



# MG CAR CLUB NORTHERN CENTRE NEWSLETTER

April 2018

Issue 436



# MG CAR CLUB NORTHERN CENTRE

A Warm Welcome to our New Members



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*The opinions expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the MG Car Club Northern Centre or the Executive Committee.*



# April Newsletter

About This Issue

## April Tomfoolery

This month there are Racing Spots, Interviews and Boot Sales. Picnics and breakdown ponderings, all in the month of Fools.

Indaba Fever is rife as the MG event draws near so we look at some recent visits to Kwa-zulu-Natal in anticipation of the National Gathering.

Robin shares some racing stories as well as some interesting facts about our Centre's cars. Not to be outdone (when not on the racetrack) William also gives some insight into his recent racing adventures.



## THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

Helgard Muller, who was unable to attend the awards evening last month, received his trophy for his contributions to the newsletter at the April Noggin. Helgard features in this month's "MG in my Garage".



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INSOMNIA

CREW

## Chairman's Letter

### The importance of National Indabas to cultivate friendships

With the onset of the cooler temperatures, the first autumn Noggin and the Pub Evening in April saw a reduced number attending but, as always, the warmth and friendship in this club came to the fore and, with the aid of a drink or two, who cares about the weather!

The Condition Concourse held at the club on Sunday the 22nd had an excellent turn out with perfect autumn Highveld weather. We had a good number of entries for the Condition Concourse with Julian Watt-Pringle driving in from Mahikeng to compete. His efforts were rewarded with his MGA being rewarded with a closely contested 3rd position.

While the judges were scrutinizing the entries, club members had an opportunity to browse through the good selection of MG parts on offer at the Boot Sale. If that was not enough we also had a craft table making T-Shirts for the upcoming Indaba. A real festive atmosphere culminating in the all important social braai.

Congratulations to all the participants and in particular to the winners of the Condition Concourse.

1st place went to Marelize Mostert with her immaculate MG ZB  
2nd place went to Peter Faul + Paul Spencer's MGB roadster  
3rd Place to Julian Watt-Pringle in a beautiful MGA Coupe. This was the car's first show after the rebuild.

Special mention must go to Jeremy Salter with his MGB GT who missed 3rd place by 2 points, in fact there were 6 points separating 2nd to 4th position and about 12 points to 1st place. A thank you too, for those that assisted with the judging during the day.

*“ A real festive atmosphere culminating in the all important social braai.*

If the enthusiasm at the T-shirt craft session is anything to go by then the Indaba is set to be an epic event, no matter what surprises the organizers have prepared. All National events as well as Club events, especially in this club will always be about the “Marque of Friendship” that seems to follow the MGs.

As in life the effort you put into what you are doing will always be proportional to what you get out. Be it your beloved car or the social interaction in and around the club. The Indaba is one such event that brings together our club at National level and the more you participate the more you will enjoy the event. The next newsletter will be a special Indaba issue with all the details. If you not able to attend the Indaba don't miss the next edition.

Moving away from the events, I have had a few people ask about the odd title of the monthly article I write, why *MGA INSOMNIA CREW*?



# Chairman's Letter



Very early on in my car club days as a member of Johannesburg Centre (a few kilos lighter, a lot less grey hair and a few less wrinkles ago), I was very fortunate to meet a number of people that either worked or designed our beloved cars. I was also fortunate enough to have had lunch with John Thornley and his wife Ann. At their home in Martock. In their kitchen. We were fortunate to have been accompanied by MG icons in their own right, Mike and Ann Allison, with whom we stayed while in England. All this was arranged by Norman Ewing and I only realized while sitting having lunch just how incredibly fortunate I was as not all requests to meet Mr.MG himself were granted.

However it was another special lady who was married to one of the first employees of MG who helped inspire the title of my column. Her husband was a young mechanic who worked on the MILLE MIGLIA winning K3's and who has become part of the MG story. His book, MG MANIA "The Insomnia Crew", has become collectable and very special amongst enthusiasts. It holds a special place in my collection as it has been autographed by Henry Stone as well as the John Thornley who wrote the forward.

*“ His book, MG MANIA “The Insomnia Crew”, has become collectable and very special amongst enthusiasts*

I first met Winnie Stone, the wife of the legendary Henry Stone, in South Africa when she attended the Pretoria MG Indaba in 1992. Having spent the journey to Cape Town on the MaGical Blue Train with her and then traveling together back to Gauteng by car, I had lots of time to chat and get to know Winnie.

Here was a lady in her late 80's who had lived and breathed MG from before the Second World War, whose daily family life was an integral part of the MG story right up to the closing of the factory.

When we did our pilgrimage to Abingdon three months later, we visited Winnie and, over a cup of tea, I was presented with the second to last copy of the book she had kept. The last being kept for her son. It was in fact one of the few copies salvaged from a container that had been washed out to sea while on its way to the USA. This is the copy that, rebound in hard cover, signed by John Thornley and Henry Stone, holds a special place in my collection.

I never had the good fortune of meeting Henry when he was visiting South Africa for the 1986 Indaba, but having read the book he wrote, and spending time with Winnie it feels like I am part of the MG family!

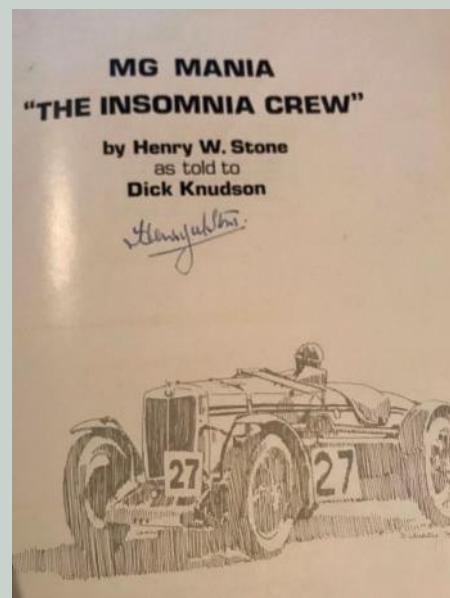
MG THE MARQUE OF FRIENDSHIP

Octagonally

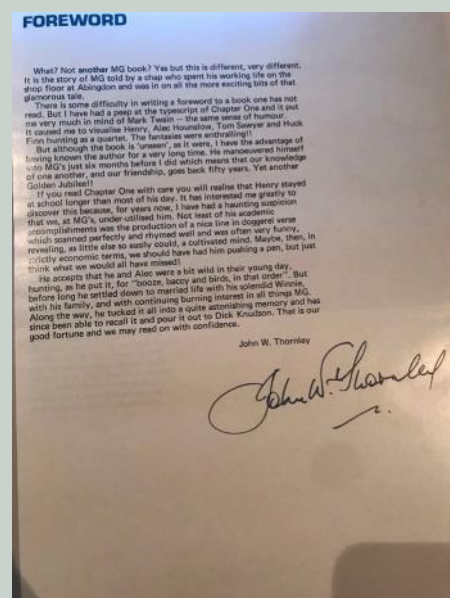
Pepi



Winnie Stone, Pepi + Pat Ewing



Front page autographed by Henry Stone



Forward autographed by John Thornley

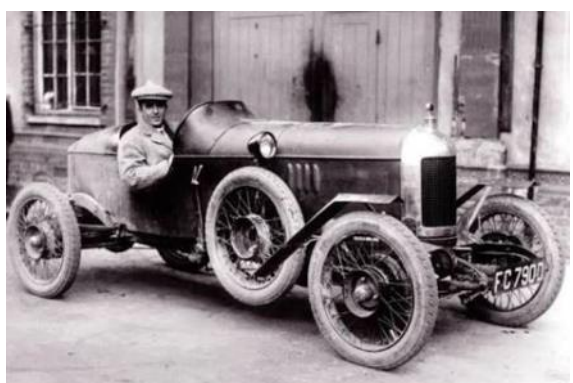


# Happy Birthday Cecil Kimber

12 April marks the birthday of Cecil Kimber. The driving force behind the MG Car Company



The rich history of MG began nearly 90 years ago in 1924. The famous initials we know and love were chosen by Cecil Kimber, the founder of MG, born on 12 April 1888. Kimber chose the letters as a "nod" to William Morris, his employer, and the owner of Morris Garages. Kimber, didn't just come up with our name. He also created the first line of MGs.



*Cecil Kimber*  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
OF M.G. CARS



# Magnette 221 Race Report

Robin Clark continues his report on The Historic Tour, covering Rounds 2 + 3

The second round of the Historic Tour was held at Redstar raceway in February. It was touch and go but I decided not to enter the Magnette. The facilities are wonderful but the track itself not great for a heavy saloon. That and work commitments caused me to bale out.

William and Rikus entered but unfortunately suffered technical problems. The MG flag was flown by Les McCloud and Wynand du Plessis both of whom I see had good races and placed well in class.

On to the third round and we were up for the Zwartkops races on 7 April. There were two goals. Firstly, to get back the lost 1 second per lap that was missing at the January meeting and secondly to get a class win.

The Magnette was trailed to Zwartkops on the Friday afternoon, the intention was to get the admin out of the way and do a few sating laps – need to get the eye in! Documentation and scrutineering went well after a scare with a snapped kill switch cable. The spare was fitted and the late afternoon session targeted for a practice run. The cool weather and rubbered-in track was a joy and on my daughters' stopwatch we were immediately into the 1.23 bracket as targeted.

Saturday morning and the "little giants" were first up for timed practice. The Magnette felt a bit "understeery" but we qualified second in class in a high 1.23 and 7<sup>th</sup> overall out of 20 entries. Job done!

*“ It was decided by the race organizers to spice things up for the second heat.*

A moments reflection before the first heat lead me to realize that the class times had been altered in 2017(while I was sleeping) and that the B class target of 1.22 was a second and a half away from the Magnette's quickest time. Oh, that constant dilemma of how much time and money to spend to develop the beast! So it was in heat 1 that I was passed by two class competitors running about 0.75 seconds a lap quicker than the Magnette. Still a good enjoyable heat with an eight overall and a 3<sup>rd</sup> in class.

Les Mcleod and Stephen Brits in MGB's were flying and achieved excellent overall and class results.

It was decided by the race organizers to spice things up for the second heat. This was done by throwing together all the Legends classes – V8's with U2 and "Little Giants" all in one race. This meant back to the good old days with a field just short of 40 cars and the Magnette in about 22<sup>nd</sup> position on the grid.

We got off to a flyer and the Magnette was duking with some class A little giants and some slower U2 cars when an intermittent misfire grew to intermittent cutting out of the motor. I decided to play it safe and retire from the race. Better to fight another day than to limp around and endanger other competitors. Almost certainly the problem is a repeat of an incident about 5 years ago when the electronic ignition "trigger box" played up.

Anyway, plenty of time to sort it out before the Phakisa round in May!







## MG in My Garage

This month Helgard Muller answers our questions about his life with MG in Know Your Club Members.

### Why MG and how it landed in your garage?

My father owned a garage and although he focused on John Deere tractors he had a love for classic cars. He also had an eye for an aesthetically body shape when picking cars - and he influenced me by saying that the late 1920s and 30s had the most beautiful cars with those curved mudguards, impressive radiator grills and big headlamps. Ala Jaguar SS-100 etc. MGs that fitted into this category were all the older models including TCs and TDs. Then around 1963 a red TD on its way from Komatipoort to Cape Town broke down in our home town – Ventersburg, along the N1.

It was a serious case – the engine seized up completely. The owners seemed to struggle to find money to do a complete engine overhaul and the MG stood there waiting and wanting. After a couple of weeks of negotiations my father bought this car. After his death in 1981 the TD ended up in my garage and the number plate changed from OXF to GP.

### What, if any, restoration work has been done?

Dad did a very thorough job to overhaul the engine and it is still running ever since. I still remember the day - I was 16 - when he first started the engine after the complete overhaul - we jumped in and charged down a gravel farm road for a few kilometres with a bellowing roar from the outlet manifold - as the exhaust was not fitted yet. My father could not wait for that. The engine was painted green- must have been a left over tin after dad painted one of the John Deere tractors or the Lister engine (so to all the purists who read this- it is not the standard MG ox-blood red). Once the engine was tip-top, the car could be driven and the restoration stopped.

Most other components were neglected such as paintwork and brakes - my dad reckoned you do not need proper brakes on rural roads in countryside as flat as the Free State. Parked in a farm shed over the years a bag of wheat landed on the bonnet and a farm implement hooked the mudguard.

Another unfortunate event was the total repainting in a not-so-nice orange shade of red by a local panel beater with skills that were more suitable for a quick repair of farmer's bakkies and tractors.

Once the car landed in my garage I started a process of gradual and sometimes frustratingly slow restoration. I had the radiator grill, headlamps and other parts re-chromed. Painting was done "in-situ" by a team staying with us in my garage and my wife catering with three meals a day. Bits and pieces were imported. My son George brought the tonneau cover from England during one of his vacations to SA.

On an overseas trip my wife came back with a steering wheel from Moss in her suitcase. I am still reminded that other purchases in London would have been much nicer. I am quite proud that although not even close to concourse condition the car is restored to a reasonable condition with own effort as I never had funds for a "cheque book job".

Currently the car is with Dave Wheeler and David Muller to have the engine and gearbox mountings replaced. I still have to re-do the dashboard.





# MG in My Garage

This month *Helgard Muller* answers our questions about his life with MG in Know Your Club Members.

**Do you have any other MGs or Classics Motors?**

No other MG, but I like to keep all my cars for long periods. So my 1990's Mercedes Benz is maturing into a classic as well.

**What does the MG mean to you?**

It obviously brings back fond memories of my father and our simple life in the "platteland". I am forever grateful for the skills and knowledge he transferred to me. I am also indebted for all the advice and tips given to me by club members as part of the petrol head family. Peter Noeth was invaluable with a number of fuel problems. Johnny van Wyk helped to replace the universal joints on the driving shaft. Other friends assisted such as Sakkie van der Westhuizen to install an extra pump and fitting the imported canvas hood. It was a privilege to involve my sons George and Hilgard in parts of the restoration work.

**What do you like most about your MG?**

What I like about my MG is that the mechanics are very simple so that even I can easily understand and figure it out. It is really back to basics! Driving the MG - that is the real thing! It is a special feeling running the TD on a scenic road e.g. from Clarens to Golden Gate with the top down and having this unobstructed view of the mountains and veld.

**What frustrates/annoys you most on your MG?**

Oh! The oil leakages. Furthermore the cockpit becomes unbearably hot in summers with all the engine heat from the engine compartment. But then on a winter morning the same engine heat it is a nice leg and feet warmer – and all the bad days are totally forgotten.

**Before driving off on a run what items are on your checklist?**

Water, oil, and petrol. And I need to check the brake fluid levels from time to time. (I hope David Muller can find that leak) After I lost the special bolt that connects the float chamber to the carburetor on the road between Fouriesburg and Sandstone Estates I always carry that specific spanner in the toolbox. And in future, I will listen to my wife and stop to open the bonnet when she says: "I smell petrol".

**Do you drive with a full set of spanners?**

Here I am a bit superstitious – with my overall and the necessary tools (not a full set) in the car I believe the TD will behave and not break down. To compensate for those hot days and vapour in the fuel system I have installed a secondary electric pump at the petrol tank to "push" fuel on those hot days when the standard pump sucks vapour.

**With R 20 000 what would you add or modify on your MG?**

I would love to fit a five speed gearbox as advertised by Moss- but it will probably cost far more than the R 20 000!

**If you can wish for a "barn find" like stumbling on this absolute classic beauty in restorable condition available at an affordable price-highly unlikely but- what car would be your wish?**

Any Bugatti will be great but if I must stay loyal to the MG brand a nice and complete "P type" will do - thanks!

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**“** *It is a special feeling running the TD on a scenic road*

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# MG Motor Show and New Features

Some exciting news released from MG earlier this month. In time for the 17th Shanghai International Automotive Show?

“ *Spoiler Alert: its electronic!* ”

Technology is everywhere, from the moment you open your eyes in the morning, to the time you close them again when you climb into bed - and its impacting everything.

Over *3 billion* people use the internet.

Almost *21 billion* devices will be connected by 2020

570 new websites are created every minute

Google attracts *3.5 billion* searches every day

Facebook currently has more than *2 billion* active users.

Amazon has 45,000 robots operating across 20 warehouses

By 2020 its estimated that there will be **10 million self-driving cars.**

We are in the data age, with 90% of the worlds data created in the last few years.

The world is changing, and MG is changing as well.

It was no surprise then that MG announced earlier this month that their new range of motor vehicles will be including new technology. The surprise was that this technology would be featured, not in the unavoidable electronic power system but in its windscreens.

The innovation is aimed at driver safety and communication. The system, MG Inter-Car Emoji technology or **MICE**, gives MG drivers the opportunity to communicate with and inform other drivers of their current, well, emotions.

*“The windscreen tech uses LED technology in the car’s front and rear windscreens to allow the driver to communicate with other road users through the medium of emoji.”* says the brains behind this voice controlled tech, Professor Hans Frei from Technische Universitat Munchen.

As with all new tech, time will tell whether the desired effect is achieved but one thing is certain, with the wide variety of emoji available today, a driver is bound to be able to find an suitably express emoji for all traffic situations.



Prof. Hans Frei





# Will on Racing

William Kelly comments on his racing exploits during The Historic Tour at Red Star

Post Zwarktops we fitted a Weber 45 and dropped the front suspension, learning as we did that the current springs in Jimmy are in fact super stiff rendering our new ones redundant – so if any one wants a set of brand new very awesome looking springs for a Midget, drop us a line.

Sitting now a few inches lower, Jimmy has a new super professional looking poise and with the Weber fitted with a new manifold he now has a lot more breathing capacity, revving to 6k and beyond amazingly quickly. He has more pulling power from 4k upwards so fitting the LSD sitting on our shelf is a must as we have wheel spin exiting tight corners under power. All we need is to gently persuade/beg/cajole/threaten/plead Joe Tex to whip up a set of side shafts for us to fit it. You heard it first here Joe!

Friday ended up in practise with yours truly on the straight going well and then, well... not going at all. The engine simply gave me a little cough and then a lot of splutter and hot air and that was the end of that. Turns out my mechanical sense was spot on and with a catch tank full of oil and later finding oil in the coolant header tank we considered it "game over man, game over!" (you need to say that quick in a Canadian accent). So we loaded Jimmy up and happily dropped him off at Mr 'Right-side-up' Greig.

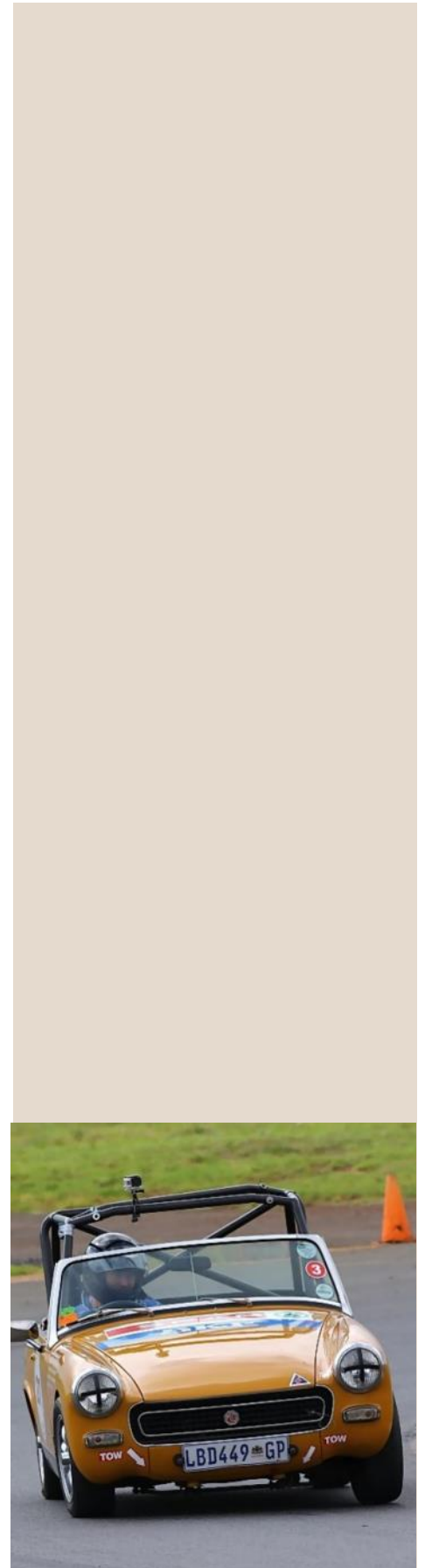
“ Talk about going above and beyond – we are thoroughly appreciative of Stu’s efforts

We had written off the weekend, said our good byes but as it turns out we'd only blown a head gasket so Stuart promptly changed that for us working all hours into the night! Near brushes with death and sore ribs only make him work harder it seems. Up at sparrow's on Saturday we collected the already warmed up (!) car from Stuart directly at 05:45. Talk about going above and beyond – we are thoroughly appreciative of Stu's efforts.

His warning though was prescient. He did show us a short video of what is known as piston slap, and Allan who came to the track on Saturday to see what it is we are actually up to couldn't believe his eyes as how our engine was even running.

Qualifying went well and if the times from last year are anything to go by the changes we have made to the car have taken us from 2:51s off down to 2:37s odd. It's still not enough of course, but it is a big jump in the right direction. Rikus has also closed the gap between us to 4 seconds, from his previous 'more than' 10s. So it was all looking good.

Race 1 was Pursuit round 1 of 2 and Rikus took that drive. He was going well, having nominated an ambitious time but he retired a few laps in when the accelerator cable decided to jam open which wasn't a lot of fun. He ended up being towed in but only after the race was red flagged as a Lotus, not to be out done, decided to catch fire on the main straight. The decision was taken by the organisers to bin the race.



Pictures by Paul Blackburn RacePics.co.za



# Will on Racing

## William Kelly comments on his racing exploits during The Historic Tour at Red Star

We had a few minutes, literally, to fix the annoying cable. Thanks to springs from Cameron, Allan jumped in and together we tried a few things before I eventually just boded a repair together on a wing and a prayer and off for Little Giants Round 1 I went. The repair proved it wasn't working in the warm up lap at the end of the straight at full chat. Now, understanding the problem, I was constantly unhooking the accelerator pedal manually with my braking foot for the entire race. It meant I had to go slower into corners to allow for the time taken and of course changing up meant I had to change up much earlier in the rev range than normal. Not something I'd care to repeat. Anyway, I finally managed to get Jimmy in front of Tux – Chris Visagie's Anglia and somehow kept him behind me for a class win, which was nice.

During lunch we borrowed a drill from Colin Ellison looking hot in his new Fairlane. Chris Visagie, of said Anglia fame, had some proper springs, and two (!) of them are still in Jimmy - thanks Chris!

“ *I managed to break one of Colin's drill bits with my super tough thumb when it slipped...*

I managed to break one of Colin's drill bits with my super tough thumb when it slipped (you know the expression more haste more blood?) and drilled through my nail and the rest of it. That was quite sore and off to the medic for a plaster and a lecture about going to get a tetanus shot.

Jimmy was running well and my nominated time I thought was pretty accurate. I was catching 'sideways' Mike Thompson in his Capri steadily but on lap 5 I noticed an oil pressure drop around a corner which we haven't had before. It then went away as soon as I straightened up but the damage was already done and the little knock from the motor was all I needed to hear to simply nurse Jimmy home and retire.

We're in for an engine rebuild and we have to fix our camber whilst we are at it. We're down another front tyre after just two races. We're going to be out for quite a while it seems. Time, and budget constraints really do suck (sponsorship would go down like a homesick mole round about now) but that's life and racing and once done we can see what we can wring out of the car.

We are getting closer and closer to the other guys in terms of lap times and whilst we won't ever be faster than the properly quick guys, getting up to the times of the Porsche 944 S2 which is as close as dammit to the MGB GT is the intention as we can then have more people around us to race competitively.

Our thanks to Stuart, and Allan and Denise who came through, and everyone else for their good wishes, and everyone at the track who offered their help and condolences. It may not have been the best racing day we've ever had, but it was a racing day and that's pretty damned good in itself.

Never did get that tetanus shot come to think about it.





# April Run

Condition Concours + Boot Sale, followed by a Bring + Braai, held at the Clubhouse for the April Run.

There was a grand turnout for the *Condition Concours* that was held as the official April Run on Sunday 22 April.

The contest, acting as another prelude to the upcoming Indaba, coincided with a beautiful autumn day, a welcome relief after the rather chilly and wet days preceding the weekend. The fine weather also helped keep the cars that had entered the Concours gleaming—especially the wheels.

The day also saw a long awaited first for the club, a Car Boot Sale.

Several pop-up “stores” were on site displaying various MG related spares and memorabilia. The afternoon was rounded off by doing what the club does best—a relaxed *kuier* around the communal braai.

Thanks to all the judges who gave of their time to examine the cars and a special thank you to Robin Clark for organizing the event.





# April Run

A Tops Only Concours + Boot Sale, followed by a Bring + Braai, held at the Clubhouse for the April Run.



Judging Underway





# April Run

A Condition Concours + Boot Sale, followed by a Bring + Braai, held at the Clubhouse for the April Run.

Some found memorabilia during the Boot Sale clean out



Photograph of Don Hayter, designer of the MGB standing in front of Roger Peace's car that was part of the London to Sydney Rally in 2000



Photograph donated by Roger Peace from the early days of the Johannesburg Centre Norman Ewing, Keith Burton, -, Phil Howe at the Baragwanath airfield 1969.







# Angela's Picnic

An Annual charity event co-ordinated by SAMCA that invites folk to enjoy special cars in a laid back atmosphere.

# Angela's Picnic

Angela's Picnic is an annual charity event held at Delta Park, Johannesburg. The event is hosted by, and open to all, South African Motor Club Associations (SAMCA) affiliate clubs. The event is dedicated to the memory of Angela Heinz who initiated and arranged the first picnic 37 years ago.

The gathering traditionally falls on the first Sunday of April which coincided with Easter Sunday this year. The day as well as overcast weather may have had an influence on attendance which was not as high as in previous years. Unfortunately no cars from the Northern Centre were able to attend but the Johannesburg Centre were present to fly the MG Flags. The Johannesburg Centre also commemorated Cecil Kimber's birthday with some tea and cake.



Johannesburg Centre wishing Mr Kimber a Happy Birthday



MGs on display from the Johannesburg Centre

Angela Heinz was a remarkable lady whose interests included crop-sprayers, off- road motorcycles, opera, Morgan cars, rifle shooting and Dobermans. She kept a Rolls Royce in England called Edwina for regular sorties to the Continent, as one does. She 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 is the coordinating body for over 30 one -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 donated to the South African Hospice Association.

Over the years SAMCA has collected and donated up to R700,000-00 to organizations for cancer sufferers and terminally ill people.



# Angela's Picnic

A Large Variety of vehicles were on display.



Members of the Air Cooled Community (pictures from Facebook)

Angela Heinz was a remarkable lady whose interests included crop-sprayers, off- road motorcycles, opera, Morgan cars, rifle shooting and Dobermans. She kept a Rolls Royce in England called Edwina for regular sorties to the Continent, as one does. She studied fashion in London, Haute Cuisine in Paris and life in the world at large.

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Some Photographs kindly shared by Charles Johnson



# National Indaba Countdown

Julie + Claus Pille share a letter from the Kwazulu-Natal Midlands to whet our appetite for the Indaba.

Hello fellow siblings.

As you might recall I was taken from the litter by my new owner and taken to my forever home in Natal.

Let me tell you about my new home. I stay on a property on top of a hill and can see everywhere. I get to chase the hadedas and those silly monkeys. They really drive me crazy and I bark at them all the time and then my owner shouts at me as I seemingly make too much noise.



The other day my owner took me in that yellow car for a drive and as we got close to our destination I could smell salt. Then when we got there I saw the most beautiful soft white sand. I can really dig deep holes here to burry my bones. There was an intimidating loud noise coming from the water as it hits against the white sand and makes a lot of foam. I was scared but my owner called me and after a while I got into the water. The weirdest thing is that the water tastes very salty. Everywhere you look you only see water and I must say I didn't really enjoy that trip too much.

Then one day as the leaves on the trees turned yellow, and had fallen off, and it was really getting cold my owner took me to see the mountains. It was really chilly while we were driving and my owner didn't put the roof up. I actually think this car hasn't got a roof. Eventually we went off the main road and parked close by a forest so I had lots of sniffing to do to get all the messages. My owner was taking pictures of his car and far, far away I saw a mountain but it was white on top. I didn't really understand this and was glad when we were back at home where I disappeared into my warm bed.



Then my owner got some friends over that all drove the same cars as my owner does. All three cars drove to a place and listen to this stupid thing they did. They stopped in front of an entrance to this place, parked their cars there and took lots of pictures.

Quite often my owner takes me to a place and leaves me outside to watch the car. What a dog's life hey ..... I am seemingly not allowed inside the house. The longer my owner stays inside the more I can hear him and when he finally comes out he always thinks he is very funny and sings (totally off tune I have to tell you) all the way home.

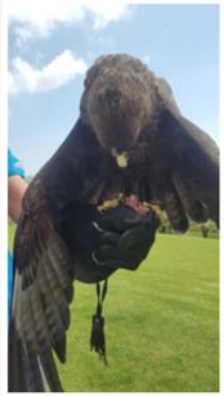


The last thing I want to tell you is when my owner took me to a big wall where water was flowing over. I wanted to go and swim but my owner told me to stay. REALLY ??? !!!!!



# National Indaba Countdown

Julie + Claus Pille share a letter from the Kwazulu-Natal Midlands to whet our appetite for the Indaba.



Then we drove to a place close to the mountains that had big birds. They fly high up in the sky and I can't see them anymore and then out of nowhere they come flying in at a heck of a speed. Much faster than what my owner ever goes with his car. *Swooshhh* and they get to eat a chicken's neck. I also wanted a chicken's neck but didn't get any. It's probably because we can't fly. The birds are so big they look me straight in the eyes. I'm scared of them and will rather chase the hadedas.



We ended up at a place with a big pool and steam was coming from the water. It looks very cozy as everything is under a roof and closed up. Everywhere I looked I could just see the mountains and the air smells so fresh. I could have stayed there for a long time but sadly we had to go home.



I am so excited that we will all see you at the Indaba as I have so much still to tell you and I'll show you all the good trees ..... and all the grass to sniff out all the hidden messages.



Greetings  
Dalmatian no 69 (my owner now calls me Claus)



# National Indaba Countdown

*Peter + Paul recently completed the 2018 Maluti Rally through the Kwazulu-Natal Battlefield landscape*

A collection of 21 “plastic” and classic motor cars with drivers and navigators participated in the 6th Maluti Tour from 22 to 25 March. Some classic marques like MGB, Porsche, Mercedes Benz, BMW, Volvo and Ford presented themselves proudly for the challenge. Mini, Subaru, Mitsubishi were among the group representing the moderns.

In a variation from previous years, the rally extended from the traditional starting point of Van Reenen towards the battle fields in a more eastern direction, allowing new roads to be explored.

Everyone started arriving at the Green Lantern Inn from around midday on Wednesday 21st for documentation and scrutineering. After the route had been studied, times and distances calculated, and highlighting in many colours were done, folks settled into the hotel and took over everything. We connected with old friends, Esra, Doug, Penny and Neil. There was a feeling of camaraderie as folks shared interesting stories, rallying experiences which turned the afternoon and evening into a lot of fun. The resident donkey paid us a visit twice that evening, much to everyone’s delight.

The heaven opened during the night forcing the organisers to make some last-minute changes to the route schedule. The first section was made an open section until past Harrismith, marked by a 120km change of speed road sign.

*“ Pity the other rally drivers that pulled up behind us.*

As car Number 2, we bravely set off with great enthusiasm and hurried to the end of open section and waited patiently, counting the minutes down until it was time to meet the challenge. It’s at times like this, with a substantial wait and no cars in sight, that the double checking of rally time and real time can shake the navigator. Luckily our timing was spot on but, due to the change in road works, we had our distance a little muddled and stopped at the incorrect COS marker. Pity the other rally drivers that pulled up behind us. Sorry guys but lesson confirmed to stick to the route schedule!

When the realisation hit home, we had to manage some high speed manoeuvring to do to get back on time and track.

We spent roughly 7 hours rallying in the rain from the Green Lantern through until reaching our accommodation at the Battle Fields Country Lodge Hotel on the outskirts of Dundee. There we gathered together in the sports lounge, perched above a small dam, where we shared war stories of the day while enjoying toasted sandwiches and watching the game buck and zebra.

The next day the early morning rise and shine was more rise and no shine as the rain continued. We took up our starting positions, stopwatches at the ready, checking down the time to start. Day 2 was underway. The weather didn’t improve during the day and all the beautiful views we were looking forward to hidden by the mist. Like the turn “to your side” to Nkandla - that’s the navigator’s story and he’s sticking to it.

The day became an adventure with poor visibility, winding roads with pots holes the size of an MG. Huddled farm animals emerged like ghosts from the mist in the middle of the road staring at us as we meandered through Enkandla to Eshowee, before making the round trip back to our refuge from the miserable weather.

There was a good gathering in the warm and dry lapa that day as the route was again dissected while eagerly anticipating the day’s results. We managed to clock up a handsome 753 score, our worst for the trip.

The weather cleared in the afternoon much to everyone’s delight, turning the parking lot into a little boot sale, as door, boots and bonnets stood open to dry out carpets and footwells.





# National Indaba Countdown

*Peter + Paul recently completed the 2018 Maluti Rally through the Kwazulu-Natal Battlefield landscape*

Saturday, the last rally day, turned into a beautiful sunny day. Our final route took us through Dundee to Newcastle where we stopped for refueling before heading towards Charlestone with a tricky double back to the lodge via Utrecht. Its always a little disconcerting seeing rally cars heading towards you. A unfortunate truck accident closed part of the road which cause havoc with times and distances, so the judges decided to amend the score for that day, resulting in a great performance by all.

Dinner that evening was a final farewell and prize giving. The winners of the various categories were announced to lots of applause and trophies handed out to beaming drivers and navigators. The Spirit of the Rally was awarded to MG enthusiast Roger Pearce - flying the flag for the MG marque of friendship.

After a sometimes scary, a little bumpy, an always wet but certainly fun rally, we are already looking forward to the 2019 rally when seconds will again count. All 740 of them!





# National Indaba Countdown

An article from *Stoep Talk* highlights the unexpected encounters possible when travelling in classic cars

## Opportunity Knocks when my Cars are Crocks

Stoep Talk by Denis Beckett, The Star Friday April 6 2018

Having a gold medal for breakdowns in Africa has led to rich memories.

If you think it's weird for the concept "vehicle breakdown" to trigger the sentiment "love Africa", then I have to say: friend, you have another think coming. For background you better know that I hold the gold medal for breaking down in southern Africa, that's a logical outcome of decades of affection for aged exotic cars that I could seldom properly maintain.

In city and in platteland, on highway and on gravel, in desert and in forest, in crowds and in solitude, at all times of day or night, in every province and all the neighbours, I have known the moment of "uh oh, here we go again, vehicle on strike". Which has led – undiluted track record – to an instant following moment of "aha, yet another adventure coming up". Every time, a broken car has meant an enhanced relationship with my world, almost always in the form of people with whom I share little in the way of culture, convention or custom.

“ aha, yet another adventure coming up

The memories fill a rich lobe in my head. The time near Hammamskraal that six guys in a tiny Austin did contortions to convey a seventh contortionist to Warmbaths. The time near Ohrigstad that a family put us up and we stayed through the next day for fun. The time near Siteki (then Stegi) that locals pulled us physically out of a mudslide. The time in Thohoyandou that I wound up as a guest at a wedding feast. The occasion that rings the loudest bells came, ironically, not in an exotic at all but in my wife's station wagon. On a road of rocks, a hundred Ks out of Nongoma, the clutch vanished.

Trudges through veld. Immense hospitality. Three pre-teen kids and their local contemporaries lapping up hide-and-seek in a scrapyard-in-the-bush. A magic-maker named Thomas Klaas ("as Zulu as anyone") cannibalises three short clutch cables from the scrapyard into one long cable for the station wagon and reckons we should make it to Vryheid, perhaps even Joburg. When the car left us 12 years later, it was still running on Thomas's clutch. Which was not, I may say, plain procrastination on my part. I loved that cable, and Thomas, and that day, and sharing a country with all who'd intersected with us in our unscheduled stationary afternoon.

So breakdowns in my mind have earned the meaning of friendly faces and trust and love, together with can-do people embracing a problem and fixing it with whatever tools there are. Times change. In some ways. No more aged exotics. My current chariot confines itself to the "aged", but has been Mr Reliability. Until Tuesday at OR Tambo. I've dropped loved ones at Departures, I'm pulling back into Terminals Road. Com-mo-tion happens.

The network of porters and security guys and taxi drivers are shouting, gesturing, pointing at my grille. What's up? The bonnet's open? No, I am flooding the tarmac. Never yet have so many volunteered moved in. One guy converts his penknife into a screwdriver.

One puts a stone in a wheel-wrench to create a spanner. One rounds up bottles, one knows a water source. Much interaction in Zulu alternates with amiable moments of humouring the owner (whose job it is to stay out of the way). In 15 minutes there are whoops and cheers and farewell waves as I take the road, feeling as warm to me home-made radiator fitting as I did to Thomas's clutch.

Familiar story: the text of life at the tip of Africa has a rare beauty. Don't get jammed on the !!!s and ???s of political punctuation. And if the beauty seems elusive, no worries. Go round up an aged vehicle.

**Some Northern Centre Members that are planning the journey to the Nation Indaba may have a small nagging feeling in the back of their minds as to the awful possibility of something falling off en route.**

**Thanks to Chris Colverd for highlighting an article that recently appeared in The Star newspaper that discusses the unexpected possibilities of such a situation.**



Rest assured fellow MG owners that the above incidents are not intended to reflect poorly on our dear cars. In fact, in my correspondence with Mr. Beckett, he has assured me otherwise:

*Obviously, Paul, nobody could believe in any such thing as an MG breaking down. Except for the TC that I had in 1965. Or the TF that I had in 1966. The Y-Type that I had from about 1968 never broke down at all, though it needed an oil tray with the cubic capacity of a bath.*

*No matter, I loved my MGs, all of them. Of course you're welcome to use my story in your newsletter. I am privileged to be communicating with so select a readership as MG owners. Strength and health to you and they!*

Denis  
PS: you'll be relieved to know that by far the most guilty marque was Jaguar.



# National Indaba Countdown

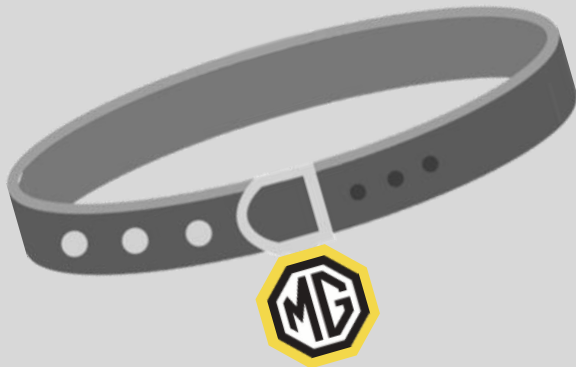
## Teamwork at the Clubhouse undertaking Top Secret Preparations for the upcoming Indaba

In a Top Secret operation, members of the Northern Centre met to prepare for the upcoming National Indaba. In preparation for the Black and White Dinner which formally closes the 2018 Indaba, the Northern Centre has a cunning plan.

A big thank you to **Sharleen Putter** for all her effort in the preparation.

Another big thank you to **Gary Chapman** who has already delivered the Indaba vehicle branding to the club which will help with registration.

Next issue will be a bumper Indaba 2018 Issue.



Gary Chapman delivered car badges for the Indaba.





# National Indaba Countdown

*Some memories from the National MG Indaba 2016 hosted by the Northern Centre*





# Car Ownership in the Centre

A breakdown by model type of the cars currently registered within the Northern Centre submitted by Robin Clarke

Some time ago the club executive committee tasked me to assist with updating our vehicle database. In essence we wanted to establish the MG ownership profile within the club. The issue was more about the number and type of vehicles rather than who owns what!

An e-mail went out inviting members to respond with a short, sharp note telling us what was lurking in their garages and the state of the vehicles. A great response was received and very few calls were needed to mop up the required information. A big thank you to all that responded.

It is recognized that this data base is a dynamic thing. Memberships change (as the Northern Center continues to grow!) and vehicles also change hands. However, as at early 2018 we have received and documented the data below. At an average of 1.3 cars per owner we can safely say that MG'S are an integral part of each family.

A highest percentage of the vehicles by far are reported as restored or running. A few have been reported as nearly completed restorations. Then there are a few off the road with niggling problems. Lastly, we have, I seem to recall, approximately 6 cars in the "bits and pieces" for restoration category.

The Northern Center club prides itself on living up to the motto of "MG- the marque of friendship" and advice or missing parts may well be at hand to get the "nearly mobile" cars back on the road with little effort. Shout if help is required!

At the time of the survey, the MGA'S were not clearly described in terms of 1500, 1600, 1600mk2 or coupe, roadster etc. If owners with A's would like to contact us with additional details, it would be appreciated.

Thanks again for the wonderful response and keep the updates coming.

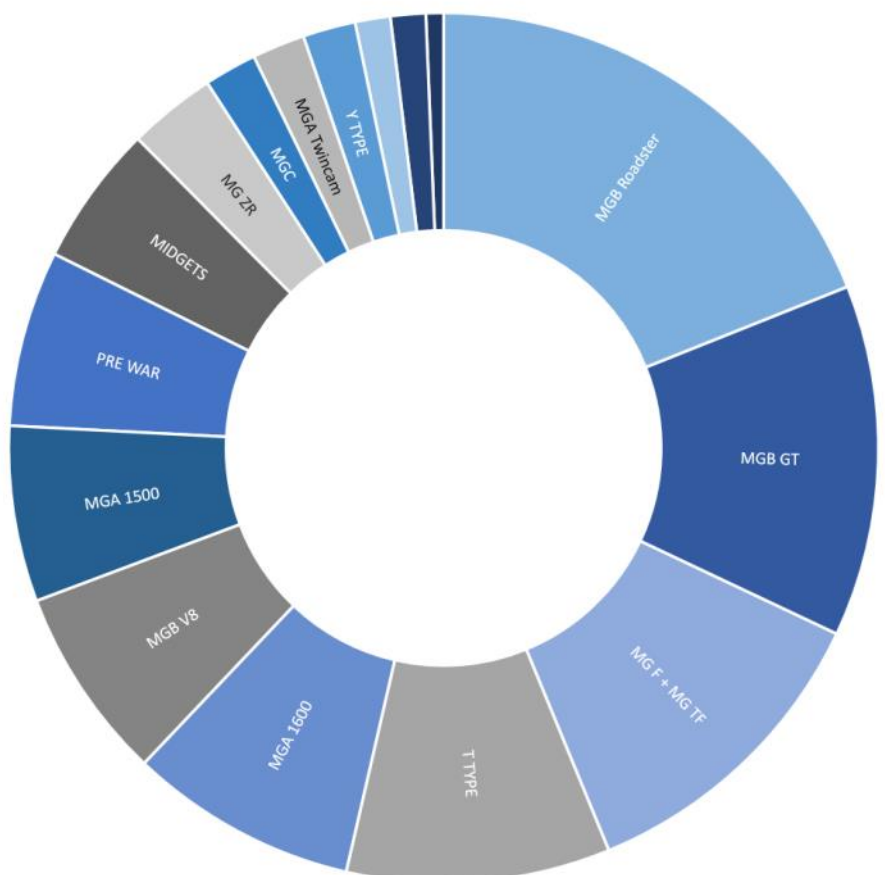
Number of Northern Centre members:  
115 members  
Number of declared ownership:  
153 cars

**MG B All Models: 60**  
29 B Roadster  
20 B GT  
11 B V8

**MG A All Models: 26**  
10 1500  
13 1600  
03 Twin Cams

**Moderns All Models: 26**  
18 MG F/TF  
05 MG ZR  
02 MGZT  
01 MG Metro

**Pre-war: 10**  
**Magnette: 02**  
**Y-Types: 03**  
**T-Types: 15**  
**Midget: 08**  
**MG C: 03**





# Club Notices + Announcements

Trading Post for Wanted Items and Those For Sale

## Wanted

- 1 MG Related Magazines, General Classic Car Books + Magazines
- 2 MG, Motoring + Motorsport Related Books
- 3 TA / TB / TC parts for long term build project. Bare chassis + body have been acquired...
- 1 MGB GT V8 Gearbox
- 2 EMCO Lathe

Stephen Grover 082 818 0540 stephendgrover@gmail.com

## Wanted

MGA Luggage Rack

Terrance Weiher  
083 452 0316

## For Sale

### MG Midget Boot Rack

Stainless steel OE pattern Midget boot rack.  
Never fitted. £204 from the owners club.  
Yours for R1200

Steve Eden  
0823728740

## For Sale

### MG B Roadster

1980 MGB Roadster - respray asking R 139 000.

Nigel Cottle  
nigel.cottle60@gmail.com



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# Club Notices + Announcements

Club Regalia Available



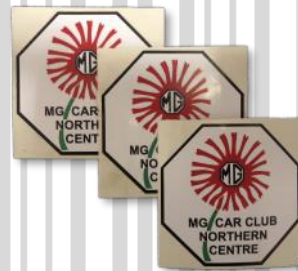
Variety of Golf Shirts, Collar Shirts and Printed T-Shirts



Peak Cap



Classic Flat Cap



Licence Disc Sticker



Vintage Parking Sign



A Variety of Club Regalia, for Ladies and Gents is available for sale. Branded with the MG Logo, proceeds from sales go towards supporting the upkeep of the Club House. Please enquire about sizes, colours + prices.

(01) 95012345678903 (3103) 000123



# Club Notices + Announcements

Upcoming Events, Social Evenings + Club Activities



## Social Evening 18 May

Tony + Annette Craddock  
Will be hosting the pub evening in celebration of  
Tony's Birthday on the 13 May.

ALL WELCOME  
Friday from 17:30 onwards MG Car Club Northern Centre Clubhouse

*Happy Birthday Mister President*

## KNIGHT RIDERS MG PUB + MG BITS Monthly Run 27th May



Meet at clubhouse at 09h45 for convoy leaving at 10h00 sharp  
(Those in Johannesburg can drive straight to venue for 11h00 arrival)  
18 Nancy Road Klevehill Park Sandton  
S26.03711o E 28.03706o

Braai Fires will be provided with Tables + Chairs laid out  
Please bring your Food + Drink as well as your own Picnic Basket Set

RSVP  
Please rsvp before 25 May to assist with seating arrangements



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# Club Notices + Announcements

Forthcoming Events in Brief

Point allocation C=Clubman, v= Victrix/tor Ludorum, RR=Regularity Rally, HR=Historic Racing

## MAY

Tuesday 1	Worker's Day	-	-	-
3-6	National Indaba	National	Drakensville KZN	C
Monday 7	Natter 'n Noggin	NC	Clubhouse 19:30 for 20:00	C
Friday 18	Pub Evening	NC	Clubhouse 17:30 onwards	-
Sunday 27	Monthly Run	NC	Peter Knight's Knight Rider MG Pub + MG Bits Bring + Braai. Leave club at 10:00 sharp	C

## JUNE

Monday 4	Natter 'n Noggin	National	Clubhouse 19:30 for 20:00	C
Friday 15	Pub Evening	NC	Clubhouse 17:30 onwards	-
Saturday 16	Youth Day	-	-	-
TBC	Monthly Run	NC	Combined Centres Show day	C

## JULY

Monday 2	Natter 'n Noggin	NC	Clubhouse 19:30 for 20:00	C
Friday 13	Pub Evening	NC	Clubhouse 17:30 onwards	-
Sunday 22	Monthly Run	NC	Centenary Run	C

## AUGUST

23-26	40th Anniversary Run		Boutique Hotel, Little Pilgrims (adjacent to Numbi Hotel) Hazyview, Mpumalanga	
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# Motoring Events

Some Forthcoming Motoring Events not related to MG or the Northern Centre

<b>MAY</b>		
1	Sunbeam Dambusters Run	Magaliesberg Vicinity
3-6	Knysna Simola Hillclimb	Knysna
5	Highveld Old Motor Club Motor Show	Middelburg, MP
19	Historic Tour Racing	Phakisa Freeway
25-26	National Rally Classics Championship	Delmas
26	Just Wheels	Brakpan
26-28	Kyalami Bike Festival	Kyalami
27	Pietermaritzburg Cars in the Park	Ashburn
27	POMC Cars on the Roof	Kolonnade Retail Park
<b>JUNE</b>		
2	POMC Mampoer Rally	Cullinan
3	Nelspruit Motor Show	Nelspruit
9	Vryheid Cars in the Park	Vryheid
24	Blairgowrie Toy Fair	Blairgowrie
24	Jaguar Regularity Rally	Bedfordview
30	Historic Tour Racing	Red Star Raceway
<b>JULY</b>		
1	1000 Bikes Show	Germiston
6-7	National Rally Championships	Port Elizabeth
8	Scottburgh Classic Car Show	Scottburgh
22	Rotary Classic Car Meander	Brits Hartbeespoort
22	Austin-Healey 100 Regularity Rally	Benoni
<b>AUGUST</b>		
5	POMC Cars in the Park	Zwartkops Raceway
8-12	Magnum Rally	Hazyview
9	Bloemfontein Cars in the Park	Bloemfontein
11	Historic Tour Racing	Dezzi Raceway
17-18	National Rally Classics Championship	Bronkhorstspuit
26	Ferdi's Swap Meet	Midrand