

April 2022

Gazette



350SL LIFE STORY
AMG SEC
LIVING WITH AN ELECTRIC SMART

THE OFFICIAL MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB FOUNDED 1952



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Gazette

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KENNY OOI



Kenny Ooi at the recent Officials' Study Day.

Just as we were going to press we heard the news that the Club's Finance Director Kenny Ooi had died suddenly on Monday March 7. The Club offers its sympathy to Kenny's family at this difficult time. There will be an appreciation of Kenny in a future Gazette.

70TH ANNIVERSARY GRILLE BADGES

A limited edition 70th anniversary souvenir grille badge has been produced. Boxed and individually numbered on the rear, they can be purchased from the Club Office (catherine.barlow@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or 01780 482111) for £35, including packing and postage. If it has not already been sold, you can request the badge number you would like. There are only 200 and once they are sold out, they will be gone.



Red Mackinnon

Limited edition of 200.

VACANCIES FOR CLUB OFFICIALS

Regional Officers

There are currently vacancies for Regional Officers in Cumbria – North; Cumbria – South; Herts, Beds and Bucks; Midlands – Central; Midlands – East; Midlands – North East; Northern Ireland; Nottinghamshire; Oxford; Scotland – North; Solent; Surrey; Thames Valley; Wales – North and Borders; Wales – South; West Country and Yorkshire – North and East. If you would be interested in learning more about any of these roles please contact me (trevor.mitchell@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or 07710 911356).

Trevor Mitchell, Regional Development Director

Model Registers

The Model Register vacancies are 190SL (W121), A-Class (W176), C-Class (W203), C-Class (W204/205), CLS (W218/219) and G-Wagen (W460/461/463). Please contact me via steve.howie@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk to enquire about these vacancies.

Steve Howie, Model Register Co-ordinator

Valuers

Valuers are required in central Wales. If you would like to know more about these roles please contact Chief Valuer Ray Waker (ray.waker@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or 07941 977356).

Deputy Company Secretary

There is also a vacancy for a Deputy Company Secretary. If you would like to know more about this please contact Phil Greaves (philip.greaves@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or 01952 292476).

Trophy Manager and liaison with Mercedes-Benz World

We need a volunteer to take over the role of Trophy Manager and liaison with Mercedes-Benz World. Ideally the volunteer will live within easy driving distance of MB World and the role is two-fold; firstly to be responsible for the Club's trophy collection and have the relevant trophies available at events, and secondly to liaise with MB World and maintain the good relations between us. Your expenses for travelling will be reimbursed. If you think you might be interested in finding out more about this important Club role please contact Geoff D'Cruz via geoff.d.cruze@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or the phone number given in the Club Directory.

Club Services Manager

The Board would like to appoint a new manager to take on and expand the Club Services function. Historically this role covered a larger number of responsibilities, some of which have been merged with other positions. We would now like to look at re-establishing this role with a view to expanding it. It will include overseeing the Archives, Regalia, the Club Shop and Club storage, but will not necessarily be limited to these areas.

If you have previous experience of managing this type of role, in the first instance please e-mail Chairman Rosemarie Maslin (rosemarie.maslin@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk) indicating your interest and outlining why you feel your knowledge and ideas would be particularly suited to this position. The closing date for applications is April 4

GAZETTE EDITOR

After more than 25 years as Editor of the Gazette, Chris Bass has decided not to renew his contract with the Club. The Board of Directors would like to thank Chris for all the hard work and experience that he has put into the production of the Gazette, which has been much enjoyed by Members over the years and admired throughout the car club sector. A full appreciation of Chris's work will appear in a future Gazette.

We welcome contributions from Members, please email editor@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk If you have previously e-mailed an article to Chris, please feel free to re-send to this e-mail address, although arrangements are in place for all articles to be forwarded to the new Editor.

The Board of Directors



These badges come with provision for mounting on a grille.

CAR BADGES

Car badges are available from the Club Shop (www.mercedes-benz-clubshop.co.uk or 01278 652340). They are approximately three inches (76mm) wide and come with fittings enabling them to be mounted on most radiator grilles. The cost is £23 excluding post and packing.





Letter of the Month

As a thank you (and as an incentive for even greater efforts) we like to choose a letter of the month and the Member whose letter is selected receives a gift from the Club Shop.

OBSERVATIONS

Dear Sirs,

I am a new Member (May 2021) and have the following observations.

I was previously a Member from 1962 to 68, a Board Member and Post-War Librarian, and a friend of Ronald Johnson [the Club's Founder], Jack Rohll [a Director and for many years Gazette Editor] and Ray Whiteway [a past Chairman].

I suggest the Board offers Honorary Membership to Toto and Susie Wolff. Toto is, of course, Principal of the Mercedes-Benz Formula One team and, until three years ago, Susie was a test driver with the team. Toto could give us an entrée into the F1 works and Susie would be ideal as a driver at a track experience day.

Secondly, would the Board offer the Patronage of the Club to Sir Lewis Hamilton? Six World Championships with Mercedes is an amazing feat and we should recognise it.

Looking through our list of Honorary Members shows us to be singularly insular – how about opening up the ranks? Especially in our 70th year.

Yours faithfully,

Peter G Gerrish, Alresford

Editor's note: I have been to see Peter and he has a wealth of memories both from his time as a Club Director and from his exploits in motor racing. He is also responsible for saving an important album of Mercedes-Benz and Club photos. I hope to bring you reports about all of this in the future.

Club Chairman Rosemarie Maslin responds to his letter: 'Thank you for your suggestions which are well received by the Board. As a matter of policy, at the moment, we only consider offering honorary memberships to people who have shown an active interest in the Club. During our 70th anniversary year we will be only too pleased to extend invitations to those you recommend and will be very happy to meet them at any event. Likewise it would be a pleasure to meet you at one such event, so please do let us know which events you are able to attend.'

LOOKING FOR A 1954-59 180 DIESEL

Dear Chris,

May I pay my thanks to Clive Henderson, the Regional Officer for Wales – North and Borders. I called him on his home phone number, leaving a message asking if he knew the whereabouts of a 'rare bird' – a 1954-59 Ponton 180 diesel saloon.

He returned my call and was most helpful, however I am still hoping perhaps someone in our Club may be able to tell me where I can find such a vehicle.

Yours truly,

Eric Williams, Wallasey

JANUARY GAZETTE

Dear Chris,

I rarely write to magazines, but feel moved to do so on this occasion, in praise of the Gazette.

It's very refreshing to see that the magazine is notably less sycophantic than the Porsche GB Club's 'Porsche Post', where no dissenting voices appear to be allowed and there are no members' letters published.

I was particularly impressed with the article by Mike Timms 'Why I'm waiting for hydrogen' and would ask that you pass on my congratulation to him. I feel very much the same about the current 'state of the art' battery electric vehicles. They are exactly as described – a solution that will be foisted on a largely naïve (disinterested?) public because it's a

relatively easy 'sell' to convince people that these are the balm their consciences need.

In reality we will see many more BEVs because the motor manufacturers have, with very few exceptions, followed classic 'me too' design, engineering and marketing solutions. They are a pack of near rabid big dogs barking up the wrong tree.

The other elements that Mike may have wanted to include are that the National Grid's ESO (Electricity System Operator) app will show the carbon cost of each kWh of electricity generated. Slightly skewing Mike's figures (and I can't remember what he wrote in his previous article, so forgive me if this is ground that has already been covered) is the fact that for each kWh generated five to nine per cent of that power will be lost in transmission (the National Grid's own numbers).

He may also have included that the immensely heavy BEVs produce a lot of particulates from brakes, tyres and road degradation, further negating their green credentials.

We own one old Mercedes at the moment – soon to be two, a Porsche 911 and a Citroen 2CV. The last is capable of transporting four adults and a spot of luggage at something close to the speed limit most of the time! In an idle moment I looked up the weight of a Porsche Taycan's battery, which was a 650kg for the 96kWh version. The weight of the 2CV? Quoted as 560kg. Instructive.

Regards,

Ian Potter, via e-mail

SPRING HAS SPRUNG



Do you know which model these springs fit?

Dear Chris,

A few days ago I was having a clear out at home and came across this front road spring covered in weeds! You could have a competition in the Gazette asking Members from what model they came.

Best regards,

Nicky Porter, via e-mail

Editor's note: See the footnote at the end of Letters for the answer.

A CAUTIONARY TALE

Dear Chris,

It was a dark Friday evening in early December, still no gritting as yet so the R129 SL had the job of getting us down to the pub and back in time for tea.

The favourite 'local' is a beautiful Berkshire country pub, next to a church in a quiet village in the middle of nowhere. 20 minutes later, parked in pole position with a pint of exceptional ale on the table, the weekend was taking shape nicely.

I am not sure if it was some sort of intuition, but within about a half of a second of the beginning of the wrenching crunching sound I found myself half way to the door as the exceptional ale dived for cover, all over the floor.

Five seconds later I was outside, the SL was two feet away from where I had left it and there was, you have guessed it, a white Transit van, a considerable distance away but stopped and surrounded by several locals and some neighbouring farmers returning from a long day but not too tired to 'lend a hand'.

The car is well known by all in attendance, except the delivery driver who, it turns out is lost, late to make a drop, on his first day at the job – filling in for a friend who had covid. The situation was never-the-less now contained and all assistants were thanked and dispatched.

It turns out that the driver was indeed in a panic and had also reversed into a VW





ClubShop

More detailed clothing descriptions, sizes and colours shown on the website.

Available via the Club website or directly on www.mercedes-benz-clubshop.co.uk Post and packing is not included in the prices shown here.



Club fleece in various colours £32.00



Softshell jacket in various colours £35.00



Red trim jacket in various colours £45.00



Unisex Windsurfer jacket in various colours £22.00



Wine bottle stopper £9.00



Pin Badge £8.00



Keyring £6.00



Holdall in various colours £25.00



Tee Jay jacket in deep navy or hunter green £90.00



Aluminium water bottle £15.00



Club face mask £8.00

Buy on-line

You can access the Club Shop via the Club website or directly on www.mercedes-benz-clubshop.co.uk Payment can be made by credit card or cheque.

Please make cheques payable to Donna Butter.

All orders will be despatched within 14 days, if there is a problem we will contact you. Post and packing is not included in the prices given above.

Goods found to be faulty through design flaws or postage damage will be replaced free of charge.

To order please ring 01278 652340

If we are unable to answer the phone, please leave a message on the answer-phone and we will call you back.

The e-mail address is sales@mercedes-benz-clubshop.co.uk

Sorry, but due to bank charges, we have had to introduce a minimum order value of £5.00.



Rosemarie's ramblings

by Rosemarie Maslin

April is my month to clean and prepare the cars, or as is now the case my one car. I do in fact still own two Mercedes but it is only my SL600 that I will be using this year.

My 380SL is still in the process of being repaired. This is taking longer than I was hoping but we all know about older cars, they need attention and when you are not looking something goes wrong. The 380SL is basically still a very good car, but once work starts all sorts of things rise to the surface.

It is with pleasure that I welcome two new members to the Board of Directors, who I am sure will add to the diversity of our work. Both Keith Williams and Paul Mazzoni are long standing Club Members and well known to many of you.

Keith is now responsible for the Club's website and all things technical with it. I use the website, but that is as far as my expertise goes. What and how it happens I am afraid I just don't know or understand.

Paul is our new Technical Director, with a vast knowledge of our cars and all that goes with them. Again I have to admit

that I am not an 'under the bonnet' person so hopefully if I need help he will be able to assist.

By the time you read this 'ramblings' the Officials' Study Day will have taken place and I am sure it will have been a most successful day and enjoyed by all who attended. This is always the jumping off point for the year for all the Officials. This is the time they can decide what they wish to do for the year and of course this year it is an extra special one being our 70th anniversary.

As I am away I have started to think about past holidays I have enjoyed with the Club. I don't want to bore you with my reminiscences but I do have some really great memories of both the trips we organised and the recce trips Peter and I made setting up the various events, both in the UK and overseas.

I started helping with Club events over 20 years ago and one of my first 'solo' events was one of the days which was part of our 50th anniversary celebrations back in 2002. I was given the responsibility of

organising the Saturday at Grimsthorpe Castle, which happened to be just a few miles away from our home. The day was a combination of a concours and activities in the castle's park, with events such as laser clay pigeon shooting, fly fishing, archery and falconry. This was together with a tour of the castle itself. I remember the starting procession of all the cars arriving at 11.30am in order of year of production. They drove very sedately up the arrow straight drive to encircle the fountain and lawn. Very impressive and such an excellent photo opportunity. I would have liked to have shown you some of the things that were on offer that day but unfortunately this was back before digital photography was so wide spread and I can't find a single photograph taken at the event. I do remember however a group of 30-plus Members from the German MBIG club visiting in a refurbished Mercedes-Benz bus. The whole weekend was reported in the August 2002 Gazette with some really tremendous photos. All of the Club's Gazettes can be found on our website. Just log-in and hover over 'Club' then 'Resource Library'. Scroll down the page slightly and the first option on the left is '1. Gazettes'. Click to open and this will produce folders for each year, starting from 1952. Click on the year of Gazettes you wish to view. These are all in PDF format. Click on the month you wish to view. It may take a few seconds but the chosen Gazette will appear on your screen and you will be able to scan through it at your leisure. *[Tremendous thanks are due to former Director John Wallis for scanning all the pre-digital age Gazettes - Ed.]*





The EQS450+ Luxury at the Carden Park Hotel.

Rob writes...

by Rob Halloway

Lovely jubilee

It was as we passed the penultimate services on the northbound M6 that the anxiety really began to take hold. We'd been cruising north in electric silence for hours, just the swoosh of the windscreen wipers and the whisper of the climate control disturbing the peace. Our cabin was toasty-warm, I had the seat and steering wheel heat on full, and on the really boring average speed stretches I relaxed by listening to some Recondite [apparently a German musician – Ed]. But I was increasingly anxious.

This disquieting sense is something that's a familiar trope in most articles discussing electric cars and long journeys. We were in the sweet spot of this cliché, with all the factors that decimate battery range: Gusty winds, cold outside, everything switched on in the car, air warmed and purified, lights on – you get the idea.

It's probably helpful at this point of the column to clarify that I wasn't suffering from electric car range anxiety – I was driving the all-new EQS, and it can go further than me without the need for replenishment. No, I was getting a little

uneasy because later that day I was to make a short speech at the Club's platinum jubilee dinner and dance at the Carden Park Hotel in Cheshire.

My plan was to make reference to the courage and determination of the first group of enthusiasts, setting up a club dedicated to Mercedes-Benz, just seven years after



The EQS's dash with the 'single layer' screen on the left.





Cars of the month



Peter Lawrence's SLK200 Blue Efficiency

Peter writes: 'It has been with great pleasure and pride that I have enjoyed the delights of Mercedes-Benz motoring. Growing up in Denmark, where most taxis have always been Mercedes, I was used to the sight and feel of them. Even though my dream had, since then, been to own one, I was not able to afford one

In my early automotive ownership I had many examples of every northern European made sports car, starting with the 1970s British rust buckets and ending with

a BMW Z4, but the three-pointed-star had eluded me.

As I now drive a Tesla as my main transportation, I am of the persuasion that we should take extra care of the planet we call home. So, even when succumbing to cherished automotive desires, I feel it incumbent on me to choose this example for its relatively low CO₂ emissions, good mpg – and it's a wonderfully balanced and beautifully designed sports car. When I took it for a test drive I was the dealer's dream.

Through the years, I have accessorised and embellished 'Victor', which is his rightful name, making all who see him swoon.

Now, in my later years, I'm happy to, occasionally, put my right foot down when the coast is clear, yet mostly content to potter around country lanes enjoying the wind on my scalp. I have had no complaints with Victor's ability to see me through all weathers on some lengthy runs throughout the British Isles, and to look and feel like the dream I had back in the day.'



The R107 SL had a 19-year production life, from 1972 to 1989, with nearly 300,000 units manufactured.

My car has a 3,499cc 90-degree V8 engine with Bosch D-Jetronic fuel injection and produces 197bhp at 5,800rpm, with 211lb/ft at 4,000rpm torque. Later models used Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection.

Transmission is by a four-speed automatic Daimler-Benz gearbox. This was changed to a three-speed automatic gearbox for later versions from August 1972.

It is claimed to do nought to 62mph in 9.2 seconds and have a top speed of 127mph, although I have only seen just over 100 mph (on the Wellington Straight at the Silverstone circuit).

It has disc brakes all round, which are ventilated at the front.

The early R107 models have no electrical refinements (such as roof motor, air-conditioning, central locking, electric windows etc). This has the advantage of making the car relatively light compared to later models. The 1972 350SL weighs 1,545kg without the hard-top, whereas a 1989 420SL, with all the extra equipment, weighs 1,600kg.

So, what you have is essentially four wheels and a big motor. It's easy to maintain and has the added advantage of being tax and MoT exempt.

My 350SL was first registered in February 1972, and appears to have had six previous owners. The current mileage is just over 122,000.

I bought the 350SL in April 2000 following a boring train journey from Cambridge to Manchester, with only a classic car magazine for entertainment. The transaction was done on the phone – the



The car's hood is always down in the summer.

only thing I needed to know was the car's length (4,380mm or 14 feet, five inches) because it had to fit into a particular space in my garage, between a workbench at the back and the garage door at the front.

On the day I picked the car up, my wife and I drove off to the Chilterns for my birthday weekend break. The dealer who sold the car to me was so confident that it was in good order that he offered to drive to collect me personally if I had any problem whatsoever.

The car ran beautifully and has continued to do so throughout my ownership. It has been on tour in

Wales and around the coast of Ireland clockwise (south and north). It has been to Silverstone, Flywheel at Bicester Heritage and to the Le Mans Classic.

On the 1,500-mile Welsh tour I only opened the bonnet three times – once for the scrutineers, once for the concours judges and once to check that the oil level was still OK. So, on the Irish tour I only opened the bonnet twice – no oil check.

Bonus

I booked the trip to Le Mans rather late, and the organisers of the group tour had already completed the reservations for the Portsmouth to Le Have ferry. I had accommodation in a lovely chateau near the circuit, and a pass to get me and the car into the infield, so I made my own way to Le Mans via a Newhaven to Dieppe ferry. Although it sounded rather a slow crossing (leaving at 8.00pm and arriving at 4.00am in Dieppe) it turned out to be a great bonus. This is because I pulled out an old *Michelin* map of France which I had used in the 1970s as a young lad hitch-hiking through France. It only showed the Route Nationale roads and not any motorways.

My 350SL

by Dr Jo Davies



Jo Davies's 350SL at a studio photo shoot in 2016.





Quirky Classics

by Paul Kelly

In Preston, my home city, there is a certain classic Mercedes-Benz that has caught my eye for a number of years. It is parked outside all year long, actually, it's a daily driver! The car in question is

a 1971 W111 280SE, in astral silver with blue leather.

This very car got a certain young man's attention, when he passed it after playing football with his friends. Adam Pasquill-

Dixon lived near, and dreamt of owning one of these cars in the future. Little did he know that he would go on to run a successful parts business, dedicated to keeping these elegant Mercedes on the road.

Adam started Quirky Classics about 18 months ago, but says he has been buying and selling classic car parts for 15 years. His new premises, in Nateby near Garstang, has cars and parts aplenty about the place, including the aforementioned W111, which Adam now takes care of for the owner, Club Member Wilf, a local business man, who uses the car daily, and has owned it since 1978. It is bubbling on the body, but Wilf is dead against any sort of restoration. "I like it just as it is!" Wilf (I don't want to mention his surname) has apparently had an article in the Gazette about driving a W114 250 to Yemen, which was by all accounts, interesting!

Adam does service work for customers, but is slowly phasing that out to concentrate on the parts side of the business. It's similar to our good friend Dave Collins, who has a business close to Brighouse in Yorkshire.

Wilf wanted to contact Adam, who lives in the same area, about the progress



Adam with the car that started his Mercedes obsession.





Lewis Hamilton testing the new car in Bahrain

F1 NEWS

by Will Gardner

MAZEPIN

As the horrific scenes in Ukraine unfolded at the end of February, the Haas team ended the contract of Russian driver Nikita Mazepin and severed its ties with title sponsor Uralkali, the Russian fertiliser giant part owned by Mazepin's father, who is cited as an associate of President Putin. Kevin Magnussen returns to F1 to take the seat on a long-term contract. F1 itself has said that Russian drivers can continue to race under a 'neutral flag' arrangement, but must publicly acknowledge the FIA's strong stance on standing in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. F1 has also cancelled its contract to hold the Russian GP, which was scheduled for September this year.

RULE CHANGES

As well as comprehensive changes to the 2022 cars to improve close racing, the biggest design shake-up since the 1980s, F1 has reacted to the debacle of last season's final race with what FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem described as a 'Step forward for F1 refereeing'. The changes include Race Director Michael

Masi being replaced whilst a Virtual Race Control Room – likened to football's VAR system – will be created and direct communications between teams and the race director have been removed. The system of allowing cars to unlap themselves behind the safety car has also been reviewed and adjusted, allowing the safety car to leave the track more quickly as there is no longer a need for it to remain in use until all lapped cars have rejoined the rear of the pack.

TESTING

Split over two three-day sessions, the new era F1 cars took to the track in Barcelona at the end of February and again in Dubai at the beginning of March. The new cars look markedly different to last year's, with the most obvious visual differences being the larger wheels and smaller rear wing, which complement a host of other changes designed to make the cars more competitive, with more opportunities for on-track overtaking. The new term in F1 this year, is 'porpoising,' marking a return to the challenges of the 'ground effect' cars of the 1980s. It refers to the cars' tendency to move up and down, in a similar motion to a swimming porpoise, at high speeds. The effect is caused by the complex effects of the new aerodynamics regulations and is creating a real headache for the teams, with those quickest to cure the issue likely to gain advantage – at least until the other teams catch up.

Over the first three days, Mercedes, Ferrari and McLaren made a strong showing with good reliability, performance and mileage, whilst reigning champion Verstappen managed 206 laps in total in his Red Bull, but was only sixth fastest over the total test. Lewis Hamilton took

the fastest lap of the session, with George Russell taking over as wing-man in the Mercedes team and dutifully chalking-up the second fastest time. Of the Mercedes customer teams, McLaren had the most to celebrate, with strong overall performance, no reliability issues and an apparent ability to follow other cars closely without losing performance – which bodes well for overtaking in race trim. Aston Martin had to contend with an oil leak, which limited its track time, whilst Williams had a solid test, with new driver Alex Albon admitting he had needed some track time to shake off the 'rustiness' he felt after not racing last season.

Red Bull had a solid test too, though a little off the pace. Verstappen declared himself happy with the car so far, whilst reliability issues hampered team mate Sergio Perez who lost a chunk of running time with a gearbox fault. The team has been bolstered by the news that it has signed a new five-year contract with current champion Verstappen; a very long commitment in F1 terms and not seen since the days of Michael Schumacher at Ferrari. The new deal will move the young Dutchman into a similar contract league to that of Hamilton, with the deal being worth an estimated \$55million. With additional win and points bonuses, coupled with sponsorship deals, the actual figure could double.

As we went to press, the second test, in Bahrain, had just ended with the teams taking time to digest the results in the desert Gulf kingdom – the season opening Bahrain GP would be taking place just a week later. Red Bull certainly brought pace to the track, showing undeniable speed as well as a striking new side pod design. Mercedes' reliability continued, but its cars were off the pace as they dealt with porpoising, leaving Russell reckoning that the team had work to do ahead of the first race to catch both Red Bull and Ferrari. McLaren and Williams also had a challenging time. McLaren struggled to address front axle issues and needed new components to be flown out, whilst Williams was frustrated with a fire breaking out in Nicholas Latifi's car.



One of the most noticeable changes are the bigger wheels. This is George Russell's car in Barcelona.





'The Beast'.

From OMG to AMG

by Brian Colledge

A labour of love

This is a tale about an ugly duckling which became a beautiful swan. It started many moons ago when I visited Powderham Classic Car show in July 2005, where I met Patrick Lynch for the first time. He had entered his beautiful 560SEC, resplendent in almandine red with a cream interior. It was love at first sight for me with these S-Class 560 coupé models. Patrick and I became great friends over the years and met regularly at many Mercedes shows. At the time I owned a white 1989 300SL. On one occasion he told me he had purchased a second 560SEC from a local garage because he could not resist it. He kept both cars on the road for about three years but, due to lack of garage space, arrived at the difficult decision of choosing one to sell. The almandine red one was chosen and a local enthusiast took on the challenge of running and maintaining a very fine car.

Fast forward to the Powderham show in 2018 and I was surprised to see Patrick arrive with his son Joe driving his 560SEC. Chatting to Patrick during the show he suggested his driving days were coming to an end and he was thinking of selling his car. This sparked my interest and I immediately asked whether he would consider selling it to me. Knowing my passion for cars and in particular Mercedes he agreed to give me first refusal should he

take the decision to sell it. Unfortunately on the way from Powderham to his home in Weston-super-Mare the car broke down and had to be recovered, which prompted Patrick to phone me and a potential sale was agreed.

We regularly return to the Midlands visiting friends and old haunts and often visited Patrick at his flat in Weston-super-

Mare on the way home, but this year was different – I had arranged to pick up the Mercedes. I'd overlooked mentioning this to my wife who was a little upset, to say the least, at only being told a few hours before the pick up. She was quick to point out we had no more garage space as I already owned two other classic cars. Undeterred, I took the car for a test drive and was hooked, so the deal was done and back to Torquay we went in separate cars.

Driving such a prestigious car I soon realised the quality of the experience but was also aware of a few problems – it wasn't stopping very well, the rear suspension was rock hard and there was a rather loud noise coming from the rear of the exhaust.

The journey home was good and without any issues, the engine pulled like



5.6-litre V8 engine.



Chris Bass's 1998 C200 – looking as good as new after 200,000 miles.

Stretching the shoestring

by Chris Bass

Annie and I have always run our 1998 W202 C-Class estate on a shoestring. We bought it 12 years ago for just £1,200 courtesy of Club Member Steve Swithin who had found it on *Ebay*. It had suffered quite a hard life, in the hands of a second-hand book seller, not least thanks to his dog, and had received a far from a full service history. But, after some remedial work by our local independent Mercedes-Benz specialist, and the replacement of its comically small battery, it was deemed fit for work. The legacy of the dog remains in some tooth marks on the steering wheel, but his or her lingering aroma was dealt with by some spray kindly donated by then Editor-in-Chief

and Club Chairman Ian Keers. This aroma and the car's purchase in Morecambe led to its nick name of 'Smelly Eric'.

Since then it has had regular servicing, with me doing some engine oil and filter changes plus fitting the odd set of brake pads, and the independent tackling the serious major services. It had 80,000 miles on the clock when we bought it and now shows over 200,000. It has been totally reliable and its load carrying abilities have been of great benefit in house moves and building work.

Recently it started to use a little coolant and as I was also concerned about the effect of E10 petrol on its fuel system I



Rust on the tailgate...



...and adjacent to it.



Rust under the sill covers.



Rust at the corners of the doors and car park scrapes.





Three years, nine months with an electric Smart

by Jeremy Stevens

In the summer of 2017 Mercedes-Benz Brentford (now West London) was doing a super deal on the then new W453 electric Smart. At that time there was a significant government contribution to the purchase of an electric vehicle and Mercedes was also offering an additional £1,000 off if you brought in an old diesel car for scrappage. We also considered the Renault Zoe and VW's electric car but both were more expensive and were deemed too wide and too long for the limited space at the front of our house.

Our 1987 Peugeot 205GRD was showing its age. When the vacuum pump for the brake servo failed, with the startling consequence that the pedal pressure required to stop the car varied from normal to 'grab the steering wheel and press as hard as you can' we decided to bite the bullet and purchase an electric car to replace it. In 23 years of ownership the 205 had always been pretty reliable (the XUD engine and

gearbox were never touched other than to have routine oil changes). It survived both our children learning to drive in it and being taken to St Andrew's University by my daughter for four years, but after 165,000 miles and at 31 years old, its time had come.

The interminable wait for the delivery of the new Smart commenced in September 2017, the Peugeot's vacuum pump was repaired with rubber taken from an old inner tube to keep it going. In fact, in the intervening six months before the arrival of the Smart, several more inner tube repairs were carried out on the 205's vacuum pump.

We finally took delivery of the Smart for Four in March 2018 and our electric car experience began in earnest. The first big plus was the load capability – I managed to get a standard bath into it and shut the boot by laying the front seat flat. I had also achieved this with the 205 but had to unbolt and remove the front passenger seat first.

The next discovery was the impressive

'from rest' acceleration which was revealed when I inadvertently surprised a motor cyclist who was in the turn right lane at a set of traffic lights, but wanted to go straight on when they turned green.

Incidentally, the Smart has a speed limiter which is a very useful aid to keeping within the law when city driving.

About a month after taking delivery we braved the 'Beast from the East' and met friends in West Clandon, about 30 miles from our base in Ealing. Starting off with a full charge we initially had the heater on but, watching the battery 'State of charge' indicator, I quickly realised that we had to economise on passenger comfort if we wanted to return home without running out of energy supply. We managed to get to our destination with a charge reading of 60 per cent. Suitably warmed up by an open log fire, and fed and watered, it was time to head home, but this time, with the additional load on the system of the lights. Now the lighting load is small compared to the heater (150W compared to 3kW) but, to avoid taking any chances with the reserve power situation, the heater remained off on the return journey, much to the annoyance of the management.

When we were nearly home the 'Reserve battery' warning loomed large in the instrument cluster but we actually made it home with 15 per cent reserve charge left. It would have been touch and go if we had used the heater all the time on both legs of the journey. One advantage of a combustion engine in these circumstances is the presence of plenty of waste heat.

Silence and practicality

We subsequently had a charging point installed at home and settled down to enjoy the silence and practicality of the Smart.



Jeremy's new purchase as a work colleague of his saw it.



30 years of diagnostics evolution

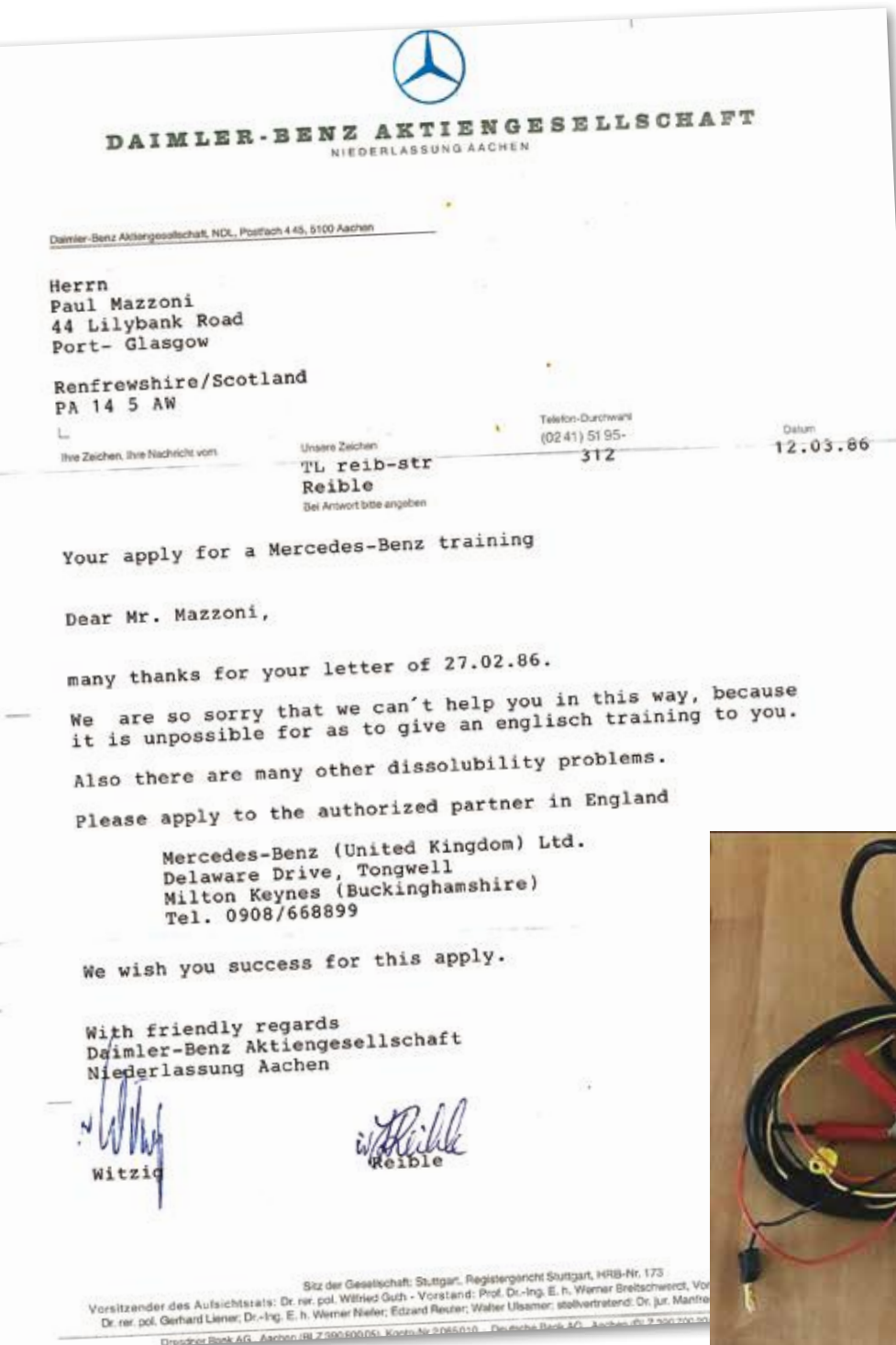
by Paul Mazzoni, Club Technical Director

When I joined the newly opened Mercedes-Benz dealer in Glasgow in 1988 (Derwent Vehicles) I felt an immense sense of pride. From the age of 10, witnessing the Mercedes-Benz dealer personnel at Koln was something that has stayed with me. I was so impressed by their kindness – buying me a glass bottle of cola from their vending machine, to their professional manner in dealing with my mum and dad’s 240D, working so efficiently to get the car repaired so that we could catch the ferry at Rotterdam.

I always wanted to work for Mercedes-Benz and in 1986 I had written a letter to the manufacturer in Germany stating that I would like to carry out my apprenticeship there – they sent me a lovely letter back and I was not deterred. So I started my apprenticeship with my dad, working on his Mercedes-Benz fleet of vans, until I applied to the dealer in Glasgow as a third year apprentice – and the rest is history.

I remember PDI (pre-delivery inspections) on R107 SLs and W126 S-Classes, then the new technology really came like a bolt out the blue – the arrival of the R129 SL and the W140 -S-Class. Diagnosis was limited on a W126, you needed an impulse counter – a device that would count flashes. One flash meant no fault and after that two flashes and so on would mean that there was a fault in the system. The W126 would allow its air conditioning unit to be blink coded, it was a start... the start of amazing things that were about to happen. In 1991 the W140 was the car that could still be diagnosed with an impulse counter, however it would take an average of 30 minutes to read and clear all codes at PDI. Then it arrived...

What arrived gave me the same feeling I had watching *Star Wars* for the first time in 1977. This technology was something you could not have imagined. It was called the HHT (Hand Held Tester) and interestingly it was made by Dornier Aerospace [at that time part of the Daimler-Benz group]. The HHT could not only read faults and clear them, it gave you the opportunity to look closely at actual values and gave a host of data readings – temperature, load, injector



Impulse counter.

Letter to Paul Mazzoni from Daimler-Benz AG in the year of the marque's 100th anniversary.



Collection day!

I'm the new SLK and SLC Model Register Captain. I have owned my SLK and been a Club Member for nearly four years now. I have been a Club Official for just over three years and have really enjoyed being a Regional Officer for the Midlands – North and a Social Media Co-ordinator, where I manage the Club's Facebook page.

I'm a life-long car enthusiast with a particulate passion for Mercedes-Benz. A Mercedes was always a dream car for me and the SLK represented an accessible way into Mercedes-Benz ownership. I'm passionate about this model as it's a usable car that can offer great experiences and enjoyment to its owners.

After owning a nearly new Corsa VXR that enjoyed regular trips to the dealer with



The R172 SLK's interior.



It has 18-inch AMG alloy wheels.

a range of issues and which was nearly out of its three-year manufacturer's warranty period, I felt it was time for a change. After a lot of searching and visits to see a few different SLKs, one appeared at a Volvo dealership just 10 minutes away from my home, a 2011 R172 SLK200 AMG Sport 125 Edition. Oddly it had been part-exchanged for a seven-seater XC90, from one extreme to the other. It was the right specification for me and had only done 16,000 miles in around seven years. I just had to buy her.

SLK and SLC

by Steven Homer



Steven Homer's SLK200. 'A lovely view – and the scenery's not bad either!'

ANGLIA – SOUTH

Michael Peters

Well-loved local Member Michael Peters died on February 21. Michael had been a Club Member for many years having joined in August 2007. He was an enthusiast for all classic cars and loved his white 500SL which he campaigned far and wide.

In pre-covid days Michael and his wife Judy would join us at most local events and enjoyed them to the full. Also, the overseas trips to the battlefields and a tour of Southern Ireland were highlights.

Michael was a kind and considerate person, always willing to help others, including once when staffing problems threatened the region's Christmas lunch in Bury St Edmunds he stepped in and after a discussion with the hotel's owners, saved the day.



Michael Peters with his 500SL.

His passing at the age of 83 was peaceful at home with his family. He will be much missed by his family and friends. We send our condolences to wife Judy and daughters Emma and Charlotte.

Tony De Frates



'A kind and considerate person'.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

2022 diary dates



Sunny skies in Surfleet.

We have several events planned! Whereas in recent years we have enjoyed many events to the east and south of Cambridgeshire, we frequently have support from Members to the north and west and they particularly should find this year's activities of interest. This is how our schedule is currently shaping up (for further details of a particular event please e-mail the contact shown in brackets at graham.black@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk or viv.paul.brickett@mercedes-benz-club.co.uk).

May 15 Club 70th Anniversary at Delapre Abbey, Northampton NN4 8AW (contact Viv and Paul).

June 11 Haynes Museum, Yeovil BA22 7LH, with hotel option (contact Viv and Paul).

July 10 Kimbolton Car Show, Huntingdon PE28 0EA (contact Viv and Paul).

August 6 Picnic in the Patch, Surfleet, Spalding PE11 4JF (contact Graham).

2020 B200 AMG Line Premium Plus owner's review – part two

In February's Gazette I set out my views on this model's physical features and driver assistance systems. In this second part I delve further into the 660-page manual (also conveniently available via the car's screen) and investigate some of the informative and multi-media aspects, many of which will be found in other Mercedes-Benz models.

Chips update

This AMG Line model must contain an enormous number of semi-conductor chips to orchestrate all its electronic systems. I tried to discover how many, but the best I could establish from various internet sources is that complicated modern cars may contain up to 1,000 chips. If that is true, what will the service life be for these electronic beehives we are driving around? Will the casino slang 'sorry, you've had your chips' take on new meaning?



The reversing camera retracts above the number plate and the after-market tow-ball is removable.



190. Shell remains from 1983 190 (Gazette April 2021). Rear end, rear screen, rear wings, roof etc. Four wheels, some axle parts, rear seat base, steering wheel. Numerous small parts and fixings. Car can be pushed. Free for collection from north of Gloucester near M50 junction. Meet by arrangement. Tel: 01962 865871
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marshall.geoffrey@gmail.com (04/22/07)

FOR SALE



190E. 2.0 petrol. Previous owner 20 yrs and 100K. Leather. Sunroof. Refurb wheels and new tyres. MoT. £7,995 ono.



CLK 230 Convertible. Black leather. 155k miles. MoT. Some bodywork and paint issues but fantastic runner. MoT. £11,995 ono.



230TE Estate. First owner from new then extensive refurbish and recommitment after storage. Sunroof. Full set refurbished steel wheels + matching colour hubcaps + winter tyres. Excellent bodywork, interior and overall condition. 146K miles. MoT. £11,995 ono.



300SL. 1986. Signal Red. Leather + Hardtop. 156k miles. Stainless exhaust. New hood. Extensive work done and bit more to do. History all the way. MoT £17,995 ono.

Full details and service history from
info@2bearsteps.co.uk

All available to view Shrewsbury. Would swap/deal/part ex all/ any for modern Merc Convertible or other R107 or Pagoda.

07802 364733

Gazette

EXAMPLE

190 Ponton 1957 Black, low mileage, original car, full service history from new, full length Webasto roof, 2 owners from new, MoT Jan 13, tax Jan 13, lots of documentation. EPOA. Tel: 01234 567890

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