



WHALE TALES

THE CAPE TOWN TRIUMPH NEWSLETTER

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As I write this to you from my home, the COVID-19 lockdown is still in full force and our leaders will hopefully bring some relief on 1 May when we move from level 5 to level 4. This time every two years is that of our national gathering. This year would have been at Golden Gate, arranged by the Johannesburg centre, but obviously due to the current lockdown it has been postponed. We will have to wait and see what dates will be announced.

Most people have taken to technology and social media and have been quite innovative in this space, from virtual car shows, challenges, historical happenings, fake news, online ZOOM and SKYPE meetings just to stay in touch and keep up to date with each other. We would like to stay in touch with our members, especially the ones that are not allowed to go anywhere. Please let us know if you are in such a position that we can make contact with you

We are going to arrange for a ZOOM noggin meeting, which if you haven't heard of it, is an online video conference type of meeting where everyone logs into their computers or through their phone, see each other and can talk to one another and have a great time together from the safe space in your home. Watch this space as the world is changing, so will we and keep our great club going into the future. We will send out an email invitation with the details in due course.

I believe that you have been busy fixing your Triumph or cleaning it now that we have some spare time on hand. I have driven my TR to do shopping and can't wait to take it on an outing with you.

God bless and please be safe.

Triumphant Regards

Gerhard

THE EDITOR'S DESK

I can only concur with what Gerhard has said, I suspect the future will be very different from the past we are used to. This is a car club newsletter but every time I get hope from the statesmanship President Cyril shows in his handling of the current crisis, I am brought back to reality with the behavior of his lieutenants Dlamini – Zuma and Patel! Hopefully someone somewhere will show us some leadership again. Rant over, where are we now.

My car is safely locked up in its garage but I haven't been able to do anything as it is about 4km away and I have to go past the police station to get to it! Hopefully now we are in level 4 (or is it 6?) I can get some work done on it and enjoys these blissful last few days of autumn before winter starts arriving. I know I will be delighted when the hardware stores reopen so I can stock up on those items such as painters mate, thinners and the 101 items I thought I had lots of but seem to need a few to finish certain jobs. My railway projects have progressed well, most of the house maintenance is finished but alas no car jobs.

May I take this opportunity to thank Tim Kent for his contributions, I know that he has built up a fan base and one gentleman in Tokai who wants to know what happened next, here it is! We are also looking at going down memory lane for some of the newer members, and those who have enjoyed the history of the club. On the technical side I am also trying to shed a bit of light on why certain things have happened over the years and why, hopefully you will enjoy them and I would love comment on them.

Gerhard has mentioned the use of Zoom to have some social interaction. Our Rotary club has used it for meetings with great success, we have listened to several webinars using zoom and all have worked really well. There are some technical issues we need to get sorted out to get the best out of the system but I look forward to our first meeting via Zoom!

TECHNICAL TRIVIA

The 4 cylinder engine used in the TR2 to 4As was originally based on a Citroen wet liner engine known as "traction avante". This engine had been bought by Standard in the 1930's for evaluation and when Standard needed an engine post war the idea of using this technology was born. At this time Standard was looking at an engine for the Vanguard but also a deal with Harry Ferguson to make tractor engines came about. This was a very profitable production item for Standard and explains why we can buy certain parts for the engine from Bepco in the northern suburbs, the "Vaal

Jaapie" tractor is the local name for the old Ferguson tractor. The use of a wet liner engine was very useful to the team competing in 1950's sporting events as if they needed to be in the under 2 litre class they could use the original 83 mm diameter pistons and in the unlimited class they could use either a 86 or an 87 mm diameter piston.

There are several significant differences between the original motor for a tractor and the TR motor but one item that remained was the use of the thick fan belt. The idea to use the thicker belt was down to the undergrowth or whatever when the unit was used in tractor mode, a normal thin belt would have been destroyed in a very short time in agricultural mode. The belt as used in a TR, particularly in the 2, 3 and 3A is incredibly difficult to change in situ as all sorts of things get in the way and is also difficult to adjust properly causing wear in the water pump and generator bearings. Unless one is a stickler for originality, then my advice would be to fit a thin belt conversion that certainly makes changing the belt on the road into a more pleasant experience. If you want to go one stage further and fit an alternator, the thin belt is a must.

Why did Triumph fit Stromberg carburettors to the TR4 midway through its production and then go back to the SU carburettor near the end of the 4A production run? The answer lies in an engineering solution to solve a political problem. All the sidescreen cars used SU's which gave good service and by the time the TR4 came along the biggest competitor to the TR was the MGA and later the MGB. The problem came in that BMC bought the SU company and it got to a point where Triumph were paying double the price for their carburettors than MG. In the cost competitive world of the sixties this was a big no no so Triumph then twisted the arm of Zenith who were supplying most of their other cars to come up with another option to the SU. Enter the Stromberg 150 CD, fitted to a fair few Triumph cars as well as other makes to give an alternative supplier at a better price. The unit was in fact technically slightly superior to its rival but at the expense of being more difficult to adjust. Then later in the decade Triumph and BMC merged so the SU carburettor was then no longer a tactical weapon and the HS6 was used on the later 4As.

What do the engine in the Herald and the TR6 have in common? At first sight not a lot but when Triumph needed an engine for its Herald based Vitesse range, the engine department came up with the idea of adding an extra 2 cylinders to the Herald block to make the 6 cylinder engine for the Vitesse. With a bit of finessing this became the 2 litre engine (hint 1300cc x6/4 becomes nearly 2000), for such cars as the Triumph 2000, the GT6 and others. When the TR5 was introduced to give a bit (lot) more power to the TR4A' the 2 litre engine was then given a bigger bore and a longer stroke to make the 2.5 litre engine used in the 5 6's as well as the 2.5 PI and Chicane made here.

[A WHALE OF A TALE PART 7 BY TIM KENT](#)

In military terms we are all 'confined to barracks', not because we have committed any infringement of military discipline but because we might all die from a mysterious

virus of Chinese origin, if we venture outside our own property. Did you know that the Great Plague of 1665 killed 100.000 Londoners in seven months? It was the Bubonic plague brought to England on rat infested ships from the Far East. Why does it always start in the Far East?

This has nothing to do with the story of my Triumphs but reading this episode might help to pass the time during your confinement.

The Wedding day has been planned for a year hence, May 15th 1976 so I have a lot of work to do, but I will deal with the TR4A IRS first. The car was removed to Canning's Body Shop and the body removed and one day Barry Canning phoned to suggest that I might like to come and have a look at what they had found. The front right hand of the chassis was 16mm higher than the left hand side. This was due to the impact of hitting the curb with the right front wheel in Heidelberg at high speed. This would explain why the car listed to starboard when proceeding in a straight line, and why the steering was so heavy. Secondly the driver's door would never close properly because the "A" pillar had been flattened and was out of line by 6mm. The original repairers had used masses of body filler to hide all the imperfections of their shoddy workmanship. Barry collected it all up and filled three shopping bags. Whilst all this was being corrected I found a man in Woodstock who could repair wire wheels, hubs, spokes and splines included. When I took all the wheels to him, he declared that mine would be last wheels he would ever do. He was well into his eighties and would be closing up. He did three wheels very well but the fourth was so out of true that it was un-useable. Other motorists would shout at me, at a robot that my back wheel was coming off.

These were difficult times in our beloved Country, Soweto had erupted, Rattles (massive armoured trucks) in the townships were every night on the news, and sanctions were biting harder. We were fighting the Cubans in Angola, (the Cubans financed by Russia) and Mr. P.W. Botha ("die ou krokodil",) (the old crocodile) was the President and many were emigrating. Driving to work along the M3 some-one had written on a bridge

"Rong Ruler, Ruined Rand",

The next day someone had written underneath

" Rather Rands than Roubles" and the next day was added

" Rather Roubles than Rubble" I have never forgotten this.

I digress, but at least this puts my story into context. Many weeks pass and I visit Canning's several times to assess progress. The rear windscreen had not yet arrived and it was most likely that it never would, as the British Motor Industry was in a state of anarchy, so Barry had one made out of Perspex and if you didn't know you couldn't tell.

Canning's had done a brilliant job, finished off in resplendent British racing green and it all cost a whopping R3500. But the chassis was straight and it went in a straight line, and the driver's door closed with a Volvo like 'clunk', the only problem still to solve was the engine's un-quenchable thirst for fresh oil regularly. The impact on the

driver's door and 'A' pillar was so severe that it had damaged the wood veneer dashboard, so it was removed and sent to an Antique restorer, on the recommendation of a colleague. The result was "astonishing" and it cost me R40. Who said anything about a Ruined Rand?

Not long after this Chris Schultz phoned to say he thinks he may have found the cause of the prodigious oil consumption and if I cared to bring the car to his home in Pinelands he could do what was necessary to fix it. Of course I was there that same evening. Chris explained that as he stared out of his office window, which overlooked the British Leyland main dealership, it was called Rob Motors (rob by name and rob by nature), he saw a Jaguar XJ6 on flatbed truck. He knew that this car had recently had the complete braking system overhauled, so why was it on a flat bed? He went to enquire and was told that the brakes had failed coming down from High Level Road Sea Point to the Main Road. The cause was hydraulic pipe fatigue. So when the brakes were applied one hydraulic pipe was so weak that it sucked closed, like sucking on a balloon, rendering the brakes useless. Chris then deduced that the same was happening on my car because the hydraulic pipe from the one way valve into the inlet manifold which sucks un-burnt fuel back into the manifold (for emission control reasons) was sucking itself closed, causing poor or no breathing for the engine. This resulted in the buildup of pressure in the engine thereby forcing the oil out through the weakest points. These points are dipstick, rocker cover bolts, and rear main bearing seal. Then I understood why smoke emanated through the gearbox tunnel on that run to Durban, it was coming out of the dipstick and the wind carried it onto the hot exhaust. So Chris disconnected the outlet pipe from rocker cover, applied some masking tape to the intake pipe on the manifold and the problem was cured.

So, whoopee, you might think, as I did, all the problems solved, and paid for, but um, no, because this a 10 year old British car which has had the living daylight knocked out of it, has under gone major surgery, spent weeks in intensive care and has been standing for most of two years, it has been man handled by ruffians and has not fully recuperated. It was now Christmas time and Nurse, her parents, siblings and others decided to come to Cape Town for the silly season, and it was. Too many people, too little space and too much activity. But when it was time for them to return to the Orange Free State someone decided that I and Nurse would go in the TR4A. I knew that the left hand bolt which connects the hard top to the windscreen was almost sheered and the bolt would not tighten, so future father-in-law found a strong cord, threaded it through the hole in the hard top and tied it securely to the grab handle on the dashboard. We set off for Welkom at about 4am and before the days of the Huguenot tunnel we crawled up Du Toit's Kloof Pass, behind heavy trucks. Father-in-law and family were behind me in the Chevrolet V8 Caprice and behind him was a motor bike. At the top of the Pass I could see a clear road ahead to overtake the truck in front. I clicked out of over-drive and powered past him, then the hard top disappeared, it came off like "Oddjobs" bowler hat in the James Bond movie, scything through the air with deadly consequences. I pulled over as soon as I could, the Chevrolet came past and the truck but no motor bike. I was shaking like an autumn leaf in a hurricane. The Chevrolet stopped and together we went back to the scene, fully expecting to find a decapitated motorcyclist lying by the side of the road

or in a ditch. We found the motor bike, on the side of the road on its stands, the owner was relieving himself in some nearby bushes and emerged, nonchalantly, lit a cigarette and showed us where the hard top was, it was in the ditch where we had expected to find him. The hard top was placed in the massive boot of the Chevrolet and we continued our journey. But throughout our journey I was keenly aware of a blood curdling screech every time I changed gear, but there was nothing I could do about it in the early hours in the middle of nowhere, so we carried on.

What was the screech?

The next episode will reveal all, and the next episode will be about the Spitfire, or most of it,

Stay indoors and don't breath more than you have to!

Tim.

[A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE](#)

[2012 NATIONAL GATHERING AT PLETTENBERG BAY](#)



THE GARAGE IS STILL AS WELCOMING TODAY



THE LINE UP OF CARS BEFORE CONOURS



NICK JOUBERT CLEANING HIS TR3



MORE CLEANING!



BEFORE THE TOUR DE PLETT



CONCOURS



TOM DOUGAN, FRANK AND SONJA



GERHARD AND GORDON WARING



THE CARS ON SHOW AT KNYSNA WATERFRONT



THE CAPE TOWN CONTINGENT