



## Vancouver Island Section

October, 2014

### In This Issue:

Coming Events - Mark your calendar now! .....	1
New Models and Technology, Nanaimo.....	1
Pacific Marine Road Tour.....	3
Stargazing .....	5
AMG GT .....	5
The Timeless W124.....	6
A Silent Partner.....	7
The Back End.....	7

### Coming Events - Mark your calendar now!

**Saturday, Oct 18: Annual Meeting, 11 AM at the Union Club.**

The Club’s one and only business meeting of the year for the general membership. What events should we have next year? This is your chance to give us feedback on the year past and input to the calendar for 2015. Lunch in the dining room after. Please RSVP to our host Jeff Cohen ([click](#)) so we know how many to expect.

**Sun, Nov 16 at 10 AM: Morning coffee.** The Victoria location will be the cafe at the Pier Hotel, at the foot of Beacon Ave in Sidney. The coffee shop is called Georgia Station. The Up-Island location will be the Saltair Station House cafe.

**Fri, Dec 19 at 7 PM: Holiday party,** Union Club. Details to follow.

### New Models and Technology, Nanaimo

Article and photos by Barry Patchett

Eleven members from the Vancouver Island Section attended a technical meeting on September 21 at Mercedes Benz Nanaimo. Our host was Taylor Kulai, a Sales and Lease Consultant. We started with coffee and a tour of all of the models in the showroom area, including a delectable SLK 55 AMG.

#### 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!**

*John & Anna Becker, Victoria, 14 B250*

**Renewing Members!**

*Russel Heslep - 86 560SL*

*Christo Pandelidis*

**Thank you!**

---

She then introduced us to the newest Mercedes Benz model, the GLA 250 with 4MATIC. This is an SUV styled vehicle with a 2.0 litre direct injection 4 cylinder gasoline engine. With the turbocharger, it puts out 208 HP (155 kW) and has excellent fuel economy. The car also comes with the latest “run flat” tire technology, so there is no spare tire – just a collapsible shopping cart in the former spare compartment! The gearbox has seven speeds and has both manual and automatic modes in the double clutch configuration. The vehicle has collision prevention assist, which works when



there is no foot on the accelerator – it is overridden under power. There is also an attention assist, which produces a vibration in the steering wheel to alert a wandering driver and includes a coffee cup display on the instrument panel when operating! There is a panoramic sunroof over both front and rear seating areas and side bars on the roof for the installation of a roof rack.





The new C class sedans were the second new cars that Taylor demonstrated. These cars have been upgraded in luxury items to be comparable to the E and S class vehicles in the interior.

*Daimler photos*



The display screen for navigation, etc., is much larger and mounted (fixed) high up on the dashboard, as shown in the photo. In the future, these will likely be removable. There are also new engines: a 2 litre turbo four in the C300, putting out 241 HP (180 kW). The C300 was formerly a 3.5 litre V6. The C400 has a 3 litre turbo V6 of 329 HP (246 kW). This

new badging by Mercedes Benz, where there is no correlation between the designation number and the engine displacement, or even the power output, is baffling to me and nobody seems to know the origin or reasoning behind it.

The new C class has air suspension as well, with four settings. These range from comfort through economy, sport and sport plus. Taylor said that “comfort” gives a silent, cushioned ride, while “sport plus” lets you feel every pebble on the road while you carve your way to a new record commute.

Our demonstration was followed by a barbeque of bratwurst, sauerkraut and potato salad. The barbeque itself was supplied via a Sprinter van organized by Yoshi Hildenbrand, the general manager of Mercedes Benz Nanaimo.

## **Pacific Marine Road Tour**

*Article by organizer Rob Watson*

Thirteen cars, 25 people and one adorable little bulldog met on October 5<sup>th</sup> on an overcast but dry morning at a Tim Hortons in Langford. There was a broad range of Mercedes-Benz periods represented, from a 1966 230 SL, a 1987 420 SEL to a 2014 E350 Coupé. Just before we left, we issued the first card of a five draw poker hand to be completed at our final stop at Serious Coffee in Duncan.

As we started our drive to Port Renfrew, the clouds began to disperse and the sun peeked out, a happy trend that continued until finally we were in full sunshine at Port Renfrew. This was a major bonus as we who live on



the west coast all know; October weather can be unpredictable. Our first stop was at the Shirley Delicious Café in, yes, you guessed it, the hamlet of Shirley. We shared chatter, coffee, delectable eats and were issued the second card.

In 2011, we travelled on the freshly paved back-country route from Lake Cowichan to Sooke along the Pacific Marine Road. We knew there were upgrades on the road and it was time to revisit it. To add a different perspective, we planned to drive the route in the reverse and clockwise direction from our 2011 trip. The road is in very good shape. In particular, the notorious section around Loss Creek has been upgraded and is now a smooth surface although the corners are still tight. This route is a good test of driving skills as it has a wide variety of surfaces, twists and turns and at least for now, no gravel or rough sections.

Lunch was a welcome break at the Port Renfrew Hotel with sunshine cascading through the windows. More chatter and large plates of sustenance ensued. One more poker card and we were off to the Pacific Marine Road. The PMR is a hard-surface ex-logging road that winds its way past a river estuary, canyons and hills to Lake Cowichan.

On arrival in Lake Cowichan we did a car check and two cars were . . . where? Turned out that not



all was sunny skies and one of our intrepid crew had succumbed to a likely crankshaft position sensor problem and was not going anywhere. And as might be expected, the wilderness area is out of cellular range. Bob Wilson was our sweep and aided in the recovery, but as the problem occurred in a remote location it was not until 7 PM when the four members arrived at their respective homes.

As we were down to ten cars (another two members had to exit the event

early), we drove the final leg on beautiful Cowichan Lake Road to Duncan and Serious Coffee where the final card and prizes were given for best, second best and the “least best” hands.

Overall? Glorious weather, great companionship and interesting roads.



We would especially like to thank Peter Braunschmidt from Three Point Motors who participated in our drive and arranged for our prizes – it is very much appreciated.

## Stargazing

### AMG GT

The order book for the 2016 AMG GT has opened following its release at the Paris auto show. The car will come in two models: the 462 hp GT and the 510 hp GTS Highlights:



*Daimler photo*

- Handbuilt AMG 4.0-liter V8 biturbo engine - the world's first sports car engine with the turbos inside the V of the engine and dry sump lubrication
- 0-100 km/h time of 3.8 seconds; 310 km/h top speed
- 7-speed dual-clutch transmission with electronically controlled limited slip differential
- AMG Performance Exhaust System with electronically controlled variable vane
- AMG RIDE CONTROL sports suspension with adjustable damping system
- AMG DYNAMIC SELECT with multiple driver selectable suspension and steering modes
- AMG Performance steering wheel with shift paddles
- High-quality Nappa leather upholstery
- AMG Performance Seats
- Numerous trim options, including silver chrome, matte carbon fibre, high-gloss carbon fibre, black diamond and matte silver fibreglass
- Advanced safety technologies, including Collision Prevention Assist Plus, Adaptive Braking technology, Attention Assist, Parktronic, Rearview Camera, Pre-Safe and Blind Spot Assist.



Fuel consumption is 9.3 L/100 km in the European driving cycle, a respectable figure for a performance car but not as good as the Porsche Carrera's (8.2 L/100 km). Perhaps because of their complexity, MB continues to build relatively heavy high performance cars. This one weighs 1,540 kg, more than a Carrera but less than the current coupe from Maserati, whose performance will not match the AMG GT's.

It's an interesting market niche. Year-to date sales of the Maserati, whose engine is built by Ferrari, have more than tripled in 12 months. A Canadian price for the AMG GT has not been announced but the price in Germany starts at €115,430 (tax included), about €2,100 more than a Porsche Carrera 4S. That suggests a base price a bit above \$120,500, the starting point for the 4S in Canada and in the same territory as the SL 550.

### The Timeless W124

This month's hat tip is to one of MB's finest developments, the W124 midsize cars that came to market 30 years ago, in November 1984. Numerous models were developed during its 11-year run, including the popular sedan, the much less common coupe, convertible and station wagon, and even a long-wheelbase limousine with six doors. The replacement for the W123, it was succeeded after 1995 by the W210 E-class, the car that introduced oval headlights.



*A rare sight indeed, the W124 six-door limousine. Daimler photo.*

Initially badged as the 300E, the model spanned the period when MB changed the trunk badge designations, when it became the E 320. It was sold in North America with 3.0L and 3.2L V6 engines and the 4.2 and 5.0L V8s. The 5L E 500 was a special car, assembled by Porsche and with a Porsche-engineered suspension.

The W124 was simple compared to today's E-class and considerably lighter. The sedans weighed 1,390 kg (3,064 lbs) compared to 1,818 kg (4,000 lbs) for a rwd 2014 E350, even with all the latter's weight-saving



technology. Despite that, the weight advantage is no compensation for 30 years of engine development. At about 10.9 L/100 km, the 300E's fuel economy was considerably poorer than a new E 350's.

Many features of the W124 were cutting edge technology 30 years ago. The multi-link rear suspension was part of that technology. The ride is still comfortable by modern standards and the car's composure on uneven surfaces was streets ahead of anything else available. ABS brakes became standard and there was a distinctive, single windshield wiper that used a cam mechanism to give its swept area an eccentric arc. The build quality was good enough to win its class in Germany as a 4-6 year-old car, and some enthusiasts think the W124 was the last MB model made to traditional standards of excellence. It has a considerable following and there's a thorough review at [curbsideclassics.com](http://curbsideclassics.com) ([click](#)), where the subtitle calls it "the best car of the last 30 years".

### **A Silent Partner**

In September, 1974 the Kuwait Investment Authority acquired a 14% stake in the former Daimler-Benz AG from the Quandt family, whose automotive interests also extended to BMW ([click](#)). The KIA's stake, purchased then for the equivalent of \$329 million, has grown in value to almost \$6 billion.

At a ceremony to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this partnership, Daimler Chairman Dr. Manfred Bischoff said: "During the last 40 years, Kuwait became Daimler's most reliable partner despite all ups and downs in corporate history. We are grateful and deeply honored to have an outstandingly reliable partner who is willing to shape a bright future for Daimler together with us." The Kuwait Investment Authority is currently Daimler's single biggest shareholder, holding 6.8 percent of the company's shares since the separation of Daimler and Chrysler took place in 2007.

### **The Back End**

A press release from Daimler on customer data security and the connected car:

<http://media.daimler.com/deeplink?cci=2529236>

Edmunds.com tries the new GLA and finds a couple of niggles: <http://www.edmunds.com/mercedes-benz/gla-class/2015/road-test.html>

Mini is preparing a competitor for the Smart ForTwo <http://bit.ly/1reP7sN> (link shortened)

Jay Leno takes his 1972 600 Grand for a drive and talks about the complications of restoring one. You may have to look around on his site for it: <http://www.nbc.com/jay-lenos-garage>.





*Dr. Dieter Zetsche introduces the AMG GT at this month's Paris auto show. Can you see one or two design cues that might appeal to Porsche 911 buyers? Daimler photo.*



*Rudolph Uhlenhaut's personal 300 SLR in the Schlumpf Museum, Mulhouse. How did it end up there? Photos: Mike McBride.*

