National Jamboree Gariep Dam August 9th, 2018

When I think back on the Gariep trip, one thought comes to mind immediately, how incredibly cold it was on this adventure. As it happens, South Africa was experiencing a cold snap at that time, and the Northern Cape was hit very badly. Nevertheless, Johann, Thys and Malcolm left Stellenbosch very early on the Thursday, traveling in two Sunbeams as their wives had pulled out for various reasons, and as a result, Johann and Malcolm had decided to ride together in Malcolm's Alpine.

Thys came in his ex Roger Wood racing Tiger and I met them at Worcester, also traveling alone as Lesley was literally knocked over with a very bad case of flu, that seemed to be prevalent in Pringle Bay, traveling in Lesley's Series V Alpine.

We set off in convoy and I fail to understand how, in spite of me blocking every hole I could find in the Alpine, a bitterly cold wind still rushed in, virtually freezing my legs making me wished that I had come with my Tiger so the big V8 could warm the cabin. At Beaufort West, we met up with Hugo and Ria van Dyk who had left Riversdal that morning, Hugo traveling in his newly restored Rapier III that looked like a sparkling new car.

By the afternoon we had reached Travalia, a guest house near Three Sisters and checked in and after going into the well stocked Farm Stall to buy meat and beer etc, we bravely set about preparing for our "Braai



Buying our groceries at the very well stocked farm stall

As it turned out, we had forgotten our 2014 experience that there was no need to do much preparing as Travalia offers to build the fire and provide all the necessary cutlery for a "Braai". A very nice touch in my opinion.

So with drinks in hand, we warmed ourselves up in the winter sun waiting to "Braai"



Warmimg up in the afternoon sun



Busy Braaing

After the “Braai”, after much talking, laughter and Brandy, we eventually settled down to sleep. Travalia is a great stopover, as it is reasonably priced, and has comfortable rooms with air con that proved to be a life saver, as the night temperature dropped to - 4 deg C

The next morning started with a hearty breakfast at the farm stall, and we set off again and travelled well until reaching the dam at about 14:00 and checked in.

The chalets had been upgraded since our last visit and were in fine new condition.



Breakfast at the Farm Stall



We checked into our favourite spot, a cluster of chalets with a lovely view of the lake and a couple of braai structures on a lovely law

Towards the evening the Gauteng group joined us and we had a “Braai” with most people staying in the chalet while Johann braved the cold to cook the mea It was great fun to meet the members of the other club and share stories about cars etc. For me, listening to Richard Preston-Beale with his stentorian voice was quite amazing

The next day turned out to be sunny and much warmer and the morning was spent with the car displays and judging with very much the same format as in 2014. The Cape members made a clean sweep of the prizes, a gesture made by John Allison for the effort the Cape members had made for supporting the event.

During the morning, John Allison told us of someone he had met at the shop that morning, a Gerrit Jacobs, who had apparently been a member of the first Sunbeam Club and suggested we pay him a visit in Trompsburg, as according to him, it was a short 50 Km trip Northbound on the N1

Well, the 50 Km turned out to be 89 Km but eventually we reached his house.
It is very sad to see how derelict and deserted many of our very pretty “Platteland” towns have become since we became “Free”, and Trompsburg is no exception.



Driving in convoy to Trompsburg



A typical site in Trompsburh

However, Gerrit seemed to be quite happy living there and we entered his massive, very old house, so typical of the houses of the early 1900’s. Huge rooms, high ceilings and, to my mind, it looked like it had at least at 6 bedrooms and multiple sitting rooms



Gerrit’s massive house

He then showed us some cars he owned and was busy working on that seemed to me to be too far gone to economically restore. I was impressed to see a 1950's Vauxhall Wyvern that I had not seen since the early 1960's and Gerrit seems to think it is restorable







After the car visits, Gerrit's wife treated us to coffee in tin cups as well as some biscuits, quite an achievement to serve coffee to more than 17 people While talking about the early Sunbeam club days, he showed us some old Sunbeam Newsletters of the early 1980's. In one of them, I saw a picture of Shirley Furlong with the original Emma, her Series II Rapier, in an article probably written by Peter, about the misgivings of his wife titled *"Who Else Has A wife Like Mine ?".*



Shirley furlong with Emma

Sadly, a year or so ago, we were informed that Gerrit had passed awaty

After departing his house, we settled down to attend the Gala Dinner that evening and said our farewells as most of us planned to leave early the next morning.

So that was the end of the Gariep Dam event, but as usual for the Cape members, the journey is part if the event and we drove in convoy to reach *Klaarstroom* by early afternoon and checked in at the guest house.

Now for those who don't know, Klaarstroom is a very small village situated between Beaufort West and Oudshoorn and is the location where the Afrikaans comedy film *"Faan Se Trein"* was made, and in fact, we stayed in the very same house that played a pivotal role in the film



Sunbeams at Klaarstroom

The evening we were treated to a great “Boerekos” meal and to the delight of Johann and myself, both being avid cat lovers, we were visited by a presumptuous, beautiful black and white cat that obviously had decided it was to have a seat at the supper







So, after after an equally nice breakfast the next morning, we set off again, saying goodbye to Hugo and Ria just after Ladysmith and myself at Barrydale, the journey and the event then ended.

A Great Week-end adventure and enjoyed by all who attended.