



MG NORTHERN CENTRE *founded February 1978*

JUNE 2026

UMGAZI Mag

CONTACT US



MG Car Club - Northern Centre



c/o Umgazi & 26th Street, Menlo Park, Pretoria



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Committee

Chairman: Bernard Mostert

Secretary: Richard Grover

Membership: Robin Clarke

Regalia: Jaco van Vuuren & Michael Mole

Social media: Shaun Freeman

Events Secretary: Frik van Sittert

Valuations: Stephen Grover

Committee member: Dirk du Plessis

*Happy
Birthday!*

14 July - Robin Clarke

30 July - Esra Martin

What is happening?

1. Noggin – 6 July
2. Club night – 17 July
3. Combined show day – 26 July 2026

Chairman's Note



Greetings to all Northern Centre Members

I was fortunate enough to escape the South African winter for two weeks while working in Nairobi. Returning home certainly reminded me what I hadn't been missing!

June was another busy month for our club, with both official and unofficial activities keeping members occupied. Be sure to read the fascinating article about the ostrich feather industry and discover how it played a part in bringing an era to an end.

Our Club Show Day was very well attended, and not even the chilly weather could dampen everyone's enthusiasm. A special thank you goes to Louis du Plessis, who eagerly took the opportunity to learn the finer points of concours judging from Robin. It's always encouraging to see members keen to develop new skills and become more involved.

July promises to be just as busy, with plenty of events on the calendar. Please remember our Combined Show Day at POMC on 26 July 2026, it should be another excellent gathering of classic motoring enthusiasts.

The latest edition of Safety Fast! is now available online. You can access it by following these steps:

- Visit mgcc.co.uk.
- Click Members in the top-right corner of the page.
- On the membership list, enter our club membership number: 270.
- Enter the email address: rjc@mweb.co.za.
- Enter the password: MGBrace\$02.
- Click Login.
- From the menu on the left-hand side, select Safety Fast Magazine (third item down).

I hope to see you at the club, at one of our upcoming events, or simply out on the road enjoying your MG.

Octagonally yours,
Bernard



CLUB Night



12 June Leen and Shaun hosted the club night.

Even though it is an "English car" club, we had an Italian evening, where we enjoyed spaghetti bolognese.

Thank you for all the members that made it such an enjoyable (as usual) evening. Remember this happens each month on the Friday AFTER we had our Noggin, that is happening on the first Monday of the month..



CLUB SHOW DAY

On the morning of 20 June, winter started in Gauteng! Yes, I know we also planned for our annual club show day, and yes we usually have it n the 3rd Sunday, AND yes we also have a boot sale, BUT as “they” say, ‘there is always a first for everything!

The day turned out to be a real blast! With 12 classic MG's at the club and 1 modern... Cyberster (!) paying a visit, it was a good day out.

Judging continued in the afternoon while the TV was on for some entertainment from the Boks against the Barbarian team. What would a Saturday be without a braai? With the fire started early and in time to have eaten before dark, there was definitely no excuse to have a good day out at the club.

To our members that made an effort to clean their cars – thank you! Our club calligraphist decided to galavant in the UK, so certificates will be awarded at a later stage.

Our price winners on the day:

- First place – Werna Davies
- Second place – Albert Spangenberg
- Third place – Jay Westaway

Please remember that our combined show day is next month – 26 July at POMC in Silverton! Hope to see you there.







**Werna Davies (with judge
Robin Clarke)**



**Albert Spangenberg (with
judge Robin Clarke)**



**Jay Westaway (with
Bernard)**

WHEN OSTRICH FEATHERS WERE WORTH MORE THAN GOLD

"The rise of the motor car did more than replace horse-drawn transport. By making extravagant feathered hats impractical, it helped end the ostrich-feather boom that made Oudtshoorn one of the wealthiest towns in South Africa before 1914."

Marelize Mostert - help from the internet

The Motor Car That Helped Bring Down an Empire of Feathers

Long before South Africa became famous for gold, diamonds and motor manufacturing, the Klein Karoo town of Oudtshoorn grew rich from a very different commodity: ostrich feathers.

During the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, ostrich plumes became the ultimate fashion accessory. Wealthy women in Europe, Britain and America adorned enormous hats with extravagant white, black and coloured feathers. The larger the hat and the more dramatic the plume, the greater the social status. By the early 1900s, ostrich feathers were among the most desirable luxury items in the world.

Oudtshoorn's dry climate proved ideal for ostrich farming. Farmers began domesticating ostriches during the 1850s, and by the 1870s the first "Feather Boom" was underway. After a brief downturn, an even larger boom followed from about 1900 to 1914. Wealthy ostrich farmers became known as "Feather Barons" and built magnificent sandstone mansions that are still known today as the famous Ostrich Palaces or Feather Palaces.

The industry reached extraordinary heights in 1913. South Africa exported approximately 450 tonnes of ostrich feathers worth around £3 million per year, making feathers the country's fourth most valuable export after gold, diamonds and wool.



Prices were astonishing. Contemporary accounts report that a single premium plume could sell for as much as £12, roughly equivalent to the cost of a steamship ticket between England and South Africa. Exceptional feathers could fetch even higher prices, and the finest plumes were often described as being worth their weight in gold.

Then Came the Motor Car

What brought this feather empire crashing down?

Part of the answer lies in the arrival of the motor car.

The huge feathered hats that were fashionable in the Belle Époque era worked perfectly in horse-drawn carriages, but they were highly impractical in the new open-topped motor cars. As automobile ownership grew, women's fashion shifted toward smaller, more practical hats that would not be blown away by the wind. The demand for extravagant ostrich plumes began to weaken.

The motor car was not the only cause. Overproduction of feathers and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 also devastated the market. Nevertheless, the rise of motoring played a significant role in changing fashion trends and reducing demand for the giant feathered hats that had sustained the industry. By the end of 1914 the market had collapsed. Many Feather Barons were bankrupted, and numerous ostrich palaces were abandoned or sold. The town that had briefly become one of the wealthiest places in South Africa entered a long decline.

A Curious Motoring Legacy

Today, visitors to Oudtshoorn can still admire the grand Feather Palaces that remain from this remarkable era. They stand as monuments to one of the most unusual economic booms in South African history—and as a reminder that the humble motor car did more than transform transportation. It also changed fashion, ended a global feather craze, and helped bring down an industry that had once made ostrich feathers among the most valuable luxury goods on Earth.



SEEN ON *WhatsApp*

Here are some photo's of activities that happened during June where our club members were enjoying their MG's



Events - 2026

MONTH	Noggin	Club Night	Monthly Run	Note
January	-	23rd - Bring and braai	25th - SAMCA (V8 Roadhouse)	31st - Passion for speed at
February	2nd - Koos Zietsman visit	13th	22nd - Wondermill Smokehouse	
March	2nd - AGM	13th - Prize giving	22nd - SAA museum & Harvard café	15th - Piston Ring Swop meet
April	13th - Slot car racing	17th - Bev & Geoff	26th - Mulderdrift safari run	
May	4th - Rocker racing	15th - Avril & Richard	23/24 - Weekend away	
June	1st	12th - Leen & Shaun	20th - Club Show day	14th - POMC British car day
July	6th	17th - Marelize & Bernard	26th - Combined Show Day	
August	3rd	14th - Meredith & Ian	23rd - Sergeant Pepper	2nd - Cars in the park POMC
September	7th	18th	20th - Piston Ring Swop meet	21 to 24 - Indaba
October	5th - Rocker racing	23rd - Liesl & Robin	11th - Jacaranda run	
November	2nd	13th	22nd - Cullinan	
December	-	5th - Christmas Party	-	

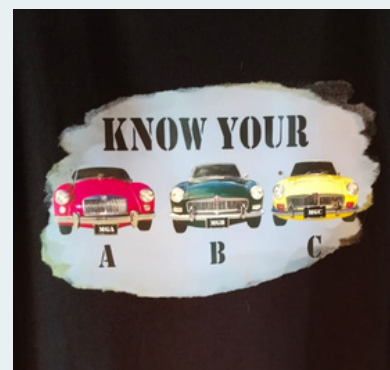


DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Golf shirt - white & grey - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt, grey & black - ladies, short sleeves 	R 130.00
Lounge shirt - silver - men - short sleeves 	R 180.00
Vogue blouse - grey - ladies - long sleeves 	R 150.00
Golf shirt - grey striped with black collar - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt - blue with white collar - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00
Golf shirt - blue with white trimmed collar and sleeves - men - short sleeves 	R 160.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Cap - grey - show day 2022 - with Jhb Centre logo 	R 40.00
Cap - grey & black 	R 60.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Socks - navy blue with logo 	R 90.00
Socks - black with logos 	R 90.00
Socks - white with logos 	R 90.00

DESCRIPTION	PRICE
MG Badge (100 yr Centennial) 	R 450.00
MG Keyring (60 yr celebration 1962-2022) 	R 40.00
MG rad cap loosener 	R 20.00



T-Shirt

R280 - size guide, see here below

Size	Body width (in cm)	Body length (in cm)
S	50	70
M	53	72
L	56	74
XL	59	76
2XL	62	78
3XL	68	80

CLUB REGALIA



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