

Report from Johannesburg Centre. May 2013

Winter has suddenly hit us. Boom! In my opinion, this is the best time for Highvelders to get out and use their Triumphs, top-down. By mid-morning the temperatures are most agreeable to drive without getting burnt to a frazzle.

Valentine's breakfast is always popular and this year was no exception. Blandford Manor in North Riding, treated us to a delicious buffet breakfast in the shade of enormous weeping willows beside a small dam and our lovely ladies were each treated to a red rose each. A most enjoyable day for both Johannesburg and Pretoria Centres, indeed.

The month of March was pronounced Donald McDonald Month to celebrate his amazing achievements. Donald is well known for his love of motoring and he can keep you entertained about his travels both here and overseas for ages. His most recent tour entailed a 6000km, two week Lap of Botswana tour, organised by Roger Pearce. This tour took seventeen classic cars through Namibia: Fish River Canyon, Luderitz, Sossus Vlei, Walvis Bay, Etosha and Katima Mulila in the Caprivi, then into Botswana: Chobe. Zimbabwe: Victoria Falls, Bulawayo and home. There was one Triumph. A lovely powder-blue 1968 Triumph 2000 (with spare wheel mounted on the boot). Donald and his friend used his beloved 1958 Austin Westminster and Roger in a '57 MG Magnette; the whole trip was the subject, by way of a photographic presentation, to keep us enthralled for a good hour at our noggin evening. Donald has also rebuilt to perfection, several interesting classic cars and is currently nearing completion of a 1933 Chevrolet four seat open-top tourer; quite rare for 1933. Before heading out to Kenjara Lodge for a buffet breakfast (organised by Keith Kelly), we all descended upon Donald's home to have a look at his 'work in progress' and enjoy a glass of champagne & orange. Thank you and we salute you Donald.

Early April is always eagerly awaited by motoring enthusiasts; perfect weather was on tap for a record attendance to Angela's Picnic, Delta Park on the 7th. Our club parking site, near the entrance affords one to relax in one's camper chair, (probably won in the door prize at our noggins) cold frostie in one hand, sarmie in the other and watch the slow passing parade as the drivers queue to offer their donation. Our parking site not only attracted many Triumphs from Joburg and Pretoria, but a variety of interesting marques within our club. Three Austin Healeys, two Ferraris, a Capri, BMW Z3, an Alfa GTV, our regular DB Panhard of Mark's and a '60 Ford F100. All welcome it must be said. George Shipway, SAMCA's Treasurer informed me that R30 280 was collected for Witwatersrand Hospice – Fantastic !

Although this event on the 1st May; The Dam Busters Tour – organised by the Sunbeam Club is not an official point scoring run for our club, it is worth mentioning and perhaps including this on our programme for next year. It's also worth mentioning mostly as a means of integrating with members from other marques – which I support (an Inter-Club quiz is coming up soon). It was a fun, route-finding clue-solving 170km tour around Hartbeespoort Dam and Magaliesburg areas with a picnic break half way along the drive at Buffelspoort Dam. Before all the scores were added up, we had one last chance to improve our dismal scores by having a short archery competition, how about that for diversity? There was a good turnout of cars from all clubs including twelve Triumph members (albeit not all in Triumphs) and I feel that this is an event to look out for next year. The event was marred however by a terrible accident, involving a Sunbeam Alpine and an AC Cobra – a powerful rear-end shunt, sending both cars farming in two directions and the Cobra, wheels up. Thankfully all

occupants emerged out of the long grass with minor injuries; the stock roll bar/harness-type seat belts of the Cobra definitely saved the driver's life. A point to observe from the day, besides this, is that when cars are travelling in an event like this, please be sure, when travelling behind a group of participants, leave several car lengths space for other travellers to be able to overtake. This will allow, if necessary, the driver return to the lane safely.

At the time of writing, both Johannesburg and Pretoria Centres are preparing a team each of four sharp individuals to represent the Triumph marque in an Inter-Club quiz on June the 6th, hosted at the MG Clubhouse in Houghton. Other teams to challenge: MG, Jaguar, Austin Healey, MX-5, Sunbeam, Alfa and Lotus. Results in the next issue.

It is nice to report that Jon Lewis has made good progress from a hip operation and we all share relief (including other car clubs) on the recovery of Neil Cameron's TR5. We also wish Cape Town's Dennis Cook a speedy recovery in the False Bay hospital following a fall from the roof of his house.

Lastly, I had an e-mail from Gertjan van de Klashorst at the time of writing. Besides his well wishes, he tells me he has just bought a very nice TR7 over there in Germany, to be used as a regular commuter and his decision based on how impressed he was with the red TR7 loaned to him whilst visiting for the 2010 Nationals.

Enjoy the winter months. Mike.



