



TRIUMPH SPORTS CAR CLUB



**OF
SOUTH AFRICA**

**JOHANNESBURG CENTRE
P.O.BOX 1102 SOUTHDALE 2135**



June 2009

Issue 3/2009



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EDITORIAL

As I write this editorial and wrap up the June issue of the newsletter, winter is very much with us with grass fires and smoke everywhere and crisp mornings making one wish for an hour or so extra “ironing of the blankets”.

In this issue John Dobbins has reported a few concerns regarding the use of silicone brake fluid which has prompted Alan Grant to set in train various tests to try and determine exactly what is causing the problem. Hopefully by the next issue we will be able to report back for the benefit of us all, as braking is a fairly important issue if we don't want to meet others by accident!

Alan Grant has really excelled in getting John Mason-Gordon, the guy that commissioned the Triumph Protea (front cover picture), to write a story on the history of this car, the development and interesting tales of racing experiences in the fifties and sixties. I actually got goose bumps reading the account for the first time and I am so pleased that we will be the first to publish the story before it goes to Sabrina and other publications – what a scoop – thanks Alan for organising the article and thank you John for taking the time to share your experiences and recording these for posterity. Next issue will include an account of the Protea



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written by Alan which I found equally absorbing and interesting – so there is something to look forward to!

You will also see that we have quite a few great activities coming up over the next few months which should appeal to members so we hope that you and your family and friends will continue to support the events as you have done in the recent past.

Finally – is there anyone out there who wishes to advertise their products or businesses in the newsletter? The rates are good and I am sure that members would like to support fellow members where possible – a win, win situation for sure! If there are any takers please contact anyone in the committee and we would be delighted to help set this up.

Until next time - cheers

Cliff

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Middle of the year already!! Very Cold!! Still – plenty time for motoring. We had a nice breakfast at the Teak Place, and are sure to have a good one at the Rand Airport too. This month we will have a little different noggin' in that we will have it during the day. The government has obliged us with a holiday on the third Tuesday this month so we will have a little braai and boot sale and our noggin'. Watch the details in the newsletter.

This brings me to the subject of the noggins'. We've had great noggins' (noggin'ses?) in the past and they have mostly been well attended and some of them extremely well attended. As expected, with the onset of winter, attendance does go down somewhat. Also, from the side of management, they have tended to become a little stale. Now there's not much we can do about the weather, but we have decided to spice them up a little. Not to worry - we will not bring in the petrol or oil experts which might be interesting to some of the guys only, and very soon none of our lady members and friends will be joining us at noggins' any more. We will have noggins' of interest to all of us.

The wine and whisky tasting worked very well last year and we all enjoyed it. We can have more of it again with different wines this time. What we have on the cards is a boot sale which will take place at John Dobbins' place this month (see news elsewhere), Mike van Ginkel and his wife will come share their experiences with us of motoring through Africa in their Rolls Royce, perhaps a table-top route find will cause as much fighting at the noggin as it does in the car. These are some of the events we are planning and we are sure they will be enjoyed by all.

June 2009



The Sunday events will be as well-planned as always. The Benoni Treasure Hunt will be held next month again, this year will see us holding the concourse in preparation for the National Gathering next year. We have been invited to join the Pretoria Centre for their end of year function which will be the last Sunday of November. They have arranged a train ride from Pretoria to Cullinan where they will have a picnic or lunch and then return. We have in turn invited them to our end of year lunch which will be held at our noggin venue on the first Sunday of December as we had last year. Everybody has complimented me on a great lunch and event we had and we felt we should do it one more time.

So that's a brief outline of the road ahead and we hope to see you all there. Brave the winter and come along.

Gino

MEMBERSHIP

Birthday Greetings

We are sure that you will all join us in congratulating the following members who, during June and July, celebrate/celebrated their birthdays. To those whose birthdays have passed we trust that you had a ball, and those who have not yet had your celebration let your hair down and enjoy.

June	July
06 Eddie Steele	05 Geoff Burton
23 Ivan Medak	16 David Sawyer
26 John Dobbins	22 David Beard

Attendance at a Noggin (irrespective of whether you are in a Triumph or not) – 10 points.

Attendance at any advertised event in a Triumph – 20 points

Attendance at any advertised event in an exotic – 15 points

Attendance at any advertised event in a non-Triumph – 10 points

For any articles submitted for use in the Sabrina or our bi-monthly newsletter – 20 points.

The following table sets out the standings as at end of May 2009.



John Dobbins	130	Coral Turnbull	130
Harry Fairley	120	Elaine Castlemaine	120
Cliff Turnbull	110	Dot Gibbons	90
Chris Gibbons	100	Margarita Coppens	80
Eddie Steele	100	Liz Roeder	80
John Craig	100	Bev Moranduzzo	60
Rob McLeod	100	Liz Dobbins	60
John Crowther	90	Colleen Craig	60
Mike Hayden	80	Jackie McLeod	60
Jean Coppens	80	Ada Liebhoff	60
Vernon Roeder	80	Joan Booyens	50
Mark Hirst	75	Gloria Miller	50
Italo Moranduzzo	70	Tina Hayden	40
Chris Ferreira	70	Marion Roets	30
Gino Casieri	65	Wendy Hay	30
Jon Lewis	60	Ann Nicolaus	20
Gary Booyens	50	Antoinette Sawyer	20
Mike Gilchrist	40	Viv Nightingale	20
Ivor Carlson	40		

MEMBERS NEWS

During the May noggin, David Harris from the Pretoria Centre mentioned that as he enjoys reading books covering various aspects of motoring, he searches the net with a view to buying interesting reading material. He suggests that if you are interested, that you have a look at www.chatters.co.uk. I did and found it fascinating just to see what is available – Triumph owner handbook for my GT6 was one that interested me. David also mentioned that their service is excellent and reliable and the payment process was not a problem.

Gary Booyens is making good progress with the restoration of his Spitfire Mk 4. The chassis is completed as is the engine. The seats have been recovered and are looking very good indeed. He is frantically waiting for the body to come back from the paint shop when he will be able to continue. Gary you have less than twelve months before the Nationals so kick a bit of butt at the body shop!

Jean Coppens has acquired a TR6 to add to his fleet of Triumphs. His other Triumphs are a TR4, TR7 and the Dolomite which he wishes to sell – see the notice in the For Sale Section.

Early History of the Triumph Protea



By: John Mason-Gordon

My first motor car was a TC MG bought in 1947 at exactly the same time as the Royal visit to Johannesburg. This was my introduction to sports cars and I drove it for several years, servicing and tuning it myself. Running it on something like the equivalent of R 10 a month!!

In the mid 1950s I did two things: learnt to fly and bought a Triumph TR2. I had seen the launch in London of the Healey 100 and the Triumph at the 1950 or 1951 Earls Court Motor show and fell absolutely in love with the Healey. Although I put my name down for one, import control scuttled my dream. The Jaguar XK120 emerged at about the same time and its lovely lines and high performance were a big hit. I was living in France then and was a spectator at a motor race in Aix les Bains where a young up and coming driver called Stirling Moss drove a BRM.

In about 1956, as I recall, Clows imported a few Triumphs and I was able to secure one in Durban. I decided to try my luck at racing.

I joined the Sports Car Club as a complete novice and set about learning all I could about sports and racing cars. As I remember it there were no racing circuits up here on the Reef --- Grand Central was not yet in commission --- and the first meeting I attended under the auspices of the SCC was a sort of sprint event at a venue called Kaffirs Kraal. There were, I think, about 25 cars amongst which were several Triumphs. We all met at the Doll's House and proceeded in convoy to the alleged track outside Pretoria. There were three events: a standing quarter mile, a one lap event and another which, for the life of me, I cannot remember and the track was so narrow that each car was timed separately. I was pleasantly surprised to get a second in all three behind a hot Austin Healey belonging to a chap who I think was called Barnard. I received three of the smallest cups I've ever seen at the prize-giving but knew that this was a big scene for me.

A hill-climb near Krugersdorp, although it rained just as I was starting the climb, brought a good result and I was firmly hooked on this sport.

Various sprints and small races followed, firstly at the airfield circuit of Palmfontein and then, I think, at Grand Central, but the one race that really caught my imagination was the Six Hour at Maritzburg. I had attended as a spectator in a previous year and was thrilled by the concept of the whole event. The TR was entered for 1958.

Although the standard TR had quite good performance I started planning to improve it. The first modification was to import from England a Derrington exhaust system and the next a Laycock overdrive. The latter caused me severe irritation because, although I had done all the ordering, taken care of all financial arrangements and the rest directly



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with either Laycock or Triumph in England, they sent it out via Clows who charged me something like 110% added to the original price --- for doing nothing but handing it over the counter!

Nevertheless both worked beautifully. The Derrington allowed the engine to breath properly, giving a noticeable increase in power and the overdrive gave me seven possible forward ratios and partly took the place of a variable differential. An anti-roll bar was fitted to the front suspension.

I believed in approaching a power increase cautiously, with total reliability a prime consideration and at a price I could afford --- there was no real sponsorship in those days and you can't win unless you finish. All the considerable modifications to the engine and gearbox were undertaken with that in mind.

At the time Triumphs recommended using SAE 30 oil in both engine and gearbox. Multigrade oils were just appearing on the scene and I consulted the technical department at Shell and asked whether they could not be substituted in both. The answer was yes and throughout their racing career both engine and gearbox ran only on 10/30 multigrade with considerable benefits in reduced friction, particularly from cold.

The triumph engine was pretty reliable as long as you did not exceed 5000 RPM. At which point the oil temperature rocketed and it promptly ran its main bearings. It happened twice, even before the oil substitution, and I was advised to hard chrome the crankshaft. This seemed to work but I never really relaxed at elevated RPM until much later when I fitted an oil cooler.

I had meanwhile befriended John Myers who then worked as a mechanic at a Marshall Street garage in Johannesburg. His boss was one Zunia Liebavicius --- Zed Smith for short --- a TR owner and charming sports car enthusiast. John was a meticulous worker with a profound knowledge of car mechanics and also had long distance racing experience. As he and I seemed to have similar philosophies about racing, I invited him to co-drive the Six Hour with me.

Without wishing to sound pretentious, my racing philosophy was patterned very closely on that of Juan Manuel Fangio at the time the most successful and probably greatest, driver in the world. He maintained that a race should be won as slowly as possible. Stirling Moss who had enormous talent, and may have been the quickest, always drove at his and the car's maximum. Moss often broke his car and failed to finish. Fangio invariably finished. Moss never won a world championship; Fangio won five. The message was clear. My directive to John was: "We race within the limits of the car" and he agreed.



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The Six Hour was a most exciting and intriguing event. Apart from the actual car preparation and racing I loved the pit organization and being part of one of the SCC teams. The atmosphere in Maritzburg was extraordinary, both on and off the track. The members of the Joburg contingent were good drivers, willing pit helpers and very compatible and we had the greatest fun, before and after the racing. I remember a bedtime frolic in the hotel corridors with the men outfitted in their wives and girl-friends nighties! The after race party, which took place at “Café de Move-on” or “Pie Cart” in the market square, saw the release of pent up high spirits and amongst other activities, races round the square involving the porter’s trolleys mounted and pushed by the teams!

Apart from initial worry over the Michelin X tyres, which scrubbed on the outside during practice and showed some of the sidewall steel belting, everything seemed to be o.k during the race. The car went like a dream and we were second to the Alfa Romeo of Horse Boyden and, I think, Mario Lupini. If my memory serves me correctly we also assisted the SCC to a team win.

Post race scrutineering bought its own moments. The engine capacity was measured by removing a spark plug and filling one cylinder with a measured dose of water. In order to evacuate the water, John pressed the starter, sending a compressed missile of H₂O arcing towards the spectators, where it unerringly targeted the bare back of a sun-dressed young lady; to the intense delight of the assembled crowd.

I was thrilled with our performance but there was no question that if we wanted to win in the future, we would have to be more competitive. So started a long train of thought and action. I embarked on a series of engine modifications including porting and polishing the head, making and adding a cold air box to the carbs with a large diameter pipe collecting cool air at the nose. This was not used to pressurize the incoming air, as SU carbs needed their pistons to be pressure equalized and the practicalities and under bonnet space of an all encompassing box made it possible. The camshaft and compression ratio were left alone in the interests of reliability and keeping the revs reasonable, but useful and perceivable performance increased were apparent.

I think it was about this time that an oil cooler was added. I had a small plate of aluminum made with the necessary ducts drilled in it which fitted between the oil filter and the crankcase. It led the hot oil to a cooler and back to the filter, with the cooler mounted, not low down at the front but, on the passenger side scuttle above the foot well --- I was nervous that near the water radiator close to the road surface, it might be damaged. In spite of being out of the main airstream the temperature was dramatically reduced at higher revs and we never had to worry about the bearing again.



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The Triumph was a fun car to drive but it wasn't particularly light and you had to enjoy its jack-in-the-box, la conga/samba progression over uneven road surfaces like at Grand Central (with almost more movement in the chassis than the suspension). There was no doubt that a light, stiff chassis would bring major benefits without sacrificing reliability, but import control was still enforced, and in any case an exotic imported chassis would be beyond my financial capabilities and not really to my taste. So I continued to race the Triumph in sprint events.

John Myers had meanwhile joined up with a family of enthusiasts called Hudson to launch a South African sports car. It would be known as a PROTEA and John, Alec Roy and Roland Fincher would design and build it. They set up a factory in Johannesburg and eventually produced their first car which debuted, a Ford 1172 cc. side-valve motor and fibre-glass body. The latter was a bit slab-sided and ordinary to look at, I thought, with little attention to aerodynamics. The engine kept the price reasonable but performance was pedestrian. It was a rather disappointing debut.

I don't know how many Proteas were sold but I think eventually the Hudsons withdrew from the operation and John moved premises to work on his own. I had driven one or two of the early Proteas on public roads near the factory, and in spite of its looks, was impressed with its lightness, precision and road-holding --- no jack-in-the-box here --- and entered into discussions with John about the possibility of marrying the Triumph's mechanicals to the Protea's chassis. He had a few chassis available and I commissioned him to carry out the work that we had discussed on one of them.

Englishman Geoff Collins, who was a professional, car body-builder of great skill occupied the same premises as John and was commissioned to provide a body for my new baby. I had acquired a DB3 as daily transport by then and seem to remember that Geoff had worked at Aston Martin.

I had very definite ideas about the external design of the car. The aerodynamics involved would of necessity be a bit of a thumb suck but I had an understanding of them from my flying experience and, borrowing some of the thinking coming out of England, especially from Lotus, drew a shape for Geoff which I felt would follow the correct principals and at the same time look good (Functional shapes always look good to me).

Thus the body has to be smooth with a low radiator air-intake pointing slightly down, where it was thought a high pressure area existed. The bonnet had to flow smoothly to the windshield area and the sides had to be rounded and flowing. I also wanted a slight air extractor effect behind the front wheel arches to assist with brake cooling. The doors had to be high, with no, or very little, cutaway. The shape of the tail was considered important in reducing or eliminating lift at speed and the current thinking was that it should be slightly higher than the bonnet and as flat as practical on top.



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John always had a pragmatic point of view and he felt that both nose and tail should have little overhang. He was concerned about bumping and boring during racing, and I agreed. We also agreed that maximum accessibility to mechanicals decreed that both bonnet and tail should be hinged or arranged to open to their fullest extent. Attachment points and other practical details were left for Geoff and John to work out. I think that there was very little difference in outlook between the three of us and we were all very pleased with the eventual result.

Due to the difference in width of the front swing axles and the narrowness of the Triumph rear axle the body turned out much wider at the front than the back, but it never looked or felt unbalanced and from every angle we thought its lines were lovely.

If I remember correctly it took about six months to complete the car and during the period I acquired a set of TR3 front disc brakes from Alex Blignaut which were fitted in place of the original drums. Its first outing without a body indicated a beautiful balance and tight control and I think that the only modification was made to the front spring settings.

I liked the colour of the TR --- good for racing cars I thought --- so we stuck to its original bright red. Geoff did such a good smooth job on the body that absolutely no filler was used before a primer and the final coat were applied. The car was finished just in time for the Six Hour and John's artistic wife Christine added the racing numbers the night before we left for Maritzburg.

We had debated relicensing it as a Protea but were worried that the taxman would levy a new car penalty and so we kept the original license and number plated and informally added "Protea" to the original name. And so was born the TRIUMPH PROTEA.

The Maritzburg Six Hour was the Protea's first and probably its most important race. I drove it down to Maritzburg and John drove it back. At practice we were a bit disappointed in our lap times and that night my mechanic (more about him later) and my brother-in-law stripped the engine and replaced the top chromed piston rings with softer Hasting ones, finishing sometime in the early hours of the morning of race day. The wheel alignment was also changed. All this to good effect, because, true to the declared philosophy, we rarely exceeded 4500 rpm during the entire race, and we won it.

The car was beautifully balanced at speed and easy to drive. The road holding was phenomenal and we were able to take the long sweep at full bore where we often passed the competition. I erred on one lap when passing a Renault that I thought was holding its line at the exit to the sweep, but he drifted out and caught the front



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mudguard and caused me to spin. Otherwise it was a faultless and thrilling performance. The post race was pretty memorable too.

Meanwhile I continued to modify the engine. I don't any more remember the precise chronology of these modifications but they included fitting larger and lighter inlet valves and larger cylinder sleeves to bring the capacity up to 2.2 liters. This simultaneously lifted the compression ratio about 10%. I then embarked on a more difficult modification involving the fitting of one carburetor per cylinder. After a great deal of searching I eventually located a bloke working at Greens Radiators who hand formed and welded four individual tubes into pairs to fit the inlet ports.

There was only room for three float chambers and so the two inner carbs drew from a central chamber carefully aligned to give them both the correct float level. On starting the engine ran very rough and I was horrified to see the SU pistons pumping in unison with the cylinders. I had completely ignored the balance pipe so necessary with SU's.

Back to Greens and the problem was solved by welding on a large diameter pipe with short links to the inlets. Controlling the butterflies was quite tricky but my mechanic rigged a very fine set of pulley with wheels and wires which worked a treat and I raced it like that in Luanda and until I sold the car.

Although we never tested the output on an engine dynamometer, Fred Wilmot had a wheel dyno which indicated that we were getting very much the same power at the wheels as the original TR2 was rated at the flywheel. I believe that the engine must have been giving somewhere near 130 BHP.

On two occasions I tried to race the car at East London and failed on both. On the one I developed an ulcer on my right eye and had to have it surgically removed. A bandage covering my eyes precluded any thought of racing and we departed East London without my even having had the opportunity to practice.

On the other occasion: I had entered for a two hour race which was scheduled for July and as the time approached it became apparent that it would coincide with the birth of my first child in Johannesburg. I felt obliged to withdraw personally and invited Chris Ferguson to drive in my place. He was accepted as a substitute by the organizers and achieved a creditable 3rd place.

Chris had shown interest in the Protea after I passed him and his Dart (I think) going into the kink along the back straight at Grand Central. He thought I was surely headed for the nearby rocks and we had a chat about the car's road holding after the race. I believe he subsequently commissioned his own Protea.



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Racing in Luanda was a unique experience. The Luanda Car Club sent an invitation to the SCC or the RAC, I don't remember which, for three South African drivers to participate in their annual major race meeting and Ian Fraser-Jones, Bill Jennings and I were selected. It was unique for several reasons: At a time when there was no real sponsorship in South Africa, we were flown to Lourenco Marques and spent one night at the Polana Hotel. We were then flown to Luanda and accommodated for 10 days in the best Hotels. We were made honorary members of the Luanda car club for the duration of our stay where all refreshments were on the house. Our cars were transported to Luanda by rail and ship and housed at selected garages for the entire period. All this was done entirely at their expense and all fuel and lubricants were sponsored by Shell. Before departing we painted a green and gold stripe along the centre of the bonnet and tail to establish our provenance.

The course was laid out in the middle of town and was the African equivalent of Monaco. I mean this literally because Luanda is a seaport and the oldest city in the southern hemisphere --- 100 years older than Cape Town --- and the streets are laid out like they are in the old cities of Europe. No really straight roads, variations in slope, widening at some places and narrowing at others, with relatively narrow pavements and buildings right on the streets.

The widest part, at about 30 to 40 metres, was the seafront esplanade which had two more or less straight sections linked by a very fast curve, ending at the South African consulate, where it turned sharp right. Then, through a narrow lane, up a short rise and into a square. Right again into the central city main drag, which was relatively straight, to the Imperial hotel, where a left and right led up and down a hill and, if you weren't careful, into the sea. (I believe that Chris Ferguson had firsthand experience of this the previous year).

Sharp right and a fast sweep going left to a massive, vertical rock with the original fort on top. Right again into an enormous square, drifting all the way, and past the pits down the esplanade. The circuit measured 4.621 kilometers and the Grand Prix consisted of 60 laps totaling 300.365 kilometers.

Practice was held on two or three days at about 5-30 A.M. before the town got busy and the road were barricaded and policed. The crowds were exceptionally well-behaved and I think only the odd canine ventured onto the track. The experience of driving at racing speeds through the city was enthralling and really concentrated the mind. The road surface, although smooth tarmac, contained a local rock or sand component which made it slippery, and cornering was one serious drift after another - predictable, but a bit like driving in the wet.



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There were two races: the Coupe de Luanda and the Grand Prix. The former was for production cars and Bill Jennings won in his Porsche -Dart. Unfortunately, due to homologation requirements, I was only eligible for the Grand Prix.

The field for the latter consisted of drivers from the U.K. and Europe, Rhodesia, South Africa and Luanda and featured D-type Jaguars, an Aston Martin DBR, Porsche Spyders, Maserati and Ferrari as well as Lotus, Cooper Monaco and Mercedes 300SL. There were also a few local sports cars like TRs and then there was Bill's Dart which was also entered for the Grand Prix.

The race took place on Sunday and I think I was on the fourth row of the grid. I don't believe that I have ever enjoyed driving more than at Luanda with the roar of the crowd clearly audible. There was never a time to relax and for two hours I really felt the qualities of the Protea. It swept through the various corners and sailed down the straight parts at speeds never experienced before (over 130 MPH?) with absolute confidence in its aerodynamics. Finishing about 7th was creditable in view of the competition and I was invited back for the following year, particularly if I could find a bit more power and speed. Fraser-Jones bust his gearbox and didn't finish and Jennings came 9th I think.

We spent the last couple of days on the beach and absorbed fair quantities of prawns caught fresh out of the sea. We were flown back via L.M. to Joeys and I at least was in a state of euphoria.

I had hoped to drive in the Nine Hour at Grand Central which followed shortly after the Luanda Grand Prix but was worried that the return sea journey would take too long for the Protea to get back in time and so didn't enter. As it turned out it arrived in time and I regretted the decision. I sold it about a year later due to business pressure (I farmed near Tzaneen) and always regretted that the next chapter of fitting a 5.0 litre Chev engine and drive train never materialized. I believe that the balance of the car would not have been impaired and the scope for power augmentation was almost unlimited. It would have been dynamic.

Right near the beginning of my racing career I made the acquaintance of a man who owned and ran a filling station garage in Craighill --- I think I took the Triumph there for a service. I seem to remember it was after the meeting at Palmietfontein that he offered to act as mechanic to the car, charging me only for parts and even paying for his own accommodation if we raced away from Joburg. His name was Angelo Pera and he was to play a significant role in any success achieved.

Originally Italian, short and powerfully built, he worked fast and accurately and I was able to rely on him for all mechanical work to the car except the actual tuning, about which I had definite ideas and always did myself. He had a lovely personality, always



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contributed to the fun of the occasion, and we became firm friends. A meal cooked by Angie's wife, also Italian, was memorable and only needed a really healthy appetite! I could never have afforded his help nor done without it.

The Protea chassis was, at the time, a very interesting development in this county: A space frame made of various diameter mild steel tubes welded into a carefully designed pattern giving immense torsional, deflective and compressive rigidity with structural integrity and strength while accommodating all the essential components of a sports-racing car. An under-tray, riveted to the chassis, covered the central driving compartment. Acting as a floor and augmenting the stiffness in this area. The driving compartment, except for the doors, was further enclosed in riveted panels.

Front suspension consisted simply of two swing axles, pivoted at the front of the chassis, located fore and aft by a single, flexibly mounted trailing arm. Originally conceived, I think, by Colin Chapman for the early Lotus and copied by John Meyers the swing arms were simple forged I-beams which came off a truck front axle, bent to the required shape and the TR brakes and hubs mounted at the ends. Springs and shock absorbers connected to brackets on the chassis.

Steering was effected by a rod attached to the steering box arm and a centrally pivoting lever with rods to the wheels and was absolutely direct.

Rear suspension used the Triumph's solid axle located with a Panhard rod from the diff to the chassis and two adjustable leading arms next to each of the hubs, attached to the chassis behind the driving compartment. Again springs and shocks were linked to brackets welded onto the chassis, above the axle.

The bodywork over the engine and front of the driving compartment was made in one piece and pivoted at the front to open completely and give instant access to the mechanicals. The rear body shell was completely removable by releasing four sprung catches.

The design made for some body flexibility and initially was a bit of a rattle trap, alleviated by suitably placed sponge rubber, but never, I think, completely eliminated.

All instruments came from the Triumph but the gray, plastic steering wheel came from a Ford Anglia and was the least attractive component of the whole car.

The original Protea chassis was the design of Alec Roy, Roland Fincher and John Meyers but modifying it and attaching all the Triumph mechanical components was John's responsibility. This was the central and most important facet of the creation of the Triumph Protea and was fundamental to its success. I have lost touch with the others but John and I have remained good friends to this day.



Submitted by Alan Grant with thanks to John Mason-Gordon for a most interesting report



NOGGINS

Tuesday 21st April 2009

On a crisp evening on the eve of the national elections our meeting took place at the normal venue, with politics being furthest on our minds, as the gathering enjoyed some good food and the normal banter that just happens on such an evening.

Mike Gilchrist is pretty tied up with various work projects which have made him a little scarce at functions so there was no door prize on offer.

Dave Sawyer advised us that he had acquired a very nice TR4A and had arranged for it to be transported up from Cape Town and was keen to come on the first run to show it off.

Gino dealt with a number of issues including the outing proposed by the Pretoria Centre, which involved going to the skidpan at Swartkops at the end of May. The matter was debated for some time but there was not much interest shown by those present.

Tuesday 19th May 2009

A reasonable number of members and partners were present along with about a half dozen guests from the Pretoria Centre. Nols and his team were disappointed about the fact that we were not going to be joining them on the 31st at the skidpan and just wanted to provide more information regarding the event with a view to changing our minds. It was great having them present but they too did not seem to



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be able to generate much in the way of interest. They also mention some of the forthcoming attractions which have been up dated elsewhere in the newsletter.

No door prize was on offer as Mike was not around – roll on the end of the projects Mike and your life returning to normal – not only do we miss the door prizes, but we miss your company as well!

CLUB OUTINGS

Sunday 17 May 2009

I joined the Axium Hydraulics run with John Roets and friends to drive down to Pietermaritzburg. Five TR3's and the support car made up the party.

We had two TR3's leave the William Nicol on ramp at 6.45 am. Travelling south under a red sky we met the rest of the party at the Heidelberg North off ramp and continued south now under heavy cloud cover.

After breakfast at Villiers we turned onto the Reitz / Kestell road turned off shortly before Harrismith to Bergville. This road takes you past the Sterkfontein Dam and Oliviers Hoek pass and Drakensville (where the nationals will be held next year).

Anyone who thinks the Free State is flat and boring should travel this route. Despite the poor roads surface the country side is neat and orderly with all the browns you can think of and the Drakensburg mountains forming a majestic backdrop.

We kept ahead of the rain all the way to Pietermaritzburg where we refreshed ourselves and told stories until just after closing time.

Chris and Dot were staying at the same Inn having been hard at work at Drakensville finalizing the bookings for the Nationals

We washed our cars at 6.30 am on Sunday morning and went straight to the park after breakfast. The park lends itself to the show because of its position and proximity of the Oval. You can read all about the cars at the show in the Classic and Performance Car Magazine as Stewart Grant was covering the event, and our drive for the magazine. What you will want to know is that the Triumph stand won 2nd prize on the day with Mercedes taking top honours - I think we were unlucky not to win.

Going home is normally not like going down especially if you have to take the freeway back (for work). The ride back did prove that TR3's are great touring cars - we will have the traffic tickets to prove it!

The ride for the Nationals will be good fun and Maritzburg cars in the park will be difficult to miss anytime.

Cheers John Craig

Sunday 24th May 2009

This run was organised by Mike Gilchrist and was to Teak Place on the Kromdraai Road in the Cradle of Humankind area west of Johannesburg. It was great to get out
June 2009



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in the cars again, particularly as no outing was arranged in April. Twenty three people took part and we had Brian and Linda Hansell, visitors from KWA Zulu Natal, join us which was really great.

The venue is really very pleasant and its operation caters for many different activities, such as mountain biking, weddings, BMX riding (there is a track set out for this purpose) and you can pick your own fresh vegetables if you want to. There is a bush restaurant as well as a more formal affair, and the buffet breakfast was excellent.

Dave and Antoinette Sawyer were along on the ride in their newly acquired red TR4A – it was really nice to have you along and welcome to the club Antoinette.

Inevitably, the Triumphs got the scent of a well known micro brewery on the way back and many of us landed up sampling the products of Gilroy's Brewery which was really buzzing as they were having an Irish day bash! "Serious"! a couple of them things can make you start to talk funny, so just as well that the Monaco Grand Prix was on and we decided to leave and watch the "Button" show and observe him parking the Brawn in the wrong place after a superb drive.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 16th June 2009

This will be somewhat different. Our government has kindly provided us with a national holiday on the third Tuesday this month, so we decided to have a boot sale during the afternoon of the 16th June while our brethren go toy-toying.

This will be held at the workshops of John Dobbins - **CJ's Classic Cars, 172 Bernie Street, Kya Sands Randburg**. The idea is that all members can bring all the spares they have at home and they wish to get rid of. We'll also have a bring and braai as well – bring your own food and drinks and we will provide fires. A chair will be a good thing to bring too. And so you can sell all your junk and buy someone else's junk! Now isn't that clever!! (do not tell your wife! She won't understand!) We will start things moving at about 12 noon and will probably run 'till 5 pm.

Tuesday 21 July 2009

Noggin will be held at Shanahan Park. Address 4 Adjutant Road Elma Park, Edenvale.

For those of you who are new to the club or have not been to our new venue **Shanahan Park** in Edenvale the directions are as follows: -



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Take the R24 highway from Eastgate to the airport – take the Edenvale off-ramp and go towards Edenvale. Turn left at the second traffic light into Horward Street and then left again at the second traffic light into Adjutant Avenue. There you will go through the booms and immediately thereafter you go right into the parking lot and the Ambience Function venue.

From the N3 it's just as easy – take the Linksfield off-ramp and go towards Edenvale. Pass the Excel garage on the LHS and then a few streets later you turn right into 4th Avenue, which later becomes Adjutant Avenue. Cross over Horwood Street, and then you'll go through the control booms. See above for further details.

PROVISIONAL CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Saturday 20 June 2009

The traditional Catseye event organised by Pretoria Centre.

Saturday 20 June 2009



“Wings of Thunder”

Private Bag X1, Rensburg, 1439

Tel/Fax: (016) 341 2631/6143

Fax: 086 635 8449

Email: agvisser@worldonline.co.za

Website: wingsofthunder.co.za / airandmotorshow.co.za

Laerskool A.G. Visser had our first Classic Car Festival in 2007 attended by over 3 000 visitors at our school grounds. Having a niche “Motor History” through the involvement of the late Doctor Anton Rupert in the now defunct Heidelberg Motor Museum, our town is the ideal venue for “anything motorized and moving”!

Based on the overwhelming attendance in 2007, Laerskool A.G. Visser teamed up with the Heidelberg Flying Club to utilize their bigger and better equipped airfield to host the 2008 “Wheels of Thunder” Motor Festival. Again the organizers were taken



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by surprise as by estimate more than 8 000 people visited our combined Air Show and Motor Show.

Laerskool A.G. Visser and the Heidelberg Flying Club have therefore now cemented their partnership to present the “Wings of Thunder” Air and Motor Show. The coming of age of this exciting event has seen us fixing our event name, logo, format and location. We are now ready to present an event that will fill the National Aviation and Motor calendar, squarely putting Heidelberg town on the map!

Our goal is to add value to Heidelberg as a town that is economy driven and keen on having people visit our town to see the rich tourist heritage. In the process we will not only raise funds for our school, A.G. Visser but our partner, the Heidelberg Flying Club will invest their share in providing a world class aviation facility and a flying Academy for young up and coming pilots. The partners have also agreed to make donations towards selected local charities and we strongly believe that this event will provide a healthy injection into our local communities.

Planning for 7 000 plus visitors on 20 June 2009 we therefore like to present you with our comprehensive schedule for a day of guaranteed thrills and excitement:

Air Show:

- Brian Emmenis and his team from Capital Sounds will provide professional sound and commentary;
- Captain Dennis Spence from SAA and his team will entertain the crowd with aerobatic displays in the Goodyear-Wesbank Pitts Special aircrafts;
- Brad Bennet and his Mazda Zoom Zoom aerobatic team will show us why they were runners up in the 2008 World Airshow championship in Japan;
- Jay Hyde and his Snake-Microlight-aerobatic team will be here;
- Parachutists and helicopter displays;
- Classic planes like Harvard's, Tiger Moth and many more other classics will grace our airspace;
- Many more exciting displays are in the pipeline and the day promise to be a highlight on the aviation calendar.

Motor Show:

- Classic cars;
- New car displays from various manufactures;
- Exotic cars, hotrods, classic motorbikes and various Car Clubs will attend the day;
- Heavy trucks and equipment.

Entertainment:

- Art stalls, food arena, beer tent and live music;
- Kids amusement;



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- Live lucky draw for a brand new Volkswagen City Tenacity Golf 1.4i.

The program for the “Wings of Thunder” Air and Motor Show will be divided between flying, new car exhibitors and classic cars. Throughout the day each section will get an hour of undivided attention and professional commentary and interviews from the Capital Sounds Team.

We present this exciting opportunity to you to become part of this grand event. Your support will help us to get our children and our community involved. We also hope to raise awareness in our young people of the opportunities available in the aviation industry and Safety and Security in our country through the close involvement of the South African Police Force in the events of the day.

We invite you to be part of this highlight on the calendar of our school in Heidelberg! You are welcome to contact us for further details.

Car Exhibits:	Elize Booysen -	084 6887 154 -	ibooyesen@basilread.co.za
Food Stalls:	Elsie Havenga -	082 4930 099 –	
Arts and Crafts:	Vanessa du Toit -	083 5642 096 -	willys_dutoit@bat.com
Classic Cars:	Riana de Villiers –	083 458 7844 -	rianadev@telkomsa.net

Sunday 28 June 2009

Our run in June will be a return visit to the Rand Airport, or more specifically: Biggles Bistro at the Transvaal Aviation Club.

The venue has changed significantly. There are now two Boeings' 747 – The Lebombo and the Maluti (the only preserved 747 SP in the world) plus three more historic planes: Lockheed Loadstar, DeHavilland Dove, McDonnell Douglas DC3 and DC6 and two flight simulators. Tour costs: Student R15.00 Adult R25.00

FAQ: Will I be able to park under the wings of the Jumbo for shade?

Answer: No.

The clubhouse has had a few enhancements since we last visited, including an outside pub and more tables and chairs with a first-hand view of the aircraft taking off and landing.

At this point one needs to know that there are three types of take – offs and landings (GARY, you will learn from this)

V-TOLL, S-TOLL AND DETOLL

1. V-TOLL: VERTICAL TAKE-OFF AND LANDING
2. S-TOL: SHORT TAKE-OFF AND LANDING



3. DETOLL: VERY CLEAN TAKE-OFF AND LANDING

Fully licensed pub at reasonable prices – my Windhoek Draught was R15.00 Irish coffee at R20.00

Good cuisine too! Biggles Breakfast at R35.00 or for the Farmhouse at R45.00
Otherwise Fish and Chips at R45.00 or Hamburger and Chips at R42.00

It's been a while since we last went to the SAA museum at the Rand Airport. It is interesting to see the museum of civil aviation, as opposed to the military museum near Zoo Lake. We will visit the SAA Museum and then have lunch at the Biggles Restaurant next door which is also licensed and very reasonably priced.

We will meet at the usual place – the Total garage on the corner of Witkoppen and Malibongwe drive on Sunday 28 June at 9h30 and leave at 10h00 SHARP!

We will drive along the highway to Rand Airport where it is located.

For those living on the East Rand and wishing to go directly there, from the N3 highway take the exit 106 after the Geldenhuis interchange to Rand Airport. At the traffic light turn left on to the M46 M48. Take the second traffic light to the right on 48-E to Rand Airport/Wadeville. Carry on with the airport on the right and the golf course on the left. Go through the traffic circle. Carry on and turn right at the main intersection with the end of Germiston Lake on your left and the GM Dealer and Bergerland Roadhouse on your right. At the next traffic light on Russel Street turn right at Kia Motors Tata and Daihatsu. At the T-junction turn left, and follow the signs to the Museum and Biggles Bar and Bistro.

Sunday 12h July 2009

Pretoria Centre is having a sell and swop noggin at their Centurion Clubhouse. Fires will be started at 12 noon – there will be a bar available and bowls for those wishing to play. We have all been invited to participate.

Sunday 19th July 2009

PRETORIA TRIUMPH SPORTS CAR CLUB

BENONI TREASURE HUNT

Organised by Dave & Judy Harris

Although organised by Pretoria, Gino seems to recall that we outnumbered their attendance last year. In fact he also recalls that the Joburg centre won it as well. So let's do it again this time!! It is well organised and the organisers put in a huge amount of effort as will be evidenced by the promotion of the event that follows.



Start: Car Park of the Engen Highveld One Stop, southbound on R21, just north of Junction 32, R25 Kaalfontein, Bapsfontein

Start Time: 10.00am

Finish & lunch: Uncle Tim's Centre, Brentwood Park. A hearty, warming, buffet lunch will be available for R70. The restaurant is fully licensed and there will be reserved parking.

Route: Mostly quiet country and suburban roads, in and around Atlasville, Benoni and Kempton Park.

There will be no sand or gravel roads. Route instructions will be as previous years.

Clues: Clues will be given along the route and each will require an answer between two route instructions

e.g name the Primary School.

Teams: There is no restriction on the number of team members per car.

Winning Team: The team who get the most points. In the event of a tie, the team who complete the route in the quickest time will win.

Prizes: The winners will receive the Benoni Treasure Hunt Floating Trophy as well as a replica and a prize. Second and third placed teams will also receive trophies and prizes. Fourth, fifth and sixth placed teams will receive medals and prizes. The team using the oldest Triumph in the event will receive medals. There will also be a host of other prizes.



Equipment needed: Pen/pencil and clipboard

We look forward to seeing you.....it should be a lot of fun!!

Sunday 2 August 2009

Cars in the Park Pretoria

Tuesday 18 August 2009

Noggin will be held at Shanahan Park. Address 4 Adjutant Road Elma Park, Edenvale.

Sunday 23 August 2009

This is the 50th Anniversary of the Leyland Mini and Pretoria Club is organising an event to encompass these celebrations.

Sunday 20 September 2009

Piston Ring Swop Meeting – non club event but important all the same

Tuesday 22 September 2009

Noggin will be held at Shanahan Park. Address 4 Adjutant Road Elma Park, Edenvale.

Sunday 27 September 2009

This is when we will be holding the concours for 2009 – more details to follow in due course.

Sunday 18 October 2009

Piston Ring – Cars in the Park

Tuesday 20 October 2009

Noggin will be held at Shanahan Park. Address 4 Adjutant Road Elma Park, Edenvale.

Sunday 25 October 2009

June 2009



Johannesburg Club to organise their own event.

Tuesday 17 November 2009

Noggin will be held at Shanahan Park. Address 4 Adjutant Road Elma Park, Edenvale.

Sunday 22 November 2009

Pretoria Club to organise an event which will be the steam train trip from Pretoria to Cullinan. This will form their year-end function and we have been invited to join in the festivities.

Sunday 6 December 2009

Christmas Bash and Prize Giving. This will be our year-end function and the Pretoria Centre have been invited to join us on this occasion.

WANTED AND FOR SALE

For Sale

Rover V8 Engines

I have sourced the following Rover 3.5 litre V8 engines so anyone with a TR7 who wants to convert their car to a V8 or upgrade their V8 car please contact me.

- 1) Rebuilt 3.5 litre V8 with high compression Morgan pistons, high lift cam, new lifters and 390 cfm Holley carb. Reputed to produce 250 bhp. No flywheel or bell housing. R15000-00.
- 2) Rebuilt 3.5 litre V8 with standard pistons, webber carb, starter motor and 5 speed Rover gearbox. R12000-00.
- 3) Good condition 3.5 litre V8 with flywheel and bell housing to bolt onto TR7 gearbox, starter motor and inlet manifold for webber carb. R5500-00.

TR7 Engine

I have in stock a TR7 engine out of a car, which had a twin cam motor fitted and was running well. It is complete with carbs, starter motor, flywheel and clutch. R4000-00.



Soft Top TR7

As I have bought a TR7 V8 my white soft top car (ex Vernon Roeder) is on the market. She has a black interior, 13 inch imported mags (not original Triumph ones), electronic ignition and has no rust. R31000-00.

Contact John Dobbins on 0117081722(w), 0825080910(c) or 0116792954(h) for above adverts.

TR3A British Racing Green with red upholstery and J Type overdrive, local commission number TR850. Body has been resprayed and the car needs finishing off. It can be viewed at John Dobbins's workshop (see numbers above). Client is keen for an early sale and is asking R75,000-00.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Soft top frame for Spitfire Mk 2. This is the folding section of the frame which stretches the canvas. The item is surplus to requirements and available at no cost.

Contact: Theuns du Rand on 011 873 7025 (home)

1974 Triumph Dolomite Sprint 175bhp, twin 45 side draft Webbers, close ratio gearbox with overdrive, fully adjustable suspension, resprayed. R42,000-00. Please phone Jean Coppens 0836017243 or 011 8022696.

3.45 Crown Wheel and pinion bearing set – new (fits all models). Contact Chris Gibbons 082 553 1229.

7 original steel rims and hubcaps for TR3A available from Ivor Carlson. Make him an offer – 083 608 0741.

TECHNICAL

SILICON BRAKE FLUID

I have been a fan of silicon brake fluid for years due to the fact that it does not destroy paintwork. However, my experiences in recent months have made me wary of it for the following reasons:

On a Spitfire that I recently rebuilt including locally reconditioned master cylinders they started leaking after a few months, while the new slave cylinders, which were imported, did not.



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A few weeks ago on the brakes of a TR3 also with locally reconditioned master cylinder and imported slave cylinders once again the master cylinder started leaking, the only difference here is that it happened within a few days! On stripping the master cylinder the seals were like chewing gum.

According to Mark Backler who does all the reconditioning for me the locally available SABS approved seals are not compatible with silicon fluid and in fact silicon seals (which are not available) should be used. To make matters worse it is not legal to import non SABS approved seals and a shipment containing them could be impounded.

The solution to the problem is not easy so if you intend using silicon make sure the seals are compatible by soaking them in the fluid for a few weeks and make sure they do not swell and or get soft and soggy.

The other option is to use a good quality DOT 4 glycol based brake fluid and keep an eye open for leaking to protect your paint.

By the way I have had silicon fluid in my TR6 for the last 20 years with no problems.

As brakes are such an important safety I thought it worthwhile to pass this on to members.

Regards
John Dobbins

ON THE LITE SIDE

A traffic cop flagged down a motorist and said, 'I'm arresting you for going through three red lights.'

'Yeah, well, I'm colour blind,' said the motorist.

'In addition to that, you were exceeding the speed limit,' said the policeman.

'So what?' said the motorist.

'And on top of all that you were going the wrong way down a one-way street,' added the officer.

'I always did have a lousy sense of direction,' said the motorist with a smile.

At that point, his wife leaned forward from the back seat and said, 'Don't pay any attention to him, officer. He always talks like this when he's had a few drinks.'



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The poor guy walks up to the rich guy's house. He's down on his luck and needs some money.

He rings the doorbell. "Hi there, I'm down on my luck, need some money, and I was wondering if you have any work I could do for you"

The rich Guy decides to give him a break, and says: "Sure, my porch needs painting. I'll pay you 50 dollars to do it for me."

"Sure thing, Mister, I'll get started right away!"

Time passes, until... "Hey Mister, I'm all done painting!" "Well, here's your 50 dollars"

"Thanks, and by the way, it's a Ferrari, not a Porsche."

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contact: Mark Backler

Tel.: 27-11-787-3142

Fax: 27-11-787-3151

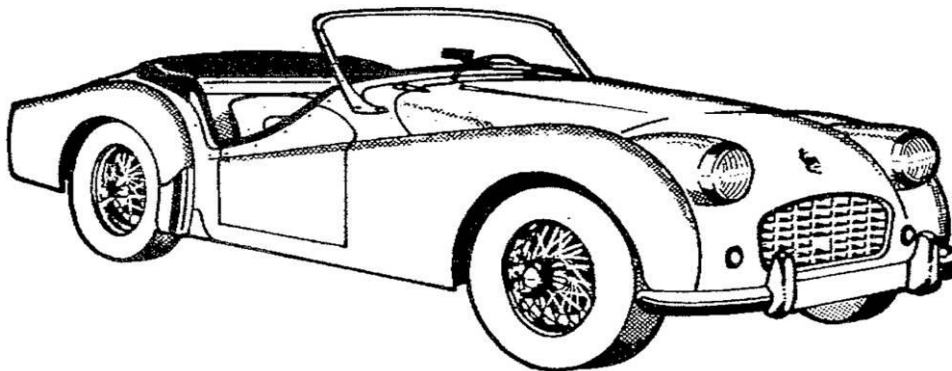
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