



**Vancouver Island Section**

**July, 2013**

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**Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!**

**Jul 7: Classic car tour, Seattle.** *From Ian Gleadle, Seattle Section*

*President:* Seattle Section has received a not-to-be missed invitation from Retired Rear Admiral (and club members) Bruce Harlow and his wife Betty who have graciously invited our group to tour their extensive collection of classic cars and vintage memorabilia on Sunday, July 7th. Their estate is adjacent to Naval Submarine Base Bangor just outside of Poulsbo, Washington on the Kitsap Peninsula. It overlooks the Hood canal, has a sweeping view of the Olympics and a large grassy field with plenty of parking. It has been said that the view is reminiscent of George Washington's overlook of the Potomac River from his historic Mt. Vernon home in Northern Virginia.

The Suquamish Tribe will greet us as we begin our tour in their Clearwater Casino parking lot (close to the highway) located at Highway 305 and Agate Passage Bridge, across from Bainbridge Island.

We'll meet at 11:15-11:45am so as to accommodate members taking the 10:30am ferry from the Kingston Ferry Terminal, members taking the 10:35am ferry from the Seattle Ferry Terminal, as well as members coming across the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. From there, we will drive along the back roads for a scenic tour of the Kitsap Peninsula to arrive at the Harlow's between 12:30 and 1:00pm. If you miss the ferry or the starting point, the Harlow's address is 3422 NW Lakeness Road, Poulsbo, WA.

**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](#)

Plan for a leisurely tour of the Harlow's collection and then sit back in your lawn chairs to enjoy the view, a catered lunch and libation, and time with your MBCA friends. Lunch will be available for \$15 per person and, for planning purposes, we ask that you send in your pre-registration and payment made payable to MBCA-Seattle Section to Linda Gleadle at 69 N Sunset Drive, Camano Island, WA 98282 by July 3rd.

**Jul 20-21: Forest Grove Concours, Oregon.** The 41st Forest Grove Concours will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the W113 'Pagoda' SL and Grand 600 with a special class on July 21st. MBCA members are invited to enter their car for judging, or display-only in the MBCA Display class, which is not judged. Judged classes include R-1, for all years of Mercedes built before 1971, where you can enter to be judged or display only. The Forest Grove Concours d'Elegance features more than 300 vintage, sports and collector cars presented on the campus of Pacific University. The deadline to enter is June 30th ([click](#)). Organizer: Allen Stephens ([click](#)), Portland Section.

**Jul 28: VI Section Barbeque, 3 PM.** A summer's afternoon barbeque, hosted by Cordelia and John McIntosh at their home on Coal Point. Please register with Cordelia to get the address ([click](#)).

The event will start at 3, with dinner sometime around 5. The cost is \$20 per couple, collected at the event, for which a BBQ salmon and prawn dinner will be provided. Please bring a salad or dessert, and your beverage of choice. Beginner level kayaks will be available for those who'd like an evening paddle. There may even be dancing!

**Aug 11: Regional Show 'n Shine, Seattle.** "Pride of ownership" — that's what shines through every year as club members from around the Northwest converge on the beautiful grounds of the Nile Golf & Country Club just north of Seattle for our Annual Regional Show & Shine. This year's event will showcase not one, but TWO Mercedes-Benz' that have been featured on the cover of The Star magazine. In addition to the largest area display of Mercedes owned by MBCA Northwest Region members, this event offers People's Choice voting with awards & trophies, local dealer & vendor displays, gift basket ticket sales with proceeds to support our charity of the year, and door prizes & demonstrations.

Now is the time to pre-register your cars and to reserve an All-American BBQ lunch by O'Callahan's Catering featuring your summertime favorites: Quarter Pound Burgers & All Beef Hot Dogs, Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Boston Baked Beans, Red Potato Salad, Chips, Ice Cold Watermelon, Soda, Water & Dessert.

The Nile Golf & Country Club is at 6601 244th Street SW, Mountlake Terrace, WA. Take exit 177 (State Route 104) off I-5. Travel west 3/10ths of a mile and make a right into the club. The event starts at 10.

Registration Fee: \$15 per person for lunch, \$10 for registration of your first show car and \$5 for registration for each additional car you place in the show. Hotels: Embassy Suites, Lynwood; La Quinta, Lynwood. Contact Ian Gleadle ([click](#)) **before August 8<sup>th</sup>**.

**Aug 18: Rally/ treasure hunt.** Jeff Cohen and Rob Watson have offered to put together a rally and treasure hunt in the Victoria area. Further details and the registration procedure will be in the next newsletter.

The Portland Section is organizing a tour to Butchart Gardens that weekend, leaving Portland on Friday Aug. 16 and visiting the gardens on Saturday, Aug. 17 for dinner and the fireworks. Portland and Seattle members will then join us for the treasure hunt on Sunday morning. A good turnout from our Section would be useful, as the plan is to pair members with local knowledge with each of our visitors.

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## Welcome New Members!

*Rennie Parish*  
*Dan Ryan*

## Renewing Members!

*Alex Currie*  
*Dale Fickinger*  
*Jeffrey Smith*

**Thank you!**

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

**Sep 15, 11 AM to 4 PM: VI Motor Gathering 2013.** The annual show on the grounds of the Queen Alexandra children's hospital includes classes for modern and classic cars and is a great place to display your Mercedes-Benz. With several activities for kids, this is one of the most family-friendly shows around as well as the one with the most exotic cars. Every year the QA show features a small but choice selection of cars from Rudi Konicek's collection.

## VANCOUVER ISLAND MOTOR GATHERING 2013



### Motorsport and Car enthusiasts, mark your calendars!

The 2013 Vancouver Island Motor Gathering, presented by the German Auto Import Network [GAIN], will take place September 15, 2013 from 11 am to 4 pm and will be in full support of the Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island. Hosted on the Queen Alexandra grounds at 2400 Arbutus Road, it will host hundreds of spectacular cars and motorcycles of all makes and models, live entertainment, food and fun for the entire family!

- When: September 15, 2013
- Where: 2400 Arbutus Road
- Time: 11am – 4pm
- Family Activities Including: Face Painting | Pedal Car Races | Remote Control Cars | Bouncy Castles | Crafts Stations and so much more
- Exhibitor Categories: Vintage | Classic | Custom Build | Motorcycles | Choppers | Modern | Rare | Muscle | Hot Rods | and more!
- Exhibitor Pre-Registration: \$25 (Payment required Prior to event)
- Spectator Admission: By Donation (\$2 min. per person)

The show is a charity benefit being organized this year by GAIN-Victoria. We are being offered a section of the grounds on which to build an exhibit specific to MB. Pre-registration for display is required ([click](#)); please let me know soon if you plan to register so we can organize ourselves. If you aren't interested in displaying your car, consider joining us for a picnic on the QA grounds at 12:30.

**Sep 22 (date change): Lunch.** The Board has discussed holding this event at Three Point Motors' new facility in Nanaimo. Stay tuned for further details. Organizer: Bob Wilson

**Oct 19: AGM** Discussion of the event calendar for 2014 and election of officers. Union Club. Organizer: Jeff Cohen

**Oct 25 or 26: Oktoberfest.** Our annual homage to German culture at the Edelweiss Club, with dinner and dancing. Maybe this year our group will be able to field a contestant in the Schuplattler contest ([click](#)). Organizer Hazel Ostrowerka.

**Nov 10:** Morning coffee, locations TBA. Organizers: Bob Wilson and Barry Patchett

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

Competition for the Enthusiast's Trophy is hot at mid-year, with Philip Early holding the lead by just one event. The Enthusiast's Trophy is awarded annually in December to the member with the best attendance record at the Section's events.

## MBCA's Loyalty Program

**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 amount at right 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](mailto:daniel.snell@mercedes-benz.ca) or 416.847.7508.

2013 Models	MBCA Discount
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

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

More Than a Car. We're a Community.™

It's time for me to mention again that members of the MBCA who have been in good standing for at least a year are entitled to a discount on the purchase of a new (not used) car. This discount is negotiated through the National Business Office with MB's distributors for the USA and Canada. The amount of the discount in Canada depends on the class of vehicle purchased, ranging from \$500 off a 2013 Smart or B-Class up to \$1,500 off a new CL, CLS, S or SL. These discounts originate with the fleet sales program run by Mercedes-Benz of Canada Inc. (MBCI) and do not affect the deal at Three Point Motors.

If you're buying a new car, the procedure would be to negotiate the best price, as usual. Once that's been agreed, you can produce your membership card and claim the discount, which involves Three Point Motors staff having to contact the appropriate person at MBCI. The staff at Three Point Motors are aware of this procedure but it's not up to them to remind us, and I suspect some of our members have not taken advantage of it.

Your MBCA membership card will also get you 10% off regularly priced parts and service at Three Point Motors. These discounts are part of the generous support provided to our Section by the dealership. Once again, you should ask for it before the invoice is printed.

## June Wine Tour

A small group gathered late last month to sample some of the artisanal food- and wine-makers on Salt Spring Island and in the Cowichan Valley. We started off with a tour of Salt Spring Cheeses, maker of goat- and sheep-milk cheeses that can now be found on the menus of fine restaurants across Canada. Visits there are always rewarded with tastes of an abundance of cheeses with organic garnishes and additions, all made on the site.

We drove out to Ruckles, amongst the oldest communities in BC. Stan Garrod, our guide, talked to us about the role of escaped black slaves in settling the south end of the island in the 1850s and 60s, when Salt Spring Island was the main exporter of fruit and nuts from the colony of British Columbia. We stopped to admire a farm house from the 1880s, the oldest family farm in the Province. Our next stop was Gary Oaks Winery, where we tasted and admired the view, which included the surprising prospect of a small, newly planted commercial trial of olive trees.

The shopping began at Salt Spring Cheeses and continued at the Saturday market in Ganges, probably the largest and most popular market in our area. Donelda and I used the time on our own to pick up a small pizza for lunch, made completely with local ingredients, including the flour. In our wandering around the booths, we were delighted to exchange a few words with Raffi, whose recordings were an important part of our children's introduction to music.

Donelda and I then went north to the Foxglove Nursery, wandering through their large selection of plants for sale and acquiring a weeding trowel with an extensible handle, which promises to be an effort-saver in the garden. Mistaken Identity Vineyards, our next official stop, was just across the road and we were able to try another set of wines made from local grapes. Stan then took us on a tour of the north end of the Island, after which we left on the ferry to Crofton.

The weather had been sunny and seasonally warm. We had enough free time after checking into our Duncan motel to pick up a bottle of decidedly non-local prosecco to share on the porch. Suitably fortified, we headed off to dinner at the Masthead, one of Vancouver Island's destination restaurants and located on the shore of Cowichan Bay. Dinner complete, we admired the view, after which Philip Early hosted us for a scotch or water tasting in his beautiful garden about ten minutes' drive from the restaurant.

We slept well, apparently not hearing at all the noisy group that came back to the motel around 2 AM. We got up to a light drizzle that stayed with us most of the day, though the humidity was low enough that the roads didn't get wet until we were almost home at the end of the day. After a hearty breakfast just up the road, we set off for the next tasting, at Venturi-Schultz. Of Italian extraction, the winemaker there makes a traditional balsamic vinegar in addition to the selection of still and sparkling wines made exclusively from grapes on the

property. Quite unlike the balsamic vinegars available in the supermarket, this one works well put on strawberries or used in a reduction for glazing meats. At Venturi-Schultz the group decided to take advantage of the award-winning chef at the Amuse Bistro for lunch. Amuse has moved recently into a renovated 19<sup>th</sup> century house the grounds of Unsworth Vineyards and we were not disappointed.



*The group at Mistaken Identity Vineyards. Photo: Barry Patchett*

Thanks go to Stan Garrod for organizing an enjoyable two-day event and for his informed commentary along the route and for coping with the ebb and flow in our group's makeup over the two days. We also have to recognize the effort made by Bob and Tanya Willits, who came up from Seattle to join us, but discovered at their Salt Spring Island hotel the day before that their car had a significant mechanical issue. They persevered through the ministrations of one of Salt Spring's classic garages, who managed to repair the differential mounts in good time for the off. After at least three Vancouver Island events, Bob and Tanya have added to our number as second-section members, and we welcome them into our Section.

## Stargazing

### The 2014 S-Class

We are mid-way through the final model-year for the current W221 S-Class, which began life in 2006 as a 2007. Refreshed in a mid-life facelift for 2010, the W221 has lasted seven years, a decent run in today's fast-changing market. The replacement S-class sedan, designated the W222, was launched in mid-May and will be on sale

here in North America in September. A coupe has been spotted on the road but few details are available; it will apparently revert to badging as an S rather than a CL.

The release of a new S-class is always an event of interest because this model traditionally introduces the latest developments, which trickle down the model range over the few years that follow. At the top of the line, this car is the showcase for the latest in MBs three engineering priorities: Intelligent Drive, Efficient Technology, and Essence of Luxury.



*The W222 S-class. Look at the size of the COMAND screen. Photos: mercedesbenz.com*

The safety technologies will all be integrated into a single system to make driving safer and yet more comfortable. I take comfort from noticing that Daimler's announcement does not list anything startlingly new, focusing instead on advances to the present offerings. There will apparently be no new Magic, unless I missed it. The various press releases serve as a reminder of:

- **“DISTRONIC PLUS with Steering Assist** helps the driver to guide the vehicle in its lane and can even follow the vehicle in front in slow-moving traffic automatically. The new Steering Assist function integrated into the DISTRONIC PLUS system is predominantly based on the new stereo camera .... At the same time, the area in front of the vehicle continues to be monitored by two short-range radar sensors and a long-range radar sensor with medium-range detection. The system fuses the data gleaned from both technologies, calculates any reactions required, and then regulates the vehicle's speed as requirements dictate by controlling engine power, transmission and brakes, as well as actuating the electric steering for lateral vehicle guidance. The stereo camera recognises lane markings as well as vehicles driving ahead together with their three-dimensional positioning, and relays this information to the electric steering assistance system. When driving at slow speeds, e.g. in congested traffic, Steering Assist can use the vehicle ahead as a means of orientation, enabling **semi-autonomous following** even when there are no clear lane markings visible.

“DISTRONIC PLUS with Steering Assist can be activated as before with a lever on the steering column in a speed range from 0 - 200 km/h. Any speed between 30 km/h and 200 km/h can be selected as the desired cruising speed. A green steering wheel symbol appears in the instrument cluster to indicate when Steering Assist is operating while DISTRONIC PLUS is activated. Meanwhile, longitudinal information (cruise control function) is still visualised in the speed display by means of circular segments and the speedometer needle.

“Drivers must keep their hands on the steering wheel at all times even when Steering Assist is activated, as the function only works in bends above a certain, speed-dependent radius. Legal considerations also mean there are no plans to introduce hands-free driving. The system's design is so refined that the sensors can detect whether the driver's hands are actually on the steering wheel. If they are not, a visual warning is issued first. Should the driver fail to react to this prompt, a warning signal sounds and lateral lane guidance is deactivated. This does not affect the cruise control function, however, which continues to be operative. Needless to say, the driver is able to override the Steering Assist at any time. If the driver signals to change lane, for instance, the lateral guidance function will switch into passive mode for the duration of the lane change.

- “For the first time, the **Brake Assist system BAS PLUS with Cross-Traffic Assist** is able to detect cross traffic and also pedestrians, and if necessary boost the braking power applied by the driver accordingly. If this anticipatory system detects a hazardous situation of this type, it prompts the driver to start emergency braking by activating visual and acoustic warnings. If the driver presses the brake pedal too tentatively, BAS PLUS will step in by automatically boosting brake pressure for effective emergency braking, even applying the brakes at full power if necessary. Applying just the right amount of braking power for the situation at hand maximises the available braking distance for traffic behind.

“The Cross-Traffic Assist function is operative at speeds up to approx. 72 km/h, while BAS PLUS is able to aid the driver in longitudinal situations at any speed.

- **“PRE-SAFE® Brake** can detect pedestrians and initiate autonomous braking to avoid a collision at speeds up to 50 km/h.
- **“PRE-SAFE® PLUS** can recognise an imminent rear-end collision, prompting the PRE-SAFE® system to trigger occupant protection measures. It can also firmly apply the stationary vehicle's brakes in the event of a rear-end collision to prevent secondary accidents.
- **“With PRE-SAFE® Impulse,** the driver and front passenger are pulled away from the direction of impact by their seat belts at an early phase of the crash before the resulting occupant deceleration starts to increase. This can substantially reduce the risk and severity of injuries in a frontal collision.
- **“Active Lane Keeping Assist** can detect oncoming traffic and when the adjacent lane is not clear, and prevent the vehicle from leaving its lane unintentionally by applying the brakes on one side. The new improved version of Active Lane Keeping Assist is now also able to intervene should the driver inadvertently cross a broken line when the neighbouring lane is not clear and changing lane could cause a collision as a result.
- **“Adaptive Highbeam Assist PLUS** allows the main-beam headlamps to be kept on permanently without dazzling traffic by masking out other vehicles in the beams' cone of light.
- **“Night View Assist PLUS** can alert the driver to the potential danger posed by pedestrians or animals in unlit areas in front of the vehicle by automatically switching from the speedometer display to a crystal-sharp night view image and highlighting the source of danger. A spotlight function is furthermore able to flash at pedestrians detected ahead.
- **“ATTENTION ASSIST** can warn of inattentiveness and drowsiness in an extended speed range and notify the driver of their current state of fatigue and the driving time since the last break, as well as offering an adjustable sensitivity setting. The system has been subject to ongoing development, and the latest version has the ability to detect drowsiness and inattentiveness across a far greater speed range from 60 - 200 km/h. The system's sensitivity can furthermore be adjusted, e.g. for drivers who already feel tired when they get behind the wheel.
- **“ACTIVE Parking Assist** is designed for automated parking with active steering and brake control in both parallel and perpendicular spaces. It is an advanced version of the PARKTRONIC system with Parking Guidance offered previously. What's more, the system is now also able to manoeuvre out of parallel parking spaces again all by itself with automatic steering and brake control, assuming the vehicle was parked there automatically previously. “

The W222 S-class is much the same size as the outgoing W221. Power in our market will come from a revised version of the 4.7 L, twin turbo V8 offered in the current model. The AMG version will continue to use the twin turbo, 5.5 L engine but this time will come standard with all-wheel drive. At launch the W222 will use MB's current seven-speed automatic transmission, but MB plans to replace that with a nine-speed in 2015. The car will also have automatic ride control, a system in which a camera scans the road surface just ahead and adjusts stiffness of the shock absorbers to cope with what it sees. An extra-long wheelbase version will be available as replacement for the Maybach.

In May, MB executives hosted a launch party for 750 VIPs, politicians and media folk at the Airbus A380 delivery centre in Hamburg, a spot usually reserved for handing over some of the world's largest planes. The

company spent 14 days installing more than 500 tonnes of steel, 4,000 square metres of wood, 25 km of cable, 400 spotlights, 96 speakers and a video wall 28 metres wide. Let's hope another seven years go by before they want to do that again!

### Showcasing the Star



*Photo: mbworld.com*

MB has just released this lit-up version of the three-pointed star for the grille of the 2014 E-class, the 2013+ GL, the 2012+ M, and the 2006+ CLS. It is being made available as a dealer-installed accessory, with additional model compatibility possibly on the way. The emblem uses LED and fibre-optic technology to light up, so Daimler's press release says, when the doors or trunk are unlocked or opened. If it doesn't stay on in conjunction with the ignition, it won't take a day for someone to figure out how to make that happen. I've checked my calendar to make sure it's not April 1. Most on-line comments have been unfavourable--what do you think? Do you like it?

### "You Make the Dog Like the Dog Food"

That's a quote from William Woebkenburg, a senior engineer in the fuels policy area at Mercedes-Benz. He was talking not of the family pet but of an initiative from the US Environmental Protection Agency to raise the average ethanol content of gasoline to 30%. This is a poor idea for almost anyone not involved in the ethanol industry.

The ethanol industry—and EPA's—main arguments relate to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability, and reducing the need for imported oil, the latter a hot-button issue on the US political right. From a fuels perspective, ethanol's main advantage is that it has a higher octane number than regular gasoline, so higher ethanol blends need fewer other octane enhancers.

There are, however, significant technical drawbacks for the owners of cars built before the 2008 model-year, along with almost all powered boats, tractors, lawnmowers, chain saws and the like. Because ethanol is more volatile than gasoline, the emission of a group of harmful substances called Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) increases. Because ethanol contains less specific energy than gasoline, a 10% ethanol blend increases fuel consumption by almost the same proportion. The loss in fuel economy is not linearly related to the blend percentage, however; a dual-fuel Chevrolet pickup running on 85% ethanol gets 30% worse mileage than the same truck running E10 (the 10% ethanol blend). Because ethanol absorbs water, blends create condensation

inside fuel tanks, in the carburettor bowls of old cars, and inside fuel lines whenever there's an air space. That leads to corrosion in the fuel system. Also, the paper filter elements in fuel filters swell up, reducing flow. Finally, ethanol erodes rubber and plastic fuel lines and gaskets that were not specifically made to resist it. I, for example, have experienced complete failure of the cork gasket on the main fuel filter of our 1965 Honda, causing gasoline to flow out onto the ground at fuel-pump rates. Had it been underway instead of waiting for me to close the gate, this car could easily have caught fire. And that's just with E10.

Here in BC, a provincial government regulation requires at least 5% ethanol, averaged across a supplier's offerings. The upper limit allowable is 85%. The government of the day—2008—justified the incoming standard by saying that it would help BC farmers and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Fuel refiners and distributors want BC's standards to be compatible with those in Washington State so that gasoline imports can be used to balance demand; Washington currently requires a minimum of 2% ethanol. The gasoline on sale in BC contains up to 10% ethanol, so that's not currently a problem.

What is a potential problem, particularly for those of us driving vehicles made before 2001, is the US federal push to increase the ethanol blend to 15%, the next step on the road to 30%. An attempt by carmakers' to take the US EPA to court was thrown out last month when the Supreme Court ruled that the manufacturers had failed to prove they would be damaged by the change.

Pumps selling E15 are, so far, limited to the USA, where a label is required on the pump stating that the fuel is not for use in vehicles made before 2001, boats, and gasoline powered equipment. Watch for it if you're travelling down south. Even if you have a new car, it would be a mistake to buy it unless it's selling at a discount to E10, which currently has over 90% of the US market.

### **Hands-Free Is Not Risk-Free**

If you've felt smug and safe using built-in, voice-controlled technology for text messages, email and phone calls while driving, forget it. Some sobering findings about the risk of distraction are contained in the results of a two-year study conducted for the American Automobile Association by the University of Utah ([click](#)).

The researchers tracked eye and head movements, charted brain activity and measured driver reaction time while test drivers in simulators and on the road listened to the car radio, talked on a cell phone (either hand-held or hands-free) or listened to and responded to voice-activated email features. The speech-to-text system was the most distracting, reducing driver attention more than talking on a cell phone held to the ear. The study showed only a slight reduction in distraction moving from hand-held to hands-free cell phones, and that was almost the same level of distraction created by talking to a passenger.

The greater the concentration required to perform a task, the more likely a driver is to develop "tunnel vision" or "inattention blindness," the AAA said. We've all experienced that: looking ahead but not actually seeing much. The organization wants manufacturers to restrict access to voice-activated technology to core vehicle functions such as climate control and wipers. Manufacturers are unlikely to agree. For example, GM's CEO Dan Acheson, presumably responding to the study, said a couple of days later that better in-car technology is critical to attracting younger, tech-savvy buyers.

### **1957 300 SLS**

If, like me, you'd thought the current SLS was the first MB model to carry that designation, you'd be wrong. In 1957, Mercedes-Benz developed the 300 SLS, a special version of the W198 300 SL Roadster built for entry into National Sports Car Championship in the USA. Two examples were made after the Sports Car Club of America

refused to accept the regular production 300 SL into its Standard Production class for the 1957 season. Engineers thereupon transformed the production roadster into a competition vehicle, which meant that it was eligible to race in a class with fewer restrictions. Paul O'Shea drove the 300 SLS to a comfortable class title in that year's SSCA Sports Car Championships.



*Daimler photo*

The 300 SLS weighed just 970 kilograms (series-production version: 1,330 kilograms), while the engine output of 235 hp represented an increase of 20 hp. Externally, the 300 SLS is distinguishable by the absence of bumpers, its specially shaped cockpit cover with air intake slot, the low racing windscreen, and the roll-over bar behind the driver's seat.

## For Sale

*Members can advertise MB cars, parts and accessories here. Non-members will pay a fee.*

**Roof Rack for a W211 (2003-09) E-class.** Lockable and very secure. Will support 100 kg/220 lb. Only used twice. New \$425, asking \$200. Email [alexwortmann@shaw.ca](mailto:alexwortmann@shaw.ca)



**Roof Rack 2-bike carrier.** Adjustable bike carrier locks onto the roof rack of any class of MB. Complete with 2 bike platforms, tire ratchet straps, frame grip which locks the bikes. Very safe and secure to transport your bikes. Like new - Paid \$240, asking \$130. Roof Rack not included. Email [alexwortmann@shaw.ca](mailto:alexwortmann@shaw.ca)

## The Back End



A 1928 W06 SSK on the 2013 Mille Miglia retrospective. *Daimler photo*

An MB rear clip made entirely from paper, in the window of a leather-goods shop in New York. *Photo: John McIntosh*

