



Vancouver Island Section

April, 2016

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CALENDAR

- Chemainus Theatre, Sun, Apr. 10**
- V.I. Motorsport Park, Sun, May 8.**
- Interior detailing, CANCELLED**
- Okanagan Wine Tour, May 20-22 (BC Stars Section)**
- Board meeting, Mon. May 30**
- Annual picnic, Sun. Jun. 26**
- Sunshine Coast tour, Jul. 9-11 (Seattle, BC Sections)**
- Motor Gathering, Sun. Aug. 21**
- Tech talk: Intelligent Drive, Sat. Sep. 17**
- Oktoberfest, Oct. date TBA**
- Annual Meeting, Sun. Nov. 6**
- Holiday dinner, Dec date TBA**

Some dates have still to be finalized.

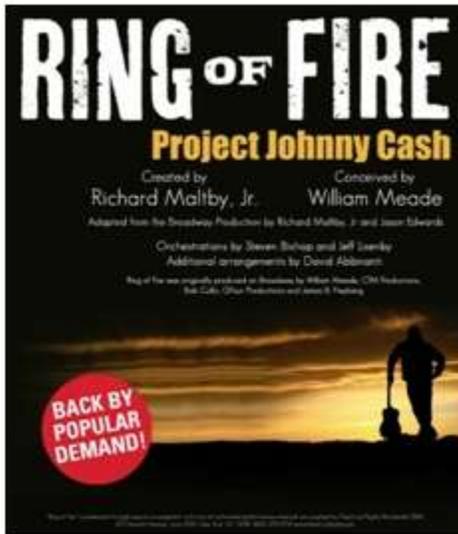
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Coming Events

Sunday, Apr. 10: Chemainus Theatre & Lunch



An outing to the Chemainus theatre returns to our calendar. The performance on offer for April 10th is the *Ring of Fire Project* ([click](#)), a tribute to Johnny Cash. Chemainus Theatre is very good at musicals and this performance is sure to please those looking for a “rockabilly story of finding love, success, faith, and redemption”, along with a twang of country music.

Meet at the Chemainus theatre at noon if you pre-registered for this event. The performance has now sold out.

Sunday, May 8: V.I. Motorsport Circuit

This half-day session at the new Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit ([click](#)) is the gift of the GAIN dealership group, a reward for the Club’s effort at last year’s Motor Gathering. GAIN is providing a team of qualified instructors led by Brent Evans, the track’s chief instructor.

The event starts before 8:30 and runs till 11:30 or noon. An optional lunch will follow in Duncan so participants can refuel, unwind and swap stories.

The day will start with a tour of the facility. We’ll be given a briefing in the clubhouse at which safety will be reviewed and driving tips will be given. This part of the session will be a good opportunity for attendees at one of the Club’s previous events at Western Speedway to refresh their knowledge in this area. First-time attendees will learn driving tips that translate well to safety on our roads.

We will be driving our own vehicles. Drivers will be split into two run groups, so car-sharing will be possible. Each group will be given a number of parade laps led by an instructor, who will demonstrate the best line for entering and leaving each corner. The run groups will then be allowed out on their own. Rules, for example about passing, will be strictly enforced.

Priority for driving in this event is given to MBCA Members and Associate Members. Guests may watch from the clubhouse facility.

The number of drivers will be limited to 30. Preference will be given to members of the Vancouver Island Section and any out-of-section members who showed a car at last year’s Motor Gathering. Out-of-Section MBCA members may apply and will be added to the event if space is still available on April 29. If space continues to be available prior to the event, members of local car clubs, specifically those which are affiliated with vehicles distributed by the GAIN dealership group, may be invited to participate.

Welcome New Members!

Donna Donaldson – Sooke
Matt Hoffecker – Victoria
Don Lucas - Victoria
Kent Nielsen & Linda Peters - Ucluelet

Renewing Members!

Jeff Cohen - Victoria
François Panetta – Nanoose Bay
Peter Vivian – North Saanich

Thank you!



Participants must drive a vehicle of a make distributed by the GAIN dealership group: (MB, Audi, BMW, Smart, Mini, VW, Porsche, Alfa Romeo, Subaru). It is essential that all vehicles be in good mechanical condition, particularly in regard to tires, brakes and steering. If in doubt, please have your vehicle professionally checked.

Each attendee must sign two liability waivers in order to participate, one provided by the Circuit and the other by the Club. While the track has been designed for maximum safety and vehicle damage is unlikely, it is our understanding that ***your regular ICBC collision insurance will not cover this event.***

You must pre-register in order to drive. Please email **Rob Watson** ([click](#)). **Include in the email the name(s) of the driver(s) and the make and model of car(s) to be driven.** He will reply and confirm your entry.

There will be a post–event lunch in the Duncan area. Rob will provide details closer to the event.

This event is a fund-raiser for the Children’s Health Foundation of Vancouver Island, one of the charities supported by the 2015 Motor Gathering. An entry fee of \$50 per driver will be collected at the circuit.

Okanagan Wine Tour, May 20-22

BC Stars Section has organized a wine tour in the Okanagan country on the Victoria Day weekend. The event starts on the Friday evening at the Holiday Inn in Osoyoos, where there is a group rate (\$115 plus tax). On Saturday the group will take a scenic drive up to Naramata, near Penticton, and visit several wineries on the way back to Osoyoos. Dinner will be at the restaurant at Tinhorn Creek, where I believe the winery is owned by a Club member. More events are planned for Sunday.

Please contact Sean Clark ([click](#)) for further information and registration.

July 9-11: Sunshine Coast Tour

Seattle Section is organizing a tour up the Sunshine Coast from Saturday, July 9 to Monday, July 11. Participants will stay Saturday night in North Vancouver at the **Pinnacle at the Pier Hotel** and Sunday night at **West Coast Wilderness Lodge** in Egmont. The organizers plan a fabulous, over-the-top drive along the famed Sunshine Coast, lunch in Sechelt at the Lighthouse Pub, and a group dinner at the hotel on the deck for Sunday evening. There are several options for hiking, kayaking and two different Zodiac Tours for activities on Monday. The Zodiac tours to Princess Louisa Inlet and Chatterbox Falls are said to be incredibly beautiful.



Space at the lodge in Egmont is limited and will sell out well in advance. If you might be interested in going, please contact the organizer, Ian Gleadle ([click](#)) as soon as possible.

Continental Cars & Coffee

An interesting crowd of car enthusiasts hangs out in the far parking lot of the Oak Bay Marina on the second Sunday morning of the month. They bring cars from Germany, Sweden, France and other European countries. Coffee and baked goods are available at the Marina café. The next meet will be on Apr. 10th.

February's gathering was graced by a 1950's DKW Sonderklasse station-wagon, powered by its original two-stroke, three cylinder engine. DKW was a marque within the Auto Union family and it represents one of the four rings in today's Audi emblem. Sonderklasse sedans were just uncommon in their day but that was the first wagon I remember seeing, ever.

New Models & Technology

Photos from Barry Patchett



About 34 members and guests gathered for the annual introduction to new models and technology, our largest-ever turnout for this event. David Rabbii and Peter Braunschmidt, both Club members and sales associates of Three Point Motors, led us through the developments of the past year and presented several new vehicles.



The undoubted highlights were a C63 S AMG

and a GLA45 AMG, which were made available for short test runs along with a C300, GLE350 d, GLC300 d, and GLA250.

Dennis and Hazel cooked up a barbeque-full of German sausages, accompanied by buns,



sauerkraut and potato salad and washed down with coffee. This event is a great chance to catch up on what Mercedes-Benz engineers have rolled out in the previous 12 months and is always worthwhile.

Stargazing

CLA Facelift

A facelift for the CLA was revealed last month at the New York Auto Show. The redesign includes new bumpers and wheels. Other changes include new seat covers, a thinner infotainment display, and a standard backup camera. The CLA45 AMG gets a new lip spoiler and interior trim along with the bumpers and wheels. Active Brake Assist will be standard, at least in the US market.



Daimler photo

The facelift goes on sale in the fall. US sales of the CLA are down almost 9% year-over-year as buyers continue to favour crossovers like the GLA and SUVs like the GLC.

Speeding Ahead (Again)

Production of the new 9-speed automatic gearbox has started at Daimler's Romanian subsidiary, Star Assembly (*August, 2013 issue*). The 9 G-Tronic supersedes its 7-speed counterpart, which has been MB's standard for the last 11 or 12 years. Its adoption is a response to the relentless pressure from regulators to improve fuel economy. Although spacing between ratios is changing slightly, the two extra gears are being used mainly to provide more overdrive ratios for the highway.

Daimler currently employs over 1,800 people at two sites in Romania. Founded in 2001, Star Transmission's plant in Cugir manufactures gearwheels and shafts as well as machined components for engines, transmissions and steering systems. It is also home to a technology centre and a training establishment. Its sister company Star Assembly was set up in 2013 in Sebes to make five-, seven-, and now nine-speed gearboxes.

Initial production is destined for the E-class and the GLE 'coupe'. The 9G-Tronic will gradually become the standard in all production built with a longitudinally mounted (fore-and-aft) engine.



Lighting the Way

The US Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) has started to rate vehicle headlights, beginning with 31 mid-size cars ([click](#)). Because many are offered for sale with more than one headlight option, a total of 81 vehicle-headlamp combinations were tested in this initial round.

Headlights are evaluated on a track at the IIHS Vehicle Research Center. The light from both low beams and high beams is measured by a special device as the vehicle is driven on five different approaches: travelling straight, a sharp left curve, a sharp right curve, a gradual left curve and a gradual right curve. Engineers compare the lights' visibility and glare measurements to those of an "ideal" headlight system and use a scheme of demerits to determine the rating. Results for low beams are weighted more heavily than high beams because they are used more often. The readings on the straightaway are weighted more heavily than those on the curves because more crashes occur on straight sections of road. Vehicles equipped with high-beam assist, which automatically switches between high beams and low beams depending on the presence of other vehicles, may earn back some points taken off for less-than-ideal low beam visibility. This credit is given only for approaches on which a maximum glare threshold isn't exceeded and on which the high beams provide additional visibility compared with the low beams. A vehicle producing too much glare for oncoming traffic on any of the approaches can't earn a rating above marginal.



C-class LED headlights: stylish but apparently not all that good.

Photo: www.mercedes-benz.ca

Headlamps are categorized as good, acceptable, marginal or poor. Of the 31 mid-size cars tested, the Toyota Prius V was the only one to achieve a 'good' rating. MB's C class and CLA were both rated 'poor', joining the Cadillac ATS as the only luxury mid-size cars categorized below 'marginal'. While that's disappointing, readers of *Stargazing* will recognize that IIHS test results can presage manufacturer and regulatory improvements.

Iracemápolis

It's getting hard to keep up with the expansion of Daimler's vehicle production network. The company has just opened a new assembly plant in Iracemápolis, Brazil, the most recent addition to 26 production locations worldwide.

Iracemápolis will make the C and the GLA for Brazilian, if not South American, markets. The plant has an initial labour force of 600 and a starting capacity of 20,000 vehicles a year. Daimler's press release says surprisingly that the plant's level of automation "is significantly lower than in traditional Mercedes-Benz plants" for reasons of flexibility. However, Big Brother will be watching. "As part of the global production network, Iracemápolis is connected to all Mercedes-Benz Cars locations around the world, allowing a location-independent access to production data and process management. Every single installation and every robot, for example, can be centrally managed and updated to new software programmes."





Workers in Brazil put the finishing touches to a line of C class cars. Daimler photo.

The Back End

Auto123 tries out the redesigned SL: “Personality and pizzazz” ([click](#))

Road & Track tries out the new E-Class: “Everything MB does best” ([click](#))

Autoblog tries out the self-driving features of the new E class: “It isn’t the world’s first self-driving car. But it’s damn close.” ([click](#))

There’s a persistent rumour that MB will show a pickup truck at the Paris Auto Show later this year ([click](#))

One of Google’s self-driving cars is involved in an at-fault collision with a municipal bus in California ([click](#))

Daimler’s media group describes the mid-life refit for the C117 CLA ([click](#))





Cars & Coffee at the MB Museum in Stuttgart. Remember to check out the similar events at the Oak Bay Marina, second Sunday of the month. Daimler photo

