



Vancouver Island Section

February, 2014

In This Issue:

Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!	1
January Brunch	2
Membership is UP	3
Stargazing	3
Seat Belts and the Canadian Safety Standards.....	3
SCoop.....	4
The New C.....	4
Aluminum	6
The Connected Car (2).....	7
Two Post-War Legends.....	8
The Back End.....	9

Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!

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

Mar 23: Detailing Demonstration, focussed this year on keeping up the interior. The event will again be at Diamond Detailing, whose demonstration last year was most informative. Please let me know if you have a special topic you’d like to see. RSVP for numbers please ([click](#)).

Apr 13: Chemainus Theatre, where the play is the comedy *Jeeves in Bloom* ([click](#)). Barry Patchett has already booked our tickets! Please let him know if you plan to go ([click](#)).

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.

Jun 6-8: Lake Crescent: MBCA Seattle Section Section weekend event, organizers Brown and Sara Maloney. Join the group heading down from Vancouver Island. Lake Crescent is in Olympic National Park about 17 miles west of Port Angeles, easily reachable via the

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!

Sue & Dan Linnen - 04 C240

Renewing Members!

*Cees & Ellen denHolder - 57 220S, 66 230SL,
69 280SE
Marke Simmons*

Thank you!

Coho crossing. Full details are in Bob's message of Feb. 6 or [here](#) on the internet.

Jun 14: Summer BBQ. This will be a full-day event. Ron and Donna Drane have offered to host this year's BBQ on their private island off Saturna. We'll also have an impressive photo opportunity at Saturna's heritage Fog Alarm Building. Look for details in a future newsletter. The date has to be a Saturday because of the Sunday ferry schedule.

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 event, 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 one of our region's most enjoyable and scenic roads.

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.

January Brunch

Twenty-one convivial members and guests met over brunch at the Fireside Grill on January 19. Our conversation covered the car-related topics that always crop up when MB enthusiasts get together but was more than usually broad. At my end of the table the two hours' discussion ranged from daughter's wedding plans to the difficulty of extracting enzymes from marine algae.

Philip Early introduced his sister Sue and her husband Dan Linnan, new members of our Section with a C240 purchased at the end of December. We were also pleased to see recent member Gerry Woloshyn for the first time; Gerry drove down from Comox to join us.



Nigel Oddy and Sherry have signed up for a Club tour in August, 2015 that goes from Chicago to Key West. Hosted by the Chicagoland Section with lots of tours and entertainment *en route*, it sounds like a fun trip! Information is available in the most recent issue of the *Star*.

A surprising number seemed aware of the house fire in Lion's Bay on the day before the brunch that had claimed the present existence of what looked from its photo like a late 60's-early 70's Ferrari coupe. Reported as a Ferrari, it was hard to tell the model because the car and house were both heavily damaged. The suspected culprit was a battery tender connected to the car, which should give a pause for reflection to those of us who use such things. The owner was not at home at the time.

We were last at the Fireside Grill a couple of years ago, when it was, again, a popular choice. The buffet offers more than enough variety for breakfast or lunch. There's a variety of fresh seafood and the desserts are delicious.

Membership is UP

On January 31, 2013, Vancouver Island Section had 69 primary members, up from 57 the year previously. We have 23 associate members compared to 22 a year earlier. It costs nothing to register an associate member, typically a spouse or equivalent, and the National Business Office will be happy to look after this for you.

The MBCA had 20,683 Primary Members and 7,800 Associate Members at the end of last month, 578 more than the year before. Our Club could not exist without your loyalty—thank you!

Stargazing

Seat Belts and the Canadian Safety Standards

Article by Louis Fourie, enlarging on MB Canada's push to harmonize European and Canadian safety standards (January 2014 issue). Louis is President of the BC Stars Section.

I have watched the evolution of North American safety standards since their formation in the 1960s.

Because the Federal Government does not have jurisdiction over wearing seat belts, there are some poor criteria to these standards. Most other global standards make the assumption that the occupants are belted up and as such have made use of pre-tensioners to "position" occupants. During the phase that the belt is fully stressed against the occupant, most manufacturers soften up forces at this point, after which the focus is to minimize intrusion into the cabin.

The American and by extension Canadian standards assumed the passengers were not "manually" belted extending the softening period while the unbelted occupant finds a "soft" landing. This eventually created the need for active devices such as the airbags. Included under this active list for a while were those belts that were mounted in doors or motorized up the A-pillar along the top of the door. These belts got round the "manual" operation of having to belt up. In the end the airbag was needed, but this still results in a delay awaiting the soft landing.

I have not been able to determine to what extent this archaic ruling has been removed and whether this is one of the core reasons for the trade agreement to harmonize the safety standards.



The irony of this is that in typical American fashion the legal issue of jurisdiction over belt wearing won out over the best engineering solution. Said another way, the auto manufacturers have been forced to let the lawyers call the shots and cater to the lowest common denominator, the idiot who is not belted.

This is kept rather quiet for fear that some lawyer does not decide to create a test case and go after manufacturers whose vehicles are solely designed to the American standards, and accordingly have a built-in delayed reaction to management of the crush sequence.

It is my understanding that all manufactures would welcome a uniform standard but are nervous promoting it. It will be interesting how the legal minded legislators try to defy physics.

SCOOP

Too bad Hyundai already took that name. The new S-class coupe has just been unveiled and it looks extremely sleek. The lines sweep back from the pedestrian-safer nose over a streamlined greenhouse to a rather Acura-like tail, emphasizing the car's power and potential speed. Initial offerings will have the twin-turbo, 4.9 L (badged 550) engine from the sedan delivering power to all four wheels. The interior is, perhaps, MB's most sensual to date.

Daimler photo



It is, of course, loaded with features and options you didn't know you wanted. One of these is a suspension trick that has the car leaning into corners, like a motorcycle, at a maximum angle of 2.5 degrees, which would reduce the sensation of lateral acceleration (G-force) experienced by the occupants. The system anticipates corners using data from the stereo cameras and sets the car up for a coming turn. This would be an advantage for those of us who like corners, meaning we should be able to take them faster before triggering a passenger's reaction.

Among the bling are features such as Swarovski crystals in the optional headlights and the scent dispensing system mentioned in a previous newsletter. This trend to showy options may seem distasteful to some of the conservative customers who form the bulk of MB's legacy buyers, but it's part of the brand's effort to broaden that base to younger customers.

The New C

You've probably seen something in the press about the W205 C-class for 2015. An important new model for Mercedes-Benz, it was introduced in Detroit last month at the North American International Auto Show (NAIS) accompanied by four short videos of the car in action ([click](#)). Europe will get fourteen different engines, starting with C 180 gasoline and diesel variants and moving up to gasoline and hybrid versions of the C 400, which has



Take Advantage of ALL Your Member Benefits



What Your Low-Cost Membership Fee Buys

Price

- ✓ 12-month membership in MBCA (2 and 3 year memberships also available). See 'BECOME A MEMBER' postcard in this issue for details Included
- ✓ 12-month Associate membership for your spouse or partner (18 years of age or older, living in same household) Included
- ✓ Receive one month FREE membership for every new Member you recruit Included
- ✓ Time to renew your membership? Renew for 3 years, get 3 months FREE. Renew for 2 years, get two months FREE. See 'RENEW TODAY' postcard in this issue for details Free Months Included
- ✓ NEW! 45% off plus FREE ground shipping on car, boat, furniture covers and more from empirecovers.com Included
- ✓ Subscription to our award-winning bi-monthly magazine, The Star® Included
- ✓ Instant savings off the purchase or lease price of a NEW Mercedes-Benz (for current Members after 12 consecutive months of membership). Discounts & conditions vary Included
- ✓ Instant savings on parts, service and accessories at participating Mercedes-Benz Dealerships and independent shops Included
- ✓ FREE technical advice, 24/7, to help you maintain, service, condition or repair your vehicle. If you have a question, our online Tech Talk experts will have an answer Included
- ✓ 15% off parts from Mercedes-Benz Classic Center Included
- ✓ Discounts on car rentals, auto insurance, Sears® Craftsman tools, and more Included
- ✓ Representation by a legal official (ombudsman) who will investigate and assist you with a complaint about your Dealership, should you ever have one Included
- ✓ Access to local, regional & national car shows & events Included
- ✓ Defensive driving classes, performance driving schools & technical seminars for every level of driver — beginner to advanced Registration fee may apply
- ✓ "Safe Drivers, Safe Families" driver education for teens and novice drivers taught by experienced members of MBCA's Educational Foundation Registration fee may apply
- ✓ Resources for enthusiasts, including: an email directory to pre- and post-war brand experts; a calendar of car shows and auctions; access to Mercedes-Benz book authors; a listing of automotive museums and more Included



ONLY
 \$49 OR \$59*

*\$49/year U.S. Members; \$59/year Canadian & International Members

a twin-turbo V6 with 333 hp and 354 lb-ft of torque. At the top end, the C 63 AMG will have a 4.0 L V8 with 460-485 hp and 479-516 lb-ft. The W205 is almost 100 kg lighter than the W204, thanks to more extensive use of aluminum under the skin and in the roof, trunk and hood panels. For the first time, versions sold here will be built in Vance, Alabama.

North American markets will initially see the C 300 and 400 in 4-Matic versions, but not before September. Rear-wheel drive will arrive later. As for engines, MB Canada's president, Tim Reuss, said a diesel will be available early in 2105. Star of the lineup from my perspective is the C 300 Bluetec Hybrid, which is projected to achieve 60 mpg (US gallon!), or less than 4 L/100 km. According to *EVWorld*, this variant will combine a 2.1 L 204 hp diesel with a 27 hp electric motor.

Speaking from MB's stand at the Detroit show, Daimler's CEO Dieter Zetsche highlighted the company's success in the US market, where MB has knocked off perennial leader BMW to take over the crown in luxury car sales for 2013. Analysts attributed part of this feat to the impact of the new CLA, a hot seller whose typical purchaser, at age 41, is ten years younger than for the brand as a whole. Zetsche said that the CLA's conquest rate, which is industry-speak for convincing the owner of a different marque to buy yours instead, was an "unheard-of 80%".

While the CLA is also doing well in Canada, MB has yet to pass BMW in

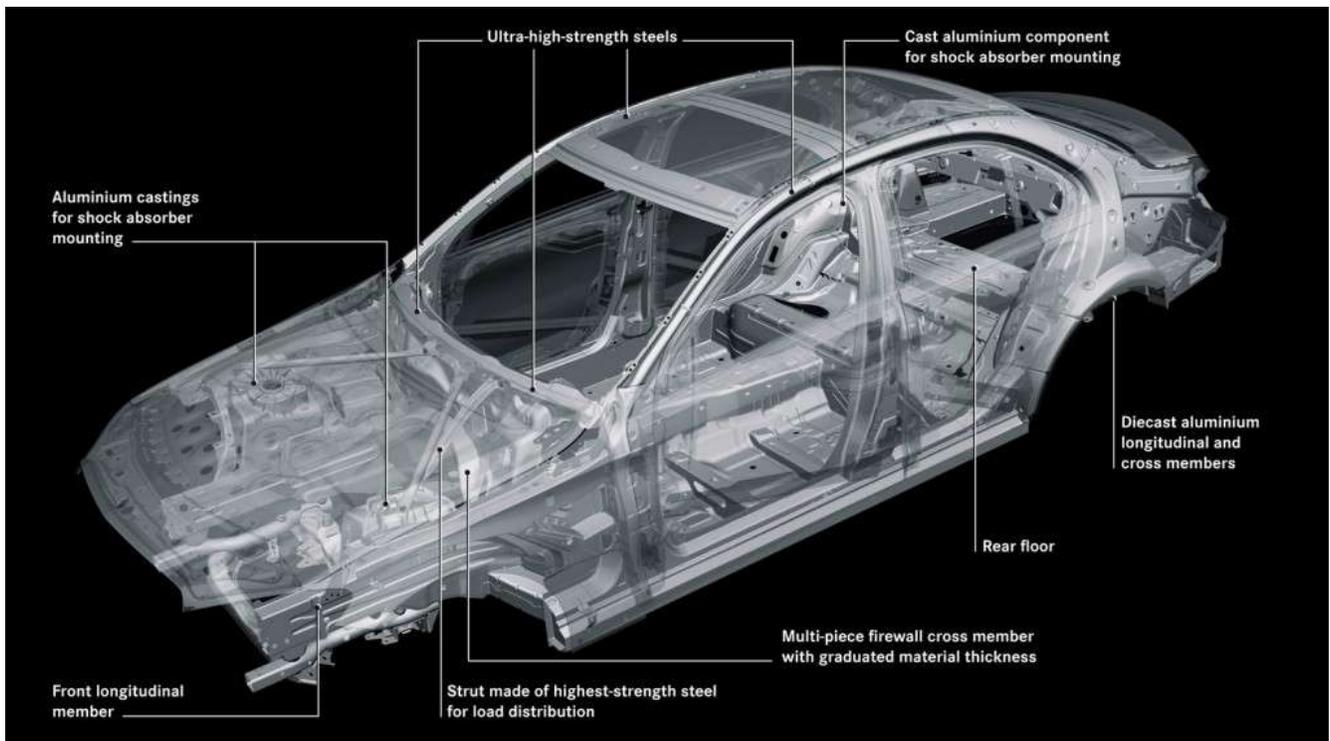


the sales race here, where its success owes much to the GLK and B-class, the latter model still unavailable south of the border.

Aluminum

The Ford F150 pickup was the surprise star of the North American International Auto Show (NAIS) despite the abundance of supercars, new technology and hybrid drive-trains in evidence from other manufacturers. Ford has managed to save about 700 pounds on its 2015 pickup by switching to aluminum chassis components and body panels. Even the pickup bed is aluminum. Weight being the enemy of fuel economy, the F150's diet has allowed Ford to fit smaller, more efficient V6's as the standard engine.

Audi pioneered the use of an all-aluminum monocoque on its large sedan, the A8, as long ago as 1994. The current A8 also has all-aluminum bodywork over top, making it the lightest car in its class. There's already a lot of aluminum in a modern Mercedes-Benz, mostly beneath the skin and under the fenders, and the trend is to have more. Like Audi's A8, the R231 SL-class (2013 on) has an all-aluminum body. The W205 C will make extensive use of high-strength aluminum under the skin: an aluminum rear bulkhead, roof panel, front fenders, hood, and trunk lid.



Aluminum under the skin of the 2015 W205 C-class. Image: motorauthority.com based on a Daimler photo.

If you're old enough to remember the exotics made with aluminum body panels in the 1950s and '60s, Ford's announcement probably made you think twice. Those old panels were notoriously difficult to straighten after an accident. The alloy of the day was soft, stretching enough at the point of impact that the flats and curves could not be hammered back into their original shape without significant amounts of filler. It's one thing to have this problem on a car whose new cost was as much as a modest house, but it would be quite another to have it on America's largest selling vehicle for 32 straight years, and probably 33 now that we've turned the page to 2014.



Ford is offering its American dealers, at least those with body-shops, a substantial discount on the \$30-50,000 of special equipment the manufacturer says will be needed to repair accident damage to the 2015 F150. On top of that, shop owners will have to physically separate their steel and aluminum repair work, apparently because steel dust and aluminum dust don't mix well. A Ford spokesman at the NAIS said that skin repair would involve replacing the damaged panel more often than straightening it.

None of us is a perfect driver, though we all think we're better than the one next door. We hear very little about what the use of aluminum might mean in the event of an accident but the implications are that, for a few years at least, an unfortunate R231 or W205 owner will have a limited choice of body-shops. There's some consensus that the F150 will be a game-changer for the auto industry, stimulating a stampede to aluminum in the mass-market and ultimately broadening the repair opportunities for those unlucky others who somehow acquire damage.

The Connected Car (2)

Excerpts from an article by Jessica Leeder in the Globe & Mail ([click](#))

Distraction – caused by texting, smartphones and other forces that draw drivers' attention off the road – is eclipsing impaired driving as the leading cause of crashes and fatalities in many jurisdictions across Canada and the United States.

Researchers fear the trend is on an upswing. Statistics collection has yet to evolve to show which highway fatalities are caused by texting or dialling a cellphone. However, academics who study the issue say texting is the most deadly of distractions – drivers who read or write text messages while operating vehicles are 23 times more likely to be in a crash than non-distracted drivers, according to researchers at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTI).

In the U.S., texting while driving annually causes 1.6 million accidents (National Safety Council) and 330,000 injuries (Harvard Center for Risk Analysis). Stuningly, 11 teens die every day while texting in the car, according to the Institute for Highway Safety.

"Dialling or texting or reading a text message, that's when they get themselves into trouble," said Charlie Klauer, a research scientist at VTI who specializes in watching people drive. Her studies involve monitoring drivers for months at a time via cameras and other equipment installed in their vehicles. "We don't see any increase [in crash risk] at all when we see adult or novice drivers talking on a cellphone, regardless of whether they're holding it or hands-free," she said. "That's because when you're talking on a cellphone, you're still looking forward."

Nicholas Ashford, a professor of technology and policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has been an outspoken critic of what he views as auto makers' decision to prioritize consumer desires for increased technology in vehicles over limiting its ubiquity for safety reasons. "I'm totally amazed at the social irresponsibility of the auto industry," he said. "These people are promoting death. That's what they're doing. It comes down to biology," he said, adding: "We process audio signals and we process visual signals. The brain functions so that it increases the signal of ... what we want to pay attention to. The other one becomes very muted."

Gary Strumolo, a manager of vehicle systems and design at Ford, said the issue of integrating the newest communications technology into the company's vehicle is double-edged.



“We want to make sure that while we take advantage of some of the information that can come into the car that we do it in a responsible way, so the driver can maintain the hands on the wheel and eyes on the road,” he said. “It’s the overriding consideration for us ... to make sure that when we do introduce something, it doesn’t adversely affect the driver’s ability to safely operate the vehicle.’

The future of in-car communications technology, Strumolo predicts, will feature more integrated use of smartphone ‘assistants’ such as the iPhone’s Siri and Google Now in the vehicle. “You’d never have to look at your phone – it could be in the trunk,” he said.

Virginia Tech’s Klauer is on side. “A complete ban on cellphones is not useful,” she said, adding that she supports ‘a truly hands-free system’ that requires at most one push of a button. “People are going to do it anyway. So let’s make it easy.”

Two Post-War Legends



Mercedes-Benz stand at the 1954 New York auto show. Photo: mercedesbenz.com



This month's hat-tip is to the 60th anniversary of the W198 300 SL and the W120 190 SL, both of which were introduced to the public at the New York Auto Show in 1954. The 300 SL gullwing was the production evolution of a special sports car with which the company had won several prestigious races; the roadster version did not come along until 1957. The 190 SL on MB's stand was a near-production prototype, not coming onto the market until 1955.

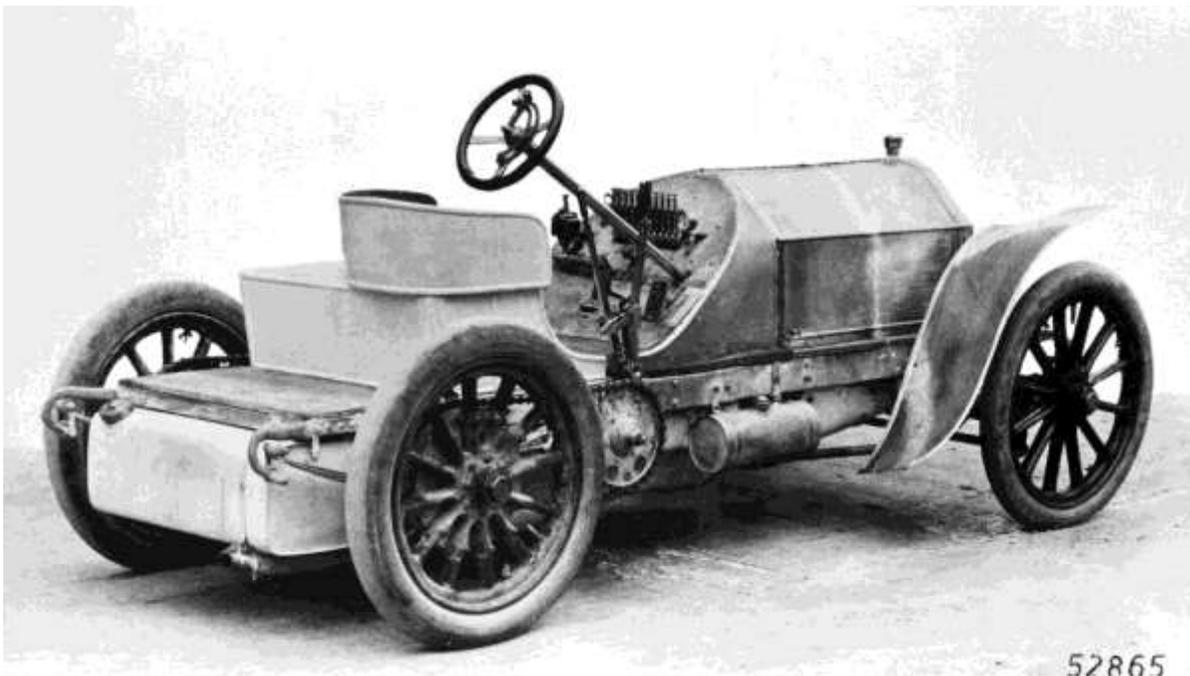
While both cars look drawn by the same pen, they were very different under the skin. The 300 SL sits on a tubular space frame with a race-based engine, while the 190 SL was built on technology adapted from the W120 180 sedan.

The Back End

Infographic analysis of Canadian auto sales in 2013 <http://www.thestrada.net/thought-factory/2014/1/13/canadian-sales-2013.html>

In this short video, Top Gear's The Stig, in an SLS AMG Black Series, takes on Google's street-view camera car in a one-lap race <http://www.topspeed.com/cars/car-news/video-the-stig-versus-google-street-view-car-162094.html>

Daimler's promotional video for the new S-class coupe http://daimler.cms-gomex.com/editor.php?keywords=S-Klasse_Coupe



The Mercedes 90 hp with which William K Vanderbilt Jr. set an unofficial world speed record of 92.3 mph on the sands of Daytona Beach, January 1904. Daimler photo

