



Vancouver Island Section

April, 2015

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CALENDAR

- Breakfast, Mill Bay Marina, Sun. Apr. 26**
Board Meeting, Mon. May 11
New Models & Technology, Sun. May 24,
Cat & Mouse Rally, CANCELLED
Advanced Driver Training, Thu. Jul 16 or Fri. Jul. 17
Motor Gathering, Sun. Aug. 16
Summer BBQ, Sat. Sep. 12
Salt Spring Tour with the VIR-PCA, Sat. Sep 19
MB's Safety Technology, Sun. Oct. 4
Morning Coffee, Sun. Nov. 15
Annual Party, Sun. Dec. 12.

More information about upcoming events is inside

Section Officers

- Membership: [Jeff Cohen](#)
Director at Large: [Ron Drane](#)
Director at Large: [Jamie Graham](#)
Dealer Ambassador, Victoria: [Dennis Ostrowerka](#)
Secretary: [Hazel Ostrowerka](#)
Dealer Ambassador, Nanaimo: [Barry Patchett](#)
Treasurer: [Rob Watson](#)
Newsletter: [Bob Wilson](#)
President: [Bob Wilson](#)
Vice President: vacant
Hon. Vice President: [Peter Trzewik](#)



Coming Events

Sunday, April 26: Breakfast, Mill Bay. We'll meet for breakfast at Bridgemans Bistro ([click](#)), on the water at Mill Bay Marina. We have a reservation for 9:30. The restaurant's address is 740 Handy Road, Mill Bay. Please drop a note to the organizer ([click](#)) if you intend to come.

Monday, May 11: Regular Board meeting, Three Point Motors, 5 pm.

Sunday, May 24: New Models & Technology, hosted by Three Point Motors. This annual event is always one of the most popular in the calendar. This year's presentation by Three Point Motors will focus around MB's new models for 2015, which include the B, C, E 400, S coupe, CLS, GLA, and AMG GT. That's a lot of new models for one year. After the introduction, Three Point Motors kindly lets us take some of these for a short drive.

New Members!

*Gary Graves (Victoria)
Don Simmons (Victoria)*

Renewing Members!

*Peter Braunschmidt (Jr) - 05 CLK320
Jeff Cohen
Bjorn Collin
John McIntosh - 93 500SEL
Jim Peters - 85 300SL
Kevin & Marilea Pirie - 09 C350, 99 E320 wagon*

Thank you!

Charter Members

The executive has been conducting a review and spring cleaning of the Section's archives. Besides correspondence and the official documents surrounding the Section's start-up in 1999, the archives include financial information, the minutes of past annual meetings, a history of membership numbers, newsletters and photos.

The review turned up a guest book listing the prospective members who attended the Section's first organizational meeting, which was held at Three Point Motors on June 24th, 1999. Some of those present then are still Section members, whose long association with the MBCA we should recognize:

- **Dale & Betty Fickinger**
- **Peter & Jackie Taitt**
- **Terry & Barbara Peace**
- **Hazel & Dennis Ostrowercka**
- **John & Cordelia McIntosh**

The Section was organized on the initiative of Peter Trzewik and its first president, Tom Body.

Visit to Rudi & Co.

Article by the organizer Jamie Graham, photos by Joseph Anthony, BC Stars Section

The Club's visit to Rudi Koniczek's iconic restoration shop was certainly the highlight of the calendar year for die-hard fans of the 300SL—and all their friends! The March 22nd visit to Rudi's place brought together about



70 members from the Seattle, Vancouver (BC Stars), Portland and Vancouver Island Sections. VI Club members picked up some of the Seattle guests who came off as foot passengers at the ferry terminal. A great brunch was held at the Fireside Grill, then a cornucopia of Mercedes models parked outside Rudi's place so as not to overwhelm the local residents!

Rudi was his usual gracious self, giving us a history of his involvement with Mercedes Benz from his start as a young boy, (showing his toy cars to the head of Mercedes Benz) to his current status of running one of the finest restoration shops of its kind in the world. Not many have the heads of various classic centres on speed dial on their office phone. Rudi's customers span the globe, a real testament to the level of skill of his long-term, loyal crafts-people. On Sunday, club members were allowed to get up close and personal with about 6 or 7 cars, walking amongst a maze of 300SL body shells and "just about complete" units. Rudi highlighted restoration secrets of his many years in the business.

What a glorious day.



Stargazing

Metris Coming to Canada

The Vito, to be badged here as the Metris (*November 2104 issue*), will reach the Canadian market in October according to media reports last month. It will be a mid-sized van whose proportions are similar to its larger cousin the Sprinter. The Metris will have plenty of cargo capacity but will still fit into an urban garage or carpark. Both cargo and passenger configurations will be offered, the cargo version starting at \$33,900 and the passenger van at \$37,900. For the cargo van, that's over \$10,000 less than a base Sprinter. It will compete with the Ford Transit, whose base price is \$26,849.

Power will come from a four-cylinder gasoline engine with 208 hp and 258 lb-ft of torque. Drive goes to the rear wheels through a seven-speed automatic transmission. The Metris comes with MB's electronic bells and whistles for fuel-efficiency and safety but will not have the same level of luxury as the rest of the line-up. The interval between services is said to be as much as 25,000 km.



GLC to Replace the GLK

Some of us remember the GLC from its previous incarnation as Mazda's small car of the 1970s & '80s. In those days, GLC was said to stand for 'Great Little Car', though I doubt that explanation originally came from the manufacturer. Notwithstanding, MB's nomenclature changes predict that the present GLK will become the GLC, meaning that it's an SUV or crossover close in size to the C-class sedan. The rebirth happens this fall with a new model.



The GLC in late camouflage. Photo: motorauthority.com

Automotive News reports that the GLC is roomier than the GLK and sheds its utilitarian, boxy shape for a more modern design. It has a longer wheelbase and wider track, giving it more interior room and making it more competitive with the BMW X3 and Audi Q5. Much of the GLC's technology and layout are expected to carry over from the C-class sedan. That includes the safety features packaged as Intelligent Drive and the advanced infotainment and connectivity systems. Canadian pricing has not been announced yet.

In related news, the first customer-ready GLE, the replacement for the ML (*January, 2015 issue*), has rolled off the production line in Alabama.

No Niche Unfilled (continued)

There has been one, no make that two, gaping holes in MB's campaign to provide luxury vehicles for everyone. Now the big hole is about to be filled. *Business Insider* and *CTV News* reported last month ([click](#)) that MB is about to launch a pickup truck. The new vehicle will be the size of the Chev Colorado, a 'compact'. I did check first to see if this story was filed on April 1, and it wasn't.



"The Mercedes-Benz pickup will contribute nicely to our global growth targets," Daimler chairman Dr. Dieter Zetsche said in a statement. "We will enter this segment with our distinctive brand identity and all of the vehicle attributes that are typical of the brand with regard to safety, comfort, power-trains, and value."

Daimler has confirmed that the truck will be developed as part of Daimler's strategic alliance with Renault-Nissan (*August 2014 issue*). It will be designed in-house at Mercedes-Benz but will share some of the architecture of the new Nissan Navara. Daimler will provide technology on behalf of both manufacturers that includes four- and six-cylinder power-trains.

The trucks will be built by Nissan in Barcelona, Spain and Cordova, Argentina. Oddly, given America's love for the pickup, Zetsche said the new truck will not be sold in Canada and the USA, at least initially.



A picture I'd thought never to see. Image: businessinsider.com

The Emissions Imperative

Vehicle manufacturers have been staring hard at the next decade's fuel economy standards. These require meaningful increases in fuel efficiency compared to today's levels. In both the USA and Europe, the standards are based on a vehicle's individual footprint, a measure of size determined by multiplying the vehicle's wheelbase length by its track width. Vehicles with larger footprints have less stringent fuel economy requirements, though there are cut-offs at both the top and bottom of the scale.

The US requirement is based on carbon dioxide emissions but translates those into miles-per-gallon based on the 5-cycle testing procedure. It's easy to do because CO₂ emissions are almost exactly related to fuel economy. An S-Class in the USA is required to have an EPA window sticker-rating of 23 miles per US gallon in 2015; the current S550's is 20. By 2025, the required figure is 30. Failure to meet the standard brings MBUSA a



penalty of \$55 per mpg per vehicle, a fine argued by some to be too low to provide sufficient incentive for compliance.

In Europe, carbon dioxide emissions are the standard for management and the concept of fleet-averaged efficiency continues. The required fleet-average in 2015 is 130 grams of CO₂ emitted per kilometre travelled. That figure is on a downward trajectory to 95 g/km in 2021. The conventional S550 is rated at 260 g/km and even the S400 hybrid—a mild hybrid with electric boost—at 237. So something has to be done.

There are two ways to improve fuel economy: reduce weight and fiddle with the power-train. The latter offers the greater payback, though the increasing use of high strength steel, which can be made thinner, and aluminum testify to the importance of weight reduction. The bells and whistles of luxury, however, work against low weight. Mazda, for example, has managed to bring their new Miata in at a weight of just 1,000 kg; an SLK250 weighs another 475 kg, in good part the penalty for MB's cosseting.

Fiddling with the power-train it is, then. In the run-up to 2017, MB will bring out a total of ten plug-in hybrid models, on average one new model with hybrid drive every four months. MB launched the S550 e plug-in hybrid earlier this year; its emissions are just 105 g/km. This month will see the C350 e find its way to European dealerships, the second model to feature plug-in hybrid drive. The C350 e gets 48 g/km. It's the path of evolution, the measure of fitness.

The 190 SL Turns 60



The 190SL, looking good. Wikimedia photo.



The W121 190SL was launched in March 1955 at the annual Geneva auto show. The 300SL's little brother, it offered customers a different choice. The styling is timeless, exquisite. The ride is comfortable for its day. But the 190 SL was more about the joys of open-air motoring for two people than it was about challenging the world of performance sports cars. Power comes from a 1.9 L—in those days the badge number on the trunk always signified displacement—four-cylinder that produced 120 hp and 105 lb.-ft. of torque. The little roadster weighed 1160 kg., 258 more than an MGA. Acceleration to 100 km/h took 14.5 seconds, a decent figure for the day but well shy of its bigger cousin's 8.5.

The chassis was based on the 180 model sedan and used a slightly altered frame-floor unit construction, with the engine carried in a sub-frame. A total of 25,881 W121s were sold between 1955 and 1963, when the 190 SL was replaced by the next classic, the W113 pagoda-roof 230 SL.

Prices for this model have taken off in the last couple of years, with good examples now selling for more than 25 times their original cost of about \$4,000. Those who were prescient enough to buy one years ago have a lovely, fun, summer tourer that captures as much attention as the 300 SL.

Coincidentally, this year also marks the 60th anniversary of Mercedes-Benz Canada, who are celebrating by offering special financing packages at the dealer and other incentives.

Sindelfingen Turns 100



Daimler publicity photo of Sindelfingen

Seven hundred guests met with Daimler's Board in Sindelfingen on March 27th to mark the 100th anniversary of the works location there. What began, in 1915, as a Daimler factory for aircraft engines is now a sprawling automotive plant. Research, Development and Design for Daimler AG and Mercedes-Benz Cars are all based in Sindelfingen. In addition to the largest factory worldwide for Mercedes-Benz passenger cars, Sindelfingen is



also home to Purchasing, Quality Management, Central Production and Logistics Planning and the Mercedes-Benz Cars development centre for new production technologies. Daimler AG is the largest employer in the greater Stuttgart region, with a workforce of some 77,300.

Sindelfingen is MB's focal point for passenger cars. Last year the company invested over 1.5 billion euros in upgrades to meet projected requirements to 2020 and beyond.

GAIN Motorsport Facility to Open Spring 2016

The German Auto Import Network – Vancouver Island will open its own motorsport facility in the spring of 2016, according to an article in the *Times-Colonist* ([click](#)). Designed by Tilke, a German company whose portfolio includes F1 tracks ([click](#)), the facility will have a road circuit, a driving dynamics area with a skid-pad, and an area for off-road vehicles. Four garages, a presentation centre, clubhouse facilities and an observation deck will be included in a 14,000 sq. ft. building. The track location was not specified but is believed to be near Duncan.

This is exciting news for fans of performance driving and for those just looking to explore the capabilities of today's cars, as it means the eight GAIN-VI dealerships, which include Three Point Motors and MB Nanaimo, will have access to the full facility for the kind of driver training events presently being staged at Western Speedway. The website for news about the Vancouver Island Motorsport Resort is
<http://www.islandmotorsportresort.com/news/>

The Back End

Autoweek story on the AMG GT customer racing car for the FIA GT3 category. It has the 6.2 L engine from the SLS (*hat tip to Mike McBride*). <http://bit.ly/1GAJRFg> (link shortened)

The Globe & Mail asks 'Have we reached peak car?': <http://bit.ly/1aQTtI6> (link shortened)

YouTube video on Rudi Konicek: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGCK6f390z8>

Fitted Luggage Maker: <http://www.tarischarysyn.com/mercedes190.html>

Tony Whitney tests the GLA250 for Tim's Car Talk, a useful local publication: <http://www.timscartalk.ca/test-drive-mercedes-benz-gla-250-compact-crossover>

How Teslas are made (*hat tip Stan Garrod*): https://www.youtube.com/embed/8_lfxPl5ObM?rel=0

Canadian super-realist Tom Forrestall paints the four seasons onto his 1980 300SD: <http://bit.ly/lyScOrI>

Wired goes inside the fast, strategic world of the used car auction: <http://www.wired.com/2015/04/inside-swift-strategic-world-used-car-auctions/>





The C 63 AMG wagon being used as the medical vehicle at this year's F1 races.

Daimler photo.

