



Vancouver Island Section

January, 2014

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Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!

Jan 19: Brunch, Fireside Grill, 11:00 AM. The Fireside Grill’s tasty Sunday buffet is a good way to start the Club year. We’ll meet there at 11 and, if there’s interest, go for a short drive afterwards. The Fireside Grill is just up the hill and across the street from the Royal Oak Shopping Centre, where we had coffee last November. The address is 4509 West Saanich Road, and it’s easier to enter from the south than the north.

Please drop me a note **by Jan. 16** if you plan to come so we can provide numbers to the restaurant.

Mar 3: Board Meeting; the Section’s next Board meeting at Three Point Motors, 5 PM.

Mar 23: Detailing Demonstration, focussed this year on keeping up the interior

Apr 13: Chemainus Theatre, where the play is the comedy *Jeeves in Bloom* ([click](#)). Barry Patchett has already booked our tickets!

May 11: New models and technology, Three Point Motors annual demonstration of what’s new in the world of Mercedes-Benz. Organizers Hazel and Dennis Ostrowerka.

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 Member!

Robert Wootan – 05 SLK350; 09 C300

Renewing Members!

Wilf & Betty Beaton- 09 E320

Dallas Chapple – 11 C300

Brian David Light – 91 190D

Barry Patchett & Gwen Jewett – 65 230SL; 08 E350

Thank you!

Jun 6-8: Lake Crescent, Seattle Section drive, organizer Brown Maloney. Lake Crescent is in Olympic National Park about 17 miles west of Port Angeles, so should be easily reachable via the Coho crossing.

Jun 14: Summer BBQ. This will be a full-day event. Ron and Donna Drane have offered to host us this year at their private island off Saturna. Look for details in a future newsletter. The date is a Saturday.

Jul 17: Driver training event organized by GAIN-Vancouver Island. This half-day event will be held at Western Speedway. Please note that the date is a Thursday.

Jul 25-27: Regional Leavenworth weekend, BC Stars Section, organized by Joseph Anthony.

Leavenworth is a delightfully Bavarian-themed town on the east slope of the Cascades and a favoured destination for car clubs. The North Cascades Highway is a most enjoyable road to drive in a performance car.

Aug 24: Motorcar Gathering, the annual show ‘n shine in the grounds of Queen Alexandra Hospital.

Sep TBA: Rally/tour: Details forthcoming later.

Sep 7: Camano Island Beach, Seattle Section drive organized by Bob Willits; Bob is also a Vancouver Island member. Camano Island is most easily reached from the mainland by turning west to the south of Mount Vernon. The beach is within a State park.

Sep 14: Tech event, Mercedes-Benz Nanaimo; details later

Oct 18: Annual Meeting, the Club’s one and only business meeting of the year for the general membership.

Nov 16: Morning coffee, locations TBA.

Waivers

The National Business Office looks after an insurance policy for events organized by the MBCA. We’ve been reminded that this policy requires participants to sign a waiver before some types of event, a practice we have not been following. The policy provides second and third party coverage and protects the organizer and Section directors in the event of a claim stemming from an accident during a Club event. After we’ve sorted out a small issue with some US-specific language, you will start to see waivers before events for which they are required.



Stargazing

On the Road to Lower Emissions

A 2012 poll of Canadians found that 86% believed that carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are a leading cause of climate variability and change. I think the competing opinion on this issue, which I followed professionally for most of my career, can now be disregarded. So I was encouraged to read the progress MB engineers have made in reducing CO₂ emissions across the model lineup.

In a media release last month, Daimler reported that fleet-average CO₂ emissions for the 2014 model-year are 134 grams per kilometer, a reduction of 40% compared to 1994. Daimler appears to have based the calculation on the total number of powertrain variations and classes on offer worldwide.

That 40% reduction equates to a savings of 3.5 to 4 L/100 km for the 'average' new car, which works out to a reduction of more than one tonne of CO₂, or 600 L of fuel, per year for the average motorist (driving 15,000 km/y). The improvement in efficiency has been greater for diesel than for gasoline engines.

It's not so long ago that our government encouraged Canadians to take the 'one-tonne challenge', reducing their personal emissions by that amount. Not many of us use cars as old as 1994 as a daily driver, but MB's emissions are becoming incrementally lower each year.

In preparing this story, I plowed through the US EPA's booklet of 2014 fuel economy ratings, which is organized by fuel type and then by vehicle type, size and manufacturer. While diesel-engined MBs are at or near the top of the fuel economy ratings for similar 2014 vehicles across all manufacturers, the gasoline-powered models are not. So we can look for further improvements!

Harmonization

Free trade discussions, like those underway between the EU, Canada and the USA, usually encompass more than the removal of tariffs. Both Canada and the US have agreed in principle gradually to remove the 6.1% duty on European cars, which should have the effect of boosting sales in both countries. Tim Reuss, the President of MB Canada, is looking for more, however.

MB Canada and BMW Canada want harmonization of safety and environmental regulations between Europe and North America ([click](#)). Eliminating the cost and delay involved in certifying new cars to meet Canadian requirements would lower costs further and broaden the model line-up. While Canadian and American emission regulations have been the same for many years, Canada still has safety requirements, such as daytime running lights, which differ from the US code.

Reuss told the Globe and Mail that MB would immediately bring in the sub-compact A-class and a 4-Matic version of the Sprinter van if European test results were accepted in Canada. Interestingly, Mexico allows sales of new vehicles that meet either European or American standards.

R&D and Manufacturing

Automobile manufacturers must invest substantially in research and development to stay at the leading edge of technology. MB has some 13,000 employees at 22 R&D centres around the world, over 80% of whom work in Germany. The company operates five such centres in the United States: Group Research and Advanced Engineering (a.k.a. the connected car) and Advanced User Experience Design, both in Silicon Valley; Advanced Exterior Design (California); and two locations in Michigan: eDrive & Powertrain and a Tech. Center.



Besides work to enable new car owners to continue their digital lifestyle while on the road, the Silicon Valley centre is working on adapting Daimler's driver assistance technology and autonomous driving capability to US roads. The Silicon Valley centre employs about 100.

Daimler has opened a manufacturing plant for Mercedes-Benz engines in China at the site of MB's joint venture in Beijing. The first facility for making MB engines outside Germany, it will produce four and six cylinder engines for Chinese-market cars, with an initial capacity of 250,000 units a year. Production will follow globally acknowledged Mercedes-Benz quality standards and processes.



The newly opened R&D building in Sunnyvale, CA (Silicon Valley).

Daimler photo

MB's joint venture in China is called the Beijing Benz Automotive Corporation (BBAC). The Chinese partner, BAIC Motor, is the passenger car unit of Beijing Automotive Industries Group (BAIC), in which Daimler owns a 12% stake. BBAC builds the C, a special long-wheelbase version of the E (March, 2013 issue), and the GLK classes for China. BBAC has become an important construction hub for Mercedes-Benz, building around 100,000 vehicles in 2012 for a rapidly expanding market. The GLA will also enter production there this year, as it will in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Technical Cooperation Agreement with Aston Martin

Daimler signed a cooperation agreement in December with the British sports car maker Aston Martin to supply V-8 engines for the next generation of their cars. The engines will come from Mercedes-AMG. Daimler receives up to 5 % of the non-voting shares of Aston Martin in return.



Aston Martin celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2013. Its current ownership group includes a company called Prime Wagon, the Italian private equity fund Investindustrial, and Kuwait-based Adeem Investment. Investindustrial recently owned Ducati, which assiduous readers of this newsletter will recall had another link to Daimler, but sold Ducati to Audi in 2013.

Wearable Computing (2)

MB's project to develop a link between the car's navigation system and its driver's smartphone was outlined in the last issue (November, 2013), along with some musings about wearable computing. This month, Hyundai announced that its 2015 Genesis model will incorporate cloud-based D-link technology to enable occupants to link the car's systems with wearable computers like Glass. No word on how regulators will view this development.

The Genesis is a serious competitor in the luxury car segment, providing features without the price premium associated with luxury nameplates.

Hyundai is part of the Open Automotive Alliance, along with Audi, GM, Honda and Google. Along with its automotive partners and graphic chipset maker Nvidia, Google is working to integrate Android mobile phones into infotainment systems to "make driving safer, easier and more enjoyable for everyone", they say. Google goes head-to-head in this area with Apple, whose automotive clients include Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

The W202 C-Class

A hat-tip this month to the 20th anniversary of the W202 C-class, the first model to bear the designation 'C'. Coming to market as a 1994 model, it succeeded the W201 equivalent, which was smaller and badged differently: 190E. A prettier design than the W201, the W202 had a relatively short production run, its last model-year being 2000. A well-made car, it is a still relatively common sight around Victoria.



The W202 with sport package. (photo: Wikipedia)

For 1998, the W202 was the first MB to use a diesel engine with Common rail Diesel Injection technology, whose acronym accounts for the CDI badge on many trunk lids. While common rail improved fuel economy and reduced visible smoke, its biggest advantage was reduction of the substantial clatter that characterized



earlier diesels. Together with an engine encapsulation package that further reduced noise, the common rail helped solidify the diesel's acceptance in the North American market.

The gasoline-engined W202 was also the first post-war MB to use a supercharger, a technology synonymous with MB's racing successes in the last half of the 1930s. In 1996, the W202 a supercharged 2.2-L four cylinder, which improved fuel economy by about 20% and increased torque at low engine speeds. The supercharged four-cylinder lasted on MB's regular models for only ten years or so, when turbochargers took over.

The Back End

Michael Schumacher shows off the driver assistance technology found in the new C-class http://daimler.cms-gomex.com/editor.php?keywords=schumacher_testet_c-klasse

The SLS Black Series comes second to the new Corvette in Road & Track's appraisal of performance car of 2013 <http://www.roadandtrack.com/bestof2013/2013-road-and-track-performance-car-of-the-year>. The Corvette also took top performance car honours in AJAC's (Automotive Journalists of Canada's) voting, where the S-class took the title of best new prestige car <http://www.thedriver.ca/index.php/news7/item/700-ajac%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Cbest-new%E2%80%9D-group-winners-revealed> .

An amusing on-line advertising duel: first comes an MB ad that uses chickens to illustrate the benefit of Magic Body Control (!) <http://www.auto123.com/en/news/what-do-chickens-have-to-do-with-mercedes-benz-cars?artid=160351>. Jaguar then suggests that cats beat chickens in the animal world <http://www.auto123.com/en/news/jaguar-takes-jab-at-mercedes-benz-in-hilarious-new-ad-video?artid=162935>

Formula One switches from engines to 'power units'. An almost-comprehensible explanation of the new complications facing MB and the other teams as they prepare for next season <http://www.f1technical.net/features/19037>



A W202 C43 AMG, the first AMG car to be completely assembled in Affalterbach. Photo: Wikipedia

