



Mercedes-Benz Club of America - Minuteman

TRI-ANGLES

MARCH 2024

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Included in your
membership...



Photo Courtesy of Denton Owen, @denton.drives

Spring is in the air!

With the arrival of spring, we're excited to bring you the latest edition of our newsletter. A lot goes on behind the scenes to bring this to you, and we value the time you spend with us.

Enjoyed a scenic drive recently? Have tips for summer car prep or written about new car technologies? We'd love to feature your insights in our next issues. Contact us at hello@leiamowen.com or europaautosolutions@gmail.com.

Hosted a club event or planning one? Send us a summary and photos. It's a great way for the Minuteman Section to stay connected and maybe join future events. We'll include notable activities in our newsletters.

Thanks for being part of our community. We're looking forward to your contributions!

Leia Owen
EDITOR

Welcome, New Members!

Thank you to all the new members from our region who joined the MBCA Minuteman Chapter in January, February, and March! Let's welcome:

**Dennis Berkey
Andrew Lippman
Raymond Loughlin
John Santilli Jr
Wilkins Vargas
Nick Woulf
Marion Seyle
Robert Henry
Leon Palandjian
David Brookes
Jamie Emerson
Zell Todd**

Are you one of our new members? We're happy to have you! Check out the upcoming events and other chapter information contained in this quarterly publication.

Please contact our team if you have any questions!

Letter from the President

2024 will be a year of significant change for MBCA. New officers, new website, and changes to the magazine will be paired with section rebates, more events and of course, increased camaraderie among our section members. Please have a look at our events calendar and join us at the many activities we have planned for 2024.

First up is a drive to Portsmouth, NH to visit the Mercedes dealer there and experience the new fleet of MB electric vehicles. We will send out an email beforehand with more information.

Following this, in May, we will have our annual EAS open house in Waltham. Ed Owen and the team provide a wonderful opportunity to see your Mercedes on the lift for 15 minutes with an expert mechanic. There will be door prizes, coffee and donuts. The date is being confirmed but it's looking like May 18th.

On June 22nd, Heather Renzoni has arranged a trip to Westport Vineyards where will be treated to a tour and tasting, followed by a fabulous lunch at a local restaurant. In July, we are looking at a possible North Shore drive.

August 10th will again feature the Newport Polo club with private chalets, food and drinks. The annual Lars Anderson Mercedes Day is scheduled for September. Exact date to follow.

The Northern New England section is preparing to host this year's Farberallye in Middlebury, VT sometime in mid-October. This should be an ideal time to see some great foliage.

We want to try and add more events as well as diversification. If you have a suggestion for an event, or would like to help plan one, please get in touch with me.

Thanks again for continuing to support MBCA and the Minuteman chapter!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean".

Dean Coclin
Minuteman Section President

From Our Members



Photo Courtesy of Denton Owen, @denton.drives

ARIZONA CAR WEEK

by Ed Owen



1987 CHRYSLER CONQUEST

Photo Courtesy of Ed Owen; see more at @eas_craftsmanship

ARIZONA CAR WEEK 2024

by Ed Owen



The annual pilgrimage to Arizona Car Week in Scottsdale was the third week in January and included stops at Barrett-Jackson, Bonhams, RM Sothebys, and the MAG Auction.

Kicking the week off this year, I was honored to be a judge at Barrett-Jackson's 'Future Collector Car Show' on the grounds of Westworld. Much along the lines of RADwood and the Audrain's Youngtimer show, it celebrates both the next generation of collectors of the hobby and the cars that interest them. Thankfully my judging category was "Best Preserved," totally my jam.

In talking with the participants, mostly a bit younger, their technical knowledge was impressive but what struck me the most was hearing their passion for the cars stemming from their halcyon days, including their desire to own one growing up and the influence a family member had on their interest. Similar conversations I would have on the fields of Pebble Beach, Amelia, or Greenwich. It definitely beckoned me to pay attention to cars I would normally walk on by like a Toyota Cressida wagon or an Isuzu vehiCROSS.

LOT #1371.1 - 1937 MERCEDES-BENZ 540K SPECIAL ROADSTER



NO RESERVE // FROM THE DON WILLIAMS COLLECTION



- One-off body by the Mayfair Carriage Co.
- More aggressive front end and an overall longer, lower appearance with the radiator and entire drivetrain set back 185 mm.
- 5401cc supercharged straight-8 engine
- The 540K was in London during the early 1950s before being purchased by Peter Hessler of Quebec City, Canada.
- In 1968, the car was purchased by publisher Richard C. Mertz, who imported it to America and began to restore it.
- In 1994, the 540K joined the world-class collection of casino owner Ralph Englestad of Las Vegas, NV.



1937 MERCEDES-BENZ 540K SPECIAL ROADSTER



LOT #1372 - 1936 BUGATTI TYPE 55

ARIZONA CAR WEEK 2024

by Ed Owen



1999 MERCEDES-BENZ E300D



1999 MERCEDES-BENZ ML320

As you would expect there were plenty of BMWs and Porsches, but among them I was happy to see three vintage Mercedes-Benzes: a 1979 “Bagged” SLC, a 1982 240D, and an award winning 190E 16V. My choice for “Best Preserved” was given to an 1987 Chrysler Conquest that spent most of its life in Massachusetts without rusting! Somewhere, Walter P. Chrysler was smiling.

As for the rest of the week, it was filled with cloudy skies and plenty of roller coaster auction fun. The prices were a bit muted but two outliers of our favorite marque were the 1955 300SL Gullwing that went for 3-Million and the 1964 230SL Pagoda that went for 200k, both at Barrett-Jackson. Among my auction favorites were the silver 1950 170S Cabriolet B and the red 1937 540K Special Roadster at Barrett-Jackson, and the black 1956 190SL at RM Sothebys. Our luck was pretty good as we ended up coming home with two mint, low mileage, single owner ‘future classics’: a 1999 ML320 with 50k miles and a 1999 E300d with 22k miles. Believe it or not, both can be registered as antiques! Next up on the circuit is ModaMiami in March...



1950 MERCEDES-BENZ 170S CAB B



1955 MERCEDES-BENZ 300SL GULLWING



THE FCCS JUDGING CREW HAVING FUN



THE AWARD WINNING 16V

Photos Courtesy of Ed Owen; see more at @eas_craftsmanship

DIY-FIX FOR GASOLINE COVER FLAP

by Ken Bourque

On some of the later 2010 and on vehicles, it often happens that the gas cover flap will not completely close and latch. This is due to the movable rubber/plastic tether connecting the gas cap to the body when it falls into the wrong position.

This condition occurs when this strap ends up above the gas cap when the cap is turned to the lock position, causing a bind. The fix is simply to rotate the strap so it rests below the gas cap. No need to go to the dealer for what is an easy, DIY repair.

In addition, if the gas cap strap is broken, you can find low-cost replacements on eBay.



-Part 2-

THIS MAN SAVED MY LIFE. HE MAY HAVE SAVED YOURS TOO.

by Steve Rankel

In Part 1 of this article, in the winter edition of our newsletter, we were introduced to young Béla Barényi - an Austro-Hungarian born engineer struggling as an independent 'engineer-constructor' in the 1920's and 1930's. Finding a manufacturer willing to readily adopt his designs still eluded our protagonist, though his innovative ideas had received accolades in print both in Europe and the US...



From intimidated to inspired:

In the final scene of our previous article, Béla is being interviewed by William Haspel, Board Member in Charge of Passenger Car Development. A force of nature married to a half-Jewish wife, the fact that Haspel kept his post in Nazi-controlled Germany speaks volumes about how respected he was by all around him - including party leadership.

William Haspel likely saw something of himself in young Béla: a young man not afraid to live out his convictions, despite the current context of late 1930's Germany. With one account of the interview saying that Haspel was literally overwhelmed by Béla's ideas on automotive safety, Haspel hired him on the spot.

"You are thinking 10 to 20 years ahead of the automotive industry: everything you do will go straight to the patent office." With that, Haspel gave Béla near-academic status to work on his ideas separate from current car production and a shed outside the factory in Stuttgart to work in. Now with a steady income, an employer not threatened by his innovative ideas and a blank canvas, Béla began to paint the future of the safety innovations we take for granted today.

Let's look at some of the life-saving innovations he inspired ...

Knautsch Zonen (crumple zones) & The Rigid Passenger Compartment

By far the most famous of Béla's innovations was the patent of deformable body zones and the rigid passenger safety cell. While some may be impressed by the solidity of vehicles sold in the middle of the 20th century, those designs transferred all the impact to occupants during a collision, sometimes with catastrophic results. (By the way: don't you love the way that word reads? The sound is even better - phonetically pronounced as "kuh-NOWTCH tsohnen" (emphasis on NOWTCH) - the term speaks to the crunch of metal, glass and rubber that occurs when vehicles are in a collision).

Béla's concept was as radical as it was simple: design deformable body members at the front and rear of the vehicle to absorb the collision forces of a vehicle strike or from crashing into an immovable surface. In tandem, create a rigid passenger safety compartment that would protect the occupants, so no collision could crush or intrude on the occupants themselves.

-Part 2-

THIS MAN SAVED MY LIFE. HE MAY HAVE SAVED YOURS TOO.

by Steve Rankel

Now used by all manufacturers, this radical idea first appeared in the 1950's in Mercedes vehicles, with a full realization in the W111 tailfin. I can speak personally to the effectiveness of this design: while visiting my sister in Germany, we were driving on the autobahn and the entire road came to a rapid halt. As we slowly threaded single-file past the damaged vehicle in the right lane, we saw a 1970's W114 Mercedes Benz with the front and rear pancaked like an accordion, green antifreeze and fluid dripping from the underside. No matter: despite crashing at high speed into a car in front AND simultaneously being rear-ended by another, the occupants were in shock, but alive. Béla's design had worked.



GUNTRAM HUBER - WEDGE PIN LOCK WORKS!

Wedge pin locks:

As crazy as it sounds, there was a debate at the time that passengers actually **BENEFITED** from being thrown from the passenger cell of a car!!! Too often, upon impact, the door locks unlatched and the passenger was either flung out or dangled outside of the vehicle. One can only imagine!

This is also a personal topic to me: a dear friend was thrown from a vehicle as a young girl (not a Mercedes Benz). Christina is now a quadriplegic. Béla was similarly appalled at such things, thank God. In fact, at the Technische Universität Karlsruhe to an audience of automotive engineers he charged them with "is the burden of safety not more important than profits to manufacturers who are in a place to do something about it?"

But bending the mind of men and metal was not a trivial task. Béla presented his findings and exposed the lie: only 2% of the time was a passenger safer when being flung from the vehicle. A door lock needed to be designed that would not open during a crash, but still allow rescuers to open the door to help the occupants after an incident.

So Béla patented a design for the "wedge-pin lock" that did just that. In an accompanying photo, one sees an almost lurid scene: a W111 is upside down and wrecked but the man opening the door is smiling. But the reason Guntram Huber - engineer in charge of shell design is smiling - is because the rear door opened even upside down after a terrible crash. The passenger could now be rescued.

-Part 2-

THIS MAN SAVED MY LIFE. HE MAY HAVE SAVED YOURS TOO.

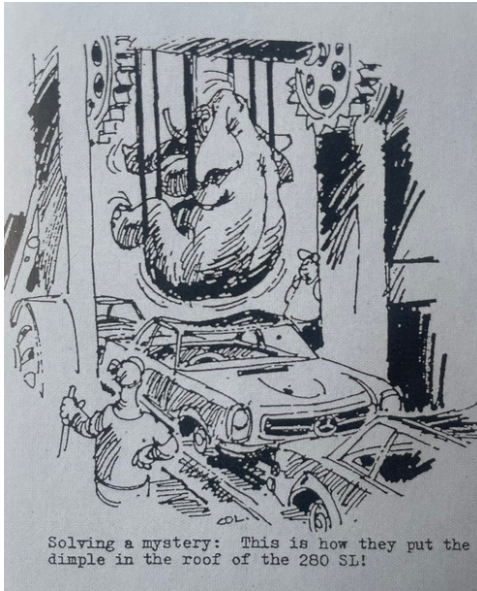
by Steve Rankel

Collapsible Steering Columns:

Automotive design in the earlier part of the 20th century focused on rigid longitudinal frame structures. Steering columns went straight from the front axle to the steering wheel, using one or two primary steel rods, which turned into spears aimed at the driver during a collision.

As a teenager Béla was asked to design a sled for a class project, to which he fitted a steering wheel. As he thought further about this, he concluded “if we crash, this thing could spear me.” Adding a cushioned steering wheel center, he felt safer, and put in motion a perspective that has changed steering column safety forever.

Collapsible steering columns and padded wheel centers finally appeared in automobiles production on the W111 tailfins 35 years later. If you’ve ever been in a crash where you struck another object at speed but were not impaled by the steering column, you have Béla Barényi to thank.



Elephant-Proof: A Strange-Looking Roof Turns a Controversy to a Classic

Did you know that Mercedes engineers even into the 1960’s refused to drive cabriolets as personal vehicles?

They understood that the front windshield frame and roof were just not strong enough to protect occupants in a rollover accident. So, they drove coupes and sedans instead. Too many crash and rollover tests had shown them what could happen to them and their families.

As an extension of Béla’s “rigid passenger compartment,” the roof structures for convertibles were on his radar.

Controversial and criticized at first but now the signature design element of the W113 SL convertibles – the 230SL, 250SL and 280SL

introduced in the mid-60’s – the pagoda roof design was so solid that it was joked an elephant was involved in its creation (see the accompanying cartoon).

It’s interesting to note that due to the number of farmer deaths from tractor rollovers, John Deere also created a “roll over protective structure,” or ROPS, in the 1960s. Passenger safety was a critical concern wherever vehicles were used.

Years later, Mercedes engineers developed the self-deploying roll bar in SL convertibles. It’s interesting to note how few competing auto manufacturers have done anything similar.

The Steam Rocket: Protecting the Lives of Test Drivers & Engineers:

In a previous article, I shared that my Onkel Bernhard was a Mercedes test driver who had some close calls. Crash test dummies were not yet commonplace. Humans did the crashing, at great personal risk.

Béla’s team developed a track to keep the cars moving in the right direction, and a steam-powered rocket to provide the acceleration ultimately without an occupant (note the water hose coiled on the bottom left of the steam rocket trailer picture). Everyone’s safety mattered to Béla - engineer and customer alike.

-Part 2-

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by Steve Rankel

Have you met Oskar? The Dean of Crash Test Dummies

Even into the later 1960's, engineers and test drivers performed extreme duty cycle tests to see how vehicles would perform at the outer edges of a vehicle's performance envelope.

This seems obvious now, but who in their right mind would want to be inside the vehicle during crash testing? Paired with Béla's rocket, test results could now be recorded on instruments, not a live human. Hence, Oskar.

Preventing Projectiles Inside the Passenger Compartment: the Dawn of Soft Surfaces and Padding

As we've mentioned, the prevailing thought of auto design right into the 1970's was to design as strong and rigid a vehicle as possible, both inside and out. That rigidity was transferred to the occupants as they were often slammed into a steering column, a steel dashboard, steel door, frames, etc. Protruding metal switches turned into projectiles when hit by a human head at 25 - 50mph.



When I rode in my uncle's W108 280S, I noticed how there were rotating rubber discs to open the vent windows, soft door straps, padding on the dash. In stark contrast to the hard surfaces of my dad's Ford Country Squire Wagon or the steel dash and side panels of mom's Dodge Dart. Even at 10 years old I noticed (and felt) the difference.



Not too Proud to Learn: Buying Wrecks and the Accident Response Team!

In Billy Joel's song You're Only Human (Second Wind) there is a line that says "you learn more from your accidents than anything you could ever learn in school; don't forget your second wind.."

While General Motors and others were obsessed with hiding their mistakes and blaming the driver for injuries, Mercedes development and design heads realized that despite the tortuous testing they subjected their vehicles to (and a simple glance at the pictures demonstrated that engineers risked their own lives), real-world crashes and accidents would show them things they may not have considered.



Mercedes-Benz mobile Unfallforschungstrupp im Einsatz

To that end, Mercedes began purchasing totaled vehicles in Stuttgart to further study and learn what to improve. The fact that these crashes were attached to drivers either grateful for their escapes or hospitalized from injuries that may have been avoided by better designs added urgency and sobriety to the challenge: design cars that would protect the occupants, even when the cars were met with circumstances the engineers never

anticipated. They were so committed to this that they created a Mobile Accident Response Team that was dispatched to accident scenes involving Mercedes vehicles BEFORE the cars were towed away. Even the Polizei approved! How's that for taking a fearless moral inventory?!

-Part 2-

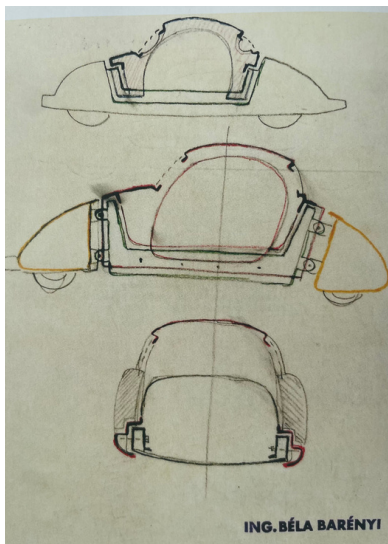
THIS MAN SAVED MY LIFE. HE MAY HAVE SAVED YOURS TOO.

by Steve Rankel



Finally: Designing the VW People's Car - Béla Barényi, NOT Ferdinand Porsche

As a college student and then after, a young Béla designed a safe car that would provide transport for the masses. The design was published in multiple European automotive magazines in the time period of 1925-1930. Now, Germans are dead serious about doing "Alles in Ordnung" (everything must be done the right way, in order). Bela was publicly defamed, his integrity questioned, and his name smeared for even hinting that he as a college student could have come up with the design for the popular VW people's car attributed to Dr. Ferdinand Porsche I. Unthinkable!



To defend his personal reputation and his life's work, Béla sued in German courts. Now this is a big deal: because if you lose a lawsuit you initiate in Germany, YOU pay all the legal costs for yourself AND your defendant. And the defendants were well-respected German publishers.

This was a risky move! But the truth prevailed in the end. In a series of epic victories, Béla won the lawsuit and the courts ordered the German publishers to publish retractions and update future editions of their books with the documented fact: Béla Barényi designed the VW people's car first, with well-circulated proof in multiple automotive and design magazines.

It's entirely possible that the VW beetle designs came from the mind of Dr. Porsche. Just not before they were documented as first coming from the mind of Béla Barényi.

Giving Honor Where Honor is Due

Though he was correctly and publicly proven by the German courts as the original creator of the VW People's Car concept, I'm not sure Béla ever saw a single Deutschmark from those 25 million beetles.

He was never a major shareholder in the Mercedes-Benz empire. And he lived a modest life in Stuttgart. But I think Béla's greatest treasures, beyond his wife and family, were the countless lives that he knew he saved around the world. And still does today.

In the early 1980's Mercedes Benz published an ad showing our protagonist standing next to an SL pagoda with the caption "no one has thought about automotive safety more than this man."

-Part 2-

THIS MAN SAVED MY LIFE. HE MAY HAVE SAVED YOURS TOO.

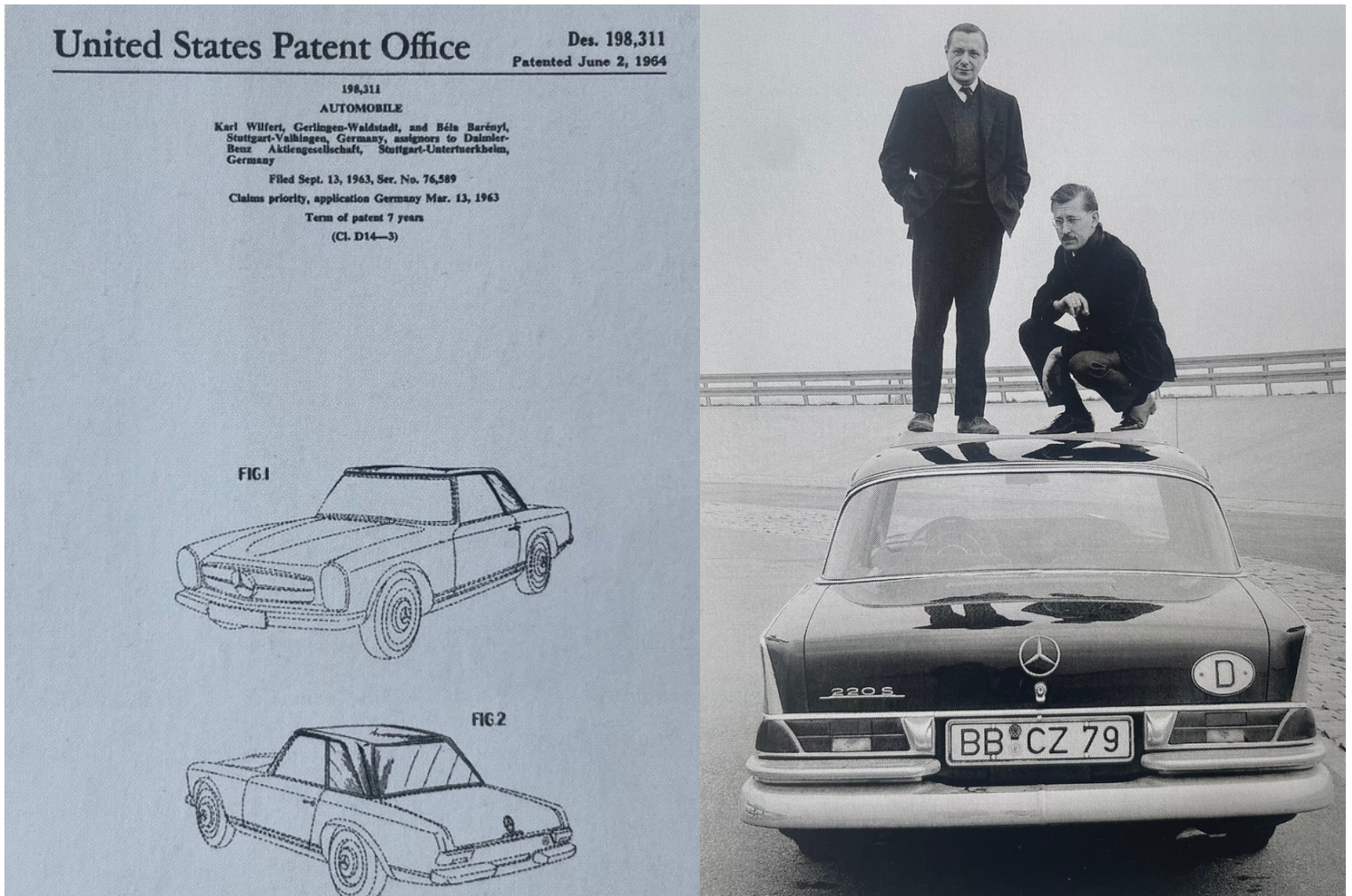
by Steve Rankel

I know that I'm alive today because of God's grace, and the crumple zones of a tiny compact car that used Béla's innovative designs to absorb the energy from colliding with a tree at speed, instead of transferring the impact and killing its driver (me). As it is I still spent 3 months in a wheelchair.

Béla died at the ripe old age of 90 in Stuttgart Germany. The world is a safer place because he had the courage to speak boldly for safety innovations no one else could see.

With as many patents to his name as Thomas Edison, I'd like to dedicate this article to Béla.

Here's to Béla Barényi: the people's inventor.



Note: this is part of the "Founding Fathers" series; feel free to contact me with comments or suggestions at steverankel@gmail.com, or if you have a Mercedes founder story you'd like to suggest.

Sources:
Photos and citations from "Béla Barényi, Sicherheitstechnik made by Mercedes Benz," Harry Niemann, Motorbuch Verlag, © 2002.
Citations from "Das große Mercedes Heckflossen Buch," Matthias Röcke, HEEL Verlag GmbH, © 1990
Mercedes Classic Magazine, published by Mercedes Benz, various issues and dates.
Pictures from both books, where various photos are from the Mercedes Benz archives in Stuttgart / Untertürkheim, Germany..

MERCEDES-BENZ “PONTON,” AN INNOVATION IN SAFETY

by Ed Owen

After reading Steve’s first article in our winter newsletter, I was reminded of one of the many reasons I love Mercedes-Benz “Pontons”... The Mercedes-Benz crumple zone, patent number 854157, was granted in 1952 on the design of Austrian-Hungarian engineer Bela Barényi and describes the decisive feature of passive safety. He started working on the concept in 1937 before working for Daimler-Benz. Barényi questioned the prevailing opinion that a safe car had to be rigid. He divided the car body into three sections: the rigid non-contorting passenger compartment and the front and rear ‘crumple zones.’ The front and rear were designed to absorb the energy of an impact, known as kinetic energy, by deformation during collision.

Work on Daimler-Benz's second new design since WWII, the first being the 300 “Adenauer,” started in 1951 and the focus was to get away from the body on frame design and incorporate the unibody concept to a mass produced vehicle, a first for the crew at Stuttgart. The result was the Mercedes-Benz 180 “Ponton,” the German word for pontoon, introduced in 1953. With its emphasis on comfort and safety, it was the first vehicle to include the basic three box design concept of Barényi, wherein the central passenger “cell” is more rigid than the vehicle’s nose and tail “boxes.” Production of the ‘milestone in safety’ Ponton vehicles, with its different motor options, ran through 1959.



Photos courtesy of Josh Sweeney, Shoot for Details

MERCEDES-BENZ “PONTON,” AN INNOVATION IN SAFETY

by Ed Owen

It is rumored that Bela Barényi was awarded twice as many patents as Thomas Edison, but what is irrefutable is his impact on automotive safety. His career at Daimler-Benz spanned from 1939 to his retirement in 1972. Barényi was inducted into the Detroit Automotive Hall of Fame in 1994. He was also nominated for the award of Engineer of the Century in 1999 by the Global Automotive Elections Foundation, losing only to none other than Ferdinand Porsche, pretty good company.



Photos courtesy of Josh Sweeney, Shoot for Details



**PREPARING YOUR
MERCEDES-BENZ
FOR SPRING & SUMMER**

by Denton Owen

Photo Courtesy of Denton Owen, @denton.drives

PREPARING YOUR MERCEDES-BENZ FOR SPRING & SUMMER

by Denton Owen

As the weather gets warmer and summer gets closer, it is essential to **prepare your Mercedes-Benz for the conditions that lie ahead.**

For the seasonally stored:

- **Battery Health Check:**

Start by inspecting the battery. If it's been on a maintainer, it should be ready to go. Otherwise, charge it up and test for any loss of performance due to the cold storage.

- **Fluids Refresh:**

Check and fill all fluids as needed. This includes oil if due, coolant, and possibly fuel if your storage steps included adding a stabilizer.

- **Tire Inspection:**

Check for proper inflation and inspect for any flat spots that may have developed, if so inflate your tires to the maximum pressure rating (bring back to desired pressures after 50 or so miles of driving. If the car has been on jack stands, check for proper seating of the wheels and inspect for any degradation or cracks in the tires.

- **General Inspection:**

Rodent checks are just as important now as they were in the fall. Look for any signs of nesting or chewing, particularly in the wiring and air filter areas. As well as looking under the car or on the ground for any leaks that may have accumulated.

For vehicles driven through the winter:

- **Undercarriage Cleaning:**

Winter road treatments can lead to rust and corrosion. A thorough undercarriage wash will remove harmful residues and help prevent rust from taking hold.

- **Tire Transition:**

If you've been running winter tires, it's time to switch back to your all-season or summer tires for better performance in dry, warm conditions. As well as the opportunity to show off your nice summer wheels if you swap them as well.

- **Alignment and Suspension Check:**

Potholes and rough winter roads can throw off alignment and damage suspension components. A professional check can prevent uneven tire wear and ensure smooth driving.

- **AC System Check:**

Before the heat hits, have your air conditioning system inspected and serviced. This should include checking the refrigerant levels and replacing the cabin air filter as needed.

PREPARING YOUR MERCEDES-BENZ FOR SPRING & SUMMER

by Denton Owen

For all vehicles:

- Exterior Detailing:

Wash and wax your vehicle to protect the paint from the sun's UV rays and to shed water during those spring showers.

- Interior Deep Clean:

Vacuum and wipe down the interior to clean out all the dirt and road salt that has accumulated over the winter months.

- Brake System Check:

Winter can be hard on brakes with all the slush and salt. Sitting unused is also hard on brake parts, check your brake pads, discs for any excessive corrosion as well as checking your fluid level to ensure reliable stopping power.

- Emergency Kit Update:

Switch out winter-specific items for summer ones, like adding sunscreen, extra water, and perhaps an insect repellent.

- Performance Prep:

If you're an enthusiast looking forward to spirited drives, consider performance fluids and other performance upgrade parts such as brakes, tires, filters, or even some suspension parts to ensure your vehicle is ready to perform. As New Englanders, we know that each season brings its own charm and challenges. Taking the time now to prepare your vehicle for spring and summer driving will not only enhance your driving experience but also extend the life and performance of your car. For any specific concerns or specialized care, especially for luxury or performance vehicles, consult your local automotive experts who can provide tailored advice and professional services.



Photo Courtesy of Denton Owen @denton.drives

SPRING CLEANING FOR THE CAR: MY SEASONAL REFRESH ROUTINE

by Leia Owen

As the owner of a beloved 2014 GLK350 4Matic, I've embraced the ritual of spring cleaning my car as a way to prepare for the changing seasons and make sure the maintenance of my vehicle goes beyond routine oil changes and service – I want my car to last as long as possible, in the best shape as possible... and regular cleaning certainly helps!

With spring's recent arrival, I thought now would be the perfect time to share some tips for how I maintain the sparkle and order of my daily driver.

Being surrounded by a family of “car guys,” I've seen a lot of car-care products over the years, and here's what's made the cut for me:

- Microfiber Towels: Gentle on the paint and a hero for avoiding those pesky scratches.
- All-Surface Interior Cleaner: Because every nook deserves to be spotless.
- Leather Conditioner: A must if you have sports leather, it keeps it free from splitting or cracking.
- Glass Cleaner: For that streak-free finish on windows and mirrors. Regularly cleaning the inside of the windshield on the driver's side is a MUST!
- Detailing Brushes: Essential for those hard-to-reach spots and delicate surfaces.

For the Exterior: I bring my car to the team at European Auto Solutions (of course) for the exterior washes - which are included in every service! Here's what they do, which you can also replicate at home:

- Start with an overall wash: Work from top to bottom (so any messes from higher areas can be cleaned, rather than dirtying a spot that has already been cleaned), soap, rinse, etc.
- Tires: Wheels get a good scrubbing with a dedicated cleaner, finished off with some tire shine for that extra gleam.
- Bonus round- Wax On, Wax Off: A thin layer of quality wax not only protects but also brings out a shine that turns heads.
- If I feel the car needs a more in-depth cleaning, or if we've had an especially harsh winter, I book an exterior detail for that extra level of care and cleanliness.

For the Interior: Most of this I like to do myself - I find it satisfying to remove items, vacuum, etc. Here's my checklist:

- Declutter Mode: Everything out! Checking under the seats and in all compartments.
- Vacuum: I make sure the seats, carpets, and mats are thoroughly cleaned.
- Misc. Surfaces: Every surface gets a once-over with my trusty cleaner.
- Leather TLC: Conditioner keeps the leather looking and feeling luxurious.
- Glass: A final wipe down on the glass ensures clarity inside and out.

SPRING CLEANING FOR THE CAR: MY SEASONAL REFRESH ROUTINE

by Leia Owen

And, my favorite part of all: organizing! This is where the magic happens for me. Organizing isn't just about tidiness; it's about having what you need, when you need it, without a scavenger hunt. Here's how I keep things streamlined:

- **Trunk Organizer:** This trusty container houses my reusable bags and seasonal essentials like a snow brush or sunshade. I also like to include some other seasonal items: for half of the year, I have blankets, ice scrapers, and hand-warmer packs - for the other half, I have sunscreen, bug spray, beach towels, and a beach blanket. Everything's easy to find and out of the way. This takes up about 1/3 of the trunk, so I still have room for groceries, golf clubs, etc. when I need it.
- **Backseat Tote/Organizer:** A backseat organizer is perfect for keeping essentials handy for passengers—think napkins, pens, hand sanitizer, and sometimes for long drives, even snacks. (I also keep a book in case I get stuck waiting somewhere or have an opportunity to sit outside in the sun for a short break during the day!) I added purse/bag hooks on the back of the seats so I can reach what I need but have room for passengers and don't have to worry about my purse sliding all over the place - and I found a color that matches my tan interior perfectly!
- **Between-the-seat totes:** For between the front seats and the center console/armrest. If your phone, a straw from the drive thru coffee shop, pocket change, etc. fall down - these things catch them so they don't sink into the abyss between the console and the seat, never to be seen again.
- **Cupholder Coasters:** They're not just for looks; they keep the cupholders clean and are super easy to wash. (As a bonus, I did buy some with a cute pattern on them from Amazon).
- **First Aid and Emergency Items:** Safety first, always. These are neatly packed but easily accessible for driver and passenger, ensuring peace of mind on the road.
- **Electronics and Cables:** A specific spot for these means never having to untangle a charger cable in despair again and reduces clutter.

This spring cleaning routine and organizational system have enhanced how much I enjoy my GLK. It's not just about keeping the car in top shape; it's about creating a space that feels good to be in, ready for any adventure that comes my way.

I hope these tips inspire you to give your car the love it deserves this season. Here's to clear roads, clear minds, and a sparkling clean Benz!

2024 *Calendar*

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

Portsmouth Cars & Coffee
 Saturday, April 20th
 9am - 11am
 @Mercedes Benz - Portsmouth, NH

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

EAS Open House & Tech Session
 Saturday, May 18th
 9am - 1pm
 @European Auto Solutions, Waltham MA

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

German Car Day
 Sunday, June 16 from 9am - 1pm
 @Larz Anderson Auto Museum

Wine Tasting & Lunch
 Saturday, June 22 - begins 1pm
 @Westport River Vineyard & The Back Eddy Restaurant

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

**NorthShore -
 Cape Ann Sunday Drive**
 Sunday, July 14th
 Details TBA

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Newport Polo Outing
 Saturday, August 10
 3pm - 6pm
 @Newport Polo, Portsmouth RI

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

Mercedes Day
 Sunday, September 8
 9am - 1pm
 @Larz Anderson Auto Museum

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

Hosted by the Northern New England Star Chapter
Farberallye
 Friday, October 18th - Sunday, October 20th
 @Middlebury Inn - Middlebury, VT

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

Dates & Location TBA -
Annual Theater & Dinner Event

UPCOMING EVENTS

Cars & Coffee



**Join us for a Cars + Coffee event on
Saturday, April 20th - 9:00am to 11:00am**

@ 309 Portsmouth Ave, Greenland NH 03840

Organized by Ulysses de Guzman (617-953-3281)

PLEASE SIGN UP HERE IF YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE

Come see the lineup of Mercedes electric vehicles at

Mercedes-Benz
of Portsmouth



UPCOMING EVENTS



ANNUAL EAS OPEN HOUSE & TECHNICAL SESSION

Come celebrate the arrival of Spring at European Auto Solutions' Annual MBCA Minuteman Section Open House/Tech Session, on Saturday, May 18th, 2023 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.



- Each attendee will be given 15 minutes of lift time for personal inspection of their Mercedes-Benz with one of our technicians to both learn more about the vehicle and to have it checked for the upcoming open road season
- Come check out some of E.A.S.'s current projects
- Quality door prizes
- Refreshments provided

So whether you want to check out and learn about the undercarriage of your Mercedes-Benz, check out the eclectic mix of vehicles that show up, or just share in the fun with other Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts, make sure you come out to E.A.S for MBCA Minuteman Section Open House/Tech Session on May 18th!

There is No Charge for this event

Please RSVP to Ed Owen 781-642-0667 / ed@virtualeas.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wine Tasting & Lunch



Join us for a wine tasting & luncheon...

Saturday, June 22nd - Begin at 1pm

@ Westport Rivers Vineyard

3417 Hixbridge Rd, Westport, MA 02790

Lunch following the wine tasting at local restaurant

@ The Back Eddy Restaurant,

1 Bridge Rd, Westport, MA 02790

Organized by Heather Renzoni (hrenzoni@gmail.com)

Minuteman Leadership Team:

President

Dean Coclin

dean.j.coclin@verizon.net

Vice-President

Barry O'Neill

barry056@gmail.com

Treasurer & Secretary

Courtland Brannen

Phone: 617-970-8156

courtlandbrannen@gmail.com

Publishing Committee / Newsletter Editor &

Online Marketing Communications

Leia Owen

Phone: 781-642-0664

hello@leiamowen.com

Web Master & Membership Director

Dean Coclin

dean.j.coclin@verizon.net

Past President: Edward Owen

Director-at-Large

Ernie Fancy

fancyer@cox.net

Northeast Regional Director

Drew Webb

rdswebb@gmail.com

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Phone: 781-642-0664

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Leia Owen/Editor & Publisher

Board of Directors:

Ken Bourque

Phone: 781-326-5158

Kenbourque32@gmail.com

Rich Garick

Phone: 603-898-3980

rgarick@comcast.net

Courtland Brannen

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*Thanks for
reading!*

**WE HOPE TO SEE
YOU AT OUR
UPCOMING EVENTS**

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