons met hierdie kuierproses nog groot hoogtes gaan bereik!



CENTRAL REGION



34th AGM and National Gathering



AGM AND NATIONAL GATHERING 2019

By Fanie Du Preez

We all know that every year the AGM and National Gathering of the Mercedes Benz Club is the highlight on the calendar. Each year we look forward to the next highly anticipated AGM and National Gathering, and before you know it 12 months had passed and suddenly it is AGM time again. This is an event for young and old, with a little bit for everyone.

In retrospect I can mention that this premier event was a huge success and a highlight to remember.

The function took place in the picturesque Eastern Free State and although the roads were not in good condition, we used and enjoyed our beloved vehicles to the maximum. The Central Region Committee of the Mercedes-Benz Club wanted to give the members the feeling of

the local people and the region. All the goody bags for instance was a remembrance of the local farming community. After registration on 21st of March the AGM meeting was held in the Eland Hall of Golden Gate Hotel. The National Committee was re-elected. That evening we kicked off with a 3 course dinner and our President presented a small prize giving to committee members.

The next day we all drove to

the world famous Sand Stone Estate near Ficksburg. The farm was built up by the Wille family from the 1830's, who were originally German missionaries. Today it is part of an international Agri-business that produces wheat, soya, beans, maize and sunflowers. It has been 100% organic since 2005. Sand Stone is known for their railway and military heritage. We were entertained with a guided tour





The highlight of the day was the trip on the old “Mercedes” locomotive on and around the Sand Stone farm.

that was very interesting. Seeing all the old tractors and steam engines of a bygone era, was incredible.

Although the locomotive broke down, all the people enjoyed the time and laughter in the open field and fresh air while waiting for the relief unit.

On Saturday, 23 March, we visited Ionia cherry farm for a cherry liqueur and mampoer

pairing and tasting. We were surprised when pupils from the local farm school held a concert. All the members could enjoy the rest of the afternoon in the picturesque Clarens.

That evening the closing off function was held – the prestigious gala event. The Hero member award went to Annalie Kachelhoffer and myself, Fanie du Preez received a special

membership reward. Clive Winterstein handled the auction in a very professional way and we raised R65 000,00 for the Ionia Farm School.

The memorable weekend passed very quickly, but fortunately we will see our Mercedes family again next year at the AGM in Graaff Reinet.

34th AGM and National Gathering



34th AGM and National Gathering



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34th AGM and National Gathering



34th AGM and National Gathering



34th AGM and National Gathering





KWA-ZULU NATAL REGION

Cars in the Park – May 2019

By Richard Tudor-Owen

The weather in KZN during May makes it arguably the best month of the year. Not too hot, and with less chance of rain, it's an ideal time to host outdoor events.

This year's popular Cars in the Park show was held at the same site near Ashburton as it did for the past 3 years. Clear skies and temperature in the mid-twenties brought in thousands of visitors who crammed the venue from early morning till mid afternoon.

Every vehicle manufacturer who ever sold in SA was represented at the show, and indeed one is always assured of seeing something new each year. Even the many trade stands offer surprises such as the Maritzburg company offering a service to apply chrome to any conceivable material you like. Chrome gumboots? Yep, I saw them with my own eyes!

The KZN Mercedes Benz branch of the National Club once again put on a display of classic models from the fifties right up to the 21st Century with a surprise thrown in for good measure. Their familiar large grey marquee this year was set up with the display of some thirty members' cars at the front and Garden City Motors displaying various new models to the rear.

There were Pontons from the fifties including KZN vice chairman Warren Geyser's glorious 180D Bakkie fresh from its recent restoration, to Justin Arnold's silver S600 V12. There were more R107 SLs on display than I recall in previous years.

It's a mystery why our club has not received a 'best stand' award but we know that we have probably the most elegant

set-up along the strip of tar with tables and chairs and all day refreshments of tea or coffee and delicious cakes, which I was told I didn't actually need - but I still had 3 pieces! Then there was a full lunch with a choice of main course and traditional Indian pudding after the usual award ceremony.

Becoming a tradition at midday, chairman Avish Maharaj officially welcomed members and guests. He thanked those involved, particularly Warren Geyser and Dave Roux, for their help and support in setting up the stand for the weekend. He paid tribute to Garden City Motors for their generosity with financial support and various infrastructure: support which he believes is unparalleled anywhere in the country.

It was our pleasure on the day to host Mercedes Club National Vice President Chris Carlisle-Kitz who, although he is officially now a Northern Region member, said he still thinks of himself as a KZN boy! Chris thanked everyone for the great turnout and for the honour of presenting the awards.

The Chairman's choice award this year went to Warren and Mia Geyser for "The Beast"! This is Warren's 1963 Fintail W111 300SE race car with CLK 63AMG motor and running gear. The car was inspired by and pays tribute to the original 300SEL AMG Rote Sau of the late 60s. With over 400 bhp this car will provide some serious entertainment for Warren.

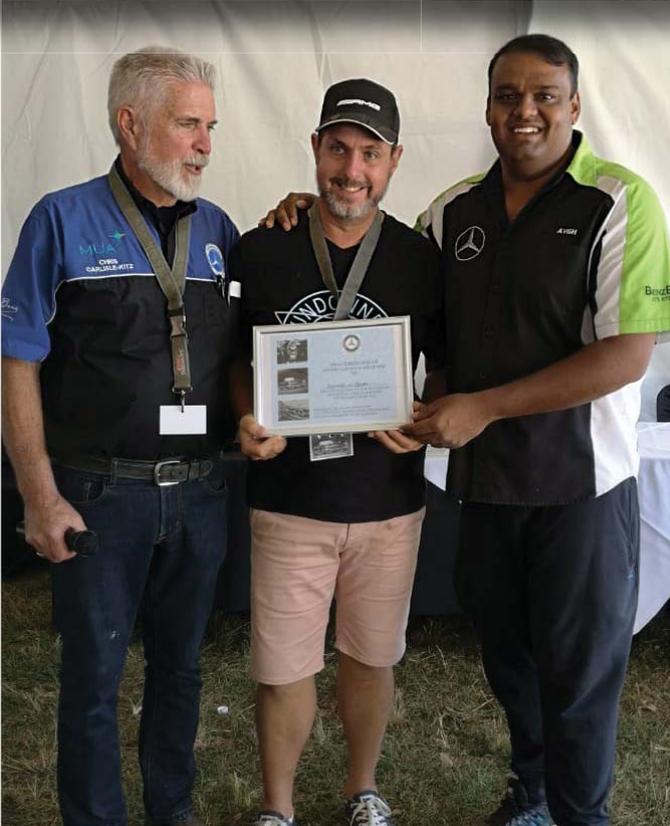
A special award for generosity went to Raymond van Rooyen who has given so much support to the club during the year and great help, including financial help, setting up the club stand.

Another special award was made to Garden City Motors of Pietermaritzburg in recognition of their support and received by Trevor Ngcobo, Sales Manager and Radesh Bahari, Sales Executive.

Other awards presented were as follows:

- **Vice President's Choice** - Fintail 220S - Alan Govender
- **Ladies' Choice** - 1956 180D Ponton Bakkie - Warren Geyser
- **People's Choice** - Display and R107 280SL - John Aritho
- **Best 2-door** - R107 280SL - Saran Naidoo
- **Oldest Car on Show** - 1956 180D Bakkie - Warren Geyser
- **Furthest distance travelled** (Nelspruit) - 280SE - Chris Viljoen
- **Best Fintail** - 220S - Alan Govender





TRIP TO CRINKLEY BOTTOM PARK – March 2019

By Avish Maharaj

On the 31st of March this year, KZN members found themselves blessed with gorgeous KZN weather. The sun was still shining down warmly in our last few days of summer and there was just a hint of winter crispness in the air. Not one to waste such an opportunity, a trip down to the scenic Karkloof Nature Reserve with destination Crinkley Bottom Park in mind for lunch which was arranged for our classic and vintage cars to enjoy along with their owners.

Crinkley Bottom?

Yes you read that right!

The history of the property before it became Crinkley Bottom

Park is colourful to say the least as it was once used as a nudist resort by the infamous Beau Brummel. Many older residents of Waterfall still remember this but few are willing to admit that they ever visited it in those days.

New owners contacted us through our social media platforms as the venue is becoming such a popular spot for car and biker clubs as a stop-over or a junction venue, what with the beautiful piece of road that the nature reserve provides as such a perfect backdrop for car enthusiasts. Sundays are a set buffet lunch for guests and a variety of options are offered for

all tastes including what just may have been the best chocolate brownies and tiramisu we ever tasted.

Being serenaded to by live music, the entire time we were there made us all ease into a lazy relaxed Sunday, sharing stories of our cars, lives and just happy to be spending time together as is the camaraderie that is shared amongst all our members.

There were plenty of opportunities for photos and we did not miss out to capture the old charm of this special venue. Unfortunately, we did not spot a single crinkley bottom to share with you all...

A Ponton called Bakkie

By Richard Tudor-Owen

It doesn't matter what you collect, it's all about the pursuit of rarity that fuels the desire to own something special, something other collectors don't have. For some it's not even a desire to be recognised as the owner of that special gem. Just to possess is sometimes all consuming even if that should be in secret. Thankfully Warren Geyser is not one of these collectors. Warren delights in showing his collection of cars and even happier to see his cars driven. The annual Cars in the Park in Pietermaritzburg is a regular opportunity for club members to take charge of one of the collection and drive it out to Ashburton for the day.

Warren has been a car guy all of his life. When he had to choose a company car when working for a bank many years ago he had to have a Golf not a Mazda! It mattered. However, his love of the 3 pointed star began when his father bought a new blue W108 280SE. This car took the Geyser





family all over Southern Africa notching up over 350000kms. Owning such a beautiful car with blue body work and contrasting chrome trim, Warren thought his dad was 'the bees knees'!

It wasn't until he was 35 that he owned his own Benz, a W126 280SE in which he and Dody went everywhere. His first 'classic' Merc, a white 450SL, was bought on an auction when he turned 40. However, it is the Ponton range that stirs most emotion for Warren. Well before he was able to pass a driving licence he was allowed to drive his granny's Ponton. Through the years he has owned many of the various Ponton models and currently has 5 in his collection.

In 2012 one of his fertilizer haulage drivers reported back one day that he had seen an old Mercedes pick-up in the far north of Zululand. Perhaps doubting the man Warren told him that when he returned to make

another delivery he should take a photo of the vehicle on his phone. This he did and sure enough there was an early Ponton Bakkie languishing in a shed covered in dust and junk. But it looked solid and certainly worth a proper look. "Bakkie" seems to be the 'official' label for the South African version of the pick-up.

It turned out that the farmer, Mr Stegen, had recently bought the farm and unknowingly, so he said, there were some interesting old vehicles in the farm sheds. What's more there were actually 2 pick-ups. It transpired that one of them was a South African produced Bakkie version and the other the imported Binz version.

Warren was keen to check the cars out and along with a friend, Rudi Stegen (no relation), they travelled to Makatini to negotiate with Mr Stegen. Rudi was keen to buy the Binz model pick-up as it was most complete and in running condition. Warren was

happy to take the other, split body, minus engine and gearbox which had been removed. Mr Stegen insisted he needed the engine for some project on the farm! Whatever, Warren was glad to take the Bakkie and pay the price and so arrangements were made to collect the vehicle which he stored in Pietermaritzburg. Eventually after 2 years of regular contact, old man Stegen agreed to part with the engine! At last!

Once he had the car safely stored, Warren was able, with Chris Carlisle-Kitz and Morne Greef, to carry out an examination and see what sort of shape it was in. Apart from a line of rust bubbles in the tail gate and minor traces elsewhere everything looked remarkably solid. The missing steering wheel, obvious from the start, was unlikely to present a problem to replace. Amazingly the original ignition key was still in place! The odometer showed 58000 miles. There were no papers with the Bakkie. According to the chassis number the Bakkie was the 5th built in SA.

Checking the chassis plates inside the engine bay revealed this to be a 1956 180D W120 assembled in Germiston, South Africa. Knowing where to look on a chassis can yield invaluable information. On the leading shut panel on the passenger door is where details of the correct paint can be found; in this case it was a classic grey, DB169. Officially, steingrau hell or stone grey.

Anyone interested in old Mercs knows that the Bakkies made in the 50s are rare beasts and now very desirable. Warren appreciated that this car deserved the very best restoration and was happily directed towards Ernst and Morne Greef of Mo's Restorations and Parts (MRP) in Benoni. Not only do they have vast experience in classic car restoration, they had honed their skills on a 180D pick-up in the past.



On the 5th of March 2017 the now clean Bakkie departed on the back of a truck for Gauteng for the rebuild to begin. Complete disassembly was the first order of business with Warren receiving reports and photos as they went. There were no major surprises or horrors lurking anywhere although, as is always the case, there was more rust to be discovered as they stripped and applied the media blasting. The bed of the load bin was too far gone to be repaired and necessitated the manufacture of a complete new part. This was skilfully carried out by Morne, Ernst and Ertjie. At the National Club Concourse in 2018, judges could find no fault with the bin during their meticulous inspection, a credit to all three gentleman. To protect the base and sides of the bin strips of mahogany timber were shaped, treated and fixed in place.

Minor repairs to most body panels were required but posed no serious challenge and all trim items were restored or replaced with genuine items from the factory. Not bad to be able to purchase OE items such as lights, lenses and indicators from the manufacturers after more than 60 years.

New, factory roof lining was fitted while the heater ducting inside the engine bay was another part manufactured by the Greefs as the original cardboard items were way too tatty to resurrect. Sadly, the one item that is no longer available is the rubber matting for the floor of the cab. Until someone somewhere decides to re-manufacture these plain charcoal carpeting will have to do.

The engine, although it appeared to have done little work during its life, was completely rebuilt and painted correctly. Engine ancillaries were painted or plated authentically as they would have been all those years ago.

To finish off a complete set

of tools was found although the canvas wrap was too worn to be re-used and a very genuine looking replacement was fabricated. All that remains is to acquire a genuine operators handbook to be placed in the cubby hole.

At the 2018 National Mercedes

Benz Concours Warren's Bakkie was awarded a 1st place in the Concours d'Etat Old Timer Class Ponton and the Bertha Benz Trophy as the President's choice. A worthy achievement for this beautifully presented and rare vehicle.

Brief History of the Ponton bakkie

By Chris Carlisle-Kitz

The first Mercedes 180D Ponton pick-up models, assembled initially by Swiss Technic Nicol in Namibia and then in Germiston by Moreware Industries, went on sale in Southern Africa in 1955 and were produced until the end of 1958. They quickly became known as the Bakkie.

Mercedes in Germany considered production of their own version of the Bakkie. Binz, a well established coachbuilder, presented two prototypes to the South African importers of Mercedes vehicles but eventually it was decided to abandon any idea of supplying Binz versions for sale in South Africa. However, one of the early prototypes managed to survive and is presently owned by Louis Coetzer. After seeing Warren's splendidly restored car Rudi Stegen swiftly dispatched his Namibian bakkie to MRP in Benoni where it is currently being restored.

There are very distinct differences between the Bakkie and the Namibian vehicle. The latter had the load-bin between the unaltered rear fenders while the SA Bakkie had the fenders incorporated into the load-bin.

The rear lights on the Namibian are not of the Ponton style but were either round or rectangular in shape. The Bakkie's cabin is slightly longer and curved at the rear to allow installation of the spare wheel to the left and behind the seat. The Namibian spare wheel was stored under the load bin in a separate compartment which intruded to the extent the load bin volume was significantly reduced. There are a number of other small differences but perhaps the most obvious difference between the two versions is the gap between the cab and load-bin on the SA Bakkie version. It is estimated that fewer than 300 Bakkie versions were sold in South Africa and experts believe production was done purely to order. An estimated 60 survived in the country with as few as 10 being on the road.





A trip to the Knysna Motor Show

By Colin Meyer

When Waldo phoned me to ask if I would bring my car to the Knysna Show, he just had to mention there would hopefully be six 300SL's and ten 190SL's coming, and the game was on. This was not an opportunity to be missed.

I had recently purchased a wide window hardtop for my 190SL and was looking forward to trying it out on a trip. Although my car left the factory as a Roadster in late 1959, the wide window hard top was an option at that time, so I was thrilled when I was able to purchase this one from Gerhard Pieterse. The top fitted perfectly first time and with a fresh coat of DB50 paint. It totally transformed the car.

My wife Anne and I departed from our house at Kleinemonde near Port Alfred at around 11:00am on Friday morning, with Lawrence Kropf & Irene in his beautiful 250SL Pagoda right behind us, having met us for a cup of coffee on his way down

from East London. This made for a lovely site every time I checked my rear view mirror! Lawrence stopped over in Jeffreys Bay for the night and we continued on to Knysna, arriving at around 5pm.

The next morning we set off back to Plettenberg Bay to attend a photoshoot of the 190SL's and 300SL's at The Lookout. This was followed by lunch at the 5 star Plettenberg Hotel, where we "kuier'd" nicely and used the opportunity to catch up with many old friends. Some members met up again later for supper at Keurbooms, but we headed back to Knysna to spend the evening with my brother.

Sunday dawned misty and cool but this soon burned off and we

were blessed with a beautiful, hot, autumn day. The show was very well organised and well supported by the public, with a vast selection of quality cars to be seen. The Mercedes-Benz stand was without doubt the best on the show and we received many compliments for the magnificent display of 300SL's, Pagoda's, 190SL's, 300SEL's, not to mention the SLS, GT and McLaren Mercedes! Congratulations must go to Waldo and Rene, Johan Sloet, Kobus Harris and the rest of the Southern Cape team for the fantastic effort they put in.

The next morning we set off at around 8:00am to begin the 6 hour journey home. We stopped off briefly in Jeffrey's Bay to say



EASTERN CAPE REGION



hello to Peter Kopke and also in PE (for my wife to do some shopping)!

Our 60 year old car performed superbly and seemed to go better and better as the day got hotter and hotter, reaching the mid 30's for most of the way. I am lucky to have a wife who loves driving in old cars and is not afraid of the heat!

It surely was a weekend to remember.

P.S. We are leaving in 5 days time to undertake a 5,800km journey through Botswana and Namibia in our 1967 Fintail with a group of 30 other enthusiasts. Should be fun!





EXCLUSIVITY...NEIN, BUT ELUSIVE...QUITE – AQUIRING MY C55 AMG

Well in East London (EL) at least they are. The title/ statement might not sit well with most classic car enthusiasts because they CAN physically vouch that they know the true meaning of owning and driving an exclusive and elusive. I do however think this can be argued when you refer to the limited numbers of the W203 model C55 that were produced.

Yes, there was a W203 AMG predecessor to this, the C32 AMG, but remember the C55's front end is longer and sleeker than the standard C-Class so to fit the 5.4 litre V8 and the rear is complimented with quad exhausts. So the look of the C55 is different (to the trained eye) vs. any other C-Class. It looks like a CLK, but with a purposeful rear.

I fell in love with this car subconsciously and I say this because I was always a big fan-boy of the E36 and E46 BMW M3 (please don't lynch me. I am only being honest). The closest I got to that dream was an E36 318i with the original motorsport kit and rims. Getting back to my C55, I knew the previous owner of the car from high school. He is a true petrol head; only difference was he was living his dream by owning and driving various cars that tickled his fancy when I was just a "poser". He purchased the C55 AMG with 110 000 km on the odometer.

The car went on to be registered under his company's fleet and he went on to enjoy the car for about 4 years. Occasionally I'd see the car

around EL and I was always drawn to the raw sound and desirable lines throughout the car. It didn't look like a normal W203 C-Class. Time passed and I caught wind from a colleague that the business wasn't doing too good... it was actually being liquidated and my colleague was advised to come collect the tailgate for his bakkie before the whole place was shut down!

I immediately had a "light bulb" moment. I visualized the many classic and sporty cars that I had seen parked on the showroom floor. I made a plan to go drive past the premises to see if the cars were all still there or if they had been taken away. The latter applied...BUT the car which had always caught my attention, be it more subconsciously, was still



EASTERN CAPE REGION

there! Along with a few others. I wasted no time in contacting the auctioneering company that had their signs planted outside. They put me onto the liquidator in town who was dealing with the vehicles. I called him and set up an appointment to view the C55 in the flesh, but I was warned straight off the cuff that if I am interested in "low-balling" him, I must not even waste his time. I assured him otherwise.

Upon getting up-close and personal with the C55 I was smitten. From then on I was instructed to put in an official offer, via email, which I later did. Before tendering my offer, I made contact with the guy from school that was being liquidated (bit cheeky I know, but when you want something, you do crazy things). I also happened to know the mechanic that worked on the C55, so I got an inside scoop. I was happy with the feedback. I also researched information on the C55 AMG as I was still scared if the car were to break down on me and how expensive it would be to run. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that out of all the AMG's this is thought to be one of the most reliable and cheapest in terms of maintenance. No fancy air suspension and the same 5 speed auto gearbox can be found in the E55 and CL55 AMG (both of which run kompressors, hence higher power and torque outputs, so effectively the transmission is a lot stronger than what is actually required. Bonus!

Soon after emailing my offer I received a response from "Mr Liquidator" that he was happy with my offer, I had to wait for the finance bank to have their meeting with Mr Liquidator. The long wait started. One week turned into two, three, a month and so on. It was in this time that another gent also showed interest in the car. This angered me, but there was nothing I

could do. Despite informing the liquidator that I personally knew the previous owner and mechanic that had zero effect. What a "hard-a**"! The "new" guy was given a chance to bid.

Bid he did and soon after Mr Liquidator called me to ask if my offer was final. I asked if the other guy's offer was more, but he said



because this is a closed bidding system that he is running, I would not be privy to the amount. The Liquidator also noted that he didn't want a bidding war to ensue. After some haggling all I managed to find out was his bid was higher...but still no figures. I even made a point to drive to the offices of said liquidator to make sure as soon as I put in my final bid that I could be there when he received it.

"We have a dead heat" he responded. I could not believe it... Trying to contain my emotions I went over to see his computer screen which he wanted to show me. True as Bob... we had both offered exactly the same. The only way to sort this out was to bid one last time. Both of us agreed... we were chasing the same dream! I did more soul-searching and research... called up my wife to get her opinion... that didn't help much, but hey I can't just do as I please - I am married and I have always believed you must involve your wife in all your big decisions. We were given 24 hours to submit our FINAL bid.

The next morning I clicked the send button, wiped my sweaty

palms on my jeans and paced uncontrollably around the office. I returned to my desk, but I could not focus on my work. Then a message came through to my phone...I HAD WON THE BID! Albeit by the slightest of edges, I had won! I was ecstatic!!

I took delivery a few days later. That same night, in the rain, I took my wife and kids on a slow cruise along the EL esplanade. I literally drove the car like I was driving on eggshells because I had my two kids, one less than 2 months old at the time, in the back seat and my wife in the front and the rain was spitting ever so slightly. I didn't know how the C55 would be in the wet, but all went well. Needless to say I was a proud new owner of what felt to me like the victory I had been yearning for years!

I have had the C55 AMG for 2 years now. In the first year the car did less than 1700 km as she was only meant for weekend use, however she is now by default of selling cars, graduated to be my daily driver.

It should be noted that a V8 isn't the most economical beast to command in and around town. On the open road and freeway this car comes alive and belongs... like a true GT car...made for long open roads, far away from the rat-race. For example, in town doing the school-run and going to work, you get anywhere from 13.5 to 15.5 litres/100 km, whereas on multiple occasions driving to Queenstown or Port Elizabeth I have seen 9.2 to 9.8 litres/ 100 km. Not bad for a V8 in my eyes...

In closing, here is a fun fact - the first RHD C55 AMG sedan verification model was produced in EL...that very car is still in EL owned by MBSA and stored in the Heritage museum. Yet you don't see many C55 driving around in EL or the Eastern Cape.



Angela's Picnic

By Koos du Toit

Sunday 7 April saw the 38th Angela's Picnic take place in Delta Park, Randburg. The event is held annually by SAMCA for the benefit of the Witwatersrand Hospice Association. It is named in honour of Angela Heinz, who was responsible for the arrangements, until she passed away from cancer. During the event, R59 000 was raised for the Association.

After heavy rains during the previous few days there were fears that the event would be rained out, but luckily the

weather held, and we could all enjoy the beautiful cars on display. Many participants took the opportunity to have a proper picnic (it's the name of the event after all); others were treated with snacks and hot drinks at the club's gazebo.

There were 35 Mercedes-Benz cars on display at the club's area. Our display included cars belonging to new members and even some freshly-restored cars. It was good to see two 190SLs, one very pristine model being "driven" by an enthusiastic

Dachshund!

Once again, we were joined by quite a few of our members from Klerksdorp. These people are true enthusiasts who spend a lot of time and money to attend club events, and they attend almost all the major ones. Thank you once again for your participation.

We would also like to thank Leon and Mollie Wannenburg, who arrived very early, cordoned off an area for our cars, arranged for a gazebo and chairs and supplied the hot drinks and snacks.



NORTHERN REGION





Noggin at Bra.i, Africa's Smokehouse

By Koos du Toit

The Northern Region's April noggin was held on 25 April at Bra.i, Africa's Smokehouse. This is a new, cozy little boutique restaurant right on the South-Eastern edge of Pretoria in a new extension of Moreleta Park.

Bra.i attempts to "deliver you Africa's favourite flavour at a pace that suits you", and by the looks of it, they are very successful in this venture. All the meat on the menu is sourced directly from farms, then spiced, slow cooked, marinated and finally grilled to perfection.

Not only is the food delicious, the drinks are special too. Apart from the normal fare, there are

craft beers on tap, shooters, cocktails and a good selection of local wines available as well.

But back to the festivities. We were met by the friendly staff, seated and soon the table was abuzz with conversation – and with Chris and Anna-Lee present, what else was to be expected! The food and drinks, as promised, was delicious and rapidly consumed. Some of the members even had one of their decadent (and delicious) desserts. I could only manage an Espresso – maybe next time...

Once again, thank you to all the members who attended, we had a wonderful evening!





WESTERN CAPE REGION

1 April Club Meeting

By Brendan Moran

On April 1st we were honoured to host a talk by Fred and Elizabeth Smits from New Zealand, who contacted us during a brief visit to Cape Town on route to a safari in Africa.

In 2014 this adventurous couple started a journey of some 90 000 miles in a 55 year old 1957 Mercedes Benz Ponton 220S. Their journey took them through the Americas, Europe and Russia, by way of India and Malaysia to Australia before returning home in 2019.

Their trip was inspired by an article that Fred read in an issue of the Classic and Sports Car Magazine in 2011 which featured "101 ways to live the classic dream". This article inspired them to plan their dream classic adventure which of course had to be done in a reliable classic car

such as the 220S.

Other than having Fred and Elizabeth inspire us all with their incredible stories and photos of their adventures around the world, the evening was also very special for the club and our guests due to an incredible coincidence which we kept as a surprise for Fred and Elizabeth till the very end of their presentation.

The very article in the June 2011 issue of Classic and Sports Car magazine, which inspired their entire adventure, was in fact written by one of our very own Western Cape Mercedes Club members, Graeme Hurst. Although now residing back in Cape Town, Graeme still writes for Classic and Sports Car, as well as for Classic Car Africa magazine locally, and is an active club

member, owning a C126 560SEC, S123 280TE and a R107 500SL. His collection of classics also includes an 80's Porsche 911SC, Austin Healey 3000, Jaguar XK150, and a notch back 60's Mustang.

It was a truly special evening for us all, especially for Fred and Elizabeth, being able to meet the man whose article inspired their life changing journey back in 2011. Not only did their presentation once again prove the engineering integrity and reliability of early Mercedes Benz cars, but it was also a good reminder to us all to grab life and live it, and to get out there and follow our dreams.

For more information on this amazing couple, their Ponton, and their travels, log on to www.classicstrider.com



Hazendal Estate Run

By Brendan Moran

On Sunday 28 April 2019 we had a breakfast run to Hazendal Estate just outside of Stellenbosch. Our two prior runs focused on sports models with February being a 107 run to Franschoek followed by the 129 Anniversary run in March which is also featured in this issue of the Benz lens.

With our 1970-2001 SL's having had their time in the sun, we saw it fit to plan a run to exercise the saloons, estates and coupe's in our lives in the form of a 108/109/114/115/116/123 themed run. All saloon, coupe and estate model owners were welcome to join the run as were any other member of course.

We met at 09:00 at the Engine Winelands garage on the N1 from where we convoyed to the venue via the N1 towards Paarl and along the R304 to Bottlery road till we reached Hazendal Estate.

The Hazendal Estate is steeped in history, being established in 1699 when the 60 hectares were granted to Christophell Hazenwinkel by then Governor, William Adriaan van der Stel. From its humble beginnings as a grain and livestock farm Hazendal today has been redeveloped into an upmarket wine and lifestyle estate which has a wine label bearing the name of the farms original owner Christophel Hazenwinkel.

We have been very lucky with all our runs and events so far this year (touch wood), as each one has greeted us with the most perfect weather conditions in which to enjoy our passion for our cars.

Our run totaled 42 members and 20 cars which

included four W123 sedans, two S123 Estates, three W116 350SE saloons, and 3 W108 280SE saloons. Unfortunately we did not have any 114 or 115 saloons or coupes join us on the run but did have a W124, and a Fintail join the run as well as some other members in other models.

The stand out models of the day had to be the beautiful Navy Blue W108 280SE of Muziam Ebrahim, Rashmi's immaculate C123 230CE and the very pristine and original S123 280TE of Johan Kemp.

The recently renovated Hazendal Estate was a hit with our members who enjoyed a great breakfast and a tour of the estate grounds and the Russian owner Dr. Mark Voloshin's Art Gallery and Faberge Egg collection at their leisure.

The cars attracted a lot of attention from other visitors to the Estate. We heard many of them fondly reminiscing about which of these great saloons their grandparents owned or that they themselves grew up in.

Most of us I am sure have childhood memories of either parents, or uncles, or friends who had Mercedes Benz models that in some way played a part early on in our lives that today make us appreciate and cherish the ownership of these classics even more.



Mercedes-Benz R129 30th Anniversary Run

By Brendan Moran

In celebration of the 30th birthday of the R129 SL range, a birthday breakfast run was planned for all our R129 owners, friends and family.

Our convoy of 20 R129's gathered at our regular meeting point at Century City Mercedes Benz from where we headed to Cape Point Vineyards. The fleet included a wide variety of early and late, including some rare AMG and limited edition models.

The route took us along the N1, M5, and over Silvermine pass to our destination. It was a perfectly clear and sunny day which allowed members to travel top down and enjoy the spectacular scenery along the way. It was a special treat for us

all to see a convoy of 20 R129 SL's in formation enroute to the venue with many admiring glances and thumbs up from passer's by.

On arrival at Cape Point Vineyards the venue had arranged reserved parking for us allowing us to park all 20 SL's alongside one another with a beautiful backdrop of Noordhoek beach and the surrounding mountains and fynbos.

We all enjoyed a wonderful breakfast, great views and a good conversation. When the time arrived for us to leave, most of us headed back home via Chapmans Peak which as you know has a very famous connection to the Mercedes Benz brand after the W123 advert which was shot

there many years ago.

Once again with roofs down, members were able to take in the beauty of one of the best coastal drives in the world and enjoy their R129's in the exact way their designer would have intended.

I am sure you would all agree that one would never guess that the 129 design is already 30 years old by looking at it. The styling has sure stood the test of time and carries its age with effortless style.

Thanks to JP van der Poel our club secretary for coming along with his drone to help capture some wonderful photos and video footage of the run.

Long live the R129!



WESTERN CAPE REGION





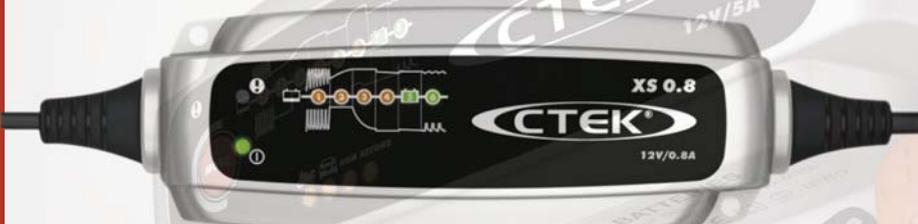
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- In addition to the above, Shocks, Brakes, Tow Bars, Bull Bars and various accessories are synonymous to Tyres & More®.
- Both Divisions are Independent, multi branded fitment Centres.
- Tiger Wheel & Tyre has 109 stores throughout South Africa, including Botswana, Namibia Zimbabwe and Mozambique.
- Tyres & More® started out in September 2013 currently has 39 Stores, currently only locally.













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Olga van der Westhuizen | Cell: 082 055 2275 • Francois van der Westhuizen | Cell: 082 379 6240
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C: 082 802 3280 | E: president@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

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C: 082 966 3463

E: vicepresident@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Johan Kemp (Treasurer)

C: 083 457 1092

E: treasurer@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

**Steve Rademeyer
(Chairman: Northern Region)**

C: 082 887 5201

E: northern@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Johan Sloet (Chairman: Southern Cape)

C: 083 640 7455

E: scape@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Fanie du Preez (Chairman: Central Region)

C: 083 262 2713

E: central@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Stephen Kaalsen (Editor)

C: 083 234 7653

E: editor@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

**Olga & Francois van der Westhuizen
(Regalia Officer)**

C: 082 055 2275 or 082 379 6240

E: regalia@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Annalie Kachelhoffer (National Secretary)

C: 084 205 5411

E: secretary@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Marlize Heroldt (Membership Secretary)

C: 073 305 6214 | F: 086 684 0235

E: membership@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Zillen Venter (Chairman: Western Cape)

C: 083 440 6814 E: wcape@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Erald Hohls (Chairman: Eastern Cape)

C: 082 443 8379 E: escape@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Avish Maharaj (Chairman: KZN)

C: 061 507 8803

E: kzn@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Marcell Mostert (Social Media)

C: 083 704 3223 E: socialmedia@mercedesbenzclub.co.za

Club Approved Insurance Brokers

Elsabé van Zyl (MUA)

T: 086 196 7568 C: 082 807 9052

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