



August 2004

## Annual Picnic and Concours

### New Location!

### Great Food!

### Fantastic Cars!

### The Pool is Open!

Club member Steve Newby will host the GWS Annual Picnic and Mid-Atlantic Concours at his home in North Potomac, Maryland, on Sunday, August 22. This is our section's biggest event each and every year.

Your fellow club members, officers, and board members will be in charge of the cooking - so you know the hamburgers and bratwurst will be great! No remarks, please! Remember, they're volunteers! And, of course, you can expect a repeat of the excellent work of our biermeisters and wine sommeliers, who will dispense the "gute Deutsche bier und wein" to slake your thirst. We'll also have soft drinks and water on ice. And, there will be lots of watermelon. So be sure to bring a big bib or your raincoat. Bring your swimsuits so you can enjoy the pool. And, don't forget to bring blankets or chairs to stake out a great spot on the lawn.

The Concours d' Elegance has no entry fee. On the registration form, please fill out your car information so we can organize the classes. Please send in your registration form early.

We will hold a silent auction again for the benefit of The Hospital for Sick Children and Children's Hospital. In addition to items from both local and national merchants, we ask that you contribute a "treasure" (no white elephants, please) for the auction. Add something nice to the list of goodies! All items sell to the highest bidder. Please indicate your contribution on the centerfold registration form.

Anniversary pins will be presented to those section members who are celebrating five-year multiple - 5,10,15, 20, and so on - memberships. (See the following article for more.)

Times: Members with cars in the Concours should plan to arrive between 9:00 and 10:30AM. We will have a Clean Car/Display Class that is not judged - folks attending the picnic will vote for their favorites. Wash it up and bring it out!

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The Street and Show Class cars are judged. Show Class cars will have their undercarriages judged. Judging begins at 11:00AM and awards will be presented at 3:30PM. Food "judging" begins at about 11:30AM. Beer, wine, and soft drinks will be served all day. The silent auction ends at 3:00PM.

### **NEW DIRECTIONS:**

From North or South take Beltway (I-495) exit 39 River Road (MD-190) toward Potomac for approximately 8.5 miles. Turn right on Trivilah for 2 miles, turn left on Split Creek - 12716 Split Creek is at end of street.

The Picnic/Concours registration form is in the centerfold. If you have any questions on Concours, call **Mark Elie at 703-858-0650**.

For questions on the registration or silent auction, call **Bill Hopper 202-363-4189**. The club does not mail out meal tickets for the Picnic/Concours. The cost is \$15.00 per person. The cost at the gate is \$20. Food will be served until 1:30PM or until it runs out.

The rain date is August 29... but as you know, it never rains at one of our events!

## **Membership Longevity Pins**

**T**he Greater Washington Section offers many opportunities to get together each year, but at only three of these events are longevity pins awarded to members based on the number of years they have been in the club (in increments of five years).

The first of the events is the Annual Picnic and Mid-Atlantic Concours, which will be held on August 22 in North Potomac, Maryland. The other two events are the Membership meeting in October and our Holiday Party next January.

Since the pins are awarded in increments of five years, that means that if you joined the club in 1999, you are eligible for a 5-year pin this year. If you joined in 1994, you will get a 10-year pin, and so on.

There is one catch. You must be present at one of the three events at which the pins are awarded. Invariably, eligible members attend one or all of the above events but leave before the pins are given out. **We do not mail pins. You need to be present!** If, for some reason, you must leave before the event is over, please see Klaus or Deborah Hirtes to get your pin. Otherwise, you'll have to wait five more years before you are again eligible!

Members eligible for pins in 2004:

### **40 Years**

Neill and Elaine  
Darmstadter

### **30 Years**

Thomas Draude  
John Gray Jr.  
Norbert Lamp  
Reuben Richards  
M. Davis Streaker

### **25 Years**

David Ballard  
Lahugh Bankston  
Larry Buel  
Simon Cain  
John Gersic  
Klaus Hirtes  
Harold Hostetler  
James Keith  
Edwin Lehnert  
Thomas Morrow  
Robert Richards Sr.

### **There are also:**

21 twenty-year members  
37 fifteen-year members  
50 ten-year members  
110 five-year members

The section offers many different events for almost every taste and fancy for its 1,500 members, so we hope you'll join us for one that interests you. See for yourself what the officers and event chairs are working on for you. Check out our web site for the latest update of [scheduled events](#).

And always try to recruit new members at every opportunity. If you need applications, please email us with your address or call us. We are the largest section in MBCA and strive to keep it that way.

**Klaus and Deborah Hirtes**

## Calendar of Events

### Greater Washington Section Events

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August 15	<b>Autocross #5</b> WSSC Lot, Maryland Contact: Tom Newman Call: 703-266-2959	October 3	<b>Autocross #7</b> WSSC Lot, Maryland
August 18	<b>GWS Board Meeting</b> Members Welcome but are asked to call in advance so we can plan room size Contact: Joe Wozney Call: 703-437-7866	October 9	<b>VPC Tour</b> Belcamp, Maryland Contact: Harry Newman Call: 540-869-4274
August 22	<b>Mid-Atlantic Concours and Annual Picnic</b> Potomac, Maryland (Rain Date - August 29)	October 24	<b>Annual Membership Meeting</b> Mercedes-Benz of Alexandria Contact: Janet McFarland Call: 703-765-9405
September 12	<b>Autocross #6</b> Winchester, Virginia	November 7	<b>Autocross #8</b> Winchester, Virginia
		November 13	<b>Junk Yard Tour</b> Brandywine Foreign Car Parts Contact: Steve Walters Call: 703-765-9405

### Regional and National Events

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StarTech 2005 **Triangle Section (NC)**  
[www.mbca.org/startech](http://www.mbca.org/startech)

## President's Message

Frank Mallory's SL

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Last month I told you of the loss of Frank Mallory - a 47-plus year member of MBCA and the Greater Washington Section. Frank was the owner of a very "strange" 250SL. This is the story of that car in Frank's own words. "I got a job assignment working in Holland starting in January 1967. So, I sold the Gullwing, 220S Coupe, 190SL, and Volvo P1800 I had at the time and figured I would buy a new 250SL configured the way I wanted it with a 5-speed, limited slip, etc. and with delivery to coincide with the MBCA Stuttgart Safari so I could take advantage of the VIP treatment that Club members got at that time. The 250SL was introduced at the Geneva Auto Show in March 1967. So I went to the show and when looking over the 250SL show car, noticed that the engine was finished very specially. The valve cover was painted black, the aluminum parts were polished, the injection lines and other pipes chrome plated.

So I asked the factory rep if I could buy a car with the engine finished like that, and he said 'Sure!' (Fortunately, I got his business card.) There was a side door next to the Mercedes stand, and he said I should go out that way and get a test drive. I went out with a Factory driver, and he let me drive the car after showing me how everything worked. I got it up to 200 kph on a road leading from Geneva; very impressive!

So when I got back to Holland, I ordered a car with my desired SA codes through the Dutch importer. I also told them that I wanted a 'factory polished show car engine.' They didn't know what I was talking about, so I got in touch with the MB rep from Geneva and asked for his assistance. Well, that's the way I got it. I found out later that the sale of such a car to me had to be approved by the DBAG directors, and I have a data card that shows that.

Other 'sticky' items were the omission of outside mirror (I preferred a pair of Talbots) and the 5-speed transmission on a USA car. Both of these were violation of laws (German law required cars to have a side view mirror and American laws required smog controls that were not available with the 5-speed).

When I picked up the car at the factory, I was told that they washed their hands of it and couldn't guarantee that I would be able to get it into the States. If I succeeded, it would be the only 5-speed 250SL going to the U.S.

I had no trouble at all getting the car through customs when I returned to the U.S. The MB rep told me that next time I wanted a car, I should order it directly through him but I still have the 250SL and have never taken advantage of his offer; I am sure he is gone by now.

So that's the story of 250SL #3757. And, although it is not one of the last two cars produced, I am sure that everyone will agree it is, as I said, 'rare and unique.' This car is one of 5,002 250SLs made during 1967."

The car was delivered to Frank Mallory, at Stuttgart, Germany, on September 7, 1967. It was used extensively in Mercedes-Benz Club of America events through 1971. It won the Daimler-Benz trophy in 1969, and placed second in men's point rank and first in women's rank in MBCA National Events. The car placed first in the GT class at the 1970 Gunston Hall Car Show.

On the road, 250SL #3757 has covered more than 140,000 miles in the U.S., Canada, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Greece, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Austria.

As I said before, Frank was fascinating and a man of many hidden facets and talents.

Joe

## Drive and Dine

Summer on the Chesapeake

Farm Roads and High Bridges

SLs Go Mudding Off-Road

**D**riving through Maryland's historic Eastern Shore from Queen Anne to Talbot and Dorchester Counties. Seeing the hustle and bustle of Route 50 and the bridges to the tranquility of farm roads and the scenic causeways with the bay lapping at the road's shoulder was the theme of the day.

Greater Washington Section Members had quite an adventure during the 2004 Summer Dine and Drive on Maryland's Eastern Shore in June. Attendees enjoyed the Chesapeake experience complete with the best crab cakes anywhere, great door prizes and got to see that SLs can go where other's only fear.

The drive started at the boat yards of Kent Narrows and wound through the lush forests, long fields of corn, crisscrossing marsh and water - truly a story book top down afternoon only available in Chesapeake Country.

Historic Wye Mill with a mill tour - some even took home freshly milled organic flour and corn meal. Then on to Cambridge where GWS members and Cambridge residents Jim and Mary Anne Adkins handed out information about the area and it's history, and to the Blackwater Nature Preserve and the quaint fishing villages of Hooper's Island. Some members did wonder why it seemed that the road was lower than the surrounding water table.

Farm roads that only the day before were perfectly fit for traffic became wet, mud and sand pits with an overnight storm. One lone C-Coupe driver was told by a large farm truck, "Don't go down that road, even 4x4s would get stuck in there!" But Debbie and Bill Repass, leading a group of SLs, did not get that warning and cruised their newly painted SL, to the middle of an exceptionally wet patch of sand over wash. With the help of fellow drivers a simple push got them out, and a trail was blazed for 5 more Benzes. However, seven others turned tail and headed for a dryer route.

Once out of the swamps, driver's found scenic causeways and high bridges connecting islands and fishing villages along the coast of the Chesapeake Bay to a very small turnaround at the tip of Hooper's island. After a stop, we headed north to the Robert Morris Inn and dinner in Oxford, Maryland. When you get a group of Mercedes-Benz Owners together it attracts attention. With Michael and Joan Wasylyseyn's yellow SLK this group was easy to spot. So much so that a picture of a line of MBs lead by Steve McQueen's SLK32 appeared in the local newspapers.

Dinner at the Robert Morris Inn is, as always, a special treat with some of the best crab cakes, fresh fish, and prime rib around. Members John and Jean Beschenbossel and John Cleland and his wife joined everyone for the dinner festivities, but not the drive. Jack and Jean Lowry who were staying at the Inn with a group of friends, stopped by to visit with fellow MBCA members. Dine and Drive is not just about eating and driving, it is about telling everybody about how wonderful your Benz is. And since there were door prizes to be awarded, donated by American Service Center, EuroMotor Cars and Mercedes-Benz of Alexandria, a little competition ensued American Idol-style!

Benzes were split into three classes, SLs, SLKs, and hardtops. Each driving team needed to convince those in the other categories to vote for their car. Stories included Benzes long yearned for - then found on E-bay; exciting racing and Concours victories soon were spun. Of course, a little liquid libation enhanced some of the telling. And personal stories of how one Benz owner's other half had not even driven it yet due to being deployed in Iraq, gained votes with other drivers. And with that Marianne Sener won top award for her C-Coupe in the hard top division. Spouses added tidbits that spiced up the story, such as Angie Bracht telling how hubby's E55 has now taken the garage space that used to shelter her Volvo. Accusations of spousal abuse soon followed. Prizes and gifts were given out to every car.

This event would not have been as much fun, if it were not for the help of member Jim Adkins, who hunted out interesting places to drive in the area. And our sponsors who provided the door prizes. Special thanks go out to them. A wonderful summer afternoon of great top-down Benz driving and an evening of fine food were enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Bill Hopper

## ASC DIY Tech Session Unparalleled Opportunity - Unequaled Fun

On July 10, American Service Center of Arlington opened the doors of their shop and welcomed the Greater Washington Section to a Do-It-Yourself tech session. It was a Mercedes enthusiast's dream-come-true.

We had coffee and donuts to get us started, and later, sandwiches and sodas to sustain us. Twenty-nine service bays (with lifts) were made available to us, and almost as many Mercedes experts were standing by to help with advice (and tricks of the trade). Some GWS members used the opportunity to repair their cars, some to do fluid changes, and some just brought their vehicles in to talk with an ASC technician about the features (and quirks) of their car.

Service Manger, Gary Little, made the arrangements for the day, and shop foremen Marc Cruz, Jack Rolo and Dave Bloom were standing by at the crack of dawn to greet us. We had advertised an 8:00AM start, but of course, we were ushered in early by the enthusiastic ASC team. Janet McFarland, the section's online bulletin editor, was the day's "Damsel-at-Arms." She was observed shouting loudly at gregarious DIYers waiting for things to get started "back in your cars and close up the line..." That was a wake-up call for many, as we sprinted to keep up with the efficiency of the ASC staff.



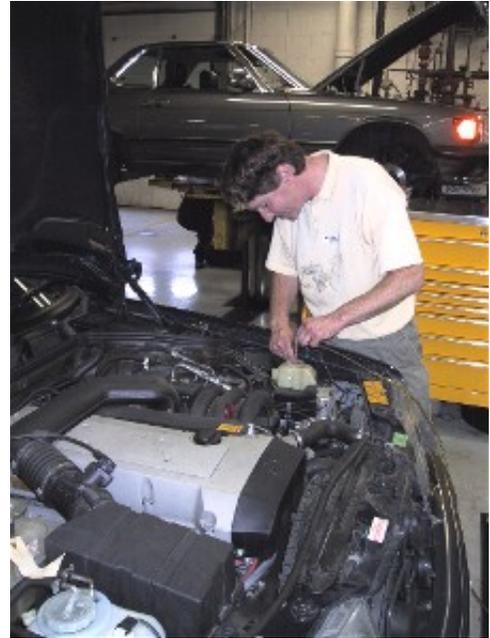
In the spirit of fun, your tech chair would like to recognize several special accomplishments of section members. The "Early Bird" award goes to Klaus Franken who was first in line. He arrived early enough to seek coffee and donuts from the greater Ballston area before the sun was up. The sugar and caffeine seemed to help him get rolling; he had the oil and transmission fluid changed in his 300SD in no time flat. The "Happy as a Clam" award goes to Eric Wagner. The proud new father seemed to have a perpetual "ear-to-ear" grin (don't tell Katie, who was left at home to change diapers on their new arrival) as he worked on his other baby, the Euro 200. The prize for "Largest Oil Slick" was hotly contested this year. Mark Duval was an early contender, but he made two tactical errors. First, he chose the wrong fluid (antifreeze), and then he covered the spill with absorbent towels before the judges could take measurements. Next up, in the same bay, was Bill Guptill. Bill's approach was a clever one, overfill the transmission by a quart or two, but unfortunately, his spill was directed onto the towels Mark had left behind in the bay. Bill did make a (domestic) strategic error in his attempt, too. He waited to make his entry until Martha was standing at the shop exit ramp, ready for the ride home. Ted Starr used the novel technique of combining motor



oil and transmission fluid. The idea was apparently to have the car leak profusely as it was driven into the shop. While the volume of fluid appeared to be sufficient for an award, there was no practical way to sum the total spill from the myriad drips. John Sullivan, our winner, cleverly used two of Newton's law to his advantage. With his car fully raised on the lift and the catch basin funnel askew at the perfect angle, John was able to use gravity to generate rush of draining oil and inertia to distribute it in such a way as to cover about half the bay with jet-black oil. It was a notable achievement.

Other (spill free) oil changers included Tony Marinelli, who also renewed the brake fluid in his silver SLK, readying it for the upcoming driving event. Ted Starr's son, Drew, who will get to take his dad's older S-Class off to his freshman year of college, proved convincingly he was a pro at oil, transmission fluid, and coolant changes.

Team Sherman, AKA "Sherman Automotive," was back in full force. It was difficult to talk to Scott this year, whatever it was that he was fixing on his '87 300D required him to be bottoms up with his head buried deep within the interior of the car. John (the younger), while replacing the shocks of the '85 300TD, was happy to relay information to Scott whenever he came up for air. The elder John, appeared to have a largely supervisory role this year, that is until Jackie Sherman stopped by, ostensibly for quality control purposes (she came armed with a tech manual). Tech session regulars Ron Altman and Ed Hainke had short enough "to-do" lists this session that they were able to get together and compare note on their W126 S-Class cars. Andrew Strasfogel worked diligently through a long list of items on his '83 300TD. He also expanded the boundaries of the "it fell down there" syndrome by losing a small object deep within the recesses of the hydraulic lift mechanism (buried under the shop floor).



A few club members took the opportunity to have their cars inspected for the upcoming driving events. Marianne Sener brought her C230 for the inspection as did "fast car" drivers Alain Drooz (C32) and Section Treasurer Jim Glenn (E55 rocket ship). Special thanks to Javier Wetzell and Jeff Hammond for doing these pre-event tech inspections. Michael Wsaylyzyn, who came all the way from Pennsylvania to change his transmission fluid, benefited from a tech inspection. Fortunately for Michael, the ASC parts department was standing by when Javier uncovered a need for new rear brake pads (which Michael quickly installed).

Our experimental "Car Q&A" allowed members who didn't want to work on their car to participate in the tech session. The idea was to pull the car into a bay so that the owner could ask questions of an ASC expert. We discovered that Mario Martins apparently needed his toolbox to ask questions, when he called later to admit he had left the toolbox behind. Tom Gray came by to find out why the automatic seat in his C-Class would go full forward and mash him like a potato against the steering wheel. Ray Sanetrik got a guided technical tour of his E500, and Jim Clifford got some pointers on transmission shift bushings. As Jim's ML was

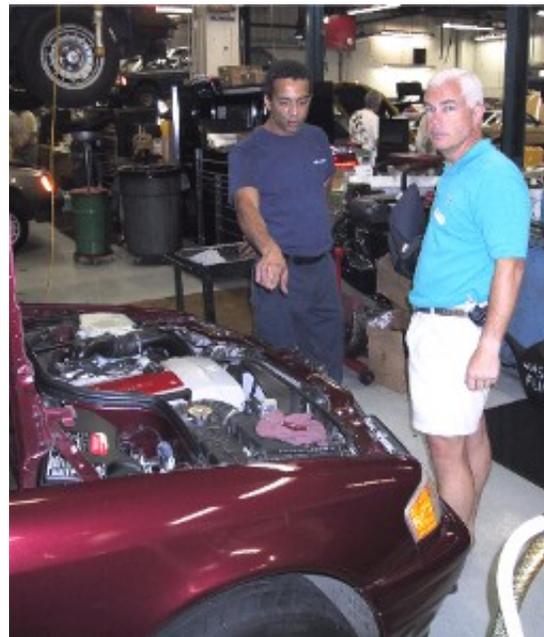
being brought in, I asked Marc Cruz which tech was familiar with the M-Class. When he responded "any of those guys over there," I realized he was gently reminding me that all his staff are experts.

Michael Egan, whose classic 230SL was the oldest car participating, made some minor adjustments with the help of Raymond Schlicht. Chuck Gainor drove home with new front brake discs and pads. Typical of DIY work, Chuck completed the second side in 1/3 the time of the first (though the number of ASC watchful eyes on Chuck's efforts remained constant at four).

We were excited to see the first of many shop improvements planned for the Arlington facility. The break room and associated "rest areas" were almost completed and were first class, just like the staff that will use them. We appreciate Gary Little working to accommodate our event in spite of a very disruptive improvement work schedule that will transform and expand the service bays.

In this world of oversaturated schedules and limitless time constraints, it is interesting to note that we had 2/3rds of last year's participants return this year. Easy to understand when you consider the things ASC provided for each of us: a service bay with a lift; two dozen experts whose sole focus was to ensure that we had a good time (and that we succeeded in our efforts); as well as, food and drink to sustain us. It really was an unparalleled opportunity, and for car lovers, it really was unequalled fun. Our thanks to Marc, Jack and Dave, and all the others at American Service Center who came in on a day off to show us such a good time.

**Steve Walters**







DIY Tech Session photos  
courtesy of Bill Hopper

## Vehicle Prep Center Tour

One of the most popular events of the year is back! For all the fans of the latest and greatest from Mercedes-Benz, we will be returning to the Mercedes-Benz USA Vehicle Prep Center in Belcamp, Maryland. Join us on Saturday, October 4, at 9:00AM sharp.

For those who have not attended this event in the past, please put it down on your calendar. The Center goes all out for us by making sure there are special vehicles available for you to sit in, to stick your head in and under the hood, to ask any and all questions, and to just generally appreciate the vehicles Mercedes-Benz has built and will be creating for us, their customers.

Three years ago we were surprised with the presence of an A-Class - the small car rumored to be coming here when it is next redesigned. Last year we saw one of the first Maybachs in the country. This time you might see the new SLK or SLR - who knows...

We can't divulge what other surprises will be in store this year... our only suggestion is to fill out the centerfold registration form as soon as you can and get it in the mail to **Harry Newman**. Questions? Call (540) 869-4274 or email [harry\\_newman@cox.net](mailto:harry_newman@cox.net).

The schedule: hot coffee and donuts upon arrival... tours start at 9:00AM sharp... and a very nice noonish lunch after satisfying all of our automotive appetites!

Directions: I-95 North, 20 to 25 miles north of Baltimore, take Exit 80 East onto Route 543. Go past Route 7, turn left onto Brass Mill Road (sign says Riverside Industrial Park) and then turn right onto Mercedes Drive. It's quite all right to park on the street.

## Nominations of Officers

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**I**nterested in getting more involved with and learning more about club activities? Here is your opportunity. The Section's Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for officers who will serve for the years 2004-2006. According to our Section's Bylaws, every two years the membership elects the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. You can find the [Bylaws on our website](#).

This year's election will be held at Mercedes-Benz of Alexandria on Sunday, October 24 during the Annual Membership Meeting. If running for office is more than you're looking for but would like to get more involved, please feel free to talk to anyone on the Nominating Committee or any of the current officers. The Section is always looking for new people to get involved!

If you are interested in running for office or would like more information, please contact Nominating Committee Chair Janet McFarland by August 15 at 703-765-9405 or email [JMcfarland@RetrospectPublishing.com](mailto:JMcfarland@RetrospectPublishing.com).

## 2004 Membership Meeting

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**M**ark your calendars for this year's Annual Membership Meeting. The meeting will be on Sunday, October 24 at 1:00PM at Mercedes-Benz of Alexandria in Virginia.

This year's meeting promises to be a very eventful afternoon. Besides the review of club activities and affairs, we will have a tour of the newly renovated facility.

And, if that's not enough it's time for the section to hold its biannual election of officers. All active members are entitled to vote. Our bylaws permit only one vote per membership.

If you are interested in serving as an officer please contact a member of the Nominating Committee and see the article on page 17.

Remember that the Annual Membership Meeting is the second of the three events where 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30-year pins are presented. So come out and enjoy the wonderful hors d'oeuvres, fine automobiles, and the good company of old and new friends.

## Maybach Receives Award

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**M**aybach, the first-ever automobile recipient of the "Five Star Diamond Award" presented by the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences (AAHS) in 2003, has now been chosen for the second consecutive year. The Maybach was named "Automobile of the Century" by the AAHS

based on the tradition of excellence and high standards under the World Renowned Products category, which also includes the famed "Christina O" as the Most Prestigious and Exclusive Private Yacht.

In the past, this prestigious award has been reserved for the world's top luxury hotels and restaurants such as China World Hotel, Beijing; George V Four Seasons, Paris; Cafe L'Europe, Palm Beach; and Jean Georges, New York.

Maybach, a sister brand to Mercedes-Benz, has been widely acclaimed since its introduction last spring and has been called "simply the finest, most spectacular, most technologically advanced, best-performing four-door passenger vehicle that has ever lightly dented the planet's surface" (Car and Driver, January, 2003).

The 2004 Maybach 57 and Maybach 62 super-luxury sedans blend 21st-century technology and innovation with classic hand craftsmanship and attention to detail in ways not possible in conventional mass production.

Designed to drive like a private luxury jet for the road, the Maybach's 543-horsepower, twin-turbocharged V-12 engine produces a massive 664 lb.-ft. of peak torque and will accelerate this large luxury automobile from 0-60 mph in just over five seconds - and in utter silence. That rivals many of the world's best sports cars.

The American Academy of Hospitality Services is governed by a Board of internationally renowned trustees that oversees the decision to recognize establishments and organizations worldwide for their outstanding commitment to hospitality within their category and classification. After a final selection is made, the Academy's Board of Trustees votes upon nominations to determine whether the establishments are entitled to The Academy's prestigious Star Diamond Award. The Academy was formed in 1989 as an offspring of a restaurant- rating bureau, founded in 1949.

## High Gear

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**M**s. Muir was a youthful looking widow with a young daughter back in 1969 when the ghost came into her life. It was around the time that she and Anna had moved into Gull Cottage on a lonely stretch of dune land by the shore.

Ms. Muir bought the gun metal gray Finback Mercedes from the estate of a Navy pilot who had cashed in his chips when his Phantom collected one of Charlie's surface-to-air missiles over the DMZ. The Finback was a 220SE with a steel sliding sunroof and red leather upholstery. Ms. Muir named it "The Ghost." With its fuel injected overhead cam six, manual tranny and all independent suspension, "The Ghost" was quite a machine. It was identical to the Finbacks with which the Mercedes team had swept the Monte Carlo Rallye back in '64. The late Navy pilot had successfully campaigned his 220SE in SCCA autocrosses, track events and rallies. This car had taken silverware at an early Tri-O-Rama in the Mercedes-Benz Club of America. "The Ghost" was shod with Michelin X radials and could hang on like grim death in the twisty bits.

Now Ms. Muir had always been a sporting sort. At one point she had driven a Speedster and she knew that "heel and toe" is not a dance step. However, when "The Ghost" came into her life, Ms. Muir suddenly became a real contender in driving events. Almost miraculously she could drift her handsome Finback through the sweepers and woosh down the straights before standing on the front discs and rear turbo cooled drums. In SCCA and club events Ms. Muir and "The Ghost" swept all before them. Indeed, they were a legendary pair. And the trophies, plaques and medals they did a come. The walls of Gull Cottage were decorated with mementoes of their triumphs.

During those driving seasons "The Ghost" and Ms. Muir were a mythic couple. They were inseparable and all-in-all for each other. The young widow's life was entirely wrapped up in her

relationship with "The Ghost." They were always together. In the real world Ms. Muir was a writer and it was during this time that she wrote her most successful book, Blood and Swoosh, a novel about a dashing young service man and club racer.

But all things do come to an end. Life moves on, and so it was for Ms. Muir. It was sometime during the late '70s that she met a good-looking middle aged man of flesh and blood. You can imagine the rest of the story. "The Ghost" was but a spirit and a creature of steel and iron. A woman yearns for what is more than the rush of the wind and the caress of g forces. And so "The Ghost" passed out of Ms. Muir's life. She bought a mini van.

There are no happily-ever-afters, you know. In the end, Ms Muir and her daughter, Anna, lived alone at Gull Cottage. No tragedy here. Theirs was a pleasant existence. Royalties from Blood and Swoosh, and her other writings provided for comfortable circumstances. At one point they owned a Mercedes 450SL and participated in low intensity car events. When, ultimately, Anna went out to make her own way in the world her mother was content to live quietly with her housekeeper at Gull Cottage on the lovely, lonely dunes by the shore.

I'm just a neighbor, you see. I've known Ms. Muir for some time. Late the other night I was driving along the coastal road as a wind storm blew in from the open water. It's a beautiful thing to watch the rolling breakers under scudding clouds in the moonlight. Suddenly I was being overtaken by a speeding Mercedes Finback sedan. Main beams flashing and big round Hella auxiliary lights piercing the night. As it came alongside I could see that there were two people on board. The windows were down and the sunroof peeled back. I could hear a snatch of an old Stones tune. The image will always remain with me.

Ms. Muir passed away in her sleep on that stormy night. Her obituary in The Times talked at length about her literary accomplishments. They never mentioned "The Ghost." **John Kuhn Bleimaier**

## LoveMercedes Tour

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**M**ercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA) will be hitting the road this summer with its largest ever experiential marketing event called the "LoveMercedes Tour." MBUSA will take all nine of its model lines to 12 cities across the U.S. allowing current and potential owners to experience new Mercedes models and in the process will raise money for scholarships in each of the cities it visits.

According to Michelle Cervantez, vice president of marketing for MBUSA, "Programs like the LoveMercedes Tour have been an extraordinary success for us for over 15 years, and we're always looking for ways to infuse our events with activities that have meaning for customers and prospective buyers. We know from our experience over the years that people attending these events are significantly more likely to buy a Mercedes once they've had the opportunity to get behind the wheel. It's what convinces people that a Mercedes is 'unlike any other.' With the help of our partners on the tour, we're able to build the relationship and establish the connection with the brand in a way that's relevant, non-intrusive and, let's not forget, fun."

The event offers attendees an opportunity to get to know a wide range of Mercedes-Benz models, including the recently launched E320 CDI diesel, the legendary SL convertible, and the all new SLK roadster which arrives at Mercedes-Benz dealerships this autumn. The event consists of track events showcasing the prowess of the model lines and an indoor component that allows visitors to experience the Mercedes-Benz brand in an partnership with other products that are representative of four areas of the brand lifestyle: Living Well (home design), Innovation (cutting edge technologies), Relax and Recharge (spa and beauty) and Style and Leisure (fashion and travel).

Beyond the sheer fun of driving, each mile driven at the event will go toward a scholarship for a

local student as part of the company's recently launched DRIVE YOUR FUTURE: The Mercedes-Benz USA Scholarship Program which benefits students who will be the first generation in their families to attend college. The company expects that driving enthusiasm will result in an average of two scholarships per market. The initiative is part of the national DRIVE YOUR FUTURE scholarship program which will award over \$500,000 this year to hundreds of students across the country who demonstrate exemplary academic achievement, financial need, leadership and participation in school and community activities.

The LoveMercedes Tour kicks off in San Francisco on July 30th. When it culminates in Dallas on October 24th, MBUSA estimates that it will have raised more than \$50,000 in scholarships in the process of introducing 30,000 people to Mercedes-Benz and its products. Beyond the prospective buyers and owners that Mercedes-Benz is inviting, the event is free to the public on a first-come, first-served basis, but pre-event registration through the event's web site at <http://www.lovemercedestour.com> is required.

The LoveMercedes driving course events feature a wide range of Mercedes-Benz model lines -- from coupes and convertibles to sedans and SUVs. Attendees will be invited to experience test drives on a variety of challenging courses that simulate real-world driving conditions. The courses were designed to demonstrate the performance, handling and safety available throughout Mercedes model lines.

The "Fun in the Sun" course focuses on the enduring allure of convertibles which Mercedes has offered for five decades in the U.S. Featured at the event are the legendary SL roadster model line which boasts timeless style with a retractable hardtop that combines the open-air fun of a convertible with the quiet comfort and security of a coupe. The four-seat CLK cabriolet features a fully automatic soft top designed to create open-air driving at the touch of a button while also ensuring year-round comfort and low interior noise. On this course, attendees will also have a chance to drive the recently launched E320 CDI diesel sedan. The E320 CDI is highly fuel-efficient and achieves lower exhaust emissions than previous diesels and has a high-torque diesel engine more powerful than conventional engines.

The "4MATIC Experience" course demonstrates the all-season capability of the company's 4MATIC all-wheel drive models. Real-world winter and bad-weather conditions are handled with dispatch by E-Class and S-Class all-wheel-drive 4MATIC sedans. Mercedes-Benz offers a full-time all-wheel-drive system on all of its four-door vehicles. The exclusive S-Class line offers an unprecedented all-new standard automatic seven-speed transmission, standard DVD navigation system, MP3 play capability, and an award-winning safety system called PRE-SAFE. "The Off-Road Adventure" invites attendees to a thrilling all-terrain experience with a professional driver in the M-Class and G-Class SUVs. Both the M-Class and the G-Class offer rugged but refined styling as well as practicality and safety. Both models offer full-time four-wheel drive for off-road excellence.

At each LoveMercedes Tour event, attendees will preview state-of-the-art technologies, and cutting-edge design and fashion from participating corporations. Partnering with MBUSA for the LoveMercedes Tour are Benjamin Moore Paints, Boylan Bottling Company, Canon Power Shot, EVIAN Natural Spring Water, Flexform, Harman/Kardon, Karastan, Kuppertsbusch, Mercedes-Benz Certified Pre-Owned, Mercedes-Benz Credit, Mercedes-Benz European Delivery, Michelin, MSN Direct, Poliform, POM Wonderful, Saks Fifth Avenue, SIRIUS Satellite Radio, Sub-Zero, Ritz-Carlton Spa, Tommy Bahama, Varenna Kitchens, and Wilson Sporting Goods.

For every mile that event attendees put on a Mercedes test drive vehicle in each market, MBUSA will donate a dollar toward scholarships for students in that city as part of the company's DRIVE YOUR FUTURE: The Mercedes-Benz USA Scholarship Program. The scholarships funded through the LoveMercedes Tour will be awarded in 2005 to students who will be the first in their families to

attend college. Launched in May 2004, the DRIVE YOUR FUTURE program will award over 250 scholarships this year to students across the country. The scholarships created through the LoveMercedes Tour will be above and beyond those already committed for each state. Detailed information regarding the DRIVE YOUR FUTURE program may be downloaded from [www.mbusa.com/drivefuture](http://www.mbusa.com/drivefuture).

The D.C. area tour will be at Fed-Ex Field on September 17-19. Sign up on the web now!

## TradingPost

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**1984 300CD:** white/palomino. V. good cond. daily driver. 28 mpg diesel. 182K. Everything works, including clock. No rust or dents. Upgraded Alpine CD radio. \$6850 obo. Call Rick at 410-758-1129 or 410-212-0744 (cell) or email at <rfsailor@msn.com>

**190E 2.3 16-Valve 1987:** Pearl black/black leather. Body/interior very good to excellent with exception - needs dash pad & few stitches in back seat. Recent engine rebuild, but rings broke, so engine needs repair. Many new parts beyond engine: new tires/battery/more. Very nice to drive car. \$5000 obo. Call Daniel at 304-229-3928 or email <seeme4vintage@earthlink.net>

**420SEL 1988:** Champagne/Maroon. 127k miles. 22 mpg. \$7500. Call Lucinda at 887-387-2457.

**560SL 1988:** Cream/brown soft top and interior. 117k miles. Auto, AC, great shape. Garaged and well cared for by GWS owner. M-B service/records. 7/04 VA insp. Includes hardtop rack and cover plus never-used car cover. \$18,900. Call Bob at 703-319-1607 or email at bobtravels@hotmail.com.

**SL320 1996:** Pearly Burgundy/tan leather. Power operated black soft top/hardtop w/roll bar. Only 73kmiles. New tires, battery. Side air bags. All SL features. Beautiful in nice condition. Extended warranty thru 7/06 transferrable. \$23,900. Call Clemence Stephen at 410-836-2291 or 410-459-3124 or <cstephen46@cs.com>

**E320 1998:** Sedan. Smoke Silver/Parchment Leather. Burl Walnut. 44.4k miles. ASR/sunroof. Car is clean all scheduled check-ups. New tires 2003. Suggested retail is \$21,723. Asking \$20,000. Call at 703-339-7776 or 703-405-7702 (cell) or email at <fffquiltlady@cox.net>

**C43 1999:** Brilliant silver/gray-black two-tone leather. 63k miles. All options. New tires, front discs, pads. Sensing Wipers, Xenons. Phone. All records since new. 7/100 Starmark. Clean. \$25,000. Call John at 703-371-8706 or email at <internet@thehuangs.us>

**CLK320 Cabriolet 2000:** Azure blue metallic (\$1000 special order) 33k miles. Garage kept since new. Voice actuated phone/6 CD changer. Command system incl. navigation. Maintained to specs. at EuroMotor Cars. Recent tires and battery. Current new price is \$60,000. This car \$39,995. Call Howard at 301-656-9496.

**Parts:** Fender trim, triple plated for SL, new! New for 116 chassis, M116, 117 engine: dr side mirror unit; pass side mirror replacement; turn signal unit; charcoal canister; tuneup video, oil filter. Becker Mexico. Factory manuals (body, elec, mech), Catalog C -exploded view/parts of body/engine. A/C manifold, coolant, pressure tester, etc. \$150 all. 703/768-3125.

**Hardtop:** For 107 chassis cars (1972-89). Red. Any reasonable offer. Call Michael at (w) 202-736-4720 or email <pagodaw113@aol.com>

**FREE!:** From 1995 SL320 - folding hardtop stand, hardtop cover, windstop (behind seats). No charge! Call James Cullen at 410-435-7766.

## Advertisers

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[Curry's Auto Service](#) 703-502-0400

[MB Motors](#) 703-978-4564

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Electronics Service Center 301-881-8637

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