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Winter 2014  
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# Classic Mercedes

Winter 2014 • Issue 10  
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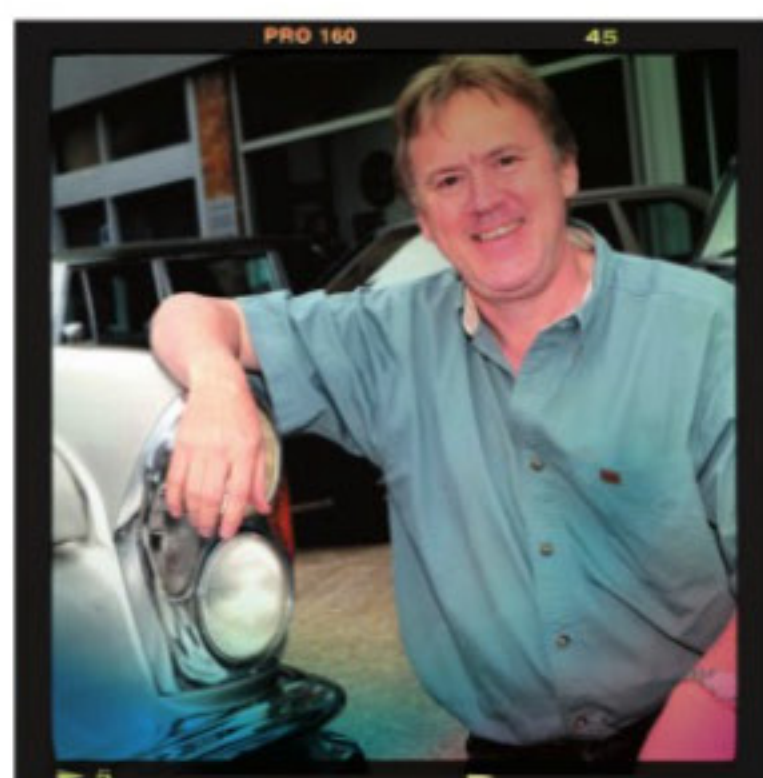
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## In this issue of Classic Mercedes

The R107 SL Roadster launched in 1971 was a far greater commercial success than the SLC coupe soon derived from it – over 237,000 customers compared to just under 63,000, and a production life twice as long.

But their passing into Mercedes history allows us to see both for what they are, as well as for what they achieved, and after driving

**"THERE'S A (QUITE) NEW KID ON THE 300SL BLOCK, PARIS-BASED NICOLAS JAMBON BRUGUIER. HE'S FRENCH, AND HE DOES IT THE FRENCH WAY"**

them back-to-back I'm not sure the sales figures tell us the full story. Go to pages 22-28 and see what you think.

We tend to think of high end classic Mercedes activity as occurring in either Germany or the US, but there's a (quite) new kid on the 300SL block, Paris-based Nicolas Jambon Bruguiere, of Classic Sport Leicht. He's French,

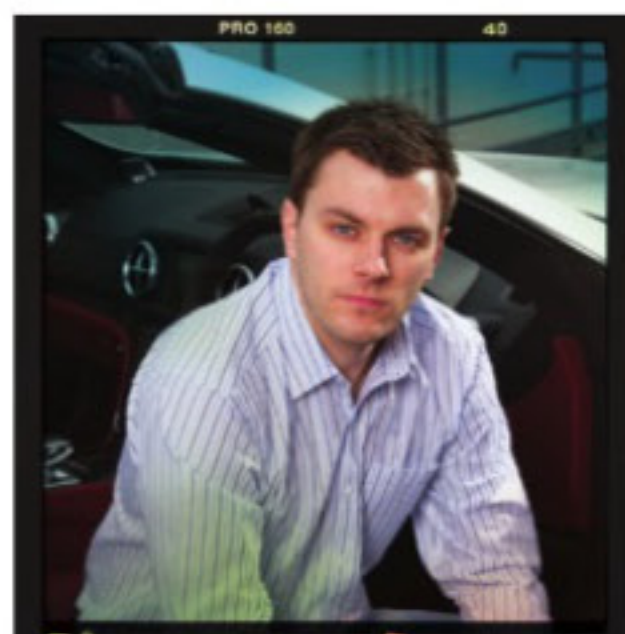
and he does it the French way – we profile him and his cars.

Now you might or might not like diesels, but I make no apology for devoting 16 pages to them. Mercedes-Benz invented the diesel car in 1936 and has never stopped pushing the technology forward – reviewing the progress is interesting, I feel.

**David Sutherland**  
Editor



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



### Kyle Molyneux

Few Mercedes-Benz fans will ever forget their first drive in an SL Pagoda. Kyle Molyneux, a new contributor to *Classic Mercedes*, and who took to the wheel of a 230SL for the first time back in 2009, is no exception. "I still remember that drive like it happened yesterday," he says. "Its parping, waspish six-cylinder engine engaged me in a way I never thought possible." Read his joyous impressions in 'My Classic Drive' on pages 16-17.



### Christine Stickley

From Australia, a charming story arrived, of the Mercedes 280SE that Warren Stickley bought new in 1968, while a pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force, and which he has driven ever since. Among other things, it accompanied him, and his young family, on a tour of duty in Thailand, lowered from the ship on ropes, and returning by the same method. "My father says he has driven to the moon and is now on his way back," his daughter Christine tells us.

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**Classic  
Mercedes**

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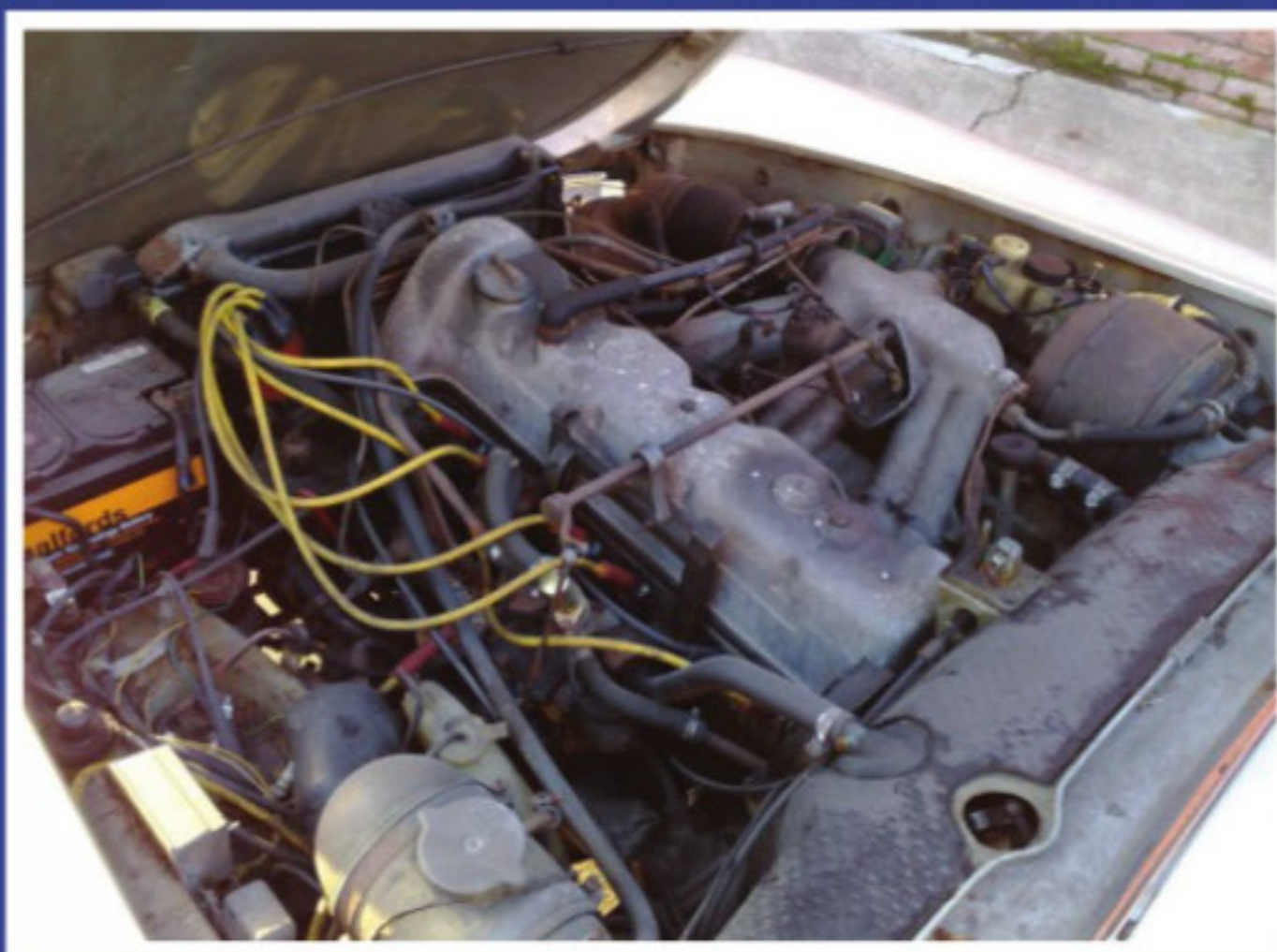
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# CLASSIC NEWS

UK AND INTERNATIONAL REPORTS FROM THE CLASSIC MERCEDES WORLD

## SEC tops £40K

The C126 is now commanding serious money if in best condition



The days of the 126-series SEC coupe being a modern classic of only middling collectability may be over, following the sale of two 560SECs at auction that fetched big prices. In July 2014, at the Silverstone Classic event, one made almost double its upper pre-sale estimate, going under the hammer for an extraordinary £40,250.

Built in 1989 and so a final specification 296bhp model, the 560SEC – the C126 flagship – had covered a warranted 14,000 miles from new, in the hands of one owner. The right-hand drive car was first delivered in Germany, the owner paying DM148,627,



560SEC's top condition and 14,000 miles helped it crack £40,000.

which included the optional climate control, orthopaedic front seats and an anti-theft device, after which it was personally imported to the UK.

"It wasn't a surprise, given its low mileage," a Silverstone Auctions spokesman commented. "These cars are now getting on to the radar." Ironically, given the extent to which originality

benefits classic values, the 560SEC wears wider, aftermarket Lorinser wheels fitted with Pirelli 700 rubber.

In a subsequent Silverstone Auctions sale, a 35,000-mile, 1991 example sold for £32,000, against a £17,000 to £22,000 estimate.

## Tax break

If you taxed your classic Mercedes just before the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) paper disc was abolished at the end of September, don't throw the disc away – it could end up being worth a lot of money. The disc has now been replaced by electronic records at the DVLA, and current road tax discs need not be displayed, the same applying to pre-1974 cars, which are exempt from VED but which still had to show a windscreen disc.

Vintage tax discs have long been moderately collectable, but now the very last tax discs issued are appearing on eBay for four-figure 'Buy it Now' prices. The discs are likely to become scarce quite quickly as owners simply throw away what they assume is a redundant piece of paper. However, it seems likely that discs that will fetch serious money will be those for particularly interesting cars, in immaculate condition, and not yet cut out from the letter it was sent with.

On a practical note, an important change is that you can no longer pass on the remaining VED when selling a car, because the DVLA automatically cancels it and refunds the seller.



## Show time

The first major classic car show to be held in London comes to town on January 8 to 11, 2015, promising to attract the very best premium classic cars of all marques – and to rival the prestige of established European shows such as Salon Retromobile in Paris and Techno Classica in Essen, Germany. It will, the organisers say, be a very different kind of event to the Classic Motor Show in mid-November at Birmingham's National Exhibition, which caters for the enthusiastic owner rather than the wealthy classic car collector.

A major feature of the London Classic Car Show, to be staged in the ExCeL, in London's Docklands, will be the Grand Avenue, a 'catwalk'



Artist's impression shows the Grand Avenue, on which classic cars will be driven.

through the middle of the exhibition, on which cars will be driven throughout the day. A turning circle at the end will house a VIP enclosure.

The organisers hope to attract high end classic car dealers, restorers and specialist suppliers

from the UK, and particularly London, and also from Europe. Tickets are now on sale, with adult admission from £20.50 and children £15, with VIP and family tickets also available. For more details, go to [www.thelondonclassicarshow.co.uk](http://www.thelondonclassicarshow.co.uk).



# Classics crushed

The government-supported, so called scrappage scheme that ran in Britain during 2009 and 2010 provided a useful boost for struggling UK car dealers, with customers offered a £2,000 discount on a new car when trading in one over 10 years old. But it resulted in the destruction of many Mercedes on the edge of classic status.

A list of the cars scrapped, compiled by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, was made public in response to a Freedom of Information request. Its haphazard naming makes it hard to extract precise numbers, but it reveals that some 50 W201 190Es were crushed, as were dozens of 123- and 124-series saloons and estates. A number of 126-series S-Classes were also culled, including six of the increasingly collectable top range 560SECs. Three SLCs, already extremely rare, went west.

Customers had to have owned the car for a year or more, and it had to have an MOT. Costing the government £400m, the scheme attracted 392,000 takers, most of whom subsequently bought small, budget cars. Other classic marques suffered, too, the offer claiming over 100 Porsches, a BMW 635CSi, a Ford Capri 3000 and 11 Fiat X1/9s.



2009 scrappage scheme claimed some 126s in far better shape than these.

## In other news...



**Sir Stirling at 85**  
One time Mercedes works racing driver Sir Stirling Moss turned 85 in October, attracting birthday wishes from his former employer. "His victories in a Mercedes-Benz at the Mille Miglia and in the British Grand Prix rank among the crowning moments of the 1955 motor racing season," Mercedes-Benz Classic said.

**Merc prices cool**  
The values of Mercedes classics declined by 3.5 per cent in September, according to London-based price analyst Historic Automotive Group International. This, it said, was a 'correction' after a strong August – the year-to-date increase being 5.6 per cent, and the year-on-year rise 16.1 per cent.

**The long run**  
German couple Gunther and Christine Holtorf have completed what might be the world's longest road trip, 560,000 miles, in a Mercedes-Benz 300GD over 26 years, visiting 215 countries. The G-Wagen will be on display at the Mercedes Museum until February 2015.

**Finding the way**  
Garmin's new navigator, the Nüvi 2599LMT-D (£149) has a useful series of updates over previous models including Foursquare, adding reviewed hotels and restaurants, and Direct Access, showing entry routes to complex destinations such as airports. It comes with free Lifetime Map updates.



## W124 is 30

In October 2014 the Mercedes 124-series saloon reached its 30th birthday, and thus in Germany the first cars built became eligible for

the special 'H' registration, denoting a classic car, and one that can be driven in that country's low pollution or so called 'Umwelt' zones. To get this coveted status, the car must be inspected, and thereafter attracts a concessionary road tax rate. The 124-series, earlier in 2014 voted Classic Car of the Year in the Honest John awards, was first built

as a saloon, was joined by an estate the year after, a coupe in 1987 and a cabriolet – Stuttgart's first four-seat open droptop in 20 years – in 1991. Performance versions included the 3.6-litre E36 AMGs and the five-litre V8 500E/E500, 20 years ago the 10,000th example of the latter presented to 1950s Mercedes racer Hans Herrmann.



When launched 30 years ago, the 124-series drew much attention at shows.



## Bookshelf A look at a newly published Mercedes title

### Mercedes-Benz W123 – the finest saloon car of the 20th Century?

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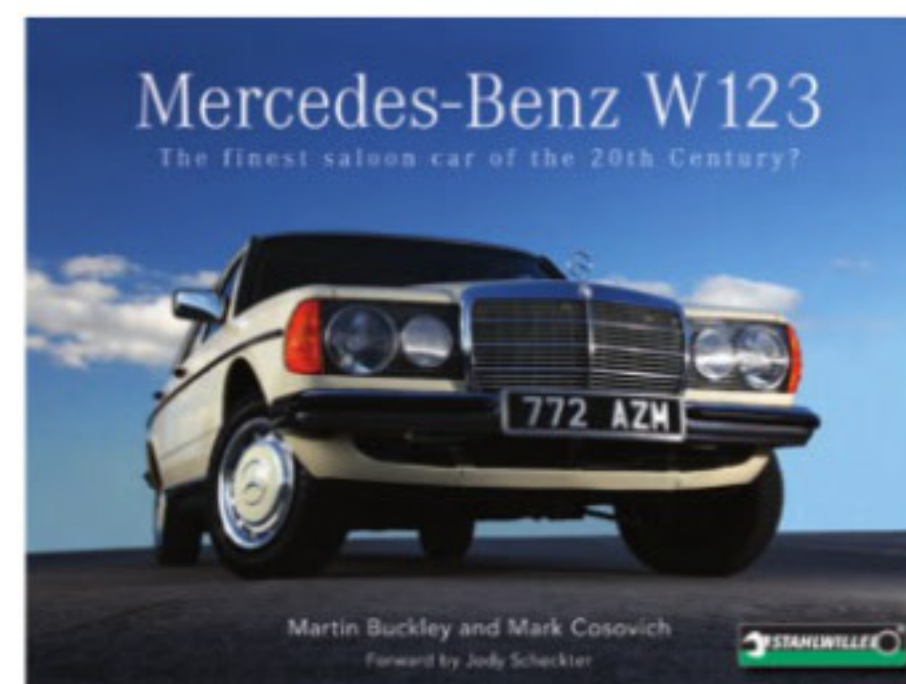
Publisher Mark Cosovich and John Summers

Contact [www.w123world.co.uk](http://www.w123world.co.uk)

Mark Cosovich, the Swansea-based 123-series specialist behind *Mercedes-Benz W123 – the finest saloon car of the 20th Century?*, says, "We think it's going to be an important book, the first English publication chronicling the period when Daimler-Benz really tried to build the finest saloon car."

It has been four years in the making, and based on Cosovich's accumulated expertise over 30 years and also much original research, including trips to Daimler's archive in Stuttgart, making it a great deal more than a rewrite of existing material and reproduction of often seen photographs. His co-author was Martin Buckley, a regular *Classic Mercedes* contributor.

'Comprehensive' hardly does justice to this self-published, 224-page hardback, illustrated with many photographs of Cosovich's own project cars, but also some rarely – if ever – seen pictures of early prototypes. The full history of the car is documented, including its development, its motorsport involvement, and the lesser known story of the cars built in Mercedes' South African factory. There's also a buyer's guide, indeed every 123 fact and figure you need to know is here.





# Price point

A Gullwing made a record auction price, yet other 300SLs failed to reach their reserve in the Pebble Beach sales. Richard Truesdell considers what might be happening



10 IMAGES Richard Truesdell

## ◆ Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance/Legends of the Autobahn

**Location** Monterey, California  
**When** August 14-17, 2014

### AUCTIONS

Pebble Beach is one event where you expect to see records broken, and it did not disappoint. RM Auctions presented a 1955 300SL Gullwing in original condition, which sold for \$2,530,000 (about £1.6m), an astounding \$1.1m (£690,000) above its top reserve – and a highest ever auction price for a non alloy-bodied Gullwing. We have more on this car in Auction Stars, pages 74-77.

Gooding & Company offered a number of noteworthy Mercedes-Benzes, one of them the first 300SL Gullwing (lead photo) delivered to a customer, the American sportsman, racing driver and car builder, Briggs Cunningham. It carried a pre-auction estimate of \$3.5m-\$4.5m (£2.2m-£2.8m), but the bidding went no further than \$2.8m (£1.76m).

A 300SL Gullwing of interest was another of the now constantly appearing 'barn finds', this one a one family owned 1956 example, probably

best described as in poor but complete condition. Based on past Gullwing barn finds, Gooding set a \$1.4m-\$1.8m (£880,000-£1.1m) estimate range, but it, too, failed to sell after bids halted at \$1.2m (£750,000).

Two 300SL Roadsters did find new owners. The first, a 1963 car, exceeded its \$1.3-\$1.5m (£816,000-£840,000) estimate, selling for a robust \$1,512,500 (£949,440). The second, from early 1957, did even better, making \$1,705,000 (£1.07m), just above the high side of its estimate.

The top two cars at this year's Russo and Steele auction were both 300SLs, one a Gullwing that sold for \$1,320,000 (£828,600), the other a Roadster for \$1,210,000 (£759,550).

The general view is that, with one or

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
It was the first ever 300SL delivered in the US, but it still failed to find a buyer.

**ABOVE FAR RIGHT**  
1957 300SL restored by the Classic Center in California made \$1.7m.

**BELOW LEFT**  
In the popular Concours d'LeMons, this Mercedes O 300 minibus was a star.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
A well used 300TD seen in d'LeMons was also a foil to the megabuck classics.

two exceptions, prices of 'normal' 300SL Gullwings and Roadsters have stopped to catch their breath after sustained and significant increases over the past two years. It was also observed that there were a good number of 300SLs available at all venues all over the peninsula, which quite possibly impacted prices.

But while these icons have paused, other classic models, especially 190SLs and Pagodas, are picking up the slack, with one 190SL breaking through \$200,000 (£125,550) at Gooding. Barring an overall market correction, it is safe to say that values will continue to rise for the time being, certainly outpacing inflation indexes, particularly with Russian, Asian and particularly Chinese cash waiting.



# Garden party

An historic palace and sunny weather throughout made for an enchanting three day classic car event, says **David Sutherland**

IMAGES Tim Scott/David Sutherland

## 2014 Concours of Elegance

**Location** Hampton Court Palace, Middlesex

**When** September 5-7, 2014

Those attending the 2014 Concours of Elegance might well have wondered what was the more beautiful sight: the wide array of immaculate, top quality classic cars from all eras, or the magnificent Thameside palace itself, originally built over 500 years ago by King Henry VIII. Either way, the event in September, blessed with calm, dry weather for the full three days, has in a mere three years (the previous two were at other royal palaces) become one of the UK's most glamorous classic car shows.

While the number of Mercedes around the stunning Fountain Gardens was small, those that were on show made up for it in sheer quality, with one of the 29 alloy-bodied 300SL Gullwings (out of a total of 1,400 300SL Coupes built) winning the 'Public Choice' award. The winner of this



This alloy-bodied Gullwing, with owner Bernardo Hartogs and flock, won the Public Choice award.

category was decided by visitors simply texting in their votes.

The first owner of this 300SL, number 19 of the 29 cars, was an Italian, Dottore Alberico Cacciari, who regularly raced it, not least in the 1956 and 1957 Mille Miglia road races in Italy. It has recently emerged from a two-year restoration at 300SL specialist HK-Engineering near Munich in Germany, and the car is seen with its 1956 racing number, 452, and with owner Bernardo

Hartogs and his wife and son.

Not entered in the concours, but lined up in the Club section, was a heavenly Pininfarina-bodied 300 Adenauer coupe from the Fred Kriz collection in Monaco, the Italian styling house's lines for the car utter perfection. Also parked up was a black Gullwing owned by Paul Stewart (son of Sir Jackie), with matching Rudge wheels. More than 10,000 visitors attended – but so extensive are Hampton Court's gardens that it simply did not feel crowded.

## CONCOURS EVENTS

On the Thursday, the Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance participants rolled into downtown Carmel on the Monterey Peninsula. Cars selected to for Sunday's Concours d'Elegance are invited to take part, the incentive being that in case of a draw in the concours judging, participation in the Tour is the tie-breaker.

The Tour takes in 17-Mile Drive, a coastal route, and among the Mercedes-Benzes taking part was the 1941 770K W150 Offener Tourenwagen owned by the William Lyons family. Its notoriety is due to it being a gift from Adolf Hitler to Finnish field marshal Carl Gustaf Mannerheim, who became Finland's President.

The Legends of the Autobahn event, held on Friday, was the coming out party for Bob Gunthorp's restored 1965 300SE long-wheelbase saloon with a rare front/rear divider. It finished second in class, missing the top prize due to a faulty clock.

One popular Monterey Week event is the Concours d'LeMons, also known as the ugly oil stain of Pebble Beach Week. It featured several Mercedes, among them a tired 1982 123-series 300TD and a high-mileage R107 SL.



**LEFT**  
The 300SL looks right in the Fountain Gardens.

**RIGHT**  
A tuneful band added to the ambience of the event.



Paul Stewart, son of Sir Jackie, brought along this fabulous Gullwing.



Italian styling house Pininfarina rebodied this 300 Adenauer – and how.

# On stage

A select few Mercedes stood under the spotlight at London's most important annual classic car auction. David Sutherland was there, and has the details

IMAGES David Sutherland

◆ **RM Auctions London Sale**  
**Location** Battersea Evolution, London

**When** September 8, 2014

At the end of the day it is only a car sale, but the organisers of RM Auctions' major annual classic car event in London made it feel more than that, creating something of a party atmosphere. This is partly due to the well stocked bar and the almost night club environment of the Battersea Evolution where it is held, but also thanks to the unstinting and infectious zeal of chief auctioneer Max Girardo ("Come on sir, drink some more wine, it'll help you bid," he smilingly but firmly advised a reticent potential buyer).

Last year's sale saw a collection of over 70 classic Mercedes sold, requiring an extra evening to be added to proceedings, but this time the



**BELOW LEFT**  
A 280SL didn't quite run up to its pre-sale estimate.

**BELOW RIGHT**  
Grand 300d Cabriolet made more than expected.

**BELOW**  
Lively auctioneer Max Girardo worked the room.

**RIGHT**  
Evening's highest seller, a 300S Cabrio at £291,200.

main focus was elsewhere, such as on the 1970 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Berlinetta once owned by glam rock legend Marc Bolan, which, with his arms working overtime, Girardo coaxed up to £543,200.

**H**e had five Mercedes to shift, and all found buyers. The most expensive was the 1958 300SL Roadster, Lot 126, which sold for £616,000, some way short of its £670,000-£750,000 pre-sale estimate.

The first Mercedes delivered to the stage was Lot 114, a 1952 300S Cabriolet. The gorgeous roadster sold for £291,200 although this, too, was way short of the £315,000-

£355,000 pre-sale estimate. A 1970 280SL Pagoda, making £89,000, also failed to meet the lower side of its estimate, but only by £1,000.

Girardo's best effort, as far as Mercedes entries were concerned, was the 1960 300d Cabriolet D, which he knocked down for £84,000, against the £60,000-£80,000 estimate. A 1958 Ponton 220S Cabriolet sold for £72,800, £2,800 over estimate.



## Sale points

Four recently sold Mercedes classics that caught our eye

◆ With a single owner (in Italy) since 1968 and a mileage of just under 40,000, this 1952 300 Adenauer saloon with its Becker Nürburg radio and Hirschmann electric aerial must be among the best of its kind. Therefore its price of \$52,900 (about £42,100) at Bonhams' Zoute Sale in Belgium looked good value.



◆ Pontons are not often seen for sale, so it was interesting that this 1960 190b sold at a Brightwells auction in Herefordshire for a modest £6,200. Since it last changed hands it has had some £6,000 spent on it, although this was for work on the mechanicals, with the paintwork described as "distinctly tired in places".



◆ The W114/115 is a near forgotten Mercedes classic, but there was sufficient interest in this 1974 230, offered without reserve by Historics at Brooklands, for the price to reach £5,376. Mileage was 87,609, and the car was said by the seller to drive well. It is a facelift model, but has the earlier steering wheel.



◆ This is certainly going to be an interesting project for someone, a 1990 W124 300E with a Turbo Technics conversions, which East Anglia Auctions sold for £3,465. It was originally commissioned by Mercedes dealer Hughes of Beaconsfield, and while it has covered 188,000 miles, it came with a partial service history.



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# Letters

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

## Question time

I have a query about the 450SEL 6.9 featured in the Autumn 2014 issue of *Classic Mercedes*. I was always under the impression that it produced 286bhp, but your article gives it as 282bhp.

Also, you reprinted some quotes from a 1979 copy of the well respected magazine *Autocar*, in whose hands the car managed 140mph. However their arch rival, the equally well thought of *Motor* magazine, managed a genuine 144mph, and I am sure some continental titles managed even more, ranging from 148mph to the magical 150mph.

The summary from *Autocar* was that the Jaguar was the better car, but only just, because

it was less than half the price of the Mercedes. I felt that it was a shame that your article didn't emphasise that the Mercedes was vastly superior in terms of reliability and crash protection – how many XJ6s or XJ12s ever managed starship mileages?

Mushtaque Ali, London  
*Mercedes-Benz quoted the 450SEL 6.9 at 286hp, which is the equivalent of 282bhp. It is no surprise that Motor got it to go faster than did Autocar. The two titles, although from the same publisher, were in deadly competition, and went to great pains to out-accelerate each other. In the article we did point out the failings of the Jaguar, referring to British Leyland's "poor production quality" during the 1970s.*



The S123 made a big impression on one reader.



Magazines competed to get the best acceleration times from the flagship Mercedes.

## Family way

I have settled on Mercedes-Benz as our vehicle of choice. My British wife and I spend half the year in South Africa, and the other half in the UK or the US. In South Africa we have a 2004 CLK430, a 1993, 422,000km E200, and a 1994 E320.

The relatively quiet roads in



An E200 is perfect for South Africa's quiet roads.

South Africa allow us to explore the full range of these great cars. They are spacious, comfortable, and easy to maintain. We have a specialist Mercedes dealership that provides servicing, and I attend to the basic maintenance on the older cars myself.

We thoroughly enjoy driving and owning our Mercedes cars, and would be hard pressed to fault them. We regularly go to Mercedes-Benz World at Brooklands, and enjoy the history and future cars displayed there. We have also owned a 1981 280SL, which gave us years of reliable and enjoyable motoring.

Ken Bridgens, South Africa

of them (including mine) are parked in the same north London street, and a fourth is regularly spotted being driven around the neighbourhood.

Your article on the R129 suggests that this model is not a 'looker', and that this is why prices remain low in comparison with other SLs. I have read this suggestion elsewhere, and remain baffled by it – to my eyes it is a very handsome car, with lovely, flowing lines. Fashions change, and I remain convinced that the R129's day will come.

Nicholas Cox, London

## Merc memories

While reading the 'S123 Focus' in the Summer 2014 edition of *Classic Mercedes*, I was reminded of happy memories of S123s owned by family and schoolfriends. The first S123 I remember was a red 1984 or 1985 B-registration 280TE with steel wheels and colour matched hub caps, owned by friends of my family. It had a blue MB-Tex interior, and an automatic gearbox. It was very comfortable and quiet, and felt very fast to me – I was only seven at the time, so it made a lasting impression.

I think the 280TE was traded in for an S124. The second S123 I knew was when I was at secondary school, and that, too, was red with red hub caps.

JP Kendall, Wakefield, Yorkshire

## Street life

I particularly enjoyed the Summer 2014 issue of your magazine, it containing articles about both Mercedes I own: a red 1992 500SL, and a blue 1997 E320 Sportline Cabriolet. I have read that fewer than 100 of the latter were imported into the UK, so find it remarkable that three

## Sizing it up

I have taken a fancy to an R107 SL, partly because I am told that their prices are rising, which means that I if don't find one soon, I may never be able to afford one. I love V8s, and would like a 500SL, but have discovered from my research that in the late 1980s a 5.5-litre 560SL was made, too, but which was never offered in Britain or Europe.

That must have been some car, but why did Mercedes not sell it here? After all, the 560SEL S-Class and 560SEC were.

Troy Gadsby, Great Torrington, Devon

No specific reason was given for its European no-show, but it was aimed mainly at the US market, having a catalysed exhaust system. Its output was 227bhp – less than the Euro-spec 500SL.



The 5.5 engine R107 was never sold in Europe.

## Get in touch!

Email your letters and pictures to the Editor: david@classicmercedesmagazine.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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## The journey

**Car** 1964 Mercedes 230SL, M127 2,306cc, 148bhp, 147lb ft torque

**Route** Backroads of the Worcestershire countryside

**Distance** 30-mile round trip

**Summary** Quiet and scenic rural roads made for an ideal introduction to Mercedes' delightful 1960s roadster



16



The SL's low shoulder line is one thing that helps put you in touch with the road.





# White delight

No matter that it was the earliest and least powerful of the three W113 models. Kyle Molyneux found this 230SL's zingy engine and delicate handling on the back roads of Worcestershire an absolute delight

IMAGES Terry Osborne

**"ALONG THE  
BACK ROUTES  
BETWEEN THE  
A442 AND THE  
M5 MOTORWAY,  
EACH TURN OF  
THE PAGODA'S  
THIN-RIMMED  
STEERING WHEEL  
BECAME A  
WINDOW OF  
OPPORTUNITY"**

Just had to do it again. From fourth gear, I dropped the 230SL Pagoda into third with a well-timed blip of the throttle and savoured the bristling, rasping sounds ricocheting off walls and hedgerows lining the road.

It should not have been like this. The way the Pagoda looks, a dainty automotive supermodel from a family of mostly sedate executive types, you expect delicacy, apologies, and crossed-legged conversations about hors d'oeuvres. But as the red and white needle swept round the rev counter, and the chromed twin exhausts cut the rural silence with gravelly, mechanical vigour, the truth could not have been any clearer. It was a child of the 60s, remember.

The fact that the W113 shared little with the preceding 190SL and legendary 300SL mattered not, especially as the W113 was instead designed to deliver a driving experience somewhere in the middle of the two, between sports car and cruiser – a compromise to enrapture a combined customer base, if you will. And so, finding myself in the 1964 Pagoda belonging to The SL Shop near Redditch on a dreary, damp and darkening December afternoon, I was forced to reconfigure my preconceptions and absorb the revelations this three-pointed star was hurling in my direction.

Carefully snaking my way along the back routes between the A442 and the M5 motorway in Worcestershire, scenic and untroubled by much traffic, each turn of the Pagoda's thin-rimmed steering wheel became a window of opportunity, a chance to experience driving at its most pure (I was going to say 'basic', but no Mercedes-Benz car truly allows this – there is always something to distinguish it from more mundane metal).

This car was once part of The SL Shop's classic hire fleet, and I was certain that those who had never driven a Pagoda before would

quickly learn to love not just this car's virgin white looks, but also the way in which it carried itself along the road. The confidence-inspiring, secure road stance was there – even on tarmac laced with diesel spilled by farm machinery – but the Pagoda also exhibited a fine ability to respond to a driver's every single input, no matter how small. For better or worse, the Pagoda stripped bare my every gear change, every movement of the helm or squeeze of the brake pedal, so I could feel whether I had got it right or wrong.

Given the choice, I would pick a manual gearbox over an automatic. So imagine my delight at having the keys to not only a true Mercedes classic, but also one with a four-on-the-floor manual shift. I could bore you about how the action lacked weight and accuracy, and how the clutch turned the biting point into a guessing game, but I didn't care about that.

When the 230SL was current, 1963 to 1967, after which it was replaced by the slightly more torquey 250SL, you could have signed a little bit more of your life away and opted for a four-speed automatic, which cut the top speed but improved upon the manual's 0-62mph time of 11.1 seconds. But since the 230SL carries a surprisingly zingy straight-six, weighs just 1,295kg, and sweeps through turns so convincingly, it seems a crying shame to deny the driver the final piece of intimacy with this sporty roadster. With a low slung windscreen and shoulder line, and no headrests, you are practically surfing on the tarmac, so why not row your boat as well as steer it?

Make no mistake, though, even without an idyllic, coastal backdrop, the cabin was still a wondrous place to soak up the rain. Colour-coded to the bodywork, it was such a pretty location for a day 'working'. Why did the safety engineers have to step in and spoil it all?



The design is five decades old, but the 230SL's road manners can still excite.



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INSIGHTS AND OPINIONS FROM INSIDE THE CLASSIC MERCEDES TRADE



# Inside job

Floormats might sound uninspiring, but in the world of Mercedes-Benz they are a vital aspect of the car, according to Peter Nixey

IMAGES Peter Nixey/Daimler AG

**H**ave you ever wondered what it is about Mercedes-Benz cars from a certain era that creates such a passionate, enthusiastic following? It's a difficult question to answer. Is it the design, the quality of the engineering, or simply the imposing and purposeful way they look and sit on the road?

To find the answer, you become involved in a search for the essential DNA contained within the cars. For me, the quest to define the magic began in the mid-1960s, when as a boy I made many trips to Berlin from my home in Bath in the West Country with my mother, to visit relatives. She had been evacuated from Berlin in 1948, during the famous airlift.

**T**here were no budget airlines then, hence every visit involved three days of gruelling travel on trains, a ferry, and then more trains. For me the highlight of the long journey was the arrival at Berlin's *Hauptbahnhof*, or main railway station, and being greeted by my uncle, a well-known one-legged Berliner called Willi Dietrich, who drove an Elastoplast beige Fintail 190D taxi. I have fond memories of that car, but what was it that made such a lasting impression on a seven-year old boy?

Was it the resounding clunk as you shut the door, or the ivory coloured steering wheel and the vertical speedometer? Maybe it was the durable but



comfortable brown MB-Tex upholstery, or perhaps travelling along the last stretch of the famous Avus racing circuit behind that three-pointed star on the bonnet?

All these experiences conjure up memories for me – but, strange though it may seem, my lifelong interest in Mercedes cars was sparked by the floor coverings in Uncle Willi's Fintail. It was a sort of rush matting, the like of which I had never seen before. It felt

nice textured, and was obviously durable, offered grip for your feet and seemed to shrug off the dirt and moisture carried into the car by its many passengers.

I know now that the material was called Coco matting, and I found out many years later that it was the very same material used for the factory fitted overmats in the


prestigious and glamorous Mercedes 300SL Roadsters and Gullwings.

The fact that the same matting was used in the Berlin taxi as well as in one of the most covetable and collectable cars of the 20th century goes some way to explaining the level of integrity in the use of material and design in every Mercedes-Benz. It also helps to explain how the company was able to be the world's leading manufacturer of prestige cars, while also providing the world with more taxis than any other marque.

This is why at Classic Mercedes Mats we aim to provide enthusiasts with what may be a missing part of that essential DNA for their cherished classic car that contributes to the driving enjoyment.

Our mats are made to the original specification, with the correct carpet weights, backing and edge detail that would have been fitted to the car when it was new. Two basic material types are offered, in 16 colours. The familiar DB Rips material, which is durable and hard wearing, and the slightly more luxurious DB Elegant Velour.

**O**ur list of templates is constantly evolving – recently, for example, I made some for a left-hand drive G-Wagen. Our most popular mats are those for the R107 SL and 124-series, but there has been an upturn in demand for the R129 SL, probably because these are now achieving classic status while still remaining relatively affordable, especially compared to the R107 and Pagoda SLs.

We will continue to expand the range as demand changes, and we now have templates for most models from the mid 1960s through to the very late 1990s. As long as there are owners out there who want to create the total Mercedes-Benz driving experience, we will continue to provide this small, but I believe essential element. 

⇒ Peter Nixey is a director at Classic Mercedes Mats in Corsham, Wiltshire Tel 0845 6891460  
Web [www.classicmercedesmats.co.uk](http://www.classicmercedesmats.co.uk)



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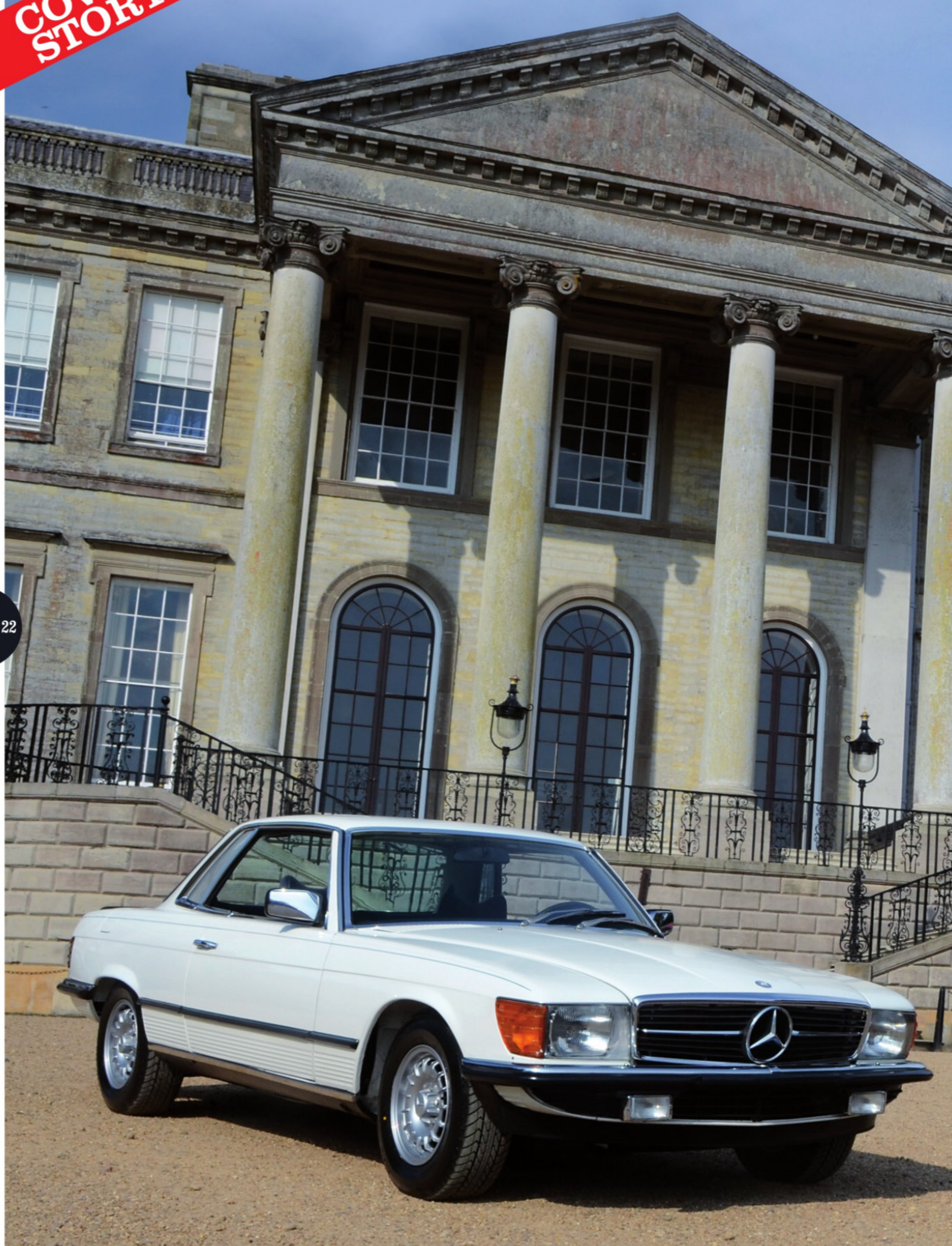
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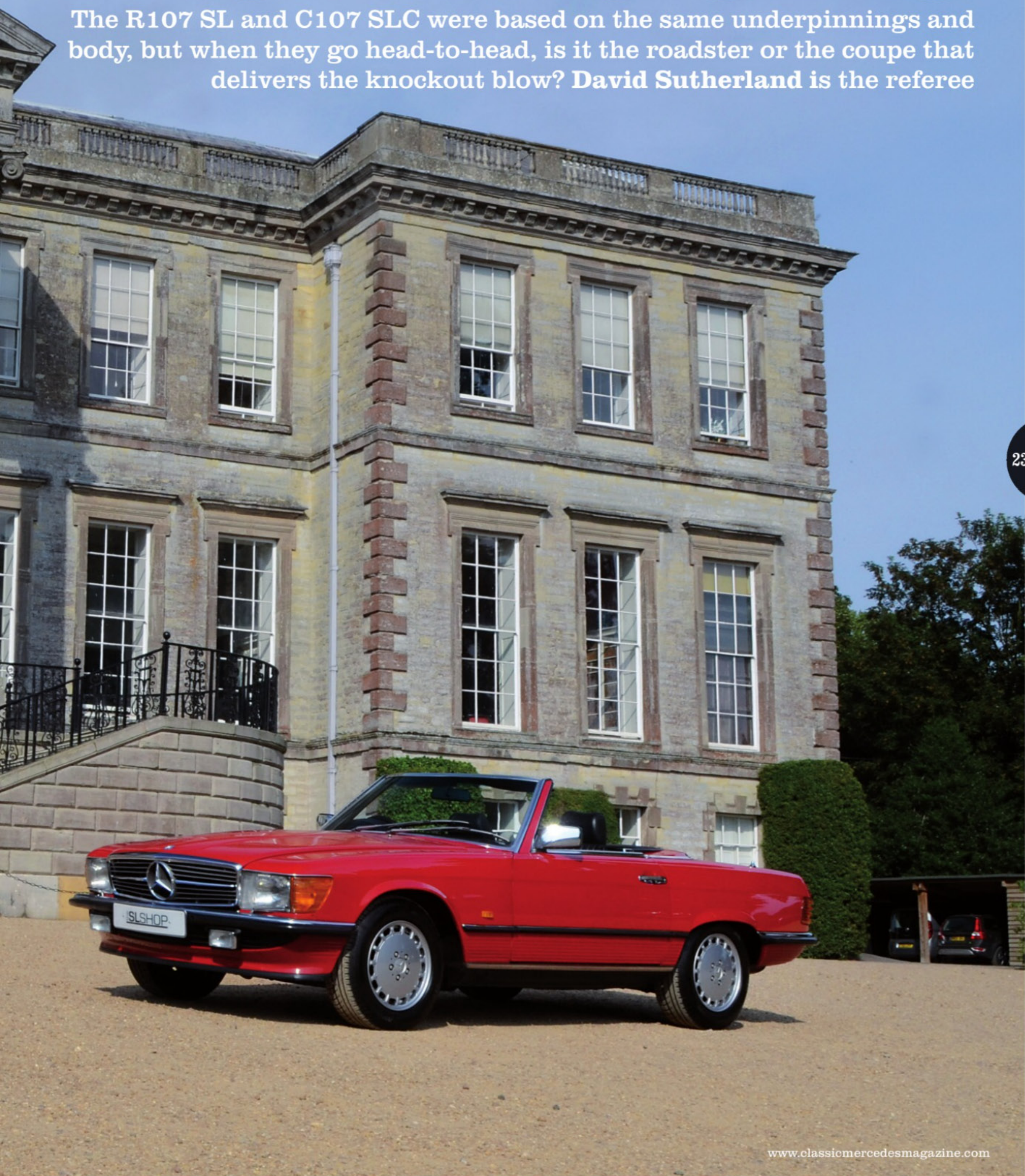


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# Matching numbers

IMAGES Terry Osborne

The R107 SL and C107 SLC were based on the same underpinnings and body, but when they go head-to-head, is it the roadster or the coupe that delivers the knockout blow? **David Sutherland** is the referee





*Enhancing the R107's appeal is its Peter Pan nature. When the first 350SLs were being ordered by customers, the Morris Minor was still in production*



hey were essentially the same car underneath their roadster and coupe bodies, identical in bodywork up to the trailing edges of the doors, after which a wheelbase stretch over the SL made possible the SLC's rear cabin accommodation. And yet to drive, the similarities beyond the same style of fascia and the sound of the engines are less marked than you might imagine, the two cars being of distinctly individual character, and when new fulfilling entirely different sets of customer expectations.

The R107 SL, introduced six months before the C107 SLC, was the two-seat plaything roadster, likely to be the summer wheels in a well stocked garage, while the longer and grander SLC was the grown up Mercedes coupe likely to be bought as a raffish alternative to an S-Class saloon. As we now know, the former idea was the more successful, the R107 notching up a production of over 237,000 before it was replaced by the R129 SL in 1989, whereas the latter was discontinued in 1981 after a quarter

of that number were made – and at which point Mercedes-Benz reverted to using its flagship saloon, by then the 126-series S-Class, as the basis for its full size two-door.

But factory numbers and their respective classic appeal aside, how do these two 1970s veterans compare? I have driven numerous 107 SLs and SLCs, but never back-to-back, so it was a test I had relished. Here we take late spec examples of both, a 1987 500SL and the rare 450SLC 5.0 from 1979, which was the homologation version of the factory rally car.



**Specifications**



**Mercedes-Benz 500SL (R107)**

**Mercedes-Benz 450SLC 5.0 (C107)**

Engine	M117 4,973cc V8	M117 5,025cc V8
Power	242bhp@4,750rpm	237bhp@5,000rpm
Torque	289lb ft@3,750rpm	296lb ft@3,200rpm
Transmission	4-speed auto	3-speed auto
Weight	1,650kg	1,515kg
0-62mph	7.3sec	8.5sec
Top speed	141mph	141mph
Fuel consumption	22.5mpg	19.5mpg
Years produced	1980-1989	1978-1980
Number built	11,812	2,769

All figures from Mercedes-Benz

**RIGHT**  
SL and SLC both have the same 1970s look Benz instruments.

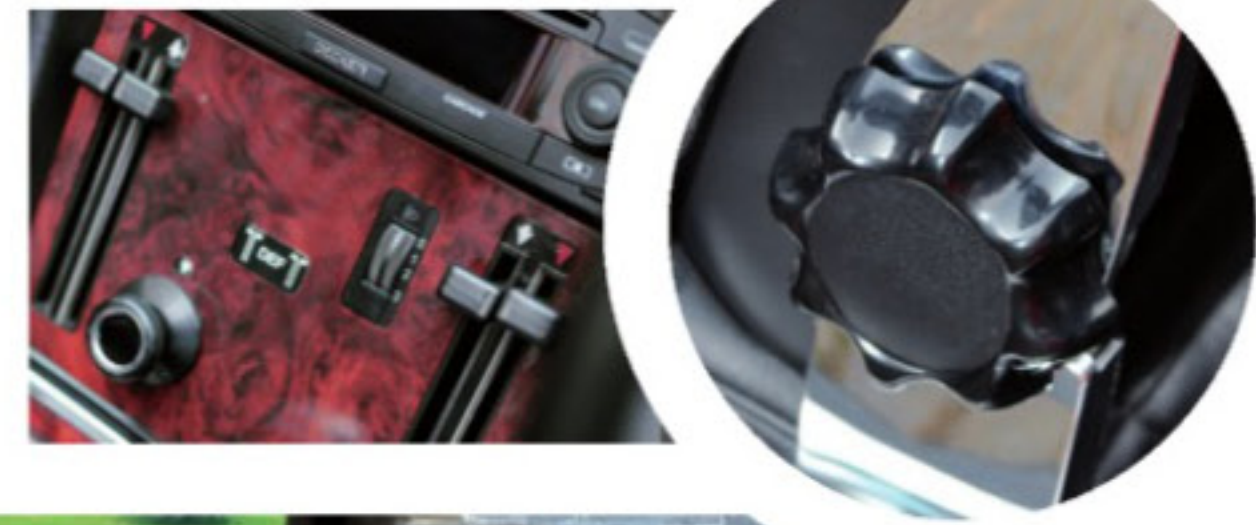
**BELOW RIGHT**  
Walnut veneer trim looks super on this well preserved 500SL.

**INSET RIGHT**  
Electric seats not a 107 option, so a rotary knob reclined them.

**BELOW**  
Even with the hood up the R107 looks perfect from every angle.

**BOTTOM LEFT**  
By the end of production the M117 V8 was good for 242bhp.

**BOTTOM RIGHT**  
Spanner undoes the front locks of a manual but clever soft top.



**R107 SL**

In spring 1971, the Mercedes R107 arrived – and never left. This most elegantly shaped roadster not only posted an 18-year production – about double the lifespan of most cars, including the preceding W113 Pagoda SL – but was also a classic even before the last cars rolled off the Sindelfingen production line near Stuttgart, thus ensuring a high survival rate. It is clear that many were bought in the months before production ended in August 1989, to be speculatively hidden away, and even now these time capsule cars occasionally emerge on the market, triggering a predictable scramble among collectors.

Enhancing the R107's appeal is its Peter Pan nature. When you consider that as the first 350SLs were being ordered by customers, the Morris Minor was still (just) in production, the Mercedes seems extraordinarily youthful in appearance. Indeed, so charismatic is the

shape that the R107 has so far overshadowed its technically superior successor, the R129 SL, in the collector car stakes.

**T**he first R107s were the 350SL and 450SL, with 3.5- and 4.5-litre V8 engines, the six-cylinder, 2.8-litre 280SL following in 1974, in reaction to the so-called oil crisis of the previous year. In almost every way the R107 was very different from the Pagoda, being longer and heavier, and a cruiser rather than a sporty convertible.

In 1980 the 350SL and 450SL became the 380SL and 500SL, both usefully gaining a four- rather than a three-speed automatic gearbox (the 280SL always was four-speed). Throughout its life the R107 barely changed in appearance, but a key date is autumn 1985, for the 1986 model year, when a final series of updates was introduced.

The 500SL pictured here, on loan from The SL Shop near Redditch (0844 414 2116, [www.theslshop.com](http://www.theslshop.com)), as was the 450SL 5.0, is from this period, as are practically all the best R107s. Facelifted 500SLs gained a revised version of the existing M117 V8 – with electronic ignition and modified fuel-injection – which boosted power by 14bhp to 242bhp, torque of 289lb ft remaining much as before. At the same time, the 380SL became the 420SL, the extra capacity of the 4.2-litre V8 clawing back some of the



**RIGHT AND FAR RIGHT**  
Early PR photo for the SL, and an SLC with Stateside bumpers.



  
*“An extra 360mm in the SLC wheelbase over the R107 allowed for a rear seat, whereas the SL offered little more than a ledge”*  


## Ragley Hall

### A beautifully restored English country house was our photo location

In this feature we could not omit a mention of Ragley Hall (01789 762090, [www.ragley.co.uk](http://www.ragley.co.uk)), the magnificent backdrop to our pictures of the two 107s. The Warwickshire country house was completed in the middle of the 18th century, but by the time of World War One it had ceased to be fully occupied, and in World War Two was used as a hospital.

During the 1950s, however, the eighth Marquess and Marchioness, in common with the owners of many other such houses, decided to open Ragley Hall to the public, and worked to restore it before doing so in 1958. Work continued after that, with, for example, the State Rooms restored to their former glory.

The ninth Marquess and Marchioness of Hertford took over Ragley in 1990, and live there with their four children, and since then the estate's activities have expanded to include a 3,500-acre farm, gardens, woodlands and sawmill, and a butchery. It is popular for film, photography and car meetings – we bumped into members of the Morgan Sports Club from the Cotswolds, who were having their annual meeting there.



ABOVE AND BELOW SLC offered a full rear seat, while that below is an option over the SL's parcel shelf.



⇒ horsepower lost to emissions measures, while the 280SL became the 300SL, the long-serving M110 twin-cam engine giving way to the single-cam, three-litre M103 unit. A 5.5-litre 560SL was also introduced, but, sadly for European customers, was bound only for the US, Australia and Japan.

On all models the front suspension geometry was revised, and the wheels, now a simpler but more elegant style, went up an inch to 15 inches in diameter, carrying lower profile 205/65 tyres. Minor changes included a reshaped front spoiler, black plastic rather than chrome-trimmed door handles, and revised seats and interior trim.

### C107 SLC

Mercedes-Benz unveiled the C107 SLC coupe at the Paris motor show in October 1971, and in doing so appeared to signal a

shift in thinking on what made a successful luxury coupe. While its predecessor, the W111, had been a rendering of the six-cylinder 'Fintail' saloon, the new car owed nothing to the W116 S-Class, but was instead a stretched and metal-topped version of the R107.

Theoretically the SLC would offer all of the features of the W111, which in a decade of production had helped hoist Mercedes exclusivity to new heights. An extra 360mm in the SLC's wheelbase over the R107 allowed for a rear seat, whereas the SL offered little more than a ledge, and the hallmark pillarless body construction was carried over.

On entry to showrooms in early 1972, the SLC came as one version, the 350SLC with its 197bhp 3.5-litre V8 engine, driving through either a four-speed manual transmission or a



The '5.0' badge and the boot spoiler mark out a rare SLC version.



Three round vents are an absolutely classic aspect of the cabin.



**ABOVE**  
Before leather was ubiquitous, most top Mercs had this velour.

**BELOW**  
Slats were a trick to hide the glass which did not fully retract.



three-speed automatic, although only the latter was available in the UK. It was joined that summer by the 450SLC with a one litre capacity increase, and an additional 25bhp and 67lb ft torque, while two years later, mirroring the R107's development, the 2.8-litre 280SLC was launched as Mercedes' answer to that 1973 oil crisis.

Of the regular, production SLCs, the best came near the end, some feel. In May 1980 the 380SLC replaced the 350SLC (which had not been imported to the UK for some years), but the difference was much more than an extra 300cc. Its M116 engine was all-aluminium unit rather than the iron-blocked motor of the previous V8s, and with 215bhp and 221lb ft torque performance was not far short of the 450SLC – plus it used a four- rather than a three-speed automatic transmission, a significant advantage. But its short, 16-month life meant that just 3,789 were built, compared to 31,739 450SLCs.

**M**ercedes' desire to rally the SLC in the late 1970s gave rise to the technically most interesting version, the 450SLC 5.0, which was built to qualify its entry. The first SLC rally car was the 450SLC in 1978, but the following year it evolved into the 450SLC 5.0, when the standard-spec engine was

turned into a five-litre aluminium design weighing 40kg less and producing 237bhp. A further 80kg was pared by the use of aluminium for the bonnet, bootlid, doors and bumpers.

The road-going car was distinguished in appearance by the black plastic miniature wing on the bootlid, along with a grey finish on the lower body sides. For 1980, the 5.0 became the 500SLC using a four-speed automatic gearbox, and this became the flagship production SLC, though this model

was never officially imported to the UK; 450SLC 5.0 and 500SLC production totalled 2,769 out of the 62,888 SLCs built.

### **Driving the SL and SLC**

Benefiting from a later specification of the M117 V8, the 500SL has slightly more power than the SLC, but the difference is more evident in the way it picks up than the overall pace it delivers. The 500SL unit revs rather more freely, and also feels a tad sweeter than the more 'woofly' SLC V8. The 500SL's →



Based on the same chassis and sharing much else, but the R107 Roadster was by far the more popular, outliving the tin top SLC by eight years.



*“A 500SL in above average condition starts at £20,000, while an equivalent SLC could be little more than half that”*

⇒ four-speed gearbox is a help, too, the SLC engine feeling noticeably more lazy as it works with its three-speed transmission.

But the relaxed feel is an important element of the SLC's character, and between the heavy showers on the day of our photoshoot, I was determined to maximise this by dropping all four windows and enjoying the coupe at its pillarless best. Of course, it is not quite pillarless – because engineers could not find the space for the rear side windows to lower fully into the bodywork, decorative rear quarterlights had to be installed to conceal the glass.

The sudden downpours called for the 500SL's hood to be raised quickly, and although manual – no R107 ever had a factory-fitted electric roof, although latterly a dealer-fit option was offered – is a clever design that can be operate easily, if not totally without effort.

There exists a school of thought that says the SLC, with its longer wheelbase and greater body rigidity thanks to its fixed roof, has better handling than the SL, and the fact that Mercedes chose to rally the SLC and not the SL might be seen as confirming that. But in normal driving you are unlikely to spot a great deal of difference between the two cars' responses, especially if age has taken its toll on springs, dampers and bushes. Indeed, you are more likely to feel the added agility of a six-cylinder 300SL over the 500SL, as a result of the former's lower front-end weight.



The 500SL (top) received the later style of alloy wheel at the autumn 1985 facelift.



With an earlier V8, and a three-speed auto, the SLC feels lazier than the SL.

The SL's cabin is a tight fit, especially with the hood or factory hard top in place, yet the interior styling scores as highly as its perfectly formed exterior. The trim is top quality, with unfussy but classic Mercedes instruments, and


rich looking walnut veneer on the centre console. This car has leather upholstery (an option costing over £800 when this car was new), the black working particularly well with the red paintwork, even if mushroom coloured leather is probably a more desired colour on an R107.

**T**he 5.0 has a slightly lower driving position that the regular SLC, but eyes ahead, it is much like the SL inside, with its three sunken dials, prominent centre air vents, and large, flat-surfaced centre console, although as with all left-hand drive 107s, the SLC has a foot parking brake rather than the handbrake on the transmission tunnel of right-handed cars, and being from the 1970s, when leather was an infrequently specified option, the coupe has

Mercedes' thick velour in a purple-blue that so strongly evokes that era of interior trim. But look to the rear, and you see a passable approximation of a two-seat rear cabin.

And what of that most subjective of qualities, the two cars' looks? Previously I have always favoured the neater, chiselled looks of the R107 (particularly with its excellent hard top in place), but as the years pass I feel the C107 is less the overly long and bulky shape.

## Verdict

SL, or SLC? Unless you swear allegiance to either the roadster or coupe format, this is a swings and roundabouts judgement. The SL feels a little more sprightly to drive, but with its very limited space cannot offer the SLC's practicality. The SL is also widely available with an acceptably economical three-litre engine in the form of the 300SL, whereas if you wanted the coupe equivalent you would have to search hard for one of the few 280SLCs that have survived. You choose! 



Maybe David spent too long in the sun, but he couldn't pick a winner.

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# d1 Diesel dawn

Mercedes-Benz introduced the world's first diesel passenger car, the 260D, 78 years ago, and since then has proved a leader in the field, with a stream of innovations up to the present day. In this special section, we look at three key models from different eras, beginning with the 170D, the model that brought oil-burning cars to the mainstream market in the early 1950s, **Richard Truesdell** tracking down a rare survivor, a 170Da from the last year of production, 1952

IMAGES  
Richard Truesdell/  
Daimler AG

To follow...

**Page 38 300D**  
Europe's first executive diesel car, it blazed a trail

**Page 44 E250 Diesel**  
A favourite mid-sized diesel for families and taxi drivers

**D**isplayed on the Mercedes-Benz stand at the 1936 International Motor and Motorcycle Show in Berlin, among legendary luxury cars such as the 540K, was a car positioned to appeal to upper middle class, white collar Germans – the all new W136-series Type 170. It was, then, a thoroughly modern four-door saloon, its body a compact two-box design. You can think of it as the E-Class of its era.

Nine years later, following World War Two, with most of Germany's industrial infrastructure in ruins, and the country divided into four Zones of Occupation, its reconstruction began. The factories of many German car manufacturers, such as BMW, were located in the Soviet zone, and their tools and machinery had been shipped eastwards to the USSR, taken as war reparations.

While most of Daimler-Benz's facilities lay in the Western zone, primarily in the American sector, they were largely heaps of rubble. But the factory and, more importantly, the large presses used to produce the W136 Type 170, were intact. This relative good fortune cannot be underestimated, because the resumption of 170 production would be the foundation of Daimler-Benz's recovery, and would even help kickstart West Germany's noted 'Economic Miracle' of the 1950s.

Production of the 170-series resumed in May 1946 in Stuttgart-Sindelfingen, output consisting of commercial vehicles – pickup trucks, cargo vans and ambulances – for the occupation authorities by the end of the year. But resumption of 170 passenger car production was never far from the thoughts of Daimler-Benz managers and engineers, with a 170V prototype constructed in February 1946, based on the pre-war design of Walter Hacker, and engineered for production by Rudolf Uhlenhaut and Max Sailer. ⇨

MERCEDES  
*Diesel  
pioneer*



31

*“Mercedes-Benz had introduced the world’s first production diesel car, the six-cylinder 260D, in 1936, but for the post-war market a more miserly diesel was needed”*



Their design brief was a car for the middle class, with an economical engine and a spacious interior to accommodate a family of four and their luggage. The first post-war models were powered by the M136 1.7-litre petrol engine, which, like the car itself, was a pre-war design. It produced 37bhp, enough for a top speed of 67mph.

But this was just the start of a production programme that would spin off many different models – the most significant being a diesel engined variant, the 170D. Mercedes-Benz had introduced the world's first production diesel car, the

2.5-litre 260D, in 1936 (see page 35), but for the post-war market a more miserly diesel was needed. Julius Witzky, the former head of design for Daimler-Benz marine engines, transferred his expertise to small diesels, and the result was the OM636, the existing petrol engine with a new cylinder head. The new diesel produced the same 37bhp as the

petrol powered unit, but offered much better fuel economy – a claimed 46mpg, compared to the pre-war 260D's 26mpg, and which until quite recently would still have been an impressive figure. And as things would turn out, the OM636 appeared to be virtually indestructible, setting a standard for all Mercedes-Benz diesels to this day.

**T**he 170D was introduced to an eager public in May 1949, just four years after the end of the war, and would be an unqualified success. The engine was an especially attractive proposition, given that petrol quality in this period was often poor. Taxi companies quickly adopted the 170D as their favoured work vehicle.

In January 1950 an improved 170V appeared, and its advances were applied to the 170D, which then became the 170Da (although the '170D' badging was retained). This included a slight increase in cylinder bore, which raised capacity by 100cc and output to 40bhp. Other changes included a widened track, uprated brakes and the adoption

***“The new diesel produced the same 37bhp as the petrol unit, but offered much better fuel economy – 46mpg compared to the pre-war 260D’s 26mpg”***





**Specifications**



**Mercedes-Benz 170Da (W136)**

Engine	OM636 1,767cc 4-cyl
Power	40bhp@3,200rpm
Torque	75lb ft@2,000rpm
Transmission	4-speed manual
Weight	1,245kg
0-62mph	50sec
Top speed	63mph
Fuel consumption	46.3mpg
Years produced	1950-1952

*All figures from Mercedes-Benz*



**ABOVE LEFT**

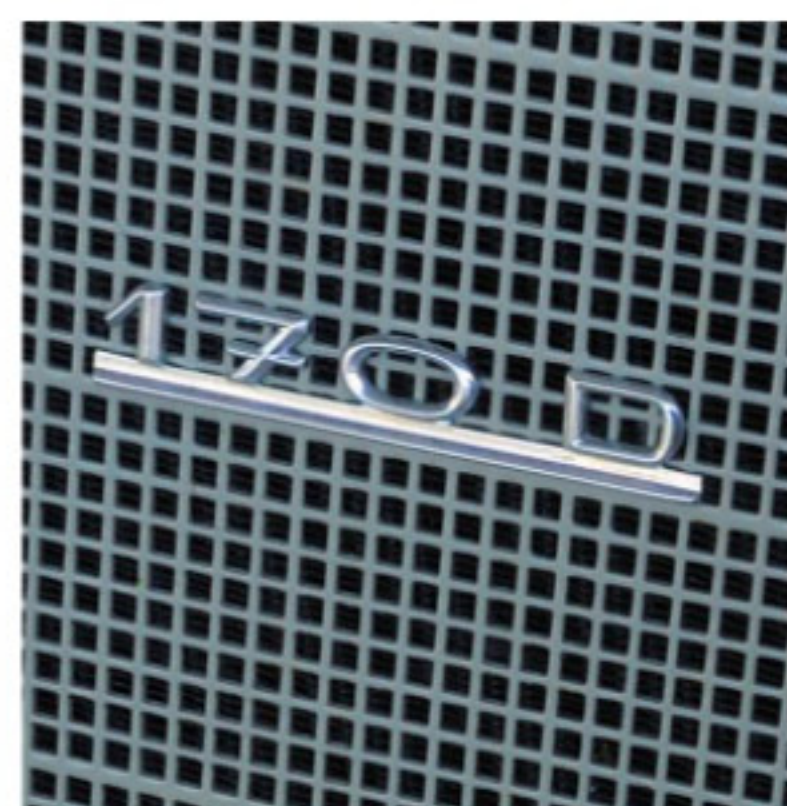
The 170Da's smart cabin is accessed via rear-hinged 'suicide' doors.

**LEFT**

An enormous steering wheel, with a chromed ring horn push, dominates.

**BELOW**

Encinitas, California, has been the Mercedes' home for most of its long life.



of telescopic suspension dampers, while the seats were enlarged and improved, the air vents were equipped with covers to prevent draughts, and access to the boot was now from the outside. In 1952, the 170Da's final year of production, the 170s were again updated, receiving a further widened track, one-piece bumpers and a larger windscreen, while the bonnet louvres were now horizontally rather than diagonally aligned.

Unsurprisingly, 64 years on from its build, not much is

**ABOVE**

All diesels had a '170D' badge on the grille but the last cars were the 170Da.

**ABOVE LEFT**

Semaphore arm indicators are mounted between the bonnet and the front door.

known of this 170Da's first owner, except that he or she lived near Julian, California, a tourist town best known for its apple pies. In 1965, Walter and Theresa Worsch of the coastal town of Encinitas, north of San Diego, bought the car for \$300 (about £1,400 in today's money).

Walter operated an independent German car repair shop in Encinitas, and for many years the 170Da was his daily driver. In a 1987 article that appeared in the *San Diego Union* newspaper, Theresa had this to say: "We drove the →



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*“Driving along California’s Pacific Coast Highway, we were astounded at how little of the expected diesel clatter made its way into the passenger compartment”*



⇒ kids to school in it, and my husband drove it to work. But we always said one day, *one day*, we would restore it to what it looked like when it was new.” The restoration did happen, and took three years to complete, with Walter labouring about an hour a day on the Mercedes after work.

Sadly, Walter died in 2004, which brings us to the car’s third and current owners, Charles and Shelly Sougias, also of Encinitas, California. Charlie, who established Charlie’s Foreign Car Service in 1978, another independent shop specialising in the repair of German marques, bought the car from Walter’s estate. “It was in impeccable condition when I first saw it,” says Charlie. “I wanted to buy and maintain it in its perfect condition. It has been driven about 100 miles since its restoration.”

**W**hen asked what is his favourite story about the Mercedes, Charlie had this to say: “I was driving the car to a show and my family was following behind, and they watched as an old van nearly side-swiped the 170Da. All they could do was watch and hope that it would miss. Of course, they told me 50 miles later, when I arrived at the show. I was unaware of how close a tragedy could have been.”

Charlie has clearly undertaken some detailed research on the development of the OM636 diesel engine during the car’s production life. “The throttle body that you see from the passenger side of the engine compartment ⇒



**ABOVE**  
The 170 introduced motorists to the habit of filling up with diesel.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
You couldn’t ask for much more driver information than that provided here.

**BELOW**  
Skinny 16-inch wheels have vintage compound Firestone cross ply tyres.

## Discovering oil

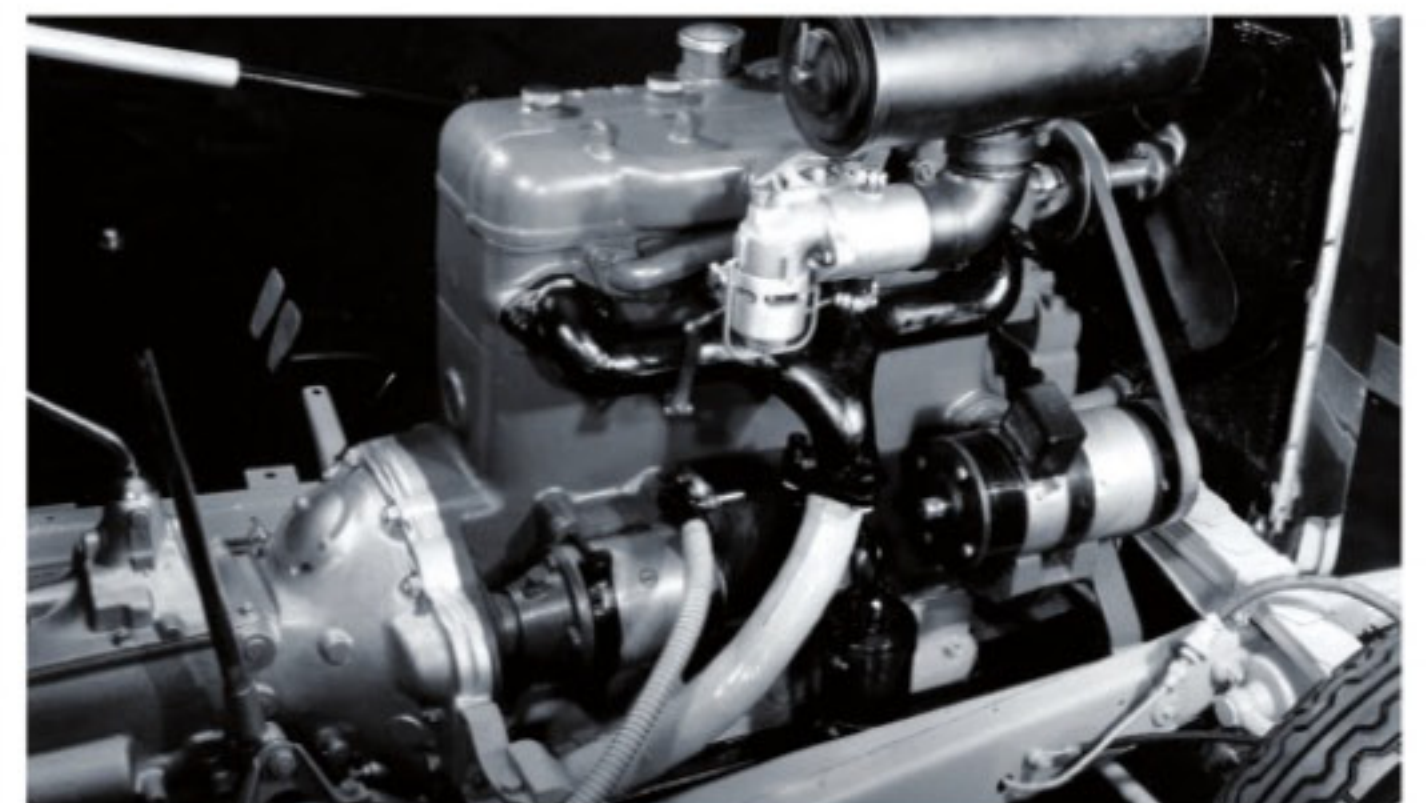
The 260D that Mercedes launched in 1936 was the original diesel car – just



In 1936, two diesel cars were unveiled in Germany: the Hanomag Rekord, and the Mercedes-Benz W138 260D. The former did not go into production for another two years, hence Mercedes was the first car maker to launch a diesel-engined passenger car.

Following tests with a 3.8-litre, six-cylinder diesel, which vibrated excessively, a four-cylinder, 2.5-litre unit, the OM138, was developed, and in September 1936 the 260D went on sale, offered in long- and short-wheelbase forms, as well as in Convertible B guise. You are, of course, forgiven if you laboured under the misapprehension that drop top Mercedes diesels were a recent development.

The first models were almost exclusively six-seaters bought for use as taxis, and just a year after its launch the 260D was updated, the fuel tank moved from the engine compartment to the rear of the car and increased in capacity by five litres to 50 litres, and a smaller radiator grille and revised headlamps fitted. In early 1938 there were further changes, including an overdrive gearbox to replace the original unit with its direct top gear, improved rear suspension, and more robust bumpers. Just under 2,000 were made before the war ended production in 1940.



**ABOVE**  
Engine was a 2.5-litre four-cylinder delivering 44bhp and 26mpg.

**LEFT**  
A 260D kitted out for taxi drivers, who were its biggest customers.



*“Today, you’re much more likely to see a 300SL Gullwing or Roadster offered for sale than any of the 170-series variants”*

**ABOVE**  
Later OM636s modified to cure a running on problem that affected early engines.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Then, as now, Bosch made the fuel injection hardware for Mercedes’ road cars.

⇒ was added to later cars,” he points out. “This addressed the problem with the earlier models of the engine running on after shut-off.”

He continues: “It wasn’t possible fully to control engine speed, because the engine was burning its own oil. The throttle body addressed this unintended issue. The throttle body also served to dampen the air intake, improving driveability.

“On the early cars, you literally couldn’t turn the car off without throwing a rag against the air intake. You had to take the air intake hose off, and stuff the rag inside it, starving the engine of air.”

**D**riving around Encinitas, along California’s famous Pacific Coast Highway, we were astounded at how little of the expected diesel clatter made its way into the passenger compartment. No one would mistake this 170Da’s soundtrack for the sophisticated quiet found in a contemporary E-Class turbodiesel, but nonetheless its refinement was a surprise for any car more than 60 years old, especially one that is diesel powered. And of course at every stop light and stop sign, the car generated admiring glances,

**RIGHT**  
Completed 170s at the Sindelfingen factory in Germany, about 1947

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The 170-series saloon was a model pitched at Germany’s middle class.

thumbs ups, and a number of very positive comments.

When asked what is the car’s best attribute, Charlie responded: “Its history. This vehicle is one of the reasons Mercedes-Benz is a viable company today – because of post-war manufacturing and sales of this particular model.”

But while the 170-series was built in large numbers, and thus laying the foundation for the success of diesel powered Mercedes-Benzes that followed, very few have survived the ravages of time. Today, you are much more likely to see a 300SL Gullwing or Roadster offered for sale than any of the 170-series variants. The reason is quite simple – they are

almost as costly to restore, and in most instances when the restoration is complete, the owner will end up financially upside down.

That’s why it is so important that enthusiast owners like Charlie and Shelly Sougias take up the responsibility of preserving these significant cars.

Maybe Walter looks down on his 170Da every day (and makes sure it doesn’t get side-swiped), knowing that his three years of work restoring the car is fully appreciated by its present custodians.

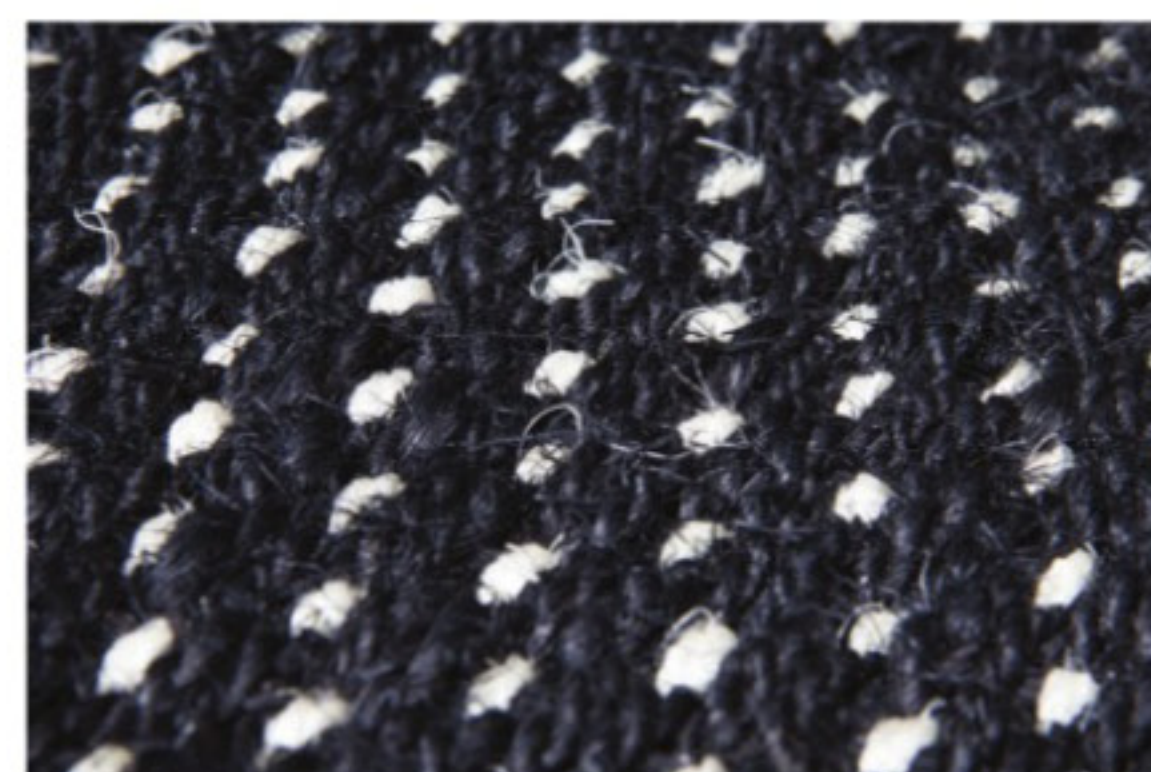




#12 Black & White

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# Blue efficiency

Back in the 1970s Mercedes was among the first luxury car manufacturers to seriously address fuel economy. **Martin Buckley** drives a pristine example of the 123-series saloon that pushed out the diesel envelope

IMAGES  
James Mann



**T**hree decades ago, driving a diesel-powered, privately owned car in the UK was still seen as something of an eccentricity. The oil-burning compression ignition engine had been developed almost exclusively for commercial applications, and although it had a certain following in Europe – where the likes of Citroën, Peugeot and, of course, Mercedes-Benz sold many diesel-powered saloons and estates – the UK was, by contrast, very slow to see the benefits.

In fairness, the reasons for this were as much fiscal as they were cultural. Even if there wasn't a certain resistance to what was still seen as a noisy, slow and smelly means of motivation, then the fact that diesel fuel in the UK was as heavily taxed as petrol meant it was of only marginal interest to the majority of British motorists, whereas in much of Europe diesel was significantly cheaper.

When, after the so-called fuel crisis of the early 1970s, it was realised that a stable supply of oil from the Middle East was not guaranteed, the inherently thrifty and hard-working diesel engine was increasingly viewed in a new and more favourable light as a way of powering not just trucks and taxis, but also family cars. Electric power was not yet a practical reality in the 1970s, hence diesel represented an immediate means of squeezing a lot more mileage from a

*“To own a diesel in the 1970s or 1980s meant smoke, mechanical roughness that was hard to disguise and plodding, uninspired performance”*

tank of fuel for those drivers who were not hooked on performance or refinement.

The quick and quieter turbodiesel cars that dominate our roads today were still decades away. To own a diesel in the 1970s or 1980s meant smoke (at least from cold), mechanical roughness that was hard to disguise, and plodding, uninspired performance from naturally aspirated power units that in most cases had been hastily adapted from motors found in light vans.

At least Mercedes-Benz had a head start. The car maker had built the first diesel-engined private car in the 1930s, and supplied diesel cars to millions of taxi drivers in Germany and right across Europe. The then new W123, even more than its W114/5 predecessor, was created with the assumption that a large number would be sold with diesel engines (51 per cent, as it turned ⇒





⇒ out). It was decreed that the new, mid-range car would be offered with a 'premium' three-litre diesel engine option as an alternative to the top-end petrol models with performance equivalent to the petrol-engined 200. Enter the 300D in 1976, spearheading a new commitment to diesel-powered cars for Mercedes-Benz. Designated OM617 (OM standing for Oil Motor), the 300D's engine was first offered in the W115 as the confusingly badged 240D 3.0, and was essentially a four-cylinder OM615 engine with an extra cylinder, making it the first saloon car application of a five-cylinder diesel motor.

More than 53,000 240D 3.0s had been sold, so the concept was proven, and its useful extra torque was especially attractive for the US market, which demanded an automatic gearbox. Mercedes-Benz had spent too long exploring the blind alley that was the Wankel engine. Now it was becoming increasingly clear that it would be possible to make diesel engines run relatively cleanly, and there was huge scope for making high performance, turbocharged diesel cars. Mercedes had already proved the point by running a three-litre turbodiesel powered C111-II D around the Nardò test track in Italy for 10,000 miles at a record breaking 156mph, powered by basically the same five-cylinder engine in 187bhp turbocharged form.

At the launch of the 300D, Mercedes' bosses were predicting a diesel-engined Mercedes sports car within two years, and even expressed enthusiasm for the new diesel-engined VW Golf. They gleefully predicted that it would encourage people to buy bigger and more expensive, diesel-powered cars – presumably built by Mercedes-Benz!

In the late 1970s, diesel temporarily became important in North America where, traditionally, buyers used to cheap fuel were previously horrified by the idea of diesel cars – indeed, the private market for diesels simply did not exist then, and indeed hardly does even now. But the energy crisis had seriously worried the car buying public, and for a significant number diesel became a real alternative. The diesel's case in the US was also advanced by President Jimmy Carter's Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) initiative, under which fines were levied on manufacturers with a high average consumption across their model ranges.

## Specifications



### Mercedes-Benz 300D (W123)

Engine  
OM617 2,998cc 5-cyl

Power  
87bhp@4,400rpm

Torque  
127lb ft@2,400rpm

Transmission  
4-speed manual

Weight  
1,450kg

0-62mph  
17.8sec

Top speed  
96mph

Fuel consumption  
30.5mpg

Years produced  
1976-1985

Number built  
324,718

*All figures from Mercedes-Benz*



TOP

The shape is conservative, yet almost 40 years on is handsome and timeless.

ABOVE

Leather trim is very classy but it was never a widely specified option on 123s.

BELOW

A Daimler press photo showing the 300D on a set of knobby snow tyres.







*“At the launch of the 300D, Mercedes’ bosses were predicting a diesel engined Mercedes sports car within two years”*

In the UK, diesel-engined passenger cars were increasingly seen as the answer to transport needs in a society that had been frightened by the effects of the last energy crisis – the idea of a prestigious, luxury car that did upwards of 35mpg had obvious appeal. North America received only the 240D and 300D – 73 per cent of Mercedes sold in the USA in 1980 were diesel-powered – and for the large part so did the British market, although a few 200Ds did get in.

General Motors’ reaction to the success of Mercedes’ diesel cars on American soil was to build diesel-engined Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles, but the technology was disastrously unreliable, thus making an even stronger case for buying an expensive but dependable, diesel-powered Mercedes.

During the production run of the 300D, diesel cars contributed to 67 per cent of all North American Mercedes sales, but in the UK a luxury diesel car was virtually unheard of. For a while it had an almost unique place in the market where it was favoured mostly by plant-hire bosses and gentleman farmers. And today the 300D is still heavily in demand throughout Africa, thanks to its ability to run on almost any fuel oil. Scores of these cars have reportedly been stolen from all over Europe for export to Africa, and the car pictured is perhaps the only really superb, low-mileage 300D known in the UK. It was originally supplied for the manager of the BP oil refinery in Swansea as a retirement gift. When he subsequently died, the car was offered to Swansea-based W123 specialist Mark Cosovich, with just 40,000 miles on the clock. “It had always been kept in a heated garage,” says Cosovich, “and was probably the best 300D in the UK with a full history from new.” Cosovich presented the car, fully recommissioned and warranted, at the

**TOP LEFT**  
The 123’s engineering was very thorough, right down to the door handles.  
**LEFT**  
Front and rear mud flaps part of this car’s unusually high equipment spec.  
**BELOW**  
Attractive ‘youngtimer’ interior, a simple design with high quality fittings.



*“Today the 300D is still heavily in demand all over Africa, due to its ability to run on almost any fuel oil”*

⇒ 2005 NEC Classic Motor Show. It was really the first W123 to be displayed as a ‘classic car’ in the UK, and its £8,000 price was viewed at the time with some scepticism.

“All visitors to my stand commented how unrealistic the price was, and most said how they could find a similar car on eBay for £1,200. I politely asked them to get me one and I would willingly double their money. None of them ever did!” Cosovich soon sold the car to a customer in Ireland.

It became available for photography only because the current owner returned it to Cosovich for a full cosmetic restoration of the floorpan, and a major service. The axles and subframes were removed for future longevity as in Cosovich’s ‘condition 1’ restored W123s. In the metal, the 300D looks particularly attractive in DB900 Surf Blue with the extremely rare, blue leather interior, including rear headrests and centre armrest.

It is the only one Cosovich has ever seen in this specification and it feels much plusher than the usual ‘poverty’ diesel Mercedes. Of the diesel W123s, only the 300D has a conventional key start, lesser models sticking with the separate ignition and glowplug arrangement that had long been the trademark of diesel motoring.


**I**t fires readily and is poised to work immediately from cold. Most 300Ds have automatic transmission, but the four-speed manual in this car helps the performance, and gives marginally longer legs in top gear. The five-cylinder Mercedes 300D was the most powerful diesel car offered in the UK in the late 1970s. By the time this car was built in 1982, following revisions in its production life, it squeezed out 96mph and 0-62mph in 17.8 seconds from its 87bhp – but there is nothing to be gained from revving the engine hard. It is better to just let it work for you with its ample torque,

which is sufficient to keep up with traffic around town. In the UK market, power-assisted steering was standard on the two bigger-engined diesel models (300Ds also had vacuum-operated door locks as standard, and the British importer specified a windscreen with a graduated top tint), so it is as manoeuvrable as any other W123.

What the UK did not get was the turbodiesel version. After extensive testing, a forced-induction model was offered in left-hand drive 300Ds (the engine was first seen in the American-market W116 300SD), which increased the power by 44 per cent. But the turbocharger fouled the steering box when fitted to right-hand-drive cars.

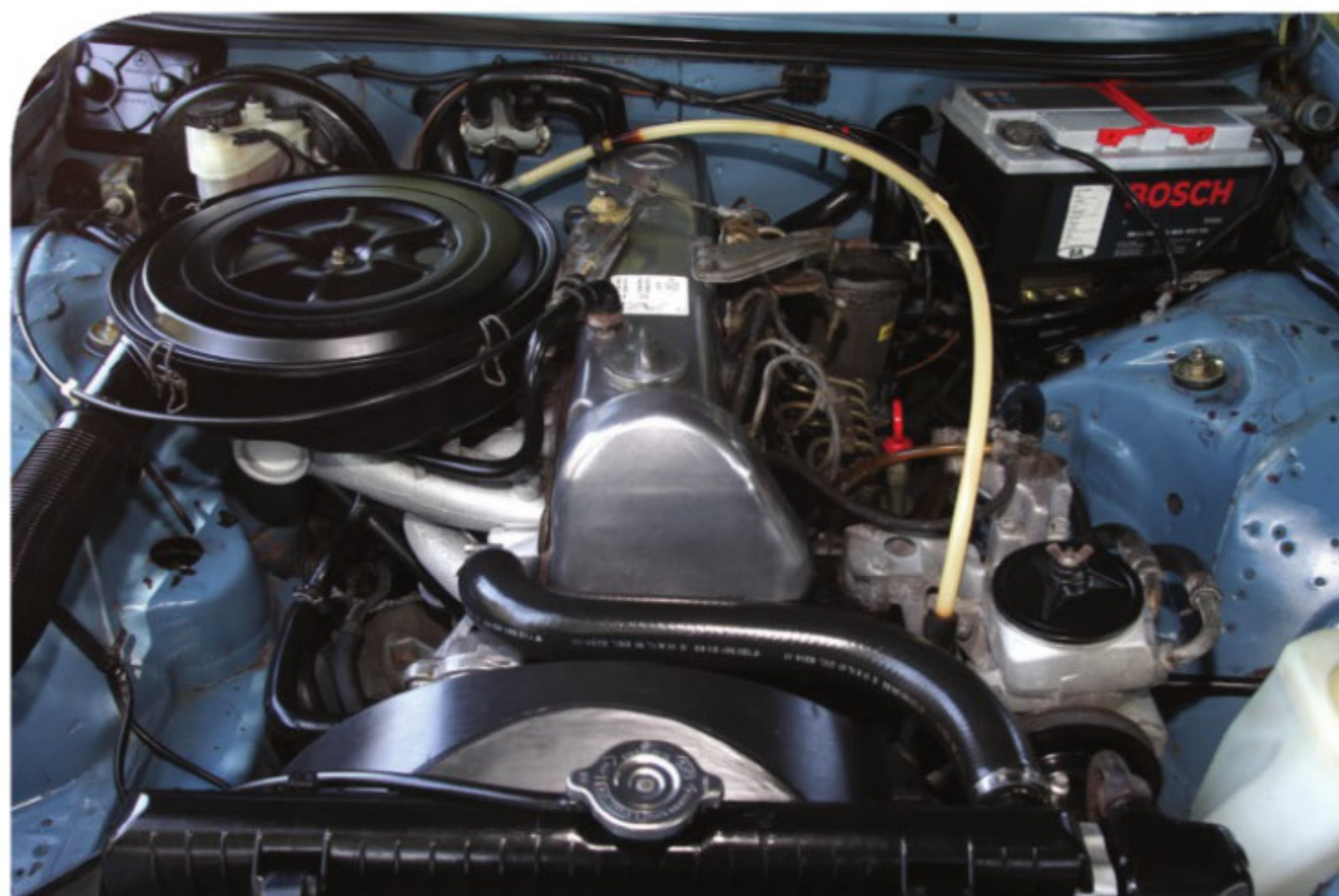
**N**evertheless, most people would find the performance of the naturally aspirated 300D acceptable, at the very least, and you find other pleasures in it, anyway. The joy of any W123 is its solid feel, the way the doors shut with such an effortless ‘thunk’, and the lovely finish of the interior details. Cruising at, say, 80mph in top gear, the car’s diesel characteristics are less obvious because the hard rattle of the engine is consumed by the general road and wind noise (which are not excessive). Now you can sit back and enjoy the stability and the light touch of the W123’s ride, and celebrate that the 300D will go a very long way on one tank of diesel.

It was far from cheap in its day, and bringing an average 300D back to this condition would be very costly indeed.

But as one of the early W123 promotional brochures so rightly pointed out, “the only true economy is quality.” 

**BELOW RIGHT**  
Blaupunkt radio could not be more basic, with only long and medium waves.

**BELOW**  
The innovative OM617 five-cylinder diesel first appeared in the W115.



**ABOVE**  
In Britain in the 1970s, few people wanted to know about diesel cars

**RIGHT**  
This pristine example is quite possibly the best remaining 300D in the UK.



# Patrick Carroll

*Mercedes from the Isle of Man*

Please telephone  
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Dark Blue, unmarked and perfect Blue cloth interior, sunroof, absolutely superb condition, full Mercedes-Benz dealer history. First owner had car for 20 years and the last for 10 years. Ready to go ..... £6,000



### 1990 230CE 2 DOOR COUPE

Classic White with contrasting Black hide interior, electric sunroof. Full service history with detailed file to confirm the last owner for 20 years. Just had a major service and expenditure ..... £3,500

**2010 Jaguar XK8, 2 door coupe, 5 litre, V8 portfolio, Spectrum Blue, Warm Charcoal interior, 17,000 miles £30,000**

*“You know that no journey in this car will be an aggressive hustle, allowing you to take in the car’s charms, of which there are many”*



# Slow bu



IMAGES  
Derek Goard

***rn***

With just 111bhp, this E-Class won't win the traffic lights grand prix, but that is actually one key reason why this pristine example from late in 124-series production is such a joy to drive, says **David Sutherland**

**H**istorically, Mercedes-Benz has a rather strange relationship with the diesel engine. On the one hand, Stuttgart, which in the 1930s introduced the first diesel car, has been an innovator in the field ever since, for example introducing the first five-cylinder diesel car, the W115 240D 3.0 in 1974, the turbodiesel luxury car, the W116 300SD S-Class in 1978, and the first common-rail production diesel car, the C220 CDI, in 1997. But at other times it seemed to lag behind, using outdated engines with somewhat lowly outputs while rivals offered sweeter, more powerful units.

By the mid-1990s, the world had all but moved on from naturally aspirated diesels, those remaining built mostly for specialist markets. But in the UK you could still buy

an E-Class with a 2.5-litre non-turbo diesel producing all of 111bhp. A turbodiesel 124-series had been available since 1988, but Mercedes wouldn't sell that model here. It was the same with the three-litre car – the E300D was available in the UK, but not the turbodiesel version. The reason given at the time was that right-hand drive production didn't justify the required engineering (which could be complicated, due to the need to keep the turbocharger clear of the steering column), but that didn't stop rivals Audi or BMW.

And yet there is something very appealing about low-power Benz diesels, as this amazingly well-preserved E250 Diesel demonstrated. Perhaps it's because you know that no journey in this car will be an aggressive hustle, allowing you to take in the car's other charms, of which there are many. And with Mercedes currently involved in a headlong rush for ever more



**ABOVE**  
Five-speed manual gear shift feels lifeless, but it does maximise economy.





ABOVE  
Excellent rear legroom is a 124 virtue, and the big bonus here is leather trim.



ABOVE  
The interior of this E250 Diesel is in perfect condition, and feels new.



## Specifications



### Mercedes-Benz E250 Diesel (W124)

Engine	OM605 2,497cc 5-cyl
Power	111bhp@5,000rpm
Torque	128lb ft@2,000-4,600rpm
Transmission	5-speed manual
Weight	1,440kg
0-62mph	15.6sec
Top speed	118mph
Fuel consumption	38.8mpg
Years produced	1993-1996
Number built	278,222

All figures from Mercedes-Benz

horsepower, there is almost a feeling of being liberated by having such a modest output.

The E250 Diesel was in the line-up almost from the start of 124 production (badged simply 250D prior to 1993), its two-valve, five-cylinder engine then mustering 89bhp. By the end of its life it had a four-valve unit, although time really had stood still for the Mercedes so loved by Europe's – and particularly Germany's – taxi drivers. Regular production of the E250 Diesel ended in September 1995, but carried on in CKD ('Completely Knocked Down') kit form for export for a further nine months. Over 278,000 E250 Diesels were built during 124-series production, although not many came to the UK, no doubt partly because at nearly £25,000 it cost £2,900 more than the petrol equivalent, which could only be the base E200, and even that was more than four seconds quicker to 62mph.

This example was first registered in June 1998, although it is reckoned to be a German-built car, presumably one that somehow lingered there before arriving in the UK. It was delivered to its first owner well over two years after the 210-series E-Class had gone on sale in Britain.

The specification is interesting, almost contradictory. The transmission is the taxi-issue five-speed manual, but at the same time the car has the luxury of leather trim, rear headrests, and rear reading lamps.

Expectations are frankly low as I slide into the seat, check for neutral in the manual gearbox (not a natural thing to do in a Mercedes), and turn the key. But there's a pleasant surprise, because I am not hearing the ghastly, loud rattle and feeling the drumming vibration of ⇨



ABOVE  
Eight-hole alloy wheels were among the many pricey 124-series options.



LEFT  
OM605's performance is very limited, yet overall the car is so endearing.

*“The transmission is the taxi-issue five-speed manual, but at the same time the car has the luxury of leather trim”*



*“Everything feels so solid and well screwed together, and the instrument and control layout has a classic simplicity that still looks great”*



**ABOVE**  
Over 278,000 were built, but very few E250 Diesels found homes in Britain.

⇒ diesels of old. The engine hums at tickover, and I feel it is no less smooth than the 2.1-litre CDI unit in current Mercs.

The second surprise is how well the engine revs. Diesels of this vintage tend to run out of steam by 4,000rpm, when acceleration abruptly dies and the dreaded ‘brick wall’ effect is felt, but this one sails past that point, and doesn’t feel out of breath until 5,000rpm, that being its power peak. At cruising speed, older diesels also often drone their occupants to distraction, but not the E250 Diesel, which is notably quiet at all times, thanks in part to the excellent sound suppression that all 124s had.

Mercedes’ 0-62mph figure for this model was 15.6 seconds, which gives a good idea of what to expect. The car doesn’t so much accelerate as wind itself up to a comfortable pace. But once on the move the motor sounds relaxed, and given a long enough stretch of road the saloon will achieve a 118mph maximum, Mercedes claims. Everything is fine, unless you want to overtake – the E250 Diesel, with its meagre 77bhp per tonne, isn’t really made for that. By comparison the E200 has 97bhp per tonne, and the six-cylinder E320 has a heady 145bhp per tonne – perhaps it’s just as well the E200 Diesel, with an almost laughable 54bhp



**RIGHT**  
Badge apart, the offside wing vent is the only sign that this is the diesel 124.

per tonne, was never officially imported for UK sale.

When this car was new, manual gear changes in Mercedes were still quite rare in Britain, and it’s obvious why. The shift is light and short, but so wooden that it barely feels attached to the gearbox it operates. I am so used to 124s with an automatic transmission that a couple of times I forget to change down and declutch on coming to a standstill.

The compensation for the leisurely performance is, of course, the fuel economy. When the 250 Diesel was built, ‘official’ consumption was measured in a different way than it is now, there being three tests, an urban cycle and constant 90km/h (56mph) and 120km/h (75mph) tests. The E250 Diesel gave 31.0, 52.3 and 41.5mpg, respectively, and a weighted average of 38.9mpg – a worthwhile 22 per cent improvement over the petrol-powered E200.

Many classic Mercedes enthusiasts would not want a model later than the 124-series, and sitting in the pristine cabin of this 26,400-mile example you can see their point. Everything feels so solid and well screwed together, and the instrument and control layout has a classic simplicity and order about it that still looks great. And it still rates as a comfortable car with excellent ergonomics (a pity the original owner skimped on the electric seat adjustment, though). There is plenty of space in the rear cabin, and an enormous boot that beats many hatchbacks hands down.

The E250 Diesel is diesel technology from an era that now seems so distant, despite it actually not being that long ago. Even the least powerful version of the current E-Class turbodiesel – the E220 BlueTec – has well over twice the torque, and makes 62mph in half the time, and is much more sophisticated. But old-fashioned though it undoubtedly is, the E250 Diesel has a simple charm that no amount of high-tech trickery can truly compensate for.

CM

## Trouble in the ranks

### Early 124s had problems, as German cab drivers revealed

During the mid-1990s Mercedes-Benz’s newly introduced models were criticised for what was seen as a reduced level of build quality – but the same had happened a decade previously. Within two years of the 124’s launch in 1984, German taxi drivers who had switched from W123s to its successor held

a protest to complain about faults experienced in their 124s.

These reportedly included cylinder head and gearbox problems, electrical issues, and squeaks and rattles. At the press conference held during the launch of the 124-series coupe in 1987, I asked the board of directors what they were doing

about it, only to be told in no uncertain terms that the problems did not exist, prompting one or two raised eyebrows among we journalists. In those days top management at Stuttgart were an autocratic bunch, not inclined to be



particularly media-friendly when it came to awkward questions. It’s believed that tens of millions of Deutschmarks were spent swiftly to rectify the faults.

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Finished in DB040 Solid Black, with special order Pearl Grey leather interior with matching carpet, and black Sonnenland Mohair soft top hood, a matching hardtop is also available. A truly unique 190SL in this colour combination, which will be admired wherever it goes. Currently in the final stage of restoration ..... Offers circa £135,000



### 1970 Mercedes 280SL Auto.

We are pleased to offer this beautiful 1970 280SL Auto for your interest. Finished in DB172 Antrazit Grau, a Mulberry Red leather interior with matching carpets and a contrasting Black Sonnenland Mohair soft top; makes this a very striking and unusual combination.

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We are delighted to offer this beautiful example of the much sought after Mercedes W113 Pagoda. This particular car is a June 1965 registered Mercedes-Benz 230SL with manual transmission. Subject to a recent restoration, over 700 hours have been spent to bring this 230SL back to life.

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**"ROSQVIST NOT ONLY DOMINATED  
THE RACE, BUT TO SEAL VICTORY SHE  
INCREASED THE AVERAGE SPEED  
COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR"**

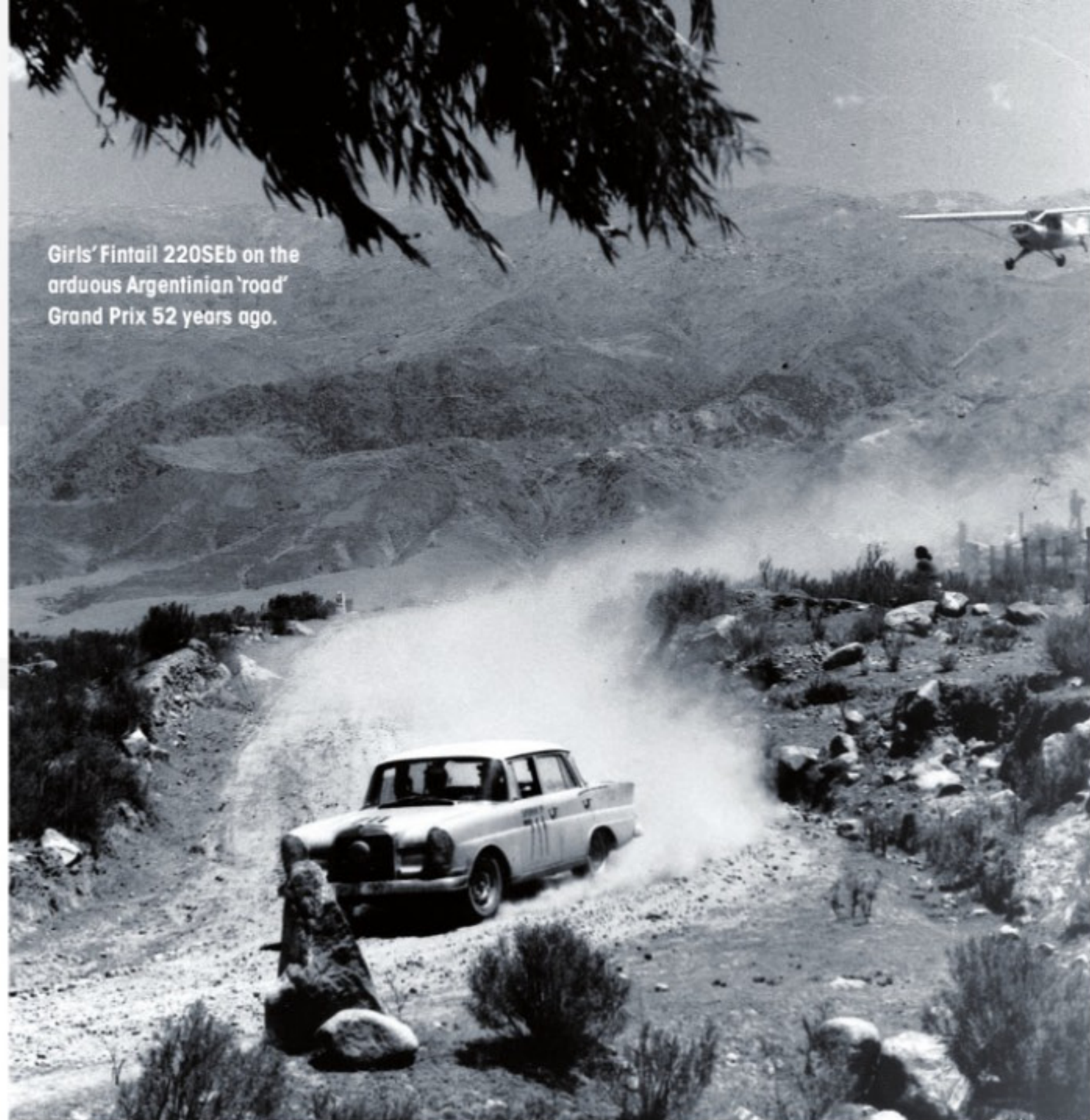


50

**BELOW**  
Ewy Rosqvist trained as a vet but by her mid twenties was a famous rally star.



# Girl



Girls' Fintail 220SEb on the arduous Argentinian 'road' Grand Prix 52 years ago.

**O**n November 5 1962, Ewy Rosqvist finished over three hours ahead of the rest of the field in the sixth Argentinian Touring Car Grand Prix (*VI Gran Premio Internacional Standard Supermovil YPF*) driving a Mercedes-Benz 220SEb. Winning this long-distance rally outright was a career highlight for the Mercedes works driver – and an early and outstanding example of female empowerment, many would say.

Rosqvist – who has recently celebrated her 85th birthday – and her co-driver Ursula Wirth won all six stages of this near 2,900-mile race in course records, triggering enthusiastic celebrations on their arrival in Buenos Aires. Rosqvist not only dominated the race, but to seal this victory she also increased the average speed from 75.331mph to 78.835mph compared to the previous year's winning duo, Walter Schock and Manfred Schiek, also in a Mercedes-Benz 220SE.

Their victory, in a near standard production Fintail, was a worldwide sensation. There was amazement not only at the crushing nature of the win, but also at the fact that two women had won an exceptionally gruelling contest otherwise made up exclusively of male competitors.

Over the next couple of years, Rosqvist continued to achieve excellent placings in famous rallies and long-distance races. Examples include 16th place overall and a win in the ladies' class at the 1963 Monte Carlo Rally, 12th place at the 11th Acropolis Rally, and victory in the class up to 2,500cc in a six-hour race at the Nürburgring (with Ursula Wirth and Eberhard Mahle). She and Ursula also achieved third place in the Argentinian Touring Car Grand Prix behind teammates Eugen Böhlinger and Klaus Kaiser, as well as Dieter Glemser and Martin Braungart, each duo in a W112 300SE.

**I**n 1964, Ewy Rosqvist teamed up with Eva Maria Falk to win the class up to 2,500cc at the Monte Carlo Rally, secure fifth place in the Acropolis Rally and third place in the Spa-Sofia-Liège Rally. The Swedish driver ended her active career by finishing third in the 1964 Argentinian Touring Car Grand Prix with Eva Maria Falk.

The rally driver was born Ewy Jönsson in Stora Herrestad near Ystad, southern Sweden, on August 3 1929. Her parents ran a farm and had five children, Ewy being the only girl. She attended the local school first and then high school in Ystad, a small coastal town. ⇨



**LEFT**  
The crowds went wild when Rosqvist and co-driver Ursula Wirth won in Argentina in 1962.

**ABOVE**  
Rosqvist (left) and Wirth at the 1963 Monte Carlo Rally, winning the Ladies Cup in a 220SEb.

**Fifty-two years ago, a female veterinary assistant proved that women, too, could wear the trousers in the man's world of international rallying**

# power

## ★ Headlines of 1962 ★

★ Graham Hill won the F1 World Championship in a BRM, but Stirling Moss was seriously hurt when he crashed at Goodwood, ending his racing career

★ Screen icon Marilyn Monroe was found dead in bed at her Los Angeles home, aged 36. Millions of her fans around the world were deeply shocked

★ Bob Dylan released his first album, *Bob Dylan*, the jazz pianist Oscar Peterson released the landmark *Night Train*, and Dick Dale, who invented surf music, brought us Surfer's Choice

★ It was a memorable year for British sports cars, with the sublime handling Lotus Elan, unitary construction MGB (pictured), and Michelotti-styled Triumph Spitfire all launched



ABOVE  
Celebrating in Buenos Aires with motorsport boss Karl Kling and a soft drink.

LEFT  
A 300SE they drove in the same event in 1964, in which they finished third.



⇒ Having completed her intermediate schooling, she was encouraged by her father to go to agricultural college – this actually laid the foundation for her subsequent rally driving career, and provided her first contact with the Mercedes-Benz brand. After studying livestock husbandry, as well as two terms of veterinary medicine in Stockholm, Ewy Jönsson qualified as a veterinary assistant and, working for a veterinarian, she had to cover a large district containing far flung farms. Her father therefore bought a Mercedes-Benz W136 170S for the young woman to drive between 90 and 120 miles each day on narrow dirt and gravel roads.

Within a relatively short time she had clocked up nearly 140,000 miles in the car, and was constantly improving her times between the various farmsteads and home. This honed her driving skills, and revealed her talent for driving quickly and safely on challenging routes.

In her autobiography, *Fahrt durch die Hölle (Driving through hell)*, the rally driver described the time thus: “After two years, I was driving so well that I often finished

RIGHT  
A charming if rather self-conscious publicity photo of the two works drivers.

for the day one and a half to two hours before my female colleagues, despite all my stops on the farms.”

Marriage to the engineer and motorsport enthusiast Ingve Rosqvist in 1954 gave this young Swedish woman a

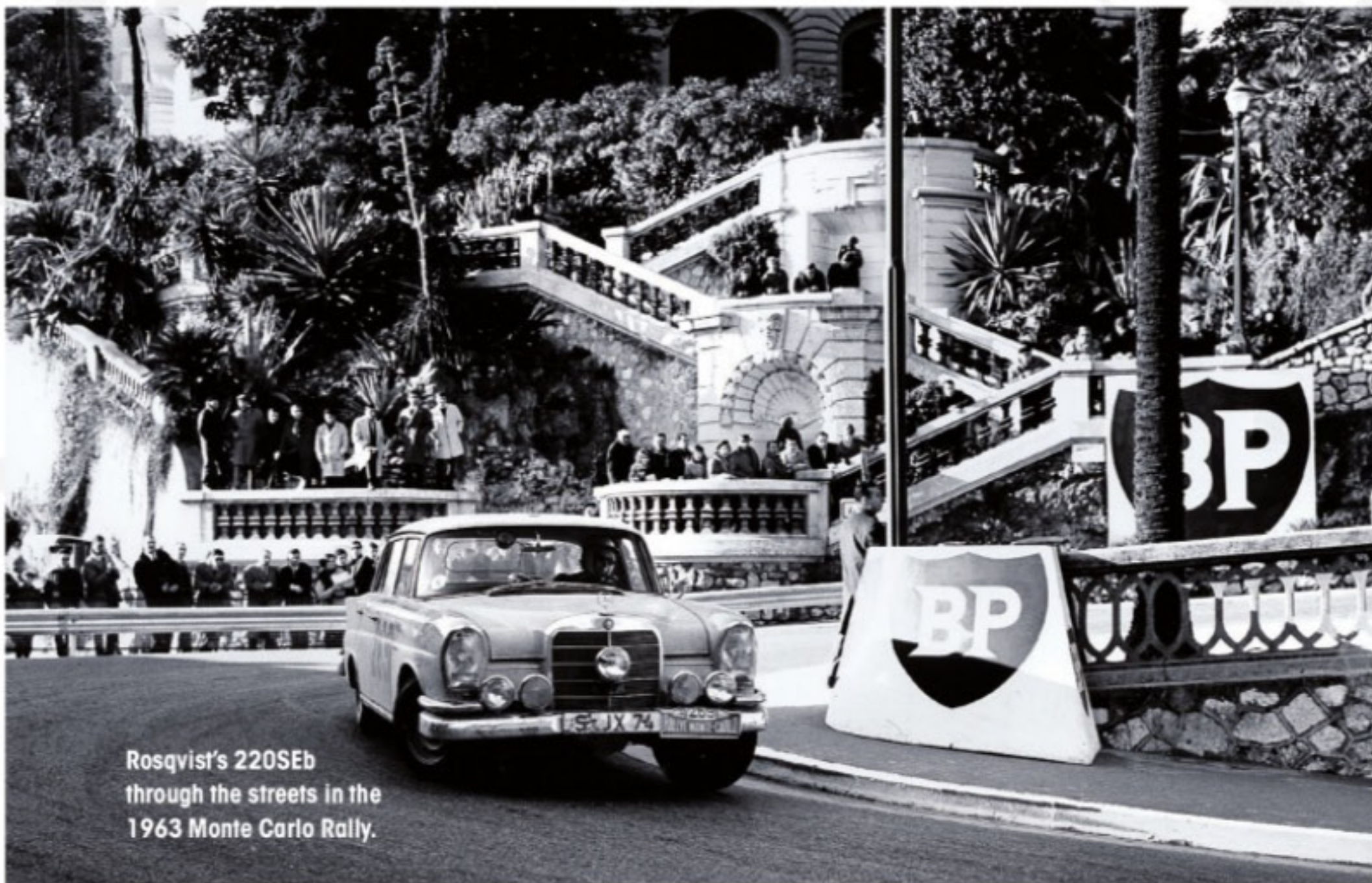
taste for rallying

as a sport. Ewy accompanied her husband during the 1954 Swedish Rally to the Midnight Sun (*Svenska Rallyt till Midnattssolen*) – and had her chance behind the wheel. “I was allowed to drive on some of the intermediate stages, and that was so much fun that I decided to take part in a rally myself, or as a co-driver, as soon as possible,” she later recalled. In 1956, aged 27, she found herself on the

starting line of the Midnight Sun Rally with Maybrit Clausson as her co-driver.

She became passionately committed to the sport, even though rallying was an expensive pursuit for a young veterinary assistant. Taking part in a major national rally

**“SHE BECAME PASSIONATELY COMMITTED TO THE SPORT, EVEN THOUGH RALLYING WAS AN EXPENSIVE PURSUIT FOR A YOUNG VETERINARY ASSISTANT”**



Rosqvist's 220SEb through the streets in the 1963 Monte Carlo Rally.



**ABOVE**  
Mercedes' 'flying workshop' was a key part of the drivers' success in the tough Argentinian events.

**BELOW**  
After living in Stuttgart, the multi talented Ewy decided to settle back in Stockholm.



**ABOVE**  
Seen in 2013 with Björn Waldegård (1943-2014) and racer Marcel Tiemann.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The team receiving an impromptu serenade at dinner in Argentina, 1963.



in the late 1950s was, as it would be now, a very expensive business. Rosqvist won the Women's Cup four times at the 1,000 Lakes Rally in Finland, and also topped the female rankings at numerous other rallies across Europe.

In 1959, Rosqvist became European Ladies' Rally Champion in a Volvo ahead of Pat Moss, the internationally famous rally driver, and sister of Stirling Moss. Princess Grace of Monaco presented the trophy to Ewy at the Monte Carlo Rally in January 1960. Rosqvist won this title again in 1960 and 1961, and also won the ladies' class (*Coupe des Dames*) in international rallying in 1959 and 1961.

Ultimately it was not possible to pursue intense, successful rallying as a private passion alongside other employment on a permanent basis. As a result, in 1960 Rosqvist signed a contract as a works driver with Volvo. The circle back to her first car was soon drawn, though. After all, she had completed her driving apprenticeship in a Mercedes. In the spring of 1962, Stuttgart recruited the successful rally driver and her co-driver Ursula Wirth for the Mercedes works team.

The first race for Rosqvist and Wirth in their top-end W111 220SE saloon was the four-day Swedish Rally to the Midnight Sun (June 12-16, 1962) where they immediately

secured the women's cup. Before that they had taken sixth place in the 22nd Rajd Polski (June 2-6), and they came 12th in the Liège-Sofia-Liège Rally (August 29 to September 3) before going on to win the Argentinian Touring Car Grand Prix in the November.

In June of that year, Rosqvist married Baron Alexander von Korff-Schmysingk in the chapel of Stuttgart's Old Castle. Following her husband's death in 1977, Baroness Ewy von Korff-Rosqvist carried on living in Stuttgart for some years, and among other activities, she conducted museum tours in Swedish, German, English and Spanish.

Baroness von Korff-Rosqvist now lives in Stockholm. She is closely connected with Mercedes-Benz Classic as an ambassador for motorsport and is a popular guest at Mercedes-Benz Classic events.

Fans are always delighted to see Baroness Ewy von Korff-Rosqvist whenever she makes appearances as a charming brand ambassador for Mercedes-Benz Classic. At her recent 85th birthday party, Michael Bock, Director of Mercedes-Benz Classic, said of the much loved 1960s' Stuttgart works team member, "We extend our wholehearted congratulations to Ewy Rosqvist on her special day. We greatly appreciate her personable manner – and her utter professionalism at the wheel."

**"AFTER A PRODUCTION  
RUN OF 1,400, THE  
GULLWING WAS  
REPLACED BY THE  
300SL ROADSTER,  
UNVEILED AT THE  
GENEVA MOTOR SHOW  
IN MARCH 1957"**



# POSH IN THE PARK

Possibly in even better condition than when new, this 300SL shows just how exclusive the Roadster was when it was launched 57 years ago as wheels for the rich and famous, says **David Sutherland**

IMAGES Terry Osborne



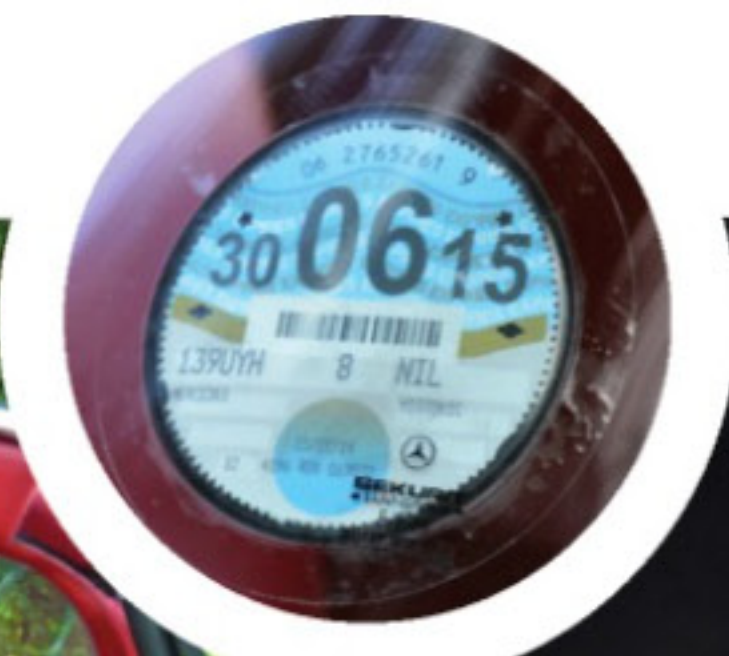
**T**he W198 300SL Roadster, introduced in 1957 was in simple terms a convertible version of the 300SL Coupe – or Gullwing, as it is almost universally referred to

– that had been launched four years before, after a sensational debut at the New York International Motor Sports Show. But the switch from tin top to canvas represented an important change in the direction of Mercedes-Benz's thinking on sports cars.

Or perhaps that should read Max Hoffman's thinking on sports cars, because during the early 1950s, when the German car maker was rebuilding itself after wartime destruction, this US citizen of Austrian extraction, the marque's New York-based importer, served as the eyes and ears of Mercedes-Benz in America. Experienced in handling European cars (and also involved with both Volkswagen and Porsche, among others), he saw great potential for Mercedes as a glamorous brand in a country where a post-war economic boom was generating increasingly strong consumer demand.

The 300SL Gullwing was based closely on the 300SL racing car of 1952 and hence was, even after road car refinements, very much a sports car. Its straight-six, three-litre engine was, for the day, highly tuned, and the chassis was a lightweight tubular space frame, which ruled out conventional full height doors, leaving the top-hinged doors that have become so iconic as the only practicable solution. It was the world's most impressively engineered car at the time, yet Hoffman correctly predicted that a more user friendly successor would be appropriate in a market so appreciative of luxury cars.

In particular, he urged his Stuttgart masters to build a convertible version, which he believed would go down especially well in prosperous, sun-drenched California, and hence after a production run of 1,400, the Gullwing was replaced by the 300SL Roadster. The bodywork was largely carried over, the main difference in appearance, apart from the absence of a solid roof, being the Roadster's



**ABOVE** Although stationed in France this 300SL is registered in Britain.

**LEFT** For many, red leather on silver paintwork has to be the dream Mercedes.



**ABOVE** Handsome alloy induction tubes feed the M198 six, which produces 212bhp.

**CENTRE INSET** Glovebox lid bears one of the most evocative badges in Mercedes' long history.

**ABOVE RIGHT** The ashtray on top of the dash is from long before smoking was frowned on.

stacked, rather than round headlamps, but the space frame was adapted to allow normal, side-hinged doors, making cabin entry easier (if still somewhat awkward) than on the enclosed Gullwing.

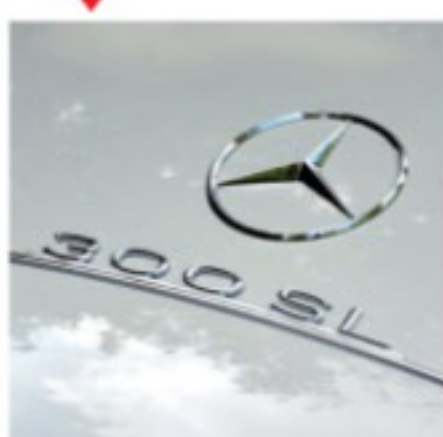
**T**he Gullwing's engine, canted over at an angle to help keep the car's centre of gravity as low as possible, remained unchanged, the Bosch fuel-injected M198 giving 212bhp and 202lb ft torque. The four-speed manual gearbox was also as before, but the rear differential was completely redesigned, as Mercedes sought to address one of the Gullwing's few shortcomings.

Owing to the company's still precarious finances during the Gullwing's gestation, the car had been signed off with swing-axle rear suspension more or less from the parts bins, a design that while cost-effective

also allowed the rear wheels to assume considerable positive camber through corners, rendering the chassis worryingly tail happy at speed, especially if the driver lifted off the power in mid-corner. The remedy was to switch from a fixed differential, with drive shafts that moved up and down, to one that itself pivoted on the subframe, but which had solid axles, this reducing the amount of camber change possible. It was also mounted lower, to keep the weight as near to the ground as possible. An additional feature was a transverse coil spring, which reduced the amount of rebound when a wheel hit a bump.

In the cabin, the folding steering wheel was no longer needed as an aid to entry and so was replaced by a fixed column, mounted closer to the driver, while the dashboard was redesigned, with the previously scattered minor dials grouped between the

## Specifications



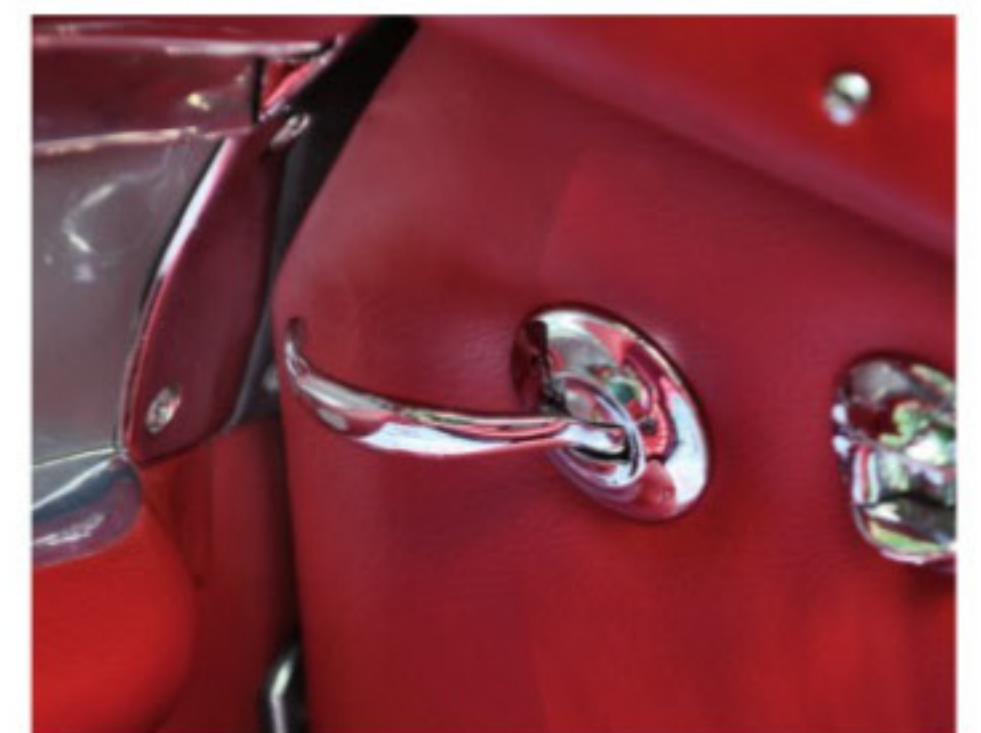
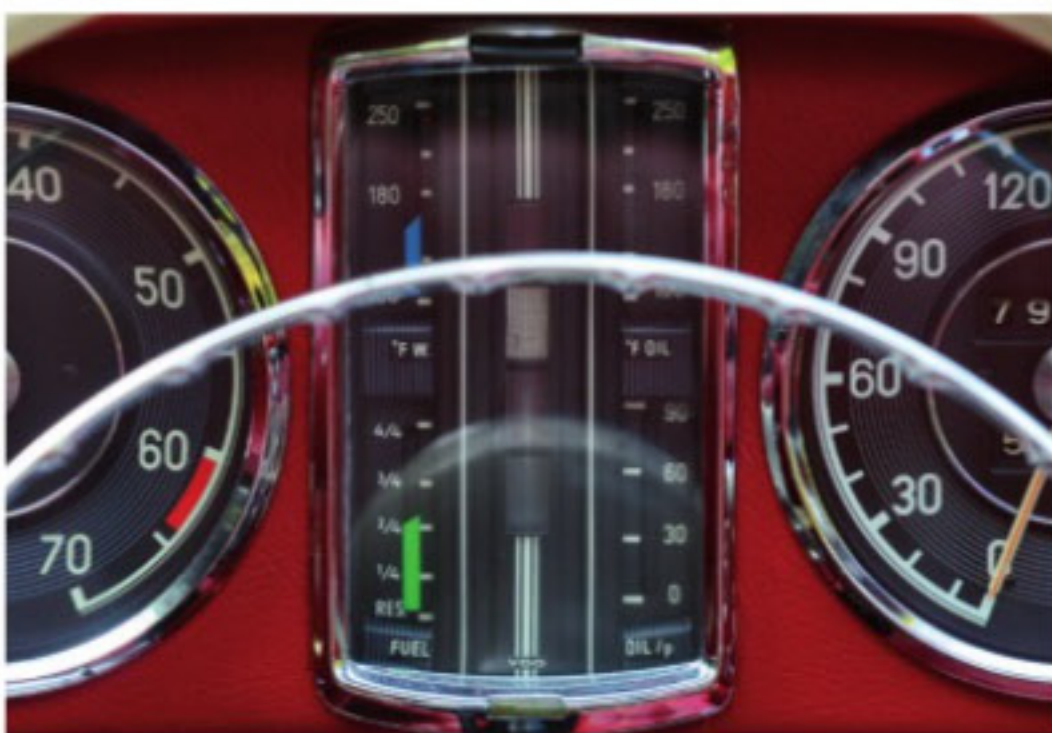
### Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster (W198)

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 the rear axle ratio used



**"THE ROOF WAS AN IMPORTANT DESIGN FEATURE, CONCEALED WHEN LOWERED, AND THUS NOT INTERFERING WITH THE CLEAN LINES OF THE 300SL BODY"**



speedometer and rev counter, in the classic vertical display that would be seen in Mercedes' cars until 1971, when the SL Pagoda and W111s were withdrawn. A powered hood would not be seen on a Mercedes for a further 32 years, when the R129 SL appeared, but the roof was nonetheless an important

design feature, concealed when lowered, and thus not interfering with the clean lines of the 300SL body.

The Roadster was an altogether more forgiving car than the Gullwing. That was reflected, as Hoffman had predicted, in the type of people who bought it, the Hollywood glitterati and

**ABOVE**  
'Egg box' air intakes are a detail, but help define the 300SL's unique persona.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
Vertical minor instrument cluster was one of the updates over the Gullwing.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The Roadster's interior door handles are chromed and beautifully designed.

generally the rich and famous, many of whom no doubt appreciated the Mercedes for its stunning looks and exclusivity rather than for its undoubted engineering integrity.

**A**s Nicolas Jambon Bruguier, proprietor of 300SL specialist Classic Sport Leicht in Paris (a profile of his company follows this feature) dropped a gear and accelerated along a fortunately empty boulevard on the bank of the River Seine in the north-west of the city, I suspect it was not the looks the Mercedes would attract that was occupying his thoughts, but the glorious mechanical howl of this pre-electronic, single cam, two valves per cylinder motor as the revs climbed toward the 6,000rpm peak. This temporary gap in the traffic was enough to feel the engine's strong thrust, which in theory can deliver a →



**LEFT**  
Nicolas Jambon Bruguier's job as Classic Sport Leicht owner is not all hard work.

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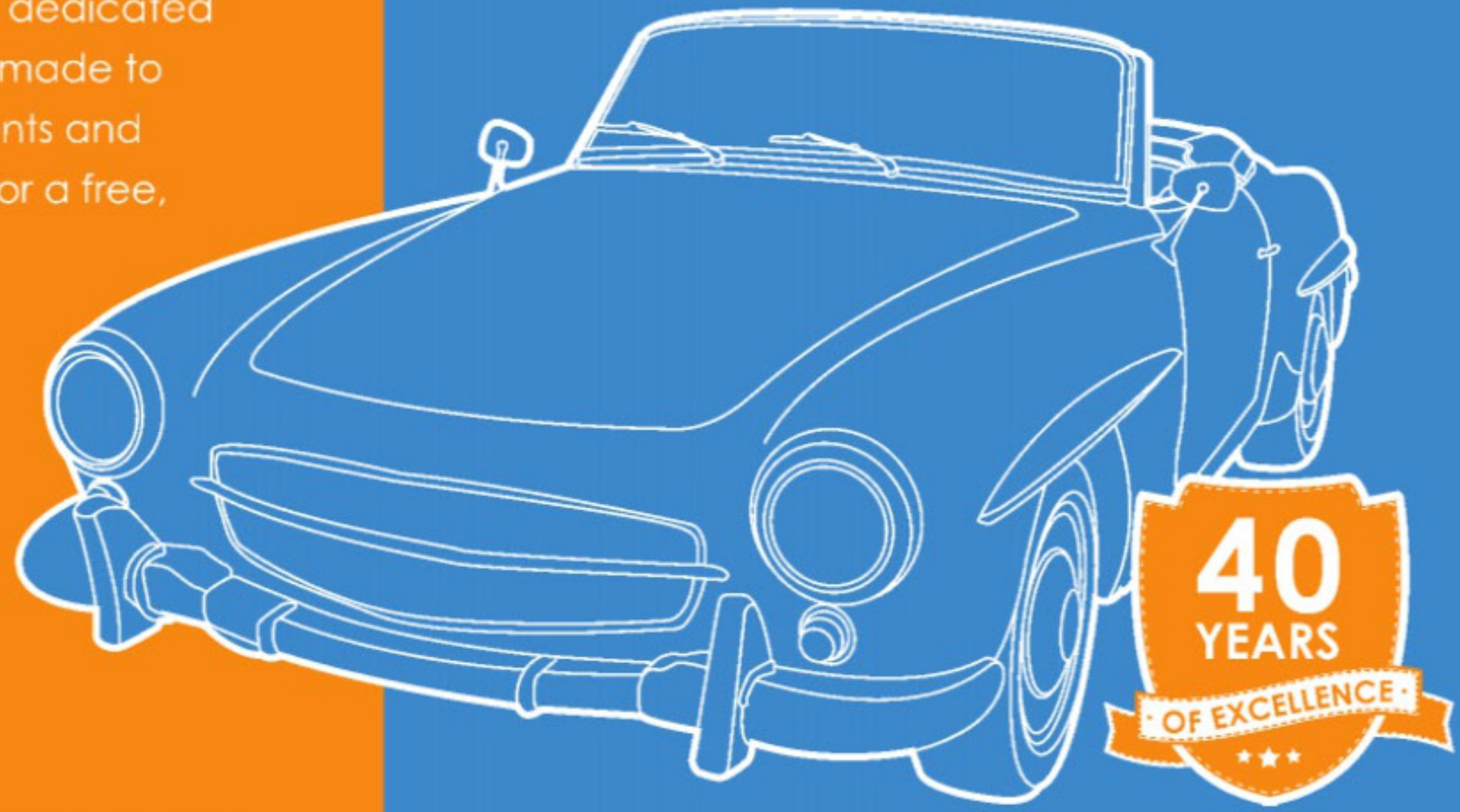
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**"I IMAGINE THAT THIS 300SL FEELS EXACTLY AS IT DID THE DAY IT CAME OUT OF THE SINDELFINGEN FACTORY IN 1958, TO BE DELIVERED TO A CUSTOMER IN THE US"**



⇒ top speed of 156mph. And the need for him to brake sharply as the traffic lights frustrated our clear progress revealed that despite its all-drum brakes, stopping was efficient enough.

I imagine that this 300SL feels exactly as it did the day it emerged from the Sindelfingen factory in 1958, to be delivered to a customer in the US (its destination evidenced by its US-specification, two- rather than one-piece headlamps). "All parts are original on this car – the engine, the gearbox, the axle," shouts Nicolas above the addictively noisy engine. "Every single document since new is present, which is not always the case for these cars. It's usually very difficult to find 300SLs as fully documented as this example."

Certainly this Roadster, still showing just under 80,000 miles, reflects the international appeal of the 300SL. It remained with the same owner in the US from new until 1996, when it was sold to a German collector. At this point it was still fully original and free of rust or accident damage. Eight years later it was sold to a Belgian, who displayed it in a Mercedes-Benz dealer in Belgium, before passing it on to an English owner living in Switzerland, who registered it in the UK – hence the British numberplate and tax disc.

**W**hile original, the 300SL Roadster was restored in 2012, undergoing a full stripdown, after which it was resprayed from blue to its present silver, and the leather was changed from blue to vibrant red. The chrome trim was replated, too. "I would have left it original, but the new owner wanted us to restore the car and make it perfect," Nicolas explains.

**ABOVE**  
The Roadster dropped the Gullwing's round lamps in favour of stacked clusters.

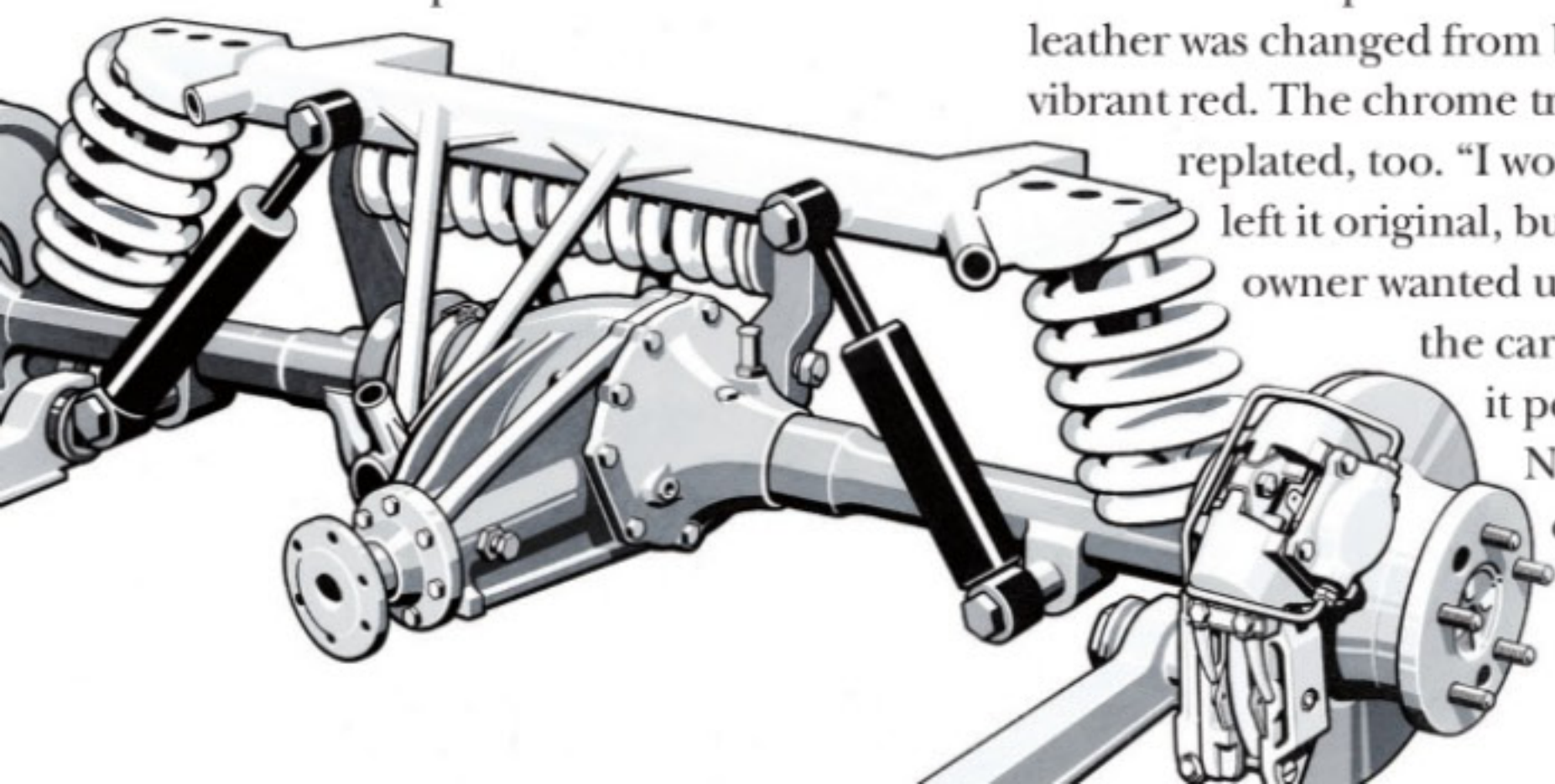
**ABOVE TOP RIGHT**  
Parking brake lever has an adjuster mounted next to it; gearlever is spindly.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Triangular tailpipe gives out an urgent exhaust note as revs get near the limit.

**LEFT**  
Daimler's diagram shows the Roadster's improved, pivot axle rear suspension.

It seems that quite a few 300SLs, and indeed other classic Mercedes, undergo colour changes, and it is easy to see why silver paintwork and a red interior – even if bordering on 'common' on this classic Mercedes – are such a desirable combination. In the September sun in the beautiful Domaine National de Saint-Cloud in the outskirts of Paris, its chromework glinting, this 300SL looks just so handsome, a shape that was once a glimpse of the future now a still breathtaking outline that perfectly defines this era of the past. It is little wonder that not only is the Roadster now a valuable classic, but also that those values appear to be catching up with those of the Gullwing.

There were three important modifications made to the Roadster before it bowed out in 1963, to make way for the W113 SL, following a production run of 1,858 (its passing marked the last of Mercedes' passenger cars with separate chassis). In October 1958, a detachable factory hardtop was introduced as an optional extra, notable for its curved rear





⇒ screen, which complemented the body styling. This introduced another Mercedes hallmark, the high-quality SL hardtop, supplied with the next three SL generations, and retired only on the debut of the R230 SL with its electrically folding metal roof. In March 1961 Dunlop disc brakes were fitted front and rear, a development that makes cars built after this point especially sought after, while the introduction a year later of a light-alloy rather than cast-iron engine block further enhances collectability.

**T**hese days, 300SLs, Gullwing or Roadster, don't get out much beyond appearances at classic shows, prisoners of their own rarity. It was, therefore, a delight to see one stretching its legs on a proper road, Nicolas Buguier happy to mix it with Paris's fast-moving, take-no-prisoners traffic, and more importantly surviving the encounter unscathed. Gorgeous as they are to look at, these Mercedes were surely made to be driven. CM

**ABOVE**  
Open and less cramped, the Roadster feels a lot different to the Gullwing.

**ABOVE INSET**  
Gearbox was four-speed manual only, but three axle ratios were offered.

**BELOW**  
Many Roadsters went to California, so the wipers wouldn't get a lot of use.



**"QUITE A FEW 300SLs UNDERGO COLOUR CHANGES, AND IT IS EASY TO SEE WHY SILVER PAINTWORK AND A VIVID RED INTERIOR ARE SUCH A DESIRABLE COMBINATION"**

## Max Hoffman

### He guided Mercedes to success in the US after World War Two

In a country where buyers were staunchly loyal to domestic car marques, in the late 1940s New York-based Max Hoffman (below) became a specialist in European cars, advising their makers – all hungry to make headway in the lucrative US market – how to present their products. Indeed he went further than that, sensing from dealers what kind of cars buyers wanted, and sometimes persuading manufacturers actually to build them.

The 1954 300SL Coupe was a prime example of that, as was Porsche's 365 Speedster of the same year.

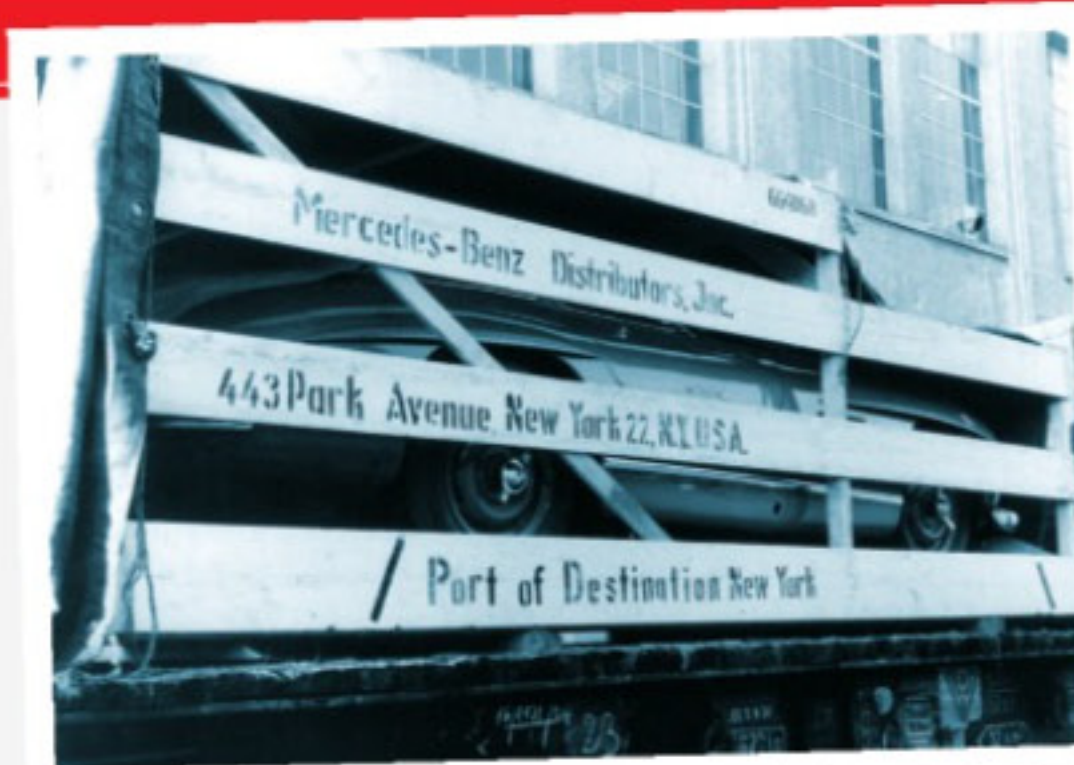


Hoffman concentrated on prestige makes, and by the mid-1950s his main business was Mercedes-Benz and Porsche. But he also handled Alfa Romeo (persuading the Italian car maker to build the Giulietta Spider), and

went on to become the official importer for BMW (which on his recommendation built the 507 sports car, intended to slot between the expensive 300SL and the cheaper MG

**LEFT**  
Max Hoffman was America's European car guru in the 50s.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Stock being delivered to his chic Park Avenue showroom.



models). He sold his business back to the Munich manufacturer in the mid-1970s.

Hoffman operated from a showroom on Park Avenue, an ultra-modern building designed for him by the leading architect of the day, Frank Lloyd Wright. It was later taken over and used by Mercedes-Benz until 2011, but since then, sadly, has been demolished. Max Hoffman died in 1981, aged 77, leaving a legacy of charitable foundations.

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# FULL HOUSE

IMAGES Terry Osborne

300SL Gullwing and Roadster specialist Classic Sport Leicht was set up in Paris four years ago to fill a void in the French classic car market. **David Sutherland** met its owner, Nicolas Jambon Bruguier

**N**icolas Jambon Bruguier's journey to Paris in 2010 from a small town in the south of France was propelled by a burning ambition – to prove that the axis of top level classic Mercedes restoration need not be Germany and California. Just four years later the business he started, Classic Sport Leicht, based in the north-west of Paris near the River Seine, is on the map, and appears to be thriving.

In a low key way, certainly. There is no glass fronted showroom (apart from, amusingly and mischievously, on his website, [www.classicsportleicht.com](http://www.classicsportleicht.com)), and first time visitors might be surprised to find that Bruguier literally lives above the shop. But what a shop.

Once you have realised that, yes, 15 Rue Parmentier, a tightly packed residential street, is the right address, and the unmarked door to the street is raised and the doors to the workshop in the courtyard behind are pulled open, you will find yourself in Mercedes heaven. It is wall-to-wall W198 300SL Gullwings and 300SL Roadsters, including several historically significant examples, a glorious mass of ⇨



LEFT  
Seeing 300SLs lined up is always a most evocative sight for those who love Mercs.





ABOVE  
Extreme care is required when reversing out of the Classic Sport Leicht shop.



ABOVE  
Working with 300SLs full time was a long held ambition for Nicolas.

**"BRUGUIER LIKES TO KEEP THINGS LAID BACK, OR AT LEAST LOOKING THAT WAY, IN CONTRAST TO THE FORMAL APPROACH OF RESTORATION COMPANIES IN GERMANY"**



⇒ Stuttgart silverware, either in beautiful condition or in the midst of being made that way.

In the way he runs his business, Bruguier likes to keep things quite laid back, or at least looking that way to the visitor, in contrast to the far more formal approach of restoration companies in Germany, and indeed the corporate grandness of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Centers in Fellbach in Germany and Irvine, California. There is no clear line where the windowless display area ends and the workshop begins. The epicentre of Classic Sport Leicht is not so much an office as an alcove, Bruguier's desk surrounded by an appealing clutter of Mercedes memorabilia, and also various boxes overflowing with jazz and English classic rock CDs, Nicolas being a music fan as well as a classic Mercedes convert, this possibly linked to his wife, Marie, working as a music presenter on French radio.

Setting up a classic Mercedes business that enjoys true credibility cannot, presumably, be easy, but Bruguier simply spotted a gap in the market he felt his knowledge, enthusiasm and talent could fill. "A lot of French people are into classic Mercedes, but there was no specialist shop for 300SLs," he points out. "Before I started working with 300SLs it all seemed unreachable, but in 2007 I met a classic car collector who wanted to reduce his collection and I convinced him to let me sell his 300SL and Gullwing. That was a very important time for me – it was a dream come true."

From that beginning, Bruguier soon found that buyers began instructing him to find suitable cars for them. "In this small town, people were saying, 'this man does cars'," he reveals.

A milestone of almost equal importance came 18 months ago when Classic Sport Leicht bought a 300SL Roadster of its own. Bruguier wanted one of the very few 300SLs originally registered in France, and found not only that, but a late 1961 model benefiting from disc brakes, and which had just one owner. "It was a magical moment and a reward for what I had been doing for the last few years," says Nicolas. The Roadster has never been restored, hence its interior, with its beautifully patinated red leather, contrasts markedly with that of most 300SL Gullwings and Roadsters, now refurbished to concours condition.

Bruguier's journey to the rarefied, upper echelons of the classic Mercedes trade began almost two decades ago, and with two rather than four wheels, when as a teenager he began restoring scooters in Luberon, where he was brought up. "Living in the south of France, it was



**ABOVE**  
Even the alloy induction pipes on the 300SL's engine are a work of art.

**RIGHT**  
The door shuts and air extractors help define the car's unique character.

**FAR RIGHT**  
A lot of high value Mercedes hardware resides in this quite compact workshop.



**RIGHT**  
This is the vast wooden box that the Roadster's hardtop came in.







easy to get to Italy, and I was going there to buy Lambrettas and Vespas,” he says, nodding to the immaculate 1960s Lambretta TV175, in its day the Golf GTI of the scooter world, nestling in a corner of the workshop. “I had about thirty of them at one time.”

By the time he was 23 he had bought his first Pagoda, for FF50,000 (then the equivalent of about £5,500). “It belonged to a friend’s cousin, and I dismantled and restored it,” says Nicolas. “Two weeks after I had finished it I got stopped by someone who wanted to buy it. I told him I had just spent two years restoring it and it was not for sale, but he left a card and told me, ‘Your price will be my price.’”

By this time, in early 2000, Nicolas was married to Marie, who unhesitatingly advised him to sell it and find a new one. “She said, ‘You have a talent for finding cars, you should go into this,’ and that is probably how it all started – they say that behind every successful man there is a strong woman,” he smilingly says of his Mercedes career, and of course his wife. In the coming months a few more Pagodas and a 190SL came his way, after which he took on his first 300SL project, with the help of an elderly mechanic, Gérard Carlier, with 55 years experience as a motor engineer. Bruguier began travelling to the US to source cars. “It was very easy, it didn’t really feel like work,” he recalls.

**M**arie then landed a job in Paris hosting a radio show, and this, and his increasing involvement with 300SLs, persuaded him that Luberon was no longer a suitable base. Thus in 2009 he closed the workshop there and they relocated to Paris.

Classic Sport Leicht caters for all Mercedes classics, and a 190SL and a Pagoda SL are among the cars in the workshop. But 300SLs are its speciality, and with just two technicians, it works on only one major Gullwing or Roadster restoration at a time. But 50 per cent of the staff headcount is made up of the cheerful Bernard Tendero, an engine specialist with 40 years’ experience, so he is clearly ⇨

**“A MILESTONE OF ALMOST EQUAL IMPORTANCE CAME 18 MONTHS AGO WHEN CLASSIC SPORT LEICHT BOUGHT A 300SL ROADSTER OF ITS OWN”**



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT

Claude Delpippo, seen in his own workshop, does all the bodywork for Nicolas.

The bare chassis and engine of the Gullwing once owned by actor Paul Newman.

Its bare shell awaits paint.





**"50 PER CENT OF THE STAFF HEADCOUNT IS MADE UP OF THE CHEERFUL BERNARD TENDERO, AN ENGINE SPECIALIST WITH 40 YEARS' EXPERIENCE"**



chassis number is 1980404500071), and which Nicolas extracted from a museum in Greece. He contracts all metalwork-related tasks out to a closely associated bodyshop nearby, run by Claude Delpippo, and so can claim that all the work on the cars, with the exception of upholstery, is carried out in-house. With each restoration taking two to three years, customers – who must pay 10 per cent of the estimated total cost up front, and then instalments – have to be patient. “The difference between us and some others is that we are not working on several major projects at once, and I explain to clients that we can work only one way – we want to do the work in the best possible way,” he says. “If someone wants to do it a cheaper way, I suggest they take it somewhere else.”

⇒ an asset around the workshop (and out of it, too, as he proved during our visit by rebuilding a 300SL’s fuel filter housing by the roadside after it sprang a leak).

An occasional, and most welcome, visitor to the workshop is 72-year old Gérard Carlier, whom Bruguier has known since his scooter days, when Carlier was a technical director at Motobécane. In his time he has developed a direct-injection motorcycle engine, has worked on engines and suspension at the Ligier F1 team and at the same time was F1 driver Jacques Laffite’s race engineer.

The current project is a 1954, 143,494-mile 300SL Gullwing that belonged to the actor Paul Newman (its

**S**maller jobs such as servicing and minor repairs are also undertaken, and parts supplied, too. Bruguier spends not inconsiderable time and effort tracking down increasingly rare supplies of original, unused parts, some of which can command four times the price of equivalent remanufactured parts.

Despite Classic Sport Leicht’s location being ideal for wealthy Parisians, the clients that Nicolas drops into conversation largely seem to be an international bunch. But then the Mercedes-Benz 300SL was arguably the first international sports car.



**LEFT**  
With wife Marie, who encouraged the Paris start up.

**BELOW**  
Suitable reading material to be found in his premises.

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# Friend for life

**Bought new in 1968, and still his daily car, Warren Stickley's Mercedes 280SE has been a vital part of his and his family's life these past 46 years. His daughter, Christine Stickley, tells its fascinating story**

IMAGES Stickley family/Australian Defence

**D**ad's excursions into the village always take longer than planned, because passers-by stop to admire his car and ask for a look inside. A conversation ensues, and my father will say, after sizing them up, "This car is older than you! It's 46 years old, and came off the assembly line at Stuttgart in 1968." In fact, it was one of the first of the W108 280SEs produced.

"You know who is a stand out character of our village?" asked a friend of our daughter. "It's the gentleman who drives the dark olive Mercedes, and who always wears an English cap." My own daughter laughed, replying, "That's my grandfather!" and my Dad is



**“We took the glossy brochure for the W108 home, giving much thought to each extra. Would it have a sliding roof, or a Becker stereo radio?”**

**LEFT**  
Warren and wife Franlie (who died in 2014) in 1968 in Pattaya, Thailand.

**BELOW**  
He reached the rank of Commanding Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force.

new Mercedes. All dressed up in our Sunday best, we travelled to Perth from the RAAF base at Pearce to view the possibilities for our family car.

The 250SE was the latest model at the time, and Mum and Dad checked it out, discovering that nearly every desirable attribute of the Mercedes was an optional extra! But my younger brother, Matt, and I were much more attracted to the sporty 250SL Pagoda. We promised that we would jam ourselves into the back somehow, and wouldn't cause any trouble – even on long trips! “Please, please Dad, can we get one?” He wouldn't listen, of course.



**W**e took home the glossy brochure for the W108, giving much thought to each extra. Would it have a sliding roof, or a Becker stereo radio? Maybe both. Colour was very important, and Dad and Mum chose a dark olive green, the colour of the car on the brochure (Dad still has this, in pristine condition). We learned that for one of these special – and rare – paint orders, the

Mercedes people would have to drain the pigment tank and add the new colour, into which the body would be submerged.

The docks were not far from where we lived in Bangkok, and in April 1968 the family went down to see the car arrive at Khlong Toei, being off-loaded from the ship in huge rope nets. Much to everyone's surprise, the heavily waxed car was just sitting in the ship's open hold, with no packing around her, and certainly not containerised, as it would be today, to protect her from the long voyage from Europe. Our new car had come down the coast of Africa, around Cape Horn, and across the Indian Ocean, to arrive at the port along the Chao Phraya River. A week later we were presented with it (in the meantime, the order had changed to the new 280SE). It gleamed beautifully, and had sweet smelling cognac coloured upholstery, air conditioning, automatic transmission and a Becker radio – the first 280SE in Thailand. ➔

most amused at all the interest.

When, as children in the 1960s, we asked him what he would like for his birthday or for Christmas, he would always say, “a Mercedes-Benz”, just like in the Janis Joplin song. One year I proudly gave him a Matchbox model of a Mercedes.

In 1967, Dad was driving a beautiful black 1952 Humber Hawk, lovingly referred to as ‘The Old Girl’. She had faithfully conveyed us across Australian roads of all descriptions. Into the Gippsland countryside in Victoria on early morning trout fishing trips, for picnics through the high country of Victoria, to hiking points in



Queensland, through the Blue Mountains of New South Wales – and even into the Nullarbor Desert in Western Australia.

My father was a pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force. When Dad was posted to Thailand in late 1967 we had to leave the Humber behind in Western Australia, but he was about to realise his dream and order a brand

**ABOVE**  
The car that preceded the 280SE, a much travelled 1952 Humber Hawk.



ABOVE  
The Mercedes merges into a street scene in Chiang Mai Province, in Thailand.

⇒ The price of petrol was not an issue, around 40 US cents a gallon, and the Mercedes was to see a significant amount of Thailand. Kanchanaburi and the Kwai River in the west, from Pattaya and Hua Hin resorts in the south and Chiang Mai in the north, 500 miles from Bangkok. That distance doesn't really sound momentous now,

**“The price of petrol was not an issue, around 40 US cents a gallon, and the Mercedes was to see a significant amount of Thailand”**

but back in 1968 and 1969 there were few facilities for foreigners, and very few places in the countryside suitable for an Aussie family to stay in.

**E**very time we would pull up on the roadside en route, we were immediately surrounded by happy children, curious to see the visitors. The terrain was flat, treeless and consisted mainly of fields of rice. Very few Thais spoke English, but luckily Matt had mastered enough of the language to get us by.

The Benz also took us over very rough roads to the south of Thailand, as we explored the country around Pattaya, the old Royal Holiday Palace of Hua Hin, and the big United States Air Force base of Sattahip, home of the

RIGHT  
Pictured three years ago, with a smart, matching dark olive W111 coupe.



B-52 Stratofortress operations into Vietnam at the time. We saw at close hand how the Vietnam war was impacting on the simple village life of the Thais, and walked on tarmac airfields bristling with F-4 and F-5 fighter aircraft returning from the war only a short distance to the east. We also ventured up into the centre on another occasion to visit the Ubon and Udorn joint Thai/US air force bases.

We experienced the massive road-making projects that were starting in Bangkok, where, tragically, the canals of this truly magical place – the ‘Venice of the East’ – were gradually being filled in to make way for

more roadways. Each day we would drive on these dusty roads, past the scores of women labourers, crouched down and dressed in dark blue, with their wide straw hats, and towels wrapped around their faces to stop the relentless dust penetrating their lungs, constantly placing rocks from their woven cane baskets into the embankments. It was slow, hot and incredibly dirty work, and a heart





wrenching sight for us. Hard working women laid the foundations for Bangkok's massive transport system.

The Bangkok that we knew, with its canals and traditional teak houses, where people lived life as they had done probably for centuries, where families could cast huge nets into the canals to catch the evening's dinner, where children jumped from their verandahs to swim in the canals, in which mothers washed their clothes and bathed their little ones, and where smiles and waves were ever present, was being replaced by the growing westernisation of the busy city. But it was a time of 'progress' and change – Neil Armstrong walked on the moon that year, 1969.

One of our most enduring memories is of the Buddhist monks, in their long

teak boats, quietly paddling among the house at the water's edge in the late afternoon. Their saffron coloured robes were a brilliant foil for the deep green of the thick vegetation at the sides of the canals. Each monk had a large pot in front of him, and he would call in at each verandah step, where a woman would be waiting to hand him a cup or two of cooked rice meal.

**T**he Mercedes was there at a time of great social change in Thailand, at the start of a new westernised modernity, and the car enabled us to see the precious nature of the country's traditional culture. The German car had rubbed bumpers with hundreds of Datsun Bluebirds and Toyota Coronas (the Thai taxis),

**ABOVE**  
Back in Oz, in 1976, and Christine Stickley and Mum are ready for the off.

**TOP RIGHT**  
Sensibly, a snap of the new Merc's dash was taken and preserved for posterity.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The 280SE as it is now, but Christine recalls the smell of the leather when new.

with the smaller three-wheeled Samlors, with the hugely decorated Isuzu trucks, with ox drawn carts, with bicycles, and families balancing on motorbikes, and had survived the pace and craziness of it all, much to my father's pride, without a scratch.

Matt, who was 13 at the time, learned to drive in this car, on the front lawn and up and down the long driveway of the house we were living in. He taught me to drive, as well, our three-point turns leaving tyre marks on the grass, much to the gardener's horror.

**O**ur next posting was back to Australia, to New South Wales, and another sea voyage for the Mercedes – loaded by rope netting into the hold of a ship, she arrived unscathed in Sydney. The year was 1970, and after an initial culture shock we settled into day-to-day life in Australia, those days becoming years almost before we knew it.

My father drove the Mercedes to work each day, picked us up from the station after work or school, took us shopping, and, most memorably, on picnics and holidays to Queensland, or to the Snowy Mountains. The Mercedes stalked her way along fire trails deep in the Blue Mountains National Park, despite the lack of a short wheelbase or high ground clearance. As my father is also an artist, the car's boot has also →



safely carried a good number canvases, paintboxes and easels on painting trips in the countryside, and also numerous completed framed canvases to art shows, and art galleries.

Later, she transported my parents to the births of their grandchildren, and a new generation has been taken to kindergartens, to schools, to concerts and plays, to the park, on holidays, or just to visit friends. The Mercedes also etched her way into the history of Penrith, in New South Wales. In 1971 a postcard was published of the High Street looking west towards the Blue Mountains, and in the foreground is my father driving his 280SE!

Our dark olive Mercedes is still going strong, still looking as good – recently

ABOVE  
The Intercontinental Hotel in Bangkok was a suitably grand photo backdrop.


ABOVE RIGHT  
He flies jets and he drives a Mercedes – quite a cool dad, Christine is thinking.

BELOW  
No surprise that Warren gets attention when he takes the car for a drive.

**“Our dark olive Mercedes is still going strong, still looking as good as she did the day she arrived in Bangkok 46 years ago”**



winning a concours trophy in Canberra – as she did the day she arrived in Bangkok 46 years ago. My father, who is now 91, still dearly loves his car, and tends to it carefully. It now leads a quiet life, taking Dad shopping, but attracts much attention. Someone will find him in the shops nearby, and say, “I knew I would find you here, Warren, your car is parked outside!” Many notes, phone numbers and e-mail addresses appear under the wipers when it’s parked locally, which my father admits is a “flattering annoyance”.

I’ve spoken to other Mercedes owners at concours events, and they often say that we are mere custodians of these wonderful chariots. Their endurance and sheer elegance in design will see them live on in respectful hands way into the future. 



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# UNDER THE HAMMER

At Pebble Beach in August, arguably the venue for the year's most important premium classic car sales, RM Auctions presented a selection of highly desirable Mercedes-Benz models. Here we describe four of them in detail

IMAGES Pawel Litwinski/RM Auctions/ Tim Suttten



PEBBLE BEACH, CALIFORNIA, USA

## The way it was

This almost entirely original 300SL Gullwing went into the auction with a one million dollar pre-sale estimate, but incendiary bidding at Monterey saw it sell for two and a half times that amount

### Lot 111 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Coupe

Mercedes-Benz's original 300SL claimed second place in the Mille Miglia, a 1-2-3 in the Berne, Switzerland, Sports Car Race, first and second at Le Mans, a 1-2-3-4 at the Nürburgring, and first and second in La Carrera Panamericana. Yet more was to be desired.

From his Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Park Avenue showroom, the company's US distributor, Max Hoffman, argued that there was a market in America for a fast, sensual Mercedes-Benz coupe. And a production version of the racing 300SL, complete with the fascinating, and now legendary, gullwing doors – necessitated by the unusually tall 'birdcage' frame design – would be it. Fuel injection replaced the race car's carburettors, and the Bosch mechanical system would be the first for a production car.

The 11 prototype W194 racers, including the so called 'Hobel' (which was angular and more aerodynamic), all had light alloy bodywork. But the new Karl Wilfert designed body was largely steel, retaining aluminum doors, bonnet and bootlid, and included bumpers (with overrides for US-specification cars, but optional for the rest of the world) and numerous creature comforts, as well as a tilting steering wheel for ease of entry, and

<b>Year</b> 1955
<b>Engine/power</b> M198 2,996cc/212bhp
<b>Chassis/engine/ body no</b> 198.040. 5500368/198.980. 5500388/ 198.040.5500356
<b>Auction</b> Pebble Beach, Monterey
<b>When</b> August 15, 2014
<b>Pre-sale estimate</b> \$1,000,000- \$1,400,000
<b>Price achieved</b> \$2,530,000 (about £1,566,300, includes buyer's premium)

a sumptuous interior, this last feature a prerequisite for road use.

The SL moniker (translated into English as 'Sport Light') reflected the pioneering use of a welded, tubular steel and ultra light frame that weighed only 1,035kg. The car also featured fully independent suspension in addition to its fuel injected, three-litre overhead camshaft straight-six engine, inclined to one side in order to reduce the height of the front end and also to help lower the centre of gravity. Power, 212bhp at 5,800rpm, with the factory optional or dealer installed sport camshaft, was delivered through a four-speed manual gearbox. A 161mph top speed and a 0-62mph of approximately eight seconds, depending on the final-drive ratio selected from five options, made the Mercedes 300SL the fastest production car of its time.

Appropriate for an automobile that Max Hoffman had almost single handedly willed into being, the production 300SL made its debut in the United States, not in Germany, which was a Mercedes first. More than 1,000 of the 1,400 cars produced

between 1954 and early 1957 were delivered through Hoffman, to whose showrooms the rich and famous flocked. The 300SL was as much a status symbol in its time as it is today, as it was favoured by everyone from Hollywood stars, to racing legends, to genuine royalty.

The 300SL was also raced and piloted by the top drivers of the day, such as John Fitch, Olivier Gendebien, Paul O'Shea, Prince Metternich and, of course, Sir Stirling Moss, who holds the 'forever' course record for his famous Mille Miglia finish in 1955. It all added to the romance of a car that seemed destined to become a legend the moment production began. It had all of the right ingredients: incredible exclusivity, incredible speed, and an incredible price. Any red blooded human who had ever pushed a clutch pedal would have sold his or her soul for the feeling of 161mph behind the wheel. "A thoroughbred in every sense of the word," the advertising boasted, "and a car which will be recognised by all enthusiasts as the 'last word' in sporting automobiles; a car which puts indescribable pleasure into driving!"

The Gull Wing Group Register records chassis number 198.040.5500368 as having been completed on May 31, 1955, and delivered as a special order on July 6, 1955, by Max Hoffman's distributors in New York. The car was originally ⇨

**"THE CAR WAS ORIGINALLY  
FINISHED, AS IT IS TODAY, IN  
THE ELEGANTLY SUBTLE COLOUR  
OF IVORY WITH AN INTERIOR  
IN RED LEATHER"**



**LEFT**  
Original leather seat cushions are still fitted.

**RIGHT**  
Even from behind, the Gullwing looks stunning.



**RIGHT**  
Plate identifies the car's Ivory paint code, DB608.

**FAR RIGHT**  
Motor canted over to keep the nose and gravity low.

**BELOW**  
300SL an unrestored car.





⇒ finished, as it is today, in the elegantly subtle colour of Ivory (DB 608), with an interior in red (1079) leather, and it was equipped with one of the most desirable options, chromed Rudge knock-off wheels.

The first owner was reportedly Buddy Champlin, who was the son of Oklahoma oil baron H.H. Champlin. The Champlin family's other interests in the 'Sooner State' included ownership of the First National Bank of Enid, Oklahoma, for which Buddy Champlin would serve as CEO.

In 1973, after 28 years, Champlin's 300SL was listed for sale at \$12,000 by the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Tulsa. It was purchased for \$10,000 by a local man, David Rogers, who owned it for only a very short time before passing it to Bob Boone, an Oklahoma University student. Boone, in turn,

**ABOVE**  
Raised doors still look extraordinary 60 years on.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
A complete set of factory manuals is with the car.

traded the 300SL to Rennsport Werkstatt, also of Tulsa.

While in the care of Rennsport Werkstatt, the 300SL was fitted with new pistons, bearings and camshaft drive chains, and the valves, water and oil pumps, injection pump and fuel injectors were all overhauled. New engine mounts and heating and cooling system pipes were installed, along with a new clutch assembly. Remarkably, the wiring harness was able to be replaced with a complete

new harness, which was acquired from Mercedes-Benz, and the interior was re-upholstered in new, old stock factory standard leather, which was still available in 1974. All instruments were rebuilt at VDO, this work being performed with the odometer reading approximately 76,400 miles.

The car was subsequently bought from Rennsport Werkstatt by Gullwing enthusiast David Jahmiak, who owned the car until 1997, when it was acquired, at the Door County Gull Wing Group's annual convention, by its present owner. The consignor noted that the 300 SL "showed only the expected long term storage issues," having been driven only about 200 miles in Jahmiak's two-decade long stewardship. In the care of Gullwing guru Albrecht Stachel's Brooklyn Motoren Werke, it spent nearly six months being properly

**"THIS 300SL COUPE HAS BEEN DRIVEN TO GULL WING GROUP CONVENTIONS AS WELL AS TO SEVERAL FERRARI CLUB EVENTS WHEN THE CONSIGNOR'S FERRARI REFUSED TO RUN"**



**ABOVE**  
A single, streamlined wing mirror adorns the body.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
Huge air intakes dominate the 300SL's front wings.

**LEFT**  
Original Becker radio was repaired, and works well.



**ABOVE**  
The car also has a set of custom made cushions.

**RIGHT**  
Top speed was amazing for the 1950s – 161mph.

**BELOW**  
It has been overhauled but the engine is fully original.



recommissioned, with virtually every mechanical component disassembled and inspected. Stachel insisted on riding with the owner during the drive back to the car's new home in Tennessee, making fine adjustments to the fuel injection system along the way.

Since then, this Gullwing has been driven to Gull Wing Group conventions in Asheville, North Carolina, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Richmond, Virginia, as well as to several Ferrari Club events when the consignor's Ferrari refused to run! The Gullwing was voted 'First Place, Show Gullwing', no small accolade for an unrestored car, at the Gull Wing Group's 50th convention in 2011.

The owner noted, "During my ownership, the Gullwing has been driven some 20,000 miles. The only breakdown occurred on a trip when

running the lights, wipers, and auxiliary cooling fans exceeded the capacity of the generator, and discharged the battery. Beyond this, a signal flasher unit was replaced and the radiator re-cored. That covered the sum total of required repair work during my first 10 years of ownership.

"At this point, the car returned to Albrecht in Wisconsin for six months.

**BELOW**  
It was expected to make \$1m, but sold for \$2.5m.



A full brake service was performed, along with the replacement of several leaking gaskets, and the Becker radio was repaired and, indeed, works well."

The car still wears its factory Rudge wheels and original belly pans, as well as having its correct trunk mat, tyre pressure gauge and toolkit, and jack and wheel chock. It has a complete document case with the full set of manuals, and the service book.

A period correct Nardi steering wheel, a very popular accessory of the time, is fitted, but the original wheel, with some small cracks, accompanies the car. Correct red leather fitted luggage is stowed behind the seats, and the car is offered with a spare set of custom made seat cushions, upholstered in the factory option of red tartan plaid. This Gullwing has always been enthusiastically driven and enjoyed, but never fully restored. **CM**



RM AUCTIONS, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

# Cabriolet class

Prices of the top W111 dropheads have recently gone into orbit, as this beautiful low mileage 280SE 3.5 demonstrated when it went under the hammer for a scarcely believable £268,000

## Lot 130 Mercedes-Benz 280SE 3.5 Cabriolet

By 1969, although Fintail production was ending, W111 coupes and cabriolets continued, but with a 3.5-litre V8 engine to keep pace with competitors in the US luxury market. In Mercedes' sometimes confusing model nomenclature, which is usually – but not always – based on engine capacity, the new model for 1969 was designated 280SE 3.5, to distinguish it from its six-cylinder 280SE counterpart. In 24 months production of the Cabriolet version totalled 1,232, making it one of the rarest Mercedes of its era.

This example is a low mileage, original car with only two owners from new, the second having maintained it since 1980. The drivetrain, with matching numbers, remains as when it left the factory, while the exterior is finished in the original Mercedes-Benz navy blue. Only the blue fabric on the cabriolet top has been recently replaced, to match the original.

The odometer, showing just under

Year	1971
Engine/power	M116 3,499cc/197bhp
Chassis no.	111.027.12.001202
Auction	Pebble Beach, Monterey
When	August 15, 2014
Pre-sale estimate	\$240,000-\$280,000
Price achieved	\$429,000 (about £265,600, includes buyer's premium)

**RIGHT**  
Cabin has sumptuous red leather and marvellous looking wood veneer trim.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
The 3.5-litre V8 has done a mere 57,000 miles, and is now just nicely run in.



57,000 miles, is surrounded by the beautiful leather and wood of the dashboard. Red leather also surrounds the driver and passengers on the seats, door panels, and centre console, in striking contrast to the blue exterior. A Becker AM/FM stereo and the factory fitted Behr air conditioning are to be found inside, and no other blemishes are visible in the interior. An extraordinarily high level of hand craftsmanship is evident everywhere on this Mercedes.

This pristine and exceptionally



original cabriolet is complete with the toolkit, factory build card, and booklets that were delivered with the vehicle when new. The seller described this 280SE3.5 as in fine mechanical condition, and running like new.



# Perfect pitch

This 280SL showed how coveted Pagodas are, achieving way above an already high estimate

## Lot 260 Mercedes-Benz 280SL

Like its predecessor, the 190SL, the W113 borrowed its chassis and running gear from a volume built saloon, in this case the W111/112 Fintail that appeared in 1959. Its styling was fresh, the most interesting aspect being the optional 'pagoda' hardtop, so named for its upward curving sides, which offered an increased glass area. Mercedes-Benz produced 19,831 230SLs before upgrading it to 250SL status, this denoting many detail changes and a larger, 2,496cc engine. After just 12 months and some 5,200 units, the roadster was upgraded once again, to 280SL configuration, marking the introduction of the new 2.8-litre M130 engine producing 168bhp.

The new model now included rear disc brakes as standard, an energy-absorbing steering column, and removable top latch handles for the

<b>Year</b> 1968
<b>Engine/power</b> M130 2,778cc/168bhp
<b>Chassis/engine no.</b> 113.044.12.004696/ 113.980.12.002931
<b>Auction</b> Pebble Beach, Monterey
<b>When</b> August 16, 2014
<b>Pre-sale estimate</b> \$125,000-\$175,000
<b>Price achieved</b> \$264,000 (about £162,600, includes buyer's premium)

**RIGHT**  
The 280SL was the third and last of the W113s, and the highest selling one too.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
As with its bodywork, the Pagoda's cabin was fully and carefully refurbished.

windscreen header rail. Pagoda production spanned eight years, with the 280SL the final and most popular version, 23,885 units produced from January 1967 to March 1971.

This original southern California-delivered car received a frame-off restoration in Germany. Its exterior is finished in its original colour of Hellblau (Light Blue) Metallic (DB906), and it features a contrasting parchment leather interior. It is perfect for touring, since it also features the four-speed automatic transmission, plus the owner's booklets, and toolkit, along with the

removable signature pagoda hardtop and contrasting blue canvas top. During the restoration, the original engine was fully rebuilt. This 280SL is both a valuable collector's car, and a highly satisfying machine to drive.



# Chic choice

It might not have the pace of its 300SL stablemate, but the 190SL was, and is, more affordable

## Lot 104 190SL Roadster

Despite devastation in World War Two, Daimler-Benz rebounded strongly. By the 1950s it had launched the 300SL Gullwing, and also the smaller 190SL, which was less than half the price of the 300SL.

Power was from a new 1.9-litre, four-cylinder engine, the transmission was a four-speed manual, and the brakes were simple drums all round. Very few changes were made during its eight year production life. The drivetrain remained untouched, save



<b>Year</b> 1957
<b>Engine/power</b> M121 1,897cc/104bhp
<b>Chassis/engine/body no.</b> 121.042.7500610/ 121.921.7500609/ 121.042.7500248
<b>Auction</b> Pebble Beach, Monterey
<b>When</b> August 15, 2014
<b>Pre-sale estimate</b> \$175,000-\$225,000
<b>Price achieved</b> \$341,000 (about £210,000, includes buyer's premium)

**LEFT**  
The 190SL cabin feels like a 300SL's, only smaller.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Black paint and a green hood a good combination.

for a rise in compression ratio in 1959, while the 'coupe' model later received a larger rear window, and the roadster was offered with a removable hardtop roof. A total of 25,881 were built.

This lovely 190SL, finished in its original colour combination of black (DB040) over dark green leather, was fully restored, with no expense spared,

in Germany. It is equipped with the optional hardtop, its matching dark green leather luggage, and owner's booklets and tools, and while the car was being restored the original engine was rebuilt. The 190SL is appreciating significantly, but still provides a more affordable alternative to its more costly 300SL Roadster stablemate. CM



⇒ The descriptions and images of the 280SE 3.5 Cabriolet, 280SL and 190SL on these pages, and the 300SL Coupe on pages 74-77, appear courtesy of RM Auctions Tel 020 7851 7070 Web [www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com)

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**560SL Sport**, 1988, left hand drive, gleaming Signal Red with Tan hide interior, hard and Tan soft tops, over-mats, light up mirrors, power windows, tinted glass, power mirrors, central locking, air-con, cruise control, stereo system, ABS, alloys, SRS, air-bags, expensive MB car cover, auto, power steering, only 19,000 miles from new, FSH. £49,750



**230SL Sport**, 1966, Porcelain White with as new Black hide interior, auto, PAS, CD stereo system, hard and soft tops, known to us for many years, original service books etc. Entered in many events in UK and Europe. Fitted stainless exhaust system, recent overhaul. Over £10,000 spent in the last few years making this car one of the finest. £89,750



**280SL Sport**, 1969, left hand drive, finished in Ivory White with Dark Brown hide interior, auto, power, only 68,000 miles, hard and soft tops, air-con, stereo system, two owners from new. This car is just magnificent in every way, fast appreciating in value. £67,750



**560SL Sport**, 1989, left hand drive, finished in Nautic Blue with Mushroom hide interior, headrests, hard top and Dark Blue soft top, over-mats, power windows, cruise control, original stereo system, air-bag, air-con, alloys, tinted glass, complete with all tools. Auto and power steering, history, 42,000 miles, garaged from new. £39,750

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**LEFT**  
Cars with mileage this low are not just hard to find but are now gaining in price.

**FAR LEFT**  
Most 190E 2.3/2.5-16s had check cloth upholstery.

**LEFT**  
Electric front seats were a pricey option and therefore rare, but are great to have.

**RIGHT**  
This is one Mercedes on which the manual gearbox beats the automatic shift.



# Race-bred

Extrovert when unveiled three decades ago, the 'homologation special' 190E now looks quite discreet. But its bespoke engine means that careful checks should be made before buying one

IMAGES TERRY OBORNE



**W**hen it was first revealed, in 1983, some said the Mercedes 190E 2.3-16 was a ridiculous car, a modest and sober Benz saloon smothered in outrageous and inappropriate body addenda. Back then Mercedes didn't do extrovert – traditionally, the only outward sign of under-bonnet fireworks (and those were quite a rare event, anyway) tended to be a discreet bootlid spoiler, and even that was usually optional. Yet here was a 190E given the full body treatment, and on first seeing it, those unfamiliar with the nuances of motorsport stood in jaw-dropped amazement.

But with many of Mercedes' mainstream models taking on a much more sporty appearance in the two decades since the W201 flagship was last built, the 190E 2.3-16 and its 2.5-16

***“HERE WAS A 190E GIVEN THE FULL BODY TREATMENT, AND THOSE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE NUANCES OF MOTORSPORT STOOD IN JAW-DROPPED AMAZEMENT”***

successor now seem really quite conservative in appearance – not that far removed from the standard 190E, of which nearly 1.9 million were built. And that is reflected in values which, although slowly picking up, are still low considering it was built to homologate race cars, and runs a very special engine – £10,000 is easily enough to secure one.

Perceptions can change, but what is under the bonnet doesn't. So temptingly inexpensive though it is, does the 16-valve W201 make a good modern classic choice? ⇨

**LEFT**  
Cosworth designed the 2.3's 16-valve head, and it makes for a lively motor.

**RIGHT**  
Unlike regular models, the W201 flagship enjoyed two individual rear seats.



## ! What goes wrong

### Sunroof

An electric tilt/slide sunroof was standard equipment on the 190E 2.3-/2.5-16, and can be troublesome. A drainage pipe for the sunroof assembly can corrode and become detached, the water then leaking down into the cabin.

### Parts

Mercedes dealers still supply a wide range of mechanical and service parts. But for interior and exterior trim parts, and items such as the auxiliary dials on the centre console, dedicated Mercedes breakers (such as Mercman, 01736 757777, [www.mercman.net](http://www.mercman.net)) are always the most promising source.

### Exhaust

Age may have weakened the exhaust downpipe, which can break up internally, causing a lack of power. Another metal weakness is the chassis mount for the rear section of the exhaust where it joins the main pipe. This can break, causing the forward end of the rear exhaust to fall down, dig into the road, break free, and possibly damage the rear bumper in the process. On UK models, catalysts are seen only on 1992 and 1993 cars.

### Bodywork

The 190E in all forms resisted corrosion to an impressive degree, but the bodywork does eventually succumb. "We've started noticing more instances of rust at the rear jacking points," says Stefano Mazzoni of Mercedes specialist Merparts, in Port Glasgow, Inverclyde (01475 741236, [www.merparts.com](http://www.merparts.com)), the UK's leading 190E 2.3-/2.5-16 specialist. "This is all because the drain plug has become blocked, and the inner sill has filled up with water." Rust is also now seen more frequently on the front wings, just below the side-mounted indicator repeaters, and on the rear wings underneath the plastic cladding of the bodykit.

### Suspension

It is essential to check that the self-levelling rear suspension is intact and fully working, because in many cases it was removed when it developed a leak or some other problem. "Probably 30 per cent of 2.3s and 50 per cent of 2.5s have had it removed," Mazzoni estimates. "People would replace the rear hydraulic dampers with normal dampers. This was good for track use, but it was mostly done on a cost basis." The obvious telltale sign is the absence of the suspension pump at the front of the engine, the gap covered by a blanking plate. Reinstating the self-levelling "would cost thousands," Mazzoni warns, particularly as the pump itself is no longer available new. As with regular 190Es, the front suspension's lower ball joints are prone to wearing, and knocking, and may need replacing for an MOT pass.

## ⇒ Engineering

It's commonly described as the 'Cosworth' 190E, but that name does not appear anywhere on the car. What the Northampton-based F1 engine supplier did was design and supply the 16-valve, twin camshaft cylinder-head for the four-cylinder engine. That Mercedes should have gone to such lengths for a road car (no other Mercedes road car engine at the time had four valves per cylinder) is given more context by the fact that the engine was originally commissioned to provide Stuttgart with competitive hardware in the exotic and massively powerful – but by then soon to be banned – Group B rally class.

Production of the 190E 2.3-16 began in September 1984, with UK cars

## **"THE CENTRE CONSOLE HAS THREE EXTRA DIALS – FOR VOLTS, OIL PRESSURE AND A TIMER – THAT COULD ALMOST HAVE COME FROM THE GO-FASTER SHOP"**



This Mercedes is a sports car with a really useful amount of luggage space.

arriving in mid-1985. The Cosworth cylinder head – bolted to a standard Mercedes 2.3-litre block, albeit with a strengthened crankshaft and a lighter flywheel – boosted power to a then heady 183bhp, accompanied by 173lb ft torque (though these figures soon dropped to 175bhp/170lb ft). The manual gearbox was about as different from the usual Mercedes autoshifter as it could be, a close-ratio Getrag five-speed manual unit with a 'dog leg' first gear out to the left and back.

Chassis modifications comprised stiffened suspension, 15-inch light-alloy wheels (those seen on the car photographed are from Carat Duchatelet) and bigger brakes. The bodykit – bigger front air dam, extended wheelarches linked by side-skirts, and a smallish tail wing – offered a claimed 47 and 40 per cent reduction in lift at front and rear, respectively.

The cabin was a mix of the plain and decorative. Sports seats were fitted, but have similar contours to the standard items, and the regular 190E's steering wheel was retained. By contrast the centre console has three extra dials – for volts, oil pressure and a timer – that could almost have come from the go-faster shop, and unless full leather



### Engine

High mileage creates problems for the 16-valve motor. "It's a high-revving engine, and because of this some will have bore wear and valve damage," says Mazzoni. And due to incorrect tappet adjustment, which is notoriously complex and difficult to get right, the exhaust valves can fail to seal perfectly.

But the two prime engine issues are, first, the exhaust manifold, which is so complicated and heavy ("like a tubular horn," says Mazzoni) that it can break off its mounts, and, second, the camshaft drive-chain, which due to a weak tensioner can break free and cause untold damage to valves and pistons. But both problems affect only 2.3s.

The camshaft chain solution is to fit the duplex type and accompanying tensioner from the 2.5, and no doubt quite a few cars have this update. Most will have had their manifolds attended to by now (some were replaced under warranty), but welding may be the only solution for any cars that have slipped through the net, since Mercedes-Benz no longer supplies new ones.

### Engine mounts

Like all Mercedes models of that time, the W201 has hydraulic engine mounts, which eventually wear out and go flat. Besides causing a knocking noise on full steering lock (the engine strikes the subframe, metal to metal), this can also place additional pressure on the complex exhaust manifold and hasten the aforementioned cracking process.



**ABOVE**  
It looks low key, but this rear wing was downright flashy for a late 80s Merc.

**TOP**  
Later 2.5s had a catalyst, and required unleaded, but earlier UK cars non-cat.



## Milestones

### September 1983

190E 2.3-16 debuts at Frankfurt motor show

### September 1984

Left-hand drive production begins

### July 1985

Right-hand drive 190E 2.3-16 on sale in UK

### September 1988

190E range facelift, and launch of 190E 2.5-16

### March 1989

190E 2.5-16 Evolution unveiled at the Geneva motor show

### January 1990

190E 2.5-16 Evolution II launched

### June 1993

190E 2.5-16 production ends



## Telltale signs of trouble



- On the 2.3, the complex exhaust manifold can break at its mounting points
- A loss of power may be the result of a broken exhaust downpipe
- The 2.3's single-row camshaft chain can break, due to the weak tensioner
- A knocking from underneath the engine usually means worn engine mounts
- Rust attacks the front and rear wings, underneath the bodykit, and also the jacking points
- Check that the self-levelling rear suspension has not been removed, and also that it functions correctly. Removal is common

was specified the seats and door trims came in a vibrant checked cloth. In Britain, owners paid dearly for the pumped up Benz. At just over £21,000 it was getting on for double the price of the ordinary, base model 190E.

## Model evolution

The principal milestone in the near decade long life of the 190E flyer came in September 1988 when, coinciding with the facelift of the W201 range, the 190E 2.5-16 replaced the original car after a production run of 19,487. The stroke of the engine was increased to bring capacity up to 2,498cc, and output to 197bhp and 176lb ft torque.

The introduction of the 2.5-litre engine saw Mercedes take over production of the cylinder head, and

incorporate two important detail changes: a duplex camshaft chain in place of the original single-row item, and a modified exhaust manifold. Both had been trouble spots before.

The limited-slip differential was revised to incorporate ASD electronic locking, which was more selective in when it locked. From 1986 a four-speed automatic gearbox had been optional, and the 190E 2.5-16 seemed to find more takers in this form, while the original choice of body colours – blue-black and silver – was expanded to include red and a second silver.

The first Evolution version was built in a 502-unit batch from February to May 1989, as a means of homologating a number of tweaks to keep the racing car on its toes. The bore and stroke

**ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT**  
The wheel above is Carat Duchatelet – the standard 15-inch rim is next to it.



Even the bootlid latch on this 190E 2.5-16 looks amazingly clean and new.

were altered a little to increase willingness to rev, and the power peak was now at a slighter higher rpm. But it is the 232bhp Evolution II made in identical numbers between May and July 1990 that really caught the eye.

This wore easily the largest rear spoiler ever seen on a production Mercedes, along with much bigger and more aggressive looking wheelarch extensions, accommodating 17-inch wheels (big for the day). All road cars were finished in metallic blue-black.

## How it drives

A 2.3-16 or 2.5-16 is unlike any other 190E. Forget the relaxing, stately drive: the 16-valve cars have a more urgent nature, and demand a much more concentrated input from the driver. ⇨

**i Specifications/  
years sold in the UK**

- 190E 2.3-16 (M102 2,299cc 4-cyl, 183/175bhp) 1985-1988
- 190E 2.5-16 (M102 2,498cc, 4-cyl, 197bhp) 1988-1993
- 190E 2.5-16 Evolution (M102 2,463cc, 4-cyl 201bhp) 1989
- 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II (M102 2,463cc, 4-cyl, 232bhp) 1990

All outputs, except for the Evolution II, are for non-catalyst cars



**“RACE-BRED, AND BUILT IN A GOLDEN ERA OF MERCEDES QUALITY, IT CAN THRILL WITH ITS PERFORMANCE, YET STILL TAKE YOU TO WORK EACH DAY”**



Stowing the warning triangle in the bootlid was a thoughtful design detail.



Regular and careful servicing essential given the specialist motor.

**£ What a 190E 2.3-/2.5-16 will cost you**

Prices of the 2.3 and 2.5 models have been pulled up by the rising classic car market, but they remain inexplicably cheap. It is easy enough to find one for £5,000 privately, although for this money it will almost certainly have issues. Better examples will sell for up to £10,000 privately, while £15,000 is a more likely price for a well presented car at a specialist in classic Mercedes.

Aficionados generally prefer the 2.3 to the 2.5, because of the former's reviver engine and closer Cosworth engineering connection. But that is not reflected in values, because many people want the 2.5, assuming that because it's bigger it must be a better drive. And while purists would also regard an automatic transmission as something that dilutes the car's sporting character, the desirability of auto gearboxes in Mercedes in general means that it does not detract from a car's value.

The two Evolution models do not fall into the bargain basement category. These left-hand drive only cars were mostly snapped up by collectors when new, and the Evo II in particular has gone gold recently. "You'll pay £55,000 upwards for an average one, and up to £80,000 for a good one," says Martin Pearse of premium classic car specialist MCP Motorsport in Norfolk – and the best ones are making over £100,000.

**Price range**

**£3,000-£5,000** 2.3s and early 2.5s, probably with some rust, and incomplete maintenance history. Will need work

**£5,000-£10,000** Useable 2.3s and 2.5s. Can still be a risky buy at this price, but with care sound ones can be found

**£10,000-£15,000** Rust-free later 2.3s, and 2.5s, with full history. No major mechanical problems should be expected at this price

**£15,000-£20,000** If not concours, then certainly in excellent condition and with full service history and below 75,000 miles

**£20,000-£30,000** Evolution models in top condition

**£50,000-£80,000** Evolution II – and the best ones make over £100,000

**Typical servicing/maintenance costs**

**(all models, including VAT)**

Lubrication/major service **£150/£340**

Cam-chain replacement/valve adjustment **£1,100 (plus valve shims)**

Cylinder-head gasket replacement **£1,120**

Exhaust system **£1,420**

Front brakes discs and pads **£300**

Front suspension lower lower ball joints **£485**

Figures from Merparts

⇒ You have to learn your way round the gearbox, with its sometimes tricky and unfamiliar downshift. But you soon get the measure of it, and it is preferable to the automatic box.

The engine is not sweet, but a delight to rev, and revs are needed because the torque is stacked high in the rev band. By today's standards outright performance (0-62mph in 7.5sec) is good but not blistering, but the Mercedes feels alive and kicking the whole time. There is not an enormous difference between the 2.3 and 2.5, but the former definitely has more of the 'cammy' feel of early generation 16-valve engines.

The standard 190E, with its sophisticated rear suspension was probably the best handling saloon of its time (dead steering apart), and the

2.3-16's uprated chassis built on this. It is a beautifully balanced rear-drive car, and with narrowish 205/55 tyres rides quite comfortably, too.

**Verdict**

This is one undervalued Mercedes. Race-bred, and built in a golden era of Mercedes quality, it is a car that thrills with its performance, yet can still take you to work each day. You needn't pay more than £10,000 for a serviceable example – excluding, of course, the Evolutions – while £15,000 to £20,000 for a very good one is still great value.

Perhaps the used and abused cheapies won't appreciate much in the foreseeable future, but good ones can only go up. It's only a matter of time, so if this is a Merc you fancy, we suggest moving now before it's too late. **CM**

# FOR SALE

# 1978 SLC



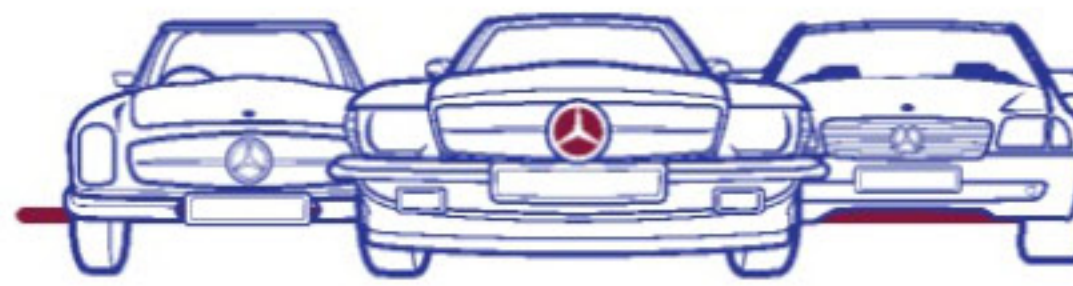
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## FOR SALE

Only one word describes this car... Stunning. Just landed from overseas we are currently changing fluids, registering and recommissioning this amazing find. Inside the car smells like it did in 1975. The exterior, engine bay and underside are in remarkable condition. The car has been dry stored from new and everywhere you look it is a delight to see complete originality.



# GOOD SHAPE

Purchased in early 2013, the elegant and silky smooth E320 continues to be a 'youngtimer' delight, particularly as the major jobs on it are now mostly done, says its owner **David Sutherland**

IMAGES Derek Goard/David Sutherland

**A**utumn has arrived and the evenings are getting shorter, and, just as I did this time last year, I wistfully contemplate the summer trips I did not make in my E320 Coupe. I fancied taking it to Germany but didn't, and even failed to make some of the classic events in the UK that were in my plan. But that's classic car ownership for you, especially when there are two other and more

modern Mercedes in our household that I rather enjoy driving, too.

I cannot be alone in under using my classic. Many other owners must also be regretting not making the most of the generally decent summer we had in the UK this year, and some will, no doubt with a furrowed brow, even be considering the ultimate step – selling it because it is surplus to requirements. If you are thinking that, then please at least hold on until the spring, when

you'll get a better price, especially if it's a convertible model.

But if the mileage covered has been low (probably no more than a couple of hundred in 2014), that doesn't mean I'm ignoring the lovely Almandine Red coupe, one of the last ones built before the C-Class based C208 took over from the C124. It's kept in a lock-up a few hundred yards from home, and I am there several times a week devoting TLC to it – even





**Owner's file**

**CAR** C124 E320 Coupe  
**DATE REGISTERED** February 1996  
**PURCHASED** January 2013  
**MILEAGE** 91,200  
**OWNER** David Sutherland  
**LIVES** London  
**UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT** Corroding wheels refurbished, electric aerial sometimes fails to fully retract

**"THE BIGGEST TASK THIS YEAR WAS TO ATTEND TO THE ALLOY WHEELS, ALL FOUR OF THE EIGHT-HOLE RIMS HAVING BLISTERED BADLY"**



**ABOVE**  
The mushroom leather is still in pretty good shape 18 years on from new.

**LEFT**  
Since the water pump was replaced in 2013, the 3.2 engine has behaved well.

if none is required. If my wife is watching something on television that I don't fancy, it is not unheard of for me to go to the garage with the supposed intention of checking the oil, but then lingering in the driver's seat listening to the CD that happens to be in the Kenwood head unit, or a track from my iPhone, which I can plug into it. Maybe there's something odd about my musical tastes (early 70s blues and rock, anyone?), but the car seems to be the only place where I may listen to music without earphones.

**O**n maintenance, the biggest task this year was to attend to the E320's alloy wheels, all four of the 15-inch eight-hole rims having blistered in the centre, really spoiling the look of the diamond cut finish. I was a little surprised at this, because it seemed to happen quite suddenly, even though the Mercedes hadn't been used much in the winter

or even the wet, but on asking around I was told that this can happen with a diamond cut treatment.

I arranged for the wheels to be treated by long established refurbisher Pristine Wheels near Milton Keynes. Of course, before that could happen I had to find something to prevent my cherished coupe from falling flat on its wheel hubs meantime. The solution was to beg the loan of four suitable wheels to use temporarily, and these



**BELOW AND INSET**  
Corroded wheels were a right eyesore until Pristine Wheels refurbished them.

came from Tamworth-based classic Mercedes specialist Avantgarde.

They are AMG wheels, a style of which I had never seen before (for the curious, a photo is on page 90), and rather than the 6.5-inch width of my wheels, they are seven-inch rims, which is actually the width of the wheels on C124s with the Sportline suspension. But with an ET (the wheel offset) of 25 rather than 44, they stuck out a good two inches proud of the front wings and weren't quite inside the rear wings, so I thought it best not to drive the car far with them fitted – in any case, the extra width makes the E320 more rumbly on the road. Their part number starts with '201', suggesting that they were once on a 190E, but I believe they came from a special equipment 124-series. Should any reader be able to shed more light on them, I would be very grateful.

**H**aving received the E320's wheels, Pristine's general manager Linda Mouldsdale explained my options – or rather my option. I had fancied the diamond cut finish again, so named because the process involves coating the wheel in primer, paint and lacquer, then putting it on a lathe with a diamond cutter which removes it all again,

except for that which goes into the various holes, such as those for the wheelnuts. After that the high shine surface is lacquered.

But to achieve this finish, the wheels have to be in top class condition. "If they're really tatty it's best to paint them all over, you can have them in a flat silver a sparkle finish, or indeed any colour you like," Linda told me, before adding that not only were mine not nearly good enough for diamond cutting, but also that one of them was dented and fit only for the bin. ➔

⇒ The damaged rim was junked and the remaining three stacked in the corner while I searched for a replacement. New ones are still available priced at £117, but that didn't seem a sensible course when there were bound to be plenty at breakers and on eBay – trouble was, most looked as bad as mine. However, a chance conversation with Sam Bailey, proprietor of another independent Mercedes specialist, The SL Shop near Redditch, revealed that he had recently taken in a 124 estate for parts, and that it had a decent spare wheel.

Once Pristine was in possession of the full set, the wheels were painted in silver, and while this doesn't stand out like a diamond cut finish, I prefer it on the E320 for its more discreet look, and also because it is close to the original Mercedes factory finish. The new finish certainly lifts the car considerably – there is probably no other single thing that improves a car's looks as much as revitalised wheels.

**O**ne thing I mentioned previously was my search for a set of the 15-hole wheels that were a factory option for E320s, to be used as and when the fancy to switch wheels took me. Now that my rims look beautiful again I've not been searching so avidly, my enthusiasm waning further when I learned from Steve Shali of Mercedes specialist Klasse of Fulham, who looks after my



If you fancy an SL from this era but need to carry more than two, the C124, with its proper rear seat, could fit the bill.

cars, that there are different types of these 15-inchers, depending on the age of the car, and that only the later ones will accommodate the E320's brakes. But if the right wheels come up, I'll have them.

Another aspect I've covered before, but which is worthy of airing again, is the set of floor mats supplied by Coco Mats in South Carolina in the US. Their design is based on the mats offered as an official option in Porsches during the 1960s and, later on, in Mercedes. They look very smart, indeed, but perhaps more importantly they are not showing any signs of wear,

even next to the pedals, where the driver's heels rest. They really do add a touch of class to the Mercedes.

Winter is when many owners work on their classics, but I can't think of much to do on mine. The boot mounted electric aerial sometimes won't retract the final couple of inches, but it's hardly a pressing issue, especially when it might end up with a new antenna being required. But one thing I will be doing, next year, is driving it more – I promise. CM

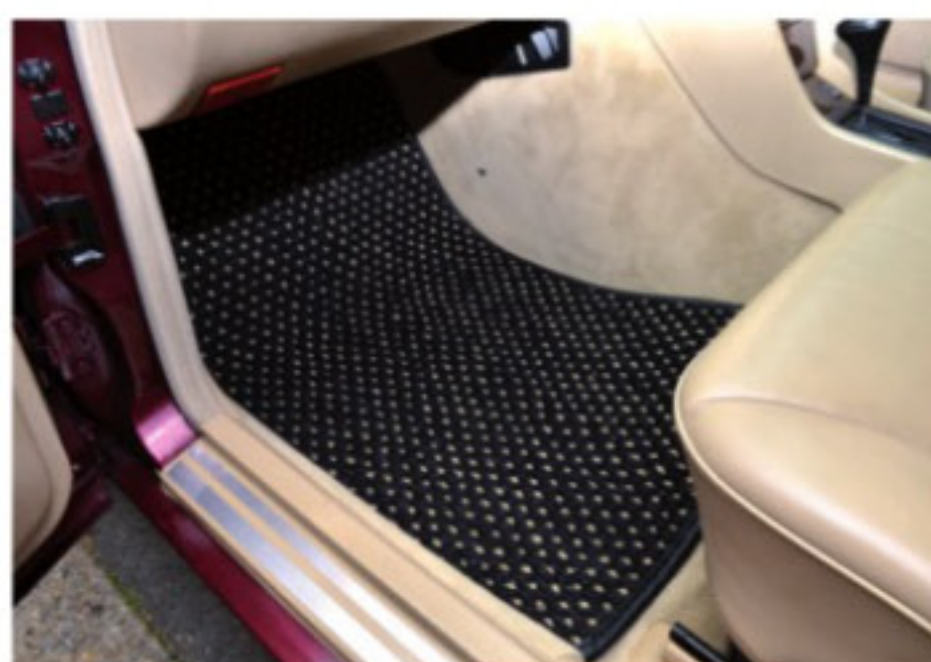
⇒ Thanks to Pristine Wheels Tel 01908 282628 Web [www.pristinealloywheels.co.uk](http://www.pristinealloywheels.co.uk)

**BELOW LEFT**  
Driving the E320, with its sweet straight-six engine, puts a smile on your face.

**BELOW CENTRE LEFT**  
These Cocomats look neat and seem like they will be very hard wearing indeed.

**BOTTOM LEFT**  
A set of temporary wheels went on while the eight holes were refurbished.

**"THE BOOT MOUNTED ELECTRIC AERIAL SOMETIMES REFUSES TO RETRACT THE FINAL COUPLE OF INCHES, BUT IT'S HARDLY A PRESSING ISSUE"**





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# CLUB NEWS

REPORTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD ON CLUB MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES



Local member Keith Ryall arriving with his two 300SLs in Cardiff.



Some terrific roads to be enjoyed.

## Welsh ways

The Mercedes-Benz Club's annual event included a glorious driving route

The Mercedes-Benz Club's 2014 National Weekend rolled into the Cardiff Marriott Hotel on Friday August 22.

The start venue for Saturday was the Hollybush Inn, about four miles north of the city centre, the 'Red Dragon Run' taking drivers on a 130-mile trip around south Wales and the Brecon Beacons, passing through the industrial past, castles, hills, valleys and lakes. Arriving at Caerphilly Castle, the second-largest castle in the UK, drivers then proceeded east towards Newport and onward to the historic town of Ebbw Vale.

From there the cars headed out onto the sweeping roads across

Llangattock Mountain, with wonderful views beyond Llangors Lake and deep into mid Wales.

They continued to Brecon, before heading into the second leg of the run, which took in the beautiful Swansea valley as they drove on toward Glynneath.

The venue for the centrepiece of the SL Day, on Sunday, and a key event for the club, was outside Cardiff County Hall, adjacent to Cardiff Bay. The display comprised some 120 cars, and in addition to SLs and SLKs, a small but select band of 'others' joined the show, including W123s, W124s, a CLK and a Ponton 190D. Neville Wright judged the 'Polish and Show'.



'Best R107' was Richard Wagenhauser's.



David Richardson owned the 'Best R129'.

## Sunny state

Spectacular weather blessed the 2014 Regional Show and Shine that the Seattle Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America put on at the Nile Country Club in Mountlake Terrace, Washington State, in September. At the final count, 63 cars graced the field, and over 100 enthusiasts enjoyed the sunshine, camaraderie, food and, of course, the display of Mercedes classics.

Special guests at the show were Terry Kiwala and Laura Simonds, president and vice president, respectively, of the national club - both were well versed in how to put on a show of this size and stepped right in, offering a hand wherever needed. In addition, Laura's husband, Richard, attended, and spent the better part of the show qualifying owners of Mercedes over 25 years old for a Silver Star Preservation Class certificate.

The 'Best of Show' trophy winner was Brad Renner's 1967 280SE, while the 'Early Model' prize went to Jim Geyer's 1969 280SE Coupe.



Sunny weather and a good turnout of classic Mercs.

Linda Gleadle

## MY FAVOURITE MERCEDES

Graham Ogg from Paisley in Scotland can claim a rare S-Class



Mercedes Owners member Graham Ogg, of West of Scotland Chauffeur Drive, tells us about his company's recently restored Mercedes 500SEC Convertible. 'Convertible'? It is one of three 500SECs that Lynx Conversions of Surrey built. One was bought by racing driver James Hunt and was recently offered at auction, while Graham's company owns one of the other two. "We bought it on eBay as a barn find

for £1,800, and didn't anticipate the amount of work involved," admits Graham. "Our mechanic, Jim, spent two years on and off working on it. It was full of rust, and needed hours of welding.

"We bought another 500SEC as a donor vehicle, replacing the worn out green cloth interior with the donor car's black leather interior. We gave it a full body respray, got the roof renovated, and commissioned a new black vinyl hood cover."





Australian club members wave the flag for Mercedes.

## Day to shine

The MB Classic Car Club, Inc, based in Australia, and whose activities cover Newcastle city, and the Hunter Valley and the Central Coast areas of New South Wales, is holding its 'All German Day' on Saturday, February 7, 2015. The venue is The Foreshore, Wharf Road, near the harbour in Newcastle, New South Wales. The club focuses on Mercedes built between 1950 and the 2000s.

A show and shine contest is the main attraction at the show, and besides Mercedes, the organisers are welcoming Porsches, Audis and VWs, and hoping for Borgwards, NSUs, Goggomobiles and Messerschmitts, too. It will be MBCCC's biggest outing of 2015.

# Ponton parade

No fewer than 27 cars from the UK were entered in the 34th annual Ponton Rally, run by MBIG (*Mercedes-Benz Interessen Gemeinschaft*), which this year started at Ahrweiler in Germany. It proceeded through the Ahr Valley and the Eifel Mountains, and all 200 of the participating cars at the start point created quite a sight in the beautiful surroundings of the Kurpark, Ahrweiler's central gardens. Cars made their way through the Eifel mountains and valleys to the lunch stop, a railway station for preserved steam trains known as Royal's Vulcanstube.

In the afternoon there was a 16-mile drive to a Mercedes dealership, where tea was provided. Saturday evening saw the Ponton Ball, attended by 400 people. Wine flowed and music played, interspersed with speeches including a thank you by Ian Keers, chairman of the UK club, on behalf of his participating members. This rally moves around from one MBIG region to another each year, and for 2014 the baton was passed to the Bonn region.



Despite the event's name, cars other than Pontons can take part.

Text and photo courtesy of Mercedes-Benz Club

## In brief



**Badging policy**  
The Mercedes-Benz Club is now supplying its members (only) with a grille badge. 76mm in diameter and with a nickel finish, it costs £25, or £30 with an adapter plate for a badge bar. More details on 01780 482111.

### Rallying call for 2015

The MBIG (see 'Ponton Parade') has announced details of the 2015 Ponton Rally. It runs from June 4 to 7, and will be at the Schwäbisch Hall, 30 miles east of Stuttgart. UK owner participation is by arrangement with the Mercedes-Benz Club.

### Bill Denton 1938-2014

Mercedes-Benz Club of America has paid tribute to long-serving member Bill Denton, who died on July 20, 2014. He joined MCA in 1984, after buying a 300SD, and became an active O'Hare Section (now named the Chicagoland Section) member.

### Getting it covered

Lancaster Insurance has signed a partnership deal with Mercedes-Benz Club, which will automatically qualify members for up to 25 per cent off insurance premiums.



Separated at birth: these lovely 220SEBs are both from 1964.

## Double treat

On September 14, some 25 members of The Mercedes-Benz Club Auckland, including the owners of two white 'mirror image' 220SEBs from 1964, met up to drive to the Classic Car Museum in Hamilton, New Zealand, to be followed by a journey to Lloyd and Trish Marx's workshop in Pirongia, writes Stuart Lowe. There are two parts to the Classic Car Museum: the museum itself, boasting a collection that includes 1920s and 1930s Packards, a Bristol 401 and a

1959 Cadillac convertible, and an inviting 1950s style American diner.

After lunch, club vice president, Garry Boyce, handed out instruction sheets on how to navigate the 20 miles to the Marx workshop in Pirongia. Once members were gathered there, he delivered an informative, interesting and sometimes technically challenging introduction to the world of 300SLs, and then spoke about the particular car members had come to view – his very own 1956 300SL Gullwing.



The Museum in Hamilton has some great exhibits.



Please send your club news and photos to

[info@classicmercedesmagazine.com](mailto:info@classicmercedesmagazine.com)

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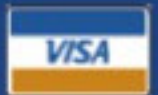
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**560SL Sport, 1987**, left hand drive, gleaming Signal Red with Beige hide interior, headrests, centre arm rest, hard/soft tops, flag ship SL with power windows, tinted glass, stereo system, light up vanity mirrors, cruise control, air-con, power mirrors, ABS, air-bags, alloys, over-mats, only 27,000 miles from new, with FSH, 1 owner, garaged and pampered. £46,750

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# SPACE WITH GRACE

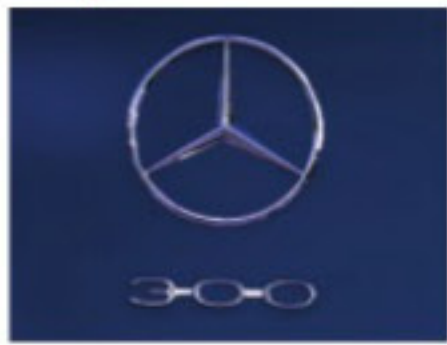
Mercedes never intended the 1951 Type 300 Adenauer as an estate car, although it did sanction a conversion by the coachbuilder Binz. **Richard Truesdell** found a rare example

IMAGES Richard Truesdell



**"BINZ CRAFTSMEN, DRAWING ON THEIR EXPERIENCE IN AMBULANCE AND HEARSE CONVERSIONS, WERE TASKED WITH CONVERTING THE 300C INTO AN AMERICAN STYLE ESTATE"**

## Specifications



### Mercedes-Benz/Binz 300c estate (W186)

Engine M186 2,996cc 6-cyl Power 123bhp@4,500rpm  
 Torque 163lb ft@2,600rpm Transmission 4-speed manual  
 Weight 1,860kg 0-62mph 17.0sec  
 Top speed 99mph Fuel consumption 22.6mpg  
 All figures from Mercedes-Benz, and for a standard 300c

Station wagons, estates, T-models. Call them what you will, such vehicles bearing the three-pointed star are commonplace today. But back in the 1950s you had to go down the custom coachbuilt route if you wanted a Mercedes-Benz *Kombiwagen*. That is just what one wealthy American did and this is the story of her car, which spans more than five decades.

In the 1950s, the mass-produced, all-steel, American station wagons were in their heyday. As the first of these cars were introduced in 1948 and 1949, real-wood body conversions were already on the decline. And while there were some large, powerful and luxurious American-built station wagons available, from Buick and Chrysler especially, none, it seems, had sufficient cachet for Caroline Foulke, a wealthy socialite with homes in Paris, New York and Florida. In 1956 she visited her local dealer – the flagship Mercedes-Benz dealership on New York City’s Park Avenue – with an unusual request. She wanted a Mercedes-Benz station wagon. There was, however, just one little problem – at the time, Mercedes-Benz offered no such model.

But this didn’t deter the eager-to-please sales team at Mercedes-Benz Manhattan, who apparently arranged for a new W186 300c Adenauer saloon – one of just 1,367 built between September 1955 and July 1957 – to be delivered directly to Binz & Company Coachworks in Lorch, Germany. The Binz craftsmen, drawing on their experience in ambulance and hearse conversions, were tasked with converting the four-door 300c into an American style estate. It should be noted that unlike many conversions of Mercedes saloons into hearses and ambulances, the rear side windows of this car are set almost flush with the bodywork aft of the ‘C’-pillars. This contributes to the car’s factory look, while the design of the thin, chromed pillars gives the car exceptional all-round visibility.

Indeed, some liken this car’s appearance to subsequent factory-built Mercedes estates. Like its saloon counterparts, Mrs Foulke’s 300c estate

was powered by Mercedes’ M186, three-litre, 123bhp straight-six. When mated to the standard four-speed manual transmission with a steering column-mounted shifter, as in this car, the 1,860kg 300c saloon could do 0-62mph in 17 seconds, with a maximum speed of 99mph.

Much folklore surrounds this car. One of the stories is that Mrs Foulke was so proud of her unique Mercedes that she had it flown to her many homes at huge expense. After all, it is a car that would be very much at home on Madison Avenue in New York City, in Palm Beach, Florida, or on the Champs-Élysées in Paris. As commissioned by Mrs Foulke, the car was finished in the striking combination of graphite grey with a contrasting red leather interior.

In the years that followed, the car passed through a number of owners. One of these was noted collector Charlie Cawley (a former CEO of bank holding company MBNA in the USA) who at one time had over 200 cars in his collection. It was when this 300c estate was in his care that it was repainted in its current dark blue.

In 1999 the car found a new owner, investment banker Lee Munder, who purchased it through the RM Auctions 1999 Amelia Island sale for a reported \$75,000. The car was invited to the 2000 Amelia Island concours d’elegance where it garnered more than its share of admiration. Afterwards, the car went to Hatch & Sons for a refresh. At the time, Jeff Cote worked on the car, but he now serves as the Restoration Manager at the Mercedes-Benz

Classic Center in Irvine, California.

“It was apparent that, while at Binz, most of the standard bodywork was removed from the front doors backwards,” Cote tells us. “In its place, the craftsmen there, with their experience of converting sedans into ambulances and hearses, fabricated a full-length, one-piece roof. When we had the car apart you could see all the welding in the rear doors, as well as the bespoke, two-piece tailgate, all of which were apparently hand made. The original 300c tail lights were replaced with smaller units from the then current 180 Ponton and 190SL.”

For much of the 2000s, this bespoke wagon didn’t attract too much attention – until it appeared in the Gooding & Company auction catalogue for an Amelia Island event in 2010. There it attracted the eye of collector Bruce Iannelli, an exotic-car broker and automotive wholesaler who lives in Bergen County, New Jersey. And this is where the story starts to get really very interesting. Iannelli told us that he had known of the car for a long time, and was keen to add it to his collection, which includes nine other Mercedes, many of which were restored and acquired through the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center.

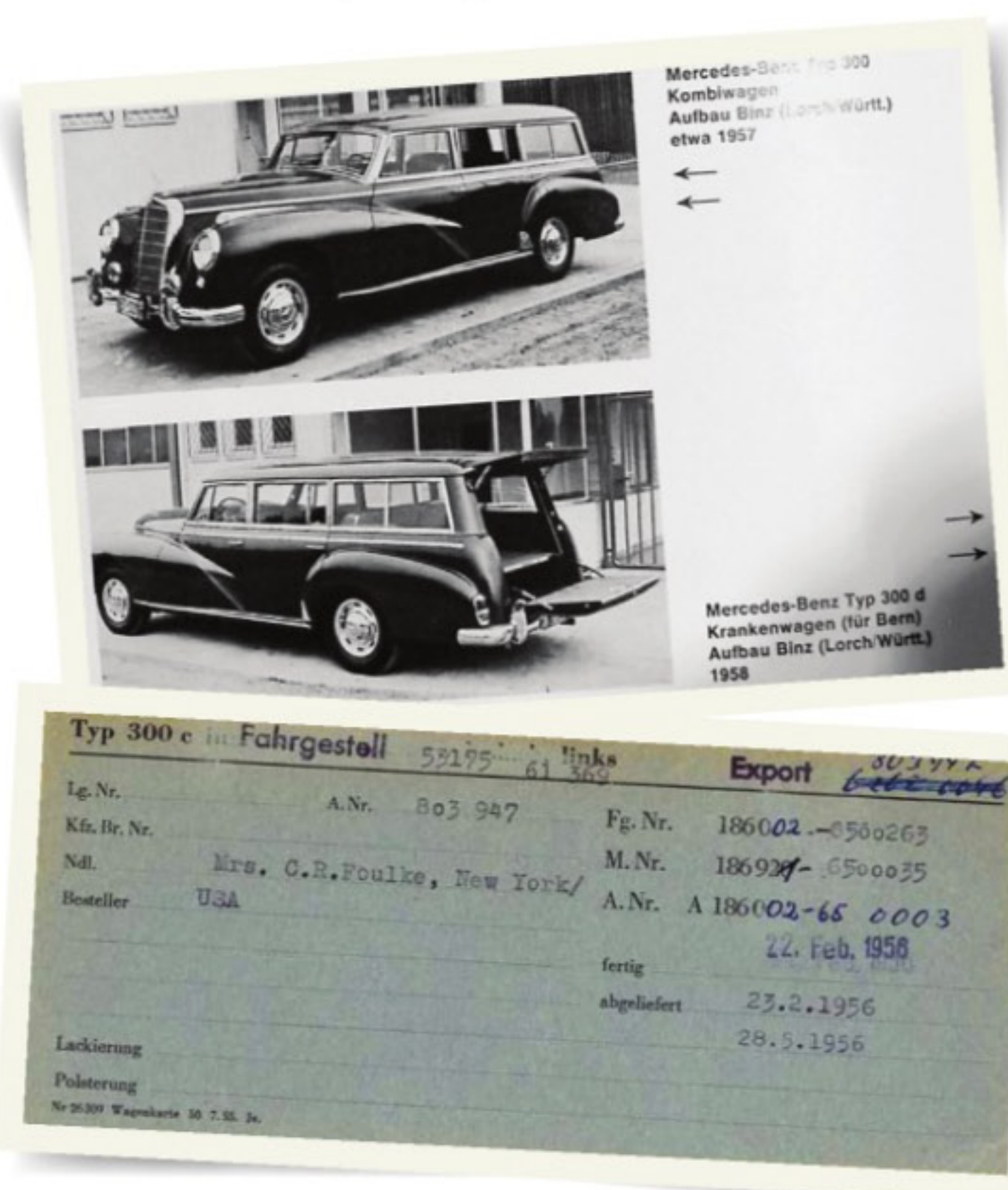
“I’ve known about the car for 10 years, but I could never get my hands on it,” Iannelli says. “Then I saw it in the 2010 Amelia Island listing and I told my wife, Margaret, that we had to have it – I told her we will take our oldest daughter to college in it.”

Michael Kunz, Manager of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center in Irvine, remembers being contacted by Iannelli soon after the Gooding & Company catalogue was released. “Reading the description, we were excited at the prospect of him adding the car to his collection,” says Kunz. “And it certainly didn’t hurt that our own Jeff Cote was intimately familiar with the car, as he led the refreshing efforts on it while working at Hatch & Sons.”

“I couldn’t be at Amelia Island to bid on the car,” continues Iannelli, “but the Classic Center served as my eyes and ears. They told me exactly what it would need if I bought it. Work included removing what appeared to be an aftermarket air con system, fitting new interior wood and refurbishing two exterior panels, and attending to the top of the motor.” Iannelli then shares his excitement regarding the bidding process itself. “On the day of the

**BELOW**  
 Contemporary photos show it was an official, if very unusual, conversion.

**BOTTOM**  
 Original paperwork adds to the 300c’s provenance.





The Binz conversion to an estate included making up an entire new roof section.



ABOVE  
The Adenauer's interior wood trim was renewed and looks really beautiful.

THIS PICTURE  
Separate front seats, but the close together chairs could take three people.

**"ONE OF THE STORIES IS THAT MRS FOULKE WAS SO PROUD OF HER MERCEDES THAT SHE HAD IT FLOWN TO HER MANY HOMES AT HUGE EXPENSE"**



A conversion, but straight rear windows help make the 300c look factory built.



100

***"LOOKING INTO THE DASH, THE BEAUTY OF THE INSTRUMENTS AND THE WOOD, IT'S SO FINELY DETAILED, SO PERFECT"***

⇒ auction, the Gooding people called me, asking if I could be available to buy the car on the phone. They told me they would call at 7.30pm as the car was scheduled to be auctioned at 8pm. Margaret and I were in a local restaurant at the time, so I told her to put down the wine. 'We're going home, I don't want to be distracted – we are going to buy this car.'

When the bidding started, Iannelli held back, hoping not to show his hand. "The bidding started at \$75,000, then reached \$110,000 before levelling off at \$165,000. I put in a bid of \$170,000 [over £100,000] and then my phone went dead. I called back on another phone and the Gooding girl answered, telling me to bid another \$5,000 even though I didn't know the

**ABOVE**  
It must have been one of the poshest wagons to ride around in back in the 50s.

**ABOVE LEFT**  
Transmission is four-speed manual, auto not available until the 300d of 1957.

**ABOVE TOP LEFT**  
Even at this level of luxury occupants had to wind their own windows down.

total price – and I got it! In the time between my phone going dead and reconnecting with Gooding, the bidding went to \$230,000 [around £140,000] and without knowing it at the time, my extra \$5,000 made me the winner! Owning the car was more important than the final price. For me, it is the story of this car, the simple passion of owning the best, and in this case, a unique Mercedes-Benz.

**N**ow that this one-off 300c Adenauer estate is part of his stable, we asked Iannelli to reflect on it. "It has a very distinctive and proud nose, the design is so straight and perfect – it's hard to tell that it wasn't originally designed as a station wagon," he considers. "Looking

into the dash, the beauty of the instruments and the wood, it's so finely detailed, so perfect. It's the ultimate. The car drives down the road so absolutely flawlessly. It's rolling art."

In looking back on his now four-year ownership of the Adenauer estate, Bruce offered up these comments. "Unique, one-of-a-kind cars are rare and getting rarer. Often they go into private collections and in many instances will never come out again. As a family, we are lucky to have it. People see the uniqueness and it is now a key part of our collection." It would seem that Bruce Iannelli has the right spirit in preserving and sharing the cars bearing the three-pointed star that reside in his collection. He is doing the memory of Caroline Foulke proud. **CM**

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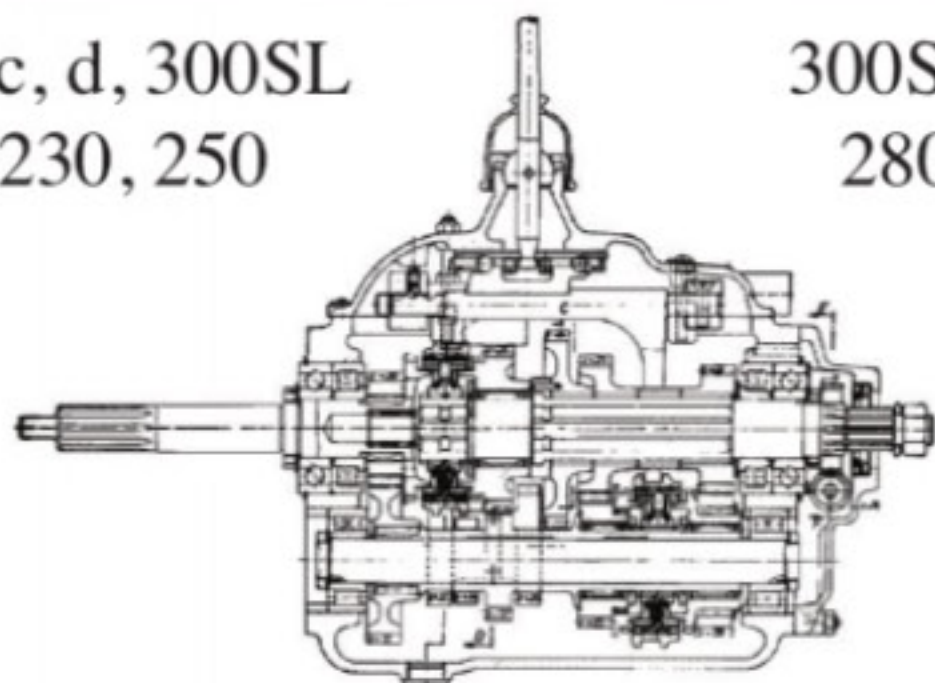
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# Events Diary


A round-up of UK and international shows and events of interest to classic car fans

IMAGES Brooklands Museum/Deutsche Classic/Essex Motor Show/Goodwood/Techno Classica/Silverstone Classic



## UK events

 **Classic Motor Show**  
November 14-16  
The UK's biggest and best attended classic car show, with many clubs taking stand space  
**Venue** NEC, Birmingham  
[www.necclassicmotorshow.com](http://www.necclassicmotorshow.com)

 **Bonhams Oxford Sale**  
December 7  
Auction of important, high end classic and racing cars  
**Venue** Bonhams, Oxfordshire  
[www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

 **London Classic Car Show**  
January 8-11, 2015  
A new, exclusive classic car show for London, featuring a 'Grand Avenue' of moving cars. Expected to become an annual event  
**Venue** ExCel, Docklands, London  
[www.thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk](http://www.thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk)

 **Beaulieu 22st Spring Autojumble**  
May 16-17, 2015  
A partner to the September autojumble, it accommodates over 1,000 stands  
**Venue** National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire  
[www.beaulieu.co.uk](http://www.beaulieu.co.uk)


 **The Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival**  
June 13-14, 2015 (TBC)  
Speed trials on the Saturday, and driving tests on the Sunday  
**Venue** Brooklands Motor Museum, Surrey  
[www.brooklandsmuseum.com](http://www.brooklandsmuseum.com)

 **Mercedes-Benz Club National Concours**  
June 20, 2015 (TBC)  
A concours with numerous categories, attracting both first time and experienced concours entrants  
**Venue** Mercedes-Benz HQ, Milton Keynes (TBC)  
[www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk)

 **Goodwood Festival of Speed**  
June 25-28, 2015 (TBC)  
Modern and classic racers and road cars, demonstration runs, and motoring personalities  
**Venue** Goodwood House, Chichester, West Sussex  
[www.goodwood.co.uk](http://www.goodwood.co.uk)


 **Silverstone Classic**  
July 24-26, 2015  
Historic racing and club displays at the F1 circuit  
**Venue** Silverstone, Northamptonshire  
[www.silverstoneclassic.com](http://www.silverstoneclassic.com)

 **Ripon Classic Car Gathering**  
July 26, 2015  
Car and bike meeting supporting the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. Includes an autojumble  
**Venue** Ripon Racecourse, Ripon, North Yorkshire  
[www.riponclassiccargathering.org](http://www.riponclassiccargathering.org)

 **W123 Day**  
August 16, 2015 (TBC)  
Gathering of the 1977-1986 123-series. Organised for the Mercedes-Benz Club UK  
**Venue** TBA  
[www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk)

 **SL Weekend**  
August 21-23, 2015 (TBC)  
A weekend of events for owners of SL models of all ages  
**Venue** TBA  
[www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk)

 **Salon Privé**  
September 2-4, 2015 (TBC)  
Exclusive classic displays, classic supercar parade  
**Venue** Syon Park, Isleworth, west London (TBC)  
[www.salonprivelondon.com](http://www.salonprivelondon.com)

 **Concours of Elegance**  
September 4-6, 2015 (TBC)  
An annual classic car show for all marques, hosted at a palace  
**Venue** TBA  
[www.concourssofelegance.com](http://www.concourssofelegance.com)

 **Beaulieu International Autojumble**  
September 5-6, 2015 (TBC)  
UK's foremost annual autojumble, 2,000 stalls  
**Venue** National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire  
[www.beaulieu.co.uk](http://www.beaulieu.co.uk)

 **RM Auctions London sale**  
September 7, 2015 (TBC)  
Has become the UK's highest profile classic car auction  
**Venue** Battersea Evolution, London (TBC)  
[www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com)



## International events

 **LA Auto Show**  
November 21-30  
Mainstream car industry showcase on the US west coast  
**Venue** Los Angeles Convention Center, California, USA  
[www.laautoshow.com](http://www.laautoshow.com)

 **Essex Motor Show**  
November 29-December 7  
Modern/tuning car show, but with many displays of classics. Plenty time, and comfortable shoes are advised, given the size of this event  
**Venue** Messe Essen, Germany  
[www.siha.de](http://www.siha.de)

 **Auto Retro**  
December 4-8  
Large show catering for classic vehicles of all kinds  
**Venue** Fira Montjuic Exhibition Center Barcelona, Spain  
[www.autoretro.es](http://www.autoretro.es)

 **Scottsdale Auctions**  
January 14-17, 2015  
A weekend of sales in the US by major international auction houses. Tends to set the price trend for the year ahead  
**Venue** Near Scottsdale, Arizona  
[www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com)  
[www.goodingco.com](http://www.goodingco.com)

 **Retromobile**  
February 4-8, 2015  
The first big European classic car fair of the year, with cars, art and memorabilia. Usually attracts 100,000 visitors over the five-day period  
**Venue** Porte de Versailles, Paris, France  
[www.retromobile.com](http://www.retromobile.com)



Brooklands Double Twelve



Goodwood Revival

 **MB Classic Car Club  
All German Day**

**February 7, 2015**

A meeting for Mercedes built between 1950 and the 2000s,

**Venue** Newcastle, Australia  
[www.mbccc.org.au](http://www.mbccc.org.au)

 **New Zealand Classic  
Car Show**

**February 7-8, 2015**

Gathering of classic cars, plus concours and various club displays. In 2014 it attracted around 70 club stands

**Venue** Ellerslie Racecourse, Auckland, New Zealand  
[www.concours.org.nz](http://www.concours.org.nz)

 **Antwerp Classic Salon**  
**March 6-8, 2015**

Classic car show for the Benelux countries. Some 350 stands, with restorers and classic car tuners across four halls.

**Venue** Antwerp Expo, Antwerp, Belgium  
[www.siha.de](http://www.siha.de)

 **Geneva Motor Show**  
**March 5-15, 2015**

The year's first major European motor show. Model unveilings, plus a classic car museum


**Venue** Palexpo, Geneva, Switzerland  
[www.salon-auto.ch](http://www.salon-auto.ch)

 **Amelia Island Concours  
d'Elegance**

**March 13-15, 2015**


Prestigious classic car show, including a number of exclusive classic car auctions

**Venue** Amelia Island, Florida  
[www.ameliaconcours.org](http://www.ameliaconcours.org)

 **Retro Classic**  
**March 26-29, 2015**

Eight halls full of classic cars, plus parts and memorabilia

**Venue** Stuttgart, Germany  
[www.retro-classics.de](http://www.retro-classics.de)

 **Techno Classica**  
**April 15-19, 2015**

The premier European classic and modern classic car show, a must-visit event for enthusiasts

**Venue** Messe Essen, Germany  
[www.siha.de](http://www.siha.de)

 **Pinehurst Concours  
d'Elegance**

**May 1-3, 2015**

Classic and historic car and motorcycle show, including a road rally, concours displays and a classic car auction

**Venue** Pinehurst Resort, North Carolina, USA  
[pinehurstconcours.com](http://pinehurstconcours.com)

 **Mille Miglia**  
**May 14-17, 2015**

Modern day touring recreation of the famous Italian road race run between 1927 and 1957

**Route** Brescia to Rome  
[www.1000miglia.eu](http://www.1000miglia.eu)

 **Concorso d'Eleganza  
Villa d'Este**

**May 22-24, 2015**

Concours show for top classics, in a beautiful setting. Events dates back to 1929. Includes an historic car parade

**Venue** Villa Erba, Lake Como, Italy  
[www.concorsodeleganzavilladeste.com](http://www.concorsodeleganzavilladeste.com)

 **Mercedes Entusiastklubb  
Meeting**

**May 29-31, 2015 (TBC)**

Lively three-day meeting for Mercedes owners, from classic to modern models

**Venue** Pers Hotell, Gol, Norway  
[www.mbtreff.no](http://www.mbtreff.no)

 **Deutsche Classic**  
**July 11, 2015 (TBC)**

Concours and display of German cars with substantial Mercedes representation

**Venue** Oley Fairgrounds, Oley, Pennsylvania, USA  
[www.deutscheclassic.com](http://www.deutscheclassic.com)

 **39th International  
Oldtimer Meeting**

**July 10-12, 2015 (TBC)**

Large and well established gathering of classic cars built up to and including 1970

**Venue** Baden-Baden, Germany  
[www.oldtimer-meeting.de](http://www.oldtimer-meeting.de)

 **Schloss Dyck Classic  
Days**

**July 31-Aug 2, 2015 (TBC)**

Large gathering of classic cars at a spectacular island castle

**Venue** Schloss Dyck Castle, Jüchen, Germany  
[www.schloss-dyck-classic-days.de](http://www.schloss-dyck-classic-days.de)

 **Pagoda Rally**  
**August 6-9, 2015 (TBC)**

A gathering of W113 Pagodas, plus many other Mercedes classics, in Germany

**Venue** TBA  
[www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz-club.co.uk)

 **AvD Oldtimer Grand Prix**  
**August 7-9, 2015 (TBC)**

Classic car racing on the Nürburgring Grand Prix track and on the challenging 14-mile Nordschleife circuit

**Venue** Nürburgring, Germany  
[www.avd.de](http://www.avd.de)



Techno  
Classica



Essen Motor  
Show



Motorclassica



Deutsche  
Classic

 **Legends of the Autobahn**  
**August 14, 2015**

German marque meeting, with concours for pre-1992 cars.

**Venue** Monterey, California, USA  
[www.legendsoftheautobahn.org](http://www.legendsoftheautobahn.org)

 **Pebble Beach Concours  
d'Elegance**

**August 16, 2015**

Summer classic car festival, plus various classic car auctions on the same weekend

**Venue** Monterey, California, USA  
[www.pebblebeachconcours.net](http://www.pebblebeachconcours.net)

 **Gull Wing Convention**  
**September 9-13,**

**2015 (TBC)**  
Long running annual get together for 300SLs

**Venue** TBA  
[www.gullwinggroup.org](http://www.gullwinggroup.org)

 **Frankfurt 66th IAA**  
**September 7-17, 2015**

Europe's largest and most significant motor show, a biennial event

**Venue** Frankfurt am Main, Germany  
[www.iaa.de](http://www.iaa.de)

 **Veterama**  
**October 9-11, 2015**


Vast autojumble, with many types of classic cars and parts, and more than 2,500 trader participating

**Venue** Maimarktgelände, Mannheim, Germany  
[www.veterama.de](http://www.veterama.de)

 **RACV Motorclassica**  
**October 23-25, 2015 (TBC)**

Australia's biggest classic car event, including a concours

**Venue** Royal Exhibition Centre, Melbourne, Australia  
[www.motorclassica.com.au](http://www.motorclassica.com.au)

 **Auto e Moto d'Epoca**  
**October 23-25, 2015 (TBC)**

All-makes classic car show. Has a 'Dutch' auction with descending prices

**Venue** Padua, Italy  
[www.autoemotodepoca.com](http://www.autoemotodepoca.com)

**We need your help!**

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# Classic classifieds



**500SEL AMG**, 1984, metallic racing blue, 79,000 miles, this is a genuine AMG car, built at Stratton and costing £94,000 when new, we will be fitting a brand new stainless steel exhaust, totally immaculate and when I have finished with it, it will be a show winner, AMG styling, full leather, cocktail bar, crystal glass and cabinet, chauffeur rear seating, TV, VHS video, base equalisers and disco sound system, electric and heated seats, electric rear seats and massaging, amazing AMG style interior, too much spec to list. £16,995. Tel: 07710 611113. Manchester. **[CM10W9]**



**280GE**, LWB, auto, five-door, 1987, metallic paint/grey Recaro luxury pack interior, nine seats, all usual refinements, high spec, tow bar/electrics, fully colour coded, clear indicators, stainless exhaust, new tyres, fully serviced, MOT'd, wonderful condition throughout, drives superb. Tel: 07538 807864. Heathrow. **[CM10W7]**



**C200 Estate Classic**, auto, 2000/W reg, Brilliant Silver, low mileage for year, 85,400, FMBSH, cruise control, electric windows, mirrors, black cloth upholstery, key, and handbooks, factory phone console, a previous MB concours winner, and immaculate vehicle, stored in garage and only used for shows and regular maintenance, truly unmarked, £2,900 ONO. Tel: 01256 473789 or 07771 906300. Hampshire. **[CM10W6]**



**C180**, white saloon, excellent condition, 1996, 110,000 miles, MOT until September 2015, tax expires end of September 2014, two fob keys and emergency key, all MOT test certificates, original Mercedes handbooks in folder, original first aid kit and warning triangle, fuel gauge has intermittent fault of working then not working, so will be willing to reduce price at end of sale to allow for fault. £700 ONO, all sensible offers considered, cash on collection, please direct any questions to Graeme. Tel: 07908 175070. Hartlepool. **[CM10W8]**



**SL320**, R129 facelift, 61,000 miles, excellent condition, carnelian red metallic, cream leather interior, e/w, pas, e/mirrors, factory hardtop, virtually unused Pirellis, service history, car is based in the Isle of Man £12,750 OVNO. Tel: 07624 384000. Isle of Man. **[CM10W4]**



**300CE-24**, really lovely LHD, great colour combination, 129,000km, with full MOT, never welded or painted, all bills for the past five years, new exhaust, good tyres plus a spare set of alloys with winter tyres. A/C, E/W, heated leather seats, original radio, any inspection welcome. £7,500 ONO. Tel: 01630 685382. Shrewsbury. **[CM10W3]**

**230TE**, 1984, estate, LHD, blue, all original five alloy wheels, many new parts fitted, more of a collectors' car. £1,995. Tel: 07956 372230/020 8202 5250 **[KLR]**



**E320 CDI**, year 2000, long MOT and tax, FSH, 170,000 miles, excellent all round condition, no rust, wax oiled, garaged, and well looked after, first person to see will buy, £2,175 ONO. Tel: 0208 6604538 or 07584 020272. Surrey. **[CM10W2]**



**Mercedes 200**, 1988, very good condition, original and clean interior, also a 1984 **Mercedes 240 Diesel**, low miles, tidy and clean interior. Tel: 01490 420330. Corwen. **[KLP18R]**



**C180 Elegance**, auto, 1994, stunning condition, throughout, mileage 74,000, fitted new Blaupunkt radio, CD, USB, SD, Bluetooth, drives as new. £1,500 ONO. Tel: 01704 893564. **[KLP17R]**



**500SEC**, coupe, 1989, Champagne with mushroom leather interior, all electric, private BNZ numberplate, 11 months MOT, full service book, outstanding condition and original, INS guaranteed valuation £10,000, but will accept £6,950 OVNO. Tel: 01443 205903. Cardiff. **[KLP16R]**

**C32 AMG Estate**, the best car on the market, 131K, e/windows, full leather, silver, AMG wheels, taxed and MOT'd. Tel: 07979 631722. Middlesex. **[KLR]**



**500SL**, auto, 1990, Almandine with cream leather interior, e/r, hardtop wind breaker, alloys, good tyres, stainless steel exhaust, stereo/CD, e/w, ABS, ASR and ADS suspension, beautiful car, much regretted sale. £9,950 ONO. Tel: 01691 682662. (May take suitable part exchange) Oswestry **[KIP14R]**



**SLC**, 1978, 50,000 miles, one family owned its whole life, £20,000 SL Shop restoration, the car drives and looks new. Offers over £32,500. Tel: 07591 234567. Keithsellers2929@yahoo.co.uk **[KLW13R]**



**C36 AMG**, 1995 Mercedes, only 85,000 miles, probably one of the tidiest examples for sale, FSH, MOT'd/taxed, last owner 15 years, totally standard, rust free example, wheels just refurbished and diamond cut, new Continental tyres fitted. £1,000 numberplate available by separate negotiation. Tel: 07713 566745. Wiltshire. **[KLW19R]**

**230E**, auto, 1989, just 75,000 miles, in beautiful original condition, great service history, Becker radio/nav, new tyres, alloys, sunroof, all working. £1995. Tel: 07710 366009. Cheshire. **[KLR]**

**500SL**, 1992/J reg, Almandine Red, cream leather, electric seat, hardtop, AMG alloys, tax and MOT. £2,750. Part Exchange 300/320 CE. Tel: 07864 553010. Kent **[KLR]**





**C36 AMG**, a chance to own a real wolf in sheep's clothing, this is one of the best around, low mileage, full service by local Mercedes specialist, bodywork in near perfect condition, AMG numberplate included, taxed and tested for 12 months, low miles (46,000). Can email more photos. £6,250 ONO Tel: 0191 5848135. Sunderland. [KLW6R]

**230CE**, Pearl Grey, mushroom leather, 55,000 miles, 17 Mercedes stamps and three others, excellent condition, MOT until January 2015, taxed until March 2015, very rare with this mileage. £3,750 Tel: 07850012794. North Yorkshire. [JKR]



**E220 Coupe**, auto, late 1994, Brilliant Silver with immaculate grey leather, FSR, 102,000 miles, lots of receipts, paperwork and MOTs, ex Mercedes Signature car, new MOT, 4x new tyres, remote alarm and 3x keys, usual extras first aid kit etc, truly beautiful, garaged and MB club member, excellent condition, hard to find this good. £2,195. Tel: 07714 068326. Brighton. [KLW5R]

**W123 230E**, four-door saloon, 1983, MOT and taxed, automatic, white with blue interior, 146,000 miles, has had recent restoration full respray. £3,200 ONO. Tel: 07976 269174. Birmingham. [JKR]

**CLK200 Elegance**, 1999, petrol, manual, 37,400 miles, service history, one previous owner, 11 months MOT, taxed until November, excellent condition throughout. £3,200 ONO. Tel: 07434084619. [JKR]

## INTERNATIONAL MERCEDES



**W114 250**, saloon, 1969, 423 Tobacco Brown paint over 250 Cognac leather, brown dash, less than 19,000 miles, believed to be lowest mileage W114 in USA, extensive documented service history, car is in collector condition, tags are still on coco mats, original detailing kit present. Tel: 001(406) 219 8368. Bozeman, Montana USA. [CM10W5]



**190E**, 1993, 2.6L, LHD, only 27,000 miles, pristine condition, no rust, dings or seat tears, absolutely immaculate, a real time capsule. \$11,500 US. Tel: 001(612) 296 5588. Minneapolis. [CM10W1]

**220D**, 1970, for sale, +27 (0) 836563045, Bronkhorstspruit Gauteng South Africa. [KLR]

**450SLC**, 4.5L V8, 1973, excellent condition, 64,000 miles, £10,000. Tel: +27 79 861 9921. South Africa. [JKR]

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Breaking Mercedes sports, 113 and 107s.** Tel: 01322 669081 or 07836 250222 [ABC]

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# Job lot

Keep a decent toolkit and a few carefully chosen parts in your classic Mercedes, practically minded **Tim French** advises, because it could make the difference between getting home and being stranded miles from it

IMAGES Authentic Classics/Laser/Terry Osborne/Sealey

**F**or owners of modern cars, the single most useful tool is likely to be a diagnostic computer. Increasingly the vehicles themselves are becoming like the latest Apple products: cleverly designed, and with amazing capabilities, but due to their heavy dependence on electronics almost impossible for the owner to work on. You can't even change a wheel on a new Mercedes, as none have a spare.

For most Mercedes built before the mid-1990s, precisely the opposite is true. The car maker, although pursuing the highest engineering standards, and also kept things simple, avoiding complex electronic black boxes.

Hence on a classic Mercedes, such as a W113 SL Pagoda, an owner with DIY skills has a good chance of remedying a roadside problem not resulting from a major breakage, at least to the extent of getting home. That model's original toolkit comprised a cloth pouch, four spanners, adjustable pliers and a fuse set, and a spark plug socket – this last item very handy, given that fouled spark plugs are almost certainly one of the most common problems experienced on classics, due to an over rich fuel/air mixture.

**B**ut will the toolkit still be with the car after all this time? "Not many Pagodas still have the toolkit, and if they do, some tools are probably missing,"

says Paulo Custodio of Pagoda specialist Silchester Garage near Reading in Berkshire. "We get a lot of customers asking for them."

Believe it or not, you can still buy a new toolkit for a Pagoda through any Mercedes dealer. It's the same one as for the W111 models, which were made in the same



Finding an original toolkit for a classic Mercedes can now be quite expensive.



**ABOVE**  
This expanded Pagoda SL toolkit from Authentic Classics is appealing.

**LEFT**  
A decent jack, like this from Sealey, makes wheel changing easier and safer.

**RIGHT**  
Laser's Power Bar, plus a nylon covered socket, is great for loosening those overly tight wheel nuts.

years as the W113. The price is a stiff £262 including VAT. But if you want an original, period toolkit then eBay is the best bet. You will however pay handsomely for the privilege – a complete original 1950s Ponton toolkit priced at £436, and the pouch alone for a Pagoda kit at £50 were two we found.

**W**e like the look of the Pagoda toolkit from vintage parts supplier Authentic Classics (www.authenticclassics.com) based in New York, which replicates the original, but adds a screwdriver, an extra pair of pliers, and a fuse extractor. Adding to its appeal is the availability of the pouch in either canvas or a variety of colours of MB-Tex style vinyl. The price is \$497 (about £300) plus shipping and import duties.

A toolkit may be as much use as a chocolate teapot if you don't have the part that needs replacing. So it's advisable to carry a few spares that don't take up much room, the recommended items for a Pagoda being obvious, Custodio says. "You should have spark plugs, and belts for the fan and alternator – the fan belt in particular can snap. Some cars have been converted to electronic ignition, but if your car has not, carry a spare set of contact-breaker points,

which are still available from Mercedes."

**B**ut if choosing a single tool for the garage, a trolley jack is one of the most useful, given that the jack that came with the car is no more than an emergency device. One of our favourites is the RJA1800 Rocket Lift from UK tool supplier Sealey, which at just under £200 is far from the cheapest, but it is relatively light, stylish, and is a quality product.

A good jack makes wheel removal easier and much safer, so why not invest in a

worthwhile wheel wrench to use instead of the small, awkward item that came with the car? The 430mm long 'Power Bar' from Laser is a good compromise between compact size and leverage, and special Super Strength Wheel Nut Sockets are available in a variety of sizes (likely to be 17mm for your classic Mercedes), featuring a nylon coating to prevent damage to the wheel. Just don't over-tighten the nuts.



**"ON A MERCEDES CLASSIC, AN OWNER WITH DIY SKILLS HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF REMEDYING A ROADSIDE PROBLEM NOT RESULTING FROM A MAJOR BREAKAGE"**

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Photo by Nick Burt

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