



Vancouver Island Section

January, 2013

In This Issue:

Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!1

Membership Has Its Rewards2

Stargazing5

 CLA Coming Soon.....5

 Intelligent E-Class6

 Canadian Sales Numbers7

 Lightweight Robots.....7

 Seat You Later.....7

 The Connected Car8

Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!

Jan 20: Sunday morning coffee, 9:45. We’re going to try a couple of informal coffee and conversation mornings this year at locations in the Victoria area and up-Island.

The Victoria location for Jan 20 is the Tim Horton’s at the north end of the Save-On Foods parking lot, between the two halves of Blanshard St. and just to the south of Ravine Way. Organizer: Bob Wilson.

Up-Island members can gather at the Willow Street Café, 9749 Willow St., Chemainus, at 9:45. Organizer: Barry Patchett

Feb 24: Tech event, early afternoon. Our annual introduction to the new models and new technology at the Three Point Motors service centre in Victoria. Details to come. Organizer: Peter Trzewik.

Mar 24: Lunch, Shawnigan Lake. This will be a repeat of last year’s popular spring lunch outing to Steeple’s Restaurant. Organizer: Barry Patchett.

Apr 20 or 21: Detailing event. This will be a visit to and demonstrations at a full spectrum detailing shop. Organizer: Bob Wilson

Section Officers

President: [Bob Wilson](#)

Vice President: vacant

Secretary: [Hazel Ostrowerka](#)

Treasurer: [Rob Watson](#)

Membership: [Jeff Cohen](#)

Director at large: [Dennis Ostrowerka](#)

Newsletter: [Bob Wilson](#)

Hon. Vice President: Peter Trzewik

Past President: [Barry Patchett](#)

Welcome New Members!

Dallas Chapple

Renewing Members

Barrie Aldrich

Cees & Ellen den Holder

Thank you!

May 4-5: Seattle Section tour of LeMay Museum and open house at Griot's Garage. Overnight at Hotel Murano, Tacoma. Organiser Ian Gleadle, Seattle Section ([click](#)).

May 11: Chemainus Theatre. Buffet lunch and *Delicious Lies*, an adaptation of Molière's comedy *Scapin*. A row of seats has already been booked for this amusing performance. Cost \$65 per person. The registration deadline is April 28; look for more details in early April. Organiser Barry Patchett

Jun 22-23: Islands wine tour, Saltspring Saturday market, Saltspring wineries, dinner and overnight on Saltspring, Cowichan Valley wineries, lunch Cowichan Bay. Organiser: Stan Garrod ([click](#)).

Jul 20-21: Forest Grove Concours, Oregon. 2013 is the 50th anniversary of the W113 (pagoda-roof) SLs. Portland Section is planning a Feature Class for this model and is coordinating attendance by Club members. More details will be available later. Organizer: Allen Stephens ([click](#)), Portland Section.

Jul 28: Barbeque. An afternoon barbeque, hosted by John and Cordelia McIntosh at their home on Coal Point.

Aug 18: Rally/ treasure hunt. Jeff Cohen and Rob Watson have offered to put together a rally and treasure hunt in the Victoria area.

Sep 8: Mercedes-Benz in the Park, N Vancouver. Vancouver Section invites Island members to their annual event at Waterfront Park in North Vancouver. I went last year and enjoyed the day, seeing some unusual older models that we don't have in our Section. Organizer: Louis Fourie ([click](#)).

Sep 15: Lunch. The tentative destination is the dining room at the Point-No-Point resort, west of Sooke. The Section went there for lunch four or five years ago and had a good time. Organizer: Bob Wilson

Oct 19: AGM. Union Club. Organizer: Jeff Cohen

Oct 25 or 26: Oktoberfest. Our annual outing to the German Edelweiss Club for dinner and dancing. Organizer Hazel Ostrowerka.

Nov 10: Morning coffee, location(s) TBA. Organizers: Bob Wilson and Barry Patchett

Dec 13 or 14(?): Xmas party, Union Club. Date subject to confirmation.

Membership Has Its Rewards

The poster on the next page shows details of the loyalty awards negotiated by the MBCA national office for members in the USA and Canada. These rewards apply to the purchase of a new car. As it says, the procedure is to negotiate your best price and then use the MBCA Discount to reduce it. For Canadians, that discount comes through Mercedes-Benz Canada's fleet program.

MEMBERSHIP THAT PAYS YOU BACK. HANDSOMELY.

Your membership with the Mercedes-Benz Club of America (MBCA) comes with special privileges, like saving (up to) \$1,500 on the purchase or lease price of a NEW Mercedes-Benz. To qualify, you must be a current Member of MBCA and have at least one year of uninterrupted membership with the Club, prior to your NEW car lease or purchase. See details below.

U.S. Members – Get \$1,000 off a NEW Mercedes-Benz

If you are a current U.S. Member of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America and have been a Member for at least 12 consecutive months prior to purchasing or leasing a NEW 2013 or NEW 2014 (when available) Mercedes-Benz vehicle, you are considered a "Member in Good Standing" and automatically qualify for a \$1,000 price discount.

Are you a Member in Good Standing?



It's easy to find out. Visit the Club website at mbca.org. Click the "Login" button at the top right corner of the page then enter your username and password. If you've been a Club Member for 12 consecutive months or longer, a Member in Good Standing symbol will appear at the bottom left of your personal profile page.

From your profile page, go to "click here" for time-sensitive terms and conditions and to print an official Loyalty Reward Certificate redeemable at Mercedes-Benz Dealerships in the U.S. Go to your favorite Mercedes-Benz Dealership then present your Certificate to the Dealer on the day you make your purchase. The Dealer will take \$1,000 off the price of your NEW car.*

*Excludes Sprinter Vans, smart, S15 AMG Coupes & SLS AMG Roadsters. Discount may not be combined with other Mercedes-Benz Certificate Programs or offers including, but not limited to, Master Lease Program and European Delivery. Please read online rules carefully.



Canadian Members – Get (up to) \$1,500 off a NEW Mercedes-Benz

Mercedes-Benz Canada Fleet Services Division wants to reward MBCA's loyal Canadian Members with (up to) \$1,500 off the purchase or lease price of a NEW Mercedes-Benz.

1. Take this ad to your local authorized Mercedes-Benz Dealership in Canada and negotiate the best price for a NEW 2013 Mercedes-Benz.* Tell the Dealer you are eligible for the "New Car Discount Program" and present your current/valid MBCA membership card.
2. Your Dealer will automatically deduct the following amount from the price of your NEW Mercedes. Discount CAN be combined with current retail, finance and lease offers:

Note: Dealership salespeople ONLY may contact Daniel Snell, Fleet Marketing Coordinator, Mercedes-Benz Canada at daniel.snell@mercedes-benz.ca or 416.847.7508.

2013 Models MBCA Discount

2013 Models	MBCA Discount (Canadian Members ONLY)
B-Class	\$500
C-Class	\$750
E-Class (all models)	\$750
S-Class	\$1,500
SLK-Class	\$750
SL-Class	\$1,500
CL-Class	\$1,500
CLS-Class	\$1,500
GLK-Class	\$750
M-Class	\$750
R-Class	\$750
smartfortwo	\$500

*Excludes all Demonstrator and AMG vehicles



More Than a Car. We're a Community.™

Questions? Call the National Business Office 800.637.2360 Mon-Fri 8am-5pm Mountain Time

Vancouver Island members also enjoy a discount on parts and labour at Three Point Motors. This discount is currently 10% off labour and regularly-priced parts (not parts offered at a special sale price). You may need to ask for this discount, especially if you haven't used it before. Jeff Cohen regularly updates the list of Section members kept at TPM, but you should be prepared to show your membership card.



Congratulations to Jeff Cohen, inaugural winner of the Enthusiast's Trophy! This handsome trophy will be awarded annually to the member who turns out to the largest number of Section events during the year. The counters for 2013 have been reset to zero, so start off your bid for the 2013 award by coming out to Sunday's coffee 'n conversation.



Congratulations to Catherine and Lou Hobson, recipients of the Chemainus trophy for 2013! The trophy is awarded for outstanding service over a period of years.

Both awards were accompanied by a gift certificate from Three Point Motors.

Thanks and congratulations are also extended to Hazel and Dennis Ostrowerka, deserving recipients of this year's Northwest Region Officer-of-the-Year award. For some reason, no photo was taken.

And finally, congratulations to Linda Watson, who won an MB picnic set in a basket by getting the most correct answers to the Christmas party's quiz.

Stargazing

CLA Coming Soon

MB released the CLA at this week's Detroit Auto Show. The CLA is a compact sedan cast in the coupe-like mould of the CLS. Intended to slot into the line underneath the C-class but above the A-class, the CLA will be a different interpretation of MB's entry-level car, at least until we get the A (if ever). It's based on the same front-wheel drive architecture as the A and B-classes and will be built on the same MFA front-wheel-drive platform. The car will be promoted during February's Superbowl, in ads usually available to Canadians only on-line.



Daimler photo

The music I listen to is mostly classical. The audience I see at a live classical performance is definitely greying. Our paper recently carried a prescient op-ed piece about what these predominantly older audiences mean to the future of arts organizations, who, according to the message, need to think harder about their programming mix to ensure survival.

Car manufacturers recognized this problem a while back. Those with products in the luxury segment—and that's most manufacturers these days—have been working hard to make them more attractive to the young professionals who represent a sustained customer base. MB USA says the average age of a C-class buyer is 50. The CLA is clearly aimed at a younger audience, with a company spokesman saying it will attract buyers in their 30s and 40s. The car will be offered in both gasoline and diesel flavours, with the AMG version having a turbocharged 2-L, 4-cyl with an astonishing 350 hp and 300 lb-ft of torque.



An enthusiastically driven, pre-release CLA shows a front-end handling bias. We can be pretty sure its ESP was hturned off!

*Photo:
skiddmark.com*

Intelligent E-Class

Our last newsletter had a short description of the *Intelligent Drive* system debuting this year in the new S-class. A Daimler press release announced extension of this technology to the face-lifted W212 E-class, which will appear here as a 2014 model. Collision Prevention Assist will be part of the standard equipment in all markets; that’s the radar-based collision warning system with adaptive brake assist. The rest of the Intelligent Drive systems, including the self-parking assistant, will be optional globally, though the trim level that Mercedes-Benz Canada chooses to bring in as standard won’t be known for some time.

The new design features are more extensive than has been usual for a mid-cycle face-lift, another indication of the shortening time-frame for ‘freshness’. Some of the square edges have been rounded, and the rear fender link to the ponton cars has disappeared along with the separate quad headlights, the latter a distinctive feature of the E-class since 1995. Full LED headlights with anti-dazzle technology (permanent high beams) will also be standard or available, depending on how MB Canada decides to equip the base level car.



The face-lifted W212 E-class. A sport grille will also be available or standard here. Daimler photo

Canadian Sales Numbers

Sales results for 2012 are just in. For a sense of scale in the numbers that follow, the top-selling vehicle in Canada last year was, yet again, the Ford F-series pickup, which found 106,358 new and returning customers last year. The top selling car was the Honda Civic, at 64,952. The BMW 3-series outsold the C-class, 11,234 to 10,616 but the M-class (5,539) and the GLK (5,279) outsold BMW's X3 (5,017) and X1 (4,776). MB sales overall were up 7% in Canada.

Other results of possible interest:

- Porsche Panamera – 442
- Ferrari – 228
- Maserati – 162
- Lamborghini – 128
- Bentley – 126
- Nissan GT-R – 117
- Audi R8 – 112
- MB SLS AMG – 95

- Chevy Volt – 1,225
- Nissan Leaf – 240

Lightweight Robots

Daimler has signed an agreement with a German company called KUKA to use their lightweight robots on Mercedes-Benz assembly lines. These robots will function as the extension of a human worker, acting like a third hand. KUKA has designed similar equipment for use by astronauts on space-walks.

Sensitive motorized grippers give these robots a delicate touch, letting them handle objects gently while performing tasks with precision. They can also be positioned to support workers in difficult or tiring assembly functions. For example, the lightweight robot can take over and performs steps that involve handling items overhead. Working with and controlling the robot is said to be straightforward and intuitive, and Daimler's aim is to increase the efficiency of manufacturing.

Seat You Later

With content from Wired.com

Faurecia isn't exactly a household name. Based in Europe, Faurecia is a global player in the automotive parts industry, a supplier to most of the world's leading brands including Mercedes-Benz. For a sense of scale, the company has 40 R&D centres and 270 manufacturing sites in 33 countries. So when Faurecia announces a new product, which they did at last month's Los Angeles Auto Show, we'd do well to sit up and take notice.

And it was seats they were showing. Faurecia sees a future where your seat is connected to your smartphone, which uses apps to customize the seat to perfectly suit your body and allows you to download the latest upgrades. The company is forging two paths toward a future of superlative driving comfort.

The first is an ultra-lightweight, super-compact throne that's as close to an Aeron chair as you can get in an automobile. It's called the Urban Rhythm and everything about it was designed to reduce the weight and bulk

of modern seats. That allows automakers to use less material inside the car, thereby reducing weight and boosting fuel economy. Faurecia calls it a “bio-sympathetic” design and claims the seats could be less than 30 mm thick — impressive, given the average seat is between 60 and 120 mm. What’s more, it’s actually comfortable.



Wired was more intrigued by the luxu-barge La-Z-Boy shown at left. It’s 12-way adjustable with nearly infinite configurability. It’s also Bluetooth equipped and connects with your smartphone so you can control everything through an app. That might sound ridiculously counter-intuitive--why no buttons?--but it’s part of Faurecia’s SmartFit system, which tackles the issue of getting a proper driving position and comfortable pressure settings.

Image: Faurecia.com via wired.com

It starts with an Android app that asks for basic measurement information like height, weight and gender. Then you snap a few photos of yourself (yes, you’ll need a friend) to provide specific posture data. Once you’ve done that, you swing your smartphone up and down with your arm extended and the accelerometer detects the length of your reach. Once everything is calculated, the phone transfers the data to the seat, which creates the perfect seating position for you. The fact it’s all Bluetooth-enabled means the seat adjusts itself to your customized setting as you approach the car.

What next, I wonder....

The Connected Car

...Well, it’s probably the more connected car. Garmin showed the next generation in connectivity at this month’s Consumer Electronics Show, down south. We probably all know Garmin as one of the leaders in aftermarket GPS navigation units. I have one, the version with maps for North America and Europe, and I’ve found it almost indispensable when we’re travelling. But, even mounted low in the centre of the windshield, I’m very aware that it takes some of my attention away from controlling the car.

Garmin’s new in-car platform, called the K2, was shown at the electronics show integrated into a Dodge Durango. Its interfaces are a large touch-screen, mounted high in the centre stack, and an information display behind the steering wheel, like the ones in newer MBs. The system pulls real-time data from Garmin’s servers through a connected smartphone, or, if vehicle manufacturers opt to include it, a dedicated modem. It gives access to real-time traffic information, the price at local fuel pumps, email, text messages, and other data feeds like news and sports scores. Sounds distracting, doesn’t it?

However, Garmin says it has taken safety into account. Depending on its configuration, you’ll likely be able to operate the center panel only while stopped, at which point you can also read and answer email, send texts, flip through your phone book, search for weather, etc. While you’re driving, all those functions shift into text-to-speech mode, which also recognizes commands presented in full sentences. Emails pop up as they’re received, with the platform reading the messages aloud, if you so choose. You can speak your responses, and a

reply will be fired off without any need to direct your attention away from the road. At least, that's what Garmin says.

There's no indication when, but this level of connectivity in new cars is likely not far off. As just one indicator, GM is currently hiring 1,000 workers for a new IT centre outside Atlanta. Ford and GM have announced development and support systems intended to accelerate the integration of apps into their previously proprietary electronic platforms. This could turn the current trickle of new apps for cars into a torrent. Personally, I think it's a poor idea, especially if connectivity isn't combined with the kind of safety technology MB makes available to counteract driver distraction. Dodge may be less inclined to add these features than Daimler.

Multitasking might be necessary seated at an office desk but, behind the wheel, it's a recipe for more accidents on our increasingly crowded roads. It doesn't matter whether the urban speed limit is 50 or 40. Even if (s)he's sitting still, accident avoidance requires a driver's full attention.



The S-class 99 years ago: no driver aids. This aptly named Mercedes-Simplex 60 hp, from 1904, was once owned by Emil Jellinek, an early Daimler board member and distributing agent. Participants in December's Christmas party quiz will doubtless remember that our cars are half-named after his daughter.

Daimler photo