

EASTERN PROVINCE VETERAN CAR CLUB

GQEBERHA /
(PORT ELIZABETH)



NEWSLETTER

Affiliated to the
Southern African Veteran and
Vintage Association



JANUARY 2022 & FEBRUARY 2022

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44th Issue January & February 2022

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Chairman's Chat – March 2022

The club had many feet passing through in the last two months. This is always a good sign, which means our members and the public enjoys the vibe at the club. Your committee is geared to make your experience at the club, events and displays even more enjoyable.

We started our display evenings with the Mercedes Benz display in February. We had more than 30 cars on display that evening. Niki set the bar high with this display. This was followed with the Convertible display. From Model T's, to Bentleys, to Porches and many more. These cars were an absolute pleasure to look at and enjoy.

February was hectic at the club, as we ended February with the All-Clubs Day. This event was well attended by other clubs. The Alfa and MG Clubs came out in numbers and had stunning cars on display. A huge thank you for the support of the clubs for attending the annual event. After all, we are likeminded petrol heads.

March is fun packed and promises to be enjoyable. The Red Car display was stunning and eye-catching. Our Theme Displays are very popular and is well attended by the public. Anel from Rooted, keeps our palette satisfied with her scrumptious meals. The next display planned for March is the Jaguar display. We hope to see plenty of the cars parked on the lawn. Polish those beauties and come and share them with us.

After a long absence, we will have a Breakfast Run on the 27th of March. Info will follow shortly. The calendar is set for the year and based on the events and displays, this year promises to be even better than 2021. After all, your attendance, input, and participation make all the effort worth it.

Please pass on any suggestions or thoughts on making your club more enjoyable.

Francois

Editorial

Hi folks

That's the first Newsletter for 2022 done & dusted!! As you will see it has had a revamp to hopefully make it easier for me to do as it does take hours to get everything nicely spaced, pictures adjusted and down sized to make the file smaller for Michael to email out plus many other bits and pieces that must be done to basically make it flow.

In future one page or less will be allocated for each car display or event, depending on the size of the event. If you would like to see more photos of the event, please visit our Facebook page.

Once again, I am begging for articles from our members to put in the Newsletter e.g., technical tips or maybe a few pages on any restorations you are busy with. Anything that might be of interest to other members.

It is great to basically see the club slowly getting back to pre-Covid times, but Covid is still out there so we must still be careful out there.

Stay safe everyone.

Sue

Just for a laugh



Past Club Events Jan & Feb 2022

1st Noggin of 2022 – 14th January

Usually, the first noggin of the year can be a quiet affair, but the club was well supported, and several members brought their cars to park on the lawn. A lovely evening to just relax and catch up with friends. Thank you everyone for your support.



Mercedes Benz Display 4th February

An excellent turnout this evening. Over 30 Mercedes Benz were on display 🤖.



Convertibles / Roadsters Display 18th February

Another well supported display event with classic and modern convertibles or roadsters on display. Something to suit everyone's taste.



All Clubs Day 27th February

Sunday morning dawned with black heavy clouds, light rain and of course the usual gusty wind. It did not look like it was going to be a very good day to hold a club event. However, by lunchtime the clouds had cleared but the wind remained. We would like to say a huge thank you to all the clubs who participated, Barista Coffees for their delicious coffee, Chef Anel from Rooted who kept us fed for breakfast and lunch plus the Algoa Bay Caledonian Pipe Band for finishing off the day.





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Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Eastern-Province-Veteran-Car-Club/296587683705528>

(Control and click to follow link)

Website: www.epvcc.co.za

FUTURE EVENTS

2022 E.P.V.C.C. C A L E N D A R – PLEASE DIARISE

Emails will also be sent out with details well before the event AND also notifications will be posted on our Facebook page.

18 th March 2022	Jaguar Display up to 1985
27 th March 2022	Breakfast Run
1 st April 2022	Unrestored Cars up to 1978
22 nd April 2022	VW Beetles up to 1978
6 th May 2022	Rolls Royce & Bentley Display
20 th May 2022	MG Indaba Display
June and July 2022	NO DISPLAYS – Winter break
5 th August 2022	Classic Black & White cars pre-1985
19 th August 2022	DKW, Borgward and Audi
2 nd September 2022	Gas Guzzler V8 Display
16 th September 2022	Porsche Display
7 th October 2022	BMW Display
21 st October 2022	Motorcycle Display

CONDOLANCES

It was with great sadness that we learnt that our friend Trevor Hoole passed away suddenly in February. Trevor had a real passion for the classic car movement and took part in many Milligan Rallies. He was a farmer, engineer, collector and a people person. Many of us spent memorable evenings around the kitchen table on his farm. He will be missed. RIP Trevor.

**Remember to always adhere to the Club's protocols!!!
COVID is still around**



George Old Car Show held on the 12/13th February

The 25th George Old Car Show driven by SCRIBS BENZEUM way, was held in February after a two-year break due to Covid.

The showgrounds at the George Old Car Show were graced with around 2000 engines all spotting vibrant colours indicative of their rich history. Besides the beautiful vehicles that could keep you captivated for days, there was good music, delicious food, and a variety of stalls and special exhibitions to make this show the perfect event for the whole family.

Visit the Southern Cape Old Car Club's Facebook page to see photos of the event.

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=southern%20cape%20old%20car%20club>





SAVVA Technical tip 173 - Battery storage

(The following interesting historical article was sent in by Dane Fraser – thanks Dane!)

Question: "Why do they say not to put a car battery on a concrete floor?"

The caveat not to put an automobile battery on a concrete floor is a LOT OLDER than the people realize. Although inapplicable to today's polypropylene battery cases, the warning used to be sensible. And, before either polypropylene or hard rubber were used for battery cases, those cases used to be made out of WOOD and used a rubber liner called a jar. Really.

A 1922–1923 catalogue from the Chicago Automobile Supply Warehouse shows batteries in the 19-teens and 1920's were rebuildable. And they were expensive. Adjusted for inflation to 2018 dollars, a battery for a Ford T would cost you \$274. A battery for a Mitchell Light Six would cost you \$848. Thus, rebuilding them made sense.

One could buy replacement lead plates, treated wood separators, positive and negative plate straps (which electrically connected and placed a terminal on plate groups), cell connectors, covers, carboys of battery acid, terminal molds, battery "jars", and wood battery cases. You could also buy battery paint, molds for terminals (which you would pour from molten lead), and battery steamers. The latter were devices used to disassemble batteries for rebuilding.

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These wooden cases would, of course, be porous and could become electrically conductive if the electrolyte leaked through or around the rubber battery jar or through the battery cover which was sealed with tar, or leaked through the vents, or if electrolyte or distilled water were spilled on the battery.

But there was another, and probably much more important, reason why mechanics were warned not to place these wood cased automobile storage batteries directly on concrete floors: Uninsulated concrete wicks moisture up from the earth beneath the floor. It is always somewhat wet. And WOOD MOVES as it absorbs or loses moisture from or to the surrounding environment.

It moves A LOT! If placed directly on a damp concrete floor the bottom of that wood battery case would begin to absorb moisture. It would then begin to expand, but the expansion would be differential and uneven. The bottom side of the case in direct contact with the concrete would expand, in a dimension perpendicular to the grain, more than the interior side of the base. The battery's base would thus become convex rather than flat, stressing and then breaking the tongue and groove joint with the battery end pieces. The expansion of the base would then push out the sides of the battery case, breaking the joints between the sides and the ends. The battery case would, thus, self-destruct, simply because of differential moisture absorption, BECAUSE IT WAS PLACED ON A CONCRETE FLOOR.

Considering how expensive these batteries were at the time wooden battery cases were used, how tedious the rebuilding process was, and how much damage could be caused to the car by leakage of battery acid, it is much more likely that wooden battery case failure, rather than electrolyte seepage and accidental electrical discharge, was the primary reason mechanics were instructed to not place an automobile battery directly on a concrete floor.



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Did you know.....

.....that The Black Beast - 1909 Alco, Twice winner of New York's Vanderbilt Cup race, the 1909 Alco comes back home to Long Island.

By [Jim Donnelly](#) from January 2013 issue of [Hemmings Classic Car](#)



The name of the car, Alco, communicates as much about its massive, deafening countenance as any photograph. Alco is actually an acronym, standing for American Locomotive Company, and in 1908, it was the nation's second-largest producer of steam-powered railroad engines.

As a company, Alco had only existed since 1901, when it emerged from the merger of eight smaller rail producers based from New Hampshire to Virginia. The new company was headquartered in Schenectady, New York, and later built fabulous-looking and awesomely powerful steamers ranging from the New York Central's Dreyfuss-streamlined Hudsons to the Union Pacific's massive 4-8-8-4 Big Boy freight steamers, built to flatten the mountain West.

Its core products were fire-shaped from black iron and riveted into enormous existence, but Alco got technology, too. It was the first locomotive builder to adopt precision Timken bearings for its wheels and connecting rods. There's a strong case to be made that that's what drove Alco from the rails to the new world of road vehicles. In 1906, Alco began to build the French-designed Berliet under license at one of its former locomotive plants, located in Providence, Rhode Island. At the time, Berliet offered models up to a massive straight-six engine with 9.5 liters—it rounds out to 580 cubic inches. The Alco executives were convinced they could craft a car that was lighter, faster, more powerful, and better-built than their French franchise promised.

Alco only produced its own automobiles in Providence from 1909 to 1913. Despite its industry leadership in railroading, Alco pursued a business plan for building cars that all but ensured quick failure. In advertising material, it boasted that it took 19 months to build a single car, six months of which were consumed by machining and assembling the rear axle alone. Despite the fact that Alcos retailed from \$6,000 to \$7,500, the company lost around \$500 on every car it produced. Likely in desperation, Alco contracted Crane (later, Crane-Simplex) of Bayonne, New Jersey, to gin up a new light-six model for half the price of its existing cars, but its automobile business still flamed out.

But while it lasted, wow. Alco produced the most expensive cars in America, and some of its strongest performers. And then there was la Bete Noire. Or, as it more or less translates into English, the Black Beast.

For all the effort and cost lavished on bodywork and appointments, Alco clearly thought that anything non-mechanical was a frivolity. So, this 1909 Alco racing car, with one of the most illuminated histories of any survivor of its vintage, is simply the ultimate. It's a factory car that not only won the Vanderbilt Cup twice on Long Island, but also competed in the inaugural Indianapolis 500. According to Indianapolis Motor Speedway historian Donald Davidson, the Alco and the winning Marmon Wasp are the only known surviving cars from the 1911 field. It figures. Alco built its cars like, well, locomotives. Everything about the Black Beast is big and brutal.

Wheelbase: 134 inches. Curb weight: 3,306 pounds dry. Engine: an Alco T-head straight-six displacing 11.16 liters, or 680.6 cubic inches. It's essentially an enlarged version of a production engine, fed through a Newcomb carburetor, fired by dual ignitions and a Bosch magneto. The stock 60hp now stands at 100, a fiery stutter echoing through sawed-off-shotgun exhaust pipes. Driveline: dual chains and a transaxle. Brakes: mechanical inboard expansion on the rear wheels only. Imagine trying to grip that massive wood steering wheel while pounding along the barely graded roads of the Long Island Motor Parkway during the Vanderbilt Cup or slewing across Indy's fresh paving bricks. Before long, your hands would look as if you'd been high-sided off a Harley onto new macadam at 80 MPH without any gloves.

Racers were brutal then, too. One of them, according to the late racing historian Griffith Borgeson, was Alco factory test driver Harry Fortune Grant. Borgeson's tale has Grant convincing the Alco board of directors to build the Black Beast, using a Providence-fabricated Berliet chassis combined with the T-head 580 engine, which squeaked in under the 600-cu.in. limit for the Vanderbilt Cup. The race, founded by heir and sportsman William K. Vanderbilt Jr. (see "Pioneers," page 78), dated to 1904 and ran on portions of the Motor Parkway, the first semi-improved rural roads on Long Island. After a few New England outings and a DNF at Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, Grant and "mechanician" Frank Lee bested the 1909 Vanderbilt field over a 278-mile distance. The following year, they did it again, beating entrants who included Louis Chevrolet and Ray Harroun, who would win the first 500 in 1911. The course turned into a charnel house, however, as runaway cars killed two mechanics and injured 20 spectators, calamities that ended open-road racing on Long Island for good.



The crankcase and oil reservoir rivals a septic tank in size.



If you were a race driver around 1910, this was where you worked. An electric starter was added in Europe to make the Black Beast at least somewhat civilized.

In 1911, Grant--now a prominent star in American road racing by dint of his back-to-back Vanderbilt triumphs--arrived at the Brickyard with the Black Beast. He finished 33rd among 40 starters when a crankshaft bearing cooked at 51 laps. Alco was happy enough at his exploits to present him with the Black Beast, whereupon Grant retired from driving. Only he couldn't stay that way: Grant returned to Indy in 1913 and 1914 (with Isotta-Fraschini and Sunbeam), then showed up for the 1915 Astor Cup at the new Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, board speedway. His Maxwell exploded in flames during a practice run and the beefy Grant was unable to extricate himself from behind the steering wheel. He died after 10 agonizing days, an early casualty of the bloody board era.

The Black Beast passed between a variety of owners through 1968, when historian and collector Joel Finn found it, a rusted wreck, inside an Ohio barn. Finn totally restored the car before selling it to the Harrah collection in 1975. From there, the Alco went to England in 1988, then to France and another restoration, mainly for vintage racing, in 1994. It was in a Brussels showroom when its current owner, Vanderbilt Cup historian Howard Kroplick (www.vanderbiltcupraces.com) of East Hills, New York, tracked it down in 2008.

"Joel had invited me up to his house and told me he owned the Alco Black Beast at one point, but he had lost track of it, as well," Howard told us. "I was looking for a car of that era. I had bid on two other cars from the era and came in second on both of them. Then I found the Black Beast for sale in Brussels at a vintage car dealer called Vanderveken Bruxelles. The negotiations were all done by email. Then I went over to Belgium and saw the car in his showroom. I knew it was coming back with me." Howard never bothered asking if the engine would start, before he shipped the car to New York.

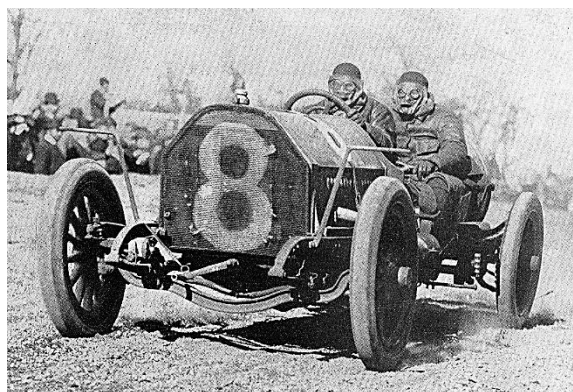
A lot of incorrect European parts were on the car, apparently because the last owner had vintage raced the Black Beast on the Continent. Once Stateside, the Euro pieces were pulled off to restore the Alco's 1909-'11 appearance, other than the modified Bendix brakes and master cylinder. It also retains the six-volt battery and Bosch electric starter, also added in Europe. For reliability's sake, Howard's changes included fitment of a larger-capacity water pump and temperature gauge. The newer-spec tires it had in Europe were removed, replaced by period-correct white rubber tires from Universal. Despite its gigantic torque, the engine is happy with 87-octane unleaded gasoline. The crankcase sump takes nine quarts of straight 40- or 50-weight oil.

Howard has returned the Black Beast to its competition roots after a century. He's been known to happily blast it around the neighborhood, flames belching from the open pipes at maximum decibels, a few times a year, not far from the Motor Parkway. The car has since returned to Indianapolis, too. In 2011, two-time Indy 500 winner and former world champion Emerson Fittipaldi drove it in a parade of former participants before the centennial running of the race. Howard was invited back in 2012, and this time, got to lap the hallowed oval himself.

"It's pretty easy to start. There's an on-off key for the battery, choke it sometimes, switch on the magneto and electric fuel pump and you start it," he said. "I don't know what it idles at, but at 70 MPH, you're only turning about 1,400 RPM. There's four forward gears and reverse, and even at the Speedway, we only got it into third. We had cars going 150 MPH next to us, so I didn't want to try anything new. I thought it could go faster, but it was pretty unsafe; no seat belts, no windshield.

"The car actually gets smoother as you go faster. Trying to steer at 5 MPH is much harder than doing it on the track," he continued. "We'd never had the car up to that speed before, so there was some concern about how things, like the wooden wheels, would hold up. But amazingly, it did extremely well. The first person to congratulate us on the run was Mario Andretti.

"It's extremely noisy, almost like a small plane. Little kids always have their hands over their ears. I did eight laps at the speedway, 20 miles, and it was physically exhausting just from focusing and gripping the steering wheel. I have a great admiration for the people who did this in 1911. They were incredibly brave."





CLASSIC ADS _____ :

FOR SALE & WANTED



FOR SALE

Rare 1935 Buick 8 Series 40, licenced, rust free, and in good original mechanical condition - could do with a fresh coat of paint. Brakes converted to hydraulic and recently totally rebuilt by Wingate in Johannesburg. Uses no oil water on runs. A few spares i.e. starter motor etc included as well as numerous collectable Buick books.

Owned by me for about 20 years but it must go to a new owner as I now have difficulty maintaining it.

It is an excellent wedding and/or promotional car and has/had an income of R80k a year for many years.

R150,000 takes it home.

Contact: Eric Mc Quillian

Email: eric@anatomical.co.za

Cell: 0837000171

Midrand.



FOR SALE

1958 Morris 1000 2 door, colour is dark green with green upholstery with white piping. I could not find any rust.

A clean car worth considering. Painwork just needs a good burnishing compound and polish.

The car has been well looked after . Been stored for the last 8 months

Contact the owner, Greg on 082 820 7490 with an offer around R65,000 and he might accept it.