



Vancouver Island Section Newsletter

MARCH 2023

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Carl and Bertha Benz in the back seat of a Benz Victoria, 1893. In the front her daughter Klara and Fritz Held. The Victoria was the first automobile with double-pivot steering, for which Benz applied for a patent on 28 February 1893. The invention is an essential prerequisite for the safe operation of a four-wheeled automobile: the risk of tipping over in curves is significantly reduced compared to turntable steering from carriage construction. (Photos on page 1 and 3 from Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives)



President's Message

Rob Watson

Right out of the “gate”, a thank you to Bob Wilson for writing the “Dieselgate” notice that we sent you in early February. It’s also reproduced in this newsletter. Bob provides an overview of the technical issues related to the diesel engine emission problem on certain Mercedes–Benz diesel models. In particular, he points out that the legal settlement offered by Mercedes–Benz Canada for these issues expires May 1 of this year – time is of the essence. In the February notice, I wrote that MB Canada had issued a “recall campaign”. In fact, it is a *service* campaign – a subtle but important difference.

Event Calendar and Upcoming Events

Better late than never, below is the 2023 Event Calendar. Some of the events have already happened and you will have seen the recent notice for Chemainus Theatre buffet lunch and show on April 2. Eighteen people are signed up. Final payment was due March 22 so registration is closed.

Alex Currie is in the preliminary stages of planning for a New Car and Tech Event at Mercedes–Benz Nanaimo for Sunday, 28 May. He is awaiting confirmation by the team at MB Nanaimo. Alex will send out a separate notice closer to the event. All members are welcome to experience this event although it is planned specifically with our mid- and up–Island members in mind.

We are continuing with our Coffee Klatches, which will alternate between Victoria and north of the Malahat. They all start at 10 a.m., usually on the first Sunday of the month (there is no gathering on April 2 due to conflict with the Chemainus Theatre event). The schedule for the next two Coffee Klatches is:

- **Sunday, 7 May**, Rusticana Coffee in Mill Bay (notice below)
- **Sunday, 2 June**, Quality Foods in Eagle Creek Village next to the Victoria General Hospital (no notice will be issued, just come along)

The Coachwerks Tour on January 15, 2023 was also the setting for our Club’s 2022 Annual General Meeting. The meeting went well, partly because of the excellent input from you, our members. We easily achieved our quorum of seven with 20 voting members in attendance. Normally we would have had our AGM last fall, but a request for an extension was filed with BC Registries resulting in a three–month extension to March 31, 2023.

Annual General Meeting

Key points emerging from the meeting:

- We changed our bylaws to allow payments by eTransfer. The payments “shall be signed or electronically approved and recorded by any two members of the Board” who are signing authorities and not from the same household.
- At the AGM, Dennis Ostrowerka, Hazel Ostrowerka, Dennis Aitken, Barry Patchett, Alex Currie, and I, Rob Watson, were elected as members of the Board. After the AGM, Kevin Carlé put his name forward to be on the Board and his appointment as a director–at–large was approved at our February Board meeting. Thanks, from all of us for volunteering, Kevin! You will be an asset to the Board as we move forward.
- I announced that after six years as President of our Section, I would be stepping down at the next AGM. That change will be effective from the first Board meeting after the AGM when Board positions are agreed on. At that meeting, I will become the Past President.

With four events – Coachwerks, Viking Air, the first Coffee Klatch and Rudi’s Tour – we are off to a strong start in 2023. That start has been supported by outstanding turnout and participation from our members. We look forward to seeing even more of you at our upcoming events.



2022 – 2023 Section Officers

President and Co–Newsletter Editor: Rob Watson
Vice President and Dealer Ambassador, Victoria: Dennis Ostrowerka
Secretary: Hazel Ostrowerka
Treasurer: Dennis Aitken
Membership Chair: Alex Currie
Co–Newsletter Editor and Dealer Ambassador, Nanaimo: Barry Patchett
Director at Large: Kevin Carlé
Honorary Vice President: Peter Trzewik
Northwest Regional Director: Jeff Shindler (jeff.shindler@shaw.ca)
Section email: mbca.visland@gmail.com

Member Awards, New Members and Renewals

Section members (with month and year of joining MBCA) who reached their Membership Anniversary milestone between January and March.

10 Years

Philip Topallan (February 2013)

If you have not received your Anniversary pin and would like to have it, contact Rob Watson [here](#).

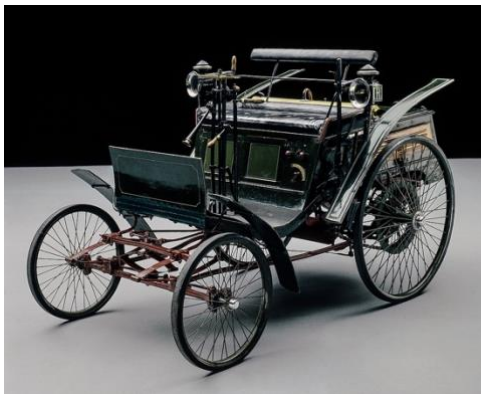
Welcome to New Members (with month of joining MBCA)

Sally McCandless (January)

Mark Davis (March)

Thank you to Members and Associate Members who renewed their membership between January and March.

Richard Ediss
Mike King
Doug Logan
John Mallett
Edward Petro



Benz Motor-Velocipede, 1894. It is the world's first mass-produced automobile.



Mercedes-Simplex 60 hp from 1903 in the version as a phaeton.



MBCA Vancouver Island Section 2023 Event Calendar

JANUARY

Sunday 1, New Year's Day

Sunday 15 1100: Coachwerks tour, AGM and lunch Rob, Dennis, Hazel
 Friday 27 1100: Viking Air tour and Mary's Bleue Moon Café lunch Alex

FEBRUARY

None

MARCH

Sunday 5 1000: Coffee Klatch, Quality Foods, Victoria Dennis A
 Sunday 12 1030: Tour of Rudi's Dennis A

APRIL

Friday 7 to Monday 10, Easter

Sunday 2 1130: Chemainus Brunch Buffet and Theatre "Naked Radio", a Musical Comedy Barry

MAY

Sunday 14, Mother's Day

Monday 22, Victoria Day

Sunday 7 1000: Coffee Klatch, Rusticana Coffee, Mill Bay Barry
 Sunday 28 Tech Event, Mercedes-Benz Nanaimo Alex and Barry

JUNE

Wednesday 21, Summer Solstice

Sunday 4 1000: Coffee Klatch, Quality Foods, Victoria Dennis A
 Thursday 22 Summer Solstice Dinner, Farm Table Inn Barry, Rob

JULY

Saturday 1 Canada Day

Sunday 2 1000: Coffee Klatch, Mill Bay/Chemainus area Barry
 Sunday 9 or 16 Cowichan Valley Drive and Wine Tour Cris, Philip

AUGUST

Monday 7 BC Day

Sunday 6 1000: Coffee Klatch, Quality Foods, Victoria Dennis A
 Mid-August Show 'n Shine Kevin and Rob

SEPTEMBER

Monday 4 Labour Day

Sunday 3 1000: Coffee Klatch, Mill Bay/Chemainus area Barry
 Mid-September Victoria Tech and New Car event and AGM Rob, Dennis and Hazel

OCTOBER

Monday 9 Thanksgiving

Sunday 8 1000: Coffee Klatch, Quality Foods, Victoria Dennis A
 Mid-October Oktoberfest dinner Kevin

NOVEMBER

Saturday 11 Remembrance Day

Sunday 5 1000: Coffee Klatch, Mill Bay/Chemainus area Barry
 Sat. 25 or Sun. 26 Holiday/Christmas lunch Rob

DECEMBER

No events



Notice to Members

Dieseldate

Bob Wilson

Dieseldate. A word most of us have heard before and one that brought worry and pain to executives at the Wolfsburg headquarters of Volkswagen. Fifteen years ago, I occasionally wondered what it was that the combustion engineers at VW knew that the engineers at Mercedes-Benz did not. MB had elected in 2006 to use the BlueTEC system on its diesels. BlueTEC was complicated, increased the cost of vehicle production, and required owners to be responsible for periodically refilling the AdBlue container. AdBlue is a fluid that catalyses the conversion of nitrogen oxides into nitrogen and water. It is injected into a special catalytic converter as the final step in controlling exhaust emissions. And VW was selling emissions-compliant diesels without it.



An AdBlue port inside the fuel door

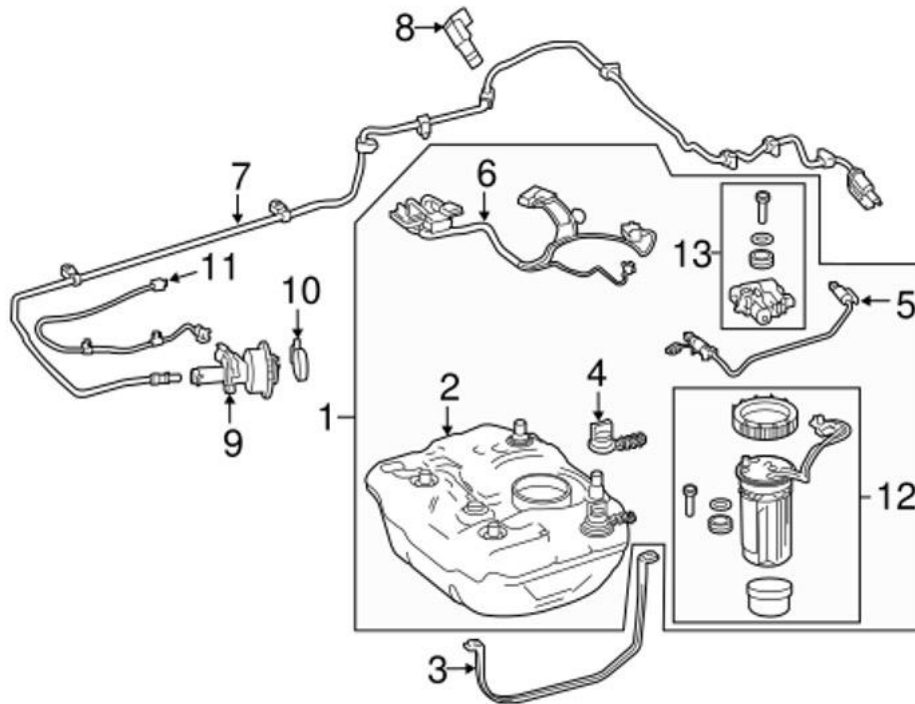
Light duty diesels have always had a problem with two pollutants. Diesel vehicles get better fuel economy and emit less carbon dioxide per kilometre than gasoline-powered ones. That's good. The problem has always been with reducing oxides of nitrogen and sooty particulates. Nitrous oxide in the atmosphere contributes to ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect and climate change. Nitrous oxide is also a human health hazard. Particulates, especially the fine particulates from diesel combustion, are another human health hazard. Both pollutants are regulated in exhaust emissions around the world. Unhappily, the combustion process in diesel engines can be optimized to minimize the production of oxides of nitrogen or the production of particulates, but not both pollutants at the same time. What magic had VW's engineers been able to create?

The VW Group, which includes Audi, licensed BlueTEC from Mercedes-Benz in 2005. They cancelled that license in 2007, deciding instead to use lean combustion technology optimized for good fuel economy and particulate reduction, routing the exhaust through standard catalytic converters. A secret from almost everyone, the Golfs, Passats, and other diesel vehicles they produced contained sensors and electronic devices that could detect when the vehicle was undergoing regulatory testing and curb emissions of nitrous oxides in ways that did not happen when the vehicle was being driven on the road. Such equipment was called a defeat device. Most readers will remember the ensuing scandal called *Dieseldate*, which ended in fines, foregone profits, and corporate disgrace for VW.

Wikipedia says that, because diesel engines burn a leaner fuel mixture than gasoline engines, the 3-way catalytic converters used on gasoline vehicles aren't enough. Diesel emissions control involves several sequential steps:



1. A catalytic converter reduces the amounts of carbon monoxide and unburned hydrocarbons in the exhaust. This process is similar to what occurs downstream of gasoline engines.
2. A second converter starts the removal of oxides of nitrogen.
3. A particulate filter traps sooty particles, burning them off when the filter gets full. VW halted at this step after 2007.
4. A special fluid, AdBlue in the case of MB, is injected into the exhaust gas stream as needed to convert the remaining nitrogen oxides into nitrogen and water.

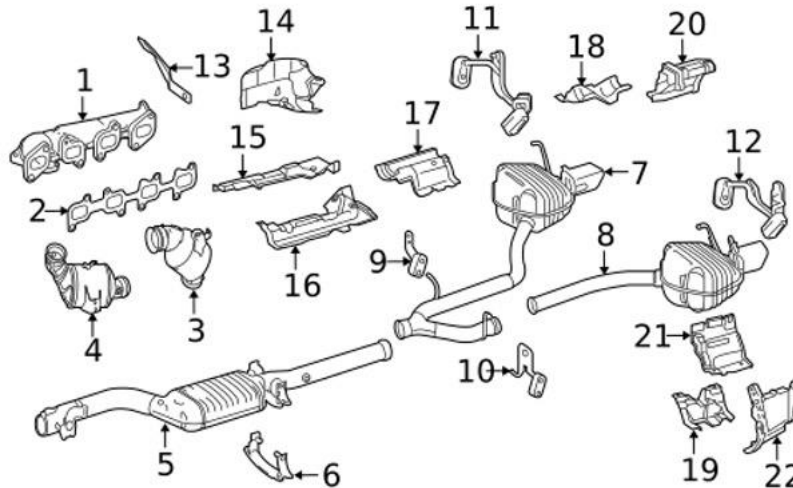


Components of the AdBlue system. The AdBlue reservoir is #2 and the injection nozzle is #9. The injection nozzle is plugged into a wiring harness #11.

So why is *Dieseldgate* relevant to MBCA members? Was BlueTEC not enough? Our President wrote in the April 2022 newsletter: “One of our Section members gave me a heads-up earlier this year that there has been a class action lawsuit settlement for repairs to **certain** Mercedes-Benz vehicles with BlueTEC II emission control systems. The model years affected include 2009–2016 Mercedes-Benz vehicles and 2010–2016 Mercedes-Benz Sprinters. If you believe your vehicle might be affected, you may want to look into it further.”

Separate class action lawsuits against MB were filed in the USA and in Canada alleging diesel emissions were not what they should have been. Both were settled in favour of the plaintiffs: in July 2021 for the USA, and February 2022 for Canada. It turns out that BlueTEC, as originally installed, was not effective enough to meet European or North American emissions regulations for nitrogen oxides. Studies conducted in Europe in 2021 on an unmodified 2016 E-class diesel found that it incorporated eight different defeat devices to skirt the regulations.





Components of an MB diesel exhaust system. The catalytic converters are #3, the particulate filter is #4. #7 and #8 are the mufflers.

The fine levied against MB in the USA was ten figures. The company was required to come up with fixes that are now available to Canadian owners of eligible models. Broadly speaking, the eligible models are the company's diesel cars, SUVs, and vans sold between model years 2009 and 2016.



RockAuto.com

A nitrogen oxides sensor.

Mercedes-Benz Canada is treating this issue as a service campaign rather than a recall. Three Point Motors is working through their customer list, booking a few appointments a week, but affected owners can phone and book anytime. As I write, Three Point is booking these repairs about a month out. Appointments take most of a day. The refits available at no cost may include the exchange of components such as the nitrogen oxide sensors, catalytic converters, diesel particulate filter, particulate matter sensor, and coolant thermostat. An extended emissions component warranty is offered.

Affected owners can wait to be phoned by Three Point Motors but there is an incentive to phone for an earlier appointment. A list of models covered by this campaign and the way affected owners may also obtain a cash compensation from the legal settlement can be found at <https://www.bluetecsettlement.ca/>. The repairs must be completed before May 1 for owners to be eligible for part of the legal settlement. MB Canada's service campaign will roll on past that date but the possibility to participate in the benefits of the class action lawsuit expires then. Further information can be found in the list of frequently asked questions at <https://www.bluetecsettlement.ca/faq>.



Upcoming Events

Chemainus Brunch Buffet and Theatre – “Naked Radio”

Registration now closed

Sunday, 2 April 2023

Barry Patchett

Chemainus Theatre opened to a new season this year and will welcome us once again. We made 18 reservations for 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, 2 April to attend the Buffet and musical comedy “Naked Radio”. This entertaining event has been popular in the past, and we certainly need a good laugh after the last few years.

The music for “Naked Radio” is by Paul Libman with book and lyrics by Dave Hudson. The brochure for Chemainus Theatre provides the following description:

“A powerful snowstorm grips the Island, and everyone hunkers down. Slowly they lose connection to the internet, cell phones and TV. What’s left is the local radio station and two reluctant DJs who fly by the seat of their pants to hold the community together through music, laughter, and song, with a host of call-in characters and cheeky jingles. Note: there is no nudity – just hilarity – in this comedy!”

Summary:

Organizer: Barry Patchett

When: Sunday, 2 April, 2023

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Where: Chemainus Theatre, 9737 Chemainus Road, Chemainus, BC

Cost: \$96 per person, including taxes and tip for the Brunch Buffet and Naked Radio show.

RSVP: None. Event closed.

Coffee Klatch at Rusticana Coffee in Mill Bay

Sunday, 7 May 2023

Barry Patchett

The Chemainus Theatre event is on the first Sunday in April so a Coffee Klatch is not scheduled for April. As well, we are alternating these get-togethers between Victoria and locations north of the Malahat. The next Coffee Klatch will be at Rusticana Coffee in Mill Bay on Sunday, 7 May. Note that this is a drop-in event and an RSVP is not required. See the summary below.

Summary:

Organizer: Barry Patchett

When: Sunday, 7 May, 2023

Time: 10 a.m.

Where: Rusticana Coffee, 803 Delourne Road, Mill Bay. Delourne is the main road into Mill Bay when you turn off the highway at Co-op Gas Station. Rusticana Coffee is on the left about 200 metres from the intersection.



Recent Events

Coachwerks Tour, Section Annual General Meeting and Lunch

Sunday, 15 January, 2023

Rob Watson

Photos by Linda Derrick

Twenty-six enthusiastic Section members and their guests were met by Ross Morrison from Coachwerks Restoration. Ross led our tour of Coachwerks and his enthusiasm and love for the cars he works with was clearly evident. He was full of information and patient in answering members' and guests' questions. Once the tour was completed, we gathered in the central part of the facility, settled comfortably into our lawn chairs (yes, we brought our own), and held the Section's 2022 Annual General meeting. Following the meeting, we replenished our energy reserves with excellent sandwiches, a vegetable and fruit tray, desserts and beverages brought by Dennis and Hazel Ostrowerka.



Ross Morrison of Coachwerks enthusiastically shares information with his audience



The note-taker and the rest of the attentive audience

Coachwerks' Dave Hargraves and Eric Cherneff have been very generous and welcomed our Section for tours and our AGM for several years. The cars being restored in their facility have changed, which makes it a special delight as it provides a unique forum for learning more about restoration and the cars they passionately care about. This year, we had the added benefit of being shown through their newly renovated facilities. Layout changes and new equipment allow for more efficient work and expanded services. All hoists are now located on one side of the building, there is a new room specifically for upholstery, and another dedicated specifically to engine work.

I was particularly intrigued by Coachwerks' effort on a 300SL Gullwing. It had been in a roll-over accident and was severely damaged (photo below), needing both extensive body work and frame realignment. It will be an amazing feat, once completed.





A Porsche on a hoist



The sad 300SL Gullwing

I appreciated the attention of and feedback from Section members during our Annual General Meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, I was especially appreciative of Kevin Carlé for volunteering to be a Director at Large on our Board.

A special thanks from the Vancouver Island Section to Dave and Eric for arranging this tour and offering Coachwerks for holding our AGM. Thanks also goes to Ross for so ably leading the tour. ‘Herding the cats’ is never easy but he provided us with yet another wonderful experience at Coachwerks.



Is there an engine here for you?



Hungry yet? Hazel and Dennis with the ‘spread’



Viking Air Factory Tour with Lunch at Mary's Bleue Moon Café

Friday, 27 January, 2023

Alex Currie

Photos by Rob Watson

On Friday January 27, 2023, eighteen members assembled at Mary's Bleue Moon Café for brunch before heading to Viking Air for a tour of their facilities.

The food was excellent, the menu offered a selection for any palate, the service was first rate and the venue pleasant. All comments were extremely good.

From there we headed to Viking Air which is just around the corner. We were joined by six other attendees and were greeted by Leona Tardif, our host for the day. We were shown into the Beaver Room for an introduction by Matt Reardon, Operations Manager, on the role of Viking in the greater De Havilland Canada family and their plans to grow their workforce in Sidney from the current 120 to between 250 and 300, which is good for the current employees and for employment on the Saanich peninsula.



After a safety briefing, off we went with Matt in the lead and Eleanor running sweep just to make sure nobody wandered off and got lost. We started where flat aluminum sheets and bar stock enter the process of being formed into parts that become sub-assemblies for larger parts such as wings, horizontal and vertical stabilizers and engine nacelles. While many parts are formed in a press, a large number are hand made using skills of metal workers developed through the ages. Those skills include the most rudimentary of tools – a sandbag and hammer which are still used in automotive restoration shops. No doubt somewhere at Coachworks you may even find a hammer and a sandbag.



No photos were allowed during our tour. This photo is of Viking Air's Calgary production facility.
(Image credit: De Havilland Aircraft of Canada)

What struck many of us was the high emphasis placed on worker safety both in terms of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), procedures and guarding of entrapment zones, pinch points and general guarding. The level of housekeeping, even as they reorganize the work area, was impressive. FOD (Foreign Object Debris) warnings were dominant.

Most of the assembly of wings and other parts is by hand. Thousands of holes get drilled manually and riveted by tried-and-true manual methods. Quality inspections at every step are clear. Operating under AS9000 – a subset of ISO 9001 – and Transport Canada regulations must be the primary focus after safety.



DHC-x15 Aerial Firefighter
(Image credit: Viking Air Ltd.)



Twin Otter Series 400
(Image credit: Viking Air Ltd.)



It is not an inexpensive undertaking to build these components. For example, there can be 3,000 worker hours involved in just that one wing under construction for a Twin Otter from the time the drawings are completed, the metal enters the facility and to the end of the process.

So all in all, this was a unique experience for many. Some may have been disappointed that we did not see planes being assembled. This reflects the decision of De Havilland to consolidate manufacturing in Calgary for Beavers, Twin Otters, and the CL-x15 water bomber series. While maybe not as 'sexy', the operations in their facility depend on Viking Air in North Saanich for their critical parts and assemblies.

In a few sidebar conversations, the people clearly enjoy working there and do so with pride, as they should. The fruits of their labour means thousands of people travel safely all around the world and their lives are protected by the water bombers they meticulously build.

A different tour perhaps from the norm for our Section but feedback tells us it was well worth doing.

A Tour of Rudi's
Sunday, 12 March, 2023
Dennis Aitken
Photos by Rob Watson and Philip Early

On March 12th we were fortunate to have an interesting and entertaining tour of Rudi Konieczek's car collection. This exquisite collection included both old and new cars with of course, a good number of MBs plus Morgans, Porsches, a couple of Jags (including the iconic XK120 and XKE convertible), a Sunbeam Tiger and some BMW motorcycles. All were immaculately maintained. Given my interest in detailing cars, I realized I need to learn a few things.



Rudi's introduction to an attentive audience



Rudi, relating the stories behind his collection



Throughout our tour, Rudi regaled us with his stories and history in the car restoration business. Listening to him, it became apparent that from a young age, Rudi's passion for MB and in particular, the SL, helped shape his future success. He was able to find his calling at an early age. His story about meeting the President of Mercedes-Benz Canada is one of my favourites.



The iconic Gullwing



The 'new' Gullwing – a SLS



The Mercedes-Benz star in the background.
All BMW in the foreground



A colourful Porsche Spyder

After drooling over the many beautiful automobiles, our tour was complete. We proceeded to the Fireside Grill for lunch where lively discussion continued! It was obvious from the many comments that members thoroughly enjoyed the tour.



One of the discussions I became involved in was around which car was our favourite. I found narrowing it down to one car very difficult. Instead, I had to say my favourite car – actually two -- would be one of the old and one of the newer MBs: the SL roadster and the newer AMG GT (there’s nothing like the sound and performance of a finely tuned V8). The SL 300 with the gullwing doors and the newer SLS also with gullwing doors would be close seconds. Unfortunately for the MB fans I have to say the very rare new Porsche 718 Spyder would also be a favourite.

In conclusion, I would again thank Rudi for taking the time to show us his exceptional collection and share his entertaining stories with us. A big thanks to our members as well – it was great to see their support (and drooling).



Morgan Le Mans



The business end of a Sunbeam Tiger



Jaguar XK120



Organizer Dennis Aitken wondering if his wife or Rudi or will notice if he sneaks this GT into his garage

