



The “Spoke ‘n Word”

The newsletter of the Cape Vintage Motorcycle Club SEPTEMBER 2026



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

RIDE * RESTORE * PRESERVE



1968 EGLI VINCENT by GODET

CHAIRMAN'S CHIRP



Once again a reminder that the Fairest Cape Tour is just over 6 weeks away on the 9th and 10th November 2026!! I hope everyone is busy getting their bikes up and running after a long winter and getting ready for two lovely days exploring the beautiful areas we are privileged to call home around the Cape.

The routes are being finalised and final arrangements are being made for a wonderful event!!

Remember as well that the SAVVA National event is made up of the Fairest Cape Tour and the Crankhandle Club's Houw Hoek Rally which is to be held on the 7th November.

The Killarney Motor Show is also around the corner, and it is being held on 1 November at the Killarney Racetrack. We encourage as many club members as possible to display their wonderful machines at the show. Please enter at Killarneymotorshow.co.za. All entrants will have access to the Porsche Club lounge to relax and escape the summer heat, so there is a nice facility available to us.

Looking forward to seeing you at Le Pommier in Stellenbosch this Sunday!

Cheers

Mark Palmer

EDITOR'S PIECE

Another month has flown by! As Mark says – just 6 weeks now to the Fairest Cape Tour. Entries are still open and Eddie is standing by at his PC waiting in anticipation for your entry.

With regards to the DJ Steering Committee where I represent the CVMC – we continue to meet every two weeks. Progress made is substantial with many of the practical arrangements being in place. Obtaining permits remain a difficult hurdle however this is receiving attention. The 2027 DJ will take place on the 12th – 13th March 2027. Happy to see that Vic has repaired his Norton after the last mishap. Not too early to start preparing your bikes!



I received my AJS rim back from Chrome and Nickel (waited 9 weeks) and I have new spokes and nipples. Time to start my first wheel build. Any advice?

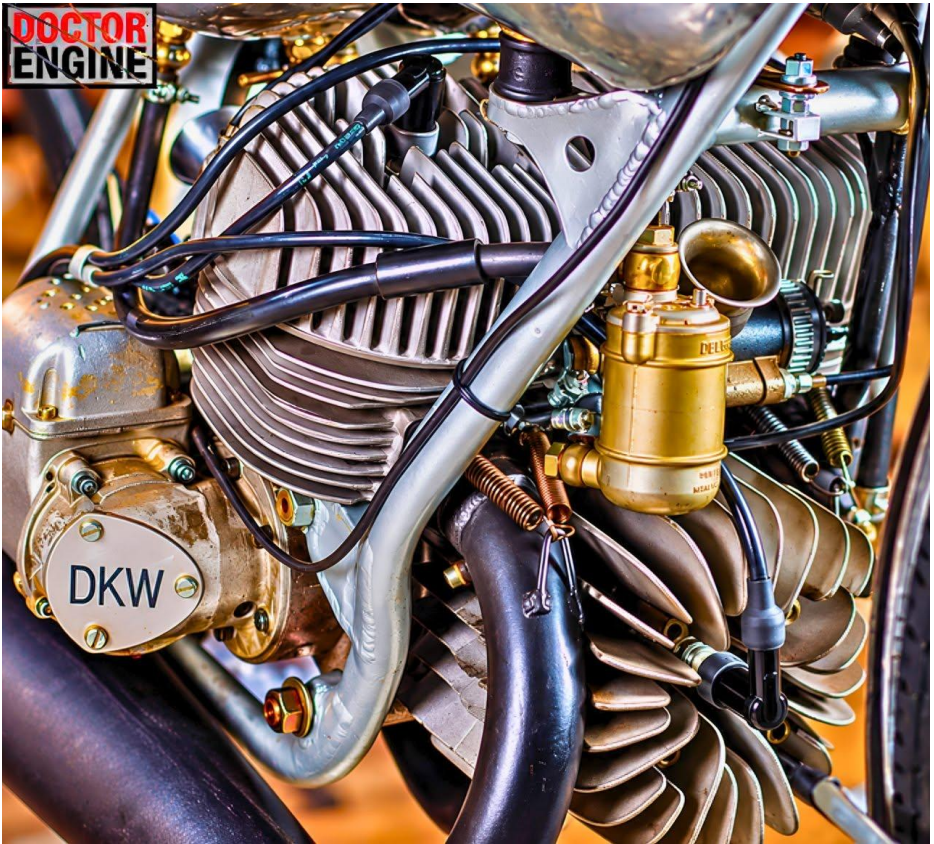
Let me know what you are building in your garage (Allan I know you have been busy – don't keep it a secret).

Don't forget – you are welcome to send me articles for the newsletter!

Hope you enjoy all the articles this month!

Gavin Youngman

DKW RM 350



The DKW RM 350 is one of the most fascinating Grand Prix engines of the 1950s.

Developed by Auto Union and introduced for the 1952 racing season, it uses a 348cc air-cooled three-cylinder two-stroke arranged in an unusual V3 configuration: two cylinders stand upward at a slight angle while the center

cylinder lies almost horizontally. The engine produced around 38 hp at 12,000 rpm in its early form, while later development for 1956 reached roughly 45 hp at 13,000 rpm.

What makes the RM 350 really interesting is its highly unconventional packaging. Each cylinder had its own carburetor, and the engine used piston-controlled intake timing with a carefully developed exhaust system designed to improve gas flow and help return some fresh charge to the cylinder. The original racing gearbox started with four speeds and later became a five-speed unit, while the complete engine was remarkably sophisticated for the period. Its unusual three-cylinder layout also produced an unmistakable high-pitched sound that earned the motorcycle the famous nickname “Singing Saw.”

And that's what makes the 1952–1956 DKW RM 350 so special. DKW's factory racers achieved an immediate breakthrough when Ewald Kluge and Siegfried Wünsche finished first and second at the 1952 Eilenriede race, and Wünsche went on to take the German 350cc championship in 1953. 348cc, three cylinders, two-stroke, air cooling, five speeds, and up to 45 hp at 13,000 rpm—an extraordinary little racing engine from an era when German engineering was pushing two-stroke technology into completely new territory.

Source: Facebook.com – Doctor Engines

SEPTEMBER NATTER

DR Gerhard Schmelzer from Germany gave a very interesting talk on Egli Motorcycles – thanks go to Vivian for organizing the presentation.



For those that missed the natter, check out the pdf and video that Vivian posted on the CVMC open chat WhatsApp group on the 20th September 2026.

I have also included a short summary about Fritz Egli and Egli motorcycles below.



Fritz W. Egli, (born June 30, 1937, in [Zurich](#)) is a Swiss former [motorcycle racer](#). He is known as a [motorcycle frame](#) specialist, and engine tuner.

History



Egli-Honda

Egli founded his motorcycle speed shop in 1965. One of his first vehicles included a [Vincent Black Shadow](#),^[1] with what was to become his signature large diameter central tube which won a 1968 motorcycle hill climb championship. He went on to become famous for his frame designs for the large Japanese motorcycle engines of the 1970s, especially the [Honda CB750 Four](#) and the first big four-stroke motorcycles of [Kawasaki](#). His large diameter tube frame design later incorporated a [honeycomb internal section](#) which was suggested by a visiting Australian in 1979. This suggestion greatly increased the rigidity of the frame. Today, he builds frames for the [Yamaha V-Max](#) and others.^[2]

Egli took the Japanese engines, enhanced them for increased power, then placed them into his own frame designs.^[3] The main backbone pipe of his designs are about 12 cm in diameter and they use straight pipes exclusively, avoiding the "bends and curlicues"^[4] of frames such as the [Norton Featherbed](#). Egli-framed motorcycles have an enthusiastic following which meets annually.^[where?]

Egli influenced other frame builders who went on to build their own 'straight-tube' frames, including the Healey brothers whose [Healey 1000/4](#) motorcycle comprised an uprated [Ariel Square Four](#) engine within an Egli-type frame.

BREAKFAST AT BERTHA'S







THE MERRY WIDOW

By Vivian Rocher

A few years before my official retirement from mining and engineering business I was presented with the opportunity to participate in the opera The merry Widow.

The opera was to be performed in the main theatre of the arts Cape (formally NICO MALAN) for one night only. The opportunity was presented to me with the information that the specific opera was premiered on 30 Dec 1905 in Vienna .

Lorraine and I had just returned from a memorable mid-winter cruise on the River Danae which started in Vienna Just before my birthday which is on 29 December . So, with my name sometimes being pronounced as Vienna and even the sausage version and the date so very close to my birthday day and month I read it as a sign to participate.

The initial brief was they required a very reliable period correct motorcycle to carry the Merry Widow onto stage early in the opera. So, this was my initial involvement. Rent out a motorcycle suitable for the job. A few telephone conversations were held, and I mentioned that in 1905 generally motorcycles did not fall into the category of very reliable and were almost all temperamental British bikes.

A very friendly lady organizing the hiring of the motorcycle then assured me that over decades the lively romantic performance had been adapted to include modern changes and they just wanted a bike that would have lots of chrome, start first time on demand, ride onto stage and disappear again after delivering the merry Widow.

I presented my 70's CB 550 Honda with 4 beautiful shiny chromed exhaust pipes at the audition and they immediately hired it. But with a snag . They would require me to bring the bike to another place the next day so that the stunt man could evaluate it. I was working full time and could not run around Cape Town after a stunt man .I also did not like the idea of a stunt man riding my prize bike in some "Stunt" . So, the deal was almost off until I said Well why could I not ride the bike? Afterall no stunt man has spent the numerous hours fixing every cable , chain, electrical component and what not on this 50 year + old motorcycle and

knows how to ride it???

The friendly lady surprisingly then said Well you have the correct bike and period correct hair color . And then asked” what is your opera background?” This was a somewhat difficult question, and it was not possible to call Lorraine for help.

Some days passed. The Honda and I ended up at a rehearsal where I had to ride with the Merry Widow on the back of the back of the bike



around a parking lot of a school to finally check out the situation. Things progressed and we ended up at a dress rehearsal at Artscape. This was easy and fun . Perfect planning and coordinatization got me and the bike in the lift taking props up to the stage days before the big night for a full rehearsal.

For those who have never been backstage at a performance of this

magnitude I wish you could experience it just once. So, backstage there is in my once only observation only chaos! Electrical cables are dangling all over. Props from former performances knocked over, people running in all directions. Actors changing costumes in seconds leaving the previous set garments just on the floor and much more, I even saw naked people ripping clothes from others and run back on stage whilst still getting dressed. All unnoticed by the audience.

So here was I and the Honda on a narrow ledge awaiting our moment with the merry widow a few steps below awaiting the signal. At the lights were on, and we rehearsed the exact stopping position a few times. The Merry Widow had long legs and easily mounted and dismounted the pillion position with a sweeping motion. I rode off stage with the cast applauding.

All went perfectly well.

Meanwhile back home life was normal. Our daughter Mia was living at home with us and I announced at the dinner table "I will be performing at Arts Cape next Saturday in a Opera." Mia said Dad you perform best in your garage amongst the bikes. rather leave the opera thing for me and Mom. Not realizing I was serious. Lorraine said yes we have tickets for the one night only Merry Widow opera we will leave you a nice dinner before we go. It took a lot of talking and convincing to get Lorraine and Mia to realize this was going to happen. I don't know if they tried to sell their tickets on marketplace or elsewhere, but we were all there on the night. My Honda and I backstage and the two of them in the audience coincidentally close to the emergency exit.

The music was roiling, beautiful girls in equally beautiful costumes were all over the stage and the Honda and I and Hanna (the merry widow) were awaiting the correct music note and signal where we would out of sight mount the bike, ride like hell onto the center of the stage and stop at once. The signal came and I hit the start button with my right thumb, Hanna had already jumped on and was tightly holding on to me.

Was this the worst moment of my life ???? _____ no! the Honda immediately started, I engaged 1st gear, and we almost flew onto the center of the stage stopping exactly at the masking tape line.

The audience applauded loudly and enjoyed this moment almost more than me, But now was time for me to leave as Hanna waved me goodbye to explore other options at this grandiose Parisian house and party. Still in gear I let the clutch out to go down the ramp as rehearsed.

But not rehearsed, a very bright spotlight suddenly filled the stage blinding me totally. This was obviously focused on Hanna, but I was in the way . So completely blinded I rode down the 300mm wide ramp and got entangled in coils of lighting ,sound and other IT cabling. These were never there during dress rehearsal. I fell over to the left and luckily did not cause a blackout in the house. The Honda started to leak fuel, and I tried to get the attention or help from the row of sound engineers and others who were just staring into computer screens. Eventually I could kick enough cable under the motorbike to park it an angle where no more fuel was leaking.

Part of my remuneration was that I had a ticket to after my very short role on stage I could join the audience and watch the rest of the show. From the back I could see Mia and Lorraine enjoying the Music and beautiful costumes to the very end. Unaware of my entanglement. Getting the Honda out of the entanglement and downstairs after the props elevator operator left early is a story for another day. It was a wonderful unforgettable night at the opera!



MAICO

Maicowerk A.G., known by its trading name **Maico** (pronounced [*ˈmaɪko*]) is the name of a family company in the **Swabian** town of **Pfäffingen** near **Tübingen**. Founded in 1926 by Ulrich Maisch as Maisch & Co, the company originally manufactured 98 and 123 cc Ilo **two-stroke** engines. After **World War II**, they began producing their own **unit construction** two-stroke engines, selling complete motorcycles. Maico made a brief foray into the automobile business with their own line of **microcars** in the late 1950s. Maico have also made **go kart** engines.^[1]

The road motorcycles were named after winds... "Blizzard", "Typhoon" etc., but the company was better known for its purpose-built **motocross** and **enduro** machines, and for its '**Maicoletta**' motor scooters, all of which sold in higher numbers than the road motorcycles.



Maico racing motorcycles



1974 Maico 400 GP

Maico motocross (MC) and enduro (GS) racing models proved very successful in both European and American competition throughout the 1970s. While lacking the financial capital and big money race-team backing like that of the Japanese factories of [Honda](#), [Yamaha](#), [Suzuki](#), and [Kawasaki](#), Maico riders such as [Adolf Weil](#), [Åke Jonsson](#) and [Willy Bauer](#) proved to be serious challenges to the Japanese factories and produced numerous top-three finishes in the [Motocross World Championships](#). The firm also experienced some success in [Grand Prix road racing](#) competitions with rider [Börje Jansson](#) winning three 125cc Grand Prix races between [1972](#) and [1973](#).^[2]

American publication *Motocross Action* called the 1981 Maico Mega 2 - 490cc the greatest open-class motocross bike of all time.



1979 Maico 250 Magnum

One of the largest contributions to the world of motocross

suspension technology came in the 1974 season when the Wheelsmith Motorcycles team in the US and the Gunther Schier teams in Europe forward-mounted the rear shocks on the Maico [factory-backed](#) motorcycles, immediately increasing the travel and ability to best the competition. This initiated a frantic effort on the part of factory teams and privateers alike; chopping up their frames in a desperate attempt to remain competitive.

Maicowerk AG filed for bankruptcy in 1983, but continued to produce small numbers of motocross and enduro models (re-badged as M-Stars in the United States due to legal issues) through 1986. Subsequent manufacturers have purchased the brand name and applied it to their own limited production motorcycles. Modern open-class dirt-bikes are still being produced under the Maico brandname.^[3] The [ATK Intimidator dirt-bike](#) (reportedly the most powerful production two-stroke motorcycle available aside from Maico's own motorcycles) features a Maico motor.^[4]

After the company went out of business in 1986, it was sold to Lorenz Merkle who manufactured the bikes under the Maico name until the mid-1990s. The plastics for Maico went from Red to Blue during this time but this was not Merkle's doing. In 1986, when Maico sent the new bikes to the UK, Bill Brown the distributor was impressed with the bikes but disappointed that they looked the same as the previous year. So he ordered them naked and bought blue plastics for them.



1956 Maico 250cc

Several changes to the motorcycles occurred during these years. In 1992-93, the 500 became a true 500 cc instead of a 490 when the location of the connecting rod was moved on the crank to increase the stroke and raise the ccs. The other change was a new shifting cam mechanism.

In the mid-1990s, Merkle went to sell the company, as he was not able to maintain it based on the rate of income. Several companies were looking to purchase the brand including one from Indonesia, as well as Ronnie Smith of U.S. Maico in America. Eventually, one attempt to buy the company turned out to be a scam. Eventually, it went to Dutch company Rodem. Rodem was producing Maicos from 1995 through 1997 when it went bankrupt and its largest shareholder, Brouwer, took control.

No Maicos were released for the first time in 1998. The famous two-stroke tuner and sidecar engine builder Hermann Walgenbach completely retuned the Maico and in 1999 there was a new bike released that also now included a hydraulic clutch. Brouwer decided to stop selling Maicos and Koestler in Germany picked up production and still produces Maicos to this day. In 2003, he was sponsoring a supermoto team and they needed more power so he had the Maico 620 and Maico 685 built.^[6]

Maico to this day retains a strong cult following. Many riders restore vintage Maicos for display or to take back to the track.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Sunday 4th October 2026 – Breakfast ride venue Le Pommier in Stellenbosch - 9:30am**

Please let us know if you will be attending by responding to the WhatsApp message poll

- **Saturday 17th October 2026 – Monthly Natter Multi-Motor Club, Jan Burger Sports Centre, De Grendal Rd, Parow.**

Tyre talk by Vivian and Mick talks about metal casting.

- **1st November 2026 – Killarney Motor Show – display your bike! NO BREAKFAST RIDE!**

REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR DISPLAY BIKE on the website – killarneymotorshow.co.za

You will receive a confirmation email after registering which will allow entry into the show.

Bikes to be parked by 8:30am and remain on display until 16:00.

- **7th – 8th November 2026 – CHC Houw Hoek rally**
- **8th – 10th November 2026 – CVMC 39th Fairest Cape Tour at Goudini Spa, Rawsonville.**
- **SAVVA National – enter both the Houw Hoek and Fairest Cape Tour – scores from both events count. SAVVA trophies awarded!**
- **Sunday 6th December 2026 – Breakfast ride venue Kelvin Grove – 9:30am**
- **Saturday 19th December 2026 – Chairman's Braai at Multi Motor Club**

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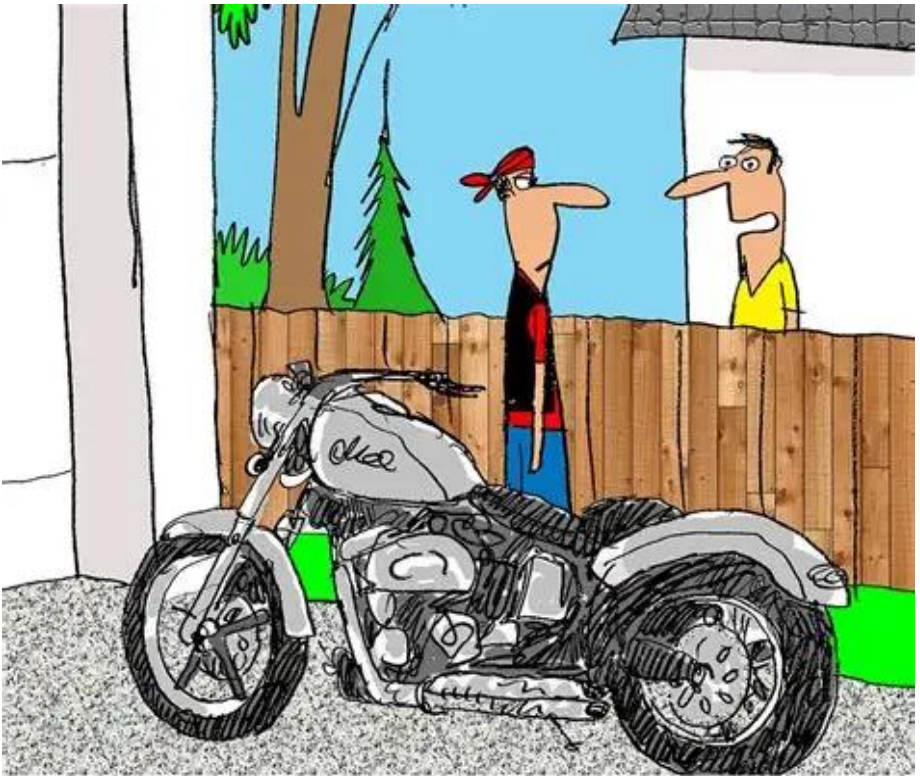
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do you have something to say? Selling a bike or parts? Looking for parts or technical information? Send me a mail to info@cvmc.co.za



- [Valyland Centre, Recreation Road, Fish Hoek, Fish Hoek](#)
- [0217825315](#)
- fishhoek1@retail.spar.co.za
- Mon-Fri: 07h30 - 19h00
- Saturday: 07h30 - 19h00
- Sunday: 08h00 - 19h00
- Public Holidays: 08h00 - 19h00

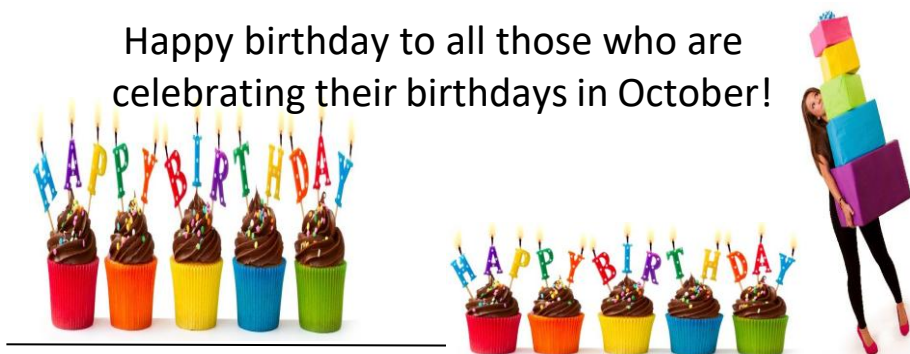
LAST LAUGH



"I'm taking a motorcycle mechanic class. Since I have the nicer bike, I was hoping to practice on yours."

BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to all those who are celebrating their birthdays in October!



BIG ENDS

Chairman	Mark Palmer	083 305 2828
Vice Chairman	Gavin Youngman	071 242 5266
Treasurer	Gavin Allison	082 335 4005
SAVVA Delegate	Andrew Miles	083 451 7622
Secretary	Len Harrison	083 317 2585
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

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