



Greetings Easterns family

November 2021

All I can say is Wow, wow, wow!! Congratulations CCSA Easterns region on your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. What a milestone achievement and celebrated in style.

To Dave Warren and his team of extremely talented marshals, Well done!! Although the planning took 20 months the result was spectacular.

David Warren offered to plan and host the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of our region over 20 months ago, but due to the advent of Covid-19 the actual party date was moved a number of times and sometimes we despaired of it ever happening. Lockdowns, Covid-19 regulations fluctuating like the weather and the uncertainty of how many people could be accommodated, were all stumbling blocks along the way. Dave (or we should actually say Lydia, his wife) was beginning to think that the celebration would never happen.

The celebration was supposed to happen on the same weekend as our AGM, but in hindsight, I for one am pleased that the celebration had its own weekend. The effort the marshalling team put in to making the weekend and party special definitely needed the spotlight.

There are so many people to thank for all their hard work and dedication that I'm afraid if I mention names, I will miss someone out and that would not be fair.

Long before the event took place Dave organised his marshalling team. In typical Dave fashion he walked past myself and Leverne and said "you're marshals." As we were at the Chief Marshals rally at the time and members of the committee, we said yes, we are. Not realising that we had just agreed to be marshals for the birthday bash. Dave, you need to understand communicates in his own form of verbal shorthand. I think even his wife Lydia doesn't always understand what he is on about. Anyway, strange invitation/request notwithstanding we became two of his marshals for the weekend.

On Friday morning Lydia and some of the ladies who were already at the rally went up to the hall to start with the placement of the tables and set up some of the decorations. The final

touches would be finished on Saturday morning. Flowers were arranged and placed strategically. Balloons would be collected on Saturday morning. I sometimes think that people in our region have caravans with elastic sides. It is amazing what comes out of a caravan when you have a function of this magnitude happening.

Leverne was asked to host the registration/cocktail party on the Friday night and as such had to decide what was to happen and who was going to help her. Irene, Jill and myself manned the registration and raffle sales table. Shirley, committee member on duty, gave out the calendars, Deon sold smous and Leone and a whole bunch of people set out the platters of delicious snacks that Leone and the ladies had put together on Friday afternoon. Leone's snacks are the best and a lot of love and effort goes into making them. Leverne and Graeme manned the drinks table (beer and R&R's were provided). As the members came down to the lapa to register they were guided in and the festivities began. We even had a touch of entertainment in the form of our resident 'pole dancer' Connie giving an impromptu show. Always good for a laugh.

After the R&R's were finished, people went back to their caravans to chat around the fires until the late-night hours. Sharon definitely had FOMO, as they had to attend a family wedding on Saturday and would have to miss our party. It's such a pity as Sharon is a party animal and if anyone can get the party started it is Sharon. Oh well, as they say in the classics "&\*%\$ happens."

Saturday morning, we were all up bright and breezy ready to put the finishing touches to the hall and fetch and carry anything that was needed. When we were finished the hall was transformed and looked spectacular. As they say many hands make light work and lots of people (ladies and gents) chipped in and did their part to help with the organising.

Our little girls, ranging from 9 to 15, went to practice their dance moves for the show. Dave had requested that the girls do a dance number as a bit of entertainment. They practiced most of the morning, and you could see the excitement and nervousness building in each one of the dancers.

Eventually it was time to get dressed and all dolled up. There was a bit of a panic earlier as the electricity went off in the morning. Rumours were, it was cable theft. Lack of electricity meant no power to heat the water in our geysers (cold shower), but worse than that no power to operate the pumps to pump the water into the geysers (no shower at all). Luckily the power came back on in time and we could all shower and dry our hair and tivate in peace.

Oh Wow!! (My favourite word at the moment, have you noticed?) The ladies and gents of Easterns really do clean up well. It looked like we were all going to a wedding. All of us that is except for the chief marshal who didn't get his own memo and turned up in Chino's and a golf shirt. Everyone was just in the hall and seated when the heavens opened. That was such good timing. A few of the guys ran back to the caravans to check that vents were closed and awnings strapped down, luckily because some would have gone back to a soggy caravan.

With the speeches begun and the starter course served the party was officially underway. Harry Bolton, CCSA Vice-President read out a letter from Russel Gibbens, CCSA President, congratulating Easterns region on the milestone of our 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. Russel gave us an insight to a bit of the CCSA history which he gleaned from a book that contained letters written by the late Eric Hoffman from March 1957 to August 1960. The 'club' was started as the Rand Caravan Club on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1947 with Mr AW May as chairman and treasurer and Mrs TB Lloyd as the secretary. The first General Meeting was held in the Victoria Hotel in Johannesburg and was attended by 17 members. Here Eric Hoffman was elected Chairman. He was chairman for 14 years. At a Special General Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1947 the Club's name was changed to "The Caravan Club of Southern Africa." Eric Hoffman was our first President of the newly named Club.

In January 1960 the clubs' newsletter listed Dan & Val Lehmann from Knights as newly approved members. Dan served on the Central Council of the club and eventually became the Chairman of the Council. He was then elected Chairman of Eastern Transvaal Region which eventually was renamed Easterns Region. Val, his wife, served as Regional Secretary for many years. Dan served as Regional Chairman for 40 years.

Thank you for the well wishes Russel, we missed you at the party but understand your need to be close to home awaiting the birth of your 7<sup>th</sup> grandchild.

After that little bit of a history lesson (I'm sure you are a lot more enlightened now) we started the party. The band – 60 shades of Grey – were great. They played music that we could sing-a-long to as well as have a good bop and wiggle to on the dance floor. Some of our members can really dance, others of us just shuffle along. But no matter what your level of accomplishment on the dance floor is you were not allowed to sit still for long before someone was encouraging you to take up space on the dance floor.

Talk about taking up space on the dance floor it was time for the mini show that our girls put on for us. They were all so cute in their crop tops and denim shorts and mismatched gloves. They only did one dance number but they rocked it. Well-done girls.

After dinner was served a special memento was unveiled and handed over to Heinz Gezorke. He had been nagging Shirley to bring his badges to the rallies for Phil Ryan to make a box frame for them. Shirley the good wife that she is kept on forgetting them (on purpose of course). Phil had already approached Shirley and told her that he wanted to frame a blazer with all Heinz's badges on for him. This was the presentation that happened to commemorate the time that Heinz had invested in Easterns in his 10-year tenure as Chairman of our region. The awards that he has been given over his time on committee are as follows:

Awarded by Head Office – Eric Hoffman Award for 10 years on committee 1994 - 2004 and also for 20 years on committee 2008 – 2018; Jhb & District Award for 12 years membership + 100 rallies 2001; Dan Lehmann Award 25 years membership 2014; Honorary Life Membership 2016.

Awarded by Easterns – Fines trophy for best fines 2007; Jean Wellman cup for Runner up Rally of the Year 2009; Bill & Anne Miller Cup for being the naughtiest person in the region 2018;

Honorary Regional Membership for serving a minimum of 4 years on Easterns committee 1998.

Heinz was Chief Marshal for Rally South Africa 2012. He served on Easterns committee from 1994 – 2021. He held the position of Chairman from 2010 – 2020. Other positions he has worked in are Vice Chairman, Rally Convenor, Smous, Scribe, Imali & Fines, Raiders.

He has also worked on Provincial Council as Area B Councillor 2017 and on National Council as National councillor for Area B & Natal regions 2017.

All in all, a very dedicated member of our region and CCSA as a whole. Heinz, we salute you and are proud to be associated with you and Shirley.

We were blessed to have special guests attend the rally with us for the weekend, Anton Pretorius and his lovely wife Riana were treated as family. After all that's what Easterns is all about – one big happy family.

A letter from past members 'Bunny and Bunny se vrou' also known as Theunis and Tanja Nel was read out to the members. They congratulated us on reaching such a prestigious milestone – one which other regions aspire to reaching. They were sad that they couldn't join us at the rally.

After the presentation Leverne and Lydia cut the birthday cake. This was served as dessert and boy was it absolutely divine.

Then the dancing started in earnest. We partied until the band had to unfortunately call it a day. What an amazing jol. We danced until our feet hurt and we ate and drank until we felt that we were going to pop!

Lydia, I hope you are already planning the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday bash. That was awesome!!!

Well-done to everybody involved and congratulations Easterns on your amazing milestone. I am so glad we transferred into your region. May we all go from strength to strength. With the strong leadership and the loyalty of our members Easterns will be around for many more celebration milestones.

Bev Reynolds (Scribe)

P.S. We received a letter from Heinz :

To Graeme, committee and regional members, for all the accolades, good wishes and well wishes I received, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Please remember, this would not have been possible without firstly Shirley's support and secondly the support I got from all the committee members who believed in me and then the overwhelming support from regional members – who I can truly call friends and family.

Again, thank you and I will never forget this as it did bring a tear to my eyes. Heinz.

Also, a letter of thanks from Anton Pretorius:

Dear Easterns members

Thank you for the invite to your regions 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was such an honour for myself and Riana to be part of the celebration.

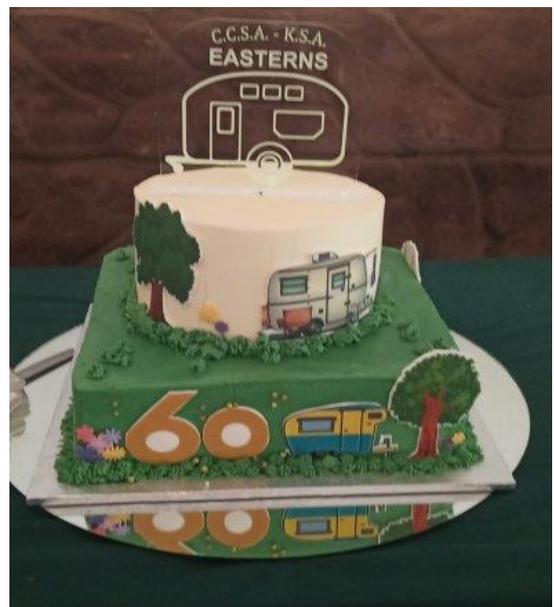
The hospitality of Easterns was in one word just WOW. We felt welcome from the beginning and Saturday nights arrangements was outstanding.

Easterns history and all the achievements and milestones reached is something to be proud of.

Well done and keep your region strong. Regards

Anton Pretorius

Provincial Councillor Area A



## **History of Easterns** (as per Heinz Gezorke)

Easterns Transvaal region, later to be known as Easterns region, was formed in August 1961.

The first Chairman was not Dan Lehmann, as all of our older members think. Unfortunately I do not know the name of the person involved and I do not think we will ever know as all this information was lost when Dan Lehmann passed away in 2014.

Dan took over as Chairman of the region about six months after the first AGM was held and held that position for forty years, after which he stood down but stayed on as Treasurer of the region.

Sid Wallach then took over from him and held the position for six years. When he stood down, Gordon Jay took over as Chairman. He held this position for three years. I then took over the position of Chairman and held it for ten years until I stood down in 2020. Graeme Johnston then took over and is the incumbent chairman.

Our region grew to become the biggest region within the realm of the CCSA, but as with everything else, we steadily lost members over the years.

We always talk about SAWA, basically the Afrikaans caravanning club. An interesting snippet is that SAWA was formed in Dan Lehmann's lounge and he became an Honorary member of SAWA until he died.

Our regional secretaries are of a similar nature. Val Lehmann, Dan's wife, held the position of secretary for +- 25 years after taking over from Purdy.

Jenny Cox was then made Honorary secretary to help Val, she later took over the secretarial position and Val was appointed as the official treasurer. Jenny held this position until Shirley took over in 1998 until present.

Shirley is the only secretary to have served under all five chairmen of the region.

Over the years, our members have held, and some still do, various positions in the CCSA:

- Dan Lehmann was the National Chairman of the club;
- John Thompson was the President of the club;
- Harry Bolton is the present Vice President of the club;
- Myself and Sid Wallach were Provincial Councillors of Area B;
- Frik Geyser is the present Provincial Councillor for Area B;
- I was on National Council for a brief time, being responsible for Area B as well Natal regions;
- Shirley Gezorke was the Area B secretary and is presently the Northern Regions Provincial secretary since 2009;
- Peter Thompson was the Provincial Treasurer, with this position now being held by Deon van Staden.

Harry Bolton, our present Vice President, has been on CCSA committees for +- 44 years holding various positions. He is standing down next year and I think that he richly deserves his rest after all his contributions and hard work for the club. Enjoy Harry!

We have had many husband/wife combinations on the Easterns committee at various stages. I have also seen many Vice Chairmen and committee members over the years, as well as many members, come and go.

I do not think that I have seen this region as happy and full of camaraderie as at present – it shows you that size does not matter. It also shows you what one or two bad apples can do to a region.

I can carry on talking, but we can do that at a rally over the fire while we enjoy a beer or port together.

**Heinz Gezorke**

