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DIE THE BENZ LENS

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Editorial

Hanjo Stier



Greetings and Salutations, from a position of surprise as I find myself in the editor's chair much sooner than I had anticipated. With my own Namibian motoring publication and a few other ventures to manage, the last thing I considered was sticking my hand up for the Benz Lens. So I didn't.

I even brushed past that full-page plea in the previous edition with everyone's favourite lie: "someday, when I have time for it."

However, this was completely unacceptable to our Western Cape chairman, Zillen Venter. According to him, I was the perfect candidate for this vacant position and he wasn't taking no for an answer. After repeated

attempts – some more liquid than others – he started playing dirty by involving Anna-Lee Dos Santos. Have you met her yet? She can be quite persuasive. And she didn't even bother convincing me; she dragged me straight to the boss. Waldo.

So here we are. I am humbled and a little shell-shocked at the same time as I've always been an admirer of the Benz Lens and its esteemed captains over the years. Thank you all for your dedication to this marvellous newsletter.

From a carefully hoarded selection of hard (and digital) copies, I can tell you that my favourite bits are the wonderful anecdotes which accompany an

old car or new purchase.

At this point I could assault you with stories of my Dad's modified 230S, a family heirloom W116 or that time I power-slid my Mom's 280E past her best friend from book-club. Oops.

But this isn't my newsletter, it's yours. And so I invite every club member to reveal their fondest M-B memories, share those epic car journeys or submit a funny anecdote to editor@mercedesbenzclub.co.za – even though it may take me a few issues to get used to that title.

I hope this edition brings you lots of reading enjoyment. ■



from the President

Waldo Scribante



Since my last communications, most of the Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted, and although we must remain safe, life is almost back to normal.

I am reflecting on our recent AGM and National Gathering 2022, hosted by the Southern Cape region. What an amazing weekend, with camaraderie at its best - just like in the old days!

A huge thank you to all our members who attended. I am sure you agree the AGM team did an excellent job, true to their theme: **eSCape to the LUXURY of the Southern Cape.**

Thank you to Aldo, Adele, René and Kobus for all the arrangements. They were assisted by members of the Southern Cape, who helped with registrations on the first day. A special thank you goes to Robert Reid and Marilze Herold, who did amazing work behind the scenes, helping to set up the venues, moving tables, putting up banners and decorations - even washing tablecloths at midnight, for the next day!

We thank Mercedes-Benz South Africa, once again, for their generous sponsorship of the Gala evening - what a spectacular event it was. We were privileged to host Esté Campher from MBSA and her family over the weekend and we thank her for her kind words at the gala evening. Esté played an amazing video for us - if you haven't seen it, please do yourself a favour and click on the link provided. We also had the pleasure of hosting Ian Matthews and his wife Susan, from Stanmar Motors, our local MB dealer in George.

I had the honour of presenting special memberships to Esté Campher, Ian Matthews and Southern Cape member André

Fourie at the Gala evening. Special memberships are awarded by members attending the AGM. The requirements for nomination are that the candidate:

- 1) Renders a valuable service to the club; and
- 2) Promotes the Mercedes-Benz Marque.

The nominated recipients are true ambassadors of both the MB Marque and Club.

I congratulate Annalie Kachelhoffer on her election as Vice President. She was an

I am very proud to be a part of a fellowship of people who are not only determined, loyal, caring and supportive, but also passionate about people, things and life. To recognise this within others is to be inspired and I thank every member of the MBCSA for being a friend and an inspiration.

excellent National Secretary, and I am looking forward for our continued collaboration. A special word of welcome to our newly elected National Secretary, Jan-

Willem Wielsma. He is well known in the Club and a popular choice, bringing the necessary experience to the National Committee.

Under the hammer of our auctioneer, Pieter Booysen, the Southern Cape sold items at our AGM charity auction to the amount of R155,000. Our beneficiaries, namely Carpe Diem School and ODIN (Oudtshoorn Dogs in Need) will greatly benefit from the generosity of our members. Well done and thank you!

It is also my pleasure to announce our new Benz Lens Editor, Hanjo Stier from the Western Cape. He is a motor journalist and bring years of experience and enthusiasm to the Benz Lens. Please support him with your contributions!

As I said at the end of our 37th AGM - "The trials and tribulations of 2021 highlighted the calibre of people we are fortunate to know through our shared passion for the three-pointed star. This year once again put into context the value of our Club and the sheer enjoyment that we derive not only from our beloved cars, but the cherished friendships that we have gained along the way.

"It has been an honour to once again serve as President of the MBCSA and I look forward to many more adventures with you."

*As always, the best or nothing!
or for now, ONLY THE BEST! ■*





eScape to the

LUXURY OF THE SOUTHERN CAPE

37th National Gathering and AGM 2022

By Hanjo Stier

After last year's successful and enjoyable National Gathering, hosted by the Eastern Cape in Graaff-Reinet, this year we were invited by their southern counterparts to "eScape to the Luxury of the Southern Cape".

Taking advantage of a long weekend starting on 16 June 2022, the 37th National Gathering and AGM took place in and around Mossel Bay with a wide variety of relaxing activities and luxurious venues. These included gin and chocolate pairing, a pirate-themed evening at the Diaz Museum, visiting a custom coffee machine facility, convoy drive to a secluded wine estate lunch, Oktoberfest dinner complete with oompah band, tours of some amazing vehicle collections in George, plus a glitzy Gala dinner to complete the weekend's festivities.

With sunny winter weather prevailing, members and their loved ones (totalling 148 people) were greeted by a friendly mob of Southern Cape representatives at the Gannet Restaurant. Lunch quickly ensued and I witnessed many beaming smiles and much vivid chatter as a steady stream of club members arrived at the seaside restaurant. There was also a constant buzz around the Regalia stand, deftly manned by Leon Erasmus and his son Mark Lavin.

Registration:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300239229>





Gin Tasting DAY 1



An optional activity took place right next door: the comical tutor at Cape Saint Blaize was entertaining and educating folks about gin and chocolate in half-hour intervals. Our AGM was held later that afternoon at the Diaz Hotel & Resort, where Annalie Kachelhoffer was elected Vice President and Jan-Willem Wielsma accepted the role of Club (National) Secretary.

The first evening event was stationed in the amphitheatre surrounding a replica Portuguese caravel; at the Bartolomeu Dias Museum. Most attendees seemed to delight in this dress-up party as

there was much swashbuckling, plenty of *har-har* to be heard, and more eye patches than at a fencing convention.

Pirate evening:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300233955>

Day two started with individual vehicle photos at the Mossel Bay Point, interspersed with voluntary tours of the Super Veloce factory – a coffee and petrol addict's paradise where the attention to detail is only outdone by their price tags.

Individual photos:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300242098>

[photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300233032](https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300233032)

Super Veloce:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300233032>

Later that morning we regrouped on the Herbertsdale road and drove in convoy to Jakkalsvlei Winery; a secluded yet world-class destination with superb wines and excellent food. Stanmar Motors (George) exhibited four vehicles at the entrance: G 63 AMG, GLC 63 AMG, GLE 400d Coupé and GLE 63 AMG, neatly stacked in pairs of black and white.



AGM DAY 1



To briefly summarise the amazing contents of the parking lot, I performed multiple mid-lunch inspections to find A207, A209, C123, C124, C126, C140, C204, C207, C208, C209, C219, R107, R129, R230, R231, S212, W108, W111, W113, W115, W120/1, W123, W124, W126, W164, W167, W201, W203, W204, W206, W221, W251 R-Class, X253 GLC and a truly unique Mercedes-Benz called "Almera".

The editor's choice, which I may or may not have invented right now, goes to the sleek silver R107 300SL with its delectable chequered interior.

Jakkalsvlei photos:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300239679>

After a lengthy and jovial lunch, everyone got plenty of time to strap on their Lederhosen and practise "Ein Prosit" for the evening's German-themed (Oktoberfest) dinner at Salt & Copper, a modern function venue on the outskirts of Mossel Bay. The evening got progressively livelier as the beer and brass music flowed; at some point I remember oompha-renditions of AC/DC and witnessing half the room in a conga line, snaking their

way through the tables.

Oktoberfest gallery:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300234500>

Although it seemed difficult to top our wonderful experiences so far, the last day was most certainly my favourite as we got to visit André Fourie and Waldo Scribante's car collections in George. The weather had unfortunately turned a bit drippy, yet André's voluminous garage hosted dozens of club members for a hot beverage and closer inspection of his amazing vehicles. Some highlights include a 300SL Roadster, Maybach, SLS



Pirate Evening
DAY 1





DAY ONE

Gullwing, a flurry of SL's and one of the smartest 111 Coupés I've ever seen.

André Fourie:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300239974>

Waldo's collection was next... and reaffirmed its status as an absolute must for fans of the brand. The quality and quantity is extraordinary, befitting of a proper museum and almost improbable for a private collection. The gracious hosts treated everyone to a buffet lunch before opening Waldo's truck store for the last viewing of the day.

SCRIBS Museum:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300240054>

That evening saw the final event of the 37th National Gathering: an elegant gala dinner at Laminin Agora, another stylish function venue in the area. Notable incidents include a mad

dash as the bar opened, flaming braziers next to Stanmar's best metal, a congenial group photo of everyone in their best bib and tucker, as well as scrumptious dinner with delicate table decorations. These formed part of the evening's charity auction, which was flanked by speeches of gratitude, awards and recognition.

Typing of which, I'd like to join everyone in thanking our amazing hosts of the Southern Cape region once more. Waldo, René, Aldo, Adele, Kobus, Marlize and your many friendly helpers - you put together a wonderful weekend of activities which perfectly matched your claim: escaping to the luxury of the region. ■

Gala Evening:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/195333296@N07/albums/72177720300242753>

**Translation:
a good time was
had by all.**





Cars **DAY 2**





Jakkalsvlei **DAY 2**





Super Veloce **DAY 2**



German Evening
DAY 2







Collections **DAY 3**





Gala Evening **DAY 3**





Gala Evening **DAY 3**







CENTRAL REGION



Region Gathering

By Jaco Kachelhoffer

Our region had a very enjoyable gathering in Upington over the long weekend of 19 to 21 March 2022. Four of us, Fanie and Anita du Preez, Annalie and myself, started our trip from Bloemfontein. We first made a brief stop at Kimberley where we were welcomed by Deon and Sandra Nel, who spoiled us with coffee and delicious scones.

From there we travelled all the way in the rain and enjoyed a sumptuous breakfast at a small restaurant in Griekwastad. Upon our arrival in Upington, we were welcomed by the Northern Cape members and were treated to a wonderfully relaxed braai at Jurie and Carina's place, where we were also joined by Paul and Thea van Wyk (Frankfort) and Koos and Hannie Kruger (Villiers).

The Upington clan, with Jurie Schneider and Michael Holland-Muter at the steer, spoiled us to the extreme. One of our highlights

was a trip on a large Orange River ferry, where we were once again treated to good food and drinks.

Northern Cape people are renowned for their warm hospitality and companionship, and this was quite evident over the whole weekend. A huge thank you to our Upington members for everything they arranged for us to enjoy.

Some of our other Northern Cape region members also had one of their regular breakfast runs in March, where they displayed a variety of beautiful vehicles.

On the 27th of April, a few of our members enjoyed a breakfast run to Tom's Place, approximately 35 kilometres from Bloemfontein. We gathered at the John Williams Motors dealership and from there, travelled to our destination while enjoying the sunshine and good company. Our Northern Cape contingent also had a breakfast run to the Border Hotel in Jan

Kempdorp.

The annual Cars in the Park event was presented by the Bloemfontein Old Car Club on the public holiday, 2 May 2022, in Bloemfontein, which was also attended by the Central Region of the Mercedes-Benz Club.

Our Club was well represented at this event with about 35 member vehicles, which included the Pagodas of Japie Vos, Fanie du Preez and Theo van Rensburg, respectively. It was rather exceptional to have three such beautiful Pagodas at one venue.

The event was well attended by the public and the Mercedes-Benz Club members had a pleasant and relaxing time in the Mercedes-Benz tent; complete with delicious food and ample drinks.

It was clear that the people were "hungry" for such an event here in Bloemfontein; and we were fortunate to enjoy nice sunny weather on a windless day.





Johan Strydom of the John Williams Mercedes-Benz dealership in Bloemfontein also arranged the displaying of a beautiful black, brand-new C-Class, which attracted a lot of attention.

Even the local newspaper made special mention of the Mercedes-Benz presence at the show, when remarking in lighter vein that the Merc owners displayed their vehicles separately from all the other “plebs” with their warmed-up cars!

Later in May, some of our members visited Bloemfontein Bearing Works, where the owner Bennie Claassen shared his knowledge of overhauling engines, followed by “worsbroodjies” and drinks.

On June 8, some of our members travelled to Mossel Bay for the long-awaited 2022 AGM and National Gathering. The weekend started off well with our Annalie

CENTRAL REGION



Kachelhoffer being elected as the Vice President of the club at the Annual General Meeting. We are very proud of her achievements as first female Chairperson (2012), National Secretary (2015) and now Vice-President of the club – all well-deserved positions.

As is customary, the Southern Cape Region spoiled us right from day one. The visit to Super Veloce was an awesome event, as was the outing to Jakkalsvlei. Our vehicles came back with a heavier load due to all the wines purchased there. Special thanks to the Southern Cape region for an excellent event.

Our club membership numbers have grown steadily since the beginning of the year and we look forward to the rest of the year's events whilst working on getting more members on board. ■



WESTERN CAPE REGION



Skotnes at the Norval Foundation

By Brendan Moran

On Sunday 3 July we had a breakfast run to the restaurant at The Norval Foundation in Steenberg (near Constantia, Cape Town). The weather did not play along initially, which meant that we lost a few attendees due to early morning rain predictions.

Despite this, about 20 of our trusty members braved the grey skies and joined us for the run and breakfast.

The Skotnes is a beautiful fine dining restaurant in Steenberg that is nestled beneath the Silvermine Mountain Range in a beautiful indigenous sculpture garden; which includes a protected wetland.

The Norval Foundation, where the restaurant is situated, is a modern twentieth century visual

arts gallery dedicated to the research and understanding of modern art in Africa.

The Norval Foundation was established by the Norval family as an NGO to promote, educate and preserve African artists' work. Apart from the great restaurant, Sculptured Garden, and the beautiful architecture of the building, visitors can always see a great collection of art in the gallery with permanent and highlight exhibitions all year round.

As we all know, many of us classic Merc custodians prefer not to drive our babies in the rain, and this run was no exception. Most of our members attended in their modern daily transport; of which not all were Mercs. One or two members did brave the elements

in a classic, such as Jürgen Apel's W124 300CE, or Hanjo Stier (our new club magazine editor) in a pristine W116 350SE with his daughter's massive Garfield soft toy buckled up in the back seat.

Hanjo's parents also attended in their lovely W123 280E, and I completed the Mercedes offering with my E500 coupe.

After a good catch-up over breakfast, some members enjoyed the grounds and Sculpture Garden when the weather cleared, while others viewed the gallery.

We will definitely be back at this wonderful venue soon for another club run, and would encourage anyone visiting the Steenberg area to visit The Norval Foundation. ■



Verkryging van die Swart Krokodil

Deur Vivian Rocher

Op 'n gewone dag in Mei 2014 kry ek 'n oproep van my oudste seun, Emile. Hy lig my in dat hy ons ingeskryf het vir die *Nuts and Bolts Rally* in September later daardie jaar. My gedagtes is, dit is seker weer iets soos die *Put Foot Rally* waaraan hy en sy jonger broer 'n paar jaar tevore met my Land Rover deelgeneem het. Die voertuig kom toe terug vol stickers wat tot vandag nog nie verwyder kon word nie.

Dit het onmiddelik baie vrae laat opduik soos:

- Wie is ingesluit in die *ons*?
Antwoord: "Ek en my broer, Vivian Jr., Pa en Vivian Jr. se skoon-pa, Joos.
- Watse Rally is dit?
Antwoord: "Ek weet nie."
- Wie reel dit?
Antwoord: "Peter Anderson van Malmesburry. Hy klink cool."
- Hoeveel van hierdie Rallys is al gehou?
Antwoord: "Een! Dit sal die tweede een wees."
- Waarmee ry ons?
Antwoord: "Ja, dit is 'n effense probleem. Ons kort 'n ryding."
- Nou watse ryding... wat vier mense kan vervoer?
Antwoord: "Daar is beperkings, spesifikasies, en kampgoed moet ook saam."
- Is dit 'n resies? Gaan dit in die nag gehou word? Waarheen ry ons?

Net voor nog 'n klompie vrae vaag beantwoord is, het die gesprek geindig met "ek en Viv Jr. doen al die beplanning en reëlings, en Pa betaal vir die kar." Ek wou nog sê/vra/sing, nou watse kar, my liewe kind? – toe eindig die oproep.

In die dae wat gevolg het, het daar meer duidelike en nog meer onduidelike inligting na vore gekom; en so vaagweg het die prentjie begin vorm. Ons gaan oor



'n tydperk van vier dae grondpaaie in Namakwaland, Noord-Kaap, Tankwa Karoo en Weskus ry. En kamp en braai en lekker mense ontmoet; en ook goeie dade verrig.

So terug by die vraag: waarmee ry ons? Viv Jr. sê hy het nou net huis gekoop en is platsak; en kan nie sy familie-kar opoffer nie. Emile sê oor 'n maand word sy eersteling gebore en hy het ook nie 'n kar wat kan werk nie. Joos is op die punt om op pensioen te gaan en het ook nie 'n geskikte ryding vir hierdie vreemde tog nie. Toe hoor ons ook nog dat die ryding ouer as 30 jaar moet wees, padwaardig, en nie meer as R15 000 werd wees nie. En dit is nie 'n wedren nie, net lekker ry.

Saam met my het op daardie stadium 'n baie interresante en veelsydige dame gewerk wat in die Tankwa Karoo groot geword het. Vir haar hele skool loopbaan het sy elke naweek van naby die bekende Tankwa Padstal na Calfinia en terug plaas toe gereis. Ek besluit toe om haar te konsulteer vir die mees geskikte ryding. Tankwa boere weet van bakkies, karre *suspension*, bande en alles wat saak maak om te oorleef oor moeilike grondpaaie.

Die antwoord het vinnig en met absolute oorgawe uitgekóm: "n Mercedes-Benz, meneer!" Verkieslik die ou Fintail modelle. Sy het vertel hoe hulle menige Sondag-middae oppad koshuis toe langs gebreekte bakkies vir die son weggekruip het en selfs een nag in ysige koue in 'n Jaguar met Pa, Ma en twee sussies gebid het dat die son opkom; of die geblaaste *head gasket* net vanself weer sal regkom. Toe skaf haar pa 'n ou Mercedes-Benz aan... en die gaan haal en terug neem na die koshuis op Calfinia het van 'n nagmerie-rit na 'n droom-reise verander. Die WhatsApp het na die seuns en almal bekend uitgegaan – "Ons soek 'n ou Mercedes-Benz in goeie lopende toestand vir max. R 15 000!"

Die ou bekende spreek-woord "makliker gesê as gedaan" het ons toe oor en oor bevestig gekry in die weke wat gevolg het. Die nuwe generasie kinders sê dit is maklik. Daar is hierdie wonderlike app, *GumTree*!

So lei *Gumtree* ons van een doodloop straat na die ander. Ek is die sonder-keuse aangestelde finasierder van die projek. Die twee seuns het albei swanger

vrouens wat ander prioriteite ondersteun as om elke beskikbare vrye tydjie te spandeer aan die soek na 'n *Nuts and Bolts* kar. Almal het ook voltydse beroepe wat hulle besig hou. So van groot entoesiasme verval ons toe in sak en as, en dink dit was 'n mal idee van Emile en hierdie onbekende Peter Anderson. Met die Engelse van het ek aanvanklik gedink hy is dalk 'n afgetreede FI kampioen.

Maar soos die tyd verloop en familieledede my vra "*You gonna do WHAT?*" pak die entoesiasme ons weer. Ons volg nog 'n advertensie op. Die kommunikasie lees: "Bring kontant, die Merc is goed!" Die twee seuns en ek ry op 'n Saterdagoggend met dik-bek vrouens by die huise die Kaapse vlakke in. Ons het 'n groot toolboks, 'n *tow rope* en 'n sleepstang op die Land Rover se dak. 'n Spaar battery, *Quick Start* en *jumper* kables. En natuurlik kontant onder 'n sitplek. Soos ons die adres nader, raak die strate / stegies al hoe nouer en die selfoon hou nie op lui met instuksies nie. Geleiktydig voel ons hierdie is *hostile territory*. Emile het bestuur en ek sê hard "draai om!" Daar is mense oorals, drank bottels en 'n geskree en eintlik geen omdraai plek vir 'n ou Land Rover 110 nie. Net voor die eerste skote klap het Emile wonderbaarlik die Landy met 'n 5-punt U-draai omgedraai gekry. Tussen asblikke wat spad, maer honde wat tjank, skiet elkeen sy eie rigting in en ons was gou weer op die R300. Ek dink 'n *side shaft* of twee lyk nou nog na daardie gedraide licorice wat jy in pakkies van vyf kan koop.

September kom nou vinnig nader... en daar is al 'n datum uitgestuur vir 'n *pre-rally briefing* naby ons in Klappmuts. Emile sê ek het nie verniet betaal nie, ons moet maar aanhou soek. Niemand bevragteken dat ons 'n Mercedes-Benz moet soek nie. Maar as jy intik "*Mercedes Fintail*" – dan kom allerhande stories oor *collector's items* en pryse van meer as R100 000.

Ons hou aan soek. Toe land



ons weer in die Kaapse vlakke, maar nou ry ons al gewapen. Steeds kontant onder 'n sitplek – *gesplit*, indien ons ons pad moet uitkoop. Bietjie voor en bietjie agter. Die wapens is twee plastiese sambokke en n kruis wielmoersleutel. By 'n verkeerslig, wat nogal werk, sien ons 'n ou met 'n kortloop haelgeweer onder sy baadjie uitsteek. Twee plastiese sambokke en 'n *wheelspanner*? Hel, moet ons nie maar hierdie ding laat vaar nie? Emile sê nee, hy het ou koshuis vriende geïnspeereer om 'n stok-ou Beetle van Upington te laat kom, en ander ouens wat van wrakke rygoed bymekaar maak; en nog meer. Vandag kry ons 'n Merc, ry of sleep hom huis toe, en maak die ding werk.

By die adres lyk dinge nie lekker nie. Daar is geen Mercedes te sien nie, die huis is klein en die erf nog kleiner. 'n Middeljarige vrou laat weet: ons is by die regte plek. Sy sê die motor is in die agter-jaard. Al hoe jy by die plek kan uitkom is deur die gang van die klein huis.

Langs die huis is skaars plek vir 'n *feeler gauge* aan beide kante tot by die volgende huis.

Ek bly agter in die Land Rover, die seuns gaan deur die huis na die agter-jaard. Intussen wonder ek of ons nie die wapentuig moet opgradeer. Dit raas om die Land Rover soos kinders skreeu en mense oor die straat heen met verskillende gesprekke besig is. Die seuns kom terug met 'n uitslag van – potensiaal! Ek spring entoesiasties uit en gaan saam met die dame deur die huis na die agter-jaard. Die Merc is daar! Nou hoe het hy hier gekom en hoe kan hy weer hier uitkom? Nee, sê sy, ons kan die *vibracrete* van die buurman uithaal... dan sleep julle hom tot in die agterste straat, en dan verder. Maar hy staan dan op blokke? Geen wiele. En sobynadere ondersoek is die 220 Fintail 'n leefruimte vir agterplaas-bewoners wat ses maande agterstallig is met huurgeld; en die *landlord* verkoop nou die "huis" onder hulle uit. Ek hou kop en dink "hier is tog



potensiaal want die prys was maar R 2200." Sy het gesê "dieselfde as die *label* op die boot; met nog 'n nul aan." Toe ek die enjinkap optel sien ek net leë drank bottels. Ek vra toe oor die enjin en 'n heen-en-weer geskellery volg met die *landlord* wat die inwoners van die Mercedes blameer dat hulle die enjin (wat verlede week nog daar was) verkoop het vir dwelms en drank geld.

Skielik vlieg daar vloekwoorde, *pistons*, remskoene, honde bakke, koekblikke en wynbottels oor en weer, en ek laat spaander deur die gang tot in die wagtende Land Rover. Wat die uiteinde van daardie skynbare daaglikse onderonsie was, wonder ons vandag nog oor.

Gelukkig sonder geweld of pistol-vuur was ons gou-gou weer op die R300 en doen 'n nabetrugting. Daar het nog 'n paar snaakse insidente gevolg en teen daardie tyd het ons in vandag se petrol-geld al twee N&B karre kon koop.

Dit bly moeilik om hierdie spannetjie bymekaar te kry met die winter en verwagte vrouens; en die een mislukking na die ander volg met die gesoek na die regte Merc. Uitendelik kry ons 'n baie positiewe leidraad.

1982 Mercedes Benz 280S in goeie lopende toestand, papiere in orde en 'n billike prys. Eienaar/verkoper sal ons op 'n Sondag-oggend op 'n plaaspad buite Wellington ontmoet. Die saak is reg, ten minste is dit in die teenoorgestelde rigting van die Kaaapse vlakke, en ons hoef dalk nie grof-geskud saam te neem nie.

Op die tyd en plek pronk die mooi goue Mercedes-Benz net soos beskryf in die advertensie. 'n Jong mannetjie klim uit toe ons nader kom. Hy groet beleefd en alles lyk reg. Hy stink well van 'n afstand af na Rum en Coke. Die Mercedes se enjin loop, ons spring sommer almal in en hy ry 'n draai. Die seuns en ek is verlig en glo nou het ons uitendelik 'n *Nuts and Bolts* kar gekry.

Ons vra die jong mannetjie "kan ons betaal en hom huis toe neem?" Hy wil, maar lig ons in dat hy seedert die vorige dag nog nie by die huis was nie, en heelnag partytjie op 'n nabygeleë plaas gehou het... en nie huis toe kan gaan nie omdat hy nog "dinge moet doen."

Skielik lyk hy baie benoud, of soos hulle sê, *stressed*.

Intussen sien ek op die windskerm is 'n lisensie-skyfie wat in Desember 2001 verval het. Die jong mannetjie sê dit is nie 'n probleem nie; hy het *contacts*. Ons druk toe om die trasaksie te voltooi en ek vra Viv Jr. om te kyk of daar 'n spaarwiel, domkrag en dalk nog onderdele in die katebak is.

Toe die katebak oopgaan is daar tot almal se verbasing a *body in the boot*! Die jong mannetjie huil en lag. Rum en Coke walms oorheers die atmosfeer langs die rustige plaas pad. Daar was 'n *bachelors* partytjie en later het gaste in 'n dam gesprong, maar minder het uit die dam gekom as wat ingesprong het. Ons druk toe almal met een vinger aan die *body in the boot* en wonderbaarlik kom daar 'n geluid uit die yskoue liggaam op die Sondag-oggend. Die jong mannetjie verduidelik: dit is sy beste vriend wat oor 'n week trou, en hy het gedink die ou het verdrink en hy moes help om die Merc (wat aan 'n ander ou behoort) te verkoop, en nou is hier allerhande probleme.

Ons is terug Kaap toe. Langs die pad het ons onself oortuig daar het wel 'n geluid of twee uit die *body in the boot* gekom. By die huis gekom, tref ons nog 'n bietjie dikker-bek vrouens aan; sonder 'n Mercedes *on tow*. Nou begin dit lyk of ons elke naweek net 'n storie oor 'n ou kar uitdink om swanger vrouens en die ewige reen en koue te ontsnap. Ons was ook bekommerd vir 'n week of twee oor ons vinger druk daar in die *boot*... maar het tot ons verligting met 'n ompad verneem: daar het wel 'n troue plaasgevind.

Die tyd na September raak toe al hoe minder en, sowaar, daar kry Viv Jr. nog potensiaal. Die verkoper weet nie eintlik watse Mercedes dit is nie, maar dit is oud en swart en hy onthou dit het 18 jaar gelede nog lekker geloop. Die swart Merc staan in 'n skuur op 'n wynplaas aan die voet van Helshoogte in Stellenbosch, naby Viv Jr. se werkplek. Hy kry 'n kaans om uit te glip en rapporteer terug: die skuur is donker en daar lê 'n swart 350SE op sy *rims*. Al die bande is pap en daar is krate op die bagasiebak se deksel gepak. My onmiddellike gedagte is toe – *another body in the boot!* Nietemin reël Emile en ek 'n *full viewing*. Ons gaan 'n paar dae later op 'n weeks-aand weer met al die nodige tegniese hulpmiddele om te probeer ten minste 'n start te bewerkstellig. Ons is verseker plastiese sambokke, pistole en ander verdedigings-middels is nie nodig nie.

Aangenaam is ons verras deur die mooi kalm en veilige omgewing. Hoe nader ons kyk, hoe meer volledig is alles omtrent hierdie ou swart Mercedes-Benz. Die advertensie het gelees “needs some attention and can then be driven away.” Die verkoper stem toe saam dat dit 'n baie optimistiese stelling was. Ons is die volgende dag terug met nog hulp-middele en 'n sterk pomp. Sowaar, nadat 'n koppie vol vars petrol in die groot keelgat afgegooi is, brul die enjin vir 'n paar sekondes. Die wiele is gepomp, maar selfs met die hulp van 'n paar omstaanders kry ons die monster nie 'n millimeter beweeg nie. Die verkoper sê toe, party maal hak die ratkas vas. O! Daar sak ons moed... gaan ons hier 'n groot kat in 'n sak koop? Ek argumenteer dat die “drive away” storie nou na 'n “tow away” storie verander het; en nog verder versleg het na 'n “load up and take away” storie.

Die volgende dag het ek 'n lang telefoniese gesprek met die verkoper en die prys sak nog R2000 van 'n reeds baie lae prys; laer as



die 280S. En daar is versekering dat daar niks in die *boot* is nie! Die krate sal verwyder word as ons hom die komende Saterdag kom haal. So gesê, so gedaan. Ons ruk toe op met 'n 4-wiel sleepwa, hys-toerusting en nog baie ander gereedkap, en sleep die ou Merc uit die stoor; amper net soos op die Amerikaanse *Barn Find* TV programme. Die wiele wat ons vroeër daardie week gepomp het, is toe wonderbaarlik nog styf, maar hulle draai nie soos ons die swaar ding met moeite op die sleepwa trek. Al vier remskywe was vas-geroos aan die skoene en rem-meganismis. Ons was in ons noppies met die aankoop, maar soos ons huis toe ry, besef ons dat dit 'n probleem gaan wees om die ding in die erf te kry; nog 'n groter problem as wat die Fintail familie-woning in Mitchels Plein ingehou het.

Ons het weldrae al die probleme oorkom. Die kattebak het 'n ander sleutel as die aansitter gehad, en ons kon eers na twee weke by 'n sleutelmaker uitkom om die spanning omtrent – wat is in die kattebak – te verlig. Daar was toe 'n spaar wiel, 'n oorspronklike Mercedes-Benz hidroliese domkrag, en 'n spaar wieldop in baie mooi toestand. En die brandstof-tenk, wat ook in die kattebak monteer is, het ½ gelees

op die meter. Na baie verdriet en kommunikasie met die vorige eienaar, het dit na vore gekom dat dit ½ vol wyn gegooi was deur ontevrede werkers jare gelede... en deels hoekom die kar in die stoor ingesleep was.

Ons het die eerste *Nuts and Bolts Rally* met die swart 1974 W116 Mercedes-Benz 350SE met werkende sondak, kragstuur, oorspronklike radio en mooi wit leer sitplekke meegemaak; en onvergeetlike ervarings gehad. Ons het nog gedink ons sou hom na die Rally verkoop vir die prys wat ons betaal het (plus die minimale herstel-kostes), maar het so lief vir hom geraak dat hy nou nog in die familie is en net vir spesiale geleenthede gebruik word. Ons is ewig deel van die *Nuts and Bolts* familie en het natuurlik 'n plaas vervanger vir die “Swart Krokodil”, soos hy tydens die Rally naam gekry het, nadat gespekuleer is dat dit dalk PW Botha se amps-motor was.

Die plaas vervanger is toe 'n 1975 Chev Kommando stasiewa, wat ook 'n kleurryke geskiedenis en baie gelukkige Rally-km op die klok het. ■



EASTERN CAPE REGION



My '69 6.3 Resto project

By Nikiforos Georgiou

"I like flowing contours. Elegance, lightness and comfort are what counts. For me, simplicity is elegance. So I always looked for simplicity. And cars must have a distinctive face." These are the famous words of the legendary Mercedes-Benz designer, Paul Bracq, the 'Father' of the W108/9.

I have been a 108/9 fan for as long as I can remember. I'll never forget the first time I met a 108 face-to-face. The sensation and feeling is hard to explain.

I've had the privilege of

restoring my very own '69 6.3, and I would like to take you through what's been happening over the last couple of years.

She was specially ordered for a customer in Zambia, and finally made her way to South Africa in 1994. From what I can tell, the chassis number and annual production figures indicate that she may be the last 6.3 built in 1969. Over the last 52 years, not much mileage has been added to the clock due to problems with the transmission, air suspension and

fuel system. 40 000 miles is what's presently showing on the dial.

Since taking ownership, I have resprayed the entire car, going down to bare metal as the old primer was reacting with the paint. All the loose panels were chemically dipped and coated to remove any of the old paint and filler. The rest of the shell that couldn't be dipped had to be cleaned with paint stripper. To my surprise, no rust was found, which left me very happy.

I decided to stick with the





factory-opted Blue Metallic paint, matched from the vehicle's data card – it really is a beautiful colour to look at, and changes shades in different lighting.

The entire air suspension system was redone, including the levelling valves, air bags, compressor and metal pipes inside the engine compartment. I've stripped and rebuilt the entire suspension with all new rubbers, plated nuts and bolts, as well

as freshly powder-coated metal parts.

The entire braking system has also been overhauled: the disks, callipers, brake lines and master cylinder.

I managed to send the injector pump, cold start valves, fuel dampers and injectors to California for rebuilding, cleaning and calibration by the leading specialist in the States - the engine has never run so smoothly.

I also took the automatic transmission apart to renew all the gaskets, seals and clutches. Quite surprisingly, all parts are available.

As we speak, I'm in the process of reassembling the doors and fitting the chrome mouldings around both front and back screens. I'm hoping to have her ready for the 2023 George Old Car Show.

Hope to see you all there! ■





Thomas River Weekend

By Fabian Cairns

The weekend of May 20th to 22nd saw a group of us from PE and East London heading to Thomas River, for what has become our annual *jolly*.

Situated between Cathcart and Stutterheim, just the drive itself is an absolute treat. The scenery is spectacular and the roads are in pretty good condition, which makes for a good drive, slow or fast.

As is usually the case with older gals, we had a lady that wasn't enjoying the wet and decided to go into safe mode. A lot of talk around the engine bay of the G-Wagon eventually established the cause of going into limp mode, but there was no solution forthcoming. Andrew Hempel was called and he was game to make the trip up on Saturday, with a diagnostic machine in hand, to get the lady happy again.

Most of us arrived on Friday afternoon to a cold and wet Thomas River, which saw us gathering around the fireplace in the pub for a few tipples of sherry and other spirits; to ward off the chill.

As always, a festive time was had, and it was great to have

everyone together for a catch-up and discussion of all things cars.

Friday evening also saw the local farmers popping in, which made proceedings even merrier. As is customary, Jeff Sansom and his wife Anne went out of their way with a special meal on Friday night.

Saturday had us up and about with the view of some fishing at the local dams after breakfast, but with the weather not playing along, we busied ourselves with a walk around the Thomas River village. This involved looking at all the cars on display and, of course, scouting through the numerous sheds and buildings to gawk at the spare parts and memorabilia that Jeff has gathered over all the years. Always very interesting.

Saturday evening was hosted by Jeff and Anne with a wonderful, fully-catered-for braai, which was a real treat. Thanks to Andrew, Adrian and friends for taking care of the tanning of the meat.

A great evening was had by all.

Shortly after a bright Sunday dawn, the boys were back under the hood of the G-Wagon with their diagnostic machine plugged in, but alas, the fault could not be

cleared, so Colin and Joe got the chance of taking a very sedate drive back to ELS.

After another "healthy" breakfast, we bade our farewells and headed home, everyone getting back safe and sound without incident.

We are all looking forward to the next one. ■









The WOW (Wizard on Wheels) SHOW

By Rudi le Roux

The Ronnies Motors Wizard on Wheels Show, or better known as the "WOW SHOW", was held on the 2nd of July on a beautiful warm winter's day in East London.

As per usual, the three-pointed star dominated the show with more than 40 examples in attendance. The title sponsor was Ronnies Motors, our local Mercedes-Benz dealership, as such there was a strong mix of modern Mercls to add to all the older beauties on show.

The event was well supported by the local community as well as Eastern Cape club members and their families.

The oldest car from the three-pointed star was Erald Hohls' 1951 170Da, while the newest was a (locally built) W206 C-Class.

There was a lovely mix of coupes and roadsters, from beautiful W113 Pagodas through various examples of SL, SEC, CL, CLK and E-Class Cabriolet.

S-Classes also featured prominently with examples of the W111, W116, W126 and W220 series alongside a sublime new W223.

Lending some local flavour was a fleet of locally-assembled "Baby Benzes", C-Classes, Pontons, Finny's and /8's.

All in all, one for the books, and a definite must for next year's calendar. ■





Generosity at the 2021 National Gathering

By Paul Merifield

Club members opened their hearts and pockets at the 2021 National Gathering Gala Dinner, held in Graaff - Reinet.

Under the relentless auctioneering skills of Pieter Booyen, individuals, tables, friends and regions (as well as MBSA), bid, out-bid, and bid some more during the evening's fundraising auction for a number of special, collectible and once-off items.

All this generosity was in aid of Vuyani Safe Haven, a "home" that provides a place of safety and care for about 35 children: from babies to teenagers, whose parents either do not or cannot care for them.

When all was said and done, nothing less than R 100,564.00 was bid in support of the evening's charity of choice.

On Saturday 7th May 2022, Club President Waldo Scribante, outgoing Eastern Cape Chairman Erald Hohls, accompanied by Johannes Coetzer, Pieter Moolman and Rudi le Roux, all travelled to Graaff - Reinet. Joined by locals Johan Minnaar and Paul Merifield, the party gathered to hand over the auction proceeds (by old-fashioned cheque) to Chairperson of the Vuyani Board, Mrs Elaine Stanley.

The visiting group later travelled out to Paul's farm in the

Camdeboo Conservancy, where some Mercedes-Benz tyre kicking took place, followed by some braaiing and refreshments, before getting a good night's rest in the peace and quiet of the Karoo.

The Board of Vuyani Safe Haven expressed their sincere and deepest gratitude to the members of the MBCSA for their kindness and generosity, particularly as the amount raised exceeded their wildest expectations!

The MBCSA members can rightly be proud of their unselfish contribution to a needy cause. Well done and Thank You! ■

EASTERN CAPE REGION





KWA-ZULU NATAL REGION



KZN Cars In The Park

by Mira Maharaj

What a glorious day this was at Cars In The Park, with such an amazing turnout in May this year.

It was bittersweet as we met many members who we haven't seen in all these lockdown years, while recalling members who aren't with us anymore. Especially our very own Chris Carlisle Kitz, Dodi Geyser and Pat Smythe; whose presence we sorely missed.

KZN's premier car show is also our KZN Mercedes-Benz Club biggest event of the year. No cost is spared in making our stand the most luxurious and most envied one at the show. With teas, coffees, drinks and snacks served

throughout the day to members and their families, and a place to sit and rest throughout the course of the day, almost every passer-by wishes they were a Mercedes-Benz Club member. And to top it all, we are the only stand that serves a fresh lunch too.

Our KZN Committee went to great lengths to ensure the success of this event, working tirelessly for months ahead of the time. So it really pays off to watch each three-pointed star arrive in all their glory to take up allocated space on our stand, while having the families spend the day with us and share in the festivities. ■







Universal, Safari, Station Wagon

by Chris Carlisle-Kitz

During the post war years until the late 1960's, a number of coach builders in Europe were approved by Mercedes-Benz mainly for the conversion of their sedan vehicles into commercial vehicles, ambulances, hearses and station wagons.

In the mid-1960's, Mercedes used I.M.A. S.A. to design and build station wagons, generally known as the "Universal"; and the "Safari" in Sweden. This was to be an official model which could be bought as a special-order vehicle through Mercedes-Benz dealerships worldwide.

The W110 190D Universal first appeared in 1964. It was a good-looking vehicle with a lower roofline than the products of other coach builders. The stunning and artistic treatment of the rear doors (blending beautifully with the roofline) made this station wagon stand out from other wagons of the period. Most other coach builders used standard rear doors and 'tacked on a rear box', so to speak, to make a station wagon.

To make a Universal, I.M.A. received unpainted 4-door partial bodies from the Sindelfingen factory. These vehicles had no

roof or rear body parts. I.M.A. then built the long roof, inner rear fender arches, back windows and tail gate before modifying the window lines of the rear doors.

Five hundred and eleven 190D Universals were built, together with 16 panel vans and one bakkie, before the Fintail was updated in August 1965, when production of Universals changed to the 200, 200D, 230 and 230S chassis.

A total of 2,754 Universals were built between 1964 and September 1969; of which 2,736 were station wagons. The rest were panel vans and, interestingly,



one was a bakkie.

Although the magnificent new Fintail sedans (with class-leading safety features) were a huge success for Mercedes-Benz, the Universal suffered its own problems. This despite sharing its host's reliability, durability and top-class German engineering standards.

Production was anticipated at 1,000 units per year, but this was not achieved as the cost of the vehicles was far too high; a Universal was 30% more expensive than the equivalent sedan. There were also import duties when exported to various European countries. Production ended in September 1969 and it's understood that any spare Universal parts were scrapped.

All the versions (with the exception of the 190D) were equipped with a hydro-pneumatic compensating spring to assist the rear axle. The 15" wheels were fitted with 195 / 65 tires. A sun roof and air conditioner were options, as was a third row of seats, in addition to the 60/40 split of the rear seats. These were options which now appear in many modern station wagons.

Many of these wagons were used as workhorses and did not survive; others succumbed to rust and would be expensive to repair... if they can be found.

Today they are highly collectable and make great, functional, rolling investments. Good examples are not difficult to maintain as most of the mechanical components (and

sheet metal) are common with the sedans and still available.

By far the most popular version of this workhorse was the 200 Diesel, making up for more than 50% of the total production. Interesting variants were the few 5-door 190D panel vans and the one and only 190D bakkie. Very little information is available on either of these models.

There are five Universals known to survive in South Africa. Two are 200's and three are 230S versions. All five are in running condition and are owned by members of the Mercedes-Benz Club of South Africa. ■





NORTHERN REGION

Angela's Picnic

by Anna-Lee Dos Santos

Angela's Picnic is an event that has been staged for the last 33 years in Johannesburg.

Organized by the South African Marque Car Association (SAMCA), now South African Motor Clubs Association, on the first weekend of April in memory of Angela Heinz. Angela was a remarkable lady whose interests included crop-sprayers, off-road motorcycles, opera, Morgan cars, rifle shooting and Dobermans. She kept a Rolls-Royce (called Edwina) in England for regular sorties to the Continent, studied fashion in London, Haute Cuisine in Paris and life in the world at large.

She arranged this totally laid-back, uncompetitive picnic in the park to give SAMCA members and the public the opportunity to see a variety of very special cars in one place. SAMCA (South African Motor Clubs Association) is the coordinating body for over 30 single-marque clubs catering for

classic cars in South Africa.

Angela died of cancer some years ago and a collection is made at the picnic every year, which is handed to the South African Hospice Association. Over the years, SAMCA has collected and donated up to R700,000 to organizations for cancer sufferers and terminally ill people.

The 39th annual Angela's Picnic took place on Sunday 3 April at a brand-new venue - Riversands Farm, Rose Road, Knoppieslaagte, Midrand. This was the first Angela's Picnic since 2019, with both 2020 and 2021's events having been cancelled due to COVID-19. Gates opened at 8h00 and the entry fee was a donation to Hospice Wits. Due to excessive rain on the day, the event was not as well attended as in previous years, but nevertheless it was great to see the classic cars out and about at the new Angela's picnic venue! ■



Nirox Art & Sculpture Park outing

by Koos du Toit

The May events calendar kicked off with the Nirox Art & Sculpture Park outing, arranged by Marcell Mostert.

It was a perfect day for members to enjoy the drive out to Nirox on Sunday, 15 May. 30 members of the Northern Region paid a visit to NIROX Sculpture Park for lunch and an afternoon of art appreciation. NIROX Sculpture Park is a beautifully-landscaped 15-hectare park in the Cradle of Humankind, and houses contemporary sculptures in displays that are changed regularly.

Displays are carefully curated to show each sculpture in the best possible manner. For the "Good Neighbours" winter sculpture exhibition, works from

30 students from four leading South African universities, as well as universities in Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe were selected. This specific exhibition runs from May to August 2022. The idea behind the theme is to provide a reflection on the relations between South Africa and its neighbouring countries, neighbours in the usual sense of the word, as well as the relationship between people and their immediate environment.

The food served at the And Then There Was Fire restaurant was top quality. This, the serene surroundings of the sculpture park, and the world-class artworks all contributed to a very memorable event for all the attending club members. ■





Attends the National Gathering & AGM

by Anna-Lee Dos Santos

The June events calendar kicked off with our National Gathering & AGM, which is our club's prestigious annual event, this time organized by the Southern Cape Region. The Northern Region attended in full force with 40 members, who travelled from all over Gauteng, to attend the AGM in the beautiful George and Mosselbay areas. The weekend calendar was filled with action from the minute the regions

arrived. Thank you to Aldo, Waldo and Rene from the Southern Cape Region for a most wonderful time!

Congratulations to the newly-elected National Committee. The Northern Region is looking forward to hosting a wonderful 2023 AGM in Gauteng.

Sadly, on the day the regions were checking out to return home, club members were saddened by the devastating news that our Northern Region member,

Johan Coetzee, passed away. How blessed we are to have spent this special time with Johan and Rina Coetzee at the 2022 AGM. Our deepest condolences to Rina and the Coetzee family during this sad time. Johan will be remembered for his kindness, gentle nature, enthusiasm & passion for the Merc Club - you will be missed, my friend! ■



June Noggin

by Anna-Lee Dos Santos

With its roots firmly set in passion and its flavours unapologetically Afro Porto, the Mozambik restaurant group is fast becoming one of South Africa's leading dining brands. From the launch of its first restaurant 17 years ago, the brand has seen rapid growth over the past half-decade, now totalling 28 stores nationally, and launched its first international store in Lusaka, Zambia.

Inspired by the Afro-Porto fusion cuisine of Mozambik, the brand's organic evolution has led to its current positioning; the taste of escape. Chef Brett Michielin has, over time, developed a range of bastings, sauces and rubbing spices which have become Mozambik's trademark. The menu is inspired by Afro-Porto cuisine with a rich tapestry of flavour - the common denominator across an eclectically styled offering. From traditional fare such as prawns through to Mozambik's famous chicken, the menu offers a wide variety of taste experiences.

Jan-Willem Wielmsa arranged the June Noggin at Mozambik, at one of their largest restaurants in the East Rand. Club members enjoyed a lovely meal together and were catching up on adventures, projects and upcoming car outings or events. A special welcome to our new Club members who joined their first Noggin. ■



Mercedes-Benz Anniversaries

By Hanjo Stier



Alternative fuel vehicles

40 years ago – April 1982

Mercedes-Benz presented a petrol-hydrogen research vehicle at the Hanover Fair in 1982. This 123-series 280TE could operate on a variable combination of the two combustible sources and featured a regular 35L petrol tank as well as a low-temperature metal hydride storage unit. In the same year, Mercedes-Benz also presented its first battery-electric research vehicle: another S123 with 30kW of electric power and a nickel-iron battery. ■

DTM double victory in Donington

20 years ago – May 2002

On 19 May 2002, Jean Alesi won both rounds of the DTM race at Donington Park Circuit near Birmingham in the AMG-Mercedes CLK-DMT. This was the first DTM victory for the brand in this season. The lines of this touring car with a 330kW (449hp) four-litre V8 engine are inspired by the Mercedes-Benz CLK (C 209), which celebrated its world premiere at the Geneva Motor Show in March 2002. ■



Rallying success for Eugen Böhringer and Mercedes-Benz in Greece

60 years ago – May 1962

This was the beginning of the European Rally Champion title in 1962: Eugen Böhringer with his co-driver Peter Lang won the 10th International Acropolis Rally 60 years ago in the near-production Mercedes-Benz 220 SE rally car (W 111). The competition was held in Greece from 23 to 27 May 1962. ■



One million MB vehicles with airbags

30 years ago – July 1992

It marked an important milestone: the one millionth Mercedes-Benz passenger car with an airbag rolled off the production line at the Sindelfingen plant on 31 July 1992. The world's first series-produced vehicle with this important passive safety system was the S-Class of the 126 series in 1981; it featured a combined system comprising driver airbag and seatbelt tensioner.

Other model series would follow - along with further developments. The passenger airbag, for example, made its world premiere in September 1987 in the S-Class saloons and coupés. ■



Sensational streamline victory in the Avus race

90 years ago – May 1932

Manfred von Brauchitsch won the International Avus Race on 22 May 1932 in an aerodynamically-optimised Mercedes-Benz SSKL against strong competition. Reinhard Freiherr von Koenig-Fachsenfeld developed the innovative streamlined body but the crowd initially scoffed at the unusual shape and called it a "cucumber". After von Brauchitsch's sensational victory in front of around 250,000 spectators, the car was celebrated all the more. In his live broadcast, radio reporter Paul Laven coined the term "Silver Arrow" for the racing car with its unpainted body. ■



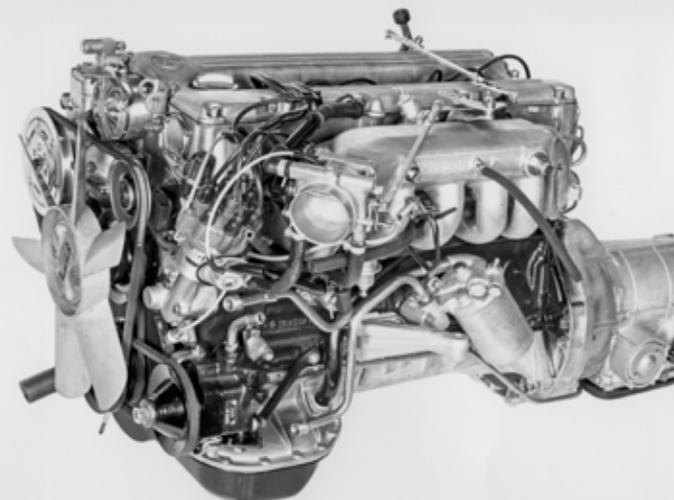
New M110 six-cylinder engines

50 years ago – April 1972

The "Stroke Eight" series is the first to benefit from a new line of engines: the now-legendary M110 straight-six petrol motor. 280 and 280E sedans are complemented by the sleek two-door coupes 280C and 280CE. This engine produces 132kW in the carburettor version and 136kW with electronically controlled fuel injection.

Distinguishing features of the W114 models include larger front brakes, 6x14-inch wheels with 185 tyres and reinforced transmission gears. All 280 models of this series were able to reach 100km/h in about 10 seconds with top speeds of 190km/h (carburettor) and 200km/h (fuel injection) respectively, earning them the title of "wolves in sheep's clothing".

Please follow this link to watch a documentary on the Mercedes-Benz M110 engine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0y0oxWUG1o> ■



MERCEDES-BENZ

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TRIPOLIS



Debut victory for new Mercedes-Benz W 125
85 years ago – May 1937

Hermann Lang won the Grand Prix of Tripoli (Libya) on 9 May 1937 with the 750-kilogram formula racing car Mercedes-Benz W 125. It is the first race of the vehicle specially developed for this season by a team led by Rudolf Uhlenhaut.

The 5.6-litre eight-cylinder engine with a compressor delivered a peak output of around 441kW (600hp). Further victories followed in the Grands Prix of Germany, Monaco, Switzerland and Italy as well as in the Masaryk Grand Prix in Brno.

Hermann Lang auf Mercedes-Benz

durchfährt die 524 km lange Strecke auf Continental-Reifen, mit Bosch-Zündung und Bosch-Kerzen ausgerüstet, in neuer Rekordzeit von 2 Stunden 27 Minuten 57 Sekunden und

erringt den ersten Preis



Mercedes-Benz resumes the tradition of four-seater cabriolets

30 years ago – June 1992

Nothing but sky above: after the world premiere at the 1991 Paris Auto Show, in 1992 Mercedes-Benz launched a fifth body style of the highly successful 124 series – a classic four-seater cabriolet with a fabric top. Its technical basis was the C124 coupé, but around 1,000 parts were redesigned with a great deal of effort.

After a hiatus of around 20 years, the 300 CE-24 Cabriolet (A 124) continued the tradition of four-seater Mercedes-Benz cabriolets, which combine comfort and space for four passengers with the luxurious flair of open-top motoring. When the brand reorganised the nomenclature of its passenger cars in 1993, the open-top four-seater became the first E-Class Cabriolet. ■

Fritz Erle wins the third Herkomer Competition

115 years ago – June 1907

Reliable, fast and beautiful: Fritz Erle from Mannheim won the third and final Herkomer Competition 115 years ago, from 3 to 13 June 1907, with Edgar Ladenburg's Benz 50 hp (7.4-litre four-cylinder engine, 37 kW/50 hp). This series of long-distance drives was initiated by Landsberg artist Professor Hubert von Herkomer: as an enthusiastic motorist, he offered a challenge trophy worth 10,000 Marks for a competition for touring cars with four seats, wings, lights, rain cover and luggage compartment.

There were three sub-classifications: a touring race with the six stages Dresden–Eisenach–Mannheim–Lindau–Munich–Augsburg–Frankfurt am Main, two speed tests and a beauty contest. Public interest in the Herkomer Competition was strong and, as a result, the passion for the motor car grew across Germany and Europe. ■



Restart of post-war production with the 170 V

July 1947 – 75 years ago

It took courage, skill and organisational brilliance to start producing cars again after the end of the Second World War. Production facilities had been destroyed and materials were scarce. Mercedes-Benz quickly took the first step and from May 1946 initially produced urgently-needed platform trucks and ambulances based on the 170 V (W 136).

A good year later, things were proceeding: from July 1947, the company resumed production of the four-door saloon – an important signal of further normality. The vehicle was the only passenger car model in the Mercedes-Benz model range until 1949. A total of 140,415 units of the 170 V were produced. ■





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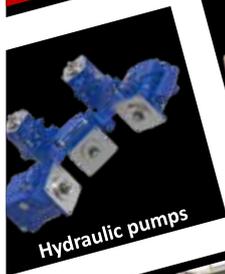
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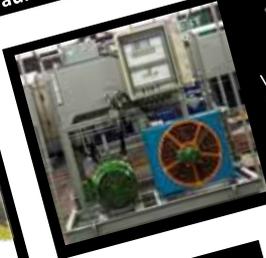


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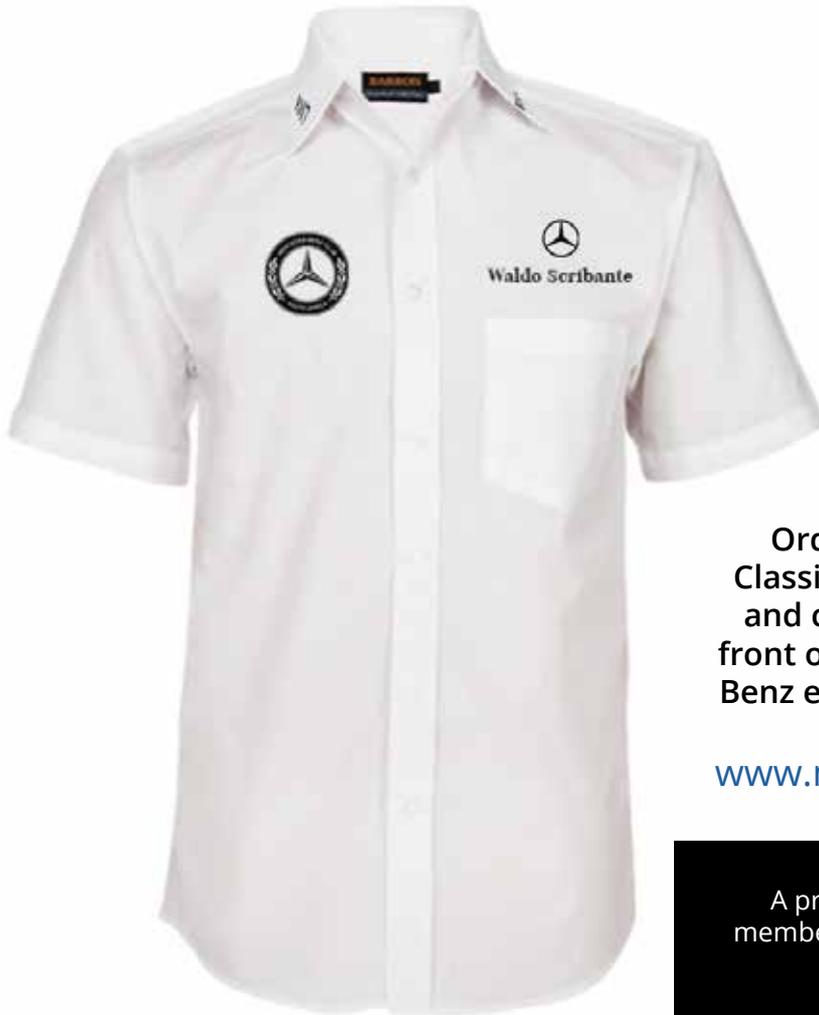
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