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Issue 44  
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# Classic Mercedes

Autumn 2023 • Issue 44

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## In this issue of Classic Mercedes

After the 1954 arrival of the 300SL, the world's first 'supercar', the far cheaper, volume-built 190SL struggled for an identity, always in the shadow of the space-framed exotic and thought pretty but not potent.

That conclusion doesn't do it justice, I feel, and from page 22 we explore the below-the-radar charms of this wonderful touring

**"THE 190SL WAS  
THOUGHT PRETTY  
BUT NOT POTENT.  
THAT DOESN'T DO  
IT JUSTICE"**

roadster. Accompanying that is the rarely told story of the 190SL as grand prix winner, and we recall a very convincing recreation of that GP car built back in the late 2000s.

This year marks 60 years since the launch of the 600, which was – and arguably still is – the best limo ever. From page 52 we

chart its development, and what I found most fascinating are the archived comments from those involved, such as technical boss Fritz Nallinger and engineer Werner Breitschwerdt. They intended to build a phenomenal, ground-breaking motorcar, and did so.

It always moves me to recall the early demise of F1 legend James Hunt. But his 450SEL 6.9 – at one point up on bricks – survives, as you'll see on pages 14-15.

**David Sutherland**  
Editor

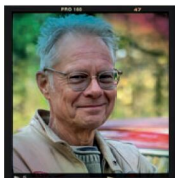


## Who's been bringing you the classic stories in this issue



### Kip Cyprus

Most 300SLs are restored, but some new owners want to do it all over again. Like California-based Kip Cyprus, who needed his car to be black over red leather, not its love-it-or-loathe-it violet and cream. "I had to pay top dollar for the car based on the high quality of its restoration," he explains. "But to make it feel like 'my' 300SL Roadster, the paint, the interior, even the 'stealth' air conditioning system would have to go." More on page 58.



### Tim Slade

Pontoon-driving Tim's favourite Mercedes decade is the 1950s, making him the perfect writer to bring us the full story of one extraordinary event: the rain-soaked 1956 Macau Grand Prix in China, in which Doug Steane drove a 190SL (pages 30-34). "It had taken over five hours to cover the 77 laps and 300 miles in atrocious conditions," says Tim. "He had a big spin, a crash, body and mechanical damage, but Doug and the 190SL won."

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# CLASSIC NEWS

UK AND INTERNATIONAL REPORTS FROM THE CLASSIC MERCEDES WORLD



## Classic pollution cut

Classic car engines can now be much more environmentally friendly thanks to a new, low polluting fuel, the first of its kind to be made available in the UK. The plant-based Sustain Classic has been developed by Essex-based Coryton Advanced Fuels, which says it can be used in any petrol engine, with no modifications needed.

There are two road car options, both 98RON, and with a less than one per cent of the bio-ethanol content that can corrode older engines. Super 80 claims an 80 per cent renewable content, and is priced from £4.65 per litre, while Super 33 is at least 33 per cent renewable content and costs from £3.80 per litre. There's a race fuel too, the 102RON Racing 50, with 50 per cent renewable content.

Presently Sustain Classic can be purchased from fuel/lubricant specialist Motor Spirit at Bicester Heritage in Oxfordshire, but Coryton is appointing agents where owners will be able to buy the fuel from garage type pumps.



## Wet, wet, wet!

**Pagoda celebration falls victim to bad weather but some owners battled on**

Mid July saw a convoy of W113 SLs converge on Mercedes-Benz World as part of the year's celebration of the roadster's 60th anniversary. It had been a long-planned event starting out from SL specialist SLShop near Stratford-upon-Avon, and a repeat of two years ago when 75 of the R107 SL assembled at the car maker's site in Brooklands, Surrey,

to mark that model's 50 years.

The beautiful weather of the R107 meet had been hoped for, but sadly the Great British Summer had other ideas and wind and heavy rain decimated the field, with just 16 of the 27 owners who'd signed up for the run showing up. However, all 16 made it from SLShop to Surrey without incident, and were rewarded with

laps of the Mercedes-Benz World circuit behind a G-Wagen, and then assembled for a photo.

The severe weather played havoc with other events on the same weekend, the Goodwood Festival of Speed organisers forced to cancel the Saturday proceedings for the first time ever, although the Sunday finale was able to go ahead as planned.

## Mansell SEC moves on

Mercedes-Benz UK has bid farewell to a stalwart of its heritage fleet after more than a dozen years – selling off the 560SEC bought new by Williams F1 driver and future champion Nigel Mansell in March 1987. It's not known who has purchased it, Mercedes marketing director Rob Holloway saying only, "It's gone to a good home, I'm sure it will resurface somewhere soon enough."

Living in the F1 driver's Monaco tax haven at the time, Mansell ordered his Champagne metallic C126 in left-hand drive, and in two years commuted 15,000 miles between home and European grands prix. It then spent time in a Midlands classic car collection before serving as everyday transport for the art critic Brian Sewell and featuring in his TV travel programmes.

Sewell swapped the 560SEC for a new Mercedes A-Class, and soon after,



in 2013, it appeared in the third issue of *Classic Mercedes*, and has been in attendance at a number of Mercedes-Benz Club events, sometimes with other ex-F1 driver SECs. Mercedes retains the 'partner' car, a 1980 116-series 450SEL 6.9, presently seen on display at Mercedes-Benz World in Surrey.





Engine and transmission out, and the chassis hung from the container's roof.



## Barn find Gullwing

Given the million-plus value of 300SL Gullwings, you might reasonably expect that by now none of the 1,400 made would still be languishing in a 'barn find' state in a remote area. But 300SL specialist HK-Engineering, based in southern Germany, recently dispelled that assumption when it tracked one down in the vastness of Alaska.

The silver 300SL had been dismantled and kept in

a storage container. The body had been separated from its lightweight tubular chassis, which was suspended from the container's ceiling, and the engine removed.

"While further investigation and research is conducted, it remains exciting to learn more about the history of this 300SL," said HK-Engineering, which is understood to have acquired it and moved it to Germany. "From the previous owners to the reasons for its storage in a container in Alaska, every detail adds to the fascination of this find."

## In other news...

### 123s' star role at Goodwood

Mercedes modern classics were deftly represented at July's Goodwood Festival of Speed by Walt Motor Company, whose display included a 123-series trio: a 230E saloon, a 280CE and a 280TE. The cars were prepared by Swansea-based W123 World, which also helped with event logistics.



### M-B Club aims to find new members

With membership down almost 30 per cent to 8,300 in five years, new Mercedes-Benz Club Chairman Clive Henderson has pledged to haul that number back up. "The Board will commence the task through social media but most importantly by 'getting out there' to promote our club at events," he said.

### 60th for Histories Auctioneers

In July, Histories Auctioneers, the UK's biggest seller of Mercedes-Benzes at auction, marked its 60th sale and 12,000 cars under the hammer since starting out in 2010. The Windsor/Surrey Lakes event in Berkshire offered over 20 star cars, the headline lot a 2007 SLR McLaren 722 Edition Coupe.

### 450SEL 6.9 values hit the big time

The flagship 116-series has always been more sought after than other variants – but its price is now leaving them in the dust, it seems. Dealer Rosier Classic Sterne in Bremen in northern Germany asked €99,000 (£84,900) for a 1978 450SEL 6.9 with 93,460km and velour, much more than would have been hoped for even five years ago.



## Kienle investigated

The normally discreet, low-key Mercedes restoration business in Germany has been rocked by scandal following the revelation that one of the longest established and most respected names – Kienle Automobiltechnik GmbH – was under investigation over alleged fraudulent trading. In late May, 2023, the State Criminal Police Office of Baden-Württemberg searched Kienle's premises in Heimerdingen, near Stuttgart.

Two days later Kienle issued a statement explaining that the investigation concerned a 300SL Roadster in the rare DB658 Fantasy Yellow that after many years in a collection in Switzerland had been sold to a buyer intending to register it in Germany, but that this could

not be done because a 300SL with the same chassis number had already been registered. In 2019, Kienle had brokered the sale of this car, and the statement said that Kienle had been accused of having "manufactured and sold 'professional duplicates'".

Founder and managing director Klaus Kienle said, "There were absolutely no indications evident to us that this vehicle is not the original one," and added, "This 300SL Roadster was never in the workshop of Kienle Automobiltechnik for restoration." Besides denying fraud, Kienle's statement said it was instituting legal action against individuals "deliberately fomenting defamatory allegations". Kienle has not commented since June 2.

## Old Benz quality is tops

Classic era Mercedes-Benzes were better built and more reliable than the Stuttgart car maker's present offerings. That's been a long-held belief based only on anecdotal stories, but now after investigating the matter, a German TV company has concluded that it's actually true.

The German state-owned broadcaster Deutsche Welle (DW) consulted a range of industry experts, including Mercedes' 1984-1997 design chief Peter Pfeiffer, who pointed out that in his time, Mercedes' philosophy was to keep the design as simple as possible and reduce it to essentials. Mario Theissen, a FIVA (Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens) expert who inspects, analyses, and certifies thousands of classic cars annually, links German quality directly to German engineering. He said that 50 years ago, marketing did not play the essential role in developing a car it does today.

Classic dealer Burkhard Steins opined that 124-series "indestructibility" comes from components being oversized to stand the test of time, whether it be suspension arms, bushes, or driveshafts. He added that repair and maintenance was made simple, and therefore easy for less skilled people to carry out. In conclusion, all the experts feel the higher quality isn't a myth.



ABOVE The 124 is judged one of the most solid 1980s cars.

RIGHT Peter Pfeiffer said that simplicity helped reliability.







# Hot work!

Competing in the five-day Italian road rally is always a challenge, but the HK-Engineering team added pressure by running their Gullwing on 'e-fuel'!

IMAGES HK-Engineering

◆ **1,000 Miglia  
(Mille Miglia)**  
**Location** Brescia-Rome-Brescia, Italy  
**When** June 13-17, 2023

The renowned 300SL Gullwing and Roadster specialist HK-Engineering, based in Polling in southern Germany, is no stranger to the Mille Miglia, the modern, much safer re-running of the infamous, 1,000km road race across Italy that was first held in 1927 but finally banned in 1957 on safety grounds after many fatalities. The present Mille Miglia, or 1,000 Miglia, only accepts cars that participated in the original event – which included 300SL Gullwings and around 150 of the first 300SL Roadsters made and, as has more recently been established, 190SL Roadsters.

But for HK-Engineering, there was one big difference this year: for the entire, gruelling event its Gullwing named Rubirosa, driven by seasoned

racing drivers Jochen Mass and Ralf Eisenbac, ran on FuelMotion Synfuel98, a synthetic petrol. The purpose was to demonstrate to the classic car world that 'e-fuel' is suitable for older engines, and if this was a gamble, it paid off. "We are incredibly proud to have been the only team to take the plunge and use e-fuel at the 2023 Mille Miglia," commented Hans Kleissl, founder of HK-Engineering. "This milestone marks

**ABOVE**  
1,000 Miglia participants gathered in Siena's historic Piazza del Campo.

**BELOW**  
Darkness arrives, but there's still a lot more driving to get through.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
The event is effectively a series of 'regularity' trials, with instructions provided.

an important turning point in the history of classic cars and shows that sustainable alternatives are possible."

So keen is Kleissl to promote the environmental benefits of e-fuel – and therefore protect his customer base – that HK is working closely with fuel producer Aramco and FuelMotion to overcome some technical difficulties with the fuel with respect to classics. The HK-Engineering team gained







**ABOVE**  
In Ferrara in the early stages; the Gullwing got hot and bothered in towns.

**LEFT**  
On the open road drivers Mass and Eisenbac saw the car run more smoothly.

**BELOW**  
The 'e-fuel' Merc made it to the finish in Brescia, even if in second last position!

## Classic Peru

When Mercedes-Benz Club Peru members visited one of South America's best car museums it proved fascinating, as Club organiser **Andres Montesinos Malpartida** explains

IMAGES Andres Montesinos Malpartida

**Treffen & Fahren Meeting**  
Location San Isidro, Lima, Peru  
When June 11, 2023

On Sunday June 11, members of the Mercedes-Benz Club Peru met up in the district of San Isidro in Lima to form a caravan of Mercedes-Benzes heading for the Automobile Museum Nicolini Collection, which houses the personal collection of passionate classic car enthusiast Jorge Nicolini. He was there on the day to warmly greet the visitors and show them round.

He's been collecting classics for six decades, starting with his first car, a family gift, when he was seven. Now he has around 120 in the museum. And he uses these cars, having, for example, driving a 1938 Packard to Cajamarca in Peru's northern highlands. During the museum tour the group marvelled at the extraordinary collection, including an impressive 1970 Mercedes 280SE, a four-speed automatic model imported directly into Peru, and which belonged to Argentinian football star Hugo Nicolini B. The visitors were also invited into Jorge Nicolini's workshop, where they witnessed the restoration process of a W123 limousine, a 1950s 220S and were amazed by a true rarity, the 1935 Mercedes Benz W23. It was fascinating to be able to witness the dedication and painstaking work that goes into keeping these automotive gems in tip-top condition.

Undoubtedly, all the Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts who attended the Treffen & Fahren meeting enjoyed a unique experience in one of the most important museums in South America. This outing allowed members not only to admire the beauty of these classic cars, but also to strengthen the bonds of friendship and passion that unite them as a community of lovers of the brand. It was an unforgettable day full of emotions, learning and camaraderie.



This 280SE once belonged to Argentinian football star Hugo Nicolini B.



**LEFT**  
There are some classic Benzes among the 120 cars on display.

**ABOVE**  
Museum owner Jorge Nicolini clearly enjoys having visitors.



The M-B Club Peru convoy parked up.



The Museum restores Mercs as well as displaying them.

some important insights during the event.

As for the Mille Miglia itself, the modern event is a series of many 'regularity' trials, participants given an average speed to maintain over a certain distance, and then awarded penalty points according to how many tenths of a second over or under that mark they come. Nonetheless, participants can experience moment when the Mille Miglia seems to still be the mad, no-holes-barred road race it was back in 1955 when Stirling Moss won in record time in a Mercedes-Benz 300SLR and Juan Manuel Fangio finished second.

**T**he high-profile, much loved automotive circus commences on the Tuesday in Brescia in northern Italy, and over the next five days tracks down the east side of the country, passing through Adriatic resort town, Cervia Milano Marittima, and then crosses the country to Rome before heading north again through Parma, famous for its music and culture, and then through Milan to end at Brescia on the Saturday. The total distance has expanded from the original 1,000km, and in recent times gained an extra day of driving – which are typically 14 hours behind the wheel.

300SL Gullwings are usually numerous on the Mille Miglia, although their restricted cabin ventilation and inadequate engine

cooling makes them a tough challenge to drive in Italy's mid-summer heat.

Unsurprisingly, Mass and Eisenbac took the stresses and strains of the 2023 event in their stride, over long and exhausting driving days through blistering heat as well as heavy rain. Milan was especially difficult for the Gullwing, but otherwise beautiful, they reported! The police motorcycle outriders escorting the convoy – in the past known to egg on participants – were reportedly calm and efficient throughout the entire distance.

The Mille Miglia was won by Andrea Vesco and Fabio Salvinelli in a 1929 Alfa Romeo, while the two HK-Engineering drivers were classified in 305th, second last in front of a Porsche Speedster. But what was important for HK was that Rubirosa e-fulled its way from start to finish.



# Raining champion

A threatened thunderstorm didn't dampen M-B Club's annual beauty contest, David Sutherland discovered

IMAGES *Classic Mercedes*



It looked like it would be hoods up all round, but the downpour stayed away.



**TOP RIGHT**  
First outing since resto, and Rosalind and Paul O' Keefe's 300SE wins.

**ABOVE**  
Barry Walker's 420SL was Master Class Convertible winner – and Best in Show.

**LEFT**  
Bob Coxhall with the delightful 170S he's owned for half a century.

## Mercedes-Benz Club National Concours

**Location** British Motor Museum, Warwickshire

**When** July 8, 2023

Each year the Mercedes-Benz Club convenes to pick its best presented classic, and in early July at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon the hard earned honour went to the red, 1987 420SL owned by Barry Walker. Judges gave his Best in Show car 293 points out of a possible 300 maximum.

The National Concours comprises a number of different classes, Barry's car entered in Master Class, open only to past winners of Classic Class. It won the Convertible section prize, the two other Master Class categories being Saloon, won by Frank Gillett's W124 300D, and Coupe, won by Philip Wheatley's E320.

Rain and concours events don't go well together, but thankfully the heavy rain forecast mostly held off and by shaving an hour off, the judges got through their work to hand the prizes out in the dry. The event is open to modern as well as older Mercedes



**ABOVE LEFT**  
The Rajbans family bought this 200E new in 1980, a W123 in African spec.

**LEFT**  
Mark Dwyer presented the 230SL owned for 23 years by his wife Nikki Dino.

models, but the vast majority of cars fall into the classic, over 25 years sections. It doesn't usually tempt out the super valuable classics like 300SL Gullwings, Roadsters and the 300 series two-doors, but otherwise is a roll call of great Benzes from the 1950s to the 1990s.

The oldest car present was the 1951 170S owned by Bob Coxhall for 50 years, while among the most eye-catching (discounting a heavily modified W108 and R129 SL) was the 230SL liveried in the style of the Pagoda that won the 1963 Liège-Sofia-Liège Rally, and owned by Nikki Dino Dwyer.

In 1980, the Rajbans family purchased a W123 200E which was in African spec, therefore sporting items such as a sunnypad. They still have it today, looking in much the same condition. The Concours was the first outing since the W112 300SE belonging to Paul and Rosalind O' Keefe had been restored, and they were rewarded with a Best Coupe prize. Last year, Neville Wright won Best in Show with his W124 230E – he returned with a W202 C180 and won Best Saloon.

## £10K heroes

Four Mercedes-Benzes sold for four figures at auction

◆ Cabriolets are the highest value 124-series, but at auction they're still affordable. This tidy 1996 E320 with 107,500 miles (and described as original, not restored), which like all late A124s carries the desirable Sportline chassis package, went for £9,563 at Classic Car Auctions' sale held in Warwickshire in mid-June.



◆ A 123-series need never die, as this 1982 300TD surely proves. Of course the £1,260 handed over for it at Anglia Car Auction's sale in King's Lynn, Norfolk, in June would be only the start of a very costly refurb, as there's a lot of rust and the engine doesn't run. The 149,000-mile warhorse is, amazingly, a one-owner car.



◆ In Barolo Red rather than the usual grey or silver, and with a cloth trimmed interior, this 300SE had been carefully maintained by its two owners, and even came to auction with refurbished wheels and new tyres. The 63,000-mile W126 was sold by Historic Auctioneers at its Ascot sale in late May, reaching £9,240.



◆ Sooner or later the first-generation R107 SLK will be regarded as a classic, so now is a good time to buy one, as they're still cheap. Just £5,300 secured an above average SLK230 Kompressor with a light, 60,800 miles at Brightwell's on-line auction in Leominster in June. It came with 15 past MOT certificates.







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# Letters

WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE YOUR VIEWS ON ANYTHING TO DO WITH MERCEDES CLASSICS

## Detail devil

Reading Auction Stars in *Classic Mercedes*, Summer 2023, I noticed that the 1955 300SL Gullwing sold at Amelia Island has a 'Talbot' mirror on the wing. I was under the impression that these mirrors were not available on early cars.

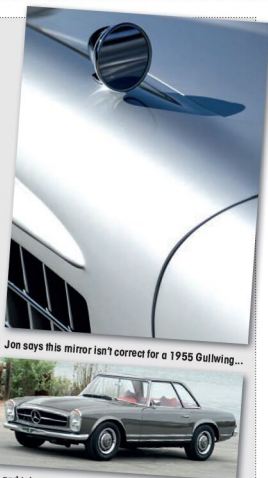
Then for the Pagoda also sold at Amelia Island, it was described as an Italian-delivered car. An Italian-market car would have the small round indicator lights at the front corners, and an early car like this would not have the dual brake reservoir that can be seen in the photo.

I am also curious about the source of the number of W113s equipped with a five-speed transmission, said in the article to be 112. Michael Egan collected the data on five-speeds for Frank Mallory's 1992 *Mercedes Collector* magazine, and indicated that 885 were so equipped. I just can't help myself!

Jon Bernardi

San Marcos, California

*We defer to your expert knowledge! In Auction Stars we reproduce auctioneers' catalogue descriptions in good faith, and occasional minor inaccuracies are perhaps inevitable.*



Jon says this mirror isn't correct for a 1955 Gullwing...



...and takes issue with five-speed W113 SL deliveries.

virtually no parts from previous 'S' class cars, or the W114/115 chassis introduced in 1967.

Bob Gunthorp

Onager Corporation, Chula Vista, California

## Fintails forever!

After reading the article on the 230 ambulance conversion in the Summer 2023 *Classic Mercedes*, I would like to salute its rescuer, Bob Gunthorp. While Fintails have classic status, their values are hardly in the Pagoda league, hence there is presently very little financial incentive to restore them or even to cherish them day to day.

Here in Southern California, Bob is the patron saint of Fintails, working on them, supplying parts for them and promoting them through his appearances at classic car shows with another Mercedes gem he has recently uncovered. Long may he continue in his excellent work!

Damion Brockelhurst, San Diego, California



Damion praises Bob Gunthorp's Fintail passion.

## Pub torque

This photo is from our monthly Mercedes-Benz Club meet at The Horse And Groom Inn in Charlton, Wiltshire. Three nice red 'uns: a C123, W201 and a C124 E320. The C123 is a

280CE which recently had its engine rebuilt, and the 190E 2.0 has been with its owner for six years. The E320 Sportline Coupe is mine, as proudly featured in *Classic Mercedes*, Autumn 2022 issue!

John Griffiths,

Chippenhams Wiltshire



John saw red, in a good way, at a club pub meet.

## S-Class origins

The 300SE Fintail article in the Summer 2023 *Classic Mercedes* starts by saying "The title 'S-Class' was first used for the 116-series launched in 1972". But the first car Mercedes-Benz introduced as an 'S' class was

the W108/109 chassis in 1965.

However, these 'S' class cars were really just a major re-work of the W111 platform and mechanicals. In 1972 the factory introduced a totally new model, the 116-series, which was the first true S-Class in that it shared

## Ponton connection

On a train heading from Northallerton to Edinburgh, I decided to read my copy of the Spring 2023 issue of *Classic Mercedes*. This year I attended the Ponton Rally at Jever in Lower Saxony as a guest of our German colleagues in the Mercedes-Benz Interessen Gemeinschaft eV (MBIG). Unsurprisingly, given the name of the rally, there were many Pontons there along with other excellent Mercedes classics.

It was therefore a great joy to



Benz expert Bob raises an 'S-Class' naming issue.

## Get in touch!

Email your letters and pictures to the Editor: david@classicmercedes.com. Or post them to: The Editor, *Classic Mercedes*, Sundial Magazines Ltd, Sundial House, 17 Wickham Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 5JS. Or you can fax them to +44 (0)20 8639 4411. We do not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed in letters published.



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by JP Group Automotive

NEW

Radiator, 430x570x40 mm, aluminium. For LHD models  
JP no. 8314200100 - OE no. 1135010001\*  
Fits: Mercedes Pagoda (W113) (2.8) '68-'71



Radiator, 433x633x40 mm, aluminium. For LHD models  
JP no. 8314200200 - OE no. 1135001103\*  
Fits: Mercedes Pagoda (W113) (2.5) '66-'68



Painted aluminium combines the look like the old copper/brass radiator, but the improved functionality of aluminium cooling. A/T and M/T combined in one version to cover all types and variants!

A-pillar structure with windscreen frame, left & right  
JP no. 8381900170 & 8381900180  
OE no. 1136200313 & 1136200413\*  
Fits: Mercedes Pagoda (W113) (2.3-2.8) '63-'71



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# Unblocked

The 450SEL 6.9 was driven by the top F1 drivers of the 1970s. These included James Hunt, whose car came close to not surviving even as he owned it, but, as David Sutherland reports, it lives on as part of the late World Champion's legend

IMAGES Goodwood Festival of Speed & Newspress/Historics Auctioneers/Shutterstock



14

**M**ercedes-Benz had no active presence in Formula 1 in the 1970s and 80s, but Stuttgart didn't want to miss out on the glory associated with motorsport's highest profile and most glamorous international series, so ensured that the drivers at the business end of the grid had the top Mercedes-Benz model in their garages. That of course included one of the sport's most charismatic and also hardest-living characters, 1976 World Champion James Hunt, who through his McLaren and Walter Wolf Racing years and afterwards had a series of S-Classes, including a late, 1979 450SEL 6.9 which he owned until his sudden death in June 1993 at home in south west London, aged just 45.

James' long-time friend and F1 rival Niki Lauda also drove a 6.9, but these cars were not, as one might have expected, gifted by

Mercedes-Benz. Instead, the deal put before them and others was in the form of an irresistibly large discount on the price. Which in those days of cast-iron Mercedes residual values, conferred a nice little bonus when selling on.

By 1980, Hunt had left F1, and while probably not the super wealthy retiree that today's former grand prix champions are, had the time and money to indulge his passions. He would purchase a spacious house in Wimbledon, and freed from the constant travelling of the F1 circus, spent time in the area. I recall in 1981 my plumber pointing out the location of the house in Putney he rented prior to moving to Wimbledon the following year, and as I also lived in the area, curiosity prompted me to indulge in a spot of star

**ABOVE**  
By the early 1990s Hunt's 450SEL 6.9 sat unused, up on bricks on his driveway.

**RIGHT INSET**  
It's now 30 years since the much-loved former F1 champion died suddenly at home in London.



gazing and visit the address. Outside, bumped up on the pavement, was the 450SEL 6.9; it was also to be seen on pavements outside various pubs in Wandsworth that Hunt liked to visit. By coincidence, seven years later we bought a house opposite, and as an avid F1 fan back then, I took great delight in telling anyone who would listen the story of our famous former neighbour.

Hunt quit F1 because the Walter Wolf Racing WR7/8/9 cars were uncompetitive, but also, some say, because he had been





badly affected by the death of Lotus driver Ronnie Peterson following an accident at the 1978 Italian Grand Prix at Monza. Nonetheless, in the immediate aftermath of retirement, comebacks with McLaren and Bernie Ecclestone's Brabham team were both mooted, but came to nothing, leaving Hunt free to pursue other business interests in between his grand prix commentating duties.

His business sense appeared to not match his driving ability, matters aggravated by a sizeable loss on a Lloyds of London investment, and this and a healthy appetite for the good life saw him eventually rattling around in splendid penury in his large Wimbledon residence by the early 1990s, his divorced wife elsewhere with their two boys. Which is why the Mercedes-Benz came to be left, forlornly, up on bricks on his driveway, Hunt seemingly unable to afford the running costs and driving a 1960s Austin A35 van instead.

I can still remember the shock of overhearing the news of Hunt's bolt-from-the-blue passing while standing in a queue in a post office on that afternoon in June. The famous newspaper photo of the slab-supported super saloon had by now been published, revealing the motorsport playboy's now sharply reduced circumstances and, in the way that reasonable thought can desert you in a moment of shock, I instantly wondered what would become of the delapidated looking Mercedes.

I found out the following year, when NLT 935V was sold from his estate for £4,000 plus 10 per cent commission at an auction in London, still in sad condition. At that point the paperwork revealed that having been originally registered to Owen Coyle Anodising Ltd, the car was purchased by Hunt in November 1980 as shown by the original V5 logbook, initially under in his holding company's name, Grosvenor House, run by his brother David (who died aged 55 in 2015). This was the second of the two 450SEL 6.9s James had owned.

The purchaser was Lord John Gould, who undertook a full and comprehensive restoration. This was a car that Gould had tried to purchase from Hunt prior to his death in 1993, Gould a long-time admirer of the Mercedes. Contained within the history file were photographs and documents pertaining to the restoration, and

accompanying these was a letter, dated February 1994, from the executor of Hunt's estate thanking Lord Gould for his purchase and indicating that the proceeds would help fund Hunt's two sons' continuing education.

During the restoration, the shade of brown on the bodywork was resprayed in Milan Brown, and the original velour trim

changed for a special order Connolly hide that has been well protected by covers. The restoration was completed in 1995 at a cost of £24,000, leaving the car looking as new. Lord Gould later sold the car to a doctor in London.

Most recently, the ex-Hunt Mercedes was seen at Historics Auctioneers' sale at Mercedes-Benz World in November 2018 (where it had been on display a few years earlier), selling for £27,000 including buyer's premium. For a Mercedes owned by a genuine motor racing legend and with full paperwork, that seemed a very good buy.

⇒ The images of the restored 450SEL 6.9 and some of the text are reproduced courtesy of Historics Auctioneers Tel +44 (0) 1753 639170 Web [www.historics.co.uk](http://www.historics.co.uk)

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Mercedes-Benz 450SEL 6.9 (V116)**  
**ENGINE M100 6,834cc**  
**POWER 282bhp@4,250rpm**  
**TORQUE 405lb ft@3,000rpm**  
**TRANSMISSION 3-speed automatic**  
**WEIGHT 1,935kg**  
**0-62MPH 7.4sec**  
**TOP SPEED 141mph**  
**FUEL CONSUMPTION 17.7mpg**  
**YEARS PRODUCED 1975-1980**  
**NUMBER BUILT 7,380**  
*All figures from Mercedes-Benz*



**TOP**  
 'NLT 935V' was sold from Hunt's estate the year after he passed...

**ABOVE**  
 Mercedes' mighty M100 6.8V8 powers the super saloon.

**LEFT**  
 ...and it reappeared at Historics Auctioneers' sale in November '18.

**BELOW LEFT**  
 The restoration included changing from velour to hide.

**"THE 450SEL 6.9 WAS TO BE SEEN BUMPED UP ON PAVEMENTS OUTSIDE VARIOUS PUBS IN WANDSWORTH IN SOUTH WEST LONDON THAT HUNT LIKED TO VISIT"**

OLD SCHOOL MERCEDES DEVOTEE REED HITCHCOCK  
SHARES OWNERSHIP THOUGHTS

# Ramping up!



With more cars at home than space to keep them, and with his wife enacting a land grab on what was available, Reed felt he had no choice but to look upwards. Now he has a garage hoist – and no longer a car mechanic's sore back

IMAGES Reed Hitchcock



Reed's latest acquisition, the lovely 500SEC, was guaranteed a garage slot.

**J**ust over a year ago, with kids off to university and lives of their own, my wife and I decided to move further out from Washington, DC to a larger house. Our old place was located in a 1960s-vintage tract neighbourhood and if you had more than about 3.5 cars something was going to sit out on the street. We had a two-car garage, but we also had absolutely no basement or other storage area, so at any given time half the garage was filled with a marriage's worth of accumulated 'stuff'. I always made sure to have room for whatever car was my prized possession at the time, but everything else



But with three cars to house, could the headspace work harder?

was relegated to the outdoors regardless of weather, season, or anything else.

The new house, despite being three times the size of the old one, also has two garage spots. At least with this property, however, there is plenty of driveway space – if needed. However, when we moved in my wife made it abundantly clear that she would be commandeering one of the two available spaces. This, unfortunately, conflicted with my as yet undisclosed plan of accumulating a few more cars. I mean, more space equals more cars, surely?

For the time being, all was not lost. My daily driver for the time being is a full-sized





American-style pickup truck – albeit a reliable one thanks to the Toyota badge and the Lexus V8. It is however simply too big for the garage. So with my wife's car and one 'special' vehicle, we had enough enclosed space. Well, then my buying instinct kicked in, and I started looking to expand the collection. I'd sold the R107 560SL, purchased a C126 500SEC (see pages 46-51), but I wanted more – or at least the option for more. So we started looking at possibilities. After all, I've noticed I'm not getting any younger and there are still a lot of Mercedes-Benzes out there I haven't owned yet.

**W**e brought in an architect to look at some design options, including expanding the existing garage to three bays as well as just building a new garage on the other side of the driveway where there is a pretty big grassy knoll. We were largely on board with the new garage and got a good way down the design path before we started taking stock of the other, arguably more pressing, needs of the property such as new windows, a kitchen re-model, and so on. My wife pushed pretty hard for the garage, but ultimately we agreed that since we are not necessarily planning to die here, perhaps a three-car detached garage/clubhouse was probably not the most practical move – especially considering the well-over-six-figure price tag.

So we revisited the garage expansion, but the design of the house coupled with where it is sited on the property doesn't lend itself well to expansion. Now what? Less cars? Surely not! So I pondered the existing garage. What occurred to me is that the garage ceilings, at 12ft high, left a lot of open space above the parked cars. I wondered if maybe a lift would fit. The spaces are fairly narrow, but so long as the lift would fit width-wise I had the headspace. Sure, the garage door would have to be re-routed but based on everything I read, that seemed do-able. I had a couple of lift specialists come out for a look, and both confirmed that a lift was a no-brainer for the space. It would also deliver the added benefit of enabling me to work on the cars, or should I say under the cars, in a manner far more pleasing to my own ageing chassis.

I ultimately went with a four-post lift that didn't require being bolted to the floor (and hence I can pack it up and take it with me if we move in the future), could support over 3,600kg, and didn't require an air compressor to operate. At the same time, the garage door was indeed re-routed to allow for more open headspace, and a side-mounted electric opener took the place of the previous overhead unit.

The installation of the lift happened to coincide with a new Mercedes joining the fleet, at least for a while, a W211 E320 CDI with a bunch of miles. So instead of having to move cars all over the driveway it fits beautifully underneath the loftily homed 500SEC, thus transforming my former two-car garage into a three-car garage while at the same time providing the added benefit of not having to crawl on the ground underneath cars to perform simple tasks

**"THE GARAGE CEILINGS,  
AT 12FT HIGH, LEFT A LOT  
OF OPEN SPACE ABOVE  
THE PARKED CARS. I  
WONDERED IF MAYBE  
A LIFT WOULD FIT"**



In the end the best solution, on cost and practicality, was a ramp.

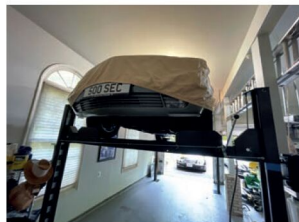


The only alteration required was a re-routng of the sliding door.

like oil changes. Result!

Unfortunately, the garage has also been home to my lawn tractor ever since I got it last fall, so what should be my wife's space is still temporarily unavailable. I say "temporarily" because in addition to the lift, I have also recently purchased a proper garden shed to house the tractor along with all manner of lawn and garden implements. It may also have just have space for items like spare wheels and tyres for a 500SEC. The shed should be here in three to five weeks. After that I just need to do something about those unsightly wire shelves in the garage. I'm thinking some nice DIY black hanging cabinets with some workspace. How hard could that be?

⇒ Reed Hitchcock lives in Virginia, USA and is co-host of the *Totally That Stupid* motoring podcast and blog [Web.totallythatstupid.com](http://Web.totallythatstupid.com)



Hey presto, a two-car garage instantly becomes a three-car garage.



While the SEC is tucked safely upstairs, the E-Class drives out.



The tough-as-nails Toyota stays outside but wouldn't fit in the garage anyway.

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INSIGHTS AND OPINIONS FROM INSIDE THE CLASSIC MERCEDES TRADE



# On the system

When a classic Mercedes needs a new exhaust, Rob Jones tells us that the extra cost of stainless steel over mild steel is a no-brainer

IMAGES John Colley/Richard Mason

**N**owadays, I'm seeing more and more Mercedes models where exhaust systems are no longer available, or parts of the system are no longer stocked. In other instances, if the original parts are available the cost is sometimes more than the vehicle's value. This isn't just confined to the classics and 'youngtimers' – recently we had an ML in from a Mercedes specialist because they couldn't obtain an exhaust.

The good news is that exhaust systems are not complicated. Pipework comprises the majority of the system, which is easy to replicate. We remove the original exhaust and then 'jig' it, that's measuring the dimensions. If the system is fragile, we can do this while it's still on the car. We have state of the art tube benders, so can usually replace any system quite easily. However, it's quite a time-consuming process.

I always recommend customers opt for stainless steel. It's hardly any more work to make, and there's not a big difference in cost compared to making one in mild steel which will eventually rust and fail. For a stainless steel exhaust there's the slight price increase up front for the material, however the offset is that it will pretty much last forever.

**C**heck that a high grade, 304 stainless steel is being used. Most suppliers like us use this or higher, but it's always worth asking the question because lower grade systems do exist. Classic cars by their very nature don't get the use that a daily driver does, hence condensation can build up through infrequent use, and on mild steel exhausts rusting the system from the inside out. Stainless steel doesn't suffer this issue.

If your classic is in storage and has a mild steel system, then when the engine is started it needs to be properly warmed up through a



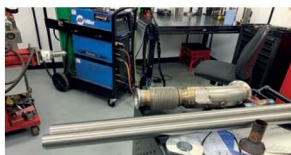
On a Pagoda the tip of the exhaust system needs to look good.

from the outside by painting with high temperature paint, but that doesn't stop rusting from the inside.

All Mercedes have been equipped with catalytic converters since the early 1990s, and these eventually fail. We can supply original equipment quality catalyst exhaust systems to any specification, and in stainless steel. It's difficult to be precise on the cost of a replacement system

with a catalyst because it depends on the car, but as a minimum, owners should be budgeting for between £1,500 and £2,000, around £500 over a non-catalyst system.

**"FOR A STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST, THERE'S THE SLIGHT PRICE INCREASE UP FRONT FOR THE MATERIAL, HOWEVER THE OFFSET IS IT WILL PRETTY MUCH LAST FOREVER"**



**ABOVE**  
Rob's garage can make up catalyst exhaust systems.

**RIGHT**  
For best results he uses a special welding process.



full heat cycle to minimise condensation damage. Of course, if you take your classic out in the winter and it has a mild steel system, then the elements attack the exhaust, especially when there's salt on the road. You can protect mild steel systems to some extent

**T**he work is quite labour intensive and requires skill. With our systems, we TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas) weld everything, which produces a more precise weld. However, stainless steel has to be welded in such a way that there are no weaknesses in the joins which can become brittle and crack. To avoid this, we use a method called 'back purging', which involves filling all the tubes with pure argon gas when welding to make the weld the same on the inside as on the outside. If this isn't done, the weld oxidises where it's in contact with oxygen, giving a 'sugaring' effect which then is a weak point. This isn't needed with mild steel, but vital with stainless steel if the system is to last. So again with stainless steel it takes longer because of the preparation that goes into it.

With this approach, we can offer a lifetime guarantee, so it's worth checking with a prospective supplier if they use this method. Most do, and also offer the guarantee. In the 15 years we've made these exhausts, nobody has had to resort to the guarantee.

⇒ Rob Jones is director at Browns Garage in Haywards Heath, Sussex Tel +44 (0)1444 454055 Web [www.brownsgarage.co.uk](http://www.brownsgarage.co.uk)

## Frankfurt, September 1963: W100 600 launched

Sixty years ago, Mercedes-Benz introduced a remarkable motorcar, the like of which has not been seen since. It drew top engineering expertise from both the automotive and aero divisions of Daimler-Benz, and was wrapped in stunning bodywork that projected the vehicle's super modernity. When unveiled at the Frankfurt motor show, there was every reason to assume that the luxury car in its ultimate form had just been redefined by the W100 600, the replacement for the 300 limousine introduced in 1951.

But other car makers in the sector, most notably Rolls-Royce and Ford-owned Lincoln declined to chase

Mercedes' high technology, deeming engineering conservatism the best policy, thus for the next 17 years until the last of the 2,677 rolled off the Sindelfingen assembly line, the 600 (this photograph taken in Paris in 1978) remained peerless. Thereafter, 600s would serve the rich, famous and infamous for far longer than would have been normal had there been a suitable replacement; indeed, today, some royal fleets maintain W100s.

The launch of the 600 was not the first sensational premiere of 1963, the fabulously chic W113 SL 'Pagoda' having appeared at the Geneva show six months earlier to succeed the

190SL and 300SL, both of which were – from a contemporary perspective – looking dated and no longer providing the best market focus. The celebrated pair made the name of the young stylist Paul Bracq, and underlined the proposition that Mercedes-Benz made “the best cars in the world”.

On page 52 we look back to not just six decades of the 600, but to the careful, even protracted thought process that led to the final production car. It is, like most episodes from Mercedes-Benz of the '50s, a good tale.







# JUNIOR SL SPECIAL



“Styléd by Mercedes designers Walter Häcker and Karl Wilfert, the 190SL had the appearance of a scaled-down 300SL, but was more mundane in construction”



Cover  
story

# Little star

Mercedes' small-engined roadster launched in 1955 offered only modest performance compared to the 300SL, but it hit the big time in sales, claiming eight times as many deliveries worldwide.

David Sutherland tells the 190SL's story, and as part of that drives a pristine example. In this special section, we also look at other aspects of the model that arguably was never taken seriously only because the spotlight fell on its illustrious stablemate

IMAGES TIM ANDREW



To  
follow...

### Page 30 **GP winner**

The 190SL's sole motorsport moment came in Macau in China, 67 years ago



### Page 36 **Race replica**

Back in 2008, a 190SL enthusiast built a close lookalike of the race winning car



**"Replaced by  
the W113 SL in  
1963, 25,881  
190SLs were  
built in a  
production life  
three months  
short of seven  
years, with the  
majority of cars  
going to the US"**

**F**ollowing the rebirth of Daimler-Benz after its near total destruction in World War Two, a key aim of the company was to gain a foothold in the United States, where the economy had remained in good health,

unlike in most European countries where commerce and industry had been widely devastated, and consumer spending power in many countries left severely weakened. The German car maker announced its plans to boost US activity in September 1952, and spearheading the brand-building exercise would be Austrian-born Max Hoffman, a top level mover and shaker in New York's prestige automobile business since the late 1940s, and who boasted an impressive track record helping establish niche European marques including Jaguar, Austin Healey, MG, Alfa Romeo and Porsche.

In that same month, a memorable meeting took place in Stuttgart chaired by the company's new General Director, Fritz Könecke, during which Hoffman spelt out the truth, as he saw it, about the Mercedes-Benz model range: dreary, and lacking a proper sports car. His proposal to fix this went down well, Könecke pledging every possible support for a new sports model, and the dealership network Hoffman would develop. He had already identified the car he thought most suitable, strenuously advocating that the W194 model that in 1952 was doing so well in international sports car racing be quickly developed into a road car. Two years later a true legend was born, the 300SL – the world's first 'supercar', and as futuristic and exciting as the pre-war 170 series had been dull and backward looking.

But while the 300SL was an extraordinary 'halo' car in



### Specifications

#### Mercedes-Benz 190SL (W121)

**ENGINE** M121 1,897cc 4-cyl

**POWER** 104bhp @ 5,700rpm

**TORQUE** 105lb ft @ 3,200rpm

0-62MPH 14.5sec

**MAX SPEED** 113mph

**TRANSMISSION** 4-speed manual

**FUEL CONSUMPTION** 32.8mpg

**WEIGHT** 1,140kg

**YEARS BUILT** 1955-1963

**NUMBER PRODUCED** 25,881

*All figures from Mercedes-Benz*



**ABOVE RIGHT**  
190SL customers got the same grille and lights as were fitted to the 300SL.

**RIGHT**  
This is a 1961 car, which makes it towards the end of the 25,881 build run.





# Driving the 190SL

It's not fast or sharp handling, but the 190SL has other qualities that will likely be more important to an owner

**T**he first step to fully appreciating the 190SL is to stop thinking of it as the poor cousin to the 300SL. It might have been pitched as the cost-effective alternative to the Gullwing, with 1.7 litres and just over 100bhp compared to three litres and over 200bhp, but it is a car with a character of its own, albeit a modest one. Indeed, some might even prefer it in a way, for its smaller and neater size, and the lesser expectations associated with it.

Enjoying the 190SL begins with taking in the exterior fittings. It is be-decked with detailing, mostly chrome work, such as the beautifully sculpted bumpers, the edging of the 'winglets' designed to reduce the amount of dirt thrown up from the wheels, and protector plates on the side sills just ahead of the rear wheels.

Inside, the 190SL is simply magnificent for what was a volume-built car. It certainly punches above its weight in dashboard design, with a huge speedometer and rev counter mounted high and in your direct line of view, complemented by fuel, water temperature and oil pressure gauges below, plus a clock on the glovebox lid. Exquisite detailing includes the chromed horn push ring on the steering wheel which doubles as the indicator switch, and the flip up interior light mounted on the dash top. The red leather trim is, for me, stunning. However, I'm reminded that the average human frame must have been smaller 70 years ago, because even with the seat fully back I don't have quite enough legroom and I feel a little too close to the steering wheel to be fully relaxed.

For the best driving experience, you need the best 190SL, because they vary a lot, from those with out-of-tune suspension and engine tune, and which are no fun to drive, to properly sorted examples such as this one, freshly restored and pristine looking. It was made available to us for driving and photos by the UK's biggest SL specialist, Stratford-upon-Avon-based SLShop, and the car's owner, Romesh Srinivasan.

The first test for a 190SL to pass is to start and run cleanly. The twin Solex carburettors on the M121 engine are notorious for going out of tune and being very tricky to set up properly, but this particular engine splutters briefly as it fires up, a blip of the throttle clearing its throat after which it revs enthusiastically. To make the most of this, you need to carefully coordinate the vague gearshift and awkward clutch, while keeping the 'wandery' steering under control. And herein lies an unexpected joy of the 190SL: it forces you to fully engage with driving, always aiming for the best gearshift and throttle reapplacation, the Mercedes rewarding you with a delightful fluidity when you get everything right. This SL is so different from all the silky smooth, effortless-to-drive generations that have followed since.

**L**et's be generous and say that the 190SL's handling was good for the period. It doesn't encourage fast cornering, and in such manoeuvres the chassis feels wobbly, while the drum brakes make anticipative rather than heroic braking prudent.

Notwithstanding the slightly cramped cabin, the 190SL can be considered a comfortable car – luxurious compared



**RIGHT**  
Editor  
Sutherland could  
have used a little more  
rearward seat adjustment.

to most contemporary roadsters, such as those from Morgan and MG, which were basic in the extreme. You sit on decently padded and reasonably supportive seats, and unlike on the British pair, the

***"The roadster punches above its weight in dashboard design, with a huge speedometer and rev counter mounted high up and in your direct line of view"***

suspension absorbs bumps well and provides a comfortable ride. The 190SL reveals what 1950s upmarket motoring felt like, and with the appropriate mindset you'll find it utterly charming, we're sure.



**ABOVE**  
The 190SL is a charming classic roadster – once you engage with its ways.

the Mercedes range, it was numerically insignificant, with 1,400 to be delivered over a three-year period. What was required was an attractive alternative that was cheaper and easier to manufacture, and sold at a price that would generate much greater sales. That car was the W121 190SL and it was unveiled in New York, at the International Motor Sports Show in February 1954 – actually, at the same time as the 300SL Coupe made its public debut, although, with engineering and design work still to do, it did not go into production until May of the following year.

**S**tyled by Mercedes designers Walter Häcker and Karl Wilfert, the 190SL had the appearance of a scaled-down 300SL. But while the 300SL used a weight-saving, light-alloy space frame, in view of the 190SL's higher production aspirations, it was far more mundane in construction. Indeed, it was based on the platform of the four-cylinder Ponton model of the time, the W120 180. It used that car's front subframe and axle – an innovative design that went some way toward isolating vibration from the rest of the car – although was not powered by the

**RIGHT**  
By 1950s sports car standards the hood is good looking and weatherproof.

⇒ same 1.8-litre engine, but instead a new 1.9-litre four-cylinder unit. This was fuelled by twin Solex carburettors and made 104bhp, just over double the saloon's output. That, however, was approximately half the horsepower of the 300SL's fuel-injected, three-litre six-cylinder engine, and torque of 105lb ft was a similar proportion.

There were two regular versions of the 190SL, a Roadster with a canvas hood, and a Coupe with a removable hardtop, the hood an option on the latter model. No doubt with a competitor to Porsche's 356 Speedster club racer in mind, in the first year of production Mercedes also offered a racing conversion kit, comprising light alloy doors and twin Plexiglas flyscreens, the idea being that besides fitting these

## **"In 1956, with the British driver Doug Steane at the wheel, what was effectively a Mercedes factory prepared 190SL won the Macau Grand Prix in China"**

in place of the original doors and screen, owners would also remove the bumpers and other items to save weight. But it is thought that only a handful of these kits were delivered, probably because the modifications would have pitched the 190SL into the GT class, in which it would have found little chance due to its limited engine output.

**R**eplaced by the W113 SL in 1963, 25,881 190SLs were built in a production life three months short of seven years, with the majority of cars going to the US. The car never underwent a facelift, and changes were minor. In 1956, new chrome strips appeared on the upper section of the doors, and the Ponton 220's larger rear lamps were fitted, while a year later the numberplate panel was made bigger and the light for it moved to the bumper. In 1959, a new hardtop with a larger screen was offered, and in 1960 the door handles and boot lock were modified.



**ABOVE**  
Everything about the interior is nicely detailed, even the glovebox lid.

**BELOW**  
The easy-to-see clock mounted on the glovebox lid winds up at the back.



**RIGHT**  
As with the W113 SL, the 190SL was offered with a side-facing rear seat...

**RIGHT**  
...but it doesn't work that well, so leave it at home would be our suggestion.







**ABOVE INSET**  
All 190SL used a four-speed manual gearbox, with a quite vague shift.

**LEFT**  
The fascia with its big main dials and detailing is a most appealing aspect.

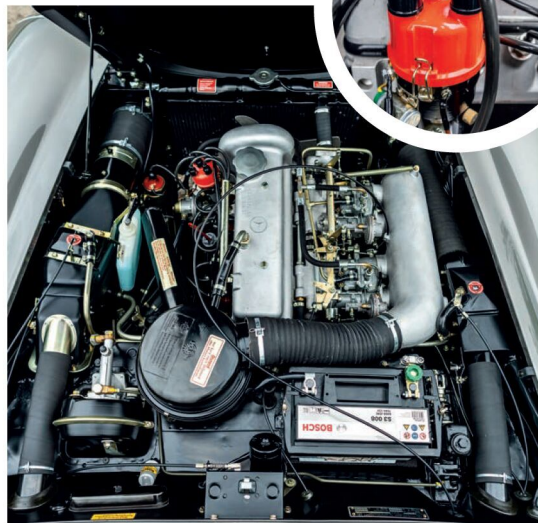
For its entire production life, the 190SL was left in the shadow of first the Gullwing, and then its replacement, the 1957 300SL Roadster. Its presence was, therefore, low key, but two single events pertaining to the model are noteworthy. The first was in 1956, when with the British driver Doug Steane (1931-2023) at the wheel, what was effectively a Mercedes factory prepared 190SL won the Macau Grand Prix on the south coast of China – the full story of the race and the lead up to it are fully explained in the article following this one.

The second occurred in 1957 when Mercedes-Benz became fleetingly associated with the seamier side of West German life after one of West Germany's first major scandals in the post-war period broke. It was the favoured transport of a high society prostitute named Rosemarie Nitribitt, who plied her trade in Frankfurt so successfully that within a short period she became sufficiently wealthy to maintain an affluent lifestyle. The black 190SL she bought in 1956, made even more distinctive by its red leather upholstery and whitewall tyres, was said to have been used in the course of her soliciting clients.

But she was found murdered in November 1957 in her luxury apartment in Frankfurt, after which police investigations revealed a number of prominent figures, including the ➔

**BELOW INSET**  
Long pre-dating electronic ignition, the distributor has points to be adjusted.

**BOTTOM**  
190SLs use the Ponton M121 OHC engine, but twin carb and 1.9 litres.



## Weber carburettor conversion

The setup problems of the factory carburation on the 190SL have led to many Weber carb sets being installed

**O**ther than the usual troubles that afflict all classic cars, 190SLs have a particular Achilles heel: the twin Solex PHH44 carburettors, which are commonly out of tune, worn, or both. It's a problem that Brian Gunney, proprietor of Redcastle Classics in Caerphilly in south Wales, has become very familiar with in over 40 years of 190SL restoration.

"The bushes on the butterfly shaft wear and draw air in, which throws everything out, so the engine runs too weak," he explains. "You get an erratic idle, and may not be able to get the idle down to the right speed, while performance also becomes erratic. The problem is aggravated if the inlet manifold gasket is leaking, which is quite common." Cracked bodies on 1950s carburettor bodies can make matters worse.

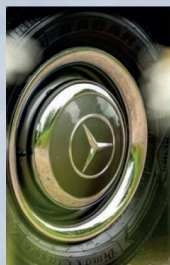
Why did the problem slip through in the first place? "All the pre-production 190SLs were on Weber carburettors, which were made in Italy, but Mercedes wanted to keep it German and so used Solexes," Brian explains. For a long time Redcastle Classic has offered a twin Weber carburettor conversion, presently around £1,500 installed, the originality sacrifice promising easier starting and no flat spots. The Weber parent company, Webcon, also offers a conversion kit.



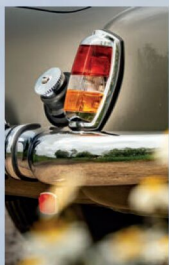
Worn original Solex carburettors cause poor engine running, and perplex owners...



... which is why twin Weber 40 DCOEs are a common W121 engine modification.



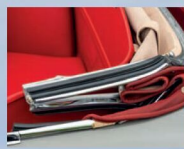
In the 1950s car road wheels were always steel, these being 13-inches.



Among the Ponton parts used on the 190SL are the rear lamp clusters.



The canvas hood attaches to the front screen with easily operated catches.



A tonneau cover fits over this – once you squeeze the folded frame down enough.



The wing mirrors are, like the rest of the car's exterior detailing, lovingly designed.

⇒ then head of the Krupp industrial corporation, to have been among Nitribitt's alleged associates. The case, possibly the West German equivalent of the 1963 Profumo affair in the UK, shocked the public, particularly as no successful prosecution was brought, and also because there were allegations of a cover-up by some of the well known people involved. For a while afterwards, the 190SL was commonly referred to as the 'Nitribitt Mercedes', and to this day the whereabouts of Nitribitt's car, impounded by police at the time, is unknown.



Rosemarie Nitribitt was a high society 'call girl' with good taste in cars.

**E**ven in 1955, the 190SL was thought to be something of a poseur's conveyance, a car with the general look of the 300SL, but under the bonnet a humble, four-cylinder 1.9-litre engine. However, at around half the price of the 300SL, the 190SL was an accessible glamour car that found a ready niche during the West German 'economic miracle', or *Wirtschaftswunder*. But during its lifespan, Mercedes-Benz concluded that building two SLs, spaced as far apart as possible on price

and specification, was unnecessary and that a single model representing the middle way would suffice. This would be the W113 SL 'Pagoda' that replaced the 190SL and 300SL in 1963, and which in eight years would sell almost double their combined volume. However, the two-pronged SL attack would reappear 33 years later when Mercedes launched the first generation R107 SLK, a 'mini' SL bloodline that would run for almost a quarter of a century and prove highly popular.

For well over a decade a 190SL with no rust or mechanical issues has been a car with a six-figure value, and sometimes a lot more; in 2014 during the Monterey auction week RM Sotheby's drew a high bid of \$341,000 on a body-off restored 1957 example, which may be an auction record. That is nonetheless a mere fifth of what a 300SL of similar quality typically fetches, and immensely charming as the 190SL is, that gulf perhaps sums up the relationship between the two models.



Nine years ago this 190SL made \$341K when auctioneer RM Sotheby's sold it.

⇒ Thank you to owner Romesh Srinivasan for the loan of the 190SL, and to SLShop Tel +44 (0)1789 337070 Web [www.theshop.com](http://www.theshop.com) for facilitating the photoshoot

**"At half the price of the 300SL, the 190SL was an accessible glamour car that found a niche during the West German 'economic miracle', or *Wirtschaftswunder*"**



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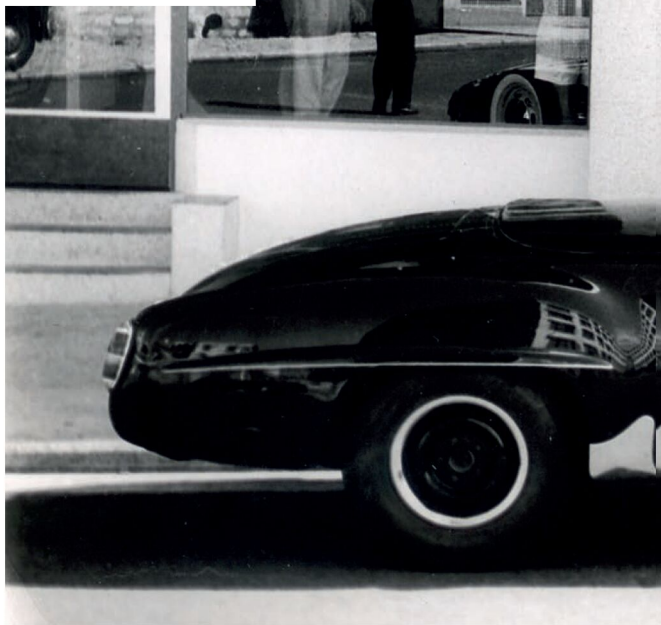
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# JUNIOR SL SPECIAL

**RIGHT**  
In 1956 Doug Steane was  
in the British army but he  
also raced in a Grand Prix!

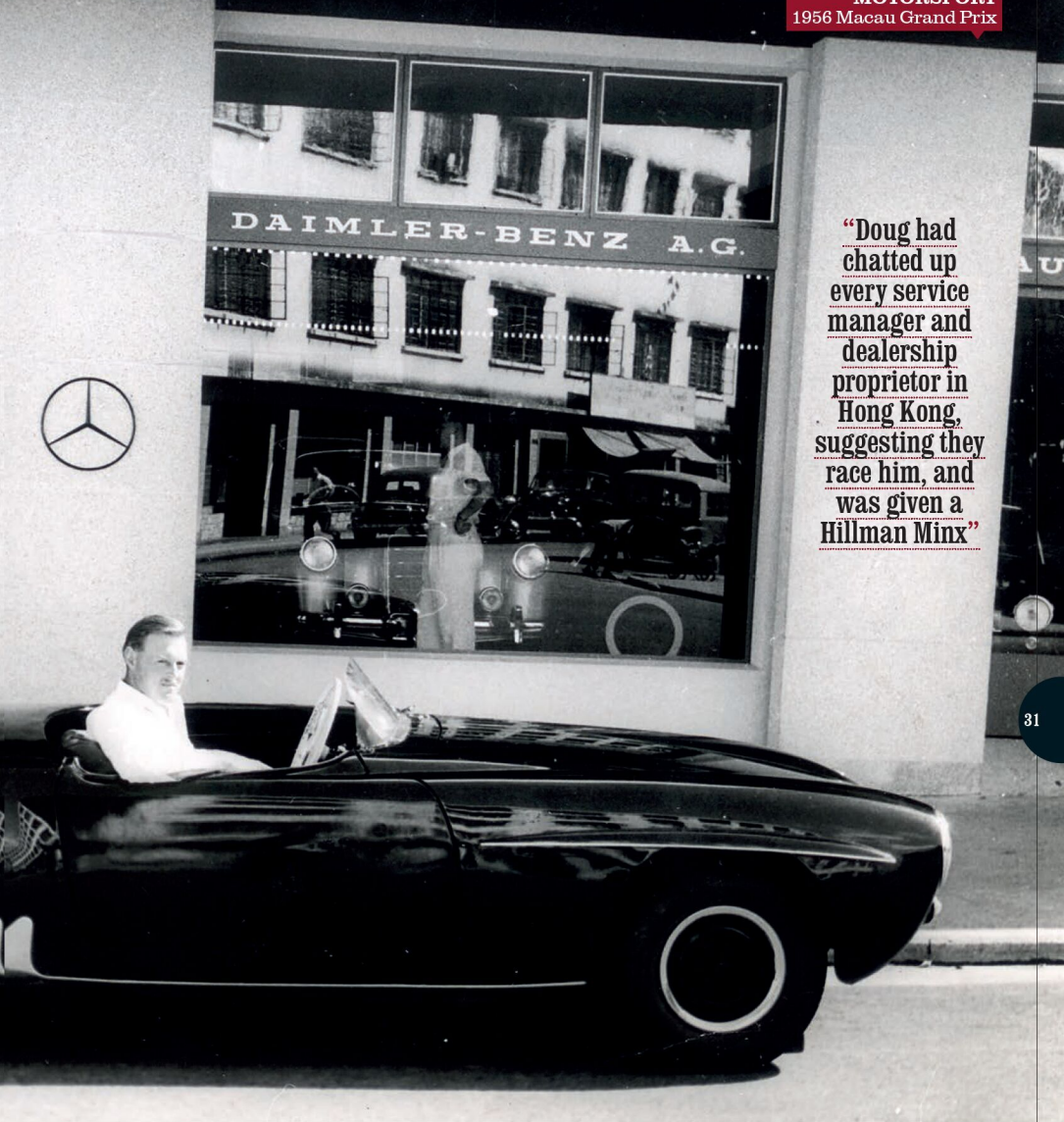
**BELOW**  
Mercedes sent this special  
190SL for the '56 GP with  
some mystery upgrades.



Daimler-Benz didn't feel the 190SL had motorsport potential, but one racing driver and his backer proved otherwise. **Tim Slade** tells the rarely aired story of Doug Steane's victory in the 1956 Macau Grand Prix in China

# Forgotten





"Doug had  
chatted up  
every service  
manager and  
dealership  
proprietor in  
Hong Kong,  
suggesting they  
race him, and  
was given a  
Hillman Minx"

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IMAGES MERCEDES-BENZ GROUP AG

# hero

ABOVE  
Steane with the 1956 car  
outside the Hong Kong  
Mercedes-Benz distributor.



After poor practise times  
Doug put in a late  
scorcher and won pole.

## Specifications

### Mercedes-Benz 190SL (W181)

ENGINE M121 1,897cc 4-cyl  
POWER 104bhp@5,700rpm  
TORQUE 106lb ft@3,200rpm  
0-62MPH 14.5sec  
MAX SPEED 113mph  
TRANSMISSION 4-speed manual  
FUEL CONSUMPTION 32.8mpg  
WEIGHT 1,140kg  
YEARS BUILT 1955-1963  
NUMBER PRODUCED 25,881

All figures from Mercedes-Benz, for a standard 190SL.



**RIGHT**  
In the early stages Doug  
battled with a Ferrari,  
which was the faster car...

**FAR RIGHT**  
...and managed to  
overtake it and lead the  
race by a clear lap.



**D**oug Steane, who passed away earlier this year aged 92, was an engineer, and just after World War Two took up an apprenticeship at bus and truck builder Dennis in Guildford, Surrey. The racing bug he caught might have had something to do with the company he kept, as a fellow apprentice and friend was future Formula 1 world champion Mike Hawthorn.

In 1948 he joined the Army as a regular soldier, and in 1953 was transferred to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Promoted to Sergeant, he soon found himself in Hong Kong, in charge of 10 fitters in a small workshop in Kowloon on the mainland. At this point Doug's competition experience was limited to some motorcycle scrambling and a couple of club events at Goodwood. In Hong Kong he discovered The Hong Kong Motor Sports Club, and joined. The membership was mostly of wealthy Chinese and English businessmen, along with British officers, but the enthusiastic sergeant Steane was invited on to the committee.

The club used airfields for events, but unrealistically aspired to a race around the streets of Hong Kong. However, five hours steam going west was the Portuguese colony of Macau, whose government not only wanted to attract tourism, but had a track already planned. The Hong Kong and Macau clubs joined forces and, with the backing of the Governor, and the Automobile Club Du Portugal, the first Macau Grand Prix ran in November 1954. An elegant street circuit that included in its four miles a sea front straight, a blast through the town, and a hairpin round the lighthouse, helped to attract a strong entry.

Doug had chatted up every service manager and dealership proprietor in Hong Kong, suggesting they race him, and found a sympathetic ear at Gilman Motors, which imported Rootes Group cars and Jaguars. He was given a Hillman Minx and amassed

enough silverware in the 1954 GP associated sports car events to catch the eye of Walter Sulke, who ran the Hong Kong Mercedes-Benz dealer. Some months before the 1955 GP, Walter asked if Doug would like to race a DKW in the saloon event and be number two in a 190SL for the GP. Paul Du Tot was the number one, a successful driver, so Doug expected to simply to do enough laps to satisfy the course stewards.

**U**ntimed practice and testing went on at various points in the six days preceding the meeting. Timed practice and qualifying didn't happen until Friday and Saturday. But Du Tot wasn't getting on with the 190SL, and his practice times were disappointing. Half an hour before the end of final qualifying on the Saturday, Walter asked Doug to take out the car, which he did – taking pole five minutes before the session ended.

The black 190SL was fresh from the showroom floor. The car ran well, but 25 laps from the end of the 77-lap race it began suffering fuel starvation after right-hand, second gear corners so, worried about running out of petrol, Doug pitted. There he was told he had been about to lose the lead, which made him incandescent. The positioning of the pit boards had been a subject of contention because they were at a fast point on the track just before a corner, and Doug was too busy setting up the corner to be able to read the pit signals. He had no idea that he was leading, and would certainly not have stopped had he been aware of it. His friend Bob Ritchie in an Austin-Healey 100S took the flag.

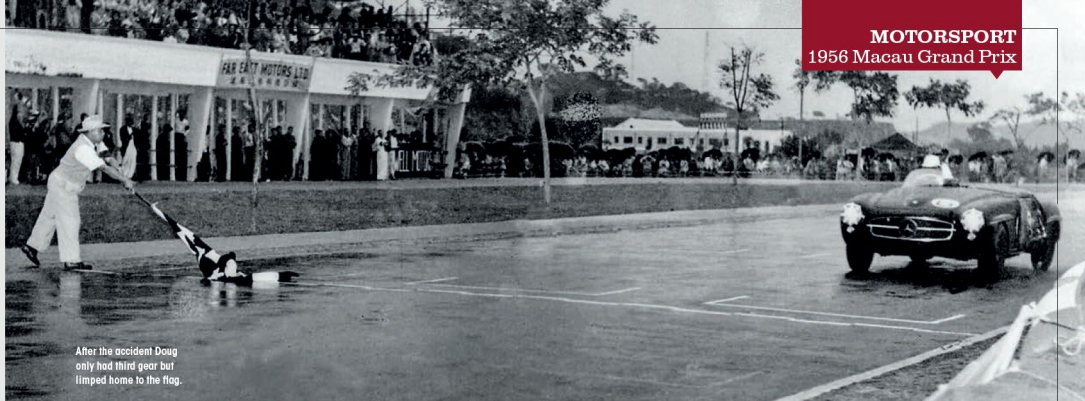
Sulke had a passion for the sport, and also wanted to sell Mercedes-Benzes, and saw racing as a vital sales weapon. It was plain that winning in 1956 was going to demand far greater professionalism. Former Mercedes grand prix driver Karl Kling was now in charge of Daimler-Benz motorsport, and Walter pushed him to supply a car that wouldn't suffer braking or fuel problems.

Two months before the 1956 race, a black right-hand drive 190SL arrived from Stuttgart, and a fortnight before the race, the competition department sent over race mechanic Willie Zoltberger;

**BELOW**  
Doug closes in on the  
Ferrari, which would help  
him win by spinning.







After the accident Doug only had third gear but limped home to the flag.



LEFT Clouting a sentry box after a high-speed spin could not stop Steane winning.

FAR LEFT The Macau street circuit included a long straight section on the seafloor.

Mercedes-Benz was clearly serious about the event. Just how much race preparation had been carried out on the 190SL wasn't revealed, not even to Doug. It felt lighter and had an aluminium bonnet and tonneau cover. Springs and dampers had been changed, and there were special light metal brake drums and extra engine cooling. An additional fuel tank had been fitted, but its positioning did nothing for the handling when it was full. The Continental tyres suited the Mercedes far better than anything that they had tried in 1955. The troublesome fuel tank had been baffled, but it was still allowing fuel surge on tighter bends. The Chinese mechanics, under Willie's careful direction, tore the tank apart and welded in their own baffles, which solved the problem.



**"Just how much preparation had been carried out on the 190SL wasn't revealed, not even to Doug. It felt lighter and had an aluminium bonnet and toneau cover"**

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that keeping the Italian car in sight was good enough. In fact he caught it, and for 15 or 20 laps they had a great scrap, although the Ferrari had the legs on the little 190SL and could always pull out a lead on the straights.

The weather had been threatening, and now a fine drizzle started to come down. On top of the rubber from all the practice and support races, it turned the track into a veritable skid pan. But the 190SL's strongest suit was its handling, and now with good tyres Doug found it a real joy on the track. The 190SL was the first Mercedes to be given the single low-pivot rear suspension, eliminating most of the handling maladies of the potentially wayward 300SL. The roadster loved the wet, and as the rain got heavier Doug took the Ferrari going up the hill past the hospital. Driving on through the terrible conditions, he managed to pull out a whole lap lead, but →

ABOVE INSET This crossing-the-line photo shows the damage of the sentry box shunt.

BELOW The expression of a man who's won a treacherous race against all the odds.

Six days before the race the team took the ship to Macau. Doug didn't see the point in too much testing, as the roads were very dirty, still being open to the public. By the Friday, the track had been swept and Doug got down to practice – and found his times a wake-up call. A Ferrari Mondial was three seconds quicker and both Bob Ritchie in the Healey, and an Aston Martin DB3 were two seconds faster. And for all the added professionalism, he was only two seconds a lap quicker than in 1955. However, as in 1955, Doug made a last-minute qualifying dash and won pole. Moreover, he was happier with the pit signalling, which after input from Kling, former Mercedes team manager Alfred Neubauer and Doug himself, was now more easily read.

Come Sunday and Doug was lined up beside the Ferrari. As the flag dropped, predictably the Ferrari got away first, but this was going to be a long race and Doug wasn't intending to risk too much in the early corners, reckoning



**RIGHT**  
Local dignitaries line up to congratulate Doug on his unexpected race victory.



**ABOVE INSERT**  
In later years Mercedes invited him to Goodwood to try a Macau recreation.



## "Daimler-Benz considered the 190SL too heavy to develop as a racing car, but in his brief period under racing's spotlight, Doug Steane proved it a winner"

⇒ unfortunately he was going to need it.

Braking and changing down at the end of the seafront straight, Doug suddenly found himself going backwards, still doing 65 to 70mph. He spun again and side swiped a sentry box, before coming to a halt in the slip road. On restarting he was horrified to find the gearbox was jammed in third. Back at the pits the body damage was found not to be anything that would prevent him finishing, but the 'box was still stuck in third. Wrenching it out might have resulted in no gears at all, so Doug limped back out to finish the race with only one gear working!

It was frustrating having to carefully watch the rev counter and not over-rev the engine, but the torrential rain was slowing everyone down, and very much to his advantage. It might not have suited the Ferrari, but by now it was catching Doug. Then the Ferrari had an almighty spin, and though the driver recovered it, by the chequered flag he was still a minute adrift – too much to allow the Mercedes to be reeled in.

It had taken over five hours to cover the 77 laps and 300 miles in the atrocious conditions. He had survived a big spin, a crash, body and mechanical damage, but Doug and the 190SL had won the Macau Grand Prix.

**D**aimler Benz considered the 190SL too heavy to be worth developing as a racing car, in spite of it having a brand new overhead-cam engine. But in his brief period under racing's spotlight, Doug Steane proved it to be a race winner. His sole victory came the year after Juan Manuel Fangio, Stirling Moss and others had swept the board with the W196 and grand prix racing and the 300SLR in international sports car events, and after the factory had quit motorsport, and thus struggled to get headlines. Indeed, Daimler-Benz appeared not to know of his victory until informed by its Hong Kong representatives. But if the event lacks appropriate status in Mercedes-Benz motorsport history, it should never be underestimated. **CB**

## After Macau

**It could well have been the start of a star motor racing career, but circumstances dictated otherwise**

**D**oug's race victory led to offers being received from Hong Kong dealers – but nobody was going to get a look in once he had been promised a 300SL drive! In a letter to him after the race, Daimler-Benz said, "We are extending to you our best personal wishes, hoping that you may be able to repeat this splendid performance very often under the three-pointed star."

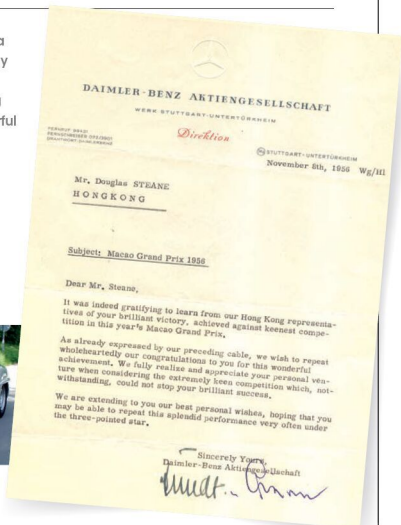
Unfortunately, real life was about to get in the way of Doug's racing career. He had only managed to stay in Hong Kong for so long with the connivance of some senior officers, and now the army wanted to bring him home. Back in the UK, he went racing in a Ford Anglia. A letter from Walter Sulke to Colin Chapman led to a trial at Lotus, and even the offer of a drive.

Unfortunately, Chapman expected all his

drivers to earn their crust racing, and with a young family to support, Doug chose to stay with the security of the army. Then he was posted to Gibraltar, where the closest thing to motor racing was Peter Ustinov's wonderful spoof recording of *The Grand Prix of Gibraltar*. Whenever his postings allowed, Doug remained involved in racing, and on retiring from the army in 1971 took up rallying. In 2004, Doug was finally reunited with the racing 190SL – or at least a recreation of it – when Mercedes-Benz invited him to Goodwood to drive it. This was a long overdue honour, surely.



Doug in 2004 at the wheel of M-B's tribute 190SL racer.







# OH LORD WON'T YOU FIND ME A...



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**T**here are those who look down upon the 190SL. "Not a proper SL," they sniff. "Just a Ponton in pretty clothes," they continue. And what, exactly, is wrong with that? The Ponton might not be glamorous but it drives beautifully. And even the most hard-hearted can't deny the baby SL's beauty. It was certainly enough to captivate 190SL owner Adrian Timothy, who liked them so much that some 15 years ago he bought two. Subsequent investigations into the model's history revealed to him its relatively

unknown competition background, not least a win at the Macau Grand Prix back in 1956 with Englishman Doug Steane at the wheel, which planted the seed of an idea.

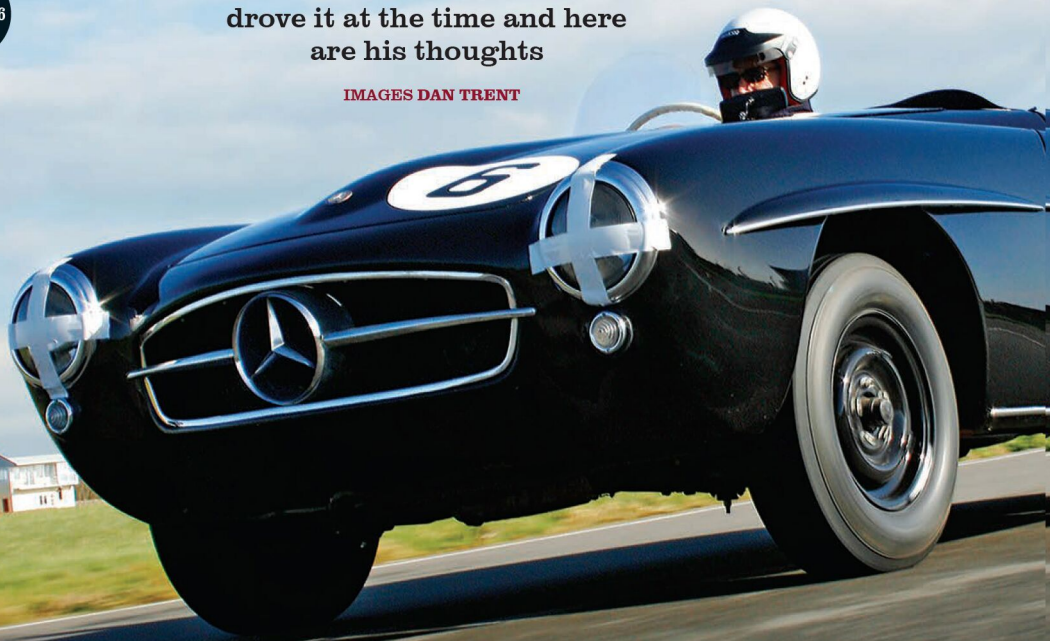
Now even the most ardent 190SL fan isn't going to count blistering performance among its talents. But the fact it had actually won the famous Macau street race was more than inspiration enough for Adrian to look at building a racier garage mate for his existing SL. Contact was made with Doug Steane, who was living in Herefordshire, and a meeting organised with Brian Gunney of Redcastle Classics, the Cardiff-based 190SL specialist who restored Adrian's silver SL. At the time, Brian also ran a 190SL race replica

# Good copy

**In 2008, a 190SL specialist built a lookalike of the 190SL that Doug Steane drove to victory in the 1956 Macau Grand Prix. Several years later, following a club racing career, it was turned back into a road car, but Dan Trent drove it at the time and here are his thoughts**

**IMAGES DAN TRENT**

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of his own, with cut-down doors and an aero screen inspired by the little-known club sport options pack offered for the first year of the 190SL's production life.

**T**he first challenge was to find out exactly what the Mercedes-Benz competition department had done to Doug's car, before shipping it to Hong Kong ahead of the Macau race. Information was sketchy, with even the usually thorough Mercedes archives unable to shed official light on the matter. After much hunting, Adrian suddenly hit pay dirt – a memo, reproduced in a book about the 190SL, detailing some of the mods fitted ➔

**“The first challenge was to find out exactly what Mercedes-Benz had done to Doug's car, before shipping it to Hong Kong ahead of the Macau race”**



**ABOVE LEFT**  
Some of the beauty of the replica was the recreation of the original's detailing.

**LEFT**  
A shortened lever vastly improved the precision and speed of the gearshift.

**BELOW**  
It's reckoned the M121 motor gave about 130bhp, against the stock 104bhp.

**BOTTOM**  
Maybe not the quickest sports car racer ever, but surely one of the prettiest.



⇒ to the Macau racer. Now all they needed was a car.

After a long search, Brian found a suitable candidate – a 1957 right-hooker that was on only its second owner. It had an MOT – just – but hadn't moved for a while. Predictably, pulling the car apart revealed a slightly larger job than everyone had anticipated. "It looked OK when we first got it," Adrian recalled, "but once we got the panels off it was like lace underneath."

**I**n the end, all the exterior panels were replaced and new floor panels welded in. The cut down, windowless doors were hand-beaten from aluminium, using drawings scaled up from the photos of Doug's original car. Mechanically, the decision was made early on to remain as faithful as possible to the original. Various racy 190SLs existed at the time, but few owners had resisted the temptation for more power and as a result many used bored out versions of the later five-bearing M121 engine. Great fun, but hardly authentic.

"Reliability was the priority," said Brian. "So we fitted a later engine from a 1959 car which has a slightly stronger

**"Even at a gentle canter it was a real laugh, the engine willing and smooth, and the shortened gearlever adding a more racy quality."**



**RIGHT**  
This is of course the racing number allocated to Doug Steane for the Macau race.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
It was a race replica, but compliant with motorsport safety equipment regs.



This photo is from 2009: Adrian's first drive of the replica.





LEFT  
The interior was much the same as a standard 190SL – but so was the GP car's.

RIGHT  
Gillian Goldsmith raced the 190SL in 2009/2010, seen here at Silverstone.



## What happened next...

The 190SL embarked on its club racing career, albeit a short-lived one, Tim French reports

With the 190SL looking fabulous and ready to race, Adrian's next move was to recruit Gillian Goldsmith, who had raced in saloon car production events for Ford in the 1970s, to drive the 190SL in various historic events around UK circuits in 2009 and 2010. To some extent, this experience mirrored the mid-1950s in that the 190SL simply wasn't sufficiently competitive to bag silverware.

"We took it very seriously, and it wasn't cheap!" Adrian said. "We

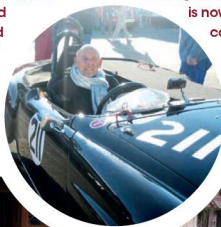
always finished and we were never last, but we were always down the field. Doug won in the wet in 1956 because the car handled beautifully, and our best results were in the wet too. But we stopped because we knew we'd never be competitive."

Adrian retained the 190SL in its racing form, but one New Year's Day decided its fate. "It was a

sunny, bright day and I decided to take my wife out for a run in it," he explained. "But it was so cold that I knew I wasn't going to be able to take her out in it again, so I decided to turn it back into a road car again."

The race modifications were carefully reversed and Adrian used the 190SL as a classic tourer, which after the work looked like any other stunning restoration, with nothing from its previous life evident. This was exactly what had happened to the replica that Brian had built for himself, as he was unable to sell it as it was, and once put back to standard it easily passed on to a new owner. "We sold it only last year, we must have done 30,000 miles in it, it's a wonderful touring car," Adrian said. The 190SL

is now with an owner who can enjoy it for the classic roadster it is – and also, thanks to Doug Steane having driven it, albeit briefly, as a car with a genuine link to motorsport history.



RIGHT INSET  
At Hotel de France at La Chatre sur le Loir, an old Le Mans driver's haunt.

RIGHT  
Here, the 'post-Macau' 190SL was accompanied by Alan Jones' silver car.

FAR RIGHT  
At Oulton Park Circuit Sir Stirling Moss found time to try the 190SL for size.



block. We got two Weber 40s and we skimmed the block and head a little, which raised compression slightly but is as much to ensure it seals properly." Once run in, Brian was hoping for a horsepower count of "around 130-ish."

Accepting that extra pace was never going to come solely from the engine, Brian put the SL on a strict diet. "By stripping out what we didn't need we have improved the power to weight ratio by other means," he told us. And without a hood, conventional windscreen, side windows and other fripperies the SL certainly lost a bit of excess baggage. Other modifications included a free-flow exhaust, although the original side-exiting version similar to that on Doug's original car was abandoned. "It was just too noisy," Brian was forced to admit, "and we couldn't get decent back pressure either."

The inaugural outing of the replica racer took place in March 2008 at Llandow circuit near Cardiff. Even with the modifications, there was no escaping the fact this 190SL wasn't the fastest racing car in the world. But under the bright winter sunshine on a blustery morning in Wales it could win a prize for being one of the most beautiful.

Stripped of bumpers, screen and hub caps, it managed to look both delicate and purposeful, and the huge grin across Adrian's face as Brian carefully backed it off the trailer told all you needed to know about its owner's delight in seeing his dream made real.

A delightful addition to the party was Doug Steane himself, the sight of a near perfect recreation of his race car instantly transporting him back half a century. Nobody there seemed to mind the biting wind and all were keen to assist with the task of running in the newly-built engine. It would not be going above 3,500rpm for the time being, but nobody was any the less excited for it.

Brian and his son Simon had burnt the midnight oil to get the car completed on schedule, and it fired first time and settled down to a rock-solid idle, all the gauges reporting healthy readings. Simon went out for a quick shakedown, and after a few laps declared himself happy and from there an orderly queue quickly formed. Adrian's generosity was astounding, and he seemed to take genuine pleasure from just seeing the car lapping the

**"The race modifications were carefully reversed, and Adrian continued using the 190SL, which looked like a stunning restoration, with nothing from its previous life evident"**



## Specifications

### Mercedes-Benz 190SL Roadster (W121)

ENGINE M121 1,897cc 4-cyl  
POWER 104bhp@5,700rpm  
TORQUE 105lb ft@3,300rpm  
TRANSMISSION 4-speed manual  
WEIGHT 1,140kg  
0-62MPH 14.5sec  
TOP SPEED 106-112mph  
FUEL CONSUMPTION 32.9mpg  
YEARS PRODUCED 1955-1963  
NUMBER BUILT 25,881

All figures from Mercedes-Benz,  
for a standard 190SL

⇒ track. Indeed, it was a battle to get him to accept his turn at the wheel, but the grin on his face when he did summed up his emotions.

**A**nd then it was my turn. Sticking to the rev limit was tough, the little SL keen to press on. But even at a gentle canter it was a real laugh, the engine willing and smooth, and the shortened gear lever adding a racier quality. The big, spindly wheel looked a bit incongruous, but the nose

responded sharply and with none of the slack that can affect 190SLs. Most of all, the car was just lots of fun.

Discussion in the pits led to a consensus that firmer springs, especially at the back, wouldn't go amiss, but other than that there was nothing but praise. And as Doug himself told Adrian during their discussions about the project, the reason he was able to beat a Ferrari in his

Macau win was all down to the SL's handling, which he reckoned was superior to a Gullwing he was later able to test on an airfield circuit in Hong Kong. For this you can thank the 190's low pivot swing-axle rear suspension, a design adopted for the 300SL Roadster that it later partnered in the Mercedes range.

Once it was run in – a job Doug offered to assist with – Adrian's plan for his 190SL was to use it in anger, be that for some trackdays or for events like the Cloth Cap Masters series for pre-1966 front engined sports cars. Most of all he was keen that Doug should receive the recognition he deserved for his outstanding victory in Macau, not to mention draw attention to the 190SL's little known moment of motorsport glory. Given his racer's stunning looks, he had just the tool to achieve both aims!

⇒ Thanks to Llandow Circuit Tel 01446 796460  
Web [www.llandow.com](http://www.llandow.com)



**ABOVE**  
The 190SL lacked serious power but on track it was a lovely, well balanced car.

**LEFT**  
13-inch steel wheels minus their factory hubcaps, as at Macau.

**BELOW LEFT**  
It was decided to replace the possibly troublesome Solex carbs with Webers.

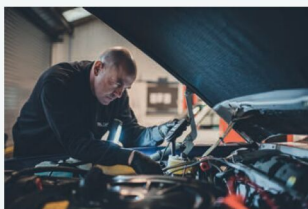
**FAR LEFT**  
L/R: Brian Gunney, Adrian Timothy and Doug Steane at Llandow Circuit, 2008.



## SLSHOP HEALTH CHECK

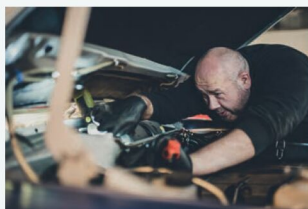
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Developed exclusively for the R107, W113 and R129 SL, our comprehensive Health Check and consultancy is an industry leading service that cannot be found anywhere else. This Health Check is a comprehensive review of your car, which takes place on the ramps, in our service bay and out on the road. A Health Check is more than just a status report, it's a chance for you to really examine your car and your future plans. It gives reassurance for you and the car, an opportunity to discuss your intended direction with an impartial expert. For customers who have recently acquired an SL, whether as part of an inheritance, from an auction or from any other source it's a great opportunity to really understand exactly what is sitting in your garage. Our consultancy platform provides a structured approach for the next steps in your SL journey. Many fine restorations have started with a Health Check, but we've also saved customers from investing money in the wrong areas or in the wrong car entirely.



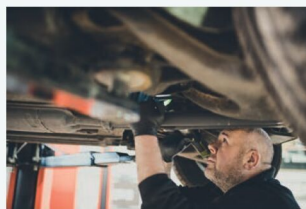
#### COMPLETE HEALTH CHECK

Our industry leading Health Check is specific to the SL, designed to give you a full and complete report on the wellbeing of your classic car. A great place to start if you have recently purchased a car or are about to embark on a programme of restoration.



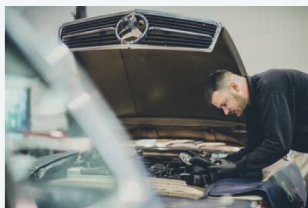
#### BULKHEAD CHECK

The bulkhead is arguably the one area on your car that has the potential to produce the largest bills. This Bulkhead Health Check aims to reveal the true extent of any bulkhead corrosion hidden within your SL, and form a road map to rectify the issue.



#### STRUCTURAL CHECK

Our Complete Structural Check combines the Under Body Check with the Bulkhead Check giving a comprehensive picture of the condition of all metalwork beneath and inside your SL.



#### ENGINE CHECK

Chasing misfires, leaks, wobbles and squeaks results in frustration and confusion. By performing a complete Engine Health Check, you will be provided with the best possible information on the health of your engine, from top to bottom.



#### BRAKE CHECK

A complete report on your entire braking system, putting you in the best possible position to make a decision on what to do next to improve your SL. We work through each area of the system, from the sole of your shoe to the disc itself.



#### UNDERBODY CHECK

Our Underbody Check is designed to give a full report on the integrity of a car, covering the all-important metalwork and mounting points from front to back.

Perfect for getting an understanding of your SL



**MAIN IMAGE**  
The W202 equalled the E-Class in almost every respect apart from size.

**RIGHT INSET**  
Of the four trim levels offered, Elegance was for the 'mature' buyer.

# Stepping up

The 'baby Benz' W201 190 saloon proved that Mercedes' return to the 'small' car market in 1982 was a good move. **Tim French** explains how that model's success was consolidated and expanded by the original, 1993 C-Class

IMAGES Mercedes-Benz Group AG

**B**y the late 1980s, Mercedes-Benz was clearly top of the pile in the volume prestige sector, and the Stuttgart car maker was achieving production of 500,000 to 600,000 per year. But top management concluded that things at Stuttgart had to change; in the light of motor industry consolidation, those production figures no longer looked so reassuring, and now that Lexus had established a bridgehead in the luxury sector with the engineered-to-perfection-at-any-cost LS400, it was clear that Japanese manufacturers were no longer content to supply only value-for-money cars in the lower/medium market.

Mercedes thus decided to make more, and more varied



**ABOVE INSET**  
The Esprit pack meant a fancier interior finishing and lowered suspension.

**BELOW**  
It was the same size as the 190E on the outside, but had more cabin space.





**"THE W202 CAME IN A VARIETY OF TRIMS, A MOVE MANY THOUGHT RISKED RUFLING MERCEDES CUSTOMERS' FEATHERS, IT BEING THE KIND OF THING FORD WOULD DO"**



**FAR LEFT**  
A subtly upswep tail helped maximise the C-Class's boot capacity.

**LEFT & TOP LEFT INSET**  
Early models ranged from the base 1.8-litre C180 up to the 3.6-litre C36 AMG.



**ABOVE**  
Some vivid colours were available but most cars were soberly upholstered.

**RIGHT**  
Repositioning of major components gave the W202 a bigger interior.

motorcars, and at a reduced cost. It also sensed that buyer's preferences were changing and that the company had to lessen its dependency the loyalty of an ageing customer base. The first model to appear under the 'strategic product initiative' was the 202-series, the original C-Class, launched 30 years ago, replacing the W201 190E after a highly successful 11-year run, which saw nearly 1.9 million built.

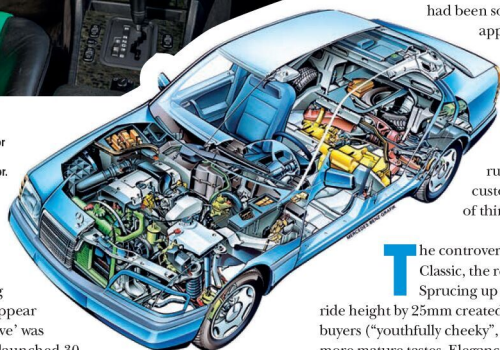
The design of the 202 series had to be not just elegant, but with a timeless quality as well, Mercedes felt. "The first C-Class was intended to appeal to a broad public, with a sleek, aesthetic and timeless form," Professor Peter Pfeiffer, Head of Design from 1999 to 2008, explained at the time. "It fitted naturally into the design idiom of the brand. Its success showed that this consolidation, which was planned from the beginning, was the right way to go."

In size and configuration, the C-Class was a direct replacement for the W201, but there were far reaching differences, not least increased interior space. "We responded to the fact that the central European population was growing year by year," said Professor Hermann Gaus, head of overall vehicle development at the

time. More interior space with scarcely larger external dimensions was achieved on the one hand by the arrangement of components such as the engine, axles and transmission. Rethinking and relocating the fuel tank alone brought considerable advantages: a plastic tank was used for the first time, which was light, freely formable and located under the rear bench seat ahead of the rear axle, instead of behind the rear seat as in the 190, therefore it was possible to move the rear bench seat back slightly for increased space. Boot capacity also increased over the W201.

For the C-Class range, Mercedes adopted a radical new presentation of trim and equipment. Hitherto, models had been sold with a sole level of

appointments, buyers who wished more dipping into a lengthy (and expensive) options list. But the W202 came with a variety of badges and exterior/interior trims, a move many thought risked ruffling traditional Mercedes customers' feathers, it being the kind of thing Ford and Vauxhall would do.



**BELOW INSET**  
1994 saw the S202 estate added, an elegant wagon that proved very popular.

**RIGHT**  
The Baden-Württemberg police force found the C-Class estate very useful.

The controversial trim hierarchy started at Classic, the regular Benz austerity package. Sprucing up the interior and dropping the ride height by 25mm created the Esprit to draw in younger buyers ("youthfully cheeky", said Mercedes), while for the more mature tastes, Elegance ("formally elegant") meant extra chrome and interior wood trim. Sport models ("dynamically technical") ran the Esprit's lowered suspension but with stiffer springs, and alloy wheels as standard.

Time proved, however, that customers liked the new approach. "We succeeded in appealing to an even broader public with these lines," explained Professor Pfeiffer. →





**RIGHT INSET**

Overall, the W202 felt a more 'grown up' car than the 190E it replaced.

**RIGHT**

With its Bruno Sacco stablemates, the W124 and W140 S-Class.

⇒ "With Esprit and Sport, we were able to convince buyers who found the design of the W202 too staid." The Classic and Elegance lines each accounted for one third of vehicles delivered, Esprit and Sport making up the remainder.

At first the engine line-up, other than for the 280E, wasn't appealing, with uninspiring four-cylinder petrol units and sluggish diesels. But that would change within months with the arrival of the C36 AMG, one of the first Affalterbach-enhanced models that have been a part of the Mercedes-Benz range ever since.

**T**he mid-1990s saw Stuttgart buck an industry trend and offer a punchy if not especially refined supercharged engine, and also a 2.5-litre turbocharged diesel that meant opting for an oil burning C-Class no longer condemned you to snail-like performance. And following the mid-term, 1997 facelift, buyers had every reason to think, 'Why buy an E-Class?', because the entry-level Mercedes was now pretty well matching its skill set in every respect bar size. The sporty but quite raucous six-cylinder C36 AMG had given way to the C43 with its sweet, torquey M113 V8 that would become the bedrock of AMG performance.

Early on in the design phase of the W202, which began in 1986, the Board of Management of the then Daimler-Benz AG also decided to develop an estate with the in-house designation S202. This was launched in 1996, and was the first wagon in the compact class. If the C-Class saloon was conservatively styled (under Bruno Sacco's direction, as was the W201), the S202 estate added the year before the revamp was considered one of the prettiest estate cars, and being available with everything from a 1.8-litre to the AMG V8 petrol engine, and various diesels too (including the world's first direct-injection diesel, the 2.1-litre OM611 CDI), it was no wonder Mercedes built almost quarter of a million of them in four years.

The 202-series unfortunately fell victim to rust, widely attributed to a switch to water-based paint, and mostly as a result of this the model is now something of a rarity, numbers fading much more quickly than was the case with the W201. But this should not detract from what it did for its maker during a seven-year production life, which incidentally saw Stuttgart move into small cars and SUVs with the A-Class and M-Class.

It helped broaden Mercedes' sales base, competitive pricing and discounts giving it appearances in the UK's top 10 sellers, as an attractive and affordable option for 'Mondeo man'. It also brought the compact Benz a little closer to being a convincing rival to the BMW




**"IT HELPED BROADEN MERCEDES' SALES BASE, DISCOUNTS GIVING IT APPEARANCES IN THE UK'S TOP 10 SELLERS, AS AN OPTION FOR 'MONDEO MAN'"**



3-Series, which hitherto had the compact sporty saloon market sewn up; it would be the 202's successor, the 203-series or perhaps even the 204-series after that which finally proved that Mercedes could build such a motorcar.

**F**or Mercedes' numbers-boosting ambition, the first C-Class did its job. Some 1.6 million saloons and estates were made, less than the W201 total but in a build period four years shorter.

The classic car market is beginning to pay tribute to the 202-series. The AMG pair have enjoyed moderate modern collector status for some years, and more recently other models, notable the C280, are showing signs that they are now more than simply old cars. Having passed the 30-year mark, the first W202s now qualify for Germany's classic H-plate registration, which confers some tax concessions, and that can be expected to boost its collectability a little. Very welcome – the 202-series C-Class certainly does not deserve the fate of 'forgotten' Mercedes. 

**★**  
**Headlines of 1993**

★ Following his departure from the Williams team after taking the 1992 F1 title, Nigel Mansell won the Carl series championship in the US. His Williams successor, Alain Prost, won the 1993 F1 title, in the active suspension FW15C.

★ Customers who in 1988 had eagerly signed contracts to buy the Jaguar XJ220 (below), but were having second thoughts about fulfilling the £470,000 purchase as recession took hold, received writs from the Coventry car maker.

★ The UK's Conservative government reacted with relief to news that Britain's economy grew by 0.2 per cent in the first three months of this year, and declared the longest recession since the 1930s officially over. But the Tories still lost the 1997 election.

★ The public was allowed inside Buckingham Palace for the first time, for £8 entrance, while The Queen was at her Scottish residence, Balmoral. The cash would help pay the £40 million cost of restoring the fire-damaged Windsor Castle.

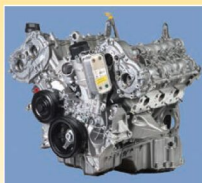
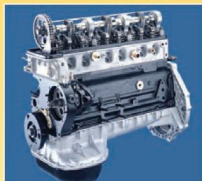
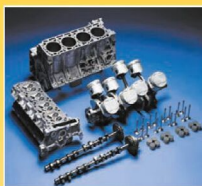
★ A mission to repair the faulty Hubble telescope in space was successful after astronauts completed a record five space walks. Jeff Hoffman and Story Musgrave spent over seven hours unravelling the 40ft solar panels powering Hubble.



**ABOVE**  
Writs concerning the Jaguar XJ220 flow around in '93.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
The C-Class facelift felt more styled than the W201's.





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LUXURY COUPE  
500SEC

# *Delivering the* **dream**

Although he's bought and sold almost more Mercs than he's had hot dinners, **Reed Hitchcock** has finally purchased the car he's admired and wanted to own since in short trousers

IMAGES  
Reed Hitchcock /  
Mike Kunz





RIGHT  
Reed's face tells us that  
buying the 500SEC was a  
boyhood dream come true.

People use (and misuse) the phrase “love at first sight” far too often, and normally in the context of physical attraction to another person. Truth be told, I liked my wife of nearly 27 years at first sight, but I didn’t love her until she demonstrated her prowess with a manual transmission. But I digress. There are very few cars I’ve fallen for at first glance, and fewer still that I ever had a hope of owning. I truly love the Ferrari 330GTC, the early Jaguar E-Type roadster, and the original Mazda Cosmo, but none of those will ever likely grace my driveway.

The 126-series Mercedes S-Class coupe has long been on that same list, but timing was never right: either I had the money but couldn’t find the right car, or the car was right in front of me and either the money was lacking or practical considerations prevailed. I even bought one once – a late 560SEC in 040 Black



Leaving the M-B Classic  
Center in California, bound  
for a home in Virginia.



*“Photos in  
contemporary  
car magazines just  
didn’t do this sweet  
machine justice,  
because in the metal  
the new SEC was  
downright exotic”*

**RIGHT**  
Would Reed like to buy a nice Euro-spec 500SEC, the Classic Center asked.

## Specifications

### Mercedes-Benz 500SEC (C126)

Engine M117 4,973cc V8

Power 228bhp@4,750rpm

Torque 298lb ft@3,000rpm

Transmission 4-speed automatic

Weight 1,610kg

0-62mph 8.1sec

Top speed 141mph

Fuel consumption 23.2mpg

Years produced 1981-1991

Number built 30,184

All figures from Mercedes-Benz: figures for a pre-September 1985 facelift car



⇒ over palomino leather – but it was a fright pig of a car with rust, a sagging headliner, a leaky exhaust manifold, troublesome self-levelling rear suspension and, well, you get the picture. In all fairness to the car, it had around 200,000 pretty hard miles on it, and still started and ran every time. It was a functional car, but it was never going to be the pride of any collection. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I vividly remember when the 126 S-Class saloon was released. It was a black long-wheelbase model perched on the showroom stand previously occupied by a black 116-series. It was so sleek, so modern. In 1980 it looked like nothing else on the road, yet still unmistakably a Mercedes-Benz. Over the next year or so, executives, hotel fleets, and possible gangsters in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong my family called home at the time all replaced their suddenly

**ABOVE**  
Previously, this was the closest that Reed had got to a pre-facelift 500SEC.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
Velour was quite common on early SECs; this one also has nice Coco Mats.

**BELOW**  
Stored at the Classic Center in Long Beach, with the Hitchcock name on it.

antiquated 116s with the new stunner. In short order, 126s were all over our small island colony and, at the ripe old age of 10, I vowed to have one someday.

Then, one sunny day in early 1982 as I sat outside my sister's preschool, I saw it in all of its resplendent glory. Photos in contemporary car magazines just didn't do this sweet machine justice, because in the metal the new SEC was downright exotic. This one was a 500SEC that belonged to an uptight preschool mother – looking every bit the part of *Dallas* star Sue Ellen Ewing – and was (retrospectively a rather unfortunate) white over palomino tan leather. Nonetheless, I was rendered speechless by a stunning coupe that elevated the sleekness of the saloon to a whole new level. Not only did it have a chic pillarless hardtop roofline but, oh, those space-age *Battlestar Galactica*-esque robotic seat belt presenters! I mean, the newly revealed SEC made everything else look absolutely archaic in comparison.

Shortly after that first encounter, Tamiya released a plastic



www.classicmercedesmagazine.com







scale-model 500SEC, and I bought one in short order. I finished it just like the picture on the box, which was the same as the car in the factory brochure I'd sweet talked the main dealer salesman out of: silver on blue. As a tween, I figured that model was likely to be about as close as I'd ever come to having an SEC of my own – after all, it was the top of the line for one of the most prestigious car makes in the world. Admittedly, I was a little less in tune with basic economics and the principles of aging in those days.

Fast forward several years, and I contemplated buying a C126 SEC when I graduated from university. I wasn't making a lot of money, however, and I'd observed first-hand how much Mercedes maintenance could cost as my parents nursed their W126 300SD through middle age. So I bought what I thought would be a reasonable substitute: a 1988 Acura (Honda) Legend Coupe. It was a great looking car, and somewhat fun to drive despite its front-wheel drive configuration. But it was no SEC. It was not a true hardtop, it didn't have a V8, and it just didn't have the solidity of the Mercedes-Benz. Valiant effort, but it didn't quite make the

***"It had been delivered new in Switzerland, and lived a coddled life. It wears 96,200km, or 60,000 miles"***

grade. I eventually sold it after two years and not insignificant upkeep costs, telling myself that for what that car had cost me I should've gone with the SEC. We live and learn.

**T**he next few decades brought a flurry of children and other priorities. It's no secret around here that I've bought and sold a lot of Mercedes over the years, but very few of them had less than four doors, and even fewer cost more than about US\$5,000. Sure, as time has gone by my budget has increased: partly due to inflation, but thankfully I also make a little more money these days than I did at 22. I've had the chance to dabble in some interesting cars and have really liked many of them, but there always seems to be a reason to move on. Maybe it has a little rust, too many miles to be a real collector car, or my kids won't be caught dead in it. Whatever the reason at the moment, it's mostly about my quest to own one of everything. That said, I'm a lot more inclined to hold onto a car that is unique, offers real collector interest, and/or that my family likes to boot.

And that's where the car pictured came in. Literally within days of making the tough decision to sell my perfectly good yet high mileage R107 560SL, I received this text message from Mike Kunz, long-serving Director of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in California: "Do you have any interest in a low-mileage, European-spec 500SEC?" Mike sent some basic photographs, and imparted, "It just drives so smoothly. It's easily one of the nicest 126s I've ever driven! Honestly, if you don't buy it, I might have to!"

It was the 126-series SEC I'd always wanted, right down to that silver on blue velour. It was an early 500SEC, meaning it had the pre-1985 facelift ribbed body side cladding and baroque-style Bundt, or Mexican hat alloy wheels – both of which I prefer, being the original design. As a true



**ABOVE LEFT**  
We don't know if Reed's the caravan type, but the Merc has a factory towbar.

**LEFT**  
At just 60,000 miles it'll be a long time before the big V8 starts burning oil.

⇒ European specification car, it also had a non-catalyst engine, had the proper height-adjustable flush headlights, and some other interesting features from the options list, including heated seats with lumbar support, a factory tow bar, manual air conditioning and headlight wipers.

A European car imported through the US 'grey market' during the 1980s would have been 'federalised', possibly to a mediocre standard, meaning it was brought into US Department of Transportation compliance with items such as sealed-beam headlights, reflector tail lights, miles per hour speedometer, and even cobbled together bits like steel reinforcements added haphazardly to bumpers and doors. This particular car, however, had been imported quite recently, in 2018, and once a car is more than 25 years old it can be imported as it sits. That means this car is a true, unmolested, as-Bruno Sacco-intended 1980s C126 500SEC.

**T**he car had been in stock at the Mercedes-Benz Classic Centre, in Fellbach's short-lived All Time Stars programme that sold excellent examples of classic Mercedes cars through a retail setting. The buyer was an American from Florida who worked with the Classic Center in Long Beach to bring the car stateside and get it through all of the importation paperwork. It came with all of the original books, including full dealer service history stamps and even the

**ABOVE RIGHT**

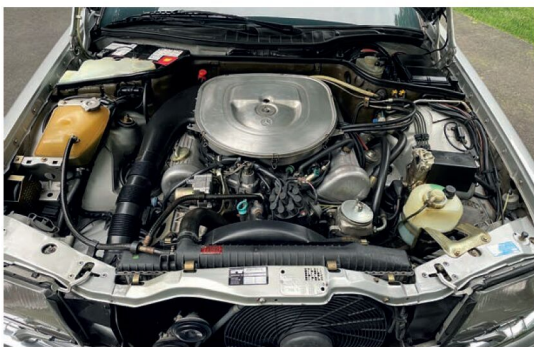
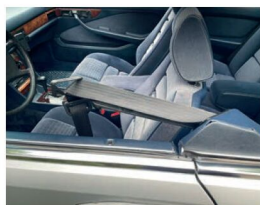
Classic instrument style, although the 'economy' meter is a waste of space.

**ABOVE FAR RIGHT**

Seat belt 'butterfly' were an SEC feature that amazed the young Reed in 1982.

**BELOW RIGHT**

The M117 two-valve 5.0 is just one of the loveliest Mercedes V8s ever built.



**50** *"This is the dream SEC of my youth. Add that it's nice enough to be a proper collector car, but also with enough mileage that I'm not afraid to drive it"*





**LEFT**  
Less rear cabin space than in the 126 saloon, but it's still a luxury environment.

original build sheet. It had been delivered new in Switzerland and had clearly lived a very coddled life. Today it wears a scant 96,200km, or about 60,000 miles.


The owner then decided that he preferred the later US-specification 560SEC, due to the styling changes, and the 500's smellier non-catalyst exhaust. The Classic Center had even fitted a new stainless steel exhaust, but the owner ultimately opted for an essentially new 560SEC with just 9,000 miles and traded this one back to the Classic Center.

Back to Mike's question: I contemplated it for a hot minute, and then my mother passed away unexpectedly. That meant all my available mental capacity was spent on family matters. I told Mike that I was reluctantly going to have to pass for now, but that if things settled down and the Classic Center still had the car, I might be interested in a few months' time.

**A**nd that's exactly what happened. The Classic Center took care of a few small niggles like a non-functional driver's seat heater, a worn bootlid badge, and an aerial that only went halfway up. I sent them a remarkably reasonable bank transfer, and they put the car on a truck to make the cross-country trek from California to Virginia.

Of course, things are rarely as easy as they should be, especially when you're boiling over with anticipation. The transporter suffered no less than three breakdowns and a routing that took them through New York City, where they finally gave up on that truck and sent a replacement all the way from California to complete the delivery. What should have taken four days took 26, but all I could think when it arrived was that the previous owner's loss was most definitely my gain, although I like to think we both got what we wanted.

After dozens of cars over dozens of years, this car is the dream SEC of my youth. Add that it's nice enough to be a proper collector car, but also with enough mileage on it so that I'm not afraid to drive it. It gets comments at every fuel stop, and nothing beats the feeling of opening the windows and sunroof on a crisp morning, turning on the heater and the heated seats, and meandering along the B-roads.

Although it's not bad on the highway with the windows up and the aircon on, either! Will it be a keeper? That of course remains to be seen. But if I'm smart, the Benz will stay. 

## C126 SEC: world favourite

Built for 10 years, it was a top seller to the very end, Tim French explains



**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The ultimate C126 is the 1985-launched 560SEC, which was a big seller...

**RIGHT**  
...whereas the 'small' V8 models, the 380 and 420, made only small volumes.

**BELOW**  
Reed's C126 brochure has waited for many years to join his real life 500SEC.

**M**ercedes' first post-war luxury coupe was the W188 300S launched in 1951, but the large pillarless format arrived a decade later with the W111 220SE Coupe. The 126-series coupe is a descendent of that model, although a break in the succession occurred in 1971 when Stuttgart opted to replace the W111 two-door, by then evolved into 280SE 3.5 form, with the SLC based on the 107-series SL roadster. This was because a model based on the forthcoming 116 S-Class saloon would have meant no luxury coupe for two years.

The saloon-based coupe returned with the 126 SEC in 1981, and Mercedes reaped the rewards of building an uncompromised,

king-of-the-road coupe: just over 76,000 were delivered until production ceased in October 1991, nearly 11,200 up on the SLC. The C126 also outsold the coupe that replaced it, the poorly received 140-series, by almost three times, and even the lithe and likeable C215 CL coupe which took over in 1999 trailed C126 sales by some 26,000 units.

Most C126 customers avoided the smaller V8s, the 380SEC and 420SEC, which between them found fewer than 15,000 customers. The top seller was the 500SEC with 30,200 sales, but arguably the 560SEC was the more popular choice, because although slightly fewer were sold, its 28,900 sales were concentrated into six years rather than the 500SEC's 10.



BELOW

The 600 was conceived as the 1960s equivalent of the '30s 770 Grosse.

FAR RIGHT

Early designs envisaged a car more like the 1951 300 than what emerged.

RIGHT

Mercedes tech boss Fritz Nallinger was key in defining the 600 mission.



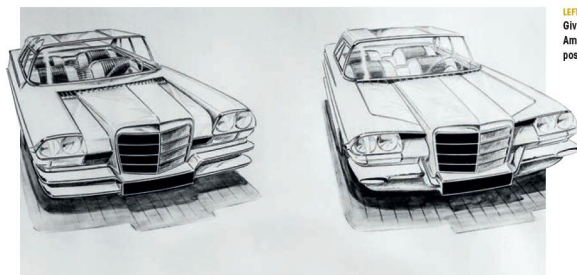
# ROAD KING

The high watermark of post-war Mercedes-Benz engineering and design was, arguably, 1963. At the Geneva motor show in March, the stunning W113 SL 'Pagoda' was unveiled, and six months later at the Frankfurt show the W100 600 made its debut. **Tim French** delves into the Mercedes-Benz archive to bring its full story

IMAGES Mercedes-Benz Group AG







**LEFT**  
Giving the 600 a full on American flavour was a possibility considered.



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**"The 600 held its position  
as the international  
benchmark for limousine  
design for almost two  
decades, until production  
ended in 1981 after 17 years"**

**T**HE PUBLICITY HEADLINE FOR THE NEW MERCEDES-BENZ LIMOUSINE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MORE ASSERTIVE AND CLEAR: "THE 'GRAND MERCEDES' 600 - THE EXCLUSIVE VEHICLE OF GREAT PRESTIGE," IT READ. WITH THIS DESCRIPTION, THE 1963 PRESS RELEASE FOR THE PREMIERE OF THE MERCEDES-BENZ 600 POSITIONED THE VEHICLE, WITH INTERNAL MODEL SERIES DESIGNATION W100, AT THE VERY FRONT OF THE TOP GROUP OF MOTORCARS WORLDWIDE. AND 60 YEARS AGO, THE DOCUMENT WENT ON TO SAY, "MERCEDES-BENZ CONTINUES THE COMPANY'S PRE-WAR TRADITION OF BEING REPRESENTED IN THE SMALL GROUP OF THE WORLD'S SENSATIONAL PRESTIGE CARS WITH A LUXURIOUSLY EQUIPPED AUTOMOBILE THAT IS EXTREMELY SAFE TO DRIVE." IT WAS A VEHICLE OF ENORMOUS ACCOMPLISHMENT, LAUNCHED WITH ENORMOUS PRIDE WITHIN STUTTGART.

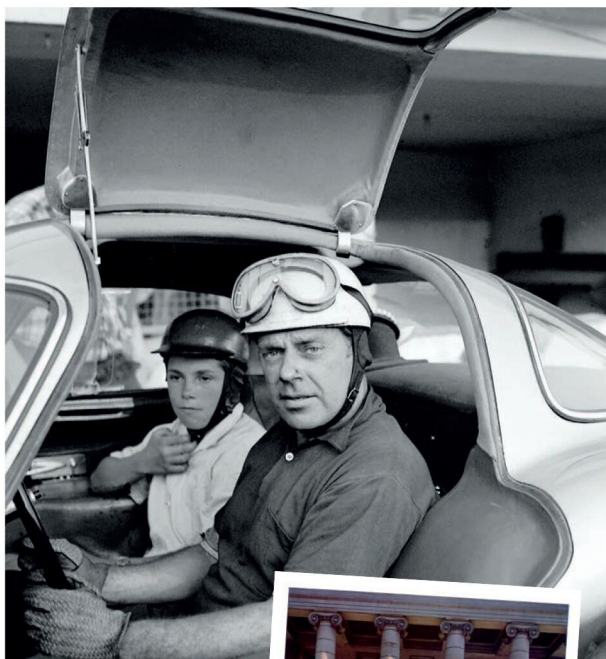
The 600 held its position as the international benchmark for limousine design for almost two decades, until production ended in 1981 after 17 years. What was its longevity due to? Outstanding technology, exquisite comfort, excellent handling and a more than impressive appearance. In other words, perfection. Buyers of the prestige limousine came from all over the world. They included royalty, heads of state (including a few who answered the description of 'dictator') industry chiefs and and those who'd done especially well in show business.

The W100s were produced in the Sindelfingen factory alongside other models, and Mercedes-Benz was happy

to accept individual and unusual customer requests, provided they didn't change the basic character of the car or compromise safety. This gave each of the 2,677 Mercedes-Benz 600s built, 487 of them the extended-wheelbase Pullman version, the character of a unique model. A high proportion survive and all are collectors' items, values ranging dramatically according to condition and the fame or infamy of the original owner.

**H**IGHLY PRESTIGIOUS CARS ARE OF COURSE DEEPLY ROOTED IN MERCEDES-BENZ HISTORY, DATING RIGHT BACK THE ORIGINS OF THE BRAND, ONE EARLY EXAMPLE BEING THE MERCEDES-SIMPLEX 40HP PRESENTED IN 1903. The top model of this time exists in the Mercedes-Benz Classic collection as a very special exhibit: as an elegant and luxurious touring car from the estate of Emil Jellinek, who shaped and decisively influenced the early days of the Mercedes brand, not only by giving it its name.

In the years that followed, the sales programme of the separate Mercedes and Benz brands always included



**BELOW INSET**

Befitting the 600's grand status, a star badge 20 per cent bigger was fitted.

**ABOVE**

No facts, no figures in this ad - just making it clear who'll be buying the 600.

several models at the top of the prestige stakes. Daimler-Benz AG, created in 1926 by the merger of these two car makers, continued this tradition, most notably with the W07/W150 770 Grosser Mercedes launched in 1930 and

made until Daimler-Benz switched from passenger car to full-time military production in 1943.

From 1951, following the







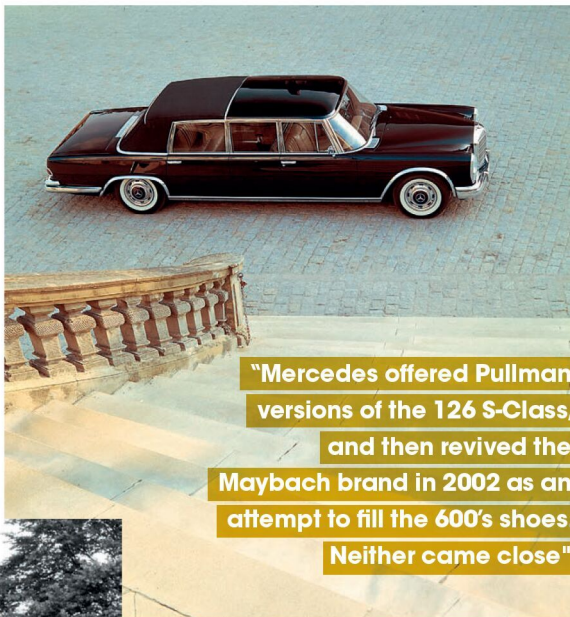
**ABOVE LEFT**  
Luxury cabin, though in Pullmans with a partition the front seat is cramped.



**LEFT**  
In Pullmans the two extra seats could be front- or, as shown here, rear-facing.

**RIGHT**  
Of the 2,677 W100s built, 58 were four- and six-door Landaulet soft top cars...

**BELOW**  
...plus a sole Landaulet SWB was made in 1967 for a German aristocrat.



**"Mercedes offered Pullman versions of the 126 S-Class, and then revived the Maybach brand in 2002 as an attempt to fill the 600's shoes. Neither came close"**



#### Specifications Mercedes-Benz 600 (W100)

**Engine**  
M100 6,332cc V8

**Power**  
247bhp@4,000rpm

**Torque**  
369lb ft@2,800rpm

**Transmission**  
4-speed automatic

**Weight** 2,475kg

**0-62mph** 9.7sec

**Top speed** 128mph

**Fuel consumption**  
15.9mpg

**Years produced**  
1964-1981

**Number built** 2,677

*All figures from Mercedes-Benz; data is for the SWB 600, weight, performance and fuel consumption varying on other models*

near Stuttgart took on a £10m-plus restoration of a south east Asian royal fleet including two 600 Pullmans.

**T**HE W100 WAS PRODUCED FROM SEPTEMBER 1964. From the outset, the saloon with a 3,200mm wheelbase and the Pullman at 3,900mm were offered, 'special protection' armoured versions of both built from 1965 onwards. Later, the canvas-topped Pullman Landaulet and the Pullman six-door were added. Two special custom-made models were a long-wheelbase Landaulet for Pope Paul VI, and a short-wheelbase Landaulet for aristocrat and car enthusiast Count Berckheim.

In 1965, a pair of two-door coupes based on the 600 were built, though did not progress beyond the pre-production stage. They used a wheelbase 220mm shorter than the standard saloon, and the same 247bhp, 6.3-litre V8 powertrain. Unmistakably derived from the SWB W100 saloon, they featured the same angular lines (though with a slightly thicker C-post) and an equally generous chrome complement.

Although prototypes, the cars were of a finished standard, and Mercedes' director of passenger car development, Dr Rudolf Uhlenhaut, used one, while Dr Fritz Nallinger, technical director, was allocated the other, retaining it when he retired. The whereabouts of the former is unknown, but the latter crossed the →

effective rebirth of Daimler-Benz after it had been all but destroyed in World War Two, the company picked up where it left off with the W186 and W189 300 limousines before the 600 replaced it, albeit after a two-and-a-half-year sales gap. When it was discontinued in 1981, Mercedes offered Pullman versions of the 126-series S-Class, and then revived the historic Maybach brand in 2002 as an attempt to truly fill the 600's shoes. Neither came close to achieving that, and a number of prominent royal families continue to maintain and operate their fleets rather than pensioning them off in favour of something newer. For example, in 2018 leading 600 restorer Kienle



**LEFT**  
You could have anything you wanted in a 600 apart from the kitchen sink.

⇒ ocean to America, before returning to a private collection in Germany in the early 1990s, where it underwent a full restoration.

The market taking the highest number of 600s was the US, where 743 vehicles were delivered. This was followed by Germany with 589, France with 151 vehicles and Great Britain with 126. The 1964 price list quoted DM56,500 (then about £14,800) for the saloon and DM63,500 (£16,800) for the Pullman saloon. By comparison, the next model down, luxury-class W112 300SE Long saloon with automatic transmission was DM27,800 (£7,300). Indexed to 2023, the above 600 prices are £244,500 and £277,600.

**T**HE 600 APPEARED ON THE PRICE LIST FOR THE LAST TIME IN 1979. THE SALOON AT DM144,368 (£37,100), THE PULLMAN SALOON DM165,760 (£42,600) AND THE SIX-DOOR PULLMAN DM175,728 (£45,300). By comparison, the top ranking volume built Mercedes, the 116-series 450SEL 6.9, then listed at DM78,999 (£20,300).

The concept of the 600 took shape eight years before its world premiere. In mid-1955, technical head Fritz Nallinger defined the key parameters for "construction group C", the "future group of large touring and prestige vehicles". He described this upcoming prestige car thus: "It gets automatic transmission, power-assisted steering and power-assisted brakes as standard. It is normally a six-seater. The frame floor system is designed to allow for creating a vehicle with three rows of seats by extending the wheelbase, if necessary."

The 600 was powered by an all-new OHC V8 engine, the debut of this configuration in a Mercedes-Benz passenger car, the first built-up engine running on the test bench at the end of 1959. The production engine, designated M100, was ultimately given a displacement of 6.3 litres following smaller capacity trials and produced 147bhp and 369lb ft torque; the unit was also used in the W109 300SEL 6.3 launched three years later, which turned out to be a good way of more effectively amortising the engine's not insignificant development budget. The body styling of the Mercedes-Benz 600 was created under the direction of Friedrich Geiger, with the young Paul Bracq playing a major role, its



**ABOVE INSET**  
The interior of the Pullman Landaulet mode specially for Pope Paul VI in 1965.

**RIGHT**  
For this visit to Germany The Queen left the Rolls at home and rode in a 600.



**Many customers used it for years for mobility befitting their status, whether with a chauffeur or themselves at the wheel**



**ABOVE**  
A pair of 600 coupes saw the light of day, and were used by M-B executives...

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
... shorter length cut cabin space, but otherwise they were like other W100s.

**ABOVE FAR RIGHT**  
On June 10, 1981 the final 600 left the Sindelfingen factory assembly line.

razor-sharp waistline and perfect proportions a reprise of his work on the Pagoda. However, the 600 might have looked very different had early design themes been adopted, as the photographs on pages 52-53 show.

The exterior was a powerful statement of modern prestige, while inside, passengers could expect an atmosphere of cultivated luxury and distinct culture that made the most of every opportunity to enhance comfort. But Nallinger, who was intensively involved in the design of the new flagship during development, felt that by the end of the 1950s a large vehicle body and good performance should not be the only unique selling points for a reborn 'Grand Mercedes'.

More was expected from a Mercedes-Benz, and the marque rose to the challenge of making the impossible possible. Werner Breitschwerdt, who later became Chairman of the Board of Management, said in retrospect

about the W100 at the end of the 1980s: "At the time, we wanted to build a car that could do everything that was possible, and we wanted it to be able to do more than any other car, for the driver and the passenger." The ease of use was certainly exemplary. A hydraulic system closed the doors on their latches, slid the sunroof, opened and closed the windows, operated the cabin partition, opened the boot, adjusted the heating and ventilation flaps, moved the front and rear seat, adjusted the shock absorbers and released the parking brake.

**T**O ACHIEVE THE OPTIMUM, THE ENGINEERS COMPARED AN ELECTRICAL SYSTEM,

DEVELOPED BY BREITSCHWERDT, WITH A HYDRAULIC SYSTEM, DESIGNED BY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER ERNST FIALA. HYDRAULICS WON. "You couldn't have accommodated the many







**LEFT**  
A 1969 loading at the port of the Sultanate of Brunei was safely done.

**ABOVE**  
The Laudauler canvas top could be small like this, or near full length.


double suspension in conjunction with the adjustable shock absorbers, led to handling that was euphorically rated at the time. The engineers also devoted special attention to the brake system, dual-circuit disc brakes fitted at the front and rear. Two brake calipers acted on each of the front 291mm discs. The 15-inch cross ply tyres were special designs provided by Fulda and Continental.



**T**HE Cd VALUE OF 0.458 WAS ASTONISHINGLY GOOD FOR THE LARGE, ANGULAR 600. BY COMPARISON, THE PAGODA WITH HARDTOP ON ACHIEVED 0.515Cd AND THE PRECEDING W121 190SL MODEL WITH HARDTOP WAS 0.461Cd. A design stipulation

was that the grand saloon should accelerate like a sports car, and being capable of 0-62mph (100km/h) in

9.7 seconds and a 128mph maximum show that objective had been met.

The Mercedes-Benz 600 was widely regarded as 'the best car in the world'. Many customers used it for years for mobility befitting their status, whether with a chauffeur or themselves at the wheel. The motoring press was also extremely enthusiastic about the 600, *Motor Revue* of March 1965 noting, "The result is a level of ride comfort that is undoubtedly the optimum achieved in automobile engineering to date." It added: "You can drive the 600 on mountain passes like a sports car – a well-driven sports car then has a very hard time keeping up." Rather extraordinarily, most of the compliments originally paid to the 600 would still apply 60 years later, so far ahead of its time was the W100. 



**BELOW LEFT**  
The 1903 Mercedes Simplex 40HP is among the 600's predecessors.

**BOTTOM LEFT**  
Stuttgart hoped the revived 2002 Maybach would replace the 600.

**ABOVE INSET**  
It rolls on corners but 60 years on the 600's handling is impressive.

functions we wanted to do with electrics back then," Breitschwerdt later commented. "It was a space and weight problem, because we would have needed a second battery, among other things. With its high pressures, the high-pressure hydraulics developed had the advantage of getting by with small elements. The hydraulics were just smaller, quieter and lighter than electrical systems of the time."

Rudolf Uhlenhaut set three focal points for this modern, prestigious vehicle in a class of its own: the highest passenger comfort, maximum safety and outstanding driving performance. The merging of the air suspension with the front wishbones and the single-joint swing axle with additional lowered thrust arms with braking torque support, as well as two cross-struts and



# Back to black

When **Kip Cyprus** set out to find a 300SL, the car he settled on wasn't just a very expensive example even by W198 standards, but needed even more spent to put back to original spec. It was definitely worth the money, he tells us

IMAGES STUDIO  
PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY  
KIP CYPRUS, OTHERS BY  
RICHARD TRUEDELL

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**ABOVE**  
‘Egg box’ air intakes on the front wings are a notable 300SL styling feature.

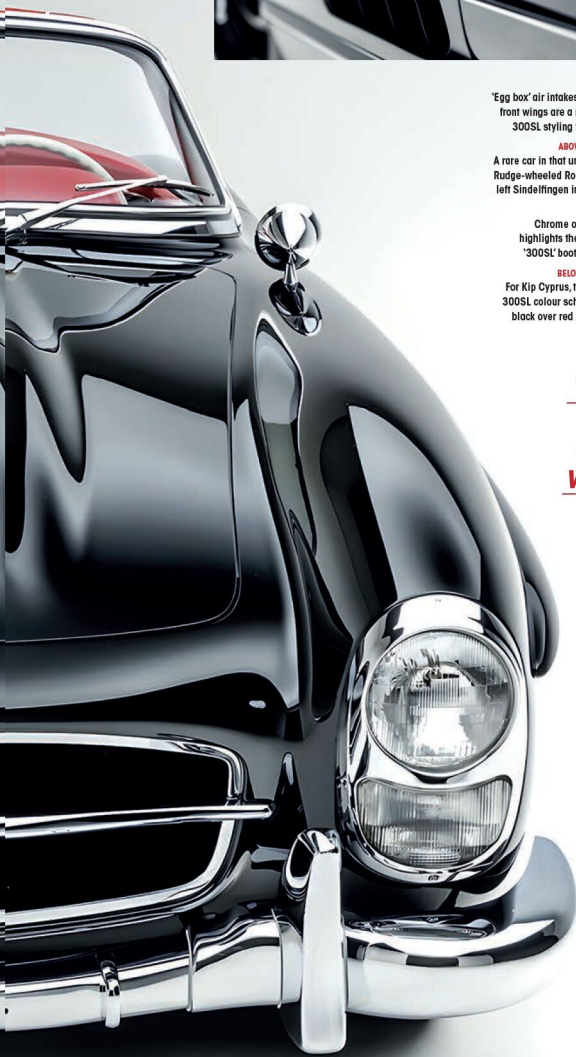
**ABOVE RIGHT**  
A rare car in that under 30 Rudge-wheeled Roadsters left Sindelfingen in 1957.

**RIGHT**  
Chrome on black highlights the iconic ‘300SL’ boot badge.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
For Kip Cyprus, the only 300SL colour scheme is black over red leather.



***“WHEN I PURCHASED THE 300SL IT HAD BEEN RESTORED TO A VERY HIGH STANDARD, BUT THE SILVER VIOLET HUE WITH A CONTRASTING CREAM LEATHER INTERIOR WAS OFF-PUTTING”***





**M**y history as a car enthusiast began when I was a student at Granada Hills High School in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles, California. There, I basically lived in the auto shop, taking as many classes as I could. I attended school in the mid-1980s which is best remembered, locally at least, in films from that era like the coming-of-age comedy *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (1982, and filmed at the nearby Sherman Oaks Galleria).

After high school, I dropped out of college and attended a maritime school because at that point all I wanted to do was be a boat captain, taking care of wealthy people on their yachts. Soon after I got side-tracked, went into real estate development, and have not looked back. I thank my lucky stars every day.

My first car was a 17-year old, 1969 Chevrolet Camaro, which remains in my collection and over the years has been restored several times. My car collection is large, taking in everything from pre-war classics to traditional American muscle, to modern day supercars; you can say I have very eclectic automotive tastes. However, the car profiled here, my 1957 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster, is one of the centrepieces.

Over the years, I've owned a number of classic Mercedes-Benches. My first classic Benz was a 1970 280SL Pagoda, and my 300SL Roadster was joined later by a companion 300SL Gullwing, which I drive in rallies. Among my

modern Mercedes, I have a 2005 SLR McLaren, and a SLS Black Series from 2014, which presently shares garage space with the 300SL Roadster.

**W**hen I purchased the 300SL it had been restored to a high standard but the colour combination – a silver violet hue with a contrasting cream leather interior, which had been a factory option, I understand – was off-putting. Plus it was modified with a totally

**ABOVE LEFT**

The engine, as with the rest of the car, was rebuilt by Hjeltness Restoration.

**ABOVE**

Kip also owns a Gullwing, and says that the Roadster is much more comfortable.

'stealth' air conditioning system. But how I acquired it is something of a story. I have a thing for black cars with red interiors, a large proportion of the cars in my collection being in that combination. I think that the two colours complement each other, especially on sports cars.

I was looking for a W198, and Eric Hjeltness of 300SL specialist Hjeltness Restoration in Escondido, California, was involved in marketing the car on behalf of its owner, whose husband had passed away. But I found out that when it rolled off the Mercedes-Benz assembly line in Stuttgart, it was... a black, Rudge-wheeled example with a red leather interior. This was my dream colour combination – I like to call it its birth colours.

Even knowing it was originally a red-on-black car, I still hesitated over buying it, because I would have to pay







**LEFT**  
US-spec Roadsters had separate, cheaper-to-replace headlamp lenses.

**CENTRE TOP LEFT**  
The 300SL's pristine black paintwork makes the chrome stand out more.

**CENTRE BOTTOM LEFT**  
If you possess a Roadster it would be rude not to have fitted luggage for it.

top dollar for the car based on the high quality of its then-current restoration. To make it feel like 'my' 300SL Roadster, the paint, the interior and even the stealth air conditioning system would have to go (it had cost the previous owner over \$50,000 to install the nearly invisible climate control system, something of a Hjeltness Restoration specialty).

This is where my good friend, Bruce Meyer, well-known California-based car connoisseur, stepped in. At the time, I was still building my collection and my tastes were evolving, not away from classic American muscle, but into other areas. At the time, around 2015, 300SLs, even driver-quality as opposed to concours examples, were in the low million-dollar range. And this was

much closer to a concours-level car, except for the non-original colours and the climate control system.

**B**ruce, whose judgment as both a collector and enthusiast I respect, said, "Kip, this is a special car. It was originally produced in your favourite colour, it's got the Rudge wheels, which among 300SLs makes this a rare car. Just 27 [some historians say 29] were made in 1957 – either figure makes a Rudge-wheel 1957 300SL Roadster exclusive." Bruce's summary was thus: "Bite the bullet and buy the car because you will never likely have the same opportunity again. If you don't buy it, you will probably second-guess yourself for as long as you live." So I decided to bite the bullet, and bought the car.

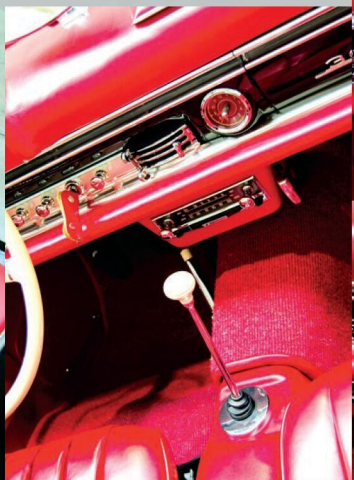
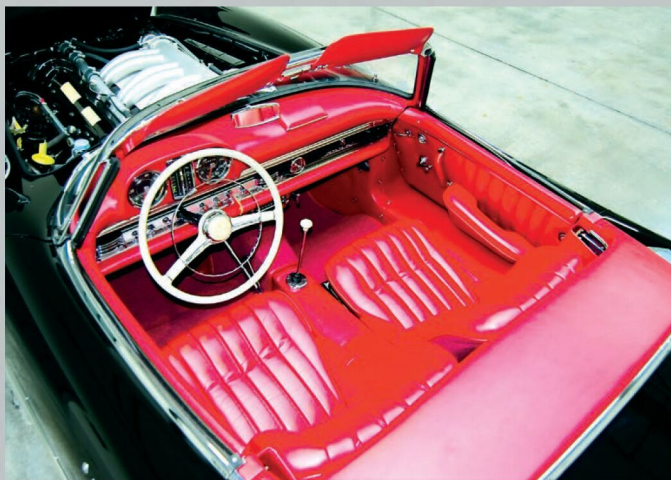
The restoration took a bit longer than I thought it would, as Eric is so meticulous. But he and I really clicked, because we both wanted to take its restoration to a much higher level than that which the previous owner ➔

**BELOW LEFT TO RIGHT**  
Hjeltness stripped the paint it applied previously; the resto was nut and bolt; the black paint, Kip's favourite, was restored, as was the red leather trim.



**"TO MAKE IT FEEL LIKE 'MY' 300SL ROADSTER, THE PAINT, THE INTERIOR, AND EVEN THE STEALTH AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM WOULD HAVE TO GO"**





⇒ had specified. I knew that when Eric had finished his work on it, it would be absolutely perfect in every way.

When I bought the Mercedes eight years ago, I was seeking a 300SL Roadster of driver-quality only. At the time, what I was looking for was, as previously mentioned, selling for something over \$1m. This car, when it was brought to my attention, stretched a long way above what I was comfortable spending at the time. But after the purchase and restoration, a

**ABOVE**  
If you'd owned this in 1957 you'd be sitting in the world's best roadster.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Below the radio there were A/C controls, but Kip said return to the original spec.

pivot point occurred in 2021 that fundamentally changed how I came to view the concours scene.

**T**hat year the car was entered at the Gull Wing Group Convention in Colorado, and the La Jolla Concours in California. It won Best in Class at both events. Then it was entered at that year's San Marino Motor Classic, where I displayed the car, assisted by Eric, in a combined class of 300SL Gullwings and

Roadsters. There were close to 10 cars in the class, mostly Gullwings, and it was very competitive. When the car was judged, the judges nit-picked on the details saying this or that detail wasn't correct. Thankfully, Eric was on hand when the car was judged, and as a noted expert on 300SLs, was able to set the judges straight.

My Roadster took class honours. To put it mildly, this didn't go down too well among the Gullwing owners, one of them commenting, "It's just a

### Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster (W198)

Engine M198 2.996cc 6-cyl Power 212bhp@5,800rpm Torque 202lb ft@4,600rpm

Transmission 4-speed manual Weight 1,330kg 0-62mph 10sec Top speed 156mph

Fuel consumption 22.6mpg Years produced 1957-1963 Number built 1,858

All figures from Mercedes-Benz; top speed depending on rear axle ratio



**RIGHT**  
After the 2021 San Marino Motor Classic Kip decided to quit concours events.





**"THE GULLWING  
IS A VERY  
FOCUSED,  
NIMBLE  
DRIVER'S CAR,  
WHILE THE  
ROADSTER IS  
SOMETHING  
DIFFERENT, IT'S  
MUCH MORE  
COMFORTABLE"**

**LEFT**  
A total of 1,858 cars bearing this badge were delivered between 1957 and 1963.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
The 300SL's fascia and instruments had a more designed look than the Gullwing's.

Roadster." To that, I responded: "It's as perfect as any 300SL can be, and you guys are getting so bent out of shape over a trophy."

After this experience, I decided to stop competing in judged events with any of my cars for the time being. However, I bring them out to events for other enthusiasts to see and appreciate, and for me, that's the best part about owning them. And when my friend Bruce comments on the car, a guy whose opinion I listen to, he will tell you that this car is significant and that it's the best 300SL in the world. And he should know. But I do feel these cars should not be bought for their investment potential alone – owners should own them because they love them. I've had serious offers to buy the car, that I turned down, so I'll leave it at that.

For me, this 300SL from 1957 puts some automotive history into perspective. Think about it: WW2 was just 12 years in the rear-view mirror, and by 1945 the Mercedes-Benz factory in Stuttgart was a pile of rubble, having been heavily bombed by the Allies. That Mercedes-Benz could design, engineer, build the Gullwing and evolve it into the Roadster, while at the same time successfully returning to top-flight international motorsport, was a remarkable achievement. By the mid-1950s, Daimler-

Benz was again building cars and against which most others would be measured. That's the perspective my 300SL Roadster gives me.

I am very fortunate to own both a 300SL Gullwing and this Roadster, not least because it allows me to directly compare them. The Gullwing is a very focused, nimble driver's car, while the Roadster is much more comfortable, a car that would be an absolute joy to take out on a long-distance driving event. And now that I've owned it for the better part of a decade – and that I've given up chasing concours trophies – it's about to get its day in the sun.

When asked where I'd like to drive it, my answer is simple. With my wife Amy as my navigator, it would be the California Coast north of San Francisco. And while I'm there, I'd turn inland to drive through the California redwoods. Can you think of a better car for that journey? I can't. And the advice from Bruce Meyer on busting the budget to buy it in the first place, was not just memorable, but sound. "Buy the best and only cry once."



## A previous life

The *Classic Mercedes* convention is that we'll only give a car the full feature treatment once. But this one's past justified breaking that rule, Tim French explains

Among the 3,258 300SL Gullwings and Roadsters built between 1954 and 1963, a number are in original, unrestored condition, and as such are highly coveted. But probably the majority have been rebuilt, refinished and resprayed, hence with their originality gone, they are sometimes seen by their wealthy owners as a blank canvas for individual expression, and this appears to have been the case in the previous life of Kip's Roadster.

When delivered to its first owner in October 1957, it was black over red leather and with a tan hood. By the time it arrived in the Hjeltness Restoration workshop in the mid-2000s, it still had the red hide but the body was white. Living in Palm Springs, where 45C is not uncommon, the then owner commissioned Hjeltness to perform one of its specialities: installing air conditioning.

This amounted to rather more than adding a compressor, pipework and switches. Eric Hjeltness reached for his in-house developed 'overbuilt' system including a compressor and motor robust enough to power a motorhome A/C, while a double pulley for the front of the engine crankshaft allowed belts to be changed without having to partially remove the engine, and an upgraded, 50A alternator from HK-Engineering in Germany boosted electrical charging. Much thought went into the design of the distribution plenum under the fascia to ensure that the air flow from the four vents – two original, two extra – was equal. The entire system was designed to be fitted without a single hole being drilled anywhere on the car, so that the conversion was entirely reversible – the course that Kip decided on. The survival of the Hjeltness silver violet paint job was never likely.



A few years after the resto and A/C instal, Hjeltness started afresh on the Roadster.

# Staple six

In 1951 Mercedes-Benz introduced an all-new, six-cylinder engine with an overhead camshaft and oversquare cylinder dimensions. **Shane O'Donoghue** tells the full story of the unit that was built for 25 years and went into 1.5 million cars

IMAGES Mercedes-Benz Group AG







he M180 straight-six, first seen in the W187 saloons of 1951-1954, was the first truly new Mercedes-Benz petrol engine of the post-war period, reintroducing customers to six-cylinder motoring as the dust began to settle on the firm's recovery. In a 25-year career, it would appear in over a dozen different bodysells (if we include the various coupe and cabriolet variants, and a version of the Unimog off-roader), while gaining over a half a litre in capacity and 90bhp by the time the most powerful 168bhp examples were finding their way into the 280SL sports cars and 280SE/SEL saloons. In fact, it would assume a variety of type numbers during this period as Daimler-Benz adapted it to different requirements: the M180 begat the injected M127, the seven main bearing, longer stroke M129 (2.3- and 2.5-litre) and bored out M130 (2.8-litre).

It was one of the first truly modern post-war sixes to be built in Europe, in an era when Daimler-Benz was striving to reassert its technical leadership. Only Jaguar's glamorous XK twin-cam and the innovative V6 of the Lancia Aurelia truly challenged the power, efficiency and refinement of the M180 in the 1950s. Although a variety of much bigger American and British straight-sixes were quieter and more powerful, it was usually at the cost of greater thirst, as indeed was Mercedes' own larger three-litre, in-line six (M186), built to power the bigger models. This engine was a superficially similar unit but shared no parts with the M180 design.



The 220 W187 was very much new wine in an old bottle. Launched in 1951 at the Frankfurt motor show, it was a hybrid of the pre-war style 170 body and chassis, and conforming to the company policy of never introducing a new engine in a new car, it was fitted with a freshly designed overhead camshaft straight-six M180.

An unassuming looking saloon with 'suicide' front doors, it reprised the role of the pre-war 230 in the firm's line-up as a vehicle for status seeking clientele who wanted a fast, refined car that was not ridiculously expensive to run. Efficiently planned out for ease of maintenance, these engines were beautifully made of the finest materials, but not particularly exciting to look at. It was carefully adapted to the circumstances of the time, its low 6.7:1 compression ratio taking account of the poor quality gasoline then available. This was supplemented by an 'octane compensator' control mounted on the steering wheel, that could advance or retard the ignition to suit the potency of the available fuel.

The M180 was not a revolutionary design but simply a modern short-stroke, oversquare unit (it was the first Mercedes passenger car engine with a bore larger than its stroke), with a shallow, cast iron cylinder-block generously cooled by water jackets that extended down to the centre of its rugged four-bearing, vibration-dampened crankshaft. Its designers had extracted 79bhp from a swept volume of just 2,195cc by allowing the M180 to breathe well through large, staggered valves in a chrome-nickel iron cylinder-head. In a country where autobahns made flat-out driving for long periods possible (but where engines over 2.2 litres were heavily penalised by road tax laws), it was designed from the beginning

as an engine that could sustain high revs for long periods without failing. An oil-cooler setup was a telltale refinement in an engine where the new, thinner oils worked harder.

Neither did it extort a huge penalty at the fuel pumps on a continent where petrol was expensive. This was in stark contrast to Britain, where a true luxury car was expected to have a low revving engine of at least three litres and where the lack of opportunities for sustained high speed use (pre-motorways) made low and mid-range torque more important than high revving power. The Brit's long-stroke, undersquare engines were a hangover of the then, only recently defunct, RAC 'horsepower tax' ratings that were based on bore size. ➔

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
In 1951 the essentially pre-war 220 was the first car with Mercedes' M180.

**BELOW**  
The last model series to use it was the W114 saloon launched in 1968...

**BELOW RIGHT**  
...in 2.3-litre twin-carb form powering the 230 model until late 1976.



**"IT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TRULY MODERN POST-WAR SIXES TO BE BUILT IN EUROPE, IN AN ERA WHEN DAIMLER-BENZ WAS STRIVING TO REASSERT ITS TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP"**

⇒ With its faired in headlights and fashionable column gear change (another first for Mercedes) the W187 220 beat the bigger three-litre 300-series saloons into production by several months. Its 36bhp per litre engine had a much higher specific output than the 170V that it superficially resembled and would push the 220 up to nearly 90mph. Zero to 62mph in 19 seconds was sports car acceleration by the standards of the early 1950s, easily outpacing the stately Rover 75 and even the three-litre Alvis.

The launch of the Mercedes Ponton six-cylinder saloons in 1954 gave the M180 a new modern environment: a lighter and less wind resistant full width monocoque saloon body that was ideally suited to the refinement and efficiency of this now well proven straight-six. Installed in the 220a, the M180 had five per cent more power and was able to rev to a full 6,000rpm. A new camshaft and higher compression ratio took advantage of the higher octane fuels now available but there was still an octane selector, now located on the dashboard. The carburettor, distributor and water pump setups were all new, but the biggest change was an alloy cylinder-head, which saved some weight and assisted with heat dissipation.

These were the first Mercedes petrol-engined cars with 12V electrical systems, but it would be another three years before the range was supplemented by the more flexible, and economical, 220S with twin Solex carburettors and 99bhp. Fuel-injected M180 engines were the obvious next step, and these duly arrived in the form of the new 220SE in 1958 and were actually designated M127. These were built in low volumes to test market response to a new simpler form of *Einspritzmotor* (fuel-injection) for a mass market saloon. Indeed, the 220SE was in fact the first 'everyday' car to feature fuel-injection, a newer, simpler system than that fitted to the 300SL.

Featuring twin fuel pumps with a timed distribution, rather than a separate pump for each cylinder, it also took account of ambient temperature for fuel flow and had an overrun cut off. With an additional 14bhp over the 220S, this Bosch-injected Ponton (built to the tune of just 1,974 saloons, and about the same number of coupes/cabriolets) would now do 103mph and was notably more flexible with 137lb ft of torque at 3,800rpm.

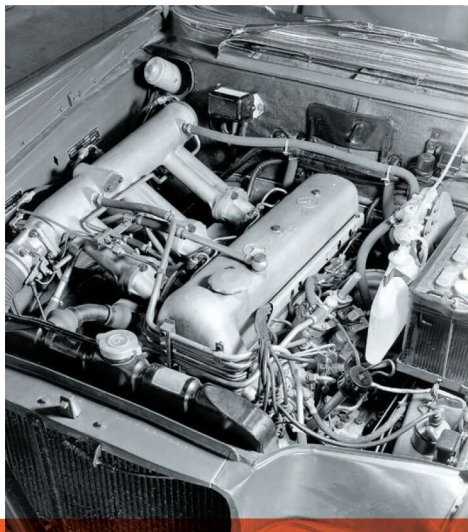
Now the potential of the engine was gathering momentum and it became the cornerstone of Mercedes Benz's big car ambitions. With the introduction of the W111 saloons, better known as the Fintails, in 1959 the entry level 220 now had twin single-choke carbs for 94bhp, while the 220S had two twin-choke carburettors giving 108bhp at slightly higher revs. The injected 220SE engine was tuned to give another 10bhp, for a total of 118bhp. In this form the M127 also found its way into the first of the pillarless W111 coupes and cabriolets in 1961.

Meanwhile, plans were underway for a more approachable version of the SL-series, a car to sit somewhere between the pricey exoticism of the 300SL and the less than overwhelming four-cylinder 190SL. Mercedes' answer was the 1963 230SL, with a new 2,306cc version of the M127, injected straight-six. With a two-inch larger bore, higher compression ratio and a new kind of injection

**RIGHT**  
Fuel-injection arrived in 1958 with the launch of the Ponton 220SE models.

**BELOW**  
The 220SE Cabriolet and Coupe had a useful 14bhp over the carb-fed 220S.

**BOTTOM**  
From 1959 to 1968 the Fintail had the M180 and M127 in 2.2/2.3 litres.

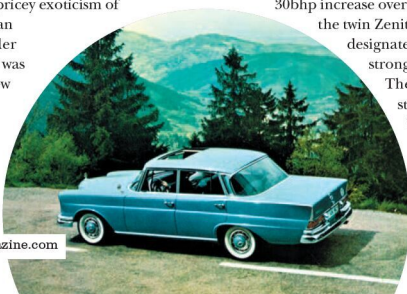


(that used a six-plunger pump to squirt fuel directly into the inlet ports, rather than into the manifold) it made a far then quite fruity 148bhp at 5,500rpm and would serve in the 230SL Pagoda until early 1967.

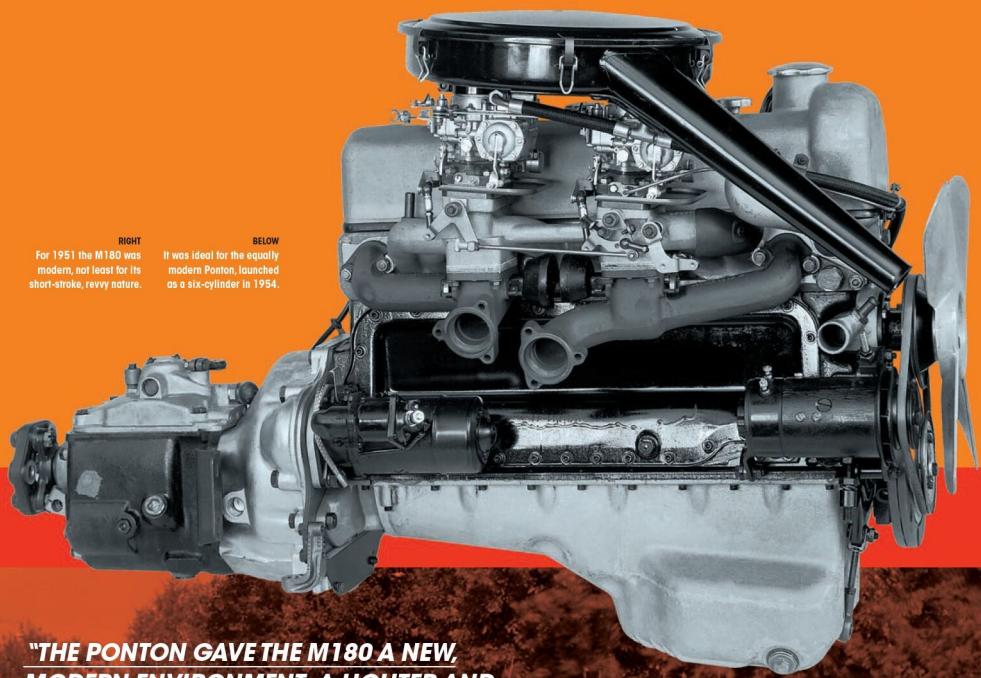
By that time, a larger straight-six had already put in an appearance in the new W108 250S and 250SE saloons. These cars were designed to appease buyers who didn't want a luxury car that shared its basic outline with a diesel taxi, thus the saloon car range spanned diesels, four-cylinder petrol engines and carburettored straight-sixes in the old Fintail body and the M127 250 engine in the newer W108 shell.

Upgraded to seven main bearings to cope with the increased stroke, the 250s featured a larger oil pump, bigger valves and, in fuel-injected form, made 148bhp; a 30bhp increase over the now superseded 220SE. Even the twin Zenith carburettor 250S (its engine designated M108) was 10 horsepower stronger than the previous injected car.

The injected 250 engine was now standard in the flagship coupes and by 1967 would be the standalone offering in the SL Pagoda as well. Other improvements included a new throttle linkage and mechanical rather than







RIGHT

For 1951 the M180 was modern, not least for its short-stroke, revvy nature.

BELOW

It was ideal for the equally modern Ponton, launched as a six-cylinder in 1954.

**"THE PONTON GAVE THE M180 A NEW, MODERN ENVIRONMENT: A LIGHTER AND LESS WIND RESISTANT BODY IDEALLY SUITED TO THE REFINEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THIS STRAIGHT-SIX"**





RIGHT

It didn't look special but it was superbly engineered, serving in many guises.

BELOW INSET

In 1965 the entry W108 model, the 250S, used it in 2.5-litre carburettor form...

BELOW RIGHT

...three years later the final, 280SL Pagoda had 2.8 litres, now the M130.

**"WITH THE M180 AND ITS DERIVATIVES FITTED TO OVER 1.5 MILLION VEHICLES, STUTTGART CERTAINLY GOT ITS MONEY'S WORTH OUT OF IT"**



68

⇒ vacuum regulator for the Bosch injection system, while the injection pump design was similar to the 230SL's. A fan with a thermostatic clutch aided quietness and, on the carburettored car, a fuel recirculation system kept the fuel cool for hot starting.

With the introduction of the 'square back' W108 250 saloons, six-cylinder options in the Fintail range were reduced to a choice between the 230 and 230S, a combination of what was still coded an M180 engine, but in the short-nose bodysell. In other words, these were Mercedes' entry level straight-six offerings to the market.

**T**he M129 250 engine gained a reputation as an oil burner, but with a new range of saloons in the pipeline for 1968, it was destined to fall victim to Mercedes' latest round of juggling with bodies, engines and badges. It was usurped in the S and SE saloons and the W113 SL by a new M130 version, bored out from 82mm to 86.5mm, to make 2,778cc. While Jaguar's XK engine had grown to 4.2 litres, and American V8s routinely running at seven litres or more, this bore increase represented the largest practical increase in swept volume for the Mercedes straight-six. It was working hard in these increasingly hefty cars, which usually came as automatics and offered few concessions to aerodynamics. Their designers maintained performance by giving them low overall gearing, responsive, efficient transmissions and engines built to sustain high revs. As before, there were twin-

carburettored S and injected SE versions now giving 138 and 158bhp respectively; for the 280SL a further 10 horsepower was teased out. The injected 280 six was standard in the coupes and cabriolets.

To rationalise the engine line-up, the big alloy, M186 three-litre engine was retired for 1968; 300SEL buyers now got the same M130 as used in the 280SE, highlighting Mercedes' lack of a mid-range V8 to supplement the much larger M100 unit that was used in the 600 and 300SEL 6.3.

**I**n fact, the 3.5-litre M116 was a year away from launch in the saloon and coupe/cabriolet bodies, which meant that late 1960s Mercedes customers had a choice between a six that was arguably too small, or a V8 that was too big. The 250 engines lived on as the flagship in the new generation W114 saloons and C/CE coupes and you could even find the M180 in the 230 version of the new series.

In the last years of the W108 saloon and the W111 coupe/cabriolet, the V8 variants seemed to take all the limelight with enthusiasts, but more conservative customers, perhaps suspicious of the American style technology, meant there was still a healthy market for the M130 straight-six option, through to the introduction of the new S-Class models in 1972. Even here the entry level car had an in-line six, but it was a twin-cam M110 now and while clearly related to the old engine it really deserves separate analysis.

The single-camshaft, M180 family straight-six engine finally came to the end of the road in 1976, some 25 years after it was introduced. With the M180 and its derivatives fitted to over 1.5 million Mercedes vehicles, Stuttgart certainly got its money's worth out of it.

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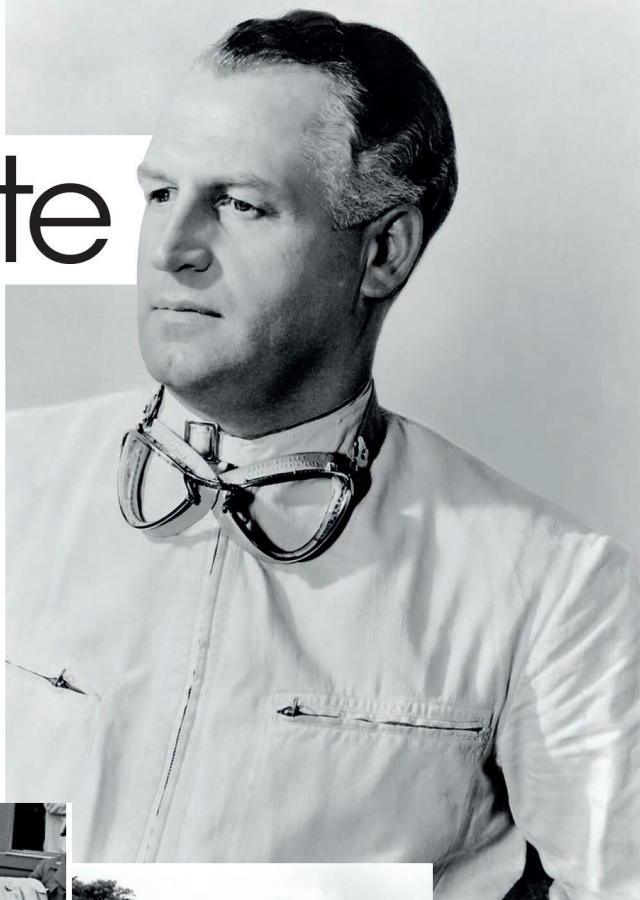
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# Born too late

He was one of the top talents in international motoring racing, but being too young for Mercedes' 1930s Silver Arrows team, and too old when it returned in the mid-1950s prevented Karl Kling fulfilling his grand prix ambition.

**David Sutherland** charts his life

IMAGES Mercedes-Benz Group AG



**ABOVE**  
In 32 years with M-B, Karl Kling went from rookie driver to motorsport boss.

**FAR LEFT**  
Aged 40 on rejoining Mercedes post-WW2, here with Hermann Lang.

**LEFT**  
Kling (far left) in the Gran Premio Presidente Perón in Buenos Aires, 1951.

To achieve greatness, ambitious racing drivers need more than skill behind the wheel and extreme dedication – good timing, usually beyond their control, is essential too. The right team, the right car, at the right time.

Karl Kling, one of the Mercedes-Benz Silver Arrows squad in the 1950s, did prove his worth and won trophies as a Mercedes-Benz works driver, but his birth date of September 16, 1910 would conspire against him, it often being said he was born both too early and too late. He was slightly too young for the Silver Arrows intake during its

prolonged success in the 1930s (although it should be noted that the British driver Dick Seaman, three years his junior, did make it into the team near the end of that decade) and by the time the reconstituted team returned to grands prix in 1954 he was, at 44, too old to fully develop his driving career at motorsport's top level.

During 1954 and 1955, he started 11 grands prix that counted for championship points, achieved two podiums (second in the 1954 French Grand Prix, third in the 1955 British). In 1955, after the Le Mans tragedy saw Mercedes-Benz withdraw from Formula 1, Kling called time on his





ABOVE  
Kling and Hans Klenk won the Carrera Panamericana in late 1952 in this 300SL.

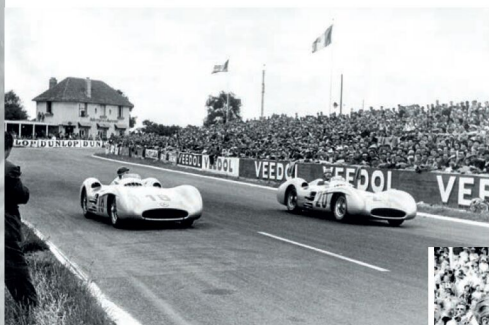
BELOW  
Overtaking team leader Fangio (left) in the 1954 French GP was a surprise.

ABOVE RIGHT  
In the 1952 Bern sports car GP, assisted by the team's pit board system.



Mercedes-Benz dealer while also studying, and in 1936 began working for Mercedes as a customer service engineer. By the late 1930s he had some motor racing under his belt at a wheel of Mercedes cars in touring car events, but his track ambitions were curtailed by the onset of World War Two, during which Kling served as a mechanic in the Luftwaffe.

**"HIS FORMULA 1  
HIGH POINT WILL  
BE REMEMBERED AS  
THAT 1954 FRENCH  
RACE, HIS DEBUT  
GRAND PRIX, WHEN  
HE FINISHED LESS  
THAN A SECOND  
BEHIND JUAN  
MANUEL FANGIO"**



LEFT  
Kling (car number 14) took third place in the 1955 British GP at Aintree.

ABOVE  
Chatting with W196R designer Rudolf Uhlenhaut before the Aintree race.

own grand prix career, becoming the car maker's rally team manager rather than migrating to another team as a driver. His role there was effective, but low key, and his Formula 1 high point will be remembered as that 1954 French race, his debut grand prix, when he finished less than a second behind the established Silver Arrows star Juan Manuel Fangio. He was fifth in the championship rankings that year.

Kling, the son of a teacher, was born in Giessen, a town north of Frankfurt in Germany. Fascinated by cars, he undertook a motor mechanic traineeship at a local

When WW2 ended he was able to restart his racing, in 1946 driving a 1930s BMW 328 in national events and, aged 37, becoming the national sports car champion in Germany in 1947. For 1948 he acquired a Veritas RS (an independently built sports car using the BMW 328's two-litre, six-cylinder engine), which enabled him to win the same title in that and the following year. Underlining his potential was that in the course of one victory in 1950 at the Solitude circuit near Stuttgart he beat pre-war grand prix stars including Hermann Lang, Hans Stuck and Manfred von Brauchitsch. In the same year, Kling began racing Mercedes cars again, winning the ADAC (German Automobile Club) six-hour race on the Nürburgring at the wheel of a Mercedes-Benz 170S.

In was in this year that Daimler-Benz reopened its racing department with the intention of returning to international motorsport. However, cost constraints within the car maker that had only just survived WW2 meant that an early, pre-war style assault on grand prix racing, now rebranded as The FIA Formula One World

Championship, was not feasible. Hence team manager Alfred Neubauer, the architect of the Silver Arrows' resounding pre-war success, decided that a first tie in the water should be a trip to Argentina for two non-championship grand prix races (which were dedicated to the country's president and his wife, Eva Perón) in promotional support of Stuttgart's new factory in Buenos Aires, running 1938 W154s driven by Fangio, Lang and newly recruited official team member Kling.

These three-litre cars had since lost their competitive edge, but Kling finishing sixth in the first race and

⇒ second in the second one was sufficient for his seat to become permanent. However, his next major drive would not be in a grand prix car, as Mercedes had, in the light of the W154's lack of competitiveness and also forthcoming rule changes, decided to delay its F1 re-entry until 1954.

**A**s an interim measure, in 1952 Mercedes-Benz entered a series of international sports car races, fielding the innovative, lightweight W194 300SL coupe with its top-hinged doors that chief engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut had designed three years earlier. In the first race, Italy's 1,000-mile Mille Miglia, Kling and his co-driver Hans Klenk took second place, while in the Bern sports car grand prix Kling came first. Kling and Klenk also won the final event of the season, the Carrera Panamericana, the 2,000-mile race from the top to the bottom of Mexico and ranked as one most gruelling and dangerous road races ever. They crossed the line first despite having to contend with a vulture smashing through the windscreen of the W194 while it was travelling at 135mph, and injuring Klenk.

While 1952 saw most of his wins, the zenith of his career was a single fixture, at Rheims in July 1954, the fourth out of nine F1 races, the French Grand Prix. That was the Silver Arrows team's first race of its new era, and the W196 rolled out into the paddock was jaw-droppingly dramatic inside and out with its sleek, modern shape, top build quality and attention to detail seen on no other teams' cars.

The fuel-injected, straight-eight W196 was as competitive as its appearance suggested, and once perched on its neatly tartan covered seat, Fangio, the 1951 F1 champion took the French win. But not before rookie Kling had caused upset by posting a practice time only a second adrift of the Argentinian superstar, and also overtaken him at the start of the race and led until Fangio took back the lead on lap two. Kling followed him across the line for a 1-2 finish and, had the third W196 (driven by Hermann Lang) not blown its engine, the race would have been a Teutonic demonstration equal to anything seen in the Silver Arrows' 1930s heyday.

Kling remained a Mercedes-Benz driver in 1955, driving both in F1 and the World Sportscar Championship. He

**RIGHT**  
Team manager as of 1956,  
Kling still occasionally  
drove, here in a 190D...

**FAIR RIGHT**  
...and he and Rainer  
Günzler pocketed their best  
suits for the prize giving.

**BELOW**  
Clearing dust during a  
short break on the 1959  
Algiers to Cape Town Rally.





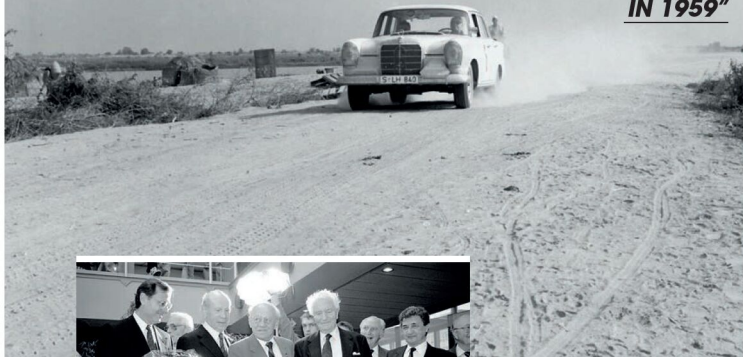
BELOW  
When Ewy Rosqvist and  
Ursula Wirth won the 1962  
Argentinian Touring Car GP.

RIGHT  
Winning team at the 1960  
Monto Carlo Rally. Kling  
ably supporting the trophy.



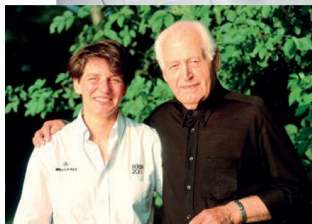
In 1961 Kling won the  
Algiers to Cape Town  
Rally in a 220SE.

**"AS AN EX-RACER HE  
COULD NOT RESIST STAYING  
OUT OF THE DRIVER'S SEAT,  
AND WON THE 9,000-MILE  
MEDITERRANÉE-LE CAP  
RALLY FROM THE  
MEDITERRANEAN TO  
SOUTH AFRICA  
IN 1959"**



ABOVE  
His 80th birthday at the  
Mercedes-Benz Museum  
with former team drivers.

LEFT  
With DTM star Ellen Lohr  
in 1992, one of Germany's  
top female racing drivers.



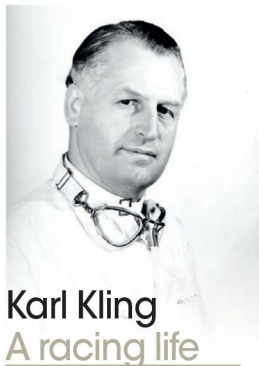
came third in the British Grand Prix at Aintree, but he had now all but been demoted in the team due to the arrival of the 25-year-old British hot shot, Stirling Moss, who had won the British GP. As it turned out, both would be out of a star drive within months.

Mercedes' withdrawal from F1 was accompanied by Neubauer's retirement. But Stuttgart had not completely washed its hands of motorsport, supporting so-called private 300SLs in American sports car races, and also turning its

attention to rallying. While F1 had been the perfect technology showcase, rallying could highlight a different virtue of the Stuttgart products: their toughness and reliability.

Hence Kling replaced Neubauer as head of the competitions department and for the next 13 years oversaw a new generation of drivers such as Walter Schock, Rolf Moll and Eugen Böhringer, not to mention the pairing of two young blonde women, Ewy Rosqvist and Ursula Wirth who sensationally won the 1962 Argentinian Touring Car Grand Prix in a 220SE Fintail. As an ex-racer he could not always resist staying out of the driver's seat, and with well known German TV journalist Rainer Günzler his co-driver won the 9,000-mile Méditerranée-Le Cap Rally from the Mediterranean to South Africa in 1959 in a 190D Ponton, then the 1961 Algiers-Cape Town Rally in a 220SE.

He retired from Mercedes-Benz employment in 1968 but thereafter remained a consultant, spending his retirement at his house on the German banks of Lake Constance, and passing away on March 18, 2003 at the age of 92. The bare figures show his grand prix tally as merely two podiums. How much more might he have achieved had he been born a little sooner, or a little later?



## Karl Kling A racing life

Born: September 16, 1910, Giessen, Germany

Died: March 18, 2003, Lake

Constance, Germany

Early career: Apprentice mechanic with Daimler-Benz

World War Two: Served as a mechanic in the Luftwaffe

Racing career: Raced sports cars for Mercedes-Benz in the late 1930s, and again from 1946 to 1950;

drove the W194 300SL in international sports car races in 1952; Silver Arrows F1 team member 1954 and 1955

Career after racing: Head of the competitions department, 1956 to 1968

Retired from Mercedes-Benz: 1968

High points: Winning the 1952 Carrera Panamericana; second in the 1952 French Grand Prix

Low point: Demoted to Silver Arrows' third driver after Stirling Moss was hired.

Grand prix starts/podiums: 11/2

First/last grand prix: 1954

French/1955 Italian



# UNDER THE HAMMER

In between the Amelia Island sales in March and Monterey Week in August the international auction scene quietsens, but sales do happen and here we review six Benzes sold by RM Sotheby's and Bonhams during that time

IMAGES BONHAMS/NEIL FRASER/RM SOTHEBY'S/KENO ZACHE

## Star Swede

CERNOBBIO, ITALY

Most 300SL Gullwings were delivered to North America, but some went elsewhere and this example was among the 17 sold in Sweden, all through the same dealer

### Lot 156 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing

Since the dawn of automobile production, the occasional truly outstanding model has appeared periodically to startle and capture the imagination of enthusiasts worldwide. There is perhaps no better example of this than the Mercedes-Benz 300SL.

The Gullwing's stunning looks were matched only by its space-age engineering, incredible performance, and world-beating pedigree, which earned its Mercedes works-prepared variants convincing victories at many of the world's premier sportscar races between 1952 and 1956. Mercedes-Benz's incredible high-velocity coupe scored wins everywhere from the 24 Hours of Le Mans and Carrera Panamericana to the Liège-Rome-Liège (as well as multiple SCCA and European Rally championships). The 300SL Gullwing was, without doubt, the sports car of its own century – an icon among post-war designs that still captivate collectors today.

Year	1955
Engine/power	2,996cc/212bhp
Chassis no	198.040.5500078
Engine no	198.980.5500118
Body no	A198.040.5500078
Rear differential no	6500134
Steering box no	5500107
Auction RM	Sotheby's, Villa Erba, Italy
When	May 20, 2023
Pre-sale estimate	£1.2m-£1.5m (\$1m-\$1.3m, \$1.3m-\$1.6m)
Price achieved	£1,355,000 (\$1,168,700, \$1,449,400)

**BELOW**  
This Gullwing remains the same colour as when new.

From 1949 until 1979, the popularity of road racing among Swedish sportsmen translated nicely into the sales of sports cars. This was especially true of the 300SL, of which 17 examples were delivered new to Sweden between 1954 and 1956 – all of them through the dealerships of Gunnar Valfrid Philipson. Importantly, enthusiasm for the 300SL was matched by Mercedes-Benz's own commitment to sportscar racing in Sweden, and during the same three-year period the firm loaned Works-prepared, factory-competition 300SLs to several Swedish drivers including Mas-Olle Persson, Bengt Martenson, Stig Eklund, Arne Lindberg, and Erik Lundgren – not only at events in Sweden, but across mainland Europe.

For its part, Philipson's eponymous Mercedes-Benz dealership network sponsored just about every major domestic sports car event during this period, with a special focus on those to which the factory team was to make an appearance. Among them was the 1955 Kristianstad Grand Prix

at Räbelövsbanan, of which a contemporary account from *Motor Sport* notes, 'The whole entourage of the Mercedes-Benz ... with four lorries, innumerable private cars, the whole of the racing technical staff, team staff, press staff, mechanics and Fangio, Moss and Kling. Mercedes-Benz banners and stars were hung everywhere, they ran special film-shows and dominated the whole scene in a manner that was a little garish for so unimportant an event.'

Completed in February 1955, chassis 5500078 is the fourth of 17 Gullwings delivered new to Sweden. It was presented at the RM Sotheby's sale in its factory-correct colour of Silver Grey metallic (DB180) – indisputably the model's signature shade.

Though much of this Gullwing's history prior to entering The Aurora Collection in 1981 is unrecorded, it is believed to have resided in Sweden its entire life, save for a brief stint in the United States during the late 1960s. While originally delivered with a set of Rudge wheels that are sadly no longer with the car, the Gullwing does retain features such as special-order driver-operated radiator shutters, a full set of belly pans, and rear mudguards. Bidders would have noted that, having been kept on static display for a number of years, this car needed to be subjected to mechanical inspection prior to being driven. Benefiting from an older restoration that retained many of the car's early 1955 build details, this wonderful 300SL would be eminently suited for an exceptionally wide variety of rallies, tours, or club events.



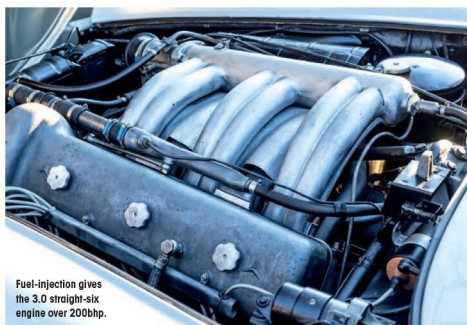




**LEFT**  
Without doubt the most iconic Benz model badge ever.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
17 Gullwings went to Sweden, this being the fourth.

**"THE GULLWING RETAINS FEATURES SUCH AS SPECIAL-ORDER DRIVER-OPERATED RADIATOR SHUTTERS, A FULL SET OF BELL PANS AND REAR MUDGUARDS"**



Fuel-injection gives the 3.0 straight-six engine over 200bhp.



**LEFT**  
A fold-down steering wheel makes entering the tight cabin easier.

**BELOW**  
Mercedes offered a variety of seat and cabin trim on 300SLs.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
These wipers would not be considered terribly good today.

**BOTTOM**  
Horsepower peaked at 5,600rpm, but the motor could rev higher.



# White light



This Roadster from year two of 300SL production has been restored, and has a disc brake upgrade



## Lot 126 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster

When the Mercedes-Benz 300SL first broke cover in 1954, it presented a blinding vision of the future. A technological marvel, the revolutionary machine set a new performance benchmark that sent shockwaves through the automotive industry. From its bold-yet-beautiful aerodynamic styling to the cutting-edge mechanical fuel-injection that afforded its straight-six such power, the incredible 'Gullwing' blew its competition out of the water. But perhaps what is most remarkable was that it achieved such performance while also proving to be one of the most elegant, chic and desirable automobiles of the decade – a car

often hailed as the first true supercar.

The Gullwing quickly found favour with wealthy enthusiasts and automotive cognoscenti, but the 300SL arguably only fully captured the imagination of Hollywood's elite with the arrival of the open Roadster variant in May 1957. Powered by the same 2,996cc straight-six engine that drove the Gullwing, the Roadster was tuned for greater power to help offset a 35kg increase in weight. The rear suspension – which in the Gullwing presented such a challenge to drivers when pushed to the limit – was modified with single-pivot trailing arms with a lower pivot point that offered more consistent handling. The car's trademark top-hinged doors, meanwhile, were changed to more conventional units allied with lower sills that allowed for more a more

Year	1958
Engine/power	2,996cc/237bhp
Chassis no	198.042.8500277
Engine no	198.980.8500278
Body no	A198.042.8500274
Rear differential no	8500286
Steering box no	8500293
Auction RM	Sotheby's, Villa Erba, Italy
When	May 20, 2023
Pre-sale estimate	€1m-€1.4m (£860,000-£1.2m, \$1.1m-\$1.5m)
Price achieved	€961,250 (£829,100, \$1,028,200)

**TOP LEFT**  
This early 300SL features the improved, disc braking of 300SLs from 1961 on.

**BELOW**  
The 300SL Roadster offers a more luxurious interior than that of the Gullwing.

**BELOW LEFT**  
Roadsters have the same 3.0 engine as the Gullwing but tuned for more output.

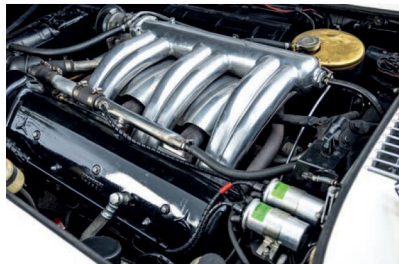
elegant entry and exit – a must for any silver screen starlet arriving for a premier at the Egyptian Theatre.

As well as being more practical than its tin-top sibling, the 300SL Roadster had greater longevity, remaining in production until 1963. Just 267 examples were produced in 1958, with the example offered here having been completed at Untertürkheim towards the end of the model year, and reportedly delivered new in Spain.

After several years of residence in Spain, it then moved briefly through collections in France and Switzerland before entering a collection in Germany under the care of a friend of the consigning owner sometime during the mid-1980s. Around this time, this *Sport Leicht* is understood to have been treated to a complete restoration by marque specialists, including a careful upgrade to the later 300SL disc brake configuration; however a set of original-type drum brakes also accompanied the Roadster to the sale.

After many years of negotiations with this friend, the consignor was finally able to purchase chassis 85500277 in early 2016, and since then it had remained a much enjoyed member of a well curated collection of post-war sports cars. This wonderful 300SL Roadster was presented in the exceptionally attractive, period-correct colour combination of white over red leather with a contrasting black cloth top, and a set chrome disc wheels with colour-matched hubs. An engineering and design masterpiece that offers a truly sublime driving experience, over 60 years after it was first introduced, the 300SL Roadster remains the gold standard for sports cars of its era.

**"THIS 300SL ROADSTER WAS PRESENTED  
IN THE PERIOD-CORRECT COMBINATION  
OF WHITE OVER RED LEATHER WITH A  
CONTRASTING BLACK CLOTH TOP,  
AND CHROME DISC WHEELS"**





# The real thing

CERNOBBIO, ITALY

Evolution IIs often come up for sale, but less so one of the four DTM cars campaigned by AMG



## Lot 125 AMG-Mercedes 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II DTM Group A

While the renamed *Deutsche Tourenwagen Meisterschaft* (DTM) was first contested by privately entered Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.3-16s in 1986, it was not until 1988 that the three-pointed star marque made its factory debut in the competition. The German manufacturer had designs to conquer the field alongside its long-time technical partner, AMG. Incumbent champion, Klaus Ludwig, was poached from arch rival Ford, to spearhead Mercedes-Benz's 1989 campaign, yet the next three seasons brought relative underachievement.

For 1992, Mercedes-Benz recruited future DTM legend Bernd Schneider to join Ludwig, Keke Rosberg and Ellen Lohr at AMG's four-car 'super team'.



Year 1990
Engine/power 2,299cc/300bhp (approx)
Chassis no 201 92 47
Auction RM Sotheby's, Villa Erba, Italy
When May 20, 2023
Pre-sale estimate €450,000-\$550,000 (£388,100- £474,400, \$481,300-\$588,300)
Price achieved €456,000 (£392,400, \$486,700)

The 190E had by now transformed into spectacular Evolution II form and Rosberg took AMG's first win at Wunstorf in early May. It was a result that was repeated by the team on a further 10 occasions that year. In total, Mercedes-Benz won 16 of the 24 championship rounds held. By contrast, arch rival BMW claimed only seven and Audi just one. Ludwig emerged a worthy Champion ahead of Zakspeed's Kurt Thiim and Schneider; the latter pair separated by a single point on the leaderboard at the season's end.

It is Schneider's car from that landmark 1992 season that was offered here. Entered in all 24 championship rounds, it took four race wins – including a noteworthy double win at Singen – two second places, two third places and seven fastest laps. Subsequently acquired by the DTM Junior Team, it was entered for Mercedes-Benz *wunderkind* Sandy Grau in the 1993 Championship, in which it took a further nine top 10 finishes, including sixth at Avus in its final DTM race.

In 1996, the car passed into a private collection, where it remained until its purchase by the consigning owner in 2008. Under this care, the most recent workshop maintenance included the replacement of the engine's control unit at Ingenieurbüro Ramler in Düsseldorf, Germany, at a documented cost of €880 (£750) in April 2023.

This 190E Evo II remains perhaps the ultimate recent-era touring car, both in aesthetic and engineering terms. Its direct association with the most decorated DTM driver of all renders it one of the most significant factory-run touring cars ever offered for sale.

**"IT IS BERND SCHNEIDER'S CAR FROM THAT LANDMARK 1992 SEASON THAT WAS OFFERED HERE. ENTERED IN ALL 24 CHAMPIONSHIP ROUNDS, IT TOOK FOUR RACE WINS"**



**TOP LEFT**  
Being a Mercedes/AMG raced Evo II added about £250,000 to the value.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
This is the rubber scorched by legends Klaus Ludwig and Bernd Schneider.

**LEFT**  
The DTM racing fuel system is operated from the boot of the Evo II.

**BELOW**  
In race trim the 2.5 engine gave about 300bhp, 70bhp up on the road-legal Evo II.

**BELOW LEFT**  
The outline of the fascia was about the only standard trim panel left.

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# Sheer class

CERNOBBIO, ITALY

Prices of the 300 two-door series are rising, making it the next most valuable Benz after the 300SL



## Lot 149 Mercedes-Benz 300Sc Roadster

In the early 1950s, Mercedes-Benz began an ambitious series of product launches. The key new model platforms were aligned with the overarching ambition of enhancing the marque's public perception as a premium brand. This era led to the introduction of the *Sonderklasse* – or S-Class, as we would come to know it – further to numerous luxury and sports models sharing the '300' badge.

The 300S was revealed in 1951 and represented the pinnacle of the Stuttgart auto maker's product portfolio. It utilised sleek styling with advanced technologies for the time,



and shared a number of components with the 300SL Gullwing – notably around the chassis, engine, and suspension. The luxurious two-seater

**"THE UPDATED 300Sc MODEL WAS REVEALED IN 1955, ADDING MECHANICAL DIRECT FUEL-INJECTION TO THE STRAIGHT-SIX, THREE-LITRE ENGINE THAT WAS DERIVED FROM THE 300SL GULLWING"**



Year	1966
Engine/power	2,996cc/173bhp
Chassis no	188.015.6500090
Engine no	199.980.6500089
Gearbox no	65001270
Body no	A188.015.6500020
Rear Differential no	6500071
Auction RM	Sotheby's, Villa Erba, Italy
When	May 20, 2023
Pre-sale estimate	€600,000-€800,000
	(£517,600-£890,000)
	\$641,800-\$865,700)
Price achieved	€846,250
	(£657,400, \$691,200)

**TOP LEFT**  
Being the later, 300Sc this has a fuel-injected engine.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
Rear cabin is small, but the 300Sc is a four-seater.

**LEFT**  
The Becker-Brescia radio looks like an original fit.

**BELOW**  
The exquisite interior was the best made in the world.

**BELOW LEFT**  
In 1956 this was among the priciest cars available.



was available in cabriolet, coupe, or roadster forms. The updated 300Sc model was revealed in 1955, adding mechanical direct fuel-injection to the straight-six, three-litre engine that was derived from the 300SL Gullwing's.

Chassis 6500090 is one of only 53 examples built as a 300Sc Roadster. While the earlier history of the car has yet to be uncovered, it is documented to have joined The Aurora Collection in 2011. The Mercedes shows signs of an older restoration, thought to have been carried out in the USA, and it was presented in attractive green over deep brown leather, complemented by chrome and walnut-finish details around the interior.

Its four-speed manual gearbox is controlled by a column-shift changer, and the car retains its matching-numbers body, chassis, and engine. As elegant and opulent now as it was when first revealed, this rare Mercedes-Benz is surely the perfect candidate for relaxed, droptop summer cruising.

# Rarely seen red

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

'Pre-merger' AMGs are hot property, as the six-figure bid on this 124 cabriolet proved

## Lot 139 Mercedes-Benz 300CE 3.4 AMG Cabriolet

**P**roduced between 1987 and 1992, the 300CE was built in limited numbers in the traditional manner of classic Mercedes-Benz coupes, being one of the very best specified and most luxuriously equipped models in the range. Outwardly similar to the 230CE, the 300CE was powered by the 2,960cc, single-overhead-camshaft six-cylinder M103 producing 185bhp, an output good enough for a top speed in excess of 140mph in the case of the manual transmission version. Anti-lock brakes

were standard on the 300CE, which was also available with the DOHC, 24-valve M104 power unit and badged 300CE-24. A 300CE Cabriolet, equipped from the start with the M104 24-valve engine, was an addition to the range in 1991, and when it arrived on the market was the first four-seater convertible from Mercedes-Benz since the 220SE Ponton had gone out of production 31 years previously.

By the 124 cabriolet's 1991 launch, the still independent AMG had been producing high-performance derivatives of Mercedes' standard production vehicles for over 20 years, and these sportier versions enjoyed an

enthusiastic following worldwide. The 'official' AMG-built models were only two years away from appearing in Mercedes-Benz showrooms, hence the 300CE 3.4 AMG Cabriolet seen here is among the last of the projects to emerge before the Affalterbach-based specialist became Stuttgart's contracted engine and chassis tuner.

It features a 3.4-litre, in-line six-cylinder engine which, with a maximum of 252bhp on tap, represents a significant performance boost over the standard three-litre model. Reportedly, AMG converted only 43 examples of the 300CE, of which only seven were cabriolets.

<b>Year</b> 1993
<b>Engine/power</b> 3.314cc/252bhp
<b>Chassis no</b> WDB12406 11B86569
<b>Auction</b> Bonhams, The Autoworld sale, Brussels
<b>When</b> May 13, 2023
<b>Pre-sale estimate</b> £120,000-£180,000 (£103,600-£165,300, \$128,400-\$192,500)
<b>Price achieved</b> £126,500 (£109,100, \$135,300)



The 3.4 motor was one of AMG's last independent projects.



Modified cars are worth less than the standard item – unless a 1980s/early 90s AMG.



The interior is a mixture of Benz reserve and AMG flourish.

# Summer cool

GOODWOOD, WEST SUSSEX, UK

Only a few drophead Pontons were made, and one with just two owners from new is extremely rare

## Lot 55 Mercedes-Benz 220S Cabriolet

**T**he 220S saloon debuted at the 1956 Frankfurt motor show, and powered by an uprated version of Mercedes' existing 2,195cc overhead-camshaft six-cylinder engine, was good for a top speed of around 100mph. A shorter wheelbase was adopted for the Cabriolet that appeared in May 1956, and also for the Coupe introduced the following year when the Hydrak semi-automatic transmission became available as an option. The Sindelfingen factory coachwork was attractive, particularly in drophead form, as with this example. Apart from a 5bhp increase to 105bhp in 1957, the 220S changed little during its comparatively short life, production ceasing in October 1959. Fewer than 3,500 Coupes and Cabriolets were built in that time, and today these elegant

<b>Year</b> 1958
<b>Engine/power</b> 2,195cc/105bhp
<b>Chassis no</b> 180030N8509058
<b>Engine no</b> 1809247502926
<b>Auction</b> Bonhams, Goodwood Members meeting, Chichester
<b>When</b> April 16, 2023
<b>Pre-sale estimate</b> £90,000-£95,000 (\$111,600-\$117,800)
<b>Price achieved</b> £101,200 (\$125,500)

**FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:** A stunner with the roof down, engine is carb fed; wood/leather is glorious.



and exclusive limited edition models are highly prized by the market.

This left-hand drive 220S Cabriolet was purchased by the vendor in 1968 from its first owner in Hamburg, Germany and driven to London. Notable features include the additions of power-assisted steering, air conditioning and a stainless steel exhaust system. From 1975 to 1987 the car resided in Lebanon, and was maintained by the Mercedes-Benz main dealership in Beirut. Returning to London in 1987, the Mercedes underwent a sympathetic restoration of the paintwork and trim in 1992, since when it had been maintained to a high standard. Other works include a rebuild of the rear axle (2003) and overhauls of the dynamo and starter motor. A participant in the Hurlingham Club Concours, this elegant Mercedes-Benz cabriolet was offered with sundry maintenance bills and came complete with handbook, jack, and some spare parts.





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# Top of the pile

The bulk of the biggest-engined R107 SLs went to the US, the flagship model that was added to the range in autumn 1985 never offered in Europe. But more than a few of the 560SL have found their way to Europe over the years, so what should you be looking for when checking out the model? And... how much better is it, if at all, than the Euro-spec 500SL?

IMAGES Terry Osborne

**T**he ultimate R107 SL was the 560SL, built from late 1985 until the end of the model series in 1989 when the R129 successor arrived, but it was a model sold only in North America, Japan and Australia. That Europe was denied was disappointing for customers and did not seem at all logical; after all, the same 5.5-litre V8 was installed in the Euro specification 560SE/SEL S-Class saloon and also the 560SEC coupe.

But all these years later the picture has changed. With 49,347 built, the 560SL is relatively numerous in the US, and with the R107 now a coveted classic whose values have risen significantly (assuming excellent to concours condition), UK specialists are finding it worthwhile to import 560SLs and never mind that apart from some right-hand drive cars for Australia, all were made in left hand-drive, even those delivered in Japan, which is a right-hand drive market.

A 560SL in very good condition will be priced at £40,000 to £50,000 at classic specialists – and that, as we'll come to later, is actually less than a European spec 500SL can go for. So the range-topper can be a relative bargain! Here is what you need to look out for if considering buying one.

### Design, engineering

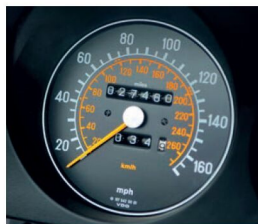
The reason for the 560SL being primarily a US market car becomes a little clearer once its output figures are set in context. For use in the European 560 saloon and coupe, the M117 V8, a longer-stroke version of the five-litre, single cam per bank engine in the 500 models, produced 268bhp (rising to 296bhp in Autumn 1987) and 317lb ft of torque – but due to the exhaust catalyst and 'Federalised' engine

**RIGHT**  
This stunning car has been 'Europeanised', losing its US bumpers and lights.

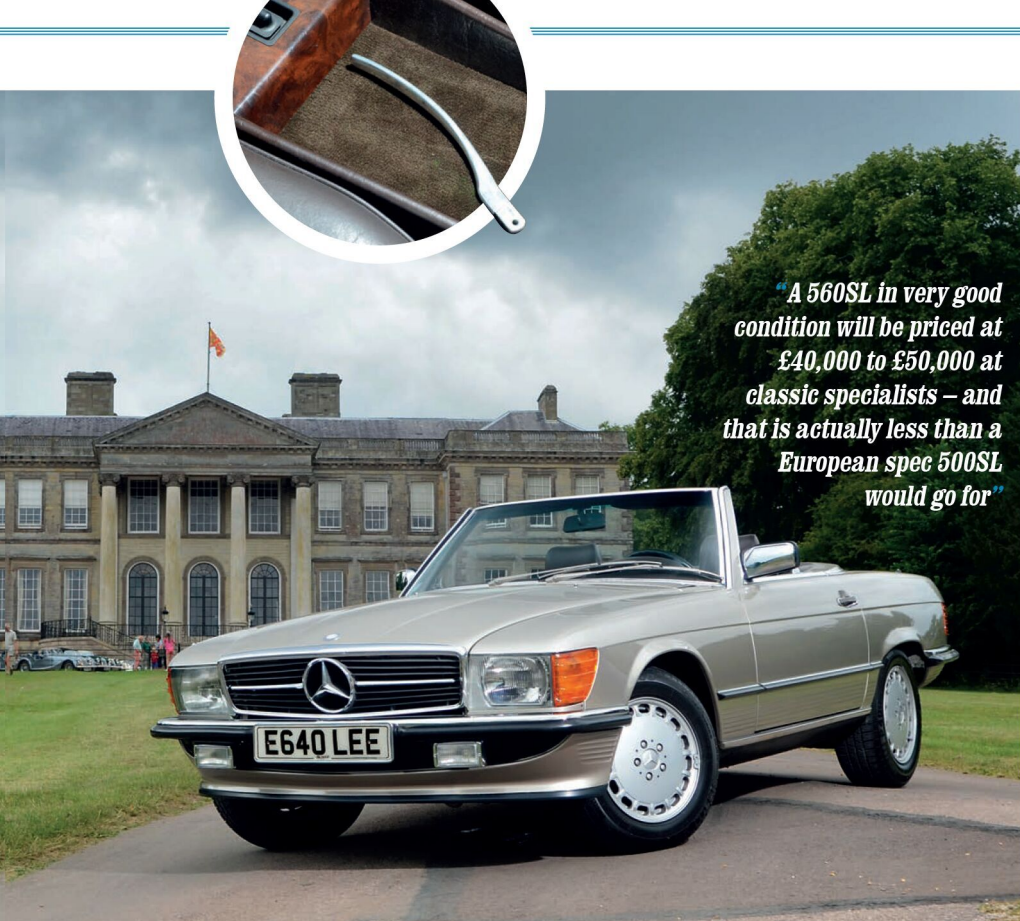
**BELOW**  
Every 560SL had factory fitted climate control, an option on Euro R107s.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
Cars with under 30,000 miles can still be found, but at top dollar prices.

**BOTTOM**  
For the 560SL, Mercedes threw almost the entire optional extras list at it.







*"A 560SL in very good condition will be priced at £40,000 to £50,000 at classic specialists – and that is actually less than a European spec 500SL would go for"*

**ABOVE INSET**

The hood is lowered and raised by hand, this special tool needed.

**BELOW**

Rear lights repel road dirt, a safety feature Mercedes introduced with the R107.



**Specifications**

**Mercedes-Benz 560SL (R107)**

**ENGINE** M117 5,547cc  
**POWER** 227bhp@4,750rpm  
**TORQUE** 275lb ft@3,250rpm  
**TRANSMISSION** 4-speed auto  
**WEIGHT** 1,680kg  
**0-62MPH** 7.7sec  
**TOP SPEED** 139mph  
**YEARS PRODUCED** 1985-1989  
**NUMBER BUILT** 49,347

*Figures for a 560SL in standard US engine specification*

management required for US emissions compliance, the 560SL gave just 227bhp and 275lb ft torque.

This was actually 15bhp and 14lb ft of torque less than a European 500SL mustered. But while this may seem a meagre output for such a large engine, it is worth noting that in previous incarnations the flagship R107 in the US had much less than this – in the early 1980s the 4.5-litre 450SL was,

**ABOVE**

Clear road, hood down, Fleetwood Mac playing... it doesn't get much better.

thanks to continual detuning, down to only 158bhp. Every 560SL was fitted with the same four-speed automatic gearbox that replaced the V8's three-speed transmission in 1980.

Due to the R107 being 14 years old by the time the 560SL arrived, the chassis was a previous generation configuration, with coil springs and torsion bars at the front and a semi-trailing arm set up at the rear. ➔

## ! What goes wrong

### Engine

The problems affecting the M117 in 5.5-litre form are the same as those on the five-litre, not that there are many of them. "They're very robust, but do benefit from regular use," advises R107 expert Bruce Greenham. "The most common issue is the timing chain, you've got to be mindful that it needs changed at around 100,000 miles."

It's also likely that the motor will develop a top end rattle, which is due to worn tappets. "You get lazy tappets, which sound dreadful," says Bruce. The electronic ignition used on later M117s eliminates the ignition fault on earlier engines.

### Gearbox

The weak link in the transmission is a tendency to jolt into reverse and a harsh kickdown. "This can happen even on low mileage cars, and to cure it you're into a gearbox removal and rebuild," Bruce tells us.

### Electrics

Being from Mercedes' pre-electronic age, there are few electrical issues to worry about, but of course any dashboard lights remaining on when the engine is running is a matter for concern. The one most likely to do this is the ABS light. "This usually means the anti-lock sensors or control unit are faulty," says Bruce.

### Steering

Check the steering for play around the straight-ahead position, this indicating a steering box with internal wear. "This can be adjusted a couple of times in its life, but after that you'll need a new box," Bruce explains.

### Bodywork

R107s can look very respectable on the outside but be suffering serious corrosion underneath. And the car's notorious rust problem is the front bulkhead, which can be in a very poor state without anyone knowing about it. SLShop has long offered a replacement bulkhead made from galvanised steel priced at £7,200 fitted and which comes with a warranty.

Unless the car is a particularly low mileage, carefully cosseted example – and there are plenty of those around – you must expect corrosion commensurate with a car of at least 34 years old. "Anything below the waitline can be an issue, for example the sills, the wheelarches, jacking points, front chassis legs and boot floor," Bruce warns.

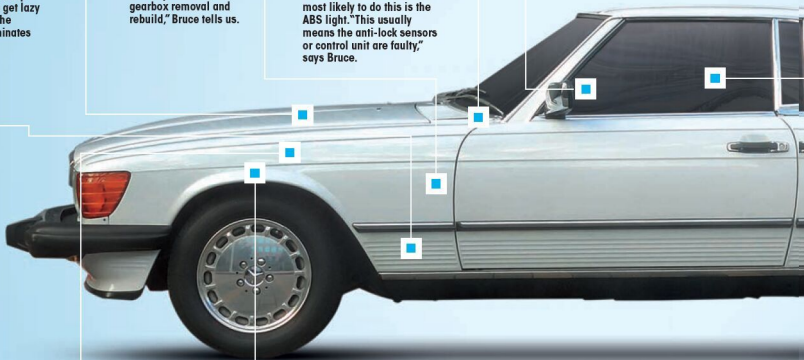
Most 560SLs will have come from the US, and the state where they were kept makes a big difference. "Cars from the east coast are likely to have the corrosion problems, but those the west coast, and dry states like Texas probably won't," Bruce points out.

### Engine mounts

If the car vibrates more than seems normal, it could be due to worn out engine mounts, these having succumbed to the weight of the big engine. The V8 cars are more susceptible to this problem than the lighter-nosed six-cylinder versions.

### Suspension

The R107 was set up to be comfortable rather than sporty, so it should ride well, feeling gently and quietly damped, and should not crash over bumps. Look out for the effect of cheap, rather than top branded tyres, which may adversely affect the handling. A job that often seems to need doing is renewing worn, clonking front ball joints.



***"In the US 560SLs were delivered with a comprehensive equipment specification including leather seats and climate control air conditioning"***

⇒ The power-assisted steering was Stuttgart's favoured recirculating ball system offering good shock absorption but little feedback, although it was quickly geared at just three turns lock to lock. The front and rear disc brakes featured anti-locking as standard.

Introduced in autumn 1985 for the 1986 model year to coincide with the R107's final update, the 560SL shared the minor tweaks applied the other three R107s (six-cylinder 300SL, and V8 420SL and 500SL). The single noticeable exterior change was the less fussy, '15-hole' design of alloy wheel to replace the 'Mexican hat' rims, and which was one inch bigger at 15 inches in diameter and with lower profile, 205/65 tyres. Other updates included a reshaped front spoiler, black plastic rather than chrome trimmed door handles, slightly more shapely



seats and minor interior trim updates.

The 560SL shares the different exterior treatment of all Stateside R107s. Extended rubber bumpers were fitted, and the European single lens headlights were replaced by twin lamps, while an additional brake

light is mounted on the bootlid. Some feel these items makes the SL look ugly, but others say they give the US-spec roadster



**ABOVE**  
A cruise control was part of the standard equipment spec on all 560SLs made.

**LEFT INSET**  
It sacrificed one of its five fascia air vents to house an outside temp gauge.

a charm of its own though they're probably in the minority. The example seen here was switched to European lights, bumpers and plain bootlid after its importation, a common conversion.

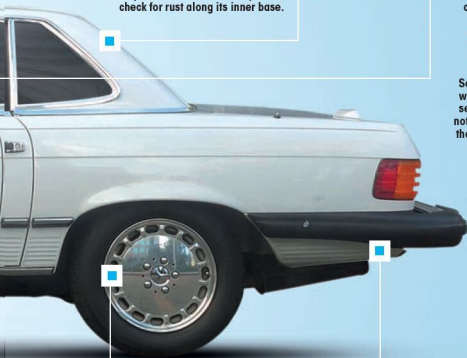
In the US, 560SLs were delivered with a comprehensive equipment specification including leather seats and climate control air conditioning. Every car came with a factory hardtop, and the hood is operated manually although aftermarket electric conversions exist. The final 560SLs





## Hood and hardtop

The canvas hood is tough and the folding mechanism (clever but cantankerous to use) is durable too. The canvas may be ripped or worn, but a more likely problem is the plastic windows turning opaque. If the hardtop is fitted, ask for it to be removed so that the hood can be raised and inspected. While the hardtop is off, check for rust along its inner base.

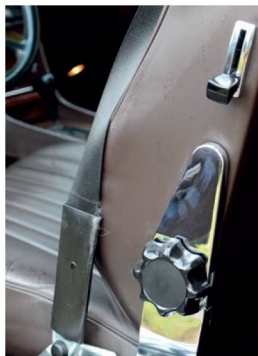


## Brakes

Brake calipers are known to bind, this more likely on a little used car and you'll easily hear and feel when driving the SL. Due to its added weight, a 560SL will go through brake pads rather more quickly than the six-cylinder 280SL and 300SL.

## Interior

Buying any R107 with a good interior side steps a lot of headaches, because while the exact material pattern is usually available, trimming is very expensive and can look inappropriate on a sub-concours car. Look out for cracked leather, and inspect the outside bolster on the driver's seat, which may be worn," Bruce advises. The interiors of R107s from dry states can look faded. Seat frames commonly crack with sheer age; a good R107 seat will be firm and springy, not soft. If when you first open the door you're hit with a waft of damp, you know water is leaking in.



**LEFT**  
Seats adjusted by hand – electric seats weren't factory fitted on R107s.

**BELOW**  
Instrumentation is simple and stylish, and also comprehensive.



## Exhaust system

For those seeking originality, one important check is the exhaust system. "People take the exhaust and catalyst off and fit a mild steel or stainless steel system, and that might free a little more power, but it's really all about the sound," says Bruce.



**LEFT**  
The 5.5 model was added at the 1985 facelift, which introduced '15-hole' alloys.

**RIGHT**  
Almost 49,400 560SLs were made, so finding a good one isn't difficult.



## Telltale signs of trouble

- The timing chain rattles when worn, as will the tappets
- A clunk when reverse is engaged indicates serious gearbox wear
- Corrosion on the rear wings, boot floor, jacking points – and especially the front bulkhead
- A damp smell in the cabin suggests water leaks
- 'Dry state' US cars can have faded and cracked interior trim
- A clanking from front suspension ball joints is a common occurrence
- The hood's plastic rear screen can turn opaque

were built in August 1989, the total accounting for a fifth of all R107s; it was the third best selling model, behind the 450SL and 380SL.

## Driving the 560SL

You might expect the 560's engine to wheeze unsteadily into life, its emaciated state preventing it from revving properly. But a good one will fire up with a pleasing, muted roar, settling back into the slightly burbly

tickover more noticeable on the 5.5-litre V8 than the five-litre. Handling and ride are traditional

Mercedes: compliant suspension causes body roll through corners, but grip and balance are more impressive than might be expected.

The R107's cabin is a close fitting environment, but with the lovely leather trim and rich carpets, also

a pleasant and cosy place. Fold down rear seats were optional, but it is not clear who would actually fit in them, so they are best regarded as a plushly upholstered shelf. You sit close to the dashboard, and when gripping the steering wheel, which is larger than is strictly necessary, your fingers find themselves only an inch or two away from the instrument binnacle.

While right-hand drive R107s sold in the UK have a handbrake lever on the central console, like all LHD

## Milestones

**September 1985** A limited number of detail changes are applied to the R107, and the 560SL is added, for North America, Japan and Australia only

**August 1989** 560SL production ends along with other R107s, now that the R129 is ready for launch

## What a 560SL will cost to buy

Well preserved, low mileage cars are usually priced at between £40,000 and £50,000 at classic car specialists. You might assume that a 560SL would be worth a premium over a 500SL in comparable condition. But with regard to the very best cars this isn't the case, according to Bruce Greetham, formerly of SLShop. "A 560SL even with a European conversion is going to be £10,000 to £15,000 less than a European spec 500SL."

The second category comprises well used, high mileage specimens that are drivable but need attention. These are seen advertised as low as £15,000 in the UK and Europe; however, bringing them up to a good standard will cost many thousands and given R107 values probably isn't economic.

Another option is to buy in from the US, where they are much cheaper, no doubt due at least in part to their greater availability. You'll see scruffy examples for the equivalent of £10,000 to £15,000, and in some cases under £10,000. But obviously if you go the direct route cost of freight and importation must be factored in, typically around £3,000.

### Price range

**£7,500-£10,000** High mileage, well below average condition cars for sale in the US – add import costs

**£10,000-£20,000** Scruffy cars in UK/Europe, and will require major expenditure to make properly usable

**£20,000-£30,000** Average condition cars offered by used car dealers, maybe incomplete service history

**£30,000-£40,000** In this price bracket, expect rust free examples and no mechanical or trim issues

**£40,000-£50,000** Low mileage, exceptionally good condition cars with a detailed maintenance history

**£50,000-£70,000** Only exceptional, 'time capsule' 560SLs with Euro conversion can fetch these prices

### Typical servicing/maintenance costs (including labour, VAT)

Oil service **£482**

Major service **£1,382**

Replace engine timing chain **£2,960**

Cure rattling tappets **£1,790**

Front brake discs and pads **£322**

Fit a reconditioned steering box **£1,356**

Replace the front bulkhead **£7,240**

Fit European bumpers and lights **£10,327**

Four premium brand tyres (205/65VR15) **£600**

*Servicing and parts prices from SLShop, Stratford-upon-Avon*



**ABOVE RIGHT INSET**  
Four-speed autobox works smoothly, but check it doesn't clunk into reverse.

***"You can buy a 560SL for under £20,000, but unless subject to a nut and bolt rebuild will never have the freshness of genuine low mileage cars"***

⇒ examples the 560SL's parking brake is foot-operated and released by a switch at the side of the fascia.

### Converting to European specification

Normally in the classic car world converting from standard instantly reduces value, but the 560SL is an exception. "I've sold 560SLs into the £50,000s, but only with the European conversion," says Bruce Greetham, R107 expert and formerly sales director of SLShop in Warwickshire. "They won't make that money with the Stateside bumpers and lights."

'Europeanising' the Mercedes involves fitting chrome bumpers and one-piece headlamps, which Bruce says are now easier to find as new stock than say 10 years ago, presumably due to Mercedes-Benz Classic having

remanufactured a batch. The bootlid brake light must be removed and the lid made good, while a foglamp should be wired into the rear offside lamp cluster to operate from the master light switch. R107 specialist SLShop would charge around £7,500 for the complete work. Changing the engine's settings isn't recommended, as the M117 has sufficient power even with its catalyst and US emissions tune.

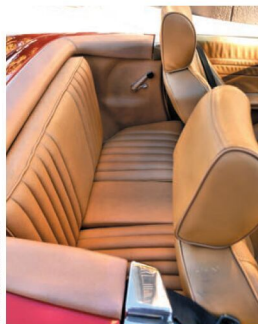
### Verdict

On paper the 560SL, with less output than the European 500SL, may seem to be a paper tiger. On the road it's a different matter, as even in tuned-down state the 5.5-litre version of the M117 is a delightful Mercedes V8, its slightly woolly feel giving it a different character to the purer sounding five-litre. We'd say the actual performance is irrelevant, as there's enough there for an R107 – it's a laid back cruiser, not a frantic sports car.

You can buy a 560SL for under £20,000, but cars in this price range will effectively be running projects, and unless subject to a nut and bolt rebuild will never have the freshness of genuine low mileage cars. The best cars are a wonderful experience, but you'll be paying £40,000 or more for that. You also need to decide whether you want the original US look or a car converted to look like a European model. But US or Euro, the 560SL delivers the wonderful classic Mercedes roadster experience.

**BELOW**  
A 560SL in California and with its 'federalised' bumpers and headlamps.

**BELOW LEFT**  
Leather-trimmed rear seat looks lovely but in practice is only useful as a shelf.





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# ALL THE CLASSICS

## Values

The values given are based on asking prices in the UK and internationally, and also achieved prices at local UK and major international classic auctions. The lower figure in each price range is for a car that is complete and running, and excludes dismantled cars. The higher value is for one in exceptional original or restored condition, and includes the buyer's premium paid at auction.

Need a quick, convenient summary and a guide to the value of the classic Mercedes-Benz model you are considering buying, or just want to find out the full picture of what models Mercedes has manufactured down the years? Over the next four pages we review every Mercedes road car offered from the late 1940s until the end of the 'young classic' era in the late 1990s, listing cars' key specification details and a likely top and bottom price



### W136 170 (1946-1955)

The pre-war, 'suicide'-doored W136 saloon and cabriolet got Mercedes-Benz back in business after World War Two. The 170V saloon resumed in 1947, using a four-cylinder 1.7-litre engine, and was replaced by the 170S in 1949, with more power and a more spacious body. The last-of-the-line model was the 1953-1955 170S-V. W136s date from a time when German cars of any kind were extremely rare outside Germany.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 1,697cc/4/38bhp - 1,767cc/4/44bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Values** £15,000-£30,000/  
\$20,000-\$40,000 **Article** Winter 2014



### W186/189 300 (1951-1962)

Called the 'Adenauer' because German Chancellor Conrad Adenauer used them while in office throughout the 1950s, the 300 marked Mercedes' return to limousines of some pre-war grandeur. All models used a straight-six three-litre engine, which gained fuel-injection when the big four-door, also available as a cabriolet, was revamped in 1957 with an elegant, pillarless body, as seen here. Values are rising significantly.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,996cc/6/113-158bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 11,413 **Values** £20,000-£80,000/  
\$25,000-\$120,000 **Article** Autumn 2017



### W187 220 (1951-1955)

Part of the effort to increase the Mercedes-Benz model line in a short time, in order to boost factory production, the 220 introduced in 1951 was a six-cylinder car based on the 170V. Besides the four-door saloon which was the prime seller, it was offered in two-door coupe, convertible Cabriolet A and Cabriolet B form, and also as a four-door 'open tourer' model. Later cars had a more powerful 2.2-litre engine.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,195cc/6/79-84bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 18,467 **Values** £20,000-£40,000/  
\$25,000-\$50,000 **Article** Winter 2018



### W188 300S/Sc (1951-1958)

This model began the Mercedes tradition of offering a two-door based on the top Stuttgart saloon, in this case the 300 'Adenauer'. Hand-built by specially selected craftsmen, the 300S was super luxurious and correspondingly expensive, and was offered as the Coupe, the Cabriolet A or Roadster with a simpler hood arrangement. In 1955 it became the 300SC, gaining fuel-injection for the three-litre engine.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,996cc/6/148-173bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 760 **Values** £350,000-£750,000/  
\$472,500-\$1.01m **Article** Autumn 2015



### W120/W121 Ponton (1953-1962)

Nicknamed 'Ponton' after the clever, easily removable engine and subframe assembly, these four-cylinder models were a technical milestone thanks to the 'three-box' design and integrated body and chassis offering much increased crash safety. It was built in 1.8-litre petrol and diesel form (180, 180D), later graduating to 1.9-litre units, and became Mercedes' first big volume model in the 1950s.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 1,767cc/4/40bhp - 1,897cc/4/74bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 442,963 **Values** £10,000-£30,000/\$15,000-\$40,000 **Article** Spring 2023



### W180/W105/W128 Ponton (1954-1959)

A year after the four-cylinder Ponton made its debut, the six-cylinder models followed, using the same front subframe and suspension, but with a new and more sophisticated rear axle, and distinguished by their longer nose and added exterior chrome trim. All used the same freshly engineered 2.2-litre overhead camshaft engine, the 220, 219 and 220S with a single carburettor, the 220SE using fuel-injection.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,195cc/6/84-113bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 111,035 **Values** £15,000-£40,000/  
\$20,000-\$50,000 **Article** n/a



### W198 300SL (1954-1957)

The world's first supercar, featuring a fuel-injected engine and a lightweight spaceframe chassis, and the model that re-established Mercedes' engineering credentials after World War Two. Gullwings have long been the ultimate Mercedes classic of the post-war years, especially the 29 alloy-bodied examples built for racing customers, and it's authoritatively

estimated that 95 per cent of the 1,400 made survive. They have become so valuable – even in poor condition they are likely to fetch £1m or close to it – that their owners now rarely drive them other than at exclusive classic car events.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,996cc/6/212bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 1,400 **Values** £1m-£3m (alloy bodied)/  
\$1.35m-\$4m **Article** Issue 1





#### W121 190SL Roadster (1955-1963)

While the 300SL Gullwing was Mercedes' 'halo' car, the similarly styled but smaller bodied 190SL launched a year later was intended as a far less expensive, volume model, and thus did without the spaceframe, instead borrowing the humble four-cylinder Ponton saloon underpinnings. Performance from the 1.9-litre, four-cylinder engine was thought modest even at the time, but the compact Mercedes roadster was nonetheless a comfortable and stylish tourer.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 1,897cc/6/104bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 25,881 **Values** £70,000-£200,000/£95,000-£270,000 **Article** Autumn 2023



#### W198 300SL Roadster (1957-1963)

Introduced as a more 'civilised' replacement for the Gullwing, the 300SL Roadster of 1957 used conventional side-hinged doors and ran with modified rear suspension that was less nervous on the limit. The interior had a more luxurious feel, too. For many years Roadster values lagged behind those of Gullwings, but there is now evidence from international auctions that it is catching up on price on its coupe stablemate.

**Engine/cyl/power** 2,996cc/6/237bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 1,858 **Values** £700,000-£1.5m/£1m-£2m **Article** Issue 4



#### W111/112 Coupe/Cabriolet (1961-1971)

The W111 two-door, built on the Fintail platform and unveiled in February 1961, offered Americans a near American-sized pillarless luxury coupe. It, and the cabriolet, started out with the staple Benz 2.2-litre six-cylinder engine which gave the 220SEb modest performance. But the W111 progressed through 2.5-, 3.0- and then 2.8-litre incarnations, culminating in 280SE 3.5 V8 guise, the model which, especially as a cabriolet, has risen in value above the rest.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,195cc/6/118bhp - 3,499cc/V8/197bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 35,931 **Values** \$50,000-\$300,000/£70,000-\$400,000 **Article** Sum '17



#### W120 Ponton Bakkie (1955-1958)

The Ponton pick-up was built for one specific reason: to sidestep import duty on cars imported to South Africa, where Mercedes-Benz had a significant presence by the mid 1950s. Partially built-up Ponton chassis were delivered to various contractors there, who assembled and sold the Bakkie (meaning pickup), which qualified as locally manufactured. All vehicles were 1.7-litre petrol, although a number of them were later converted to use a diesel engine.

**Engine/cyl/power** 1,767cc/4/51bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 400 (estimated) **Values** £20,000-£30,000/£25,000-\$40,000 **Article** Summer 2017



#### W111/112 Fintail (1959-1968)

For the first two years, the Fintail was offered only in six-cylinder form, and the sole engine was a 2.2-litre, the best model being the fuel-injected 220SEb. This was displaced as the flagship by the three-litre 300SE of 1961 boasting a high specification including air suspension, and its own W112 designation. Six-cylinder models are recognisable from the fours by the vertical front lights, longer nose, and added brightwork.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,195cc/6/94bhp - 2,996cc/6/168bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 344,751 **Values** £20,000-£90,000/£27,000-\$125,000 **Article** Sum 2023



#### W113 SL Pagoda (1963-1971)

Made in 230SL, 250SL (1967) and final 280SL form (1968), the W113 SL is regarded as one of the prettiest of Mercedes' post-war roadsters. It's also still a surprisingly modern drive - provided the complex fuel-injection linkage is set up properly, and the suspension springs and dampers are in good order. A few 250SLs were built up in 'coupe' format, with no canvas roof and with a slightly extended rear cabin. The 280SL is the most sought after of the W113s.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,306cc/6/148bhp - 2,778cc/6/168bhp **Transmission** 4/5-speed **Number** 48,912 **Values** £40,000-£200,000/£50,000-\$270,000 **Article** Spring '21



#### W180/128 Ponton (1956-1960)

Although they were derived from the six-cylinder Ponton saloon launched two years earlier, the elegant coupe and cabriolet models oozed extra style, and found much favour with affluent US customers. Built on a 120mm shortened chassis, the first models were the 220S Coupe and 220S Cabriolet using the Ponton's regular carburettored 2.2-litre engine, this giving way to the same unit with fuel-injection and more power in 1958, these cars badged 220SE.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 2,195cc/6/105-118bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 5,371 **Values** £70,000-£150,000/£90,000-\$200,000 **Article** Summer 2018



#### W110 Fintail (1961-1968)

The Fintail in four-cylinder form defined the German car industry of the 1960s and was a vehicle with wide appeal, its spacious body just as suitable for family transport as it was for taxi work. Coming two years after the six-cylinder Fintail, the production life of these shorter-nosed saloons was divided into two phases: cars built until mid-1965 were the petrol 190c and diesel 190Dc, and thereafter the 200 and 200D.

**Engine/cyl/power** range 1,896cc/4/79bhp - 1,988cc/4/94bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 622,453 **Values** £10,000-£30,000/£15,000-\$40,000 **Article** Autumn '17



#### W100 600 (1963-1981)

The 600's aero-engineered hydraulics, new V8 and perfect, Paul Bracq styling saw Mercedes-Benz displace Rolls-Royce as the maker of the 'best car in the world'. The biggest seller was the SWB 600, but LWB Pullmans and open-topped landaulets were available, too, and the bespoke nature of the car ensured that no two examples shared exactly the same interior specification. Prices have risen fast of late, especially of those cars with a famous/infamous former owner.

**Engine/cyl/power** 6,332cc/V8/247bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 2,677 **Values** £70,000-\$400,000/£90,000-\$540,000 **Article** Autumn 2013





## W108/109 (1965-1972)

The W108 was launched to replace the six-cylinder, W111/W112 Fintail, which was felt not to be sufficiently distanced from the four-cylinder models to fully exploit the luxury market. It began modestly as the 2.5-litre twin-carburettor/fuel-injected 250S/250SE and three-litre 300SE, but the most memorable model was the W109 300SEL 6.3 of 1968, the world's first 'super saloon'. More V8 models followed to give added appeal in the US.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,496cc/6/128bhp - 6,332cc/V8/247bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 383,100 **Values** \$15,000-\$90,000/\$20,000-\$120,000 **Article** Winter '21



## W114 'Stroke 8' coupe (1968-1976)

The 'Stroke 8' coupe that was introduced almost a year after the saloon was slightly lower, but had the same wheelbase and overall length, leaving it with a very long boot. At the time some thought this did not look right, but it is now part of the car's charm. The two-door was built only as a six-cylinder, but in that respect shared the saloon's engines, the M110-engined 280CE introduced in 1972 usually the favourite model.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,496cc/6/128bhp - 2746cc/6/182bhp **Transmission** 4/5-speed **Number** 56,521 **Values** \$10,000-\$30,000/\$13,000-\$40,000 **Article** Spring 2015



## W116 S-Class (1972-1980)

The W116 SE and stretched W116 SEL models brought with them the title 'S-Class', and defined that model's role as the default director-level car. The 350SE/SEL and 450SEL 3.5- and 4.5-litre V8s were the most delivered models, but the range was topped and tailed by the extraordinary 450SEL 6.9 and the six-cylinder 280SE/SEL and there was even a turbodiesel specially engineered for North America. The 116-series is increasingly attracting collectors.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,746cc/6/154bhp - 6,834cc/V8/282bhp **Trans** 3/4/5-speed **Number** 473,035 **Values** \$15,000-\$70,000/\$20,000-\$95,000 **Article** Spring 2017



## W110/111 Universal (1965-1968)

Prior to manufacturing its own estate cars, Mercedes farmed the assembly work out to specialist firms, IMA in Belgium commissioned to produce Stuttgart's first 'proper' wagon, the Fintail-based Universal. This could be purchased in four-cylinder, short-nose W110 form as the 200 petrol and 190D/200D diesel, but, confusingly, also as the short-nose, round headlamp W110 230 (seen here) or the long nosed, vertical lamped W111 230S, both with six-cylinder power.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 1,988cc/4/54bhp - 2,306cc/6/118bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 2,750 **Values** \$15,000-\$40,000/\$20,000-\$50,000 **Article** Winter 2015



## R107 SL (1971-1989)

Able to claim by far the longest production run of any SL generation, the elegant R107, with its lazy V8s and comfortably sprung suspension, was designed for North American tastes. The six-cylinder 280SL was introduced as an 'economy' model in 1974, and, at the other end of the spectrum, the 5.5-litre 560SL arrived at the 1985 facelift, but the 1971-1980 450SL achieved the highest worldwide sales tally, nearly 66,300.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,746cc/6/175bhp - 5,547cc/V8/282bhp **Trans** 3/4/5-speed **Number** 237,287 **Values** \$10,000-\$100,000/\$13,500-\$135,000 **Article** Sum 2019



## W/S123 saloon/estate (1976-1985)

It is said that the 123-series was Mercedes' most thoroughly engineered model to date when it appeared in early 1976, and the level of attention to detail and build quality supports that view. The saloon came first, offered with a variety of petrol and diesel engines, while the estate model that followed a year later was almost a model in its own right, featuring a space-saving rear (self-levelling) suspension, and a tailgate that was part of the safety cell.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 1,988cc/4/54bhp - 2,746cc/6/182bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** built 2,588,657 **Values** \$10,000-\$40,000/\$13,000-\$50,000 **Article** Winter 2018



## W114/W115 'Stroke 8' (1968-1976)

To replace the by then dated W110 Fintail, for 1968 Mercedes conceived the 'New Generation' or 'Stroke 8' W115 (four-cylinder) and W114 (six-cylinder) saloons featuring a much plainer body. A multiplicity of engines saw service, but the best one, many believe, was the free-revving, 2.7-litre, twin-cam M110, installed just before the 1973 facelift. At the facelift the front quarter windows disappeared, and a padded 'safety' steering wheel was fitted.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 1,988cc/4/54bhp - 2,746cc/6/182bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** 1,843,328 **Values** \$5,000-\$25,000/\$7,000-\$35,000 **Article** Winter 2017



## C107 SLC (1971-1981)

Mercedes-Benz did not replace the W111 coupe/cabriolet with another S-Class-based design, instead building the next generation flagship two-door on the R107 SL, stretching the wheelbase 360mm but using the same interior and engines, 2.8-litre six-cylinder up to a five-litre V8. Recently collectors' interest in C107s has picked up, the homologation 450SLC 5.0 and 500SL built from 1978 to 1981 the most coveted.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,746cc/6/175bhp - 4,973cc/V8/237bhp **Trans** 3/4/5-speed **Number** 62,888 **Values** \$10,000-\$50,000/\$13,500-\$70,000 **Article** Spring 2018



## C123 (1977-1985)

Unlike the preceding W114 coupe, the C123 used a shorter wheelbase and overall length than the saloon, lending a more balanced appearance. Pre-1980, the entry model was the carb fed 2.3-litre 230C, replaced by the more satisfactory fuel-injected 230CE, while the top model was the 280CE with its 2.8-litre M110 six with 183bhp. Two diesels were built for North America only, the 1977-1982 naturally aspirated 300CD and 1981-1985 300CD Turbodiesel.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,307cc/4/108bhp - 2,998cc/6/123bhp **Transmission** 4/5-speed **Number** 99,884 **Values** \$10,000-\$40,000/\$13,000-\$50,000 **Article** Autumn '22





### W126 S-Class (1979-1992)

With its discreet lines and impressive technical and safety innovations, the 126-series consolidated the S-Class as the luxury car of choice, beating the BMW 7-Series on prestige, and the Jaguar XJ6 on build quality and reliability. The choice model is the 1985-on 560SEL, while the North America only turbodiesel 300SDL and 350SDL have a cult following. There are few signs of values picking up, so SE and SEL 126s are still big bargains.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,746cc/6/154bhp - 5,547cc/V8/296bhp **Transmission** 4-speed **Number** 818,036 **Values** \$10,000-\$30,000/\$13,000-\$40,000 **Article** Autumn '19



### 190E 2.3-16/Evolution/Evo II (1984-93)

Mercedes-Benz launched the BMW M3 chasing 190E 2.3-16, a homologation model, to legalise the W201 in motorsport. It began in 2.3-litre form with a Cosworth-designed 16-valve cylinder-head, and in 1988 at the W201 facelift became the 2.5-litre 190E 2.5-16. As DTM competition mounted, in 1989 it was developed into the Evolution, and the following year the Evolution II, this ultimate model now making huge prices.

**Engine/cyl/power** 2,229cc/4/175bhp - 2,463cc/4/232bhp **Values** \$15,000-\$40,000/\$20,000-\$50,000; Evo/II \$60,000-\$250,000/\$80,000-\$340,000 **Article** Sum '22



### W124 500E/E500/E60 (1991-1995)

When Mercedes-Benz instructed Porsche to install the SL's five-litre V8 in the W124, an all-time great 'Q-car' emerged. Looking like any other W124 apart from wider wheelarches, the 500E (badged E500 from 1993) delivered a velvet punch while cossetting its occupants. It wasn't built in right-hand drive form, but it was sold in the UK nonetheless, and of late has gained in collectability, especially the E500 Limited, introduced towards the end of production.

**Engine/cyl/power** 4,973cc/V8/316-322bhp **Transmission** 4-speed automatic **Number** 10,479 **Values** \$20,000-\$70,000/\$25,000-\$95,000 **Article** date Spring 2019



### C126 SEC (1981-1991)

After the C107, the S-Class-based SEC saw Stuttgart back in the luxury coupe market proper. Its glorious pillarless body and all the refinement of the 116 saloon made it very popular despite high purchase prices. Mercedes didn't bother with a six-cylinder version, the base model initially the 380SEC with its 3.8-litre V8. The most popular model was the five-litre 500SEC, but the one that collectors like most is the 1985 launched 5.5-litre 560SEC.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 3,839cc/V8/201bhp - 5,547cc/V8/296bhp **Trans** 4-speed **Number** 74,060 **Values** \$20,000-\$60,000/\$25,000-\$80,000 **Article** Autumn '21



### 124 saloon/estate/coupe/cabriolet (1984-97)

The 124-series kicked off in 1984 with the W124 saloon, the S124 estate following in 1985, and the pillarless C124 coupe brought glamour in 1987 in 200CE, 230CE and 300CE form. The two-door format was further exploited with the A124 cabriolet launched in 1991, Mercedes' first full four-seat drophead for 20 years. Some prefer the pre-1992/1993 cars, with their two-valve engines, and the star badge on the grille top.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 1,996cc/4/120bhp - 3,199cc/6/217bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** 2,729, 120 **Values** \$4,000-\$16,000/\$5,000-\$20,000 **Article** Winter 2022



### W202 C36/C43 AMG (1993-2000)

The original 'hot' C-Class sold by Mercedes-Benz used the M104 four-valve engine, enlarged from 3.2 to 3.6 litres and with bigger valves, while the chassis was updated. The C36 feels like a traditional tuned car with more harshness and less ride comfort. The C43 AMG that replaced it in 1997 added much refinement, its 4.2-litre V8 as smooth as it was powerful. The C36 was only ever a saloon, but the C43 was a wagon too. Both models are on the cusp of classic status.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 3,606cc/6/276bhp - 4,266cc/V8/302bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** 5,221/3,857 **Values** \$7,000-\$15,000/\$9,000-\$20,000 **Article** Winter 2018



### W201 190E (1982-1993)

Returning to the 'small' car market to compete with the BMW 3-Series and Audi 80 proved a good move for Mercedes-Benz, considerably increasing Stuttgart's annual output. Initially there were two-litre carburettored and fuel-injected models (190, 190E), but diesels and a 2.6-litre petrol six-cylinder followed. Solidly built and without complex electronics, the W201 is DIY-friendly and inexpensive to maintain. This is now a Mercedes young classic rising in value.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 1,997cc/4/104bhp - 2,599cc/6/164bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** 1,879,629 **Values** \$3,000-\$15,000/\$4,000-\$20,000 **Article** Autumn 2018



### R129 SL (1989-2001)

This SL model is regarded as the last of the 'young timer' generation, with traditional Benz styling and build quality. It was offered with a wide range of engines, from a 2.8-litre six (SL280) to a 7.3-litre V12 (SL73), but popular choices were the 500SL/SL500 and SL320. Lacking the R107's sweet looks, the R129 is only now appealing to collectors, the six-litre SL60 AMG (1993-1998) particularly sought after.

**Engine/cyl/power range** 2,799cc/6/190bhp - 7,291cc/V12/518bhp **Trans** 4/5-speed **Number** 204,940 **Values** \$8,000-\$50,000/\$11,000-\$70,000 **Article** Winter 2013



### C/A/W/S124 E36 AMG (1993-1996)

The 124-series in its four body forms was among the first wave of 'official' AMG sold through Mercedes-Benz showrooms from 1993 and 1994. All used the 3.6-litre AMG tuned engine seen in the C36 AMG, while springs and dampers were similarly updated and a bodykit was optional. Production numbers were never released, but we do know the UK sales: 24 coupes, 14 cabriolets, 12 saloons, and seven estates. They command higher prices than regular 124s.

**Engine/cyl/power** 3,606cc/6/227bhp **Transmission** 4-speed automatic **Number** undisclosed **Values** \$20,000-\$40,000/\$25,500-\$50,000 **Article** date Issue 2

# Classic classifieds



**W116 450SE** 1979, 95,000 miles, auto, metallic magnetite blue, bamboo leather interior, air con, excellent chrome, M-B splashguards, owner's wallet, histories, spare wheel, tools, jack, M-B first aid kit, fire extinguisher, £POA. Tel: 07737 447556. Suffolk **[EFW1]**



**W123 280CE** 1983, 80,000 miles, auto, flat Sahara beige, olive cloth interior, ESR, air con, excellent chrome, M-B splashguards, spare wheel, tools, triangle, MB first aid kit, history, £POA. Tel: 07737 447556. Suffolk **[EFW2]**



**C126 500SEC**, 99,000 miles, Arctic White, black leather interior, ESR, air con, AMG monobloc alloys on Pirelli P Zero tyres, bills, history, tools, jack, triangle, M-B first aid kit, £POA. Tel: 07737 447556. Suffolk **[EFW3]**



**180 Ponton** 1954, petrol saloon, I have no time to complete this easy project, some re-chroming and bead blasting has been done, it is now ready for someone to complete the project, £8,000 ONO. Tel: 07877 198628. Bedfordhampton **[EFW11]**



**W123 230E** 1981, 120,000 miles, metallic silver blue, four-speed manual, good blue cloth interior, air con, MB alloys, service history, spare wheel, tools, jack, triangle, first aid kit, £POA. Tel: 07413 064732. Suffolk **[EFW6]**



**W124 200E Avantgarde** 1990, metallic silver blue, auto, spares or repair, £POA. Tel: 07413 064712. Suffolk **[EFW4]**



**W201 190E** 1990, Arctic White, auto, very good blue block cloth interior, ESR, spare wheel, M-B splashguards, tools, hack, triangle, first aid kit, bills and history, £POA. Tel: 07413 064732. Suffolk **[EFW5]**



**380SLC** 1980, 86,000 miles, petrol blue with cream velour interior, very good condition throughout, drives very well, three owners and full history since new, tax free and ULEZ exempt, a real head-turner, £22,000. Tel: 07721 746433. Kent **[EFW7]**



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**E200 BlueEfficiency Avantgarde** 2010, 60,000 miles, four-door, auto, reg with private plate, full M-B service history, metallic grey, full black leather seats, sat nav, two keys, two owners, well maintained with documentation, just been serviced, gorgeous condition, £7,000 ONO. Tel: 07805 933528. Essex **[EFW8]**



**W202 C280 Sport** 1998, 75,000 miles, in excellent condition throughout, only three previous owners, brilliant silver with black leather interior, M112 V6 (197bhp), full AMG bodykit, exhaust, electric seats, Goodyear Eagle 1 Tyres, full respray November 2022, good SH, all paperwork available, £POA. Tel: 07745 623664. Tring **[EFW9]**



**CLK55 AMG Cabriolet** 61,000 miles, metallic black, pristine light grey (rather than usual black) nappa leather, two keys, M-B Club member, very good history – nine stamps, last serviced by specialist October 2022 (£1,250 spent), dry stored in winter, very good Michelin Pilot Sport tyres, £11,450 ONO. Tel: 07770 765554. Gerrards Cross **[EFW15]**



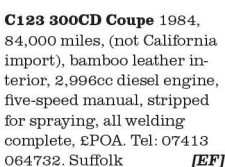
**CLS350 CDI Grand Edition** Four-door, two owners from new (one being the dealer as ex-demo) same owner since 2010, FSH with all receipts, excellent condition for the year, one-year MOT, two keys, £6,450. Tel: 07768 511243. Milton Keynes **[EFW12]**



**E280 Avantgarde** 2001, 81,000 miles, auto saloon, two owners from new, comprehensive service history, immaculate inside and out, Ruby Red metallic with anthracite leather, £4,999 ONO. Tel: 07850 187400. Ormskirk **[EFW14]**



**C43 AMG** 1999, 69,635 miles, auto, full M-B service history, always kept in a heated and dehumidified garage, never left outside overnight, completely original spec, excellent condition virtually unmarked, current MOT (no advisories) until March 2024, £17,250. Tel: 07973 225185. England **[EFW18]**



**C123 300CD Coupe** 1984, 84,000 miles, (not California import), bamboo leather interior, 2.996cc diesel engine, five-speed manual, stripped for spraying, all welding complete, £POA. Tel: 07413 064732. Suffolk **[EFW]**





**E320 Cabriolet Sportline** 158,000 miles, rare, metallic burnite, light brown leather interior, five-speed auto, FSH with plenty of bills, sold with 12 months MOT, drives beautifully, competitively priced, £9,750. Tel: 07565 006735. Cambridge **[EFW17]**



**C43 AMG Estate** 2000, 150,000 miles, one-year MOT, full history folder up to date including original bill of sale, all the toys you would expect from an AMG of this year, very recent full service (including spark plugs), gearbox service by John Haynes, lots of money spent this year, this very rare car is very clean inside and out and drives very well, comes with two keys, £8,995 ONO. Tel: 07710 414854. Worthing **[EFW19]**



**W109 300SEL 6.3** 1969, 106,000 miles, LHD, auto, blue metallic, mechanically excellent, no rust or rot anywhere, drives superbly, ivory leather, interior and carpets, FSH, only one previous owner, £40,000. Tel: 07818 471980. Canterbury **[DEW1]**



**CLK270 CDI Coupe**, 38,000 miles, M-B owners club member, drives superbly, £650 spent in January in gearbox full service and conductor plate, private plate, Sony apple car play stereo, last MOT no advisories, MOT history online, any inspection welcome, some history, rear seats unused, two keys, £POA. Tel: 07855 861825. Glasgow **[EFW20]**



**SL280** 1995, petrol, automatic, grey leather interior, drives beautifully, navy blue soft top and matching hardtop, excellent condition all round with great service history, no expense spared maintaining this fabulous future classic, £9,950. Tel: 07973 344201. West Midlands **[EFW21]**



**CL63 AMG Biturbo** 65,000 miles, pearllescent white with black leather, factory carbon fibre exterior and interior trim, too many extras to list, reluctant sale due to house purchase, £25,500. Tel: 07789 513517. Surrey **[EFW23]**



**SL350** 2004, 55,950 miles, 3.7 litres, rare Firemist Red metallic (C548) with cream leather interior, glass panoramic roof, in my ownership since September 2017 and has a full service history for that time, additionally it has upgraded Brembo discs and pads, new coil springs, fully refurbished 18-inch AMG diamond cut wheels, as new tyres, private plate and a tailored cover included, MOT to September 2023, much admired and regularly shown, £9,950 ONO. Tel: 07739 737889. Cardiff **[EFW22]**



**V124 260E long-wheelbase** 57,450 miles, auto, silver, grey interior, very clean, private plate, ultra smooth, quiet engine and gearbox, good oil pressure, very good condition all round, service records, owned 10 years, six-door limousine, seats eight, £POA. Tel: 07982 825394. Tyne and Wear **[EFW24]**

**300D** 1980, 120,000 miles, in Ascot Grey, auto, almost completely stripped for painting, good charcoal cloth interior, unmolested, solid, no welding needed, abandoned resto, ill health forces sale, £POA. Tel: 07413 064712. Suffolk **[EFW25]**



**SL500 AMG** 2003, silver with red interior, MOT until March 2024, in excellent condition and has had 'B' service 1500 miles ago at Mercedes independent garage, lovely looking car in exceptional condition, £9,750 ONO. Tel: 07710 459055. Chester **[EFW26]**



**C43 AMG** 2001, 100,000 miles, one of the last ones produced, FSH and will have fresh MOT, always garaged, absolutely no rust and never modified or damaged, more pictures can be supplied upon interest, £10,000 ONO. Tel: 07989 888880. New Romney **[EFW27]**



**SLK Kompressor** 1999, four excellent tyres, serviced during my five-year ownership by John Haynes, blue/black leather interior, Bluetooth CD radio with USB, M-B and Sadcase member, new oil/filter, 12-month MOT valid until July 2024, all extras still with car, £2,950. Tel: 01403 710029 / 07730437219. Horsham **[EFW28]**

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**V220 S320 CDI L** 2004, 141,000 miles, long-wheelbase model, fully loaded, electric heated seats front and rear, mirrors, windows, sunroof, cruise, park assist, air suspension, FSR, MOT March 2024, unmarked interior and paintwork, top of the range model, beautiful drive, 4 x recent tyres, spare unused, well looked after, £2,250. Tel: 0208 660 4538 / 07584 020272. Surrey **[EFW30]**



**W109 300SEL** 1969, 106,000 miles, 6.3, LHD, auto, blue metallic 387, mechanically excellent, no rust or rot anywhere, drives superbly, ivory leather, interior and carpets, FSH, only one previous owner, £30,000 ONO. Tel: 07818 471980. Canterbury **[EFW28]**



**E55 AMG** 1999, 174,000 miles, saloon, silver body, silver and black leather, owned by us for 12 years, FSH, new rear blind, EM, air con, reluctantly selling due to lack of use, book pack with two keys and £6,000 of receipts, bodywork needs attention, usual rear arches and inner front wings, £4,250. Tel: 07968 430044. Cheltenham **[EFW32]**



**CLK220 CDI AMG**, 111,000 miles, sports, auto, exceptional vehicle, extras include Nubuck black leather heated seats, paddle gearshifts, climate/cruise control, new tyres all round, discs and pads, £1,000 service, special car, MOT Feb 2024, £2,850. Tel: 07389 718333. Bognor Regis **[EFW31]**



**C215 CL55 AMG** 2002, 78,000 miles, FSR, MOT Nov 2023, auto, fully loaded, double glazed, heated/cooled seats, bi-xenon headlights, keyless entry/ignition, first to see will buy, loss of storage forces sale, £9,500. Tel: 07584 020272. Surrey **[EFW29]**



**500SL** 1987, 52,217 miles, auto, finished in arctic white with unmarked hard and soft tops, full grey heated unmarked leather seats, also rear seats fitted as an extra, 11 stamps in the service book, MOT'd until April 3 2024, only four previous keepers with the last owning it for 19 years, factory extras from new are outside temperature gauge, fire extinguisher, cruise control, rear child seats, full heated leather seats, serviced and maintained with the SLShop regardless of cost, this is an extremely rare low mileage 500SL in absolutely stunning condition and drives like the day it was new, been in a dry, heated garage for the last 20 years, £49,995. Tel: 07814 848932. Bridgend **[EFW33]**



**280SL** 1985, 143,380 miles, auto, I have owned this wonderful car for 20 years and has been remarkably trouble free, age is now catching up, hence sale, always garaged, black leather with walnut dash, hardtop and wind deflector, new mohair soft top 4 years ago, regular servicing, MOT Feb 2024, pioneer radio/cassette, £26,250. Tel: 07834 708255. Devon **[DEW2]**



**CLK320 Cabriolet Avantgarde** 2001, beautiful, rust free, two-tone blue and grey interior with refurbished 18-inch AMG monoblock alloys with Avon tyres, watertight roof, just serviced with new front discs and pads, spark plugs and leads, £3,500. Tel: 07769 738621. Hertfordshire **[EFW34]**



**W202 C200 AMG** 2000, 128,000 miles, one owner, grey leather seats and interior all in excellent condition, bodywork very good, full servicing records held, MOT until March 2023, all in good running order, viewing available at any time, £3,250. Tel: 07974 381315. Monmouthshire **[FGW2]**



**S210 E430 Estate** 2000, facelift model, extremely well preserved, she is by far one of the cleanest S210s I have ever seen, the car has been well looked after with all receipts including original sales receipt, £6,000. Tel: 07859 974141. Penkridge **[DEW4]**



**CLK230 Kompressor Avantgarde** 2002, Tiptronic, silver, only two owners in 20 years, FSH, Merc specialist last 10 years, MOT March 2024, no advisories, AMG alloys, two-tone leather, potential classic, sensible price, £1,350. Tel: 07710 198665. Halifax **[EFW16]**



**R107 420SL** 1987, in immaculate concours condition, except for serviceable parts it is as it left the dealers showroom, has won numerous concours events, this car must be seen to be appreciated, £49,950. Tel: 07770 784690. Leeds **[DEW5]**



**190E 2.5-16 Cosworth** 1990, 160,000 miles, H registration, full black leather interior, AMG rear window spoiler, MOMO steering wheel, Getrag dog leg gearbox, AMG 18-inch alloys, Brands Hatch 2017 Deutshefest award winner, £26,500. Tel: 07771 511433. West Sussex **[DEW6]**





**SL350** 3.7 litres, 2004, 47,000 miles, four owners, MOT 05/23, exceptional condition – everything works, agreed value warranty with breakdown cover until 10/23, too old to enjoy, history pdf available, £9,750 ONO. Tel: 07854 136628. Aberdeen **[DEW7]**



**CL63 AMG** 2011, 64,000 miles, pearlescent white with black interior, factory carbon fibre interior and exterior, sunroof, massage heated and cooled seats, FSH, two keys, a brilliant example inside and out, reluctantly selling due to house purchase, first to see will buy, £POA. Tel: 07789 513517. Surrey **[DEW8]**



**S124 300TE Estate** 1990, 117,000 miles, automatic, Artic White, sunroof, leather interior, air con, service history, MOT December, owned for 16 years, superb original condition, drives really well, Mercedes Club concours winner, £POA. Tel: 01932 787178. Middlesex **[DEW10]**

**A150** Five-door, rare blue colour, petrol, always kept in excellent condition with no bumps or scrapes it really is a very clean low mileage example, only two owners since new, part service history always with Mercedes, £POA. Tel: 07427 487019. Newhaven **[DE]**



**C220 CDI AMG** 2011, 92,000 miles, Blue Efficiency, 2x remotes, excellent M-B history/invoices inc. 7G transmission service, runs and sounds exactly as it should, covered approx. 10,000 miles since 2019, rare (option 237A) flamen red, premium mara leather, Comand/DAB/USB/SD, electric seats and mirrors, LED/DRLs, full owners pack, £7,390. Tel: 07958 629090. Woodford Green **[DEW11]**



**R129 280SL** 1995, 110,000 miles, three former owners, Nautic Blue with mushroom leather, MOT August, very well-maintained example, hardtop stand and bespoke dust cover included, not being used as often as it should and space required for new vehicle, £12,500 ONO. Tel: 0131 557 9246. Edinburgh **[DEW12]**



**380SL** 1984, 85,508 miles, auto, RHD, MOT May 2024, anthracite grey, black leather, walnut rear seat, extensive history, three previous owners, current (club member) 22 years, recent respray, £12,000+ bills excl. servicing, original handbook/documents, garaged with dehumidifier, £23,750. Tel: 07876 744320. Romford **[DEW13]**



**280SL** 26,500 miles, soft top, currently owned and always garaged for last 13 years, excellent condition and genuine, comes with hardtop, inspections welcome, £12,000 ONO. Tel: 07831 833389. Staffordshire **[DEW14]**



**CLK350 AMG V6**, AMG, 84,000 miles since 2009, Obsidian Black metallic with full black leather interior, 18-inch alloy wheels, FSH, recent B and A services during my ownership, £2,600 spent on services and improvements, can list out known future work, £5,500 ONO. Tel: 07714 772310. Brighton and Hove **[DEW16]**

## INTERNATIONAL MERCEDES



**CLS500** 2005, 54,000 miles, 05G500 registration, black with cream leather interior, very good condition, NCT tested until March 2024, £POA. Tel: 0035 38724 54893. Maynooth, ROI **[EFW10]**



**SL60 AMG** 1998, 24,800 miles, very rare RHD, second owner, complete history, £POA. Tel: 0049 173 951 4613. Germany **[CM41-21]**



**560SL** 1989, 96,500 miles, PS, PB, electric windows and door locks, 2 USB ports, new soft top, hardtop, very good condition, all new carpeting: \$30,000. Tel: +1 1714 299 9264. California **[EFW1]**



**300SE** 1965, automatic, RHD, in two-tone maroon and white top with a beautiful beige interior and wooden dashboard to complement the ride, car starts and runs, air suspension in running condition, minimal rust, car can be shipped to the UK, £85,000 ONO. Tel: +65 8118 4948. Singapore **[EFW3]**



**230SL** 1964, 144,000 miles, dark Bordeaux (573), Crema Tex, all necessary restoration work during my 12 years ownership noting Build Card, £74,000. Tel: (00) 353 872 401 819. Dublin **[EFW12]**



**190SL Coupe** 1960, 115 200 engine upgrade and Weber carbs conversion, was in storage for 18 years, body and engine professional nut and bolt restoration done in 2010, driven 1000km since completed, Fire Engine Red (DB534), black leather interior; 1.6 million SA Rand (about £78,000). Tel: +27 (0) 83 235 1101. South Africa. **[FGW40]**

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**Complete cloth interior** For Mercedes 124-series CE coupe, cream colour, all door cards, headrests and armrests included, in very good condition with no wear marks, front seats will also fit saloon model but not sure about the rears, £200. Tel: 07752 532516. Chichester [DEW9]



**R129 SL AMG 3-piece split rim wheels** 8.5x17 and 10x17, these wheels are very rare, the wheels have polished outer rims and centres, front wheels are 8.5x17 H2 ET18 with 235/40x17 Dunlop tyres, rear wheels are 10x17 H2 ET17 with 285/40x17 Michelin tyres, £3,250. Tel: 0786 0211645. Hampshire [DEW15]



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**Breaking Mercedes C43 AMG W202**, any part enquiry, £POA. Tel: 07908 624459. Manchester [BCW7]



**Genuine 18-inch AMG alloys** Fitted with Goodyear Eagle F1 tyres, staggered fit from 220-series S55 or 215-series CL55 but will fit other models, £999 ONO. Tel: 07850 187400. Ormskirk [BCW4]



**Genuine Mercedes W221 alloys** Fitted with Bridgestone Potenza tyres, £500 ONO. Tel: 07850 187400. Ormskirk [BCW5]

**Every issue of Mercedes Enthusiast** From Issue 1 up to September 2022, collection only, £150 ONO. Tel: 07960 805331. Manchester [BC]



**Full set of Mercedes Enthusiast magazines** In binders, from day one starting from December 2001 to present, £POA. Tel: 07949 792278. Leeds [BCW6]



**Front bumper for W201** Complete, plus front grille and right-hand headlamp, in excellent condition, buyer must collect, £200 ONO. Tel: 07901 567961. Dereham [CM41-16]



**Cream cloth interior** For 124-series CE Coupe, complete, from 1995 model, very good condition with all door cards and headrests, photo of driver's seat, no marks or tears anywhere, £150. Tel: 07752 532516. Chichester [CM41-19]

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**2002 CLK draught stop** As new, in canvas zipped bag, hardly used, genuine Mercedes product, £250. Tel: 07483 345233. Bedford [EF]

## REGISTRATIONS



**PM69 AMG** Personal plate on retention certificate and ready to transfer, £750 ONO. Tel: 07801 381126. Buxton [EFW13]



**PK04 SLK** Currently on retention certificate, ready to transfer, £449. Tel: 07881 847915. Weston-super-Mare [EF]



**V10 KEV** Personal plate, £2,100 ONO. Tel: 07939 309325. Norfolk [BC]



**MER 5L** Personal plate, currently on Retention Certificate, ready to transfer, open to offers, £POA. Tel: 07778 333444. London [BC]



**J55 CLK** Personal plate, dateless and a great numberplate for CLK enthusiasts, particularly the CLK 55 AMG, available on retention, £1,750 ONO. Tel: 07885 156001. Essex [EF]

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# Race pace

The Mercedes-Benz workshop built a one-of-a-kind transporter to ferry the racing team's car around Europe in 1955. Tim French takes a close look

IMAGES Mercedes-Benz Group AG

**M**ercedes' domination of grand prix racing during the 1954 and 1955 season was the result of engineering ingenuity and driving brilliance, not the near unlimited factory budget the present Mercedes AMG Patronas F1 team enjoys – in those post-war days Daimler-Benz was not a rich company. The gifted Rudolf Uhlenhaut designed the W196 grand prix car, along with the 300SLR sports racing car, while seasoned team boss Alfred Neubauer applied tactical masterclass and driver Juan Manuel Fangio delivered the two championship titles.

Lateral thinking money-saving was also seen in the one-off transport the team used to take racing cars around the European race circuit in 1955. The extraordinary looking *Renntransporter* (racing transporter), or Blue Wonder as it was quickly nicknamed, was essentially a parts bin special, using some Ponton saloon bodywork, the 300SL Gullwing's engine and suspension from the exclusive 300S two-door series.

That it was put together substantially from existing Mercedes componentry was not obvious. While some Ponton items might look familiar, for example the doors and headlamps, the bodywork is utterly exotic, the clipped nose with its race car



The loading rails doubled as a mobile workshop.



Unloading the race car was a careful operation.



This 2001 recreation lives in the M-B Museum.

three-pointed star and high cab far forward of the front axle line featured stylishly curved rear glasswork and flows into a streamlined rear bed section and a beautifully rounded tail. In its own way the *Renntransporter* looked as futuristic as the Gullwing had when introduced the previous year. There was nothing else remotely like it in the paddock, and motor racing fans loved seeing it.

Although a truck, it looks fast even when stationary, and with the Gullwing's three-litre, fuel-injected straight-six in place, detuned from 212bhp at 5,800rpm to 189bhp at 5,500rpm, top speed was 105mph, swift for the time and proclaimed on the rear bodywork. We don't know what the fuel consumption was with a race car on board, which is probably just as well. Nor do we know how well it stopped, given the four-wheel drums.

**A**t the front of the 6,750mm long vehicle which sat on a relatively short, 2,900mm wheelbase, the cabin was designed for long distance comfort, and was trimmed in the same distinctive chequered fabric used in the racing cars, and the dashboard was leather trimmed. Ponton instruments were to be seen under the large steering wheel from that model, positioned at a fairly flat angle. By all accounts, it took drivers some time to become accustomed to feeling left behind as a turn was made.

But the luxury the crew enjoyed on the way to races ended on arrival, when the car had to be unloaded. There were no mechanical aids such as a tail lift. Instead, four lightweight rails were stowed on the vehicle between the guides for the racing car's wheels, these being latched to the rear and supported about half-way down to form a ramp for the precious cargo. The unloading image seen here is of the 300SLR at the Swedish Grand Prix in Kristianstad on August 7, 1955. At major road races without their own pits, the rails also served as an improvised workshop ramp – for example, at the 1955 Targa Florio in Sicily (also pictured).

Mercedes-Benz famously retains racing cars from all eras, but this particular vehicle did not survive. After the car maker's withdrawal from motor racing at the end of the 1955 season it was used by the road-test department, before being scrapped in 1967. Daimler-Benz AG had this unique vehicle recreated as an authentic reconstruction based on historical documents and photographs – but no original tooling or measurements – from the Mercedes-Benz Classic archives. The project was completed in 2001, and since then fans of the Mercedes-Benz Silver Arrows have once again been able to admire the "Blue Wonder" in the Gallery of Carriers in the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, as well as at some events.

With its Gullwing engine the *Renntransporter* was said to reach 100mph.



**"IN ITS OWN WAY THE RENNTRANSPORTER LOOKED AS FUTURISTIC AS THE GULLWING HAD WHEN INTRODUCED THE PREVIOUS YEAR"**



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