



Vancouver Island Section

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Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!

Aug 16-18: Lady Rose Marine Trip. Reservations have closed for this weekend tour organized by Nigel and Sherry Oddy.

Aug 17: Motor Gathering , 11 am – 2 pm. A judged show at the **Viscount Aero Centre, 9800 McDonald Park Road, Sidney.** This is a new location on the eastern edge of the airport. Entered cars will be displayed outside on the grass, with some special cars inside a hangar, together with motorcycles from the Deeley



Museum in Vancouver and classic planes. Among the cars promised for display are the last 300 SL sold by the factory and a Porsche 904, perhaps the most elegant of that company's classic racers.

Horst Loewel's 1950 170S cab B at last year's event

Several Club members have interesting collector cars that are not Mercedes-Benzes. We've been thinking for some time of an event that might introduce us to these vehicles, and the Motor Gathering is as appropriate



as any. Of course, Mercedes-Benz cars are most welcome too! If you have a car or motorcycle you're proud of and would like to show, regardless of age or make, please register it at www.motorgathering.com. If you'd like to come to breakfast beforehand at 9 AM in Sidney, please drop me a line ([click](#)). We can drive from there to the field, arriving as a group.

This is a charity show with proceeds to benefit the Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island and the Saanich Peninsula Hospital Foundation. Last year's event raised \$52,831. This year's is already off to a good start, with several generous sponsors and many unique cars, motorcycles and airplanes already booked.

The Motor Gathering is organized by GAIN-VI, the dealer network supplying Mercedes-Benz to Vancouver Island.

You can enter your car on-line, in advance, at the link above. If you're not entering, consider coming out to look at the field on August 17th. Experience an hour or two in interesting company and help support a good cause.

Sep 7: Camano Island Beach, Seattle Section event 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. It's about an hour from the border. The location is at the Willits' beachfront property, which has a large grass area for MB parking a stone's-throw from the water, and a private boat ramp for anyone so inclined.

The day includes a BBQ. Overnight accommodation is available at Camano Island Waterfront Inn, Bistro and Spa ([click](#)). Contact Bob Willits for more details ([click](#)).

Sep 21 (date change): Tech event. New models and technology from Mercedes-Benz Nanaimo, with a BBQ lunch served. Organizer Barry Patchett ([click](#)).

Sunday Oct. 5, Tour of South Vancouver Island. Rob Watson ([click](#)) is organizing this full day event, which will tour out from Victoria through Sooke, and then up the west coast of the Island to Port Renfrew. From Port Renfrew the route will go northeast to Mesachie Lake and then east to Duncan.

Rob organized a great tour in the other direction a few years ago. Everyone had a good time and there's no guarantee the this time route will be the same. Route instructions will be provided.

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.

Section Officers

President: [Bob Wilson](#)

Vice President: vacant

Secretary: [Hazel Ostrowerka](#)

Treasurer: [Rob Watson](#)

Membership: [Jeff Cohen](#)

Director at large: [Dennis Ostrowerka](#)

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Hon. Vice President: Peter Trzewik

Past President: [Barry Patchett](#)



Driver Training Event

Article and photo by Barry Patchett

On July 17, fourteen members from the Vancouver Island and Seattle Sections took part in an entry level advanced driving course hosted by Three Point Motors. Ian Gleadle came all the way from Seattle in his 1962 190SL, the oldest car which attended. The driving instruction was provided through GAIN, the German Auto Import Network of Vancouver Island and hosted by Three Point Motors of Victoria. We gathered at Western Speedway in time for lunch, also hosted by Three Point Motors.

The course started with a short presentation on the day's events by dealer staff. We were then allowed to choose some of the many supplied Mercedes Benz vehicles for the afternoon's fun. They ranged from a GLK 250 BLUETEC diesel to an E550 coupe and included examples of most of the MB range, including the new CLA.

The first exercise was a braking demonstration from a speed of about 50 km/h into a boxed area, which showed us how to use ABS correctly. We moved on to a lane change emergency at 50 km/h, which showed some of us the virtues of stability control, while taking out a few unsuspecting pylons!

We then had two timed runs on a slalom - loop - slalom autocross in an all-electric Smart car, which took about 30 seconds for the faster drivers. Hitting a pylon cost 3 seconds, so a clean run was mandatory. First place went to Jeff Cohen, second to Nigel Oddy and third to Alex Currie.



Next up was the highlight of the day for many of us, about twenty-one laps of the short road course at the Speedway, following the Instructor car for three laps at a time. The instructor car was a CLA 45 AMG, which had no problem staying ahead of the rest of us! Most of us can't wait for Stage 2 at the new road course near Duncan.

Check out our new website at www.vancouverisland.mbca.org!



Welcome New Members!

Richard Engvist - Sidney
Phil Hoult - Victoria
Kenneth Levers - Parksville

Renewing Members!

Robert Allen - 86 560SL
Richard Ediss - 98 C280, 10 GLK350
Martin Enright - 67 230SL, 94 SL600, 03 CL600, 06 C230
Kenneth & Joan Loga - 84 500 SEC
Rennie Parrish
Donald & Chris Sly-Prochnow -66 230SL, 88 300TE, 08 Smart
Leo Vanderven
Jeff Wooder
Alex Wortmann

Stargazing AMG Coupe

The appearance of the new GT AMG coupe has been given more substance with the sighting of several examples on test at the site of the Pike's Peak hillclimb. The SLS AMG is at the end of its production run; 350 examples of the Final Edition have already been built. Its replacement, the GT AMG, will be slightly smaller and considerably less expensive, with journalists predicting it will be priced against the Porsche 911. It will debut at the Paris auto show in October.

The GT's engine makes more modest power than the SLS: 510 hp from a twin-turbo, 4-L V8. With a lighter body and maximum torque of up to 650 Nm the new AMG V8 still delivers very rapid performance. The turbochargers are notable for being mounted inside the vee rather than on the nose or

sides of the engine. Dry sump lubrication enables a low profile for the hood that harks back to the classic 300 SL. Each twin-cam cylinder head is made of zirconium alloy for temperature stability and thermal conductivity. Fuel consumption is under 10 L/100 km, impressive for such a high performance car. Reports say the body and chassis make extensive use of aluminum.



Image: Kent Kirkpatrick, autoweek.com





Daimler photo

What's in a C-Class

With the switch to the W205 C-class for 2015, the new generation is being made in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. These days, however, any auto manufacturer incorporates parts from a large number of suppliers besides what they do in-house. Most folk have no idea how extensive this list of suppliers is, and some, mistakenly, think Mercedes-Benz made every part of their car. Courtesy of *Automotive News*, here's a partial list of suppliers for the W205:

- Leather interior – Eagle Ottawa
- Roof bonding – Sika
- Door handles – Huff, Huelsbeck & Fuerst
- Sunroof – Inteva Products
- Infotainment module – Harman
- Interior trim parts – Novem
- Console with armrest – Grammer
- Auto-dimming centre mirror – Gentex
- Steering wheel – Takata
- Steering column bearings- INA
- Gas spring for the hood – Stabilus
- Hood hinge – Edscha
- Tunnel, hood & dash insulation – Carcoustics
- Oil mist separators – Mahle
- Cylinder heads – NemaK
- Dual mass flywheel – LuK
- Electrical coolant pumps – KSPG automotive



- Coolant hoses – Teklas
- Sound deadeners – FAIST Tech
- HVAC actuator – Johnson Electric
- Parking heater – Webasto
- Body-in-white fasteners – Profil
- Transmission filter system – Filtran
- Transmission oil cooling lines – ContiTech
- Electronic power steering – ZF Lenksysteme
- Prop shafts – IFA Rotorion
- Clutch actuating system – FTE Automotive
- Suspension air supply unit – WABCO
- Body control module – Hella
- Seat structures – Brose
- LED module on the sill plates – APAG Electronic
- Floor carpet – IAC
- Engine, exhaust & underbody shields – ElringKlinger
- Floor pan blank – Shiloh Industries
- Gas tank heat shields – Lyall Gerhardt
- Tank systems – TI Automotive
- Axle systems – ZF Friedrichshafen
- Front wheel bearings – NSK
- Rear wheel bearings – FAG
- Wheel hubs – Hirschvogel
- Brake pads – ITT Italia
- Shock absorbers – Thyssen Krupp
- Rear armrest cupholder damper – Cultraro
- Door glass assembly – AGC Automotive

Besides manufacture, the supplier is also responsible for the detailed design of the component in many or most cases, with MB providing physical and functional specifications. It's enough to create some respect for the Mercedes-Benz engineers whose job it is to integrate these disparate sources into a well-functioning whole.

Mog

MB has launched a new generation of the Unimog, the sixth in this series for serious off-roaders. A complete contrast to the AMG performance coupes, Unimogs are a rare sight in North America or, for that matter, in Europe. The last I remember seeing was a customer vehicle at Three Point Motors' garage sale last fall.

The Unimog combines extreme ruggedness with the latest in engine technology. It come in two series, the U4023 (gvw 10.3 tonnes) and the U5023 (gvw up to 14.5 tonnes). Drive comes from a 4-cyl. diesel. Several power-takeoff points allow a wide variety of implements to be used. Controlled chassis flex aids comfort and reliability. The axles can pivot 30 degrees on uneven terrain and the allowable approach angles are 44 degrees at the front and 51 at the rear. The vehicle can ford 1.2 metres of water.

Uses for the Unimog include forest-fire fighting, the energy sector, pipeline construction, disaster response and expeditions. The vehicle is made at MB's truck plant in Wurth, Germany.





Daimler photo

Refinish Wood Veneer on the Console & Replace the Shift Boot

Article and photos submitted by Jamie Graham

Yes, this may be excruciatingly boring but on the other hand you may be slightly amused and educated at the same time. Let's give it a go.

This project started because the centre wood veneer console on my 1987 420 SEL (W126) was faded and cracked. At least it looked like that to me. I mentioned it to the "bride" who gave me that stare and head tilt ... right. Twenty seven (27) years will do that. The veneer, not the wife. So I thought, how tough would it be to tackle this myself? Piece of cake, I thought. Right again!

Some advice before any of you think this is a good idea. Unless you enjoy spending a lot of time obsessing and worrying about your car, live with the faded original. Hey, a faint heart never kissed a duck's ass.

First, one has to get the wood veneer out of the car. The only trick to this is to go very, very slow. Remove the ashtray, then a couple of screws and then that little plastic coin tray gizmo has to come out. Don't pry out the wood veneer piece, it slides gently north about 1 cm, then it lifts up. Be careful as all the window switches, etc are still attached and if you haven't done this before, the wires and switches will be very dry and brittle. Stop here.

There isn't much written about how one removes these switches. If you can see the underside of the switches, they are each held in place with two clips at the north and south ends. If you have a tiny screwdriver (or extra fingers and I'm not here to judge) very gingerly try to pry them away and the whole switch will come out from the underside, not the top. Once done you'll see a plastic template gizmo that staples to the underside of the wood veneer. Each switch has its own part number and the switch itself pries away from the wiring harness if you have to replace one.





So ... I got the veneer piece out of the car. What do I do next, I ask myself. Stapled on the back is the black plastic template I mentioned that holds the window, right side mirror and rear speaker switches in place. Very gently (again) use a tiny jeweler's screwdriver (I found was best) and pry the plastic away from the wood piece. The plastic will come away with some encouragement, with the staples sticking out (which will have to be removed). Use a tiny pair of pliers to reverse push the staples back so you can get a tool to pull them all out from the same side they were put in at the factory. You'll have to put this all back later so the staples have to come out.

Find a quasi-clean place to work and concentrate on getting the existing coating off the wood veneer faceplate. You won't read this anywhere but this stuff is like concrete and congratulations to Mercedes for using such a tough coating. I used the standard wood stripper and hardly made a 'dent' after four attempts. I finally saw some of the coating coming away from the sides of the piece, then four more coats and I had it all off. This took a week on and off. I was finally down to the bare wood. Towards the end there were splotches of original varnish still on the wood so I applied stripper with a Q tip just on the areas that needed to come off. When you think you are done, inspect the wood very carefully as there are always some hidden spots on the sides where the original coating was still intact.



Voila! I should have stopped there. I checked around for some wood refinishing places where they could spray clear coat on the exhibit but the price was high and what the hell, in for a dime, in for a dollar. I tried three times with spray clear from the local hardware store to do this myself but I finally gave up. I even built a small dust shield cover for the piece right after my spray job but dust and bugs seemed to be everywhere. Try working in an area cleaner than my 40 year old single decrepited wood garage that the wife calls the "Man Cave". There is a reason why there are experts in this field and they have real workshops! About a year ago I removed a tiny starter of a wasp nest and at the worst possible time a gentle wind picked it up from somewhere in the garage and deposited it right in the middle of my day's work! Aaaaarrrrrhhh.

I was up at Rudi's (Rudi Koniczek and Company) one day, picking their collective brains and I think they took pity on me. I had tried poly resin which I was told would solve my problems but it just went cloudy after a day. They seized my "work in progress" and advised me to step away. It was in good hands now. A few days later, Rudi called me and said he had my veneer in his office for pick up. When I showed up, the fellow who had worked on my piece wanted to do another coat and but Rudi said that was enough, and "it's not as if this is a \$500,000.00 collector car." I was crushed, speechless; it may look like an '87 420SEL but it is my pride and joy and worth at least ½ a million (if you consider the time I have put into the car). What I got back was absolutely beautiful, work of art by the hands of a true craftsman. This final photo doesn't do it justice.





During this whole ordeal, I noticed that the rubber boot was cracked/torn under the gear shifter. I thought, as I was half-way there, might as well try to remove it. The plastic surrounding the shifter is well bolted in place. Bolts at all four corners and very hard to get at. You need a very thin extension to your socket to wiggle it between the rigid air tubes on either side. Get your head up by the dash and you can see the bolts. Remove them very slowly. Once out, (the plastic not my head) you'll see two tiny plastic clips and a lighting wire on the north side that have to be removed.



Then two tabs on the sides that have to be pushed in.

Everything kind of falls apart at this stage. Here are the exploded views.



The shifter is pretty straightforward. Loosen a nut at the bottom of the shifter and it just screws upward and out. Here is the old boot. A new one from Three Point Motors was about \$20.00 (had to be ordered from Germany).



This was a good time to clean out the area under the switches and the shifter. A lot of gunk, dust, dirt accumulates over the years. No real advice from me how to do this, just a lot of Q tips and some careful vacuuming.

There is still more to this story. I figured that I had the window switches out, might as well clean the terminals. Using an electronics spray, it seemed like I just touched the first switch and it disintegrated in my hand. More aaaarrhhhhh!



New from the dealer these are about \$90.00 each but Topcat (Langford) had some used plus a cardboard box of used centre veneer consoles. All were in pretty rough shape but I got two switches for \$15.00. Just to be safe I got a couple more new ones online for about \$15.00 each. Made in China.

Reassembly was straightforward. I cleaned the underside of the plastic template, then dabbed JB Weld where the staples used to be, then just put some weight on it all for a day, until everything cured. I covered the refinished wood veneer with a cloth and some tape just in case. A day later, I snapped the window (et al) switches back into place. I had broken two plastic tabs removing them so put a pin-sized amount of JB Weld at a key spot to hold the switch in place. If I have to remove them, again I'll be able to get them out. I kept



reminding myself, just a tiny amount. Luckily I tested the window switches before reassembly and the driver's window didn't work. Fuse had blown, easily replaced.

Stand by for my next project. Wheel refurbishing, air-conditioning unit repair, front seats refurbished ... so many projects, so little time. Aka How I rebuilt my Mercedes by hand.

Long Distance Driving

Two British journalists have driven an E 350 Bluetec Hybrid from Tangier, Algeria, to Goodwood, in southern England, on a single tank of fuel. Filling the 80-litre tank in Tangier, they travelled 1968 km in 27 hours, with enough fuel left over at the end for a further 160 km of driving. The route went through Spain and France and included both city driving and significant changes in elevation. The trip-average fuel consumption was 3.8 L/100 km, a pretty astonishing figure for a full-sized sedan. You'll have to wait to try one out, though, because this model is not sold in North America.

Smart Again

Delivery of the new, third generation Smart car will start in November in Europe. It looks a lot like the present one but there will, again, be a four-passenger version called the Smart Forfour (Daimler continues to use the ee cummings capitals-free style). Coming in three trim levels, both the two- and four-passenger cars in our market will have an 89 hp, three-cylinder engine connected to a twin-clutch 6-speed transmission driving the rear wheels.

A comprehensive suite of appearance, comfort and safety options will be available, including a folding fabric roof on the Forfour akin to the one on the Fiat 500. Collision warning and lane-keeping assist will be available ([click](#)).

The last Forfour was actually for five. Never made available in Canada, it did poorly in the marketplace and had a short production run (2004-2006). The Forfour is 31.5 inches longer than the Fortwo and has folding rear seats.



Daimler photo

Progress at the Nissan-Renault Alliance

You might recall that Daimler signed a joint venture agreement with Nissan-Renault in 2010 to cooperate on technology and manufacturing (*May 2010 issue*). The two companies agreed recently to establish a 50:50 joint venture to oversee construction and operation of a new manufacturing plant in Aguascalientes, in north-



central Mexico. The new plant will be built in the immediate vicinity of a pre-existing Nissan plant and will have an annual capacity of 300,000 vehicles.

Production should begin with Infiniti models in 2017. The production of Mercedes-Benz cars will follow in 2018, but press announcements did not specify which model will be built there. The new plant is part of an initiative to pool development of compact cars to cut costs, to expand the German carmaker's North American production footprint and to broaden the Infiniti lineup. So the vehicle will likely be small.

Mexico is already an important market for Daimler. The company has production plants for trucks and buses in Saltillo, Santiago Tianguistenco, and Garcia, a parts distribution center in San Luis Potosí and a remanufacturing plant in Toluca. There is also a pre-delivery-inspection centre and a training center for passenger cars.

Last month, Infiniti and Daimler began making four-cylinder gasoline engines in Decherd, Tennessee. With an annual production capacity of 250,000 units, the Decherd facility produces engines for use in the W205 C-Class and the Infiniti Q50.

Later this year, Nissan-Renault and Daimler will start selling the next-generation Smart and Renault Twingo city cars. Developed on a common platform (*January 2012 issue*), the Twingo and the Smart Forfour will be made at the Renault plant in Novo Mesto, Slovenia, while the two seater Smart will continue at Hambach, France.

Battery Explosion Risk for Aftermarket Electronics

Alex Currie passed along an email about the explosion risk due to overheated batteries in electronic devices. The photo below is of the interior of a GM vehicle whose owner left a GPS attached to the windshield in the sun. The device overheated, causing the battery to explode. The damage was more extensive than you might imagine.

The moral is not to leave electronics exposed. Aside from the risk of theft at any time of the year, sun damage can be more expensive than one would think.



The Back End

A link to AMG's gradual unveiling of the GT AMG (thanks to Mike McBride): http://www.mercedes-amg.com/webspecial/amggt/index_eng.php#media/innovation/innovation_article01/

How to decode your MB's VIN (thanks Alex Currie); those seemingly random digits all mean something: [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Vehicle_Identification_Numbers_\(VIN_codes\)/Mercedes-Benz/VIN_Codes](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Vehicle_Identification_Numbers_(VIN_codes)/Mercedes-Benz/VIN_Codes)

Tony Whitney reviews the Smart electric car, the slalom car of choice for some Club members: <http://www.timscartalk.ca/better-than-a-smart-the-smart-fortwo-ed-electric> . If you're interested in the local car scene, Tim's car talk provides weekly updates.



A 2014 S 63 AMG coupe in anthracite blue. This is MB's top-of-the-line car: 6.0-L V12, 630 hp, 737 lb-ft, 0-100 km/h in 4.1 s, optional ceramic composite brakes, forged wheels, single lithium-ion battery, 11.9 L/100 km in the European driving cycle. Daimler photo.

