

Rare makes and Model Ts star on this year's Kalk Bay Run

Words: Graeme Hurst
Photography: Viv James and Pete Rogers



A Nordenfelt, an EMF and a Maxwell. Oh, and a BAT. Err, a what exactly? If, like me, you think you've heard of most makes in our motoring past then the entry list to this year's Kalk Bay Run was a humbling education about some of the more illustrious and unusual names that help shape the early days of our two- and- four-wheeled hobby.



Johann Rust and Harvey Metcalf in the 1901 Benz Ideal



John Brewster and Bruce Stewart in the Club's 1902 Wolseley



Ali van Jaarsveld and Peter Truter in the 1907 Ford Model S



Gerhard Breytenbach in his 1910 Model T

The club's annual veteran run took place on the first Sunday in February and was a resounding success with a 25-strong entry list that saw 19 cars and two bikes making it to the finish. That's not a bad result considering that entry is strictly pre-1919, something that's not negotiable (as anyone who's had the temerity to question organisers Harvey Metcalf and Hilton Franz about the rule knows!) In fairness, their strict approach has seen the annual fixture become recognised across the country for its determination to mark an important era in a 'purist' fashion and has helped pull in participants far and wide over its 14-year history.

If you're not familiar with it, the event celebrates the inaugural run of the Automobile Club of South Africa from Greenmarket Square to Kalk Bay all the way back in 1901. For practical reasons the retrospective run finishes in Simon's Town after a 56km route via Red Hill and Smitswinkel Bay although a few of the oldest cars, such as the 1901 Benz Ideal, understandably take a more direct 25km route along the south peninsula's main road. Both entry groups stop at Kalk Bay for a breather and for a chance for the

public to get up close to motoring's 'brass era'.

Of course, there was plenty of that on show, starting with Kalk Bay Run newbie, Ryan Walker's 1912 Rover Colonial. It's well-known in the club and has taken part many a time but not at the hands of Ryan, its recent new-owner, or I should say 'custodian' as these cars are a bit like Philippe Patek watches! Actually, that's maybe an apt moniker, given that Ryan's Colonial (a name today's woke culture hasn't thankfully protested about) is the last remaining example in the world.

Also boasting 'last remainder' status was Nick Middelman's spectacular 1907 Nordenfelt, a name that in retrospect became more associated with military

hardware and the development of the submarine and torpedo. That might explain why the Nordenfelt packs a 5.8-litre Bariquand et Marre engine under the hood (massive in veteran terms).

It took part with Dad Rob's 1912 EMF 30, which goes right back to the club's early years, having been in the care of founder Angus Kinnes. EMF (or E-M-F to be precise) was an American car maker that took its name from the initials of the company's three founders and sadly ceased to exist after the year the Middelman's car was built.

And adding to the rarity stakes being the fourth oldest of the model was John Ryall's 2.4-litre 1911 Sunbeam. Complete with a serpent-shaped air horn, it spent most

of its life in Australia and is entirely original, having never been restored. That's not the case with Mike Watson's magnificent 1915 Rolls-Royce which took part. Another Kalk Bay regular, it's been in Mike's garage for 25 years having been the recipient of a new body (to Mike's design) over that time - one of five the Rolls has enjoyed during its colourful 109-year life: "It was originally commandeered by the Royal Navy in WW1 before finding its way to Mombasa where it was accidentally dropped into the harbour while being unloaded. Its then owner re-bodied it for the third time," explained Mike.

Other noteworthy entrants included event regular Ali van Jaarsveld in her 1907 Ford Model S



Ryan Walker's 1912 Rover Colonial and John Ryall's 1911 Sunbeam 12-16



Mark Shaw on his 1914 New Hudson Motorcycle



Nick Middelman's 1907 Nordenfelt 30-35 at the start



Dave Alexander and Di Dugmore in their 1913 Singer



Ockert van den Berg's 1915 Model T Ford Bakkie

- the only one in the country - and club stalwarts Dave Alexander and Di Dugmore in their pretty 1913 Singer, with the pair completing their second successful run following substantial repairs to the Singer's rather fragile transverse gearbox.

Also enjoying a trouble-free drive were Colin and Megan Greyvensteyn in their 1917 Dodge Brothers Tourer. Less fortunate, however, was Leonard Schneider, whose 1913 Hupmobile Roadster refused to play ball the morning of the event, and Hilton Franz who had to retire his 1912 Maxwell before it got to Kalk Bay with what was initially thought to be fuelling issue although subsequent attempts to get it running have cast doubt on the car's magneto.

Also succumbing to mechanical gremlins was Brian Wallace's 1914 Douglas motorcycle. Thankfully the run's two other two-wheeled participants, Adrian Denness' 1912 BAT and Mark Shaw's 1914 New Hudson made it to the finish at Jubilee Square.

But it was the iconic Ford Model Ts that arguably stole the show, with many coming from upcountry to kick off a week of touring as they made their way to the George Old Car Show the weekend after as part of the Vettoer.

The group had the chance to get 'up to speed' (excuse the irony in the pun) on the Kalk Bay Run at the pre-event braai held the night before at the clubhouse, during which a series of films of previous runs was screened in place of the usual

history talk by Derek Stuart-Findlay.

The screen time clearly provided some inspiration as in a demonstration of just how capable these famous Henry Ford icons are - the visiting T owners and Ali van Jaarsveld opted to organise a photo stop at the top of the Chapman's Peak Drive following the event's lunch and final stop!

Standouts on the Model T front included Riaan van Niekerk's 1915 'Depot Hack' which was built up from a chassis in 2007 for the Model T's centenary run, with the previous owner swapping a Vaaljapie tractor for the oak body made by a furniture maker. Riaan and his 80-year-old father drove the car from George for the run, no mean feat on seats that rival a church pew for comfort!

Also getting attention was

Gerhard Breytenbach's red 1910 Model T one of two the life-long T fan owns up in Polokwane. Like so many veteran cars, his red T has enjoyed a lot of use and alterations to keep it rolling during its 100+ years, which made determining its exact year a challenge. "The body is from 1909 and the engine is 1910 with a lot of other parts from 1911 so we decided it's a 1910 model." It was originally supplied in Canada in the left-hand-drive configuration - but is now used for tours such as this. "I have another black one which I've had for ten years and which I drive to work and to the gym," explains Gerhard who is clearly a T die-hard. "I fell in love with Model Ts when I was five years old and hope to drive mine until the day I die." ➔PTO



The Middelmann family's 1912 EMF and 1907 Nordenfelt at the Kalk Bay stop



Philip Kuschke's 1915 Model T Ford Runabout and Ali van Jaarsveld's 1907 Ford Model S



Stop at Kalk Bay



Eric Edwards' Canadian 1911 Ford Model T leads the line up at the finish



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