



The “Spoke ‘n Word”

The newsletter of the Cape Vintage Motorcycle Club June 2026



Affiliated to
South African Veteran &
Vintage Association &
The Vintage Motorcycle
Club Limited (UK)

HAPPY 80TH ANNIVERSARY

2026



CHAIRMAN'S CHIRP



Benita and I have just returned home from a fantastic 2 weeks exploring Namibia with our caravan. Namibia is such an amazing country to explore with such vast open spaces. We went all the way up to Etosha and saw so much but so little of the country – definitely on the agenda to go back!

There has been a lot happening in the background of the DJ, with a new body formed with representatives of all the clubs that have riders participating in the DJ involved. Gavin Youngman is representing the CVMC on this committee, and with his experience, particularly in organising the Fairest Cape Tour for the past number of years, I am confident the DJ is in good hands and will go from strength to strength.

The new DJ committee will be making a concentrated effort to get past riders to enter and participate again, and to get new riders to participate, so those of you with DJ bikes, please consider dusting them off so we can look forward to a large CVMC contingent at the 2027 DJ.

Have fun, be safe and keep warm and dry!!

Cheers

Mark Palmer

EDITOR'S PIECE

It's Sunday morning, cold, windy, and raining as another cold front hits Cape Town. On top of that we have a power outage since 7pm last night due to planned maintenance and upgrades in our area. The power is due to come back on this morning at 10am.

As Mark mentioned, I will be representing CVMC on the recently formed DJ Management Committee. See the announcement in the newsletter. Any past, present, or future DJ riders who have any comments, suggestions, or issues with the DJ, please let me know so that I can pass the information onto the committee.

I repeat - our AGM is coming up in July. Its time to start thinking about how you use your democratic right to elect a committee who you feel will best serve the aims of our club. The Best Restoration Award is also decided and presented at the AGM. Please bring any restored bikes that have been completed recently to the AGM for the members to vote and decide the winner!

AGM documents will be emailed to you in the next few days. Please make every effort to attend.

A number of motorcycle manufacturers are celebrating significant anniversaries this year. Vespa are featured in this months newsletter.

As usual, please don't forget to send any articles, stories, photos, bikes/items for sale, etc for inclusion in next month's Spoke n Word.

Hope you enjoy all the articles this month!

Gavin Youngman

PS – The power came on at 10:04am!

VESPA'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

25,000 Vespas roll through Rome in the biggest ever rally for iconic scooter's 80th birthday

Enthusiasts from 67 countries join historic parade as Rome hosts global celebrations



Rome was buzzing with more than just traffic as around 25,000 Vespas filled the city's historic streets in the largest rally ever organised for the iconic Italian scooter, marking the start of celebrations for Vespa's 80th anniversary.

Riders from 67 countries descended on the Italian capital for VESPA ROMA 2026: 80 Years of an Icon, transforming the city into a moving museum of two-wheeled history. The four-day celebration, which began earlier this week and continues until

tomorrow, has drawn thousands of visitors to the Vespa Village at the Foro Italico.

The highlight of the celebrations came on Friday morning when a spectacular parade wound its way through some of Rome's most famous landmarks. The procession was flagged off by Rome mayor Roberto Gualtieri and led by the presidents of Vespa Clubs representing all 67 participating nations.

Starting from the Terme di Caracalla, the convoy travelled past the Colosseum before making its way through Piazza Venezia, circling the Altare della Patria and continuing along the historic Fori Imperiali. Crowds lined the route, cheering, applauding and capturing the moment as scooters spanning eight decades rolled past.

The parade showcased the complete evolution of the Vespa, with every major model produced since its debut in 1946 making an appearance. Among the biggest attractions were rare examples of the original Vespa 98, the first production model launched in 1946, alongside vintage "low-light" scooters from the 1950s and classic VBB models from the 1960s.

Popular classics including the ET3, GTR, Rally and the enduring Vespa PX also received enthusiastic applause from spectators. Modern favourites such as the Primavera and GTS featured prominently as well, many ridden by enthusiasts who travelled thousands of kilometres across Europe and beyond to take part in the milestone event.

The celebrations extend beyond the parade at the Vespa Village in the Foro Italico, where visitors can explore exhibitions of rare historic scooters from the Piaggio Museum, view the latest Vespa

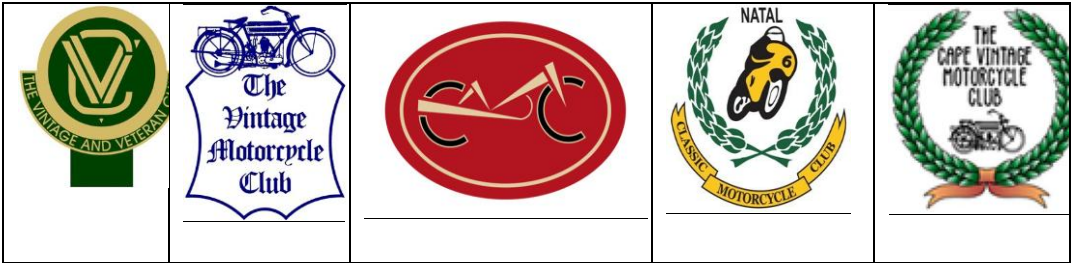
models, shop for exclusive merchandise and enjoy live entertainment from Radio DeeJay.

First introduced in 1946, Vespa has grown from a post-war mobility solution into one of Italy's most recognisable global symbols of style, design and engineering. Eight decades later, the record-breaking gathering in Rome reflects the enduring appeal of the scooter and the passionate international community that continues to keep its legacy alive.



1949 Vespa 125cc

DJ ANNOUNCEMENT



The five Motorcycle Clubs have united to secure the future of South Africa's Iconic DJ Rally.

The Vintage and Veteran Club, the Vintage Motorcycle Club, the Cape Vintage Motorcycle Club, the Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal, and the Classic Motorcycle Club have signed a landmark Constitutional Agreement designed to preserve, protect and promote the legendary DJ Commemorative Rally for future generations.

Founded in 1970 by the Vintage and Veteran Club of Johannesburg, the DJ Rally has become one of South Africa's most respected and enduring motorcycle events, celebrating the heritage of veteran motorcycling while challenging riders and machines in a uniquely historic journey between KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

The newly signed agreement establishes a formal governance framework that safeguards the rally's identity, traditions and core principles, ensuring that the event remains faithful to its original character regardless of changes in leadership, committee structures or participating clubs.

Among the key provisions of the agreement are commitments to:

- Preserve the DJ Rally name and heritage as a permanent fixture in South African motorcycling.
- Maintain eligibility for motorcycles manufactured before 1 January 1937, protecting the unique vintage character of the event.
- Continue the historic route tradition between the Durban/KwaZulu-Natal region and Johannesburg/Gauteng.
- Create a collaborative Management Committee representing all participating clubs to oversee the planning and execution of the annual rally.
- Preserve and protect the rally's trophies, archives, memorabilia and historical records.
- Strengthen the management of digital platforms and communications to promote the event and engage the broader motorcycling community.

The agreement also formally recognises the Vintage and Veteran Club of Johannesburg as the founder, promoter and custodian of the DJ Rally, while ensuring meaningful participation and representation by all partner clubs in the future development of the event.

Representatives of the participating clubs described the agreement as a significant milestone in preserving one of South Africa's most important historic motorcycling traditions.

"The DJ Rally is more than an event; it is a living piece of South African motorcycling history. This agreement ensures that its

spirit, traditions and heritage will continue to inspire riders and enthusiasts for generations to come."

By establishing clear governance structures and a shared commitment to the rally's future, the clubs have created a lasting foundation for the continued success and preservation of the DJ Rally as one of the country's premier heritage motorcycling events.

Enquiries

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COVENTRY EAGLE

Andrew gave us a talk on the Coventry Eagle that he has recently restored at the June Natter. Thanks Andrew!





BREAKFAST AT DIXIES









UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sunday 5th July 2026 – Breakfast Ride venue – Skilpadvlei Restaurant, Polkadraai Rd, Stellenbosch. 9:30am
- Saturday 18th July 2026 – AGM and Monthly Natter Multi-Motor Club, Jan Burger Sports Centre, De Grendal Rd, Parow

Election / re-election of the committee and presentation of the club awards. Vote for the best restoration bike!

- Sunday 2nd August 2026 – Breakfast Ride venue – De Werf Restaurant, Intesection R304 & N7, Philadelphia Rd. 9:30am
- 13th – 15th August 2026 – Motul Classic Magnum Rally, Mpumalanga Lowveld.
- 8th – 10th November 2026 – CVMC 39th Fairest Cape Tour at Goudini Spa, Rawsonville.





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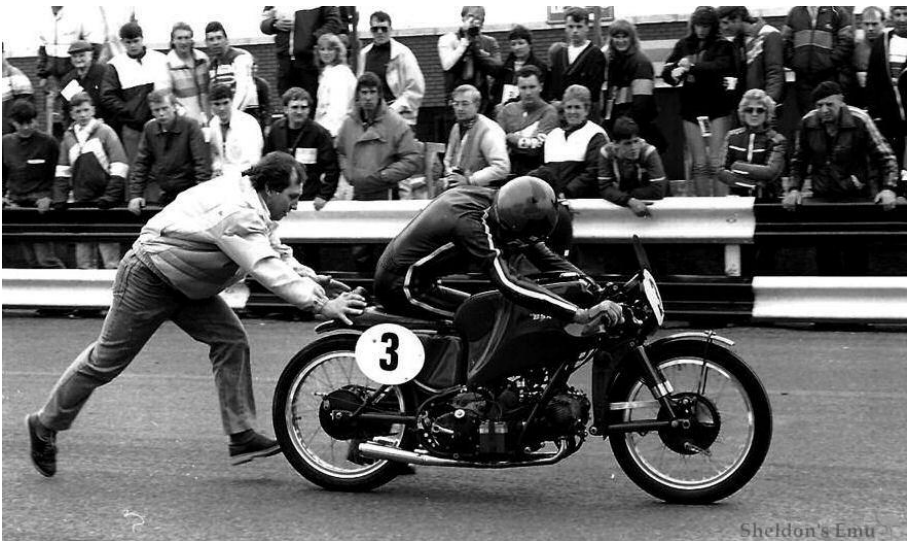
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Rare Racing Motorcycle

1952-54 BSA MC1 250 Prototype

Designed by Bert Hopwood, previously of Norton, the project began in 1950 as a four valve OHC machine destined for the road. Only one prototype was constructed which performed remarkably well, achieving a lap of 167 km/h unfaired on the MIRA banked test track. The machine did not enter production.



Together with Doug Hele the bike was constructed in 1950 with the view to it being the basis of series of road going bikes. The design featured a single cylinder 68x68mm 250cc 4-stroke with four radially placed valves connected by a short chain. A bevel shaft took the drive to the head.

A cantilever rear suspension was used. Three engines and one prototype were built - which lapped the MIRA banked test track at 167kph without streamlining.

The Missed Opportunity

The BSA MC1, an innovative machine for its time, was initially designed in 1950 by Bert Hopwood, who was BSA's chief designer since 1948, with the aim of overcoming the challenge of rivals on the Continent. Hopwood passed the project on to his assistant Doug Hele, the guru engineer on English racing motorcycles, giving him the go-ahead to finalise the design and carry out a development program. In reality, Hele was the true father of the project as he solved the critical lack of cooling and lubrication problems that plagued the engine design.

The horizontal engine, with a very low centre of gravity, was similar to the one that the unbeatable Moto Guzzi 350 had made fashionable, and which Norton would later copy with its "Manx Type F" model. The heart of BSA comprised a 248 cc (70x64) cylinder, air-cooled, with two bevel-driven camshafts actuating the valves in a radially arranged four-valve cylinder head, with two inlet ports and two exhaust.

Not only the engine was remarkable in this machine; the compact chassis, the rear monoshock (more

than 30 years before they became fashionable) and the new design of the steering head, together with its low weight of 112 kg (good for a 250 four-stroke of that time) made it very stable and manageable.

For a 250 in 1952 the bike was fast, capable of achieving 177 km/h without a full fairing.

Aesthetically the BSA MC1 could have been improved if the project had gone ahead. The massive 7 gallon tank was made with the Isle of Man TT in mind, with indentations at the front to allow space for the rider to grip the clip-on handlebars.



Three engines were built and a prototype was first track-tested at 104 mph without a fairing. Reigning 500cc champion Geoff Duke became interested in the project and ran some tests in the winter of 1954,

being very impressed by the MC1. This led to speculation that the BSA was about to enter the international racing arena.

Knowing that the BSA management expected nothing less than total success, Hopwood vetoed a track racing program because he felt the machine had not been sufficiently developed to guarantee victory at the Isle of Man TT and the World Championship. Instead, he saw the MC1 as the basis for developing a new generation of higher displacement sports models from BSA, but sadly, the company management did not share his vision.



1954 BSA MC1

Engine: 248.5cc (70mm x 64.5mm) air-cooled, DOHC horizontal single cylinder with bevel gear shaft timing, four radial valves and external flywheel. Compression ratio: 10.1: 1

Lubrication: dry sump

Carburettors: Amal

Transmission: primary chain, multi-plate dry clutch, four-speed gearbox

Chassis: double cradle tubular frame, BSA manufactured Earles front suspension, monoshock rear suspension

Brakes: drum

Weight (dry): 248 lb (113kg)

Fuel capacity: 7gal (26.5ltr)

Power: 34 HP @ 10,250 rpm (out of the box)

Maximum speed: 110 mph (117 Km / h)

Honda Dax

By Vivian Rocher Snr

I am of those lucky ones that could start work again after having been forced to stay at home due to the Corona pandemic. During lockdown I dug up an old Honda Dax in a hidden corner of my garage and miraculously got it going. I wrote a short story about it in May 2020.

A long time ago, I think the year was 1974, I saw a Fire Stone Tyre ad on a small TV. TV had just been introduced to South Africa and we were all impressed by the magic box. The advert's theme song went something like "them stones, them stones, them Fire stones....." I am sure some will recall the familiar tune. The advert was shot on the corner of Commissioner St and Fox street in old downtown Johannesburg. My father was the bank manager of the Standard Bank branch on that corner for many years. As a young boy, my older brother and I sometimes took the train on Saturdays from Hamburg Station to the Johannesburg station to visit my father at work. This was way before the "bring your child to work day" was a thing.

So if you remember that TV advert you will remember a very sexy girl on a Honda Dax stopping on that very corner next to an 18-wheeler truck. The truck driver was trying to show off and revved the truck hoping to impress the girl. The big roaring sound gave a nearby cab driver a fright and it rolled forward pinching the biker girl's dress

under the cab's front wheel just as the robot was about to change to green. The sexy biker girl took no notice of the truck driver and when the robot turned green, she sped off losing her dress in the process. The nerdy cab driver was left gawking at the biker girl who left the scene in only her skimpy panties and TV cameras zoomed in on the Firestone embossing on the Lorry's tyre. It was beautiful, but the advert had been censored by church groups and was removed from television quicker than a Nando's ad.

She and the Honda made a lasting impression on me. A robot-to-robot dice between a longhaired truck driver and a girl on a small motorcycle wearing only a panty makes for great fantasy.

Fast forward 30 years later and the Honda and I crossed paths again. My two sons and I went crayfishing in Hangklip. The wind blew us to pieces on the water, we had only caught one crayfish, and the morale was low as we drove back home in my green series 3 Landy towing the inflatable boat. Then we saw something that lifted our spirits. A Honda DAX bike chained to a streetlamp pole looking like it needed some tender love and a new owner. The owner had attached a note saying that the bike is for sale for a mere R100. Now this was a time before, Facebook, and smart cell phones so we could not check out anything more about the bike which actually had a Cape Town number plate. I called the owner to conclude the deal. When the owner came to "unleash" the bike he informed me that it was the same bike as the one in the 1974 Fire Stone tyre commercial. Was never registered

since new and the numberplate was false.

My eldest son, Emile, used this Monkey bike (as the owner and we called it - but it was a 70 cc Honda Dax) to deliver Die Burger newspaper in our neighborhood in the mornings before school. This taught him a lot of discipline, technical skills, and “vasbyt”.

Soon afterwards another similar one was acquired, and my youngest son Vivian also got a newspaper delivery job. The two bikes were well known in the hilly suburb and gave excellent service. The boys had some deal with a nearby fuel station where they could empty the fuel in the fuel hoses at the pump without activating the pump. I have it they hardly ever paid for fuel. This went on for many years until they finished school, went off to university, got married and started raising small boys themselves. Being stuck at home during the lockdown I started venturing into the dark corners of my garage.

There I found the two monkey bikes resting in a dark corner underneath some “very important, cannot get rid of it scrap”. Using what I had in my garage I tinkered them back to life.

Emile and Vivian jnr had sort of long forgotten about these nice machines, that earned them lots of pocket money.

Sadly, the seat of the red one was completely consumed by time and mice and rats but I am in the process of restoring it. The engine and rest of bike is running beautiful (even the 6 V hooters are working) and will give pleasure to my grandchildren and hopefully their children in time to come.

The red Monkey bike!



The bike is not being loaded on the trailer to take to trash dump.

This was merely a convenient way to get the piston and barrel in a vertical position. There was no compression but miraculously after removing the spark plug and filling the barrel with clean oil the rings must have soaked loose overnight and compression was back to almost new.





Emile and Vivian jnr on their red and blue Honda Dux bikes with their eldest sons looking on.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do you have something to say? Send me a mail
to info@cvmc.co.za

JOKE OF THE MONTH



"Whenever he sees a beautiful piece of machinery, he gets a little emotional. After he cries, he may want to hug it."

BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to all those who are celebrating their birthdays in July.



BIG ENDS

Chairman	Mark Palmer	083 305 2828
Vice Chairman	Len Harrison	083 317 2585
Treasurer	Gavin Youngman	071 242 5266
SAVVA Delegate	Andrew Miles	083 451 7622
Comm. Member	Vivian Snr Rocher	082 355 0930
Dating Officer	Bruce Kirby	083 700 6806

Club breakfast runs occur every first Sunday of the month, venues to be announced in

“The Spoke ‘n Word” and the WhatsApp Group

Monthly Club “Natter” at 2 pm every 3rd Saturday of the month at the Multi Motor Club, De Grendel Road, Parow.

Please address all correspondence to:

info@cvmc.co.za

www.cvmc.co.za

Bank details:

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Branch: Nedbank, Tyger Valley Branch code: 103-910

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