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When Karl Marx told the world's workers they had nothing to lose but their chains, he could have been talking about the original proletarian mode of transport: the bike. Coincidentally, cycling was the inspiration for the new C63 Sealander Elite chronometer. Not only does the smart pop-out crown stop it digging into your wrist when you're riding, but the super-light titanium case makes it effortless to wear. Though Karl would have surely loved these utilitarian features, we think its sleek design is more 'Wiggins' than 'Marx'.



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Editorial comment and the latest from the *Mercedes Enthusiast* team



This month's cover feature highlights six of the most significant anniversaries, but that's not the full story



In all the years I have worked for this magazine, I do not recall another like 2021. When it comes to Mercedes-Benz anniversaries, this year trumps all others that I can remember. This month's cover feature highlights six of the most significant, but that's not the whole story. The SLS AMG E-Cell arrived 10 years ago, Béla Barényi's patent for the passenger safety cell was filed 60 years ago, and 30 years ago Mercedes presented its anti-lock braking system to the international press in Rovaniemi, Finland – the home town of Santa Claus, no less. And how could we forget the events of 25 years ago, when Mercedes-Benz Mexico was fully acquired by Daimler-Benz AG? Oh, and did you know the first Mercedes-Benz Museum opened 50 years ago this year to coincide with 75 years of the automobile?

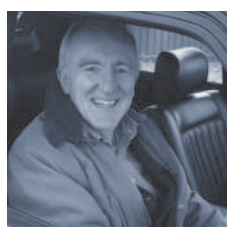
In March 2001, the 10,000th E55 AMG was built at Affalterbach, and we received the first C-Class Coupe (204-series) 10 years ago. Three decades ago, the last W100 600 rolled off the production line and was snapped up by the Museum. A quarter of a century ago, AMG supplied its first Formula 1 Safety Car in the form of the



202-series C36, and if you want to read something really obscure, how about this? 25 years ago this July, Mercedes added a partial body variant to the 210-series E-Class range. I could go on and on, but I think you get the picture. 2021? It really is a year to remember.

Kyle Molyneux
Executive Editor

Who's been doing what in this month's *Mercedes Enthusiast*...



Richard Mason

Tasked with writing this month's cover story, Richard Mason set about finding owners of four special Mercedes and then helped organise a grand gathering at

Brooklands Museum on the circuit banking. "From SL and SEC to E-Class Cabriolet and SLK, each three-pointed star brought something never seen before to their respective class and paved the way for future generations," Richard explains. The feature begins on page 26, followed by details of a Sir Stirling Moss tribute event.



Albert Mensinga

For this issue, new contributor Albert Mensinga located a Mercedes-Benz collector in the Netherlands and set up a meeting to see the

vast collection up close. Needless to say, Albert was not disappointed with what he found. "It is truly an overwhelming sight to look over almost 60 cars, spanning seven decades," he writes. Read the full story on Reinier Groenveld's cars and discover what set him on the road to such prolific Mercedes ownership from page 44.

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The latest Mercedes launches, news and motorsport

News

Rocket reinvented

Brabus' legendary 'Rocket' label is applied to the G-Class for the first time, the new 900 Rocket Edition packing almost 900bhp and incredible aero details

Brabus has launched its most flamboyant G-Class yet, the Brabus 900 Rocket Edition. Taking its cue from the GT63-based Rocket, displacement of AMG's M177 V8 has been increased to 4.5 litres, producing 888bhp (900ps) and 774lb ft of torque (limited), the Rocket dispatching 0-62mph in just 3.7 seconds and reaching 174mph flat out. To make this extra power possible, a ram air intake, uprated turbos with pressure up to 1.4bar and revised engine internals have been fitted.

The grille, flanked by glowing red lights on start-up, gives this car an aggressive appearance, bolstered by a carbon fibre body kit including the bonnet scoop, wheelarches, and aero discs on the Monoblock Platinum Edition 24-inch wheels. To keep noise levels at a considerate level, the high performance exhaust system with downpipes enlarged to 76mm, also featuring a red glow on start-up, can be switched to 'coming home' mode. Such colour choices as Stealth Grey and Signature Black give more than a hint of the menacing and imposing character of this car.

Of course, handling has been stepped up to harness such power. The new dampers, milled from

solid metal, can lower the 2,250kg car up to 1.8 inches and are part of the Brabus Ride Control system, an aluminium coil-over set up. New front and rear diffusers replacing the standard items are complemented with a large rear spoiler. The tyres are a gigantic 295/30 up front, and a planet-orbiting 355/25 at the rear.

The interior sees substantial changes: the rear seat has made way for two individual bucket seats, comfort ventilated and fully adjustable of course, equipped with



Brabus 'Masterpiece' interior with trim colour-coded to exterior details.

a touchscreen centre console for controlling the standard infotainment system and seat adjustment. If that wasn't enough, a refrigerator, and heated or cooled cup holders cosset the passengers further. The overhead console informs passengers the time, temperature and speed, the retractable tables perfect for business or pleasure. The rocket red

theme continues here too including the stitching of Brabus's fine quilted leather, and glazing of the trim, pedals as well as the controls. Plenty of carbon fibre is in there, too. Naturally, there's a wide scope of personalisation for buyers.

With a price tag excluding VAT of €480,059.00, a limited run of just 25 will be made, 10 of which will be produced this year.



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This Rubellite Red paint is part of the special Edition model package.

AMG updates GT

The six-cylinder AMG GT 4-Door Coupe models have undergone a refresh. Despite a revision last year, the AMG Ride Control+ suspension system of the GT53 and GT43 has been updated again. The electronically controlled multi-chamber dampers now feature independent pressure limiting valves, one for compression, one for the rebound.

It's cosmetically though, where most of the updates are found. Three new paint colours are available - Spectral Blue in both glossy and matte finish, and also the matte finish Cashmere White. A new Night Package II including darkened chrome radiator slats, logos and badges provides greater personalisation. Additional

wheel choices of 20- and 21-inch forged alloy wheels with twin-spoke and five-spoke designs respectively complete the GT 4-Door's awesome look.

On the inside, there's more personalisation to either bring out the sporting or luxurious characteristics of the car: new colours for both two and single tone interiors, most interestingly the titanium pearl grey/black with yellow stitching. The new AMG performance steering wheel rounds it off. An Edition model with exclusive Rubellite Red paint (pictured) and Neva Grey leather upholstery plus styling inspired by the GT63 V8 model was also announced.



△ Updates debuting on the six-cylinder cars.



△ C63 upgrades

Lorinser now offers a PowerModule for the 205-series C63 S Cabriolet, increasing power from 503bhp to 590bhp, and torque from 516lb ft to a tyre-decimating 612lb ft to the tune of €2,499 plus installation. The German firm also offers its turbine RS8 alloys for all C63 models in 19- and 20-inch sizes, with a full set costing €2,889 including VAT.

Sticking with the M177 V8-engined C63, US tuner Weistec has developed new aluminium intake manifolds (see above) as a direct replacement for the factory OEM plastic items, offering improved air flow thanks to increased plenum chamber volume.

Maybach

Six years and 60,000 sales after launching, the Mercedes-Maybach S-Class has been updated. Minor exterior styling tweaks and optional two-tone paintwork play second fiddle to the extensively upgraded rear quarters and the cabin's improved sound insulation. The revised range, comprising 496bhp S580 4Matic V8 and 604bhp S680 4Matic V12 (UK line up TBC), can be equipped with comfort rear doors, which operate via a button, and boast the S-Class's latest Digital Light headlamp technology plus the latest version of MBUX infotainment system.



△ The latest MBUX infotainment system now features in the Maybach range; self-closing rear doors.

Rear axle steering joins the options list, while a new rear airbag as standard ramps up safety. From the second half of 2021, it is expected that the Maybach S-Class will be able to drive in 'conditionally automated mode' with new and optional Drive Pilot, initially only on roads in Germany.



△ MOTORSPORT

The DTM season began at Monza in late June, with AMG GT3 race cars belonging to Team HRT and Team Winward taking second and third places in races one and two. DTM's newly-permitted GT3 spec AMGs dominated the top 10 in both events, although the spoils went to the Ferrari 488 of Red Bull AF Corse and Audi R8 LMS of Team ABT Sportline in races one and two respectively.

▽ ELECTRIC CONCEPT

Mercedes' Concept EQT hints at the new T-Class, which is billed as the first small premium van and arrives in 2022. With three rows of seats and plenty of luggage space, the model and its battery-powered EQT relation appear ideal for larger families.

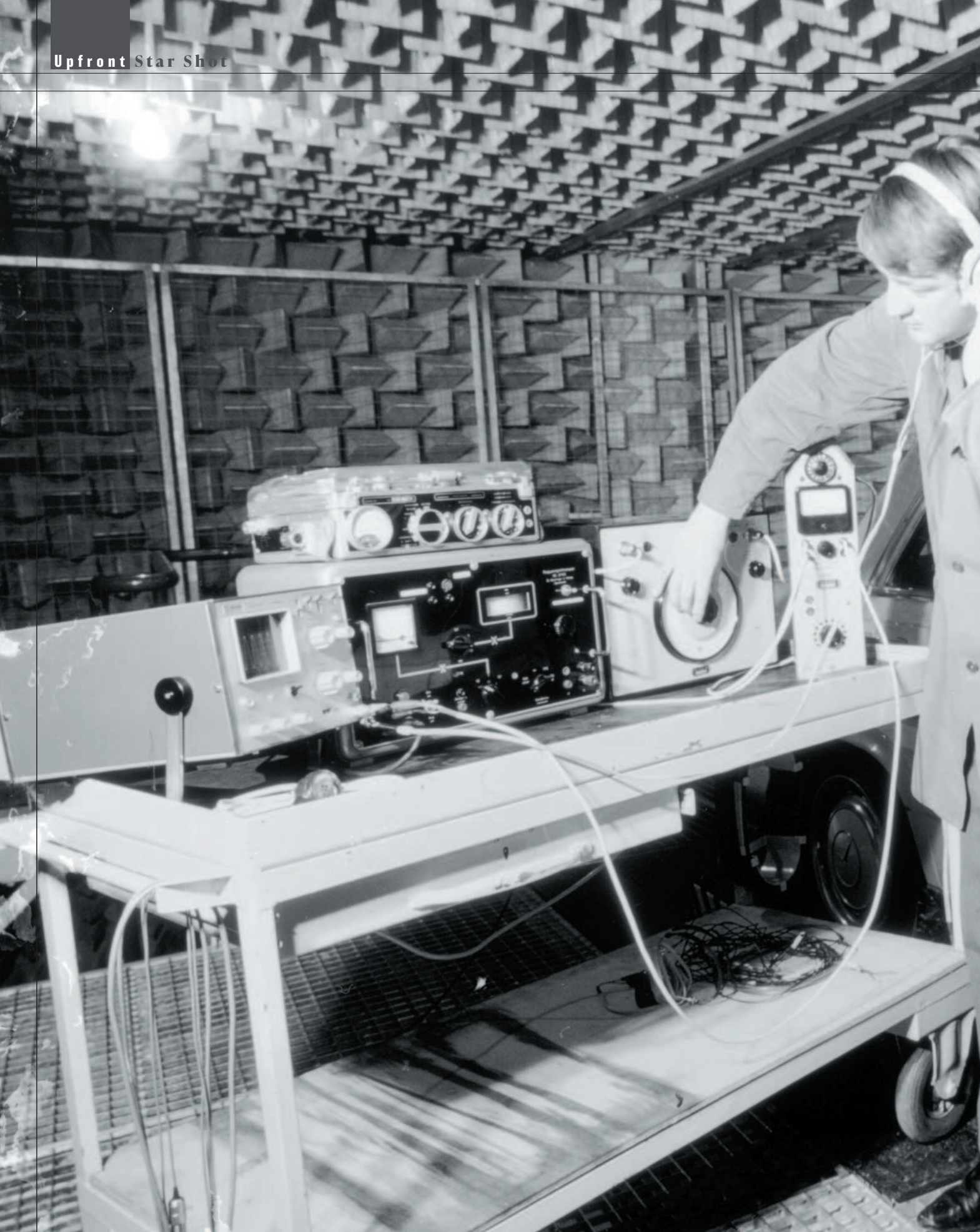


Green steel

Mercedes-Benz is making a huge leap forward yet again in sustainability through the use of 'green steel' in the production of its cars from 2025. This new steel will be sourced from H2 Green Steel, a Swedish producer founded only last year, whose manufacturing process will use hydrogen and electricity from renewable energy sources rather than coking coal. The company intends to produce five million tonnes of fossil-free steel by 2030.

Mercedes-Benz AG has high hopes for this ambitious company: an initial seven-figure equity stake has been confirmed. As the steel in a typical Mercedes saloon is responsible for 30% of CO2 at production, this is a key area required to change to achieve carbon neutral production.





"It is a misconception that a car is only beautiful when it comes to noise. Years ago, it might have been delightful to demonstrate Spartan masculinity in loud and shaking motor vehicles. The car has now grown out of its infancy," wrote Daimler AG 40 years ago. "While other sources of noise tug at

our nerves every day and hour and the traffic demands full concentration, the modern car itself should run as quietly and cultivated as possible.

"At DB there are rooms that have been made echo-free with special plastic walls and ceilings. This is where prototypes and series cars are tested:



microphones and measuring devices are installed inside and outside, which transmit any noise that may occur to an adjoining room, where tapes and measuring devices register and distinguish between them and make progress in smoothness and smoothness readable. Some people wonder

why you can travel hundreds of kilometres in a Mercedes and then get out of the car in a relaxed manner. It's not a miracle at all. But the result of careful work, around 1970."

IMAGE DAIMLER AG

Expert analysis of recent events and trends in the Mercedes-Benz market

W166 M-Class

Handsome, comfortable, well-equipped and capable off-road should you need to venture off the beaten path, the early 166-series MLs are great buys in V6 turbodiesel form

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES SVB SALES, AUTO STATION, MERCLAND, STEBBINGS CAR SUPERSTONE & CARSUPERMARKET.COM



Clean looking 2013 model stickered at just over £17,000 by Mercland.

The original W163 M-Class wobbled into life in 1997, offering Mercedes customers a more user friendly SUV experience than the G-Wagen, but the US-built vehicle suffered build quality problems and had a cheap feel to it. It gave way to the W164 model in 2005 which was improved in every respect, and was the proper BMW X5 chaser its predecessor wasn't.

The W166 that replaced this in 2012 was more of a comprehensive uprate rather than a conceptually new model, but a very significant aspect was its diesel technology, the 2.1- and three-litre engines boasting Bluetec technology, allowing compliance with EU6 emissions standards several years before this became mandatory. Owners of these early W166s now find their MLs are clean enough to avoid emissions charges such as London's Ultra Low Emissions zone when many other diesels from the same years don't.

They were of course very expensive when new, but the prices of these 'future-proofed' diesels now start at around £12,000.



There were two diesel models, the four-cylinder ML250 Bluetec and ML350 Bluetec, and if the driving experience is important to you, we'd strongly recommend the latter. It uses the excellent OM642 V6, which combines ample torque and refinement; its output steadily increased since

first offered in the W164 and for the W166 launch was producing 254bhp/457lb ft from not much more than tickover. The ML250 makes a gallant effort but its 201bhp is hard pushed to shift the 2.2-tonne vehicle; the 518bhp ML63 AMG was also offered, but we'll cover that beast another time.

Here, we're looking at W166s made up until early 2015 when the model morphed into the GLE, and there appears to be a broadly similar number of ML250s and 350s for sale, so you have plenty of 350s to choose from. However, if you are looking at the earliest, lowest priced examples, expect a six-figure mileage; these vehicles are excellent mile-eaters and that's the use most have been put to.

The cheapest we saw was for sale for £11,950 at used car dealer SVB Sales in Hamilton in Lanarkshire, a 2012 example in grey and with the standard Artico artificial leather but optional 19-inch wheels. It had covered a high, 128,000 miles (43,000 above average, Auto Trader calculated), but we liked the full service history, three owners and two keys. The condition and mileage seemed typical for this money.

Great though it is, the OM642 can require some expensive maintenance as the miles mount, so what will you pay for something with no more than 70,000 miles on the clock? The answer starts at £15,000 to £16,000, such as the two-owner, 63,600-miler in black over black cloth offered by Auto Station in Elgin, Moray for £15,995.

Lowering the mileage requirement to under 50,000 increases the price by a couple of thousand, and the 2013 ML350 Sport with 20-inch wheels and aluminium running boards for sale at Mercland in Warwickshire caught our eye. It had covered 48,000 miles (30,600 below average) and was priced at £17,190.

As already mentioned, W166s are complex modern Benzes, but we were reassured by Mercland proprietor Jay Manek, who is an independent Mercedes specialist and modern classic Mercedes devotee we've known for a long time. It was one of nearly 50



For under 12 grand, you could have bought SVB's 2012 ML350 with 128,000 miles.



Silver over black leather ML350 found at Auto Station with 63,000 miles for £15,995.



Very smart looking 2014 model at Stebbings with 31,000 miles listed at £25,600.



CarSupermarket's 64-plate, 42,000-miler could have been yours for £26,000.



With just shy of 90,000 miles, Mercland's silver 2013 ML was offered at £13,600.

Mercedes he had for sale, including another ML350, a silver 2013 model with 89,700 miles for £13,600, and we're sure that both, coming with an extendable six-month warranty, would have been prepped to a high standard.

Overall, Jay reports the W166 is a car Mercland sells with confidence. "It has fewer problems than the W164," he says. "They do have emissions issues, but that's just modern Mercedes, and we find they're very popular."

You'll see W166s at car 'supermarkets', and while these outlets often deal in high mileage ex-fleet vehicles, they were the source of the two lowest mileage, highest price ML350s we found. Stebbings Car Superstore in King's Lynn, Norfolk had a

We're looking here at W166s made up until early 2015 when the model morphed into the GLE

31,000-mile ML350 Bluetec with lots of kit including 20-inch alloys and a panoramic sunroof, although the basic half rather than full leather seat trim; it was a 2014, 64-plate and therefore among the last sold in the UK. The price was £25,600, which Auto Trader estimated was £2,200 above average, so perhaps there was some wriggle room there.

CarSupermarket.com asked the highest price of any ML350 we saw on the day, again a very late, 2014/64-plate, at £26,000, some £3,700 above average. In white and half leather, it wore 21-inch rims, which some may find excessive, and had done 42,100 miles.

Diesels may not be as popular as they once were, but the W166 ML's Bluetec engine makes it relatively eco-friendly, so it's not as if it pollutes the air like old taxis and vans do. Add to that its performance, practicality and high-up SUV driving position and you have a very appealing Mercedes. And one that is in the price sweet spot: old enough to be affordable but new enough to offer good reliability.

Insight from a Mercedes-Benz tuning industry veteran

Estate of the art



Mercedes-Benz has never manufactured its own S-Class Estate, however it has let other companies create their own versions for wealthy clientele, as Ian Kuah recalls

While almost all car enthusiasts are fans of supercars, for most people the practical head has to rule the passionate heart, which is why the Audi RS6 Avant has always been a best seller.

On the practical side, the demise of the Volvo 900 series estate in 1998 left the door wide open to the E-Class T-model to take the crown as the most commodious load carrier on the market. The trick was covering the high performance and load carrying bases, which the AMG E63 S 4Matic+ Estate did when it debuted in 2016.

Cars tend to grow with each generation, and the W213 E-Class saloon is as large as the W126 S-Class from the 1980s, albeit smaller than the substantially larger W140 S-Class that replaced it in 1991. While many wealthy buyers might have liked an S-Class T-model, because the estate car or station wagon was viewed as a 'working car' back in the 90s Mercedes would never have sullied the image of its flagship limousine this way. Instead, it gave its consent to Cadform and Binz to design and build 100 S-Class T-models for wealthy customers who had been banging on its doors.

The prototype vehicle shown in the 1995 Cadform sales brochure was based on the standard length S500, which was strange since the LWB version would have been even more capacious with the rear seat backrests folded flat. It would also have been better proportioned, as the rear doors (which are shorter than the front doors) of the standard W140 have always looked rather awkward to my eyes. Nonetheless, the resulting vehicle was exactly what the customers wanted, and when AMG entered the frame things became really interesting.

In the mid 1990s, the Sultan of Brunei and his youngest brother, HRH Prince Jefri were always on the lookout for unusual cars to add to their massive and growing collection. A practical counterpoint to the eight 300SL Gullwings and three 300SL Roadsters they had converted with



Cadform's wonder wagon was based on an SWB S500 V8 saloon.



◁ Cadform and Binz extended the 140's roof.

△ 7.3-litre V12-powered AMG with a coupe's nose.

Everything was up to Mercedes standards, from the panel gaps to the quality of the boot carpet

380bhp SL60 AMG underpinnings, the S-Class T-model had its own appeal in V12 form as the AMG S73 T with suitably fettled mechanicals, wheels and bodywork. It was no surprise that the 10 cars made for Brunei were based on the long wheelbase S-Class, which gave them better proportions.

I had the chance to examine a grey example when I was invited to Brunei in late 1997 and was very impressed by the fit and finish. Everything was up to Mercedes production standards, from the panel finish and gaps to the quality and fit of the carpet in the rear cargo compartment. The tailgate bore the badge 'Brunei' on the left and '555' referring to the engine power on the right, with angled AMG flashes proceeding each. The 19-inch AMG alloys and one-inch lower sport suspension gave the car a much more purposeful stance

than the car in the Cadform/Binz brochure.

When I drove the W140 S600 on the 1991 press launch in the South of France, the 5,987cc M120 V12 boasted 402bhp. By the time AMG launched its M297 E72 motor derived from the M120 V12 for the 1996 model year, the output of the base motor had fallen to 389bhp with 420lb ft of torque due to tighter emission regulations.

In that pre-turbocharged engine era, extra power and torque often came from a displacement bump along with hotter cams and other tried and tested tuning engine methods. AMG's E72 motor displaced 7,055cc from a nearly square bore and stroke of 91.0x90.4mm versus the

oversquare 89.0x80.2mm stock dimensions. Output was 518bhp at 5,900rpm with 546lb ft of torque at 4,000rpm. While compression ratio remained unchanged at 10.0:1, AMG recommended the use of 98 Octane fuel to support the more aggressive ignition timing that delivered better throttle response and low-end torque.

The 10 Brunei cars used the next evolution of the M297 motor with the bore and stroke further increased to 91.5x92.4mm for a swept capacity of 7,291cc. This helped increase output to 547bhp (555hp) for the S73 T. In the end, AMG built 18 of these cars, 10 of which were destined for Brunei. The last few cars built featured the SEC Coupe nose, but having seen a black example at AMG in Affalterbach in 1998, I have no doubts that the saloon front is a much better fit for the estate car rear.

When Prince Jefri's company Amadeo collapsed in 1998 and he was sanctioned by the Sultan, the last of these cars and the SL60 Gullwings were left at AMG. As all were right-hand drive, their market was limited to the UK and some Far Eastern countries. One of the Gullwings ended up with the Sultan of Johor, who is also a car enthusiast.

Why do so many rare Mercedes-Benz come to Ireland?

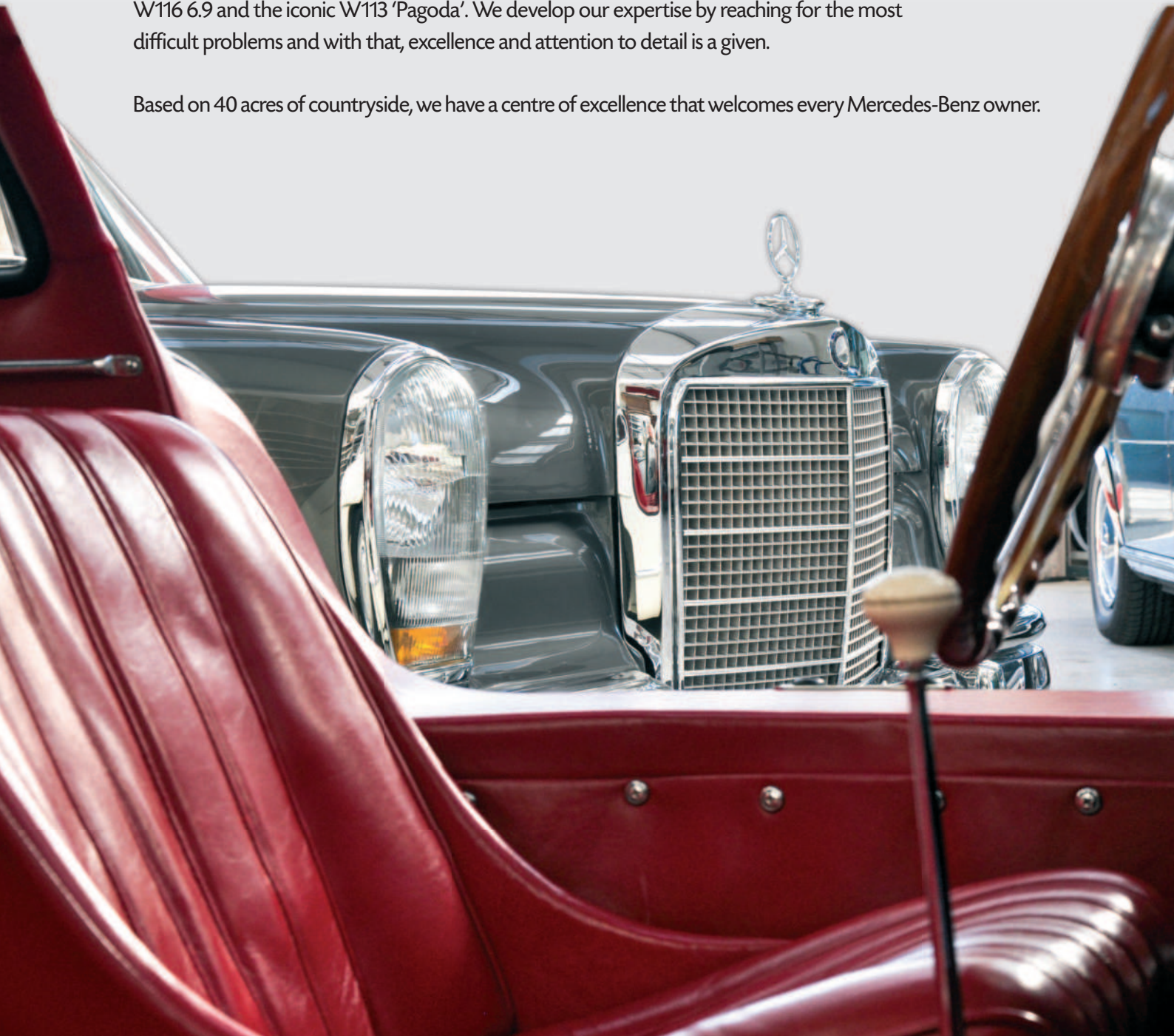


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The expert on all things Mercedes gives us his latest views...

Against the odds



This issue, David Sutherland assesses Mercedes' biggest gambles that paid off, from the manufacturer's first compact saloon to a British racing driver with much to prove in Formula 1

Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing?

It enables us to 100 per cent accurately predict the past, and give wise assessments on what should or should not have been done to have avoided catastrophes. But without that rearward looking crystal ball, big, important decisions can be tough and risky. Lonely too, because if the venture goes pear shaped the person who pressed the green light knows that career meltdown awaits. We're seeing this daily on the news, as politicians and others are vilified for what they did 18 months ago to prepare for a virus that consumed the world in a way no one could have predicted.

It set me wondering about some of the decisions in the world of Mercedes-Benz that to many seemed bonkers at the time, but which turned out to be very rewarding, and in the last half century surely no project was riskier than Stuttgart's foray into the 'small' car market in 1982 with the launch of the W201 190/190E. Had senior management lost their marbles? Mercedes-Benz builds larger, prestigious cars, and adding a cheaper one was a foolish, down-market move that could only dilute the car maker's hard-earned reputation for uncompromised build quality.

The doomsters got this one wrong big time.

Styled by Bruno Sacco at the height of his powers at Mercedes-Benz, the W201 was not only a most elegant car, but was perfectly integrated into the Mercedes range, lower in the hierarchy than the 126-series S-Class he had also designed, but with a distinct resemblance, and embodying the same principles of engineering integrity. When the 124-series arrived two years later the perfect progression of the Mercedes-Benz saloon range was seen in full.

Far from damaging Mercedes' reputation, the W201 enhanced it, and right from the start was a major sales success. Around

110,000 were built in 1983 and production peaked at almost 214,000 by 1987, bringing Mercedes-Benz output close to 600,000 cars in that year; it paved the way for the C-Class in 1993, a perennial best seller.

It was the C-Class which provoked another storm, when it was introduced with four trim options: Classic, Esprit, Elegance and Sport. Once again it was asked if Mercedes had taken leave of its senses, as these sounded as if they should be contained within a Ford or Vauxhall brochure.

For those who knew Mercedes cars, the idea took some getting used to, but it worked.

sporty version, a mildly luxurious car or as low and sporty as a Benz got back then. After a while you almost wondered why it had taken Mercedes so long to do it.

Four years on, and Mercedes was under pressure again for making a Golf proportioned hatchback in the form of the A-Class. Leave that kind of price-sensitive, low-profit model to VW, was the cry, and the heat was turned up further when an early A-Class was rolled during the infamous elk test, which called into question the stability of the high-sided vehicle.

However, after some rapid, unscheduled suspension updates the A-Class went on to become a key part of the Mercedes range, the 1997 to 2012 W168 finding over a million customers. However, after the 2004 to 2014 W169 successor Mercedes killed off the original 'sandwich' design (conceived to take a battery pack under the floor) and went for a more conventional front-wheel drive chassis, so maybe the naysayers had half a point about the original A.

But my vote for the best Mercedes gamble in recent years goes to Lewis Hamilton for switching from McLaren, a still leading Formula 1 team with who he'd won the 2008 championship, to also-ran Mercedes-Benz for 2013, and I recall during a press event at the time joining in with the communal handwringing at what seemed such a strange career move. What did we know? Although even Lewis and the

two protagonists said to have persuaded him to join, Niki Lauda and Ross Brawn, could not have imagined that Mercedes was about to stage a comeback that would see grand prix domination more crushing than in 1934 to 1939, or in the season and a half until 1955.

Mercedes will continue to do things that appear mad. But remember that what is reported at the time is merely 'the first draft of history', and later on the logic will reveal itself.



△ W201 designed to be provocative, according to M-B.

◁◁ W202 the first M-B saloon badged 'C-Class'.

◁ Lewis Hamilton joined the Merc F1 team back in 2013.

This was not just a series of different seat fabrics and wheel trims, as you'd see on an Escort or Vectra but carefully thought-out packs that made the C-Class available as a traditional basic Mercedes, a slightly more

The W201 was not only a most elegant car, but was perfectly integrated into the Mercedes range

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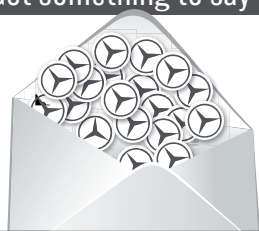
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Got something to say about motoring, your Mercedes or *Mercedes Enthusiast* magazine? Here's your chance...



Letters

Star letter

Classics reimagined

■ There is a growing trend for reimagined classic performance cars using electrified powertrains and Mercedes-Benz certainly has a range of iconic cars that would benefit from this treatment. How classy an electrified 450SEL 6.9 would be, so too a 190E 2.3-16 Cosworth, and even AMG's 300SEL 6.8 *Rote Sau* racer.

I think there are many other models that would benefit from this idea. This approach allows independent engineering companies to showcase their skills by updating engine technology (and interiors), whilst keeping the chassis close to original. I believe such reimagined cars will succeed, as they are based on a tried and tested formula, and place much emphasis on protecting the environment.

Faisal Rafique, via email



△ David Shenton champions the 209-gen CLK.

We want CLKs!

■ Why does the 209-series CLK hardly ever get mentioned in your magazine? It's been ignored in both coupe and cabriolet tests. The CLK500 has a 302bhp V8. It's not sporty but it's comfortable, relatively roomy, refined and no slouch. I accept this era wasn't Mercedes' finest, but now at £5,000 upwards, surely these cars are also good value? How about an article?

David Shenton, via Facebook

You're not wrong about the CLK's merits. We've just commissioned a story on the 209 CLK for the next issue – on sale September 17th. Hope it does the job for you!

Tactical switch

■ I loved my CLK Sport diesel but now I have an E320 diesel – amazing low fuel consumption (50mpg at speed limit), a large car and comfy, but less fun to drive. Its overall carbon footprint from beginning to end, including recycling, must be low.

Holman Blackburn, via Facebook

Marching on

■ This W140 S280 was in storage for two years. After a quick wash, it went straight from Wales to the Nürburgring.

Dean Flowers, via Facebook



△ Dean Flowers' W140 S280 at the 'Green Hell'.



△ Greg Wheeler and his R230 SL-loving friends organised a get-together with spectacular results.

R230 SL meeting

■ I thought you might be interested in this meet-up of myself and some friends: all seven owners are from different walks of life with a shared love of the R230 SL and are all friends who also are customers of Unique Car Sound & Security in Lightwater, which specialises not only in-car media but has extensive knowledge of the Mercedes brand with retrofits of Comand and coding upgrades.

I personally have owned many AMGs with this being my fourth SL and we thought it would be a great idea to get us all together for these pictures taken recently. Some cars are daily drivers and some are cherished second, third, or even fourth cars.

Greg Wheeler, via email

Numberplates explained

■ In the last issue's Merc Spotter, Andrew Hope-Morley wanted to know the provenance of the black and white registration on the Fintail seen near Geneva. This is a French one for classic cars. In former times, French plates were black with white digits, style '1234 AB 75', the last digits being the number of the county, 'département' in France. In the late 1990s, the plates became yellow at the back of the car and



△ Uwe Schulz gives reasons for these plates.

white at the front. Recently, the plates changed completely and every car now keeps its plate until the scrapyards, style 'AB-123-CD' in white. In order to give vintage cars an adequate plate, they can get the old-fashioned colour scheme with the new numbering style.

Uwe Schulz, Germany

Movie stars

■ I have been a great fan of your publication for the last couple of years and look forward to visiting the book store every other month to grab a copy. As a Mercedes-Benz enthusiast in Malaysia, I've owned about 20 Mercedes to date and reading *Mercedes Enthusiast* is something that I can relate to. I'm just wondering if there are any plans for the *Mercedes Enthusiast* team create videos of the cars that you review?

Adlis Khairil, Malaysia

It's always great to hear from readers on the other side of the world. Although we currently have no plans to release video reviews, never say never.

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TALKING POINT



This month's Talking Point...

What do you think is the greatest SL generation of all time?

"Looks? 300SL Roadster. Cool factor? 280SL Pagoda. Longevity? R107 generation." **Tony Stone**

"The Gullwing is definitely the most 'classic' one, but the SL has so many different designs that it is easy to find a model that appeals to you - young or old." **Michael Strauss**

"As 'SL' stands for *Sport Leicht*, I find it hard to see many of the ones from the Pagoda onwards as actually that, although I do have a soft spot for the R129." **William Roberts**

"While the W198 300SL is the first SL sold to the public - and it is a beautiful work of art - I think the greatest SL could possibly be the R107. It was the longest production model from 1971 to 1989 and it is just as revered as the W198." **Edward Fiore**

Take part in **Talking Point** every month on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. See the bottom of page 18 for our respective websites!

Merc spotter



The patent for Daimler's 1hp, 'self-propelling fire pump' was filed on July 29 1888. The concept has evolved much since, with the latest firefighting machines based on the Unimog, Eonic and Zetros.

Thankfully, not all 'classic' models have gone to the big scrapheap in the sky, as Viacheslav Koshonko found out recently. "It seems that a *kurzhauber* [short-bonnet] 1113-series Mercedes fire engine, against all expectations, is still in active service," he told us. "This one was seen on a hot summer's day in Chernihiv, Ukraine."

Seen an interesting Mercedes or caught one in an unusual situation? Send a picture to info@mercedesenthusiast.co.uk (subject 'Merc Spotter') or by post to Mercedes Enthusiast, 17 Wickham Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 5JS.

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Mercedes-Benz related highlights from the world of social media



Richard Tipper



@perfectionvalet

It's been a while since I've done one of these...



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True Blue. What would be your choice?



Apex Auto Center



@apexautocenter

Another project that we like! Now you can see this super Mercedes A45 S that we have done. Full wrap interior and exterior in Super Chrome Purple Satin by @hexisgraphics, grille and badges in black, and yellow brake calipers with AMG logo.



Boris Jelinek



@jelinek.b

Vision AVTR concept: Metropolitan beauty shot - What a sunset at Huangpu River.



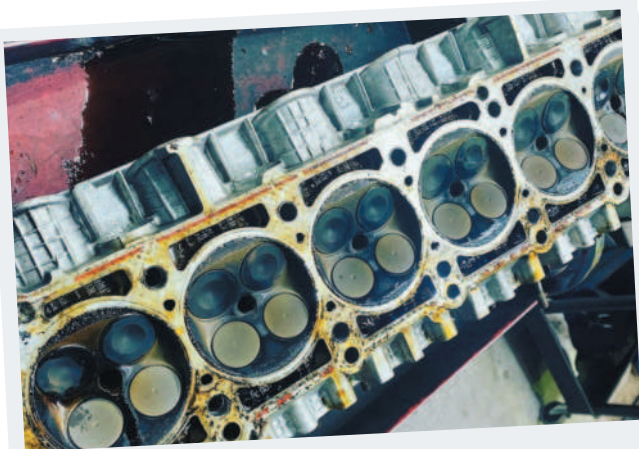
The MB Market



@thembmarket

Designo Silver Edition 2000 E320 is being auctioned on TheMBmarket.com! Not only is this a special designo paint, the interior is finished in two-tone designo Dark Green and Anthracite nappa leather with designo curled maple wood trim. This was an additional \$5,900 option when new, which is more expensive than the Sport Package. Rarity aside, this combination is stunning in person and is a refreshing sight among W210s.





Prestige Car Service

 **@prestige_car_service**

And another one. M104 engine head gasket replacement. Leaking vast amounts of oil from the rear of the cylinder head caused by a corroded head gasket. Mostly due to lack of coolant changes.



John Haynes Mercedes

 **@johnhaynesmercedes**

One of two Mercedes-Benz 450SEL 6.9s we currently have under full restoration within our workshops. This particular vehicle is a 1979 example finished in Magnatite Blue metallic over cream leather.



HK-Engineering

 **@engineeringhk**

At the Mille Miglia: The cars of the accompanying classic car group that we organise all need a gasoline 'breakfast'.



Edward Hall

 **@edwardjshall**

1998 Mercedes CL700 AMG: 7.0L V12, AMG suspension, AMG brakes, AMG exhaust, AMG bodystyling and 19-inch wheels, designo paint and interior, RHD, UK supplied. Believed to be one of two. Maintained by ourselves for the last two years. Featured in the October/November 2021 issue of Mercedes Enthusiast, on sale September 17.



Weistec Engineering

 **@weistec**

The highest mileage AMG sitting at roughly 480K miles!!! @_dpod_ is taking this @optimabatteries#c36amg to @pikespeakhillclimb to help reach the goal of half a million miles. This car has been bone stock since day one and is still chugging along without a problem. Will it make it to 500,000?



Kienle Automobiltechnik

 **@kienleautomobiltechnik**

A 300Sc Coupe, made in 1955. This beautiful coupe was first registered to the Daimler-Benz AG and used as a test car for the newly developed direct fuel injection system at that time. There exists evidence that none other than the 'father' of the famous 300SL, Rudolf Uhlenhaut, drove it.

She's electric

The smallest SUV in the Mercedes canon gets electric power, a smooth makeover and the 'EQ' badge - we've driven it

WORDS **SHANE O' DONOCHUE**
IMAGES **DAIMLER AG**





“Mercedes has calibrated the response to be notably nippy, even in the Comfort setting”

△ Lithium-ion battery housed in the vehicle's floor.

△△ EQA has a useful 495-litre boot capacity.

△△△ Two cables as standard, one with 11kW rating.

Charging times

| Source | Amount of charge | Time |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| AC outlet (230V/13A) | From 10 to 100% | 30hrs |
| Wall box (400V/16A) | From 10 to 100% | 5hrs 45min |
| Public rapid charging (100kW) | From 10 to 80% | 30min |

lights for the back end which, along with the movement of the numberplate to the bumper and the use of a large three-pointed star in the middle of the hatch for opening, further differentiates the electric version. There's badging on the boot and ahead of the door mirrors if you miss the other cues.

High technology

You'll have to delve into the menu system of the 'widescreen cockpit', twin 10-inch display MBUX system to tell the front cabin of the EQA apart from that of the GLA. The electric model gets a unique instrumentation design and other sub-menus to keep an eye on energy consumption and

Mercedes-Benz UK has launched the EQA, its smallest and most affordable electric car. As the name suggests, it's based on the likeable second-generation GLA. It won't take a complete Mercedes anorak to spot the GLA's shape under the EQ-related changes, but the EQA does look notably different. Up front, the GLA's SUV grille, expressive bumper design and faux-off-road underbody protection are replaced by much smoother surfacing in the EQA, including a blanked-off grille and a new design of LED headlights. It gets a little more definition if you go for one of the AMG Line versions (pictured), but the new nose has the effect of making the EQA look meeker than the GLA, somehow.

Stick with the entry-level Sport model and that theme continues with bespoke aerodynamic 18-inch alloy wheels and a restrained design for the exhaustless rear bumper. The AMG Line cars look better and are expected to be the most popular. Nonetheless, all versions of the EQA get new full-width LED



“Under more scrutiny from would-be buyers is the electric range, and Mercedes quotes 263 miles for the EQA250 Sport”

◁ MBUX with two 10-inch screens as standard.

▽◁ AMG Line spec brings these 18-inch alloys.

▽ Touchpad controls the infotainment.



▷ charging. It all works as wonderfully as ever, and there's a sense of really high quality, too.

The rear seating isn't bad, though the floor has been raised in comparison to that of the GLA (to make space for the battery), which means that taller passengers will find their knees up higher than they might like. That compromise extends to the boot, which now holds 340 litres, as opposed to 495 litres in the front-wheel drive GLA. There is a shallow area under the boot floor that might just about take a charging cable.

Back in the driver's seat, the EQA is comfortable thanks to lots of adjustment in the position, and you sit upright with a great view out in all directions. The driving controls all appear standard fare, with the usual drive selector stalk on the right-hand side of the steering wheel, and there are paddles behind the helm.

Those paddles don't change gear, though. Instead, they alter the level of brake energy regeneration. In other words, when you take your foot off the accelerator to slow down, the electric motor switches into generator mode, and it actively uses the kinetic energy in the car to charge up the battery pack. The paddles can be used to choose how strong the deceleration due

to this is, through four different settings, from no regeneration at one extreme (ideal for motorway driving) to a quite intense effect at the other, meaning you hardly need to use the brake pedal at all. The latter is referred to as one-pedal driving and, while it takes some getting used to, it works well in an urban environment.

Silently does it

There are various driving modes too, as we're used to across the Mercedes-Benz range, with Comfort the default option and Sport for more response. The EQA additionally gets two 'E' settings for maximum efficiency, allowing you eke out the maximum range from the battery.

On that subject, the first model to arrive is the EQA250, featuring a lithium-ion battery pack with 66.5kWh of usable energy. That is sent to the front-mounted 140kW electric motor, which means up to 187bhp in old money. Of more importance is the significant 277lb ft of torque also produced, pretty much from the moment you press the accelerator. It defines the driving experience to a certain extent, as Mercedes has calibrated the response to be notably nippy, even in the




Comfort setting. There's even a vague sense of torque steer if you ask for maximum acceleration. Nonetheless, the EQA does this quietly and traction is smoothly kept in check. The lacklustre 0-62mph time is due to the considerable mass of the EQA (just over two tonnes), but it doesn't convey how quick this car feels away from a standstill.

The chassis itself is pretty sorted, too, if lacking in anything approaching engagement. The steering is completely devoid of useful feedback, though the tyres cling on gamely, and though it has been set up for stability and safety first and foremost, there is some mid-corner adjustment available with deft use of the accelerator. It's competent rather than sporty, in essence.

Under more scrutiny from would-be buyers is the electric range, and Mercedes quotes 263 miles for the EQA250 Sport

tested here on 18-inch wheels. What's more, over a few days testing on a wide variety of roads, including an hour on the motorway, we matched the official average consumption figure, so we'd expect most drivers to easily extract over 200 miles from a charge. And it can be fast-charged at a DC rate of up to 100kW if required (see separate box on page 23).

What it costs

That range is likely to be well within the needs of many small SUV buyers, but the starting price of the EQA, £44,495 OTR, means it's considerably more expensive than even the plug-in hybrid GLA, never mind the regular petrol and diesel variants. Other taxation incentives will be needed to make it a worthwhile purchase for most, unfortunately. 

Just the facts

Mercedes-EQ EQA250 (H243)

MOTOR Asynchronous, 66.5kWh battery capacity **POWER** 187bhp (140kW) **TORQUE** 277lb ft **TRANSMISSION** 1-speed auto, FWD

WEIGHT 2,040kg **0-62MPH** 8.9sec **TOP SPEED** 99mph **RANGE** 249-263 miles **CO2 EMISSIONS** 0g/km **YEARS PRODUCED** 2021-on

All figures from Mercedes-Benz; electric range according to WLTP

Cover
story

The best of Benz

This month's cover story commemorates four hugely significant Mercedes-Benz cars, which this year are celebrating big birthdays spanning 25 to 50 years

WORDS **RICHARD MASON**
IMAGES **CRAIG PUSEY**





“Each three-pointed star brought something never seen before to their respective class and paved the way for future generations”

50 years of the R107

Launched Spring 1971
Production April 1971 to August 1989
Facelift debut September 1985
Number built 237,287
Most popular model
 450SL (66,298 units)
Prices today £10,000
 (unregistered import)
 to £100,000



The year 2021 is a big one for Mercedes-Benz, with multiple anniversaries to celebrate. What better excuse then, to bring together four cars claiming among the most significant of birthdays? From SL and SEC to E-Class Cabriolet and SLK, each three-pointed star brought something never seen before to their respective class and paved the way for future generations.

The R107 was the first V8-engined SL, and the SEC was the first S-Class-based Coupe. Coming a little later down the line, the ultra-safe 124-series E-Class convertible revived the long-lost mid-sized Mercedes droptop, and finally the compact SLK Roadster boasted a groundbreaking vario-roof and seductive looks to boot.

For this special feature, we have gathered an example of each car on the iconic banking at Brooklands in Surrey, to recall their origin and discover what they mean to their lucky owners.

1983 R107 280SL

Owner – Steve Perrett

Celebrating not only its 50th anniversary, the R107 continues to claim the longest production run of any SL at 18 years, built at a time when Mercedes-Benz sold itself on build quality, with

buyers waiting months for delivery and never daring to request a discount. One former UK Mercedes executive, Jonathan Ashman's view of the 107's long production run was, "Why would you stop selling a car when there was such demand?"

Owner Steve has spent around £7,000 on the bodywork and it shows.



“If you’re in the market for an R107 SL, the range is enormous”



Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz 280SL (R107)

Engine M110 2,746cc 6-cyl

Power 182bhp@5,800rpm

Torque 177lb ft@4,500rpm

Transmission 4-speed auto, RWD

Weight 1,540kg

0-62mph 10.1sec

Top speed 121mph

Years produced 1974-1985

two thirds of SL production went. Nevertheless, it had an 11-year production run before being replaced by the 300SL.

If you’re in the market for an R107 SL, the range is enormous. Choose from two six-cylinder engines or six V8s with gearboxes to suit everyone’s taste: four- or five-speed manual, or three- or four-speed auto. In our anniversary feature, we have a

bronze 1983 280SL four-speed auto owned by Steve Perrett who incidentally works for Mercedes-Benz. “As a young apprentice at Mercedes Brentford back in the 1980s, I had always admired the SL, but of course couldn’t afford one. Fast forward to 2016 and a friend asked me to help find him a good R107. I finally found one after a year of looking and that got me thinking about one for myself.

“Two weeks later, I’d found a 280SL near Birmingham, a probate sale. With 81,000 on the clock, it looked a good car so I paid for it and drove 120 miles home, which is actually the furthest journey I’ve done in it,” Steve continued. “Being a 1983 facelifted car, it has a better equipment level and I prefer the way it operates plus the look with the chequered seats.

“So far I’ve covered about 5,000 miles in the SL. One winter it was displayed at Mercedes-Benz World and whilst there *Harpers Bazar* magazine asked to borrow it for a photoshoot by Battersea Bridge in London. Apparently, the check trim caught their eye. Meanwhile, I’ve spent about £7,000, mainly on bodywork.

Aftermarket wings had been fitted by a previous owner, creating poor panel gaps, so I replaced them with original Mercedes-Benz items. The sills also needed welding, but luckily the infamous bulkhead doesn’t have any rust.

“Suspension items have needed replacing but what you would expect from a car of this age? Right now, all that needs doing are new door rubbers. I really enjoy the car in the summer with the top down, and in the winter it goes in the garage with the hardtop in place.” ➤

▽ Steve Perrett spotted this 280 for sale in 2016.

▽▽ M110 with Bosch K-Jetronic fuelling system.

▽▽▽ Super clean cabin with fabric/hide trim.



The R107 SL first appeared with a choice of V8s.

But soon the 70s oil crisis had Mercedes reacting by introducing a 280 model in 1974. Utilising an in-line six-cylinder twin-cam engine with a four-speed manual (or four-speed automatic) gearbox, the fuel

economy was four or five miles per gallon better. Owners claim that the performance, especially with the later five-speed manual ‘box, is not that much off the pace of the larger siblings in real world motoring. Unsurprisingly, this car wasn’t sold in the USA where about





40 years of the C126

Launched September 1981

Production October 1981 to October 1991

Number built 74,060

Facelift debut September 1985

Most popular model
500SEC (30,184 units)

Prices today

£9,000 to £250,000
(AMG 6.0 Widebody)



▷ 1989 C126 420SEC Owner – Danny Lucas

Svelte lines and elegantly proportioned, many consider the C126 SEC, celebrating its 40th anniversary in September, to be Bruno Sacco's finest design. The first coupe based on an S-Class, in this case the W126, SEC production ran for 10 years, culminating in over 74,000 cars, which in this niche market is a success.

Celebrities owned them including Tom Jones, Ringo Starr and Clint Eastwood. It was the chariot of choice for F1 drivers in the 1980s, including world champions Ayrton Senna, Nigel Mansell and Keke Rosberg. Cynics claim that's because Mercedes gave the drivers a hefty discount and they only bought them to sell at a profit a year later. This was entirely feasible because SECs were in short supply. One driver said he earned more from selling his SEC than his salary as a driver.

SECs are in two generations. The first of 1981 to 1985 had V8s of either 3.8- or 5.0-litre capacity. Second generation engines were 4.2 or 5.0 litres, later complemented by the 'Porsche Hunter' 5.6-litre. The SEC replaced the R107 SL-based SLC, which was an attempt at a four-seater. Alongside the SEC, the SLC looks stretched and some might say ungainly whereas the purpose-built SEC, designed as a genuine four-seater, simply looks right.

***"It was the chariot of choice
for F1 drivers in the 1980s"***



As with so many Mercedes models, the American market was where Mercedes expected the most sales with this stylish boulevard cruiser. Nevertheless, the SEC was one of the few Mercedes to go on sale in the UK at the same time as in mainland Europe. In terms of classic status, it's surprising that the SEC wasn't recognised sooner. Until 2015, they were cheap and their susceptibility to corrosion meant uneconomic restoration costs, so many were scrapped.

Luckily, that's no longer the case and good examples are sought-after, like this stunning Nautic Blue 420SEC owned by Danny Lucas. "I just buckled when I saw it –



△ Danny and his 420SEC lent their support to a Covid project.

it's such a fine looking example with only 76,000 on the clock," he told us. "It reminded me of one my dad had years ago. This was in December 2019 and it was my daily driver until

March 2021, during which time I added another 5,000 miles to the clock. I once used it to deliver a consignment of sanitisers to Ron Dennis [former McLaren Group CEO], who had started a Covid project to help the NHS.

"It's my car of choice. It's got a beautiful stance and the grille is reminiscent of an SL's. It's elegant, with a lean back end, not bulky – it just has presence. The chrome trim continuing around the boot is a nice subtle touch and of course the pillarless design. You could imagine the rich and famous driving down to their yachts on the Riviera. The SEC is a quality car and it compares well with a Rolls-Royce – it may even be better. Now that I've started my own museum, that's where my SEC lives." ▷



90-degree V8 with one camshaft per bank and two valves per cylinder.



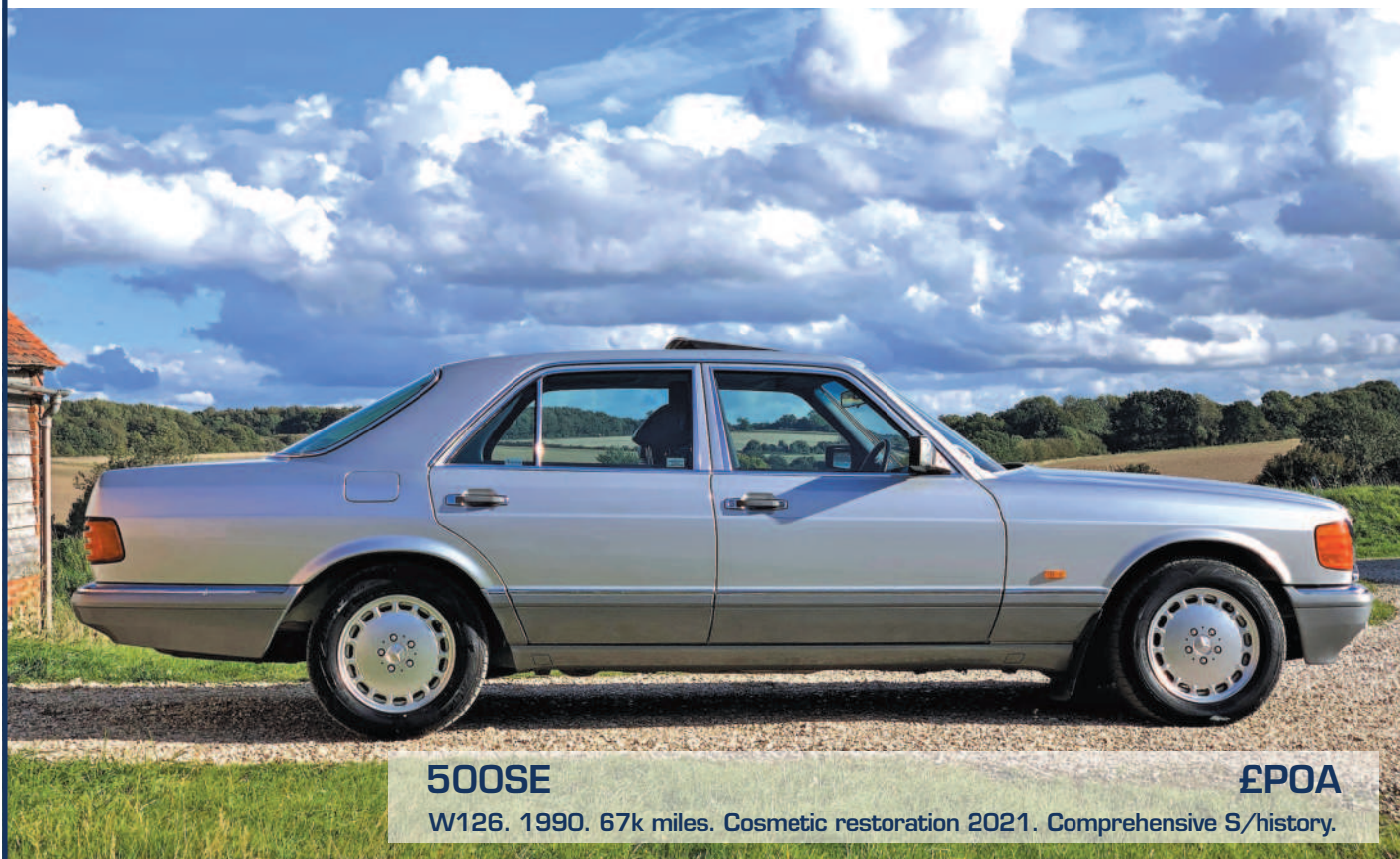
Huge, thin-rimmed wheel contrasts with grey leather and wood trim.

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz 420SEC (C126)
Engine M116 4,196cc V8
Power 228bhp@5,400rpm
Torque 247lb ft@4,000rpm
Transmission 4-speed auto, RWD
Weight 1,620kg
0-62mph 8.2sec
Top speed 138mph
Years produced 1985-1991



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W126. 1990. 67k miles. Cosmetic restoration 2021. Comprehensive S/history.

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SLK320

£9,800

R170. 2003. 32k miles.
High spec. One previous owner.



SL350

£9,750

R230. 2007. 83k miles. One previous
owner. Comprehensive S/history.



300SL-24

£19,500

R129. 1992. 46k miles.
Comprehensive history file.



500SL

£41,000

R107. 1981. 91k miles.
Documented restoration. Superb



500SL

£POA

R107. 1988. 120k miles.
Documented restoration.



500SL

£47,000

R107. 1981. 59k miles.
Superb low mileage example.



Cars invited on consignment or outright purchase



30 years
of the A124

Launched September 1991
 Production March 1992 to July 1997
 Number built 33,952
 Facelift debut June 1993
 Most popular model
 E320 Cabriolet (12,229 units)
 Prices today
 £5,000 to £27,500
 (E36 AMG)

Steering wheel with
 airbag; wood trim has
 a beautiful glossy look.

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz E320 Cabriolet (A124)

Engine M104 3,199cc 6-cyl

Power 217bhp@5,500rpm

Torque 229lb ft@3,750rpm

Transmission 5-speed auto, RWD

Weight 1,710kg

0-62mph 8.5sec

Top speed 143mph

Years produced 1992-1997

James' E320 boasts
 a rare Weissman
 hardtop option.

▷ 1995 A124 E320 Cabriolet Owner – James Dowling

Celebrating its 30th birthday, the 124-series E-Class Cabriolet was the first soft top based on a Mercedes saloon in nearly 20 years, offering a practical four-seater alternative to the SL. Initially launching as a 300CE-24 in 1991, this sleek drophead only became available in the UK from 1993. By this time, the engine line up had evolved: four-cylinder 220 and six-cylinder 320. The sales volume prize goes to the 320, despite it being more expensive than the 220, and only 14 E36 AMGs were made in RHD. The 'A124' convertible was not quite an instant classic, but the market soon adopted them.

Mercedes of this era are all equipped with a biodegradable wiring loom and throttle body which, due to age, is now an inevitable costly repair. Weeping head gaskets are another common occurrence. On the plus side, these cabriolets were often bought as second or even third cars, leading cosseted lives and racking up fewer miles, making them especially attractive and with commensurately higher price tags.

Aside from the 268bhp E36, the most sought-after is the E320 with a five-speed auto and Sportline options. Buy a good one and you

have a great modern classic with pedigree plus more modern driving dynamics and still-impressive safety thanks to its reinforced chassis and A-pillars, and pop-up rear headrests.

At our anniversary gathering is one such E320 complete with the Weissman Hardtop option, which is about as common a sight as the Yeti. And indeed, the hardtop wasn't present for the shoot! Owner James Dowling loves the car's top-down capability. "In my view, this car is just entering its prime. It's the second A124 I've owned – both E320 Sportlines. It's an ideal gentleman's car, like an old Labrador – it takes its time, it's friendly.

***"They're great cars
 for travelling across
 France using the
 back roads with
 the roof down"***

People smile at me when they see this car. The advantage of Mercedes from this era is the build quality, you can get in it and just drive it and forget about it. It's a nice way of getting from where I started to where I'm going.

"They're great cars for travelling across France using the back roads with the roof down," he continued. "I'll put the roof down just for five minutes if there's fine weather, all at the flick of a switch. Mind you, the hood is well insulated and you can hold a conversation at 70mph. Really, I have no need to drive it with the hardtop on, but the hardtop makes it the ultimate 365-days-per-year car."

James has a theory that with any car always buy the one with every extra fitted. "This is because anyone who could afford all the extras will also have maintained it properly. Mine ticks nearly all the option boxes – heated seats, memory electric adjustment, air conditioning and the five-speed automatic. I particularly like the tone of the in-line six-cylinder engine. It's silky smooth and just pleasantly audible with the roof down." James' latest 124-series convertible is destined for some rust repairs and a full respray, including the hardtop, a sure sign of his dedication to the marque. ▷

The car has a terrific
 stance on its Sportline
 springs and AMG rims.

M104 straight-six with
 adjustable intake cam
 and four valves per cyl.

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz SLK230 Kompressor (R170)

Engine M111 2,295cc 4-cyl supercharged

Power 190bhp@5,300rpm

Torque 206lb ft@2,500-5,300rpm

Transmission 5-speed auto, RWD

Weight 1,325kg

0-62mph 7.3sec

Top speed 141mph

Years produced 1996-2004



Tony Leach bought this SLK for just £300 – yes, you read that correctly.



**25 years
of the R170**

Launched April 1996

Production July 1996 to April 2004

Number built 311,222

Facelift debut Spring 2000

Most popular model

SLK230 K pre-facelift (113,520 units)

Prices today

£1,000 to £13,000

(SLK32 AMG)

► 1999 R170 SLK230 Kompressor Owner – Tony Leach

The SLK's production run of eight years, from 1996 to 2004, is testament to its popularity. In 1996, the SLK was re-entering a market last occupied by the 190SL 33 years earlier; it even has an identical wheelbase of 2,400mm. However, Mercedes was parking the SLK on turf occupied by some very successful sports cars. Think MX-5 and MR2. To avoid a 'me too' product, M-B needed a unique selling point.

What Bruno Sacco and his team came up with was a game-changer – a retractable steel hardtop, or 'vario-roof'. It wasn't long before VW, Ford, Volvo and BMW copied this roof design. Mercedes was in pole position as trendsetter and such was the initial popularity of the SLK in Europe that Mercedes-Benz delayed the launch in the USA by a year to

ensure local demand was satisfied.


Over its production run, the SLK engine range mushroomed from 2.0- and 2.3-litre four-cylinder models with superchargers to naturally aspirated and supercharged 3.2-litre V6s, including a 32 AMG variant with 349bhp.

The pre-facelift car presented here is a 230 Kompressor model owned by Tony Leach, Technical Adviser to the Mercedes-Benz Club. "I'd always wanted one – they're just so beautiful. I eventually had two at different times, but they were later sold. My current one was registered in January 1999. I bought it in 2013 via a friend. Actually, the car was virtually abandoned on the roadside in Barking and immobile. The timing chain had snapped and the engine was wrecked. Evidence suggested the autobox had never had an oil change in 145,000 miles. Most of the body panels had dings and scratches.

"However, I wasn't put off," Tony continued. "It was cheaper to replace the engine than repair it, although I reused the supercharger. The automatic gearbox was stripped and rebuilt – there was no point in just doing an oil and filter change, as it would have packed up quite soon. I fitted new front wings, did quite a bit of welding and eventually the SLK was resprayed.

"After 14 months of being in bits, the SLK was back on the road. It was only 80 per cent complete at that time but I wanted to drive it. I've used it quite a lot and now it's done just over 200,000 miles. The car cost £300 and I've spent over £8,000 in repairs. I wouldn't advise anyone to do this unless you want to have a lot of fun taking it apart. There are plenty of good cars out there costing less."

The complex vario-roof only needed minor work, which is reassuring, but the same can't be said about the interior of Tony's roadster. "The seats were all ripped, so I sourced two second hand. Now it's a comfortable car and it looks good with the roof up or down. Mine squeaks

and rattles with the roof up but not when it's down, which is the opposite to most convertibles. But the reason I love the SLK, though, is the look. It's agile, great fun to drive and now it's a very good car." 

► **Thank you to Brooklands Museum for allowing us onto the hallowed circuit banking Tel 01932 857381 Web brooklandsmuseum.com and to featured Mercedes-Benz owners Steve Perrett, Danny Lucas, James Dowling and Tony Leach**

Not forgetting...

140 S-Class

Debuting at the Geneva motor show in March 1991 and produced until 1998, the 140-series S-Class saloon was a technical marvel, bringing Mercedes' first Electronic Stability Program (ESP) plus Brake Assist, double-glazed windows, reduced emissions,



a new six-litre V12 engine and remarkable comfort. A two-door coupe version arrived in 1992.

W124 500E/E500

Co-developed and manufactured with help from Stuttgart neighbour Porsche, the wide-stanced 124-series 500E/E500 also hit its 30th birthday in 2021. Packing a five-litre M119 V8 with around 320bhp, this under-cover super saloon could dispatch 62mph in just 6.1 seconds and was restricted to 155mph. Production ceased in April 1995 with 10,479 made. Look out for our special



feature on this model in next month's magazine – on sale Friday September 17th.



Four-cylinder M111 with supercharger makes for a sporty combination.



A lot of work has gone into reviving the SLK's black leather interior.

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available from up to
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1986 Mercedes 300SL. Artie white with sports and charcoal trim, charcoal soft top and white hard top, flat face alloys, boot spoiler and full electric pack. 72,000 miles only with FMBSH. Stunning and original example in show winning rust free condition **\$34,950**



1988 Mercedes 560SL Sports. LHD. Signal red with beige leather trim, Hard and soft tops, air con, cruise, OTG, and full electric pack. Sold by us to its last two owners, and three owners from new. Full and detailed Mercedes history. Lovely original example and very very Rare..... **\$24,950**



1983 Mercedes 280 SL W107 sports. In stunning Milan brown metallic with beige tex trim. Hard and soft tops, rear seats, wind deflector, Mexican hat alloys. One previous owner and only 44,000 miles from new. Full detailed history. All books, tools, documentation. Superb original example in timewarp condition, the finest we have seen. Possibly the finest and most original in UK..... **\$38,950**



1986 Mercedes 300SL (W107). Silver with blue leather and rear seat. Navy blue hood, and nautic blue hard top. Flat face alloys. Sold by us to its last two owners over a 29 year period, stunning example with FSH **\$34,950**



1985 Mercedes W107 280SL Sports. Champagne with Brazil brown duo trim. One previous owner, 67,000 miles only. With FMBSH. Hard and soft tops, and rear seat. Spent the last 16 years in a serious collection. A superb and unmarked original car. We very much doubt that any UK specialist has a better example **\$29,950**



1983 Mercedes 380 SL Sports. White with beige leather trim, and blue sport top. Car supplied new to English film star who owned the car for 30 years. Stunning original rust free example. With impeccable provenance..... **\$29,950**



1995 Mercedes 320SL AMG W129. Azurite blue with beige leather full factory AMG Kit and AMG Alloys, mega specification includes Aircond full leather, ASR, ASD, cruise, electric everything hard and soft tops and blue power Hood, 122000 miles with FSH..... **\$14,950**



1998 Mercedes SL500 R129. Black with full grey leather, black power hood and black hard top. 5speed Auto, AMG Alloys, rear seat, Aircond, Cruise, plus excellent factory spec Last owner 13 years, always serviced by the main dealer, this magnificent car has covered 94000 genuine miles with FMBSH and has just been serviced, stunning immaculate example **\$16,950**



2006 Mercedes 280SLK. One owner 15000 miles Only with FMBSH. Great Spec and as new **\$11,950**



1985 Mercedes 280SL R107. Pageant red with full grey leather Hard and soft tops, Mexican hat alloys. This magnificent time warp example has covered 24000 miles from new with full documented history, Old MOTs etc etc.....unique and in original mint condition **\$39,950**



1992 Mercedes 300SL Sports (W129). Alpine white with full tan leather. Flat face alloys, full electric pack, power hood, hard-top, CD, plus very good spec. 71,000 miles with Mercedes-Benz history. This car is in mint original condition and must not be compared with the normal auction house offerings **\$16,950**



1992 Mercedes 300SL W129. Signal red with beige leather, 8-hole alloys, hard top, black power hood, good factory period spec. 73,000 miles with full Mercedes history, all books, tools, and original documentation. A superb and original example **\$16,950**



1994 Mercedes 280 SL W129 Sports. Monza red with Champagne leather. Hard and soft tops, power hood, windows, seats, mirrors, ABS, cruise, OTG. Two previous owners, last lady owner 20 years. Full Mercedes service history. Diamond black alloys. Stunning and original..... **\$10,950**

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Tribute to a legend

On September 12, the Brooklands Museum in Surrey will host a special Stirling Moss Celebration event as a tribute to the late icon of motorsport, bringing together some of his most famous racing cars and more for attendees to enjoy

WORDS RICHARD MASON IMAGES DAIMLERAG/BROOKLANDS MUSEUM



Stirling Moss – the name conjures a quality reminiscent of comic book heroes, something quintessentially British. A daring without arrogance, winning more than mere races but the respect of several

generations of racing professionals from drivers and team bosses to journalists.

Years ago, traffic police asked speeding drivers, “Who do you think you are – Stirling Moss?” In today’s culture, Sir Stirling Moss is a strong brand, but that’s not enough – he’s a legend. When he opted to drive for Maserati, Moss left his telephone number listed so that people could contact him and tell him what they thought. He was half a century ahead of Twitter.

Viewed as the most talented driver never to have won the Formula 1 World Championship, Moss in later years regarded this as a distinction making him different. A definite asset after he gave up racing and had to sell his name and time to earn his living through a multitude of media events. Moss’ down-to-earth philosophy was endearing, he would say that in spite of dreadful accidents and not winning that title he was very lucky. Quite simply, he was a uniquely popular

British motorsports hero to the end of his long life, despite not having raced for decades and yet relevant today when Mercedes has a seven-time F1 World Champion in Lewis Hamilton. The pair met several times over the years before

Moss’ passing on April 12 2020 at the age of 90.

Moss excelled at motorsports in all its forms, Formula 1, road races like the Mille Miglia, rallying and even lawnmower racing, not to mention go karting in the Bahamas. In 2009, as



“Moss was a uniquely popular British motorsports hero to the end of his long life”

a homage to the original Mille Miglia winning SLR number 722 and Stirling Moss, Mercedes launched a special edition, open-topped roadster based on the then current SLR. Called the SLR Stirling Moss and going without a windscreen, it was 200kg lighter than the coupe and with 641bhp was frighteningly fast. Only 75 cars were built and today sell for millions. The centre console is signed with the flamboyant Stirling Moss signature.

Stirling loved Mercedes and was one of its brand ambassadors. In 1993, he wrote a book called *Great Drives in the Lakes and Dales* about drives he'd done in his R129 500SL. When he purchased his 500SL in 1990, he drove it back to the UK from Sindelfingen. At the time of writing, the car was up for sale.

This year sees a number of tributes to Sir Stirling Moss but the only all-day event is being organised by the Brooklands Members Trust on Sunday September 12 at the Brooklands Museum. The aim is to celebrate Moss' cars and recreate a feeling of that 1950s/1960s era. An atmosphere that Moss would recognise.

The wonder years

Moss raced 107 different types of car and Brooklands will have approximately 30 vehicles on display and in action on the track and the banked section. Amongst them are Vanwalls, a four-wheel drive Ferguson, several Coopers and the aforementioned racing lawnmower and a go-kart. Really, if it had wheels Moss would race it. Arguably the most famous car Moss drove, the 1955 Mercedes 300SLR that won the Mille Miglia, will hopefully make the grid. Ross Brawn's Ferrari 250 which Moss raced in 1960 is there, but don't touch – Ross paid £5.4m for it. Of note is the 1961 Lotus 18 that won the Monaco GP and in Moss' words was his “greatest F1 victory.”

You can see them in a 1950s style paddock with vehicle history boards beside them.

Simon Taylor, a close friend of Moss, will be giving a commentary when the cars are on track and also conducting interviews with drivers and owners on the start line. Although the cars are the stars, many people associated with Moss will be attending.

Moss' father raced at Brooklands in 1907 as an amateur and met his future wife there who did hill climbs. Over hundred years later, in 2008, Stirling became inaugural president of the Brooklands Members Trust thus restoring the family link. Further celebrating the Moss era

▷ The Museum's founding was set in stone in 1984.

▽ Piloting the number 8 W196R at Goodwood.

▽▷ Moss and Hamilton driving at Monza in 2015.



are 50 members' cars from the 1950s and 60s that will be on display separately adding more atmosphere. A band will be providing authentic live 1960s music over the lunchtime.

All this is being organised by the volunteer members to celebrate Moss' motor racing history and provide an insight into the cars and atmosphere most of us have never experienced. Tickets must be purchased in advance and you can find out more information about the event on the website detailed below.

▷ www.brooklandsmuseum.com

△ Over 1,000 miles. 722 hit an average 98mph.

▷ Moss and Denis Jenkinson at Mille Miglia, '55.

◁ Moss and Fangio with 300SLR, W196R.





“A certain degree of mystique surrounds
this version of 250SL”

Bring me sunshine

Already the rarest of all W113 Pagodas, the 250SL 'California Coupe' is an even more extraordinary find in right-hand drive form

WORDS KYLE MOLYNEUX
IMAGES SIMEDLICOTT



△ Colour-coded dash with beige leather trim.

△▷ Two manuals and one autobox were available.

Relative
to standard
issue SLs,
this model's
appeal was
somewhat
more...
specific



Why?

Why did Mr Speek purchase a right-hand drive Mercedes-Benz 250SL without the rain-beating convenience of a folding soft top? The year 1968, when this Signal Red beauty was registered in the UK, wasn't exactly exceptional in terms of rainfall, although it was drier

than the previous three years. Could this situation have influenced Mr Speek's belief that he could get away with a hardtop and nothing else?

Perhaps. Although the 250SL was replaced by the 280SL in January 1968 (the same month this example was registered), so it's more likely Mr Speek was offered a good deal on this unusual and soon-to-be-usurped Pagoda. After all, it didn't have the usual fabric hood, relying instead on a removable hardtop to protect its occupants from the elements. I don't think it's unfair to say, relative to standard issue SLs, that this model's appeal was somewhat more... specific.

Working in this 250SL's favour, however – aside from the vibrant paintwork and matching hub caps – was its increased seating capacity: a bench seat is located where the fabric roof would

have been stowed. Legroom is inescapably 'limited' in this area, although the backrest doubles as a large and rather handy parcel shelf if you pop it face down, making this the perfect place for additional luggage. An alternative '+1' rear seat was also available for the Pagoda: a side-facing single pew tucked behind the driver of a right-hand drive car that offered a smidgeon more legroom than the '+2' arrangement.

Something different

Right from the beginning of its production to the present day, the W113 SL has upheld a reputation for being utterly dependable on

▷▷ Pop forward the driver's seat to access the rear.

▷ M-B made just 5,196 examples of the W113 250SL.

▷▷ First owner covered many miles sat here.



I sold one new

A friend of *Mercedes Enthusiast* magazine, Derek Singleton worked for Mercedes-Benz dealerships from 1965 to 2016, securing homes for countless three-pointed stars over the years including one special 250SL in Moss Green over black MB-Tex with an optional seat configuration

▷ Derek shed some light on these rare SLs.

▽ Sundridge Park Motors as it looked in the 60s.

▽▽ 250SL with auto and PAS priced at £4,178.



The year is 1967. It's a summer's evening and Derek Singleton is locking up the premises of Sundridge Park Motors Ltd in Bromley, Kent when he is approached by a man and his daughter. "The gentleman had seen the 250SL parked in our showroom, not far from my desk," Derek recalls. "In those days, we referred to this model as a '250SL 2+2' [or 2+1], as it had the additional rear bench seat. We talked about the car - the gentleman didn't need a demonstration of it - and about an hour later we agreed a deal, with delivery scheduled for a week later.

"The gentleman was called Mr Lockley-Cook and he lived about five miles from the dealership. He owned a chicken farm situated between Bromley and Biggin Hill. I had to

explain to him that once you've removed the SL's hardtop and go for a drive, that's it - the English weather could catch you out." Although, as Derek explains, many owners of these cars never removed the top, and it was the additional seat that made them sign on the dotted line. "For all I know, Mr Lockley-Cook may have had a small grandchild and the SL's extra seating meant they could all travel together.

"The 113-series SL enjoyed a great deal of success in the UK," Derek continues.

"We imagined that the factory produced this particular type of 250 specifically for worldwide markets that had a dry climate. I do not recall ever using the term 'California Coupe' to describe this model back then, however I recently spoke to a colleague who worked for Mercedes-Benz dealer Normand Mayfair Ltd on Park Lane in London and he told me something interesting. He clearly remembered a day in 1967 when he was in the workshop and another member of staff turned up in a new 250SL. This person explained to my colleague - who'd never seen one with the small rear bench seat before - that the model was called a 'California' because most of production was going to the United States."

So, what was it like rubbing shoulders with the Pagoda in its heyday? Did Derek have any sense that it was a bit special? "Oh yes. It was a very distinctive and pretty car. Visually, I would say it appealed even more to women than men. It was never seen as a macho muscle car, obviously. Women in particular loved the look of it and were very good customers for it, if not new then certainly second hand. In those days at Sundridge Park Motors, I was like a kid in a toyshop. The majority of new cars that we sold were stock in the showroom. Perhaps every one in five we waited a few months for it to come through from the factory. Mercedes-Benz had things very well organised, as you can imagine."

For this story, Derek dug out an old *Glass's Guide* from 1968 and confirmed that a 250SL manual was priced new at £3,611 in March 1967, which today would be around £67,000. A four-speed autobox cost an extra £210 (£3,900), and power steering £89 (£1,600). When new, the 2+2 seating was an additional £174 (£3,200), whilst 'special leather' upholstery was £149 (£2,760) and metallic paint £95 (£1,700). Choose all those options and you'd be looking at a car priced at £4,328 (around £80,300).





Clearly, demand remains for this type of Pagoda in the UK

250SL California cars were sold in England, the number would be the lowest of all Pagoda deliveries." If that doesn't whet your appetite, I'm not sure what will...

At this point it's worth noting that Mercedes-Benz also offered the 280SL in 'California' specification, although once again the exact number made is undocumented.

Amazingly, the first owner covered over 50,000 miles in this 250SL in the first three years, with 13 services carried out at John Shrigley & Co in Poynton, Cheshire in that time alone. The mileage now stands at a not unreasonable 95,000 and the service history record is complete, detailing over £17,000 worth of work lavished on this pretty coupe-roadster in the recent past.

In its present form, this 250SL is not entirely

standard, having received the larger 2.8-litre six-cylinder engine from the 280SL between 1988 and 2001, and bringing with it an extra 20bhp plus 18lb ft torque. The reason for this change is unknown, but the M130 motor is perfectly suited to the four-speed automatic transmission and I suspect its range-topping performance is one of the main reasons the 280SL is the most popular of

all Pagodas anyway.

This 250SL 2+2, with its lovely beige leather and chrome detailing, is certainly an intriguing proposition and as Bruce confirms, "it is a very good way to get into a Pagoda for a considerable amount of money less than a regular roadster," adding that the car appeals to "a very select market in which buyers understand what it is."

Clearly, demand remains for this type of Pagoda in the UK as, just before our photoshoot, the car found a new owner who very kindly allowed us to proceed before whisking it away on a whole new adventure. ■

◁ ▽ Six-cylinder 2.8-litre from a succeeding 280.

▽ Likely that many kept the hardtop in place.



▷ a run, unflinching in the face of a 200-mile trip to the countryside, or a high-spirited blast down a motorway. Its victory in the 5,000km Spa-Sofia-Liège Rally of 1963 with Eugen Böhringer at the wheel and Klaus Kaiser giving directions confirmed its exceptional build quality and its ability to carry people without shaking them into bleary-eyed submission.

A certain degree of mystique surrounds this version of 250SL, a fine example of which we've commandeered from The SL Shop in Stratford-upon-Avon. To many, it is known as the 'California Coupe' due to its apparent suitability to the warmer climes of The Golden

State, along with the fact most were sold new in that part of the world (see the separate box on page 41).

She's got the legs

As far as Pagodas are concerned, this right-hooker is particularly rare. Of the 48,912 113-series SLs built between 1963 and 1971, just 5,196 carried a 250SL badge. "Only 3,435 of these were destined for Europe," explains SL Shop's Bruce Greetham. "If it was possible to split that number down further into 250SLs delivered to the UK, and then distil the number again to ascertain how many right-hand drive

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz 250SL (W113)

ENGINE M129 2,496cc 6-cyl POWER 148bhp@5,500rpm TORQUE 159lb ft@4,200rpm TRANSMISSION 4-speed auto, RWD

WEIGHT 1,360kg 0-62MPH 10.6sec TOP SPEED 118mph FUEL CONSUMPTION 25.2mpg YEARS PRODUCED 1966-1968

All figures from Mercedes-Benz for a standard 250SL - car featured is fitted with a 2.8-litre engine; fuel consumption determined at 3/4 of top speed (not more than 110km/h, 68mph) plus 10 per cent

Thank you to The SL Shop for the loan of the car Tel +44 (0) 1789 337070 Web www.theslshop.com

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1988 Finished in Gleaming signal red, with as new beige interior, hard and soft tops, automatic, power steering, ABS brakes, alloys, stereo system, power windows, sundym glass, complete with original fire extinguisher and tools, every old MOT from new, original handbook and wallet, only 66,000 miles, magnificent full service history, garaged from new, this car is superb condition throughout having been pampered from new.

Mercedes 300SL Sports

£48,750



1987, finished in gleaming Signal Red, with soft black hide interior, hard & soft tops, headrests, stereo system, ABS brakes, auto, power steering, tinted glass, alloys, power windows, soft top never used. Garaged and stored for many years hence very low mileage of only 23,500, with service book and old MOTs. This Mercedes could easily be mistaken for new.



1988, LHD, finished in Smoke Silver with Brazil hide interior, auto, headrests, hard and soft tops, centre armrest, over mats, first aid kit, CD stereo system, air-bag, air-con, power mirror, cruise control, ABS, power windows, SRS, outside temperature gauge, tinted glass, expensive Mercedes wheels, only 38,000 miles, service history, drives like new

Mercedes-Benz Sports 300 SL

£55,750

Mercedes-Benz 560SL Sports

£39,7500



1988 left drive, finished in pajett red with parchment hide interior, centre armrest, over mats, headrests, hard and soft tops, light up vanity mirrors, first aid kit, complete with all tools, expensive stereo system, power mirrors, cruise control, air bag, air con, abs, power windows, tinted glass, power steering, automatic, only 49,000 miles with service book and history, always garaged, drives like new, superb.



1988, left hand drive, finished in Impala, metallic colour-coded bumpers, contrasting interior headrests, over-mats, hard and soft tops, auto, power, cruise control, ABS, air-con, air-bags, stereo and CD system, SRS, alloys, complete with all tools, 43,000 miles, two owners, garaged from new, service history.

Mercedes 560 SL sports

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House of cars

What do you do when you lose control of your hobby? Dutch Benz fan Reinier Groenveld found himself looking at 57 cars sitting in various barns, so decided to park his gems together under one roof

WORDS **ALBERT MENSINGA** IMAGES **CASPER HEIJ**





There are a near limitless number of details to enjoy.



It's almost a sacred moment when we stroll towards three mighty 450SELs and a 350SEL

“I

own and care for 57 cars today and maybe 58 tomorrow.” Reinier Groenveld is not the only Dutch Benz fan with a storage problem in a country where space is limited and valuable. When the vault-like doors of his all new ‘fortress’ open, I am struck with awe. Beautiful daylight from a 50m long roof window caresses a full range of exquisite Mercedes-Benz history. It is truly an overwhelming sight to overview almost 60 cars, spanning seven decades.

Reinier’s stock has a signature of its own – he chooses what really appeals to him. It’s a call from the heart, really. Sometimes there’s a story that begs for conservation. Every once in a while, there’s an irresistible Mercedes offered to him that he simply cannot reject.

And occasionally a unique car passes by, like the facelifted SL63 AMG awesomely dressed in sizzling Fire Opal – possibly the only one in Europe. “I like to have all SL cars with me, starting with the 300SL and 190SL up to the magnificent SLS.” My eyes follow an impressive line up and I spot the red V8 AMG monster, but then a blue R129 SL600 V12 catches my eye. The mind boggles...

We walk clockwise, from a huge four-door Type 300 ‘Adenauer’ (one of four) to a striking black SLS. From elegant 1950s chic to a 21st century Darth Vader hot rod. We can’t avoid four legendary giants in a row, all 116-series Mercedes S-Classes and all packed with huge, smooth and silent V8 powerplants. In my opinion, the introduction of the *Sonderklasse* represents Stuttgart’s finest hour, especially when the badge on ▷

W211, 210 and 114 E-Class type cars nestle together.



▷ the bootlid reads ‘6.9’. It’s almost a sacred moment when we stroll towards three mighty 450SELs and a 350SEL.

What’s next? A few weeks before our meeting, Reinier had sent me a complete list of his cars. To see them together here and now is simply unbelievable.

Missing hardware are a 190SL in the workshop, an SL AMG somewhere else, and a few cars stored in the other premises. Highlights that hit my eye instantly are a Ponton (220), four W111s (*Heckflosse* and Coupes), a glorious 123 Estate (Combi), W114, 115, 116, 124, 126, 129, 140, 215, 220, a fully restored (as new) 280SL Pagoda, a flashy Gullwing (holy Mother Mary), a fantastic line up of SLs and AMGs. The list goes on. “The ground floor is taken but with the gutters at 4.5 metres and the ridge at 8.5 metres I can build an extra floor,” muses Reinier. Picture a 50m long and 26.5m wide church-like building, packed with the cars of your favourite brand. Truly Mercedes nirvana.

“I’m from a family of farmers, with land in the Amsterdam area, south of Schiphol airport. I grew up working on the land growing crop and as you do, driving a tractor is complementary,” Reinier explains. “I must’ve been five or six years old when my dad sent me out in the fields with a David Brown and Ford 850, 950 or Fordson 990. Anyway, about 10 years later, Dad used to ask me to fetch parts at the agricultural store. There was this Autumn Beige W114 parked outside and it blew me away! Despite the fact that I was looking at a somewhat dull coloured car, the Benz radiated pure class.” I can see Reinier going back in time and repeating this magical moment in his mind.

I was born in 1967. So when Reinier (1954) was having his Benz moment, I was just a kid playing with Matchbox toys, but I have vivid memories of the cars in local streets. I reckon Reinier saw similar brands and types when he was a teenager. We’re talking modest Fords, Opels (Vauxhall, also owned by GM) and lots of French breeds like Simca and Renault.

A Mercedes-Benz car was from another planet. It was an event to see one passing by, and a treat for the senses discovering details like painted hub caps, luscious leather upholstery and the Mercedes-Benz front star emblem sitting proudly on top of the grille. Surely a car owned by respectable folks. I can so imagine the excitement Reinier must’ve felt, and I believe he still experiences this feeling when he is with his Mercedes today.

“What a car! Obviously, a step up from the big Ford my dad drove,” he continues. “The dream to one day own a W114 was born. I was asked many times to buy parts in the village just so I could see the Mercedes again. Then Dad decided it was time for me to own a driving license. I learned to drive in a bloody Volkswagen Beetle and my dislike for that car started right there. The smell, the noise, no comfort at all. It was not my thing. When I see one today, I instantly get pains in my back.”

It’s a fact that contractors and livestock traders used to drive Mercedes. In our time, the ‘Stroke 8’ W114 and W115, launched in 1968, and the W110 *Heckflosse* were used and driven by people of status, like managing directors and such. The only way to get close to a proper Benz experience was a cab drive. For decades, every Dutch taxi was a diesel-powered Benz. In big cities, you might see the occasional Chevrolet or other big American car, but of course you wanted to pay for a ride in a Stroke 8.



Glorious in green 190SL alongside a mint W113 280SL.





“There simply wasn’t anything better than experiencing the sight, the smell and the feel of W114 or a W110”



Four-door 300 Adenauer made in Sindelfingen.





Stunning 450SEL 6.9 and Affalterbach's V8 GT; below is the SL600's six-litre M120 V12.



“After the 240D, I bought the W115's successor, a W123 diesel and later a 1992 W124 diesel”

▷ “If my father had a meeting with colleagues, I was allowed to sit in the participants’ parked cars. As I sat there, my world changed and my desire grew. There simply wasn’t anything better than experiencing the sight, the smell and the feel of W114 or a W110. One fine day, a Benz owner lent me his car: the best day ever.

“During my lifetime, my dreams came true and since the early 70s I have bought Mercedes-Benz and nothing else,” Reinier affirms. “As fast as I could, I switched from moped to a W115. My first car was a 240D and I regret not keeping it. A fun fact is the Mercedes-Benz with the highest recorded mileage known to date, owned by Greek taxi driver and hero high miler Gregorios Sachinidis, is a W115. In 2004, he donated his 1975 240D to the Mercedes-Benz Museum Collection in Stuttgart, with 2.9 million miles on the odometer. He only changed his diesel engine three times.



Reinier Groenveld won't touch any other make of car.

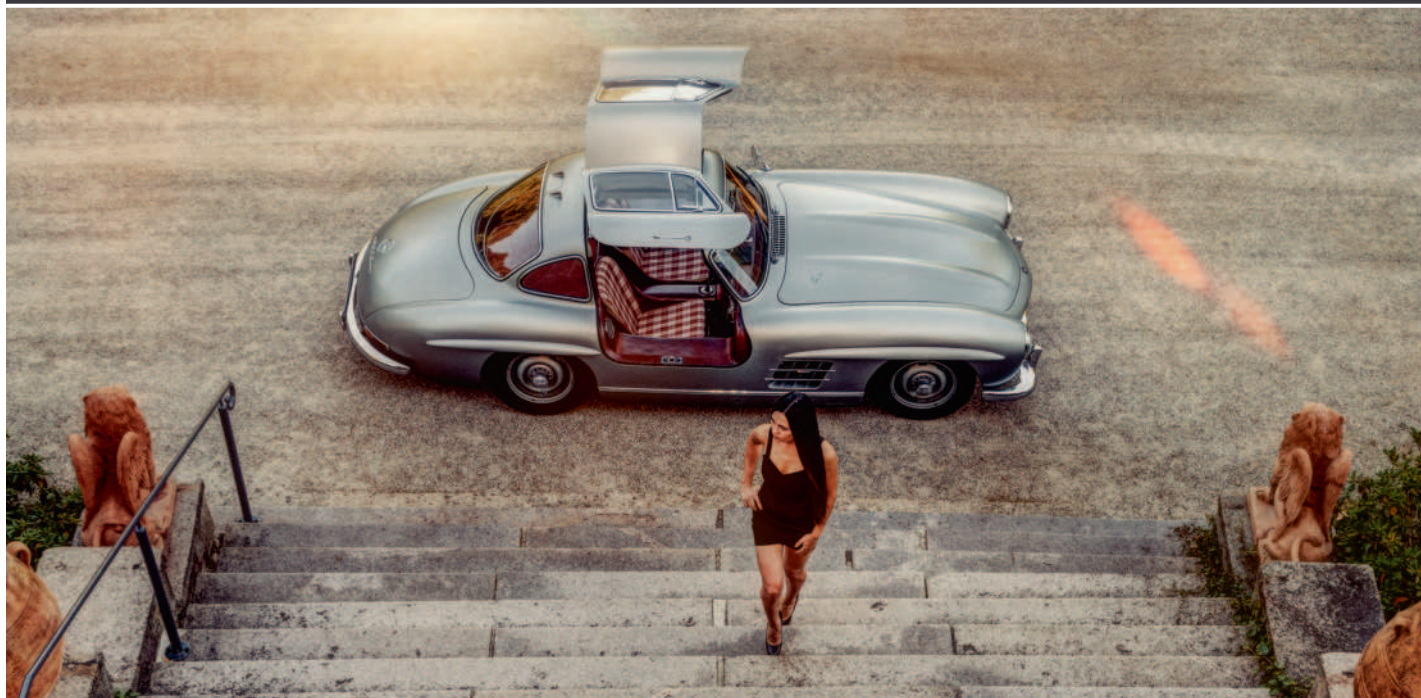
“The W124 was only one year old when the owner died and I took over ownership.

After 11 years of happy driving, I finally acquired my first and only new car – an E320 CDI. You just can't beat an E-Class. After 17 years and about 200,000 miles without missing a beat, it joined my collection as you see here today. Have a closer look – it is still a new car. That's the magic of Mercedes-Benz. Wait. I'm lying. I did have some mishap. There was a 17 euro fuel line replacement...”

Today, Reinier spends time behind the wheel of a 2019 S400d L. A true limousine and a fine addition to his growing collection. Over the years, his vast array of Benz metal was housed in various buildings on his property. Last year, he decided to build this one big garage, for both his cars and the regular visiting fans who are invited for a coffee. You could say that Reinier has created the ultimate man cave...



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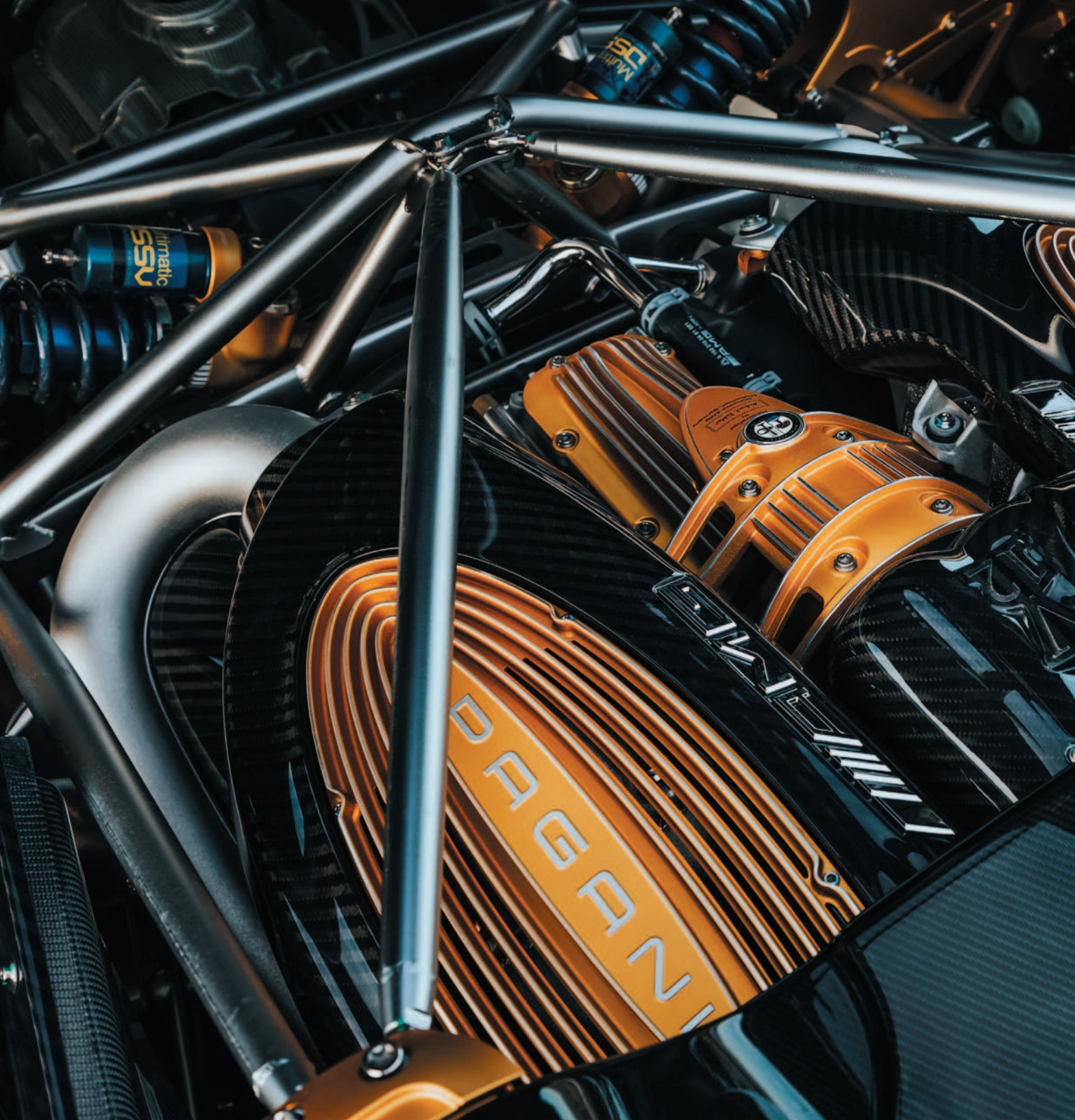
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A heart of gold

WORDS **WILHELM LUTJEHARMS** IMAGES **PEET MOCKE & MERCEDES-AMG**

Legend has it that when Michael Kübler goes on holiday, no Pagani engines are built at AMG... and it turns out that's true! We talk to the man who has been building these special motors for the past decade

“There is only one man that builds Pagani’s AMG V12s and he’s been doing so from the very start”

When you visit – and you really should – Pagani Automobili S.p.A. in Modena, Italy, take a stroll through the small museum next to the reception area. When I visited the factory and museum in 2017, there were a few Zondas, a 25th Anniversary Lamborghini Countach (which company founder Horacio Pagani was heavily involved in developing) and some scale models that Horacio designed and baked in his parents’ bakery oven when he was still living with them as a youngster in Argentina.

There are even some of his original drawings and pocket calculators.

While the cars in the centre of the museum constantly draw your eye, you must work your way through the glass cupboards and read up on the details exhibited here. After all, no museum will exhibit things that aren’t important. In one glass cupboard is a copy of a letter... an important letter, written by Juan Manuel Fangio in 1982, directly to Mr Enzo Ferrari. “I have the pleasure of introducing you to the young Mr. Horacio Pagani, designer and builder...”

Then there is another letter, dated January 13 2000 – less than a year after the first Pagani Zonda C12 supercar was unveiled at the Geneva motor show. In this letter, Dr Wolfgang Bernhard, CEO of Mercedes-AMG GmbH at the time, confirms that AMG would be supplying a seven-litre V12 to Pagani for its then upcoming C12 S. As they say, the rest is history.

When the time came for the Zonda’s replacement, it was decided that the new Huayra would be fitted with a specially developed twin-turbo V12 engine, again built by Mercedes-AMG. Such is the engine’s exclusivity and the experience required to assemble it, there is only one man that builds them and he’s been doing so from the very start. His name is Michael Kübler.

Powering the passion

Michael is a bit of a motoring icon on Instagram (find him at @f1mike28) and on this platform is where I learnt more about him. After our interview, I came to realise that his love for Mercedes-Benz, Mercedes-AMG, as well as the work he has done and is doing, is one of the ultimate passions in his life. He has been responsible for nearly all production of the Pagani Huayra engines over the last decade. However, you don’t just stroll into a job like that.

“As a kid I worked on cars as a hobby. It was always a passion for me, especially the engines. The first serious car I worked on, in my private capacity, was a friend’s Mercedes-Benz 190E 2.5-16 Evolution II.

“I joined Mercedes-Benz 24 years ago and received my training there. But immediately after my education, I was assigned to engine production at Daimler. Working at AMG was always a

△ Six-litre V12 biturbo with 754bhp/737lb ft.

▽ Michael Kübler has a lifelong passion for cars.





◀ Facelifted SL65 AMG of 2006 with 604bhp M275 V12.

▷ 221-series S65 also with 36-valve M275 biturbo V12.



Gone with the wind

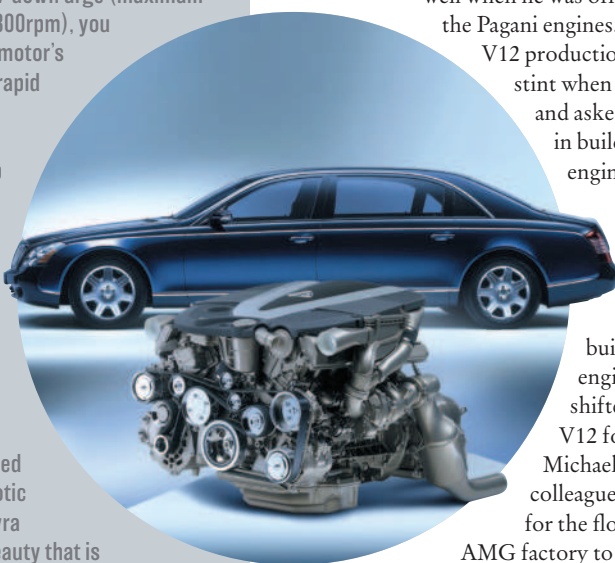
Back in South Africa, we had a rare opportunity to drive a Pagani Huayra Roadster and experience some of Michael's handiwork

Open the Huayra's rear clamshell (an easy job thanks to its lightweight carbon fibre construction) and you are presented with a six-litre V12 twin-turbo Mercedes-AMG engine delivering 754bhp and 737lb ft torque. Beautifully detailed suspension parts, an exquisitely crafted exhaust system and support bars for the rear subframe fight for your attention, too. Race car design immediately springs to mind.

As expected, the 60-degree, 36-valve engine dominates the driving experience, its soundtrack an intoxicating mix of whooshes, whistles and 12-cylinder thunder. As with other high performance turbocharged engines, these air pressure sounds change according to your throttle inputs and engine speed.

The redline starts just after 6,000rpm, but such is the V12's almighty low-down urge (maximum torque is available at 2,300rpm), you don't need to wring the motor's neck to make seriously rapid progress. Weighing just 1,280kg, the Huayra Roadster boasts 589bhp per tonne, which is somewhat more than say, an SLS Black Series with 401bhp per tonne...

The solid feeling from behind the wheel is complemented by the interior's incredible detailing, a crisply defined ocean of leather and exotic metals. The Pagani Huayra Roadster is a thing of beauty that is just as intense to drive as it is a pleasure to look at.



△ Maybach V12 motors also grace Michael's CV.

▷ dream of mine, however, and subsequently I've been with AMG for 13 years of my 24 years. My father worked at Mercedes-Benz for 45 years, my grandfather also worked for decades at Mercedes-Benz as well as my great-grandfather." That is truly something special, a fourth-generation Mercedes-Benz employee!

"My great-grandfather and grandfather worked on the engines as well, while my dad was the manager in the restaurant," Michael continues. "I wanted to join the legacy and be involved in engine building."

The hard work pays off

Michael confirmed that he was not pressured by his family to work at Mercedes-Benz, but that it was something he had always set his sights on. Thankfully, his father is still alive and is most certainly proud of his son building some of the top engines for the company. "After I got my driver's licence, I drove every second weekend to Affalterbach to see what activity there was and what cars were parked around the buildings." I'm sure such pursuits did him no harm in securing employment at AMG later on...

"Initially, I was building the V12 engines for the AMG 65 range. After that, I had the opportunity to build the engines for the limited-edition CLK DTM as well as the Maybach V12 engines." He remembers the day well when he was offered the position to build the Pagani engines. "I had just returned to V12 production after the CLK DTM stint when my chief approached me and asked if I would be interested in building the V12 Pagani engines. If you get an opportunity like that, the only answer is 'yes!'"

Michael was also involved in the development and building of AMG Zonda engines before his focus shifted to the turbocharged V12 for the Huayra. Although Michael works alongside a colleague, he remains responsible for the flow of the engines from the AMG factory to Pagani. However, Michael is responsible for more than just the Pagani engines. He also builds the AMG GT3 race car engines, amongst others. "From time to





◀ After Maybach V12s, Michael built CLK DTM V8s.

▶ Supercharged M113 V8 in the CLK DTM with 574bhp.



“ Michael is responsible for more than just the Pagani engines – he also builds the AMG GT3 race car engines, amongst others ”



“The V12’s soundtrack is an intoxicating mix of whooshes, whistles and thunder”

▷ time, I also build our V8 and four-cylinder engines. It all depends on demand of the race car and Pagani engines.” Not done yet, Michael also assists with and provides feedback on the assembly of the AMG engines.

Michael explains that the V12 engines destined for Paganis are quite different to other AMG motors. “For the Maybach, you want a smooth, very powerful and torque-rich engine. For Pagani, you want the engine of a hypercar – that is a completely different set of parameters. The Pagani is a rear-mid-engined car, so there is a lot of more space for the drivetrain in the back. There is more space for the air flow system and a dry-sump system to assist with oil supply during track conditions.” These factors, amongst others, are taken into account when the engine is tuned to Pagani’s requirements.

Exclusive club

“Every AMG engine gets tested in-house. The Pagani engine is put on our test bench for one and half hours. Then it is sent to Pagani in Italy where it is installed in the car and the factory spends another few hours on the engine, running a number of tests. For me, it is an honour to experience these engines being tested. You can feel it, smell it and hear it.”

Mercedes-AMG cannot discuss the number of engines it produces for Pagani or how long it takes to produce each engine. However, it is safe to assume that the utmost care is taken throughout the process, which will result in longer build times. Further research revealed that between 30 and 45 Paganis are manufactured every year.

I ponder what is the most enjoyable aspect for Michael when building these engines. Decades from now, his metal plaque will still be on top of these V12s when these cars’ second, third or fourth owners enjoy them. “One of the highlights of my job is when the engine is started for the first time,” he explains. “I also get a lot of feedback from the customers – owners who follow me on Instagram and send me pictures or videos of their cars when they drive them on the race track, for example. That is really special to me.”

▽ Countless details to savour inside the cabin.

▽▽ ‘Handcrafted by Michael Kübler’ plate on the V12.

◁◁ Michael is a fourth-generation Merc employee.



The M158

The Pagani Huayra’s sensational V12 engine is codenamed ‘M158’ and based on the six-litre M275 AMG motor. There are some big changes made for the Italian machine, however. These include a higher performance intercooler, a significantly detuned charge air duct, larger turbochargers and revised exhaust manifolds with the flow of air optimised to reduce back pressure.

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The luxury of fuel injection

Not content with its world class W100 restorations, Cardock Classics set about making the 600 easier to live with by developing its own electronic fuel injection system

WORDS SHANE O'DONOGHUE IMAGES NICK MAHER



“ The body was brought back to the metal during the restoration and the paint colour changed from silver to the almost ethereal anthracite grey finish shown ”





Cardock Classics, in County Kildare, Ireland, has established itself as a high-end restoration business that focuses on high quality and authentic renovations. Mercedes cars form the majority of the company's orders and, in among them all, it has developed keen expertise in the refurbishment of the iconic W100 600 saloon. Indeed, the day we visit Cardock Classics, there are several examples of the 600 in storage, patiently waiting their turn to be brought back to life for their well-heeled owners.

Today, however, we're here to see the end product, the very first 600 restored by Gar Whelan – owner of Cardock Classics – and his team, a car that has belonged to the business since 2013 and has been lovingly restored, from the ground up. The restoration is gobsmacking enough, and we'll come back to that, but this car has

▷ Large M-B star such an iconic feature of the 600.

▷▷ Rear hinged side window avoids buffeting.



M100's engine position sensor within distributor cap; new electrical relays.



also recently been used to develop a bespoke electronic fuel injection (EFI) system for the W100, a system that Cardock Classics hopes to offer to other owners of the mighty 600.

Not that you can tell at a glance that there's anything unusual about this car. It is, quite simply, perfect. The body was brought back to the metal during the restoration and the paint colour changed from silver to the almost ethereal anthracite grey finish shown. Obviously, the wheel covers – fashioned from stainless steel – are colour-matched to the paint. Their simplicity matches the three-box shape of the 600, but never has a four-door saloon looked so elegant, so proportionately perfect.

No expense spared

It's unmistakably a Mercedes, from any angle you care to look at it from, but what may not be immediately obvious from the pictures is the sheer size of this car. Everything is super-sized in comparison to most models in the Mercedes range from the same era. Even in this regular wheelbase vehicle. Up front, the chromed radiator grille is simply massive, but it's in proportion to the rest of the nose, balanced by the distinctive upright headlights.

Gar tells us that they might be the very last remaining new right-hand drive headlights for a 600 in the world, which Cardock Classics tracked down and paid nigh on five grand for. "Everything is expensive on these cars," he says, "they threw the kitchen sink at it and then realised it was ridiculous and changed things a few years later. The soft-close doors weren't in production for long, for instance."

“ This car has been used to develop a bespoke electronic fuel injection (EFI) system for the W100 ”

An undisclosed sum was paid to a German W100 parts specialist for the exhaust components on this car. Gar claims it could be the only new exhaust system suitable for a right-hand drive 600 in the world and urged Cardock Classics to copy it.

Gar and his team prefer to source original components wherever possible, and though there's a brilliant computer-based Mercedes-Benz classic parts system to consult with (this 600 received a brand new, Mercedes-Benz-supplied air conditioning compressor, for example), the parts aren't always available. Cardock Classics tells us about the curtain hooks in the back of the 600. Apparently, Mercedes-Benz wanted £5 for each hook, but the company found someone with a box of them in Iran, willing to courier them over to Ireland for considerably less – at the same time giving Cardock Classics stock for future W100-series restorations.

The interior of the 600 is as beautifully presented as the exterior, though it's the little details that make this car truly special. Such as the air inlets at the trailing edge of the side glass on each side that feeds the air conditioning fans mounted in the boot. These quietly send air to the rear seat occupants via low-set ducting. Meanwhile, the whole rear bench reclines at the touch of a switch. That movement is done hydraulically, as are a lot of other functions in the car. Gar winces when he talks about how expensive it was to refurbish all of that using a specialist in Germany.

For its engine overhauls, Cardock Classics usually buys as much as possible straight from Mercedes. Indeed, though the purpose of this visit is to check out the EFI system, Gar is quick to point out that there's not much wrong with the original-fit mechanical fuel injection pump. Once they are sent off to Bosch for reconditioning, they come back like new. But Gar saw an ➤

▷ opportunity to make the 600 even better, without altering its core character, replacing the mechanical system with a more sophisticated electronic set up.

New injectors, a mass air flow meter, oxygen sensors, engine position sensor, engine coolant temperature sensor and a control unit were sourced by Cardock Classics and the installation was designed in-house. It's mostly hidden away, too, so a glance under the bonnet won't immediately reveal it. Indeed, as the engine position sensor is hidden within the distributor cap (Cardock also fitted a more modern ignition system), there's

▽ Behr air con system now back to its very best.

▽▽ Reclining rear seats in this restored W100.



precious little to see. Until you realise that the space occupied by the massive mechanical fuel injection pump in the vee of the engine is empty.

Rather incongruously, given the luxurious surroundings of the cabin, the control unit can be plugged into a laptop and the map can be tweaked. That's the only aspect of the system that Cardock Classics required outside help with, and this 600 has spent time being fine-tuned on a rolling road. Gar says that it now makes a little more than the 250bhp figure Mercedes claimed that the 6.3-litre M100 V8 made when it was new.

More power was not the reason for going with EFI, though it's a welcome benefit.

And despite the near three-tonne mass of this car, the engine feels lusty and stronger than such a power output might suggest. Thank the low-down torque of the large capacity layout for that. Just as impressive as the smooth power delivery, however, is how this car's engine sits at idle. It's easy to take such things for granted in a modern car, but EFI really smoothens out the idle. Of course, the real trick is that it can adapt to different temperatures and conditions and maintain that, making the 600 more usable more of the time.

“More power was not the reason for going with EFI, though it's a welcome benefit”

Reliability is key

And, while the 600 has a reputation for being a car that dictators and the rich and famous were chauffeured around in, these days it's as likely to be driven by its owner. It really is a joy to do so, too. Along with the ample performance, the big 600 is remarkably composed in the corners – once you've acclimatised to the body roll of course. Meanwhile, the air suspension and soft seats make it utterly comfortable everywhere else. I would have happily driven it all day. The EFI system makes that possible any time an owner wants to do so.

Magnanimously, Cardock Classics doesn't want to keep this upgrade to itself, and it has plans to offer an EFI installation pack to owners of the 600 around the world. Or you could of course book your 600 in for some TLC in Ireland and get the EFI system installed while it's there. The beauty of the installation is that it's completely reversible.

► Thank you to Cardock Classics for the loan of the car
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WORDS & IMAGES **PARANJAY DUTT**

Fashionably late

Launched in India shortly before the all-new 210-series E-Class debuted elsewhere in the world, the locally assembled W124s had a tough start in life, but have since gained a cult following



The factory was set up in Pimpri, Pune in 1994 and the first cars rolled out in 1995”



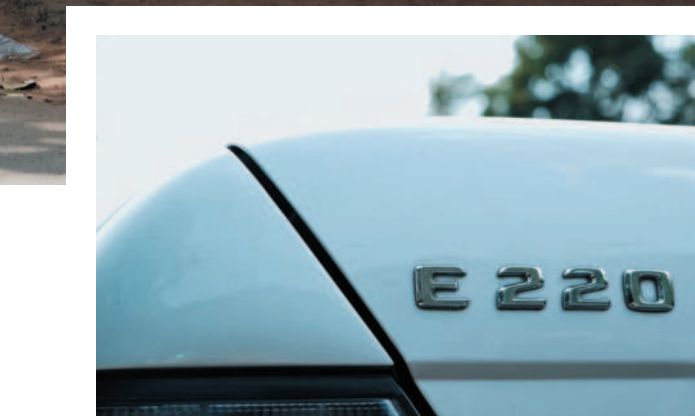
In the Indian context, the W124 has always been slightly late. From its market introduction to its eventual appreciation by the classic car community, the 124-series is much more than simply a mid-sized Merc from the 90s. Given that it was the first Mercedes-Benz product that the German car maker manufactured (OK, assembled) and sold in India makes its story worth exploring. As the W124 celebrated its silver jubilee here, I jumped behind the wheel of a well-maintained, Indian-made example to find out what the fuss is about.

25 years? That seems a bit odd because in the ‘developed’ markets if you were to look at what happened 25 years ago, that will most likely lead to the announcement/launch of the 210-series. But things were slightly different in India — a market that had just opened up to foreign companies. Despite the lack of an official subsidiary, Mercedes-Benz was a well-known brand, and in the mid 90s, with a partner it was already familiar with (Tata Engineering and Locomotives Company had earlier co-manufactured Mercedes-Benz trucks), it was determined to expand its influence. And what could’ve been a better product to start with than a Bruno Sacco-designed car, whose reliability and longevity were verified not just by the company itself but by happy owners around the world. And at a price that, while out of reach for many, would appeal to the exact client Mercedes-Benz would look at on the global stage.

Instrumental in the deal was Ratan Tata, the man responsible for guiding the Tata Group towards success, and also launching indigenous products like the Tata Nano (the world’s cheapest car), the Tata Indica (which changed the Indian hatchback scene to a large extent; the City Rover story isn’t worth discussing), and even the buyout of JLR from Ford. In what seemed like the right hands with a strong product, Mercedes-Benz India’s journey began. Backed by the greatest of intentions, the W124 looked like it could make an amazing start. Only that it did not.

New territory

The factory was set up in Pimpri, Pune in 1994 and the first cars rolled out in 1995. It was priced at Rs2 million, which according to the >



< W124s were made from CKD kits in India.

>< Wood trim contrasts with black leather.





Mercedes in India

1995

First locally made E-Class rolls out of the assembly line in Pune

2008

Mercedes-Benz hits the 20,000 mark for cars assembled in India

2010

Roll-out of 30,000 cars from the Chakan manufacturing facility

2014

50,000th Mercedes-Benz emerges from the assembly lines in Chakan

2018

The Chakan production plant creates its 100,000th Mercedes-Benz passenger car

▷ exchange rates from the year 1995, turns out to be about £33,000. While not short in quality or speed (the cars were said to be limited to 180km/h or 112mph), the 124 was hampered by the fact that it was nearing the end of its lifecycle. A hand-me-down for a new market! This in turn led to dismal sales – about 20 per cent of what was expected.

Despite the lowly sales, Mercedes-Benz effectively set up the premium car segment in India and can be credited with making a sizeable impact on the local youngtimer/modern classic movement in India. Arriving earlier on the scene than rival manufacturers, Merc established itself sooner and paved its way straight to the Indian enthusiast's heart.

The 124s soon became available in the used car market at more affordable prices, although not so cheap that anyone with a wad of cash could buy one. Buoyed by this sense of exclusivity, the 124-series (officially, India only got the W124 saloon) soon became a dream car that people could actually buy, and that remains the case today. Right now, an excellent W124 can be bought for around half a million Indian Rupees (or about £5,000), which isn't bad at all.

That was the 124, but what happened to Mercedes-Benz India? The German car maker, upon realising that its strategy wasn't working out, soon made some drastic changes. The first step was to launch the 210-series (which was already available globally soon after the 124 was

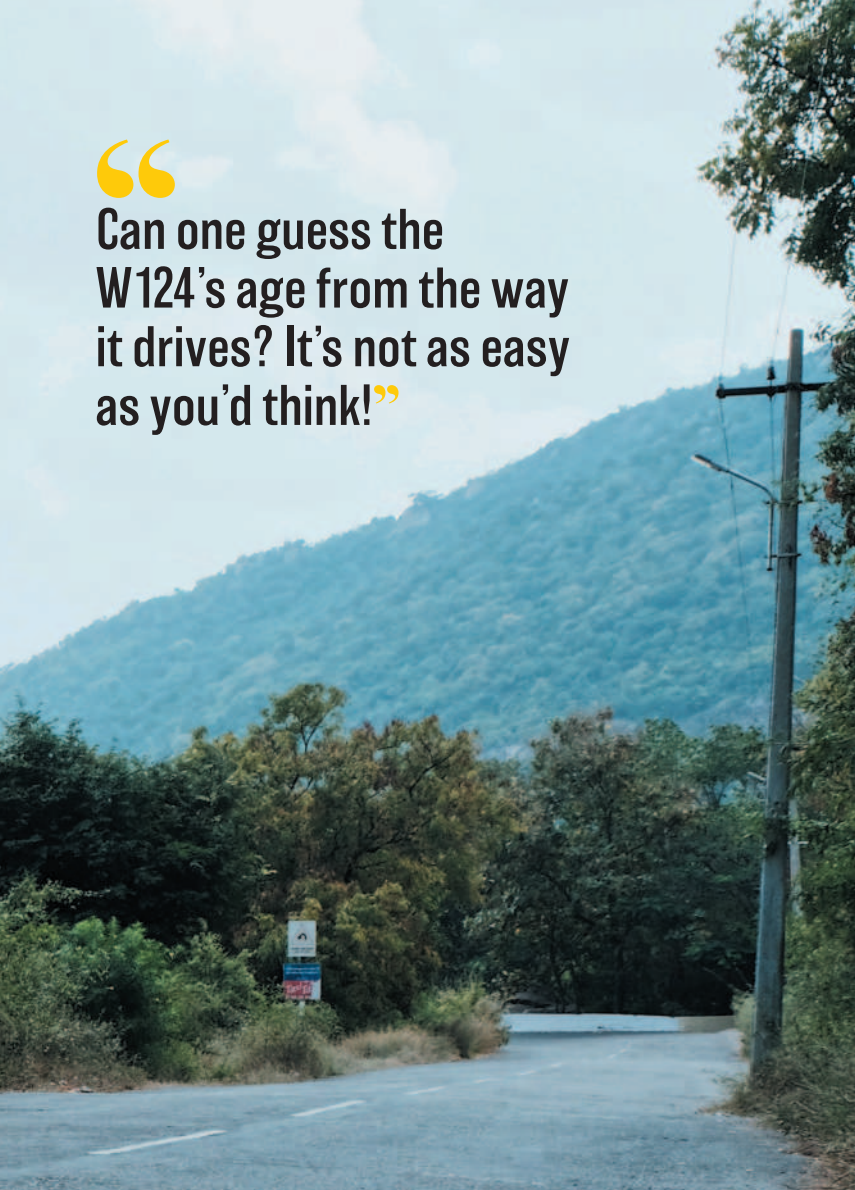
introduced in India), followed by the 220-series S-Class and the W203 C-Class, before continually adding new model lines. Currently, Mercedes-Benz India shifts close to 15,000 cars per year, has a much broader model range, and is far better tuned into its customers' demands.

Familiar surroundings

To round up my acquaintance with the India-spec 124, I drove a well-kept example and discovered that it perfectly lives up to its image. The saloon feels a great step forwards from the cars of the past, but it doesn't feel too different from a more modern E-Class. One sits fairly low in a much more confidence-inspiring position than you'll find in most modern cars.

“

Can one guess the W124's age from the way it drives? It's not as easy as you'd think!”



note, the 124 might not be at the top of my list. But can one guess its age from the way it drives? It's not as easy as you'd think! This is probably one big reason why owners don't want to let go of their cars, and why demand for them remains.

△ It's no rocket ship, but the E220 gives confidence.

▽◁ This W124 has covered about 60,000 miles.


▽ 15-inch M-B alloys wrapped in 205/60 rubber.

The rest is history

The 124's popularity can be witnessed at the Mercedes-Benz Classic Car Rally that happens in India, where they gleam proudly among much rarer siblings. Armed with the 124, the Indian fan is no longer afraid to step into the world of modern classics. Some owners have

restored them, some have modified them (with more power — there's one with a Toyota Supra straight-six engine; not for the purists, of course), and some have even found new niches. The appeal isn't limited to the Indian models alone — there are some neat 124 Estates, 300s, and even an

ex-government 124-series ambulance.

In India, the craze for the 124-series has been on the rise for years and there's no end in sight. That's quite an achievement for a brand which reportedly saw more than 7,000 potential customers back out from buying an E-Class in 1996. Those people missed out on a world class car, that there is no doubt. 



The 2.2-litre petrol engine develops 148bhp and while it's no match for, say the latest E-Class's four-cylinder, it won't disappoint.

Manual gearboxes aren't common on new cars like the E-Class, but the Indian W124s were initially supplied with manual units only and it works perfectly on the E220. On the move, the E220 is stable but supple, sufficiently

holding off road imperfections to let the four-pot engine work its magic. Of course, unless you're talking about an E320, E500 or E60 AMG, the W124 is not what you'd call exciting, especially in the specs offered in India (E220 and E250 Diesel). While it's a great medium-sized car to waft around in, if I were looking to start my day on an energy-filled

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz E220 (W124)

ENGINE **M111 2,199cc 4-cyl** POWER **148bhp@5,500rpm** TORQUE **155lb ft@4,000rpm** TRANSMISSION **5-speed manual, RWD**
WEIGHT **1,390kg** 0-62MPH **10.6sec** TOP SPEED **130mph** FUEL CONSUMPTION **24.1mpg** YEARS PRODUCED **1992-1996**

All figures from Mercedes-Benz; fuel consumption according to EEC urban; top speed of Indian car electronically limited to 112mph

Thank you to Hemanth M for letting us drive his beloved E220



◁ 800bhp 280CE featured in issue 182 (Dec' 2016).

◁◁ All manner of Benzes can be found at the strip.

▷ The AMG V8 biturbos respond well to remapping.

To the strip!

Drag racing is a highly accessible and cost-effective way to enter motorsport. Here we explain how to get involved and pick our favourite Mercedes for a modest budget

WORDS **GUY BAKER** IMAGES **SANTA POD, DAIMLER AG & TERRY OBORNE**

Drag racing – in one form or another – has been around since the dawn of the motorcar. However, it first gained serious notoriety in Southern California in the 1920s and 1930s, when rivals would duel it out on the beaches. After the Second World War, the sport moved onto tarmac, with the Southern California Timing Association (first formed in 1947) holding properly timed races, albeit over various different distances. The first official drag event, however, didn't happen until six years later in 1953.

It's now possibly the most inclusive form of motorsport, with thousands of amateur and professional competitors in the UK alone. And that's mainly because you don't need any special equipment – beginners can race in their factory-spec road car. The race distance has been standardised for a long time at a quarter of a mile, with electronic timing and speed-sensing systems used to record race results in the UK since the 1960s.

The standardised format sees two cars race to see who can cross the quarter-mile white line first, and in some events each winner then progresses to the next stage of a competition, until eventually only two cars are left, with the quickest winning the event. Most people, however, are simply looking to improve their last quarter-mile time or terminal speed and will pay for a number of runs.

But you don't need a 1,000bhp-plus ride to take part, or a big budget for

modifications – standard Mercedes are absolutely fine. And you don't need much training to get started in drag racing either.

Get involved

Attending a 'Run What Ya Brung' (RWYB) day is the best way to start. Aimed at street legal cars, these are held at nearly all of the UK's drag strips and are the perfect place to learn the art of drag racing, as well as asking the experts how and when to progress to the higher classed events.

"For beginners, RWYB public track days are an absolute must. You need little more than a road going vehicle and a driving ➤

C63 AMG Coupe (C204) 2011-2015

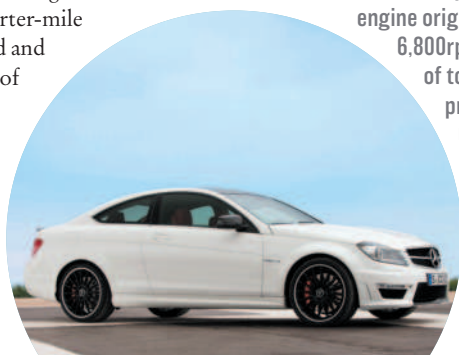
Our first contender is an obvious choice. A big seller and – as a result – good value on the used market (prices start at £17,000), the 204-series C63 AMG Coupe is completely at home on the drag strip. It ticks all the boxes – rear-wheel drive, loads of power and torque as standard, a clever automatic transmission with tech trickery to help (a Race Start function is standard), reliable, affordable and there are plenty around to choose from. It's even supremely comfortable to drive to and from the drag strip.

The car's naturally aspirated 6,208cc V8 engine originally produced 451bhp at 6,800rpm and a maximum 442lb ft of torque at 5,000rpm. This propelled the two-door C63 to 62mph in just 4.4 seconds, whilst the factory-limited 155mph top speed could

be extended to well over 180mph if derestricted.

The C63's transmission should be robust enough for drag racing. "The automatic gearbox is extremely reliable," reckons Olly Stoner at expert Prestige Car Service. The software includes a Race Start function which burns just enough rubber to catapult you forward with maximum efficiency.

Owners recommend turning off the ESP and using manual paddle control of the gearshifts as you accelerate. After the tyres are warmed, bring the revs up to about 3,600 using launch control while holding the brake and – once the second stage light appears – go for it, changing gear at about 7,000rpm to avoid hitting the rev limiter. "We'd recommend an LSD-equipped car too – on track it helps," Ollie suggests. You can retrofit an aftermarket limited-slip diff, with Quaife's ATB unit a popular choice.





E55 AMG (W211) 2003-2006

These days, you can pick up a 211-series E55 AMG for as little as £7,000. With a potent supercharged V8 that packs a mountain of torque, the E55 is a rare find so patience is key to finding a good one.

By adding an IHI supercharger, the E55's 5.4-litre M113 V8 is able to pump out 476bhp, plus an epic 516lb ft of torque from just 2,650rpm. And that enables the raucous E55 to out-accelerate almost every current rear-wheel drive saloon on the road. The official 4.4-second 0-62mph time seems conservative and without a limiter the E55 tops 180mph.

Your biggest problem will be getting all that power down, but producing even more power is possible, as Chetan Sharma at Mercedes tuner CKS Performance in Watford confirms. "The W211 E55 is my firm favourite for upgrading. Add a full exhaust system, a pulley kit, an air filter and a

few other ancillary parts and a remap will see your E55 AMG producing in excess of 600bhp – and that's 200mph territory."

Owner Sami Michaels has taken an organic route to modifying his E55 for drag racing. "I took the car to Santa Pod and I ran about a 12.5 second quarter-mile with a slightly smaller supercharger pulley (84mm) and some mild cooling mods (split cooling under bonnet tank). But traction was a huge issue, as was the exhaust."

So Sami added Nankang AR-1 rear tyres on the stock 18-inch wheels and long tube headers, followed by some East Coast Euro polyurethane billet engine mounts to give the exhaust more clearance. OEM engine mounts soon take a beating, especially on modified cars using sticky tyres.

Now with an 11.4-second run at 122mph, Sami

switched to a much smaller 68mm supercharger pulley, an 82mm throttle body, 550cc injectors, and a water-methanol injection system. "I also put Mickey

Thompson ET Street tyres on 16-inch CLK wheels and sourced the space saver wheels for the fronts to act as 'skinnies'. With this combo I managed an 11.04s at 126mph – without the methanol injection."

Sami has since added a 7.5-gallon ice tank in the boot, a much more powerful intercooler pump and a Sound German Engineering valve body to allow firmer gear changes, plus Hoosier tyres, a 7kg Braille race battery and a Kirkey Racing seat, and expects to get much closer to a 10-second run next time out.



◁ **AMG GT C**
Roadster with
historic grille.

△ **A 204-series**
C63 rips down the
Santa Pod strip.




Useful links

www.motorsportuk.org
www.rwyb.co.uk
www.eurodragster.com
www.santapod.co.uk
www.crairaceway.co.uk
www.yorkraceway.org.uk

boot and cabin before a run and remove the spare wheel!

Also, make sure you take plenty of cash for sundries and possible extra runs, and invest in a good tyre pressure gauge. Racers will experiment with different tyre pressures, which can drastically affect your quarter-mile times. Pumping up your front tyres for example will reduce the rolling resistance, whilst rear tyres

will expand slightly as they get warmer – you can get more grip by reducing the pressure slightly. And for more experienced racers, slicks will clearly improve your times – although normal road tyres are fine for beginners. Just make sure they're warmed up as much as possible before you race.

Almost all Mercedes can potentially be used for drag racing, but rear-wheel drive models are favoured by most racers. We've picked three of our favourite contenders and suggested how each could be best prepared for repeated runs up the strip. 

▷ licence to take part and they can be as simple or involved as you like," confirms Santa Pod's James Forster. "Even helmets are only required for those going 110mph or more, which is a pretty serious speed in a quarter-mile. We have all sorts of vehicles and driver experience levels running on track on any given day and even if you're in a one-litre hatchback the chances are you won't be the slowest of the day." All that is required is a valid driving licence.

A RWYB event at Santa Pod, for example, will set you back £35. This includes a £10 entry fee and a £25 signing-on fee which allows you to run as many times as you can throughout the day. Advance signing-on can also be made if you live far away, and once you've mastered the basics then the next step would be to compete in a proper series. For that you normally need a 'non race' MSA National B licence that requires registration with the Motor Sport Association (www.msauk.org) and costs £104.

Upgrades

To begin with, you don't need to do anything at all – just turn up in your daily driver in completely standard factory spec and you can take part. You don't need to do any tuning either but do make sure your Mercedes is in good working order – so check all hoses, tyres, brakes, water and oil levels and suspension components.

If your Mercedes is modified, it will be up to you to make sure that it meets the relevant regulations for a particular event. But all racers will need sensible (closed toe) shoes and some long trousers, and eventually you may need a decent helmet too. Make sure that your car is properly fuelled for the journey to the strip and plenty of runs, and it's wise to get rid of any unnecessary weight in the car. So, empty the

CLK55 AMG Coupe (C209) 2002-2006

Despite its rarity, the 209-series CLK55 is the cheapest of the our three picks, with prices starting at £6,000. The 5.4-litre M113 V8 produces 362bhp in factory trim and a meaty 376lb ft of torque at 4,000rpm, which equates to a 4.9-second 0-62mph time and a derestricted top speed that far exceeds the factory 155mph limit.

The engine does have less scope for significant tuning than the supercharged version but the robust five-speed AMG Speedshift transmission allows gear changes with the paddle buttons on the steering wheel, or a sideways tap of the gearlever. And with a stiffened AMG sports suspension and a tauter chassis, the CLK55's grip and ability to lay down the power is far better than its C208 predecessor.

At the strip, traction is less of an issue than it is with the W211 E55, but you still need to give careful consideration to your tyre choice and pressures. Some owners recommend higher front tyre pressures and lower

rears. And reducing weight as much as possible does make a significant difference when you're looking to shave tenths of a second off your quarter-mile times.

An aftermarket exhaust with a sports cat and enhanced induction, plus a remap, could see gains of around 25bhp and up to 40lb ft torque. But if you want more then you're looking at adding forced induction, which would prove tricky and add significantly to the cost. All the owners we spoke to haven't gone down the forced induction route. Adjustable coil-overs are popular with the best advice being to raise the front end, whilst lowering the rear.

To launch the CLK55 effectively, it pays to smoke the rear tyres a bit first to warm them up, and leave the transmission in Sport mode.

Some owners prefer the traction control on whilst others recommend turning it off.





Prestige Car Service

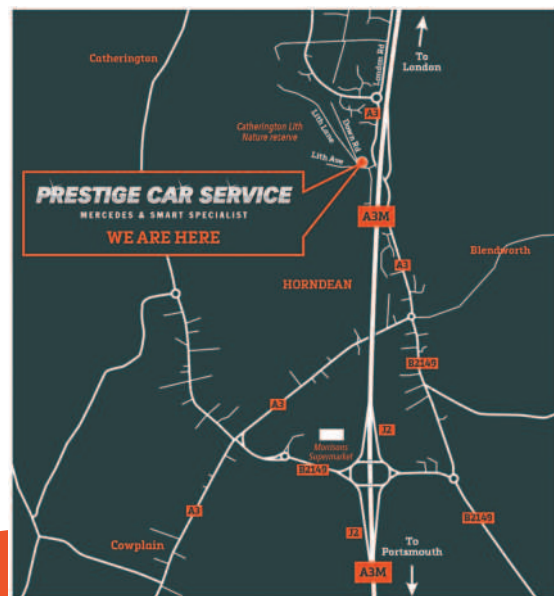
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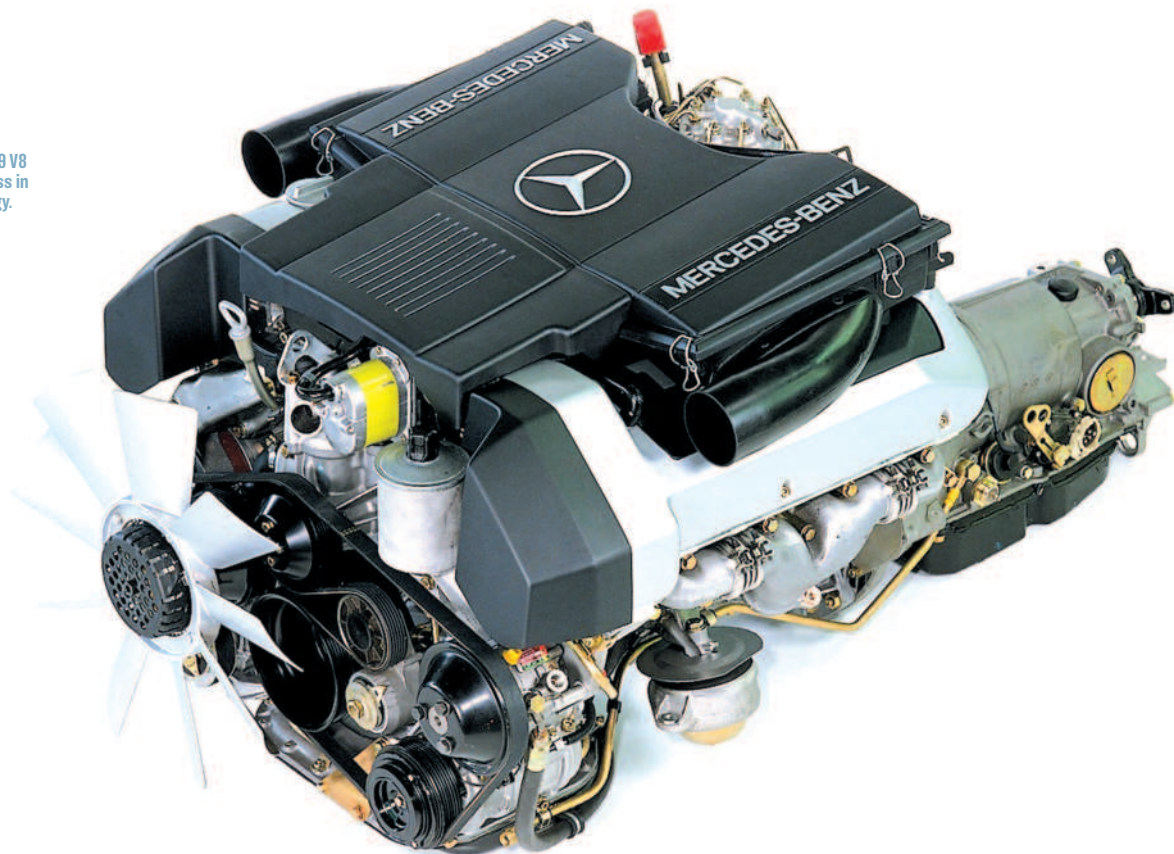
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▷ Awesome M119 V8 was a masterclass in engine technology.



Variable valve timing

Electric power will soon make variable valve control an archaic technology, but it has been instrumental in improving the internal combustion engine. Here's how it works, from a Mercedes perspective

WORDS **SHANE O' DONOGHUE** IMAGES **DAIMLER AG**

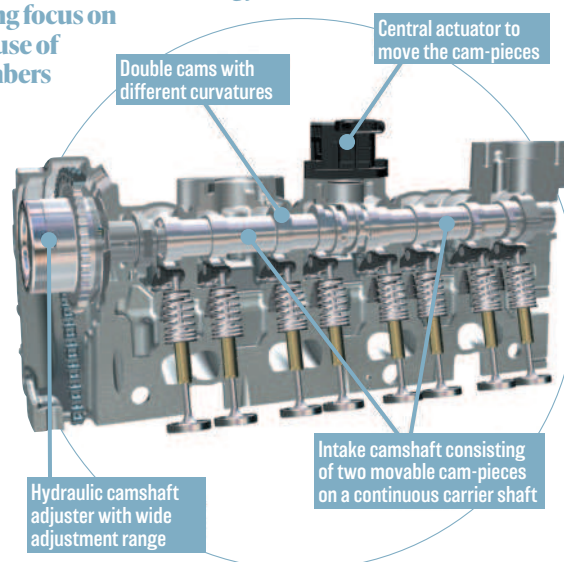
A desire to improve the performance of naturally aspirated engines, while enhancing their efficiency, led to an explosion of new technology in the late 1980s and early 90s. There was a strong focus on engine breathing, leading initially to the use of four-valve-per-cylinder combustion chambers – as in the Mercedes 190E 2.3-16. This design soon became reasonably common.

However, while the better breathing generally led to significant improvements in top-end performance, it was often at the detriment of low-down torque and drivability. This was due to the limitations of fixed valve timing.

At the beginning of the induction stroke, the piston is at top dead centre (TDC) and the inlet valves open to allow air and fuel into the cylinder. The downward motion of the piston causes a pressure reduction that sucks the air-fuel mixture in. When the piston reaches bottom dead centre (BDC), the compression stroke starts. All valves are closed, and the air-fuel mixture is compressed as the piston moves back up towards TDC again.

Next is the power stroke, where, in a petrol engine, the air-fuel mixture is ignited by the spark plug. Ignition usually occurs before the

▷ Camtronic system debuted on the A-Class 1.6-litre engine in 2012.



piston reaches TDC, but that's not important for our purposes. The energy released by the burning of the fuel pushes the piston back down the cylinder, turning the crankshaft. The valves are still closed at this stage, incidentally. Then, on reaching BDC, the exhaust stroke begins, the exhaust valves open and the piston pushes the burned gases out of the cylinder before the cycle starts again.

In reality, there is often a period of time where both the exhaust valves and inlet valves are open at the same time. This is called valve overlap. During this, the rapid flow of gases through the exhaust ports, in conjunction with the design of the inlet and exhaust systems, creates pressure waves that can cause suction through the intake valves, effectively allowing more air in for a given cycle. This is called the scavenging effect. Valve overlap is particularly useful at high engine speeds, where the gas flow rates are higher, and the effect is stronger.

Alas, valve overlap is less useful at low engine speeds. It's not difficult to imagine some of the incoming air-fuel mixture exiting the exhaust. Along with that, if the overlap is too long, it can make for rough idling. This can be explained by the duration of the valve overlap. With fixed valve timing, the overlap is a set number of degrees of crankshaft rotation, but the slower the engine speed, the longer it takes for the crankshaft to turn that far. Therefore, at low speeds, the valve overlap is longer in time. This can allow exhaust gases to flow back into the cylinder before the exhaust valves close and, if the proportion of these gases is too high, it can cause incomplete combustion, which manifests itself as rough idling.

Timing is everything

Hence, before variable valve timing came along, engineers had to compromise on the valve overlap – as it was fixed by the profiles of the inlet and exhaust camshaft lobes – ensuring that a smooth idle was maintained. Sometimes that meant increasing the idle speed, to the detriment of fuel economy, in a bid to maintain a useful valve overlap.

The valve overlap isn't the only aspect of valve timing that is a trade-off. The timing of exhaust valve opening is a compromise, too. To extract the maximum energy from the expanding gas in the cylinder, it makes sense not to open the exhaust valves until the piston is at BDC. However, that means the piston has to push against higher cylinder pressure, wasting some of the energy gained. If the exhaust valves are opened before the piston reaches BDC, the cylinder pressure quickly reduces.

To complicate matters, the ideal timing varies with engine speed and load. Meanwhile, the ideal timing of exhaust valve closing is intricately linked with that of inlet valve opening to create the valve overlap discussed above. Inlet valve closing, however, comes with its own set of compromises.

It's all about trapping as much air as possible within the cylinder before closing the valves, as this is what defines the volumetric efficiency of an engine, and therefore the performance and economy. Again, the ideal timing of the inlet valve closing changes across the engine speed and load range.

There's a lot more to all of this engine technology than we have room for, but the core message here is that, before

Unlike some car makers, Mercedes never made a big song and dance about its VVT system

variable valve timing there were always compromises to be made and a VVT system solved that predicament.

Quietly brilliant

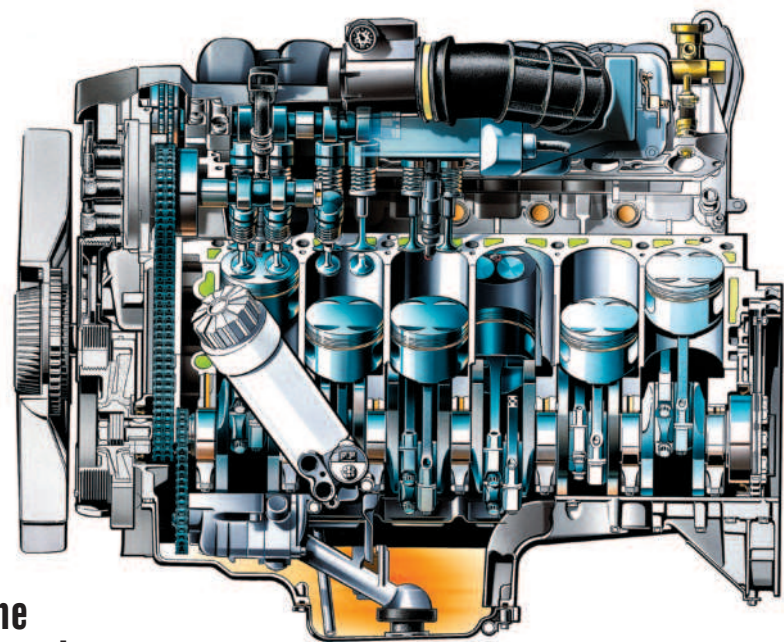
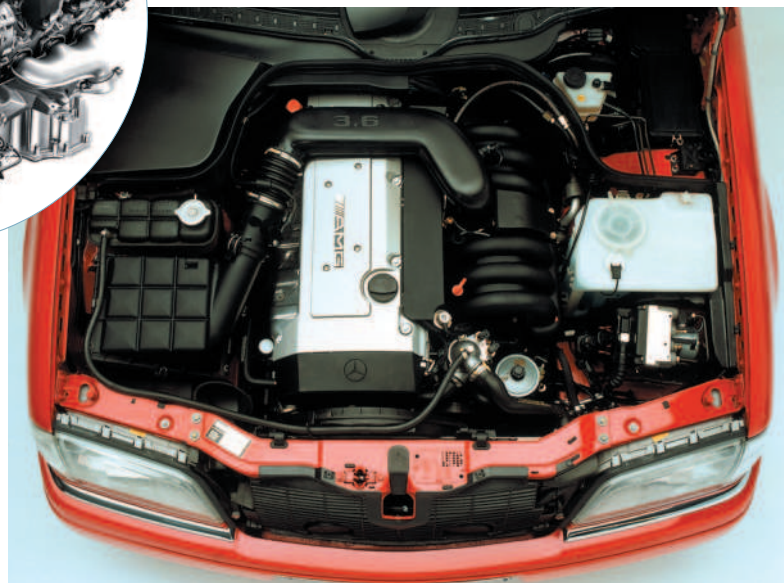
Unlike some car makers, Mercedes-Benz never made a big song and dance about its variable valve timing system. Using hydraulically driven phasers on the front of the camshafts, some engines used discrete adjustment of the inlet valve timing to two set points, while later systems used advanced computer control to allow continuous adjustment. The first model to use this technology was the R129 SL of 1989, as featured in the 500SL's M119 V8 and the 300SL-24's M104 straight-six.

This method was quietly amalgamated with the so-called Camtronic system from 2012 (introduced in the 176-series A-Class's M270 1.6-litre engine), which also features a clever variable valve lift system. Camtronic allows the alteration of maximum inlet valve lift between two settings, enhancing performance at one end, but allowing far more efficient operation at the other, especially when married to the variable inlet valve timing. This technique is still in use today.

△ The six-litre M120 V12 engine with adjustable intake camshaft system.

△△ C36 AMG's M104 motor features cam adjuster magnet.

△△△ E350 CCI's M272 V6 with VVT on both the intake and exhaust cams.



Grand designs

There are some great deals to be had on used Mercedes-Benz S-Class models at the moment, with V6 turbodiesels the picks of the bunch, as our UK market expert reveals

WORDS GUY BAKER IMAGES SR MOTORS, DERBY PRESTIGE CARS LTD AND SPECIALISTS CARS



S350 Bluetec L from 2012 with 100,000 miles priced at £10,990 by SR Motors.



Big saloons are still popular with buyers in many parts of the world, but in the UK demand has been dropping for years – and recently it's taken something of a nosedive. The majority of new S-Classes are bought or financed by companies, rather than private individuals, but when it comes to the used market it's the latter that pull the strings. Although the demand, which used to roughly match supply, isn't what it once was.

This is great news, however, for those who can still appreciate the merits of a comfortable, commodious luxury saloon, packed with the latest tech and oozing class. Right now, there are some stonking deals to be had on 221- and early 222-series S-Classes and – from what we've heard lately from dealerships – canny buyers have started to catch on. So, if you are tempted to take the plunge, we suggest you don't hang around.

Just 10 big ones bags a 2012 S350 Bluetec L diesel with 100,000 miles, like this great looking silver example we spotted at SR Motors in Glasgow (www.srmotorcompany.co.uk). Stickered at £10,990, we're led to believe that there was some room for manoeuvre on the price, and the comprehensive spec included a panoramic glass sunroof, Comand satellite navigation, cream leather upholstery, 18-inch alloy wheels and auto xenon headlights, as well as a six-disc CD player, eight-inch colour display with MP3/SD media interface, Linguatronic Voice Control, Luxury Automatic Climate Control, Speedtronic Cruise Control and front and rear electric heated seats. Sold

with two keys and a complete service history, all that was missing was the chauffeur!

Black was an even more popular colour with original S-Class owners and the wonders of depreciation mean you can now buy an early W222 example for less than £18,000. This black, 2014, 60,000-mile S350 Bluetec 4Matic



△ Specialist Cars' 78K-mile S350 CDI offered for under 10 grand!



△ 222-series S350 Bluetec (£17,490) at Derby Prestige Cars.

SE Line had covered just 60,000 miles and was advertised for sale at Derby Prestige Cars Ltd (www.derbyprestigecars.co.uk) for only £17,490. A 63-plater, it came with a full Mercedes-Benz service history, including a recent service, and a full MOT. Highlights include beige cream leather upholstery, soft-close doors, big-screen Comand with sat nav, Linguatronic, heated and cooled electric memory seats, Parktronic with reversing camera, cruise control, 18-inch alloys, four-wheel drive and xenon headlights.

Spend wisely

You'll find that a lot of used S-Class come with a full Mercedes-Benz service history – they are complicated beasts and it's worth paying more for a car that has this. Especially if the car in question is over 10 years old, like this bronze, 2010 S350 CDI BlueEfficiency we discovered at Specialists Cars in Manchester (www.specialistcars.co.uk). The asking price was a mere £9,499 and the mileage just 78,000, which was appealingly low for a car of this age. As with the two previous cars, this S-Class's spec would leave you wanting for nothing and the car boasted 20-inch alloys.

You will find cheaper S-Classes than the ones pictured, but bear in mind that a little extra money spent initially could save you a big sum down the line. Don't be tempted by an apparent bargain with a missing service point or two, or an S-Class with a few 'minor' problems.

► **Buying on a strict budget? Then check out our top three £5,000 bargain Mercedes on page 74!**

Forecourt find

C63 AMG
(W204)

The 204-series C63 AMGs are arguably the Mercedes performance bargain of the moment, with plenty around for would-be buyers to drool over (read our full Buyer's Guide on pre-facelift Saloons from page 76). That said, make sure yours packs a full main dealer and AMG specialist service history, just like this stunning, facelifted Magnetite Black, 2012 Saloon we spotted at FTR Performance in Kings Langley does.

With 92,000 miles on the clock, it was advertised for £21,990 and came with designo leather upholstery and contrasting black ash wood trim. A suitably lavish specification included black 19-inch alloy wheels (W205 63 S spec) with red brake calipers and Black Edition bonnet vents in contrasting Brilliant Silver. Equipped with an improved AMG Multi-Clutch transmission, this four-door C63 AMG will hit 62mph in 4.5 seconds.

Dealer information: FTR Performance

Tel: 01923 268900

Web: www.ftrperformance.co.uk



△ Magnetite Black metallic is a rare and awesome paint finish.

▷ This car rides on 19-inch alloys from the W205 C63 S.

▽ Designo leather, black ash wood and a seven-speed autobox.



Top tips

Online auctions

During the pandemic, car auction companies have maximised opportunities online and buyers have lapped it up. Here's a quick guide to online auctions...

⌚ Always plan ahead – stick to just one or two models and do your research. Investigate upcoming auctions and browse their sales catalogues in advance for suitable vehicles.

⌚ Most auction sales are currently conducted online either through platforms, apps or over the telephone. Some are 'live' whilst others require you to lodge bids in advance. Most live auctions last no longer than one minute per car.

⌚ Some require you to open a 'trade' account, but not all. Many classic auctions don't. Allow plenty of time for registration to be approved before you look to buy. Most auction houses have temporarily suspended all additional fees, but a buyer's fee will still apply.

⌚ Payment for vehicles up to £20,000 can now be made through debit card online, but above this and a bank transfer will be required.

⌚ You can collect any car you buy at auction, but there will be a set procedure which varies between auction houses. Don't turn up without a pre-agreed collection slot booked.

⌚ When collecting, you will be asked to attend alone – only a limited number of people will be allowed to collect cars at any one time. And you will need to wear a mask and adhere to social distancing regs.

⌚ For a fee most auctions also offer nationwide mainland UK delivery – but get full details before deciding to pay for this service.



Auction spotlight

A round-up of recent prices paid for average-condition Mercedes in auctions across the UK

● SLK350

3.5-litre, petrol, auto, 2004/54 plate, 76,000 miles, **£4,400**

● CLS320 CDI

3.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2006/56 plate, 118,000 miles, **£5,000**

● ML320 CDI Sport

3.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2007/57 plate, 104,000 miles, **£6,500**

● C220d Sport

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2017/17 plate, 91,000 miles, **£11,200**

● A180d Sport Executive

1.5-litre, diesel, auto, 2016/66 plate, 24,000 miles, **£11,750**

● E220d AMG Line

2.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2017/17 plate, 37,000 miles, **£17,150**

● SLK55 AMG

5.5-litre, petrol, auto, 2015/65 plate, 58,000 miles, **£20,350**

● GLA180 Urban Edition

1.6-litre, petrol, auto, 2019/69 plate, 11,000 miles, **£21,325**

● SLC300 AMG Line

2.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2016/66 plate, 15,000 miles, **£21,400**

● CLA220d Coupe AMG Line

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2019/19 plate, 15,000 miles, **£23,200**

● GLC250d AMG Line

2.1-litre, diesel, auto, 2018/68 plate, 15,000 miles, **£28,100**

● AMG A35 4Matic Premium

2.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2019/19-plate, 18,000 miles, **£32,600**

● GLE350d AMG Premium Plus

3.0-litre, diesel, auto, 2018/68 plate, 34,000 miles, **£33,700**

● AMG C43 4Matic Cabriolet

3.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2018/18 plate, 14,000 miles, **£34,300**

● AMG C63 S Coupe Premium

4.0-litre, petrol, auto, 2018/18 plate, 25,000 miles, **£48,350**

And remember...

Always arrive early at car auctions, if in person then pick up the sale catalogue and examine the vehicles in the line-up before the bidding starts. In addition to the hammer price, you'll have to pay a small buyer's fee. You'll need to provide a deposit of at least £500 (in cash or by Maestro or Visa Delta debit card) but the balance of the purchase price and the buyer's fee can be paid by banker's draft, cash, cheque, telegraphic transfers, credit or debit card.

Find your nearest auction house check out www.british-car-auctions.co.uk or www.nama-uk.com



TOP THREE

£5,000 bargains

Five thousand pounds might not sound like a significant sum to spend on a Stuttgart three-pointed star, but you'd be surprised just how much Mercedes-Benz metal you can actually get for that amount of money. Over time, depreciation chips away at the value of even the most expensive of Mercedes, leaving once unattainable machines repositioned

as bargain buys. For this edition of *Mercedes Enthusiast*, we have combed the classifieds to unearth some of the best £5,000 buys. These include a roadster, four-door coupe and even an SUV. As long as you choose wisely, all three of these Mercedes contenders could provide a rewarding ownership experience for years to come.



SLK280 Sport (R171)

The smooth six-cylinder SLK280 Sport is not only stylish and usually very well equipped, but it's also becoming a pretty exclusive choice - with fewer and fewer on UK roads. Our budget will put you in the driving seat of a late 2006 example with just under 100,000 miles on the clock. 228bhp equates to a 6.3-second 0-62mph time and a 155mph top speed, whilst many first owners choose desirable options like Airscarf, designo nappa leather upholstery, heated seats and 18-inch AMG alloys.



CLS320 CDI (C219)

If you're looking to max your metal for money, then the 219-series CLS320 CDI is hard to beat. There seem to be quite a few around, so that means you can negotiate a decent discount, and the CLS not only boasts ground-breaking swooping styling and lashings of luxury, but in 320 CDI guise it's also reasonably frugal. Five big ones bags a 2005 car with 110,000 miles and - despite its size - there's still plenty of poke with the six-cylinder turbodiesel producing 376lb ft of torque in factory tune.



ML320 CDI (W164)

A V6 diesel engine feels made for our third and final selection - the W164 ML320 CDI. Hugely popular when new, many have lasted the course extremely well, so at this budget you'll have a good choice of facelifted 2007 and 2008 examples to choose from. Yours might have covered as much as 120,000 miles but as long as it's been fully serviced and is in good condition you should have few problems. And if you can find one with goodies like the memory/heated front seats and Comand then so much the better.

Latest products and accessories

Lorinser for Mercedes-Benz GLS

Lorinser has released its latest tuning modules, plus some tasty 22-inch alloy wheels (pictured right), for the GLS. The Lorinser PowerModule takes power output for the GLS400d up to 359bhp, with 570lb ft of torque, whilst the GLS350d sees power rise to 315bhp with 509lb ft. Both remap options cost 1,499 euros.

The muscular Lorinser RS9 five-spoke one-piece alloy wheels for the GLS are only available in 22-inch size, with either a matt black or a silver finish. Priced at 1,107 euros (including VAT) you can find out more about these and the PowerModules at www.sportservice.lorinser.com.



Road Hero space saver wheel kit

These days, not every Mercedes comes with a spare tyre. And if you've ever had a flat tyre you'll appreciate that a space saver spare wheel can be worth its weight in gold. Road Hero offers kits tailored to every common vehicle, with 108 different wheel options. Comprehensive accessories and safety wear are included, and kits are priced from £200. These include a two-tonne scissor jack, adjustable wheel brace, warning triangle, high-vis vest, head torch, rain poncho, kneeling mat and heavy-duty gloves, plus a lightweight space saver tyre, safety rated to 50mph. Find out more at www.wheel-power.co.uk.



C63 Sealander Elite Watch by Christopher Ward

Premium watch brand Christopher Ward has produced a stylish and durable C63 Sealander Elite Watch which can be worn for everything from running, cycling and trekking to diving and adventure sports.

The lightest mechanical watch Christopher Ward has ever made, the new C63 Sealander Elite's design is inspired by elite sport and is made using Grade 2 titanium to keep weight to an absolute minimum. Available from £1,150, it has a quick-release 20mm hybrid strap and is water resistance up to 150m (other straps also available). It features a self-winding 26-jewel mechanical chronometer movement, and every watch has a unique engraved serial number. Full details can be found at www.christopherward.com.



In Focus **SL500** (R230)

The 2002 to 2011 SL500 (R230) is a dream to drive, offers impressive V8 performance and is great value too. There are over dozens of well-maintained used examples offered for sale from £8,000, with over 60% having covered less than 80,000 miles. The most popular colours are black and silver, making up 86% of the total...

60-second buying guide

Follow our top tips to quickly sort the good examples from the bad

Walk around

The R230 SL has aged gracefully, but make sure yours has near-perfect bodywork, no signs of rust and a pristine interior. Windscreen and roof repairs can be very expensive and watch out for uneven panel gaps, corroded alloy wheels, front end paint chips and scuffed corners.

Get inside

Climate control, heated/memory seats, electric windows, mirrors and roof and sports seats were all standard, and most come

with Comand sat nav too. Yours should also have 19-inch alloys, cruise control, front and rear parking sensors and xenon headlights. Check all electrics including the roof, lumbar support controls can fail and beware any sign of water leaks into the boot.

Start her up

Mercedes' responsive 7G-Tronic transmission suits the SL500 perfectly and performance should feel strong in all gears. Check reverse works seamlessly and look out

for failed fuel pumps, tired alternators, flat batteries, broken catalysts and high oil consumption. Expect to find worn suspension and brake components. Repairs to the hydraulic suspension or the ECU will prove very pricey.

Check the paperwork

Check with your local M-B dealer that all recalls have been addressed. Your SL500 must have been service by a Mercedes main dealer for the first three or four years of its life, but a specialist history after that is fine. Yours should come with old receipts and MOTs to support the service record.



72,778 R230 SL500s rolled off the line before the facelift of 2006.



ITG Maxogen pleated cotton gauze cone filters

Induction specialist ITG has introduced new Maxogen pleated cotton gauze cone filters, which provide maximum filter surface area for maximum flow rate and come with a fine cotton gauze element which is protected by epoxy-coated wire mesh. With a variety of mountings, there is also an optional foam over-sock for ultimate dust capturing ability.

Prices for the new range start at £58 plus VAT and all ITG filters are handmade in the UK using entirely UK-sourced materials. Call ITG (024 7630 5386) or check out www.itgairfilters.com for full details.



Top Mercs

Knowing the Mercedes-Benz marketplace means you can make the best buying decisions, but that requires up-to-date market information, which is why we generate fresh Mercedes market data every couple of months, to give you - the Mercedes-Benz enthusiast - the best information possible...

Top 10 best-selling used Mercedes

In order of used examples advertised for sale; percentage of total used Mercedes market

- 1 **C-Class** (23.8%)
- 2 **A-Class** (21.6%)
- 3 **E-Class** (15.1%)
- 4 **CLA-Class** (5.2%)
- 5 **GLA-Class** (4.7%)
- 6 **GLE/M-Class** (4.1%)
- 7 **SLC/SLK-Class** (2.8%)
- 8 **B-Class** (3.9%)
- 9 **GLC-Class** (4.2%)
- 10 **S-Class** (3.3%)



What's in a colour?

The colour of your Mercedes could affect its desirability to future buyers and its residual value. So, what are the top five colours on the used Mercedes market?

- 1 **Black** (28.4%)
- 2 **Silver** (23.5%)
- 3 **White** (15.6%)
- 4 **Grey** (15.0%)
- 5 **Blue** (9.5%)



Miles ahead

Low-mileage Mercedes often possess better residuals, whilst high-mileage cars can offer better value

Less than 50,000 miles **61.1%**

Between 50,000 and 80,000 miles **19.9%**

More than 80,000 miles **19.0%**

Fuel watch

How are used Mercedes powered?

| Diesel | Petrol | Hybrid | Full electric |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 65.5% | 30.4% | 3.50% | 0.60% |

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NEXT ISSUE



WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

SL60 AMG and E50 AMG go hunting for the horizon



PLUS

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Michael Hölscher, Technical Project Manager for 500E



Bags of appeal: 209-gen CLK ♦ Top selling S-Classes face off
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

Mercedes
ENTHUSIAST

October/November 2021 issue
ON SALE September 17th

The M156 V8 is thrillingly noisy when revved – the harder it works the more evocative it sounds



Muscle car

Mercedes-AMG will never make another compact saloon like the 204-series C63, its 6.2-litre, naturally aspirated V8 catapulting it to the dizzy heights of legendary status. Here's everything you need to know before buying one...

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES DAIMLER AG

It's over 13 years since Mercedes-Benz unveiled the 204-series C63 AMG, not only a monumentally quick and capable saloon but a landmark model in its class. There had of course been other hot C-Classes – the 202 C36/C43 and 203 C55 – and before them the W201 190E 2.3-/2.5-16, but never anything built from the ground up as a weapon with which to contest BMW's dominance of the sector. It used the first ever engine designed from scratch by AMG, the mighty 6.2-litre M156 V8, ran on a bespoke chassis and featured extensively modified bodywork. Everything about it exuded

Mercedes' high performance heritage, right down to the '63' numbering of the badge.

For this ultimate 204 saloon, launched in the UK in early 2008, Mercedes charged £51,317 when it went on sale. But keen to ensure that it would not end up an exotic machine that would be admired but not purchased, the car maker's finance division made it available on affordable PCP terms. Many were registered in the UK over the next five years and the inevitable result is that they are plentiful on the used market and hence unable to escape the natural laws of depreciation.

Prices now begin at £15,000 (or less if you're prepared for some

expensive corrective work), and that makes it sensationally good value on power output and also image. But that massive, complex V8 – the biggest ever in a C-Class and likely to retain that status, given downsizing – can be a maintenance nightmare if you don't buy well, so what should you be looking for if you're prepared to take the plunge?

Design & evolution

Unlike the preceding M113 5.4-litre V8 which it replaced, the M156 was essentially a high-revving racing engine and would indeed serve in factory motorsport. Besides the C63, it also went into other premium

Mercedes ranges. For the C63, it produced 451bhp and 442lb ft torque, up 38 and 18 per cent over the 203-series C55 AMG. And while that car ran a five-speed automatic transmission, the C63 stepped up to a seven-speed AMG Speedshift Plus 7G-Tronic, featuring throttle-blipping downshifts, the power delivered through substantially uprated driveshafts, aided by a three-stage ESP traction control.

The 204's normal front strut and rear multi-linked configuration was retained, but featured a new three-link front axle with a 35mm widened track, while the rear track was increased 12mm. The steering was re-

Spotted
for salePRIVATE SELLER
C63 AMG2012/12, grey, black leather,
84,000 miles, new brake discs
and pads, four owners,
Essex, £20,000

additional 49bhp and 7lb ft torque, plus new-style 19-inch wheels and racy decals on the lower flanks.

Driving the C63

The M156 is thrillingly noisy when revved – the harder it works the more evocative it sounds – and delivers devastating acceleration from any speed.

The chassis is very stiff – but stops short of the hard ride that early AMGs suffered. Steering is quick, perfectly weighted and has good feel, and the brakes, featuring composite front discs, offer huge stopping power.

But for all its performance and handling, the C63 can also be the perfectly practical four-seater saloon that transports the family in comfort and will fit in a normal garage, and this is of course a key part of its appeal. Be prepared for a heavy fuel bill, as the M156 will drop to 10 to 12mpg in town and can't be coaxed to much above 25mpg out of it, although every C63 is compliant with London's Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) and won't attract the added Congestion Zone penalty.

What you'll pay

A C63 can be purchased for £15,000, but at that price it will have over 100,000 miles on the clock and may have been modified, with a noisier, aftermarket exhaust, for example. Boost the budget to around £18,000 and you could expect a 75,000-mile example, but well looked after cars with 50,000 miles or less are likely to start at £20,000. Prices do seem to be affected significantly by mileage, with lesser used examples much more expensive.

The Performance Package is an extra that sellers prominently mention in their advert and is likely to be a strong selling point. Just how much of a premium it adds is hard to determine.

Presently, the top value for a C63, assuming it's not the Edition 507, is £32,000 to £33,000. At this price it should be under 40,000 miles, in top condition and preferably carry the performance pack. From £27,000 on you'll get a sound, historied example that will be a good long-term keeper. Even the last, 2014 C63s are too old to be seen at official Mercedes-Benz dealerships. ▶

Just the facts

Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG (W204)

ENGINE M156 6,208cc V8

POWER 451bhp@6,800rpm

TORQUE 442lb ft@5,000rpm

TRANSMISSION 7-speed auto, RWD

WEIGHT 1,730kg

0-62MPH 4.5sec

TOP SPEED 155mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION 21.1mpg

CO2 EMISSIONS 319g/km

YEARS PRODUCED 2007-2014

All figures from Mercedes-Benz for an early standard car; top speed electronically limited

engineered for a tauter feel, and brakes were six-piston caliper discs up front and four piston at the rear.

The C63 AMG came as standard with 18-inch wheels, fitted with 235/40 front and 255/35 rear tyres, but a 19-inch rim (235/35, 255/30 tyres) was a £600 option. There were other choices too, such as the AMG Performance Package at £3,100 (see page 80), while for £2,200 more you could have the AMG Driver's Package, which removed the electronic speed limiter.

For the visual treatment, the bonnet was given power domes, the front bumper a substantial section with a large intake, while bulging wheelarches accommodate the extended track. In customary AMG style, interior upgrades were limited for the C63, comprising a pair of superbly supportive front seats and a chunky, flat-bottomed steering wheel containing the extra AMG sport functions. However, a carbon fibre interior trim, replacing the aluminium finish, was available for an extra £1,520.

In July 2010, a run of 20 C63 AMG Saloons and Estates badged DR520 were made available through Mercedes-Benz World in Brooklands. They have the AMG Performance Pack, and also an extra 62bhp and 37lb ft torque, made possible by a technology transfer from the SLS AMG including forged pistons, con rods and a lightweight crankshaft.

Then in February 2011, for a UK on-sale date of July, a significantly revised C63 AMG was announced. It featured the AMG Speedshift MCT seven-speed transmission, using a wet start-up clutch rather than a torque converter which, among other things, brought a claimed 10 per cent improvement in economy. Engine output for the standard model remained unchanged, but the AMG Performance Package now included an engine specification similar to that of the DR520 although the power increase was quoted at 30bhp.

At the same time, the suspension and steering were further honed, an aluminium bonnet with differently shaped

power domes was fitted, as was a revised grille and exterior trim. Changes to the fascia included upgraded Comand, and a fixed, rather than folding information screen, as per the 204 C-Class facelift.

The C63 AMG Edition 125 appeared in 2012 to mark Mercedes' 125-year anniversary, but was merely a slightly better equipped model. The final development prior to the end of production in 2014 was the Edition 507 (denoting engine output) featured the uprated engine, in this form giving an

W204 C63 AMG Inside and out



Specialist overview

Steve Dickens, Autoclass Garage, Milton Keynes

"Overall, they're a very good car, and they don't really go wrong. But the early cars suffered cylinder head bolt problems and tended to dump their oil and water. The bolts were later revised and don't give trouble."

"The facelift cars are nicer and worth paying three or four thousand more for. They have the 'wet' gearbox type instead of the torque converter and have a better change, plus the car's interior is a bit nicer."

"Some C63s are driven very hard - we've seen a few horror stories of that nature. But others have been very well cared for, and it can be hard to tell which you're buying."

Powertrain

- Early M156s had weak cylinder head bolts which can break and make the cylinder head gaskets leak. We understand that engines after 060658 (the last six digits of the engine number) have the revised, stronger bolts.
- The four-valve cylinder heads have 32 tappet 'cells' in total, and these tend to wear as mileage builds. Their remaining life can be best judged when the engine is started from cold, as the oil within the cells will have drained and thus any rattling will be accentuated for a few seconds until oil circulates. Engine camshaft sprockets commonly wear, also causing a rattle on cold start-up, and the engine management light to illuminate.
- Fuel injectors can stick open and this can cause the engine to 'hydro lock'. Individual injectors can be replaced,

but Merc specialists advise replacing all eight for safety.

- The M156 is prone to oil leaks, notably around the crankcase join and at the seal of the two-section sump. Re-sealing these involves engine removal which is a lengthy job given the engine's size and complexity.

● Some C63s have had their exhaust catalysts removed, or an aftermarket exhaust system fitted, which will devalue the car. Should a factory replacement be needed, the two-part system plus catalysts exceeds £6,000.

- Slippage between gears is known on the seven-speed gearbox on the pre-facelift cars, but the 7G-Tronic's more common issue is, as on other models it is used in, the electronic gearbox selector failing and locking the car into low-geared 'limp home' mode.



M156 V8 with bore and stroke of 102.2x94.6mm plus two cams per bank; max power arrives at 6,800rpm.

Suspension, steering and braking system

- Shock absorber life can be short, especially if the car has been driven hard, as many have. Listen for a knocking noise, particularly at the front of the car. It's quite likely that front suspension arm bushes and ball joints will be worn out, particularly on early cars.

- All 204s can suffer steering issues, with excess play developing in the steering rack. This will be revealed most clearly on a test drive over a bumpy road, when a knocking will be hard and felt through the (flat-bottomed) steering wheel.

- Check the condition of the brake discs and pads to assess the remaining life of both. This is particularly vital on C63s with the Performance Pack, as the composite discs cost just over £1,000 a pair compared to £340 for the steel discs, with pads for both at £300. Allowing



for the discount on parts an independent would pass on to the customer, a front disc/pad change on a Performance Pack car would be around £1,300 compared to £750 on the regular model; a Mercedes main dealer will charge a lot more.

Full AMG exhaust system; three-link front and multi-link rear set up.

Spotted
for saleINDEPENDENT USED
CAR DEALER
C63 AMG2013/13, white, grey leather,
32,000 miles, Performance Pack,
19-inch wheels, Berkshire
£32,500

Mercedes-AMG made 24,940 of the pre-facelift C63 Saloon; 360mm front and 300mm rear brake discs as standard.

“The early cars suffered cylinder head bolt problems”

Bodywork and wheels

● Rust should not yet be present on a 204 C-Class unless there is inadequately repaired accident damage. The extended front and wings are vulnerable to stone chips, so check the paintwork there.

● Mercedes wheels can develop alloy corrosion at almost any age, so examine for blistering, usually from the centre outwards. The optional

19-inch AMG alloy wheels are more vulnerable to damage than the 18-inchers.

● Many C63s will have been driven hard and not always well, so look out for accident damage. Also check whether it's an insurance write-off; categories have changed quite recently, but if it's a Category S or N, there has been serious damage, slashing its value.



This is a pre-facelift C63 AMG interior - note the thick-rimmed AMG steering wheel and AMG specific instrument cluster.

Interior and electrics

● Illuminated dashboard warning lights are an MOT failure, so ensure that none remain on after the engine is started. If a light does stay on it will almost certainly indicate a costly issue; for example, if the camshaft adjustment solenoids (part of the engine's variable timing system) are not operating correctly, a warning light is the only indication of their condition.

● Check on the electrical functions in the cabin: seat adjusters and heaters, windows, air conditioning and mirrors, as fixing problems here can all be expensive.

● The rear light bulb holders can burn out, causing shorts in the electrical system. The lamps can simply be unplugged for inspection and replaced if necessary.

W204 C63 AMG Inside and out

Verdict

The C63 AMG Saloon, unlike other users of the M156 V8, has developed something of a 'bad boy's' car image, quite commonly modified and often driven more quickly than is prudent. As the cars get older and cheaper, this ownership profile may become more widespread.

However, there are enough C63s around that have been carefully used by mature drivers as second cars and which have accrued modest mileages. These are the best buys, even if they cost a lot more, probably at least £25,000.

Few would be disappointed by a C63 AMG, as it is one of the best compact performance saloons of recent times. But good things have to be paid for, both to get hold of in the first place, and to properly maintain – check if your finances are up to that before proceeding.



Performance Pack – what do you get?

The AMG Performance Package added to the car's already super sporty specification. An uprated braking system was fitted which included composite front discs to replace the regular steel items, the already stiff suspension was made even more so, and a rear limited-slip differential was installed. In the cabin, you got a steering wheel trimmed in lovely-feeling leather and Alcantara.

The Performance Pack unsurprisingly makes the C63 feel even more firm, especially if the 19-inch wheels – an obvious complement to the pack – are fitted. Expect even tauter handling and more tug through the steering. The AMG Driver's Package raises the C63's top speed above the normal 155mph, though M-B didn't state by how much (officially, facelifted cars with this option could hit 175mph).

Spotted
for saleFRANCHISED DEALER
C63 AMG2012/62, white, grey leather, 50,400
miles, 19-inch wheels, six-month
warranty, Sytner Nottingham,
£26,000

Typical basic servicing costs

(A/B services including VAT)

| MODEL | OIL SERVICE | MAJOR SERVICE |
|---------|-------------|---------------|
| C63 AMG | £230 | £330 |

Quotes from Autoclass Garage

Non routine servicing costs

- ★ Renew cylinder head bolts and gaskets **£1,650**
- ★ Replace 32 tappet cells on engine **£1,320**
- ★ Fit replacement electronic selector plate on 7G-Tronic automatic gearbox **£795**
- ★ Front brake discs and brake pads (standard/AMG Performance Pack) **£740/£1,295**
- ★ Fit two new front shock absorbers **£756**
- ★ Four premium brand tyres (235/35ZR19 front, 255/30ZR19 rear) **£650**

C63 AMG timeline

- **January 2008** C63 AMG launched in the UK, following its summer 2007 reveal
- **July 2010** A small number of C63 AMG Saloons badged DR520 were made available through Mercedes-Benz World in Brooklands
- **July 2011** The C63 AMG was facelifted and now used the AMG Speedshift MCT seven-speed gearbox
- **May 2013** Edition 507 model with the uprated engine goes on sale in the UK

What you'll pay

£15,000-£18,000 The cheapest C63 Saloons available, early, 2008 cars with well over 100,000 miles and possibly incomplete service history

£18,000-£25,000 Tends to be the most common price bracket, buying well cared for cars up to 2011. Mileage should be under 100,000 for this money

£25,000-£30,000 Likely to be at a reputable independent used car dealer, with under 75,000 miles, coming with a six-month or year warranty

£30,000-£33,000 Late, 2013/2014 cars with the Performance Package, low mileage examples and full Mercedes-Benz service history record

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Built to last

New BBS wheels and spacers for the 300TD as the 500SL is saved for evening jaunts and the S320 reaffirms its impeccable road manners

WORDS & IMAGES BLAKLEY LEONARD

FACTSHEET

CARS 1998 S320/1992 500SL/1983 300TD

OWNER Blakley Leonard

LOCATION Virginia, USA

PURCHASED June 2019/July 2017/August 2019

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT S123 receives 15mm spacers and BBS Mahle rims, brake light issue for the 500SL and S320 gets used more often



Over the last few weeks, I've racked up some miles on my daily drivers. Mostly, the 1998 S320. Between the overly humid weather and a couple of road trips, the W140 was naturally my weapon of choice given it's stress-free M104 and unbelievable comfort level.

The 500SL is now reserved for warm summer night drives, which is unfortunate considering the right rear brake light has decided to stop working. I've replaced the bulb and determined that's not the issue.

I've even gone as far as swapping the back housing of the rear tail light with my other R129 to see if the issue is in the housing itself or the car. I now need to find time to trace some wiring in the trunk in hopes of finding the culprit. I'm willing to bet drivers of modern day cars don't have issues like this and it often makes me consider the alternative. But then again, who needs brake lights?

The 300TD has seen the least amount of use lately but by no fault of its own. While it is a phenomenal cruiser, it's slightly less comfortable than the W140, especially for road trips. The air conditioning also works without flaw so I can't blame it on that. I did find some time to add 15mm spacers to the rear

which greatly improved the stance of the car. In addition to being slightly lowered, I installed a square set of BBS Mahle wheels. While the front sits perfectly flush, the rear needed some help to fill out the wheel well a bit. My OCD can finally let me rest.

Sweet six

I must admit, this W140 is impressive. This is one of the very few cars I was able to purchase locally. I saw it advertised in a parking lot with a "for sale by owner" sign in the window and naturally I had to stop. Turns out, the car was single-family owned and the older gentleman who bought the car new had kept every record, organised neatly by year with the original window sticker on top. This wasn't my first W140

so I was no stranger to the immense quality and comfort of the car. Still, I didn't expect to love the M104 powerplant in this car considering previously owned versions consisted of a 400SEL, S420 and S500. While it's not the fastest of the group, it's a far cry from the snail that most forums make it out to be. Not to mention, it gets decent miles per gallon and yes, I pay attention to that.

Over the last six weeks I've driven the car to Atlanta, GA and back twice

(roughly 1,600 miles in total) as well as day-to-day. The car is a beast. The water temperature always stays perfectly stable no matter how hot the ambient temperature is, and the A/C is as cold as ice. I had been debating swapping to the Continental TR7412 head unit for Bluetooth capability but instead went even more old school and found a Bluetooth tape deck adapter. Apparently, it's a thing and it works great.

For those who haven't driven a well-maintained W140, I implore you to do yourself the favour. It is remarkable how solid these big Mercs feel in contrast to most cars today.

△ There is much to love about the six-cylinder W140, reckons Blakley.

▽ The 123-series Estate's road stance is now much improved.

▽ Rear brake light issue on the 500SL was not fixed by a new bulb.

For those who haven't driven a well-maintained W140, I implore you to do yourself the favour



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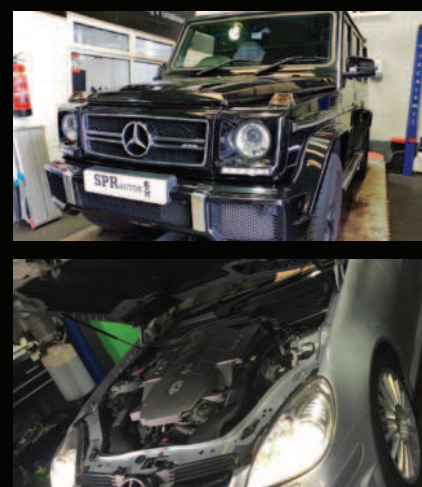


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Hedging our bets

As the compact SUV neared the end of its PCP finance agreement, careful consideration of various financial options was required

WORDS DAVID SUTHERLAND IMAGES DEREK GOARD & DAVID SUTHERLAND

FACTSHEET

CARS 2017 GLC220d

OWNER David Sutherland

LOCATION Surrey, UK

PURCHASED September 2017

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT Decided to make the big final 'balloon' payment on the GLC's finance agreement and take ownership of the SUV



△ Mercedes-Benz Brooklands offered £24,500 for the GLC.

Personal contract purchase (PCP) is a great way of keeping the monthly payments

down on a new car, which is why around 80 per cent of private buyers use it. But the reckoning comes at the end of the deal, when a large sum of money has to be settled up one way or the other, and after four years, which seemed to fly by, we had to decide what to do about our Agility-financed GLC220d AMG Line.

Agility revolves around Mercedes-Benz Finance predicting at the outset the value of the car three or four years down the line, and that figure plus interest is subtracted from the total price of the car, leaving the amount you pay. If the actual value turns out to be more than what was predicted that equity belongs to you and can be used towards a follow-on PCP deal.

The reality was that few cars of any marque exceeded the figure, but then came Covid which, due to a variety of reasons drove up used car values. So when the expected call came from Mercedes-Benz Brooklands, which supplied the GLC, inviting me to

replace it, I was excited to learn that it could be worth around £25,000, allowing us to exchange it for a new one and keep monthly repayments similar.

I decided to have the GLC valued at two dealers: Mercedes of Guildford said £24,000 and Brooklands £500 more, leaving us £6,300 to use as a deposit.

Playing the long game

I had not beaten the system, though. Since we got the car in September 2017, Mercedes has facelifted the GLC and jacked up the price, the equivalent to our AMG Line Premium spec – now with a 'Plus' on the end of it – over £9K more. The equity was therefore meaningless unless I wanted to trade down, and I didn't fancy the smaller GLB much, although it does look interesting.

I was irritated but knew all along that keeping the GLC was my preferred

option anyway. It has only done 28,000 miles (under Agility we were 'allowed' 40,000 over four years) and apart from a few small scuffs and scrapes still feels new to me. Also, is this really a good time to commit to a brand new car when petrol and diesel engines are on the way out but there is still no clear road map for electric cars?

The next consideration was the small matter of the £18,175 Optional Final Payment. In 2010, we refinanced the OFP on our A-Class with Mercedes-

Benz Finance, but during the course of the GLC valuation I was told by one of the salesmen that such finance was no longer available.

Incorrect: you can still get a Mercedes loan for this, but it's now only offered on

a case-by-case basis.

I didn't find out if I would be eligible because I didn't formally apply. An initial enquiry revealed the Mercedes-Benz Finance APR to be 4.9 per cent, 2 per cent more than from a certain bank with a supermarket chain attached to it, equating to an extra £18 each month or £860 in total.

Now we can forget about financial options and get on with enjoying the GLC, which is a brilliant car that'll do anything any normal driver would ask of it. Mind you, it'll be even better once I've had the always-beeping Parktronic parking sensors fixed.

“Since we got the car in September 2017, Mercedes has facelifted the GLC and jacked up the price”

▽ Parktronic sensors are playing up but David loves the GLC anyway.

▽ Cabin has aged well, with just some light creasing on the seats.



Holiday road

The 190E receives new parts and a spruce up before its attendance at two big events, while the E-Class Coupe laps up a trip to Cornwall

WORDS & IMAGES WILLIAM TERRINGTON

FACTSHEET

CARS 1989 190E/2011 E250 Coupe

OWNER William Terrington

LOCATION Surrey, UK

PURCHASED March 2014/March 2017

UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT W201 fitted with new suspension parts with detailing in the pipeline; E250 Coupe on the verge of passing 50,000 miles



I am convinced it could be a future classic, especially being a coupe

Life has changed in the past few months. The big news is that my 190E and I have received an invitation to the inaugural '30Under30 Concours' event at the Concours of Elegance at Hampton Court Palace on September 3 to 5. Prior to this grand occasion, the car will be on the owners' club stand at the Simply Mercedes day in Beaulieu on August 22. And it's perfect timing – 2021 marks 30 years of Mercedes-Benz ownership in my family and the arrival of that first W201 with delivery miles.

So, the big push is on to have the 190 looking and driving fabulously. As I write this, TM Motors in Surrey is fitting new shock absorbers and springs front and back, as well as new rear arms and an anti-roll bar, and re-spraying the rear subframe and differential. The 190 is receiving new Avon tyres at the rear to match the fronts, too. Astounding though, was the cost of new shock absorbers and springs from Mercedes-Benz – it would have added up to around £1,000! So, I did some research and found that the actual maker of these parts is Sachs. By sourcing them direct, I saved many hundreds of pounds, although those parts join a very small list that have not been purchased from

Mercedes-Benz. Genuine parts are almost always the best option.

A pair of new wing mirror casings primed for painting were purchased some years ago, intentionally reserved for the future. That decision has paid off. Painting them in a smart 040 gloss black along with the frames, and adding a new '190E' badge will enhance the car's appearance. To get the W201 show-ready, there will be two rounds of detailing, one before Beaulieu and an even more intensive one before the concours. This 190E has come a long, long way from how it was back in 2014, offered online for £1,250.

Savour the moments

Given my recent investment in the 190, it's time to reduce the number of trips it takes into Greater London. The standard of driving in the area is deteriorating and I figured it's best to keep the saloon mainly for holidays, weekends and other special occasions.

As for the E250 Coupe, it's not far off passing the 50,000-mile mark. The air conditioning was no longer providing ice cold air, but thankfully a new pressure sensor rectified this. Afterwards, it went on a long weekend to Cornwall and performed brilliantly: a relaxing drive and 40 to 50mpg on the

△ This beige Benz is approaching 50,000 miles at 10 years old.

▷ The E250's 1.8-litre four-cylinder motor makes a useful 201bhp.



▽ Two rounds of detailing are due before big events.

motorways. However, I don't fancy piling the miles onto it either. Although I don't believe it will happen, the UK government's intention to ban the sale of new ICE cars from 2030 and hybrids from 2035 is prompting (already planned) further conservation of this car. I am convinced it is a future classic, especially being a two-door coupe with a desirable specification.



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E320 CDI Avantgarde 2002, auto, 3,226cc, diesel, five-door, saloon, dark blue, light beige leather, MOT, 87,000 miles, full service history, amazingly economical, fast and powerful, superb 3.2-litre diesel engine, would make an excellent tow car, please note the MBZ registration, £2,600 – PX old car, kit car, motorcycle or three-wheeler. Tel: 07756 567248. Dorset [DEW2]



SL320 1999, 3.2L, excellent condition throughout, the entire body work and interior is very nice, in stunning Almandien Red factory Metallic, beige leather interior, radio, three owners, nice condition five-spoke alloys & good tyres, full Mercedes history, substantial documented service & MOT history, electric mohair soft top, maintained regardless of cost, recent service, Mercedes Pagoda forces sale, £7,695. Tel: 07958 431991. Croydon [DEW3]



CLK180 1996, full MOT, three previous owners, very good interior, original radio, first aid kit, outside very clean and in great condition, £1,995. Tel: 07414 006863. Middlesbrough [DEW5]



E220 Cabriolet AMG Diesel, 2016, 17,000 miles, full Mercedes services, white, navy blue top, navy and cream leather interior, Airscarf heated comfort seats, unmarked AMG alloy wheels, all usual extras including, AMG carpet mats, totally as new throughout, £20,000 ONO. Tel: 07944 732666. Essex [DEW4]



CLK320 Cabriolet 2003, convertible, 82,000 miles, only two former owners, comprehensive service history, most recently serviced & MOT'd March 2021, five tyres and battery in 2020, excellent condition, working roof, future classic, £POA. Tel: 02089 422066. Mob: 07590 551640. Ewell [DEW6]



CLK230 Cabriolet Sport 1996, 2,295cc, 147,000 miles, petrol, automatic transmission, silver, black leather heated seats, serviced and MOT March 2021, has been well looked after, excellent condition, £1,200. Tel: 07890 04700216 [DEW8]



C320 2003, Brilliant Silver, very low miles at 49,000, full M-B history, maintained regardless of cost, 3.2L V6, automatic, full service book and history available, cream interior unmarked, electric glass sunroof, electric steering column, front heated/memory seats, Comand sat nav, factory upgraded Bose sound system, DAB radio, folding rear seats, air conditioning system, in-built phone system, unmarked five-spoke alloy wheels, owned from only six months, previously owners by a M-B director, spare never used, garaged all its life, ULEZ compliant, £4,650 OVNO. Tel: 07970 403617 [DEW9]



2x 280SE One is from 1969 and the other is from 1971, both require reconditioning as have not been driven for some time, both are extremely solid cars having been in Cyprus since they were nearly new, £POA. Tel: 07734 102121. Borehamwood [DEW11]



W123 230E 1983, fabulous example, South African import, RHD, complete service history, MOT until November, automatic, 79,000 miles (genuine), factory air con, everything original, all paperwork and service book, kept covered in a garage with a de-humidifier, excellent condition, no rust, £9,000. Tel: 07809 557451. Leicester [DEW12]



W124 E280 1994, rare Rosewood Metallic, club enthusiast's car, owned seven years, main dealer maintained with no expense spared, perfect oatmeal cloth, all maintenance records from new, smooth quiet six-cylinder engine, alloys, sunroof, airbags, Air Con, M-B radio CD, two remote keys. £2,550 ONO. Tel 0781 8068307 Wiltshire [DEW10]



280SLC Automatic, 150,805 miles, classic white, cream velour interior, owned for 12 years, restored to concours condition, voted best SLC in Mercedes Club and others, MOT August 2020, no time wasters please, £POA. Tel: 01932 787178. Middlesex [DEW13]

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W140 S320 1995, 145,000 miles, Onyx Grey, owned for 13 years, full service history, MOT until March 2022, garaged, spare keys, excellent condition, a wonderful car to drive, £5,000. Tel: 07908 114234. Kent [DEW16]



S212 E350 CDI BlueEfficiency Estate Avantgarde March 2010, two careful owners, full service history, 10,900 miles, excellent condition, silver, grey interior, Comand audio system, memory package, sat nav, heated front seats, reversing camera, Parktronic, leather seats, sliding glass, sunroof with tilt, 7G Tronic auto, paddles, cruise control, Harmon Kardon Logic7 surround sound system, cornering light function, adaptive main beam assist, tyre pressure loss warning system, £8,500. Tel: 07770 935744. Kent [DEW15]



SL300-24 1993, very good condition both inside and out, 83,325 original miles, as new electric hood, including factory hardtop, as new matching Goodyear tyres, service history including receipts for work carried out, all old MOT's, maintained regardless of cost, new MOT, £7,250 ONO. Tel: 07598 791860. Nuneaton [DEW17]



450SL 1980/V Reg, sky blue, nearly 113,000 miles, new soft top and with original hardtop (needs some repair), well maintained and serviced by Devon Classic Cars, MOT until September, kept garaged, in very good condition, engine purrs beautifully, £18,500. Tel: 07860 670403. Bath [DEW19]



190E 2.6 1991, rare manual, white with black leather, e/ windows, e/sunroof, Becker radio/cassette, 143,000 miles, all MOTs, all original books, not currently MOT'd as on SORN, not used in two years, only 600 miles in the last five years, garaged, trailer collection for light recommissioning before road use, £POA. Tel: 07449 205448. Southampton [DEW18]



E-Class Cabriolet 1994, convertible, only three owners, current owner for the last 18 years, in fantastic original condition, only 75,000 miles, silver, blue hide hood and interior, I will gladly fit a new battery and MOT the car, £15,000 ONO. Tel: 07802 491561. Worthing [DEW20]

190D 2.5 Manual, dark red, 156,00 miles, FSH, MOT until October 2021, ERS, factory alloys, good condition, call for photos, £POA. Tel: 01516 390149. Wirral [CD]



SL500 1998/S reg, facelift, finished in a stunning Tourmaline Green Metallic with contrasting Helios, soft nappa leather interior, removable matching panoramic hardtop, fitted with many factory options, ice cold air con, £13,995. Tel: 07860 211645. Winchester [DEW21]



450SLC 1978, badged 500SLC, LHD, totally original, rust free, silver bodywork, £15,000 spent in last two years alone, very reliable daily driver, e/sunroof, blue leather, automatic, cruise, e/windows, e/aerial, DAB and much more, large file of receipts, £18,000 ONO. Tel: 07760 166166. Bournemouth [DEW22]



C240 Estate Elegance 1999 reg, one owner since new, bespoke order from M-B factory in Bremen, Germany, 79,200 miles, V6 engine, auto, leather and many other extras, service and MOT history available, well looked after, good condition, a beautiful car to drive, £3,750 ONO. Tel: 07836 273700. London [CM35W1]



C240 Estate 11 months MOT, great car, call for more information, £POA. Tel: 07711 080336. Leeds [CM35W3]



W123 230 1982, saloon, 200,000 miles, petrol, one owner from new, excellent condition, am selling as the car has failed its MOT, small hole in chassis and bush/pin on subframe worn hence the sale, still good car, open to offers. Tel: 01380 812807. Devizes [CM35W5]



C124 E220 Coupe 1995, Azurite Blue, mushroom leather, 171,000, S/H, MOT until February 2022, drives well, regularly used but sparingly, good condition but not perfect, priced accordingly, recent work, paperwork, MOTs and history show that the car has been well looked after, £3,995. Email: cjknot65@icloud.com. Bournemouth [CM35W9]



E220 Coupe Auto, silver, grey leather, 102,000 miles, electric windows, sunroof, mirrors, steering column and aerial, cruise, new air con system, AMG monoblocks, recent Falken tyres, expensive stereo installation, full history, runs like a Swiss watch, £6,995. Tel: 07981 062374. Coulsdon [CM35W10]



SLK32 AMG 2002, MOT until April 2022, 105,000 miles, owned seven years, 12 stamps main dealer/specialist garages, just serviced with new front discs and pads front and rear, new front wings, Waxoyl underside, dry stored in winter months, rare, very quick, excellent condition, £8,000 ONO. Tel: 07914 614694. Northampton [CM35W11]

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C215 CL55 AMG 2002, low mileage, 74,000 miles, FSR, MOT until November 2021, auto, fully loaded, double glazed, heated/cooled seats, bi-xenon headlights, keyless entry/ignition, first to see will buy, loss of storage forces sale, £9,500. Tel: 07584 020272. Surrey [CM35W12]



CLK320 Cabriolet AMG Sport Special edition, 2003, 90,000 miles, well maintained, no rust, clean, FSH, full documentation and provenance, Sport pack includes AMG alloy rims, lowered suspension, six-disc CD autochanger, Bose rear seat mounted subwoofer, front and rear bumpers, £5,495. Tel: 07902 941397. Northants [CDW1]



SL500 04 plate, 77,000 miles, three previous owners, owned since 2014, many extras, wooden steering wheel and dashboard, CD autochanger, sat nav, serviced by Mercedes upon purchase to ensure it was perfect (cost £2,000), detailed cost £800, happy to chat about it, £POA. Tel: 07827 282204. North Hampshire [CDW2]



E200 CDI Blueefficiency Avangarde Four-door, auto, 2010 reg, 47,500 very low miles, full M-B history, metallic grey, full black leather seats, sat nav, gorgeous condition, two keys, two-owner, £8,200. Tel: 01708 457440. Hornchurch [CDW3]



CL500 4.7L V8, biturbo, 2011 (11 plate), 83,300 miles, Obsidian Black, Aubergine exclusive passion leather, purchased from M-B main dealer in 2017, FSH, all receipts, 20-inch AMG alloys, recent work includes new front pads and discs, lower wishbone arm, too many options to list, £13,900 ONO. Tel: 07887 051657. Bedfordshire [CDW4]



SLK380 Six months warranty, amazing interior, polished aluminium, blue interior to match the exterior blue metallic, electric seat controls, amongst the host of other extras, engine compartment like new, video can be sent to view for seriously inquiries, ring for demo, £4,500 ONO. Tel: 07715 584001. Portsmouth [CDW7]

SL320 Absolutely stunning, 1999, metallic Amber Red, saffron leather interior, burr walnut trim, three owners from new, last owner since 2010, the soft top functions correctly, wind deflector, nice wheels, service history, MOT until October 2021, Mercedes Pagoda forces sale, £8,890. Tel: 07958 431991. Esher [CD] **W123 280E** 1982, 127,000 miles, runs and drives, needs a little love and care, please call for more information, £1,500. Tel: 07470 168102. Surrey [CM34]

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CLS55 AMG 2006, Mystic Blue, designo Porcelain leather, cheaper tax bracket, 72,000 miles, Comand, digital TV tuner, Bluetooth, Keyless-Go, Linguatronic voice control, electric glass sunroof, Parktronic front and rear parking sensors, remote boot closing, £15,000 ONO. Tel: 07859 056445. Dartford [CDW8]



C180 1996, 83,713 original miles, full MOT, future classic investment, big file history, £1,400 in 2018, original first aid kit, radio, three owners, £2,200 ONO. Email: paulcoates59@gmail.com. Marton [CDW9]



190E 1993, 168,000 miles, impressive looking, excellent runner, pleasure to drive, original finish in Almandine Red, cream interior, 1.8 ohv engine, Bosch fuel injection ignition, automatic dual-mode gearbox, power steering, five classic alloys, electric sunroof, tilt and full opening, electric windows x4, reversing sensors, original Blaupunkt radio, alarm system, new brake discs and pads F/R (November 2019), recent new blower motor and associated fan unit, new thermostat and control unit, new sparking plugs and fuel pump, new silencer and tailpipe, new 75A battery and fanbelt, two sets of keys, comprehensive workshop manual, well maintained with plenty of service history available, MOT until January 2022, owned, driven and enjoyed by seller for 22 years, £1,850. Tel: 01614 371407. Heald Green [CDW10]



W116 280SE 1976, automatic, RHD, 142,000 miles, blue, beige interior, all original with matching numbers, ideal restoration project as rusty front of bonnet and around sunroof and wheelarches (bodywork needed), runner, ticks over nicely but no current MOT, MOT history and bills back to 2006, £2,000. Tel: 07710 098825. London [CDW11]



W221 S350 2012, 57,000 miles, diesel, Ivory White metallic, excellent condition, just had a full service and new rear tyres, stored in heated garage, £12,000 (sorned). Tel: 07841 616594. North Bradley [CDP1]



R129 300SL 1992, 93,000 miles, full service history, all MOTs, stamped service book, hard and soft tops, MOT until October 14 2021, no advisories, four new tyres fitted, good condition, £7,500. Tel: 07950 436272. West Yorkshire [CDP2]



260E 1991, auto, Pearl Blue, three owners, 71,000 miles, 10 months MOT, blue leather seats, FSH, gearbox oil filter changed, tinted windows, Becker radio cassette, electric aerial, always covered up, no rust, in showroom condition, £7,250 ONO. Tel: 01529 421712. Lincs [CDP3]



260E Estate Classic seven-seater, soft close tailgate, detachable tow bar, auto headlights and wipers, £3,500. Tel: 07736 432667. Coventry [CDP4]



CLK320 2002 reg, V6, Brilliant Silver, black hood, MOT until March 16 2022, 117,000 miles, full spec, cruise control, heated seats, full leather interior, radio, CD player, perfect AMG alloy wheels, full toolkit, unused spare wheel, two keys, complete set of original owner manuals, everything works as it should (including power hood), unmarked light grey interior and external coachwork, recently serviced, stunning example, photos on request, joy to drive, ready for the summer, £4,300 OVNO. Tel: 07933 108280 Bourne Lincs [CDP5]



C240 1998, 122,000 miles, black, auto, MOT until June 2021, cruise control, drives great, central locking, front electric windows, owned for six years, good condition, £600. Tel: 07880 698564. Stanford-le-Hope [CM34P1]

300 CE, 1990, G Reg, 33,000 from new, 2 previous owners (same family), full leather, electric sunroof, unused: spare wheel, first aid kit, ashtray, cigarette lighter, fire extinguisher, all electric seats etc., over mats original from new, everything working, a wonderful car, £POA. Tel: 07796 183851. London [CM33]

S202 C280, sport, estate, auto, 1997, silver, grey leather, rare low mileage example, MB history, MOT'D and running well, £995. Tel: 01747 824018. Gillingham [CM33]



CLK230 Tiptronic, 2002, silver, two-tone grey leather, FSH, M-B specialist last nine years, two owners from new, potential classic, dry storage, 151,000 miles, AMG alloys, no expense spared, in need of attention to wheelarches, will be sold with full MOT, private plate NOT Included, £2,000. Tel: 07710 198665. Halifax [CM34W2]



W126 420SE 1991, 94,082 miles, Almandine, ivory leather upholstery, MOT until Dec '21, FSH, all MOTs since I have had it back in 2003, new front and rear chrome bumpers from Mercedes dealership, bumpers and front wings done in late 2020, two previous owners, £POA. Tel: 01457 239872. Mob: 07943 514391. Oldham [BCW1]



CLK500 AMG 1998, this car is the last of the fantastic 140 body S-Class Coupe, so far as I can tell one of the last 10 on the road from 1998, solid engine means it is a joy to drive, but I need a new owner who will love it as it deserves. £2,500 ONO. Tel: 07900 908854. Northamptonshire [BCW2]



SLK230 2001, 59,000 miles, MOT until July 2021, apart from a few rust spots the car is in very good condition, mechanically sound, all windows, wing mirrors and roof function correctly, £900. Tel: 01323736996. Eastbourne [BCW9]



190D Runs well, been dry stored for 18 months, no tax or MOT, a few small patches of rust, for more pictures please call me, £POA. Tel: 07870 514757. Merseyside [BCW3]



SL320 Convertible, 1996, 44,700 miles, ruby, light leather upholstery, children's seats, excellent condition throughout, one owner, summer use only, always garaged, comes with hard top and private reg, only for sale as we are downsizing and will not have garage space, £17,950 ONO. Tel: 07715 856174. Glasgow [BCW4]



C180 Estate Classic 1999, manual, petrol, requires ignition reprogramming (immobile), battery, indicator lens, £1,000 spent, receipts, documents, history, excellent mechanics, 150,000 miles, small blemishes, £1,950 OVNO or part exchange for combo van. Email: jameskiddbrown@hotmail.com, Dorset [BCW5]



SL350 Auto, 2003, one lady owner from new, only 20,100 miles, FMBSH, garaged from new, two door, convertible, fully electric hard top, black leather interior, petrol, totally original, for more information call, £9,850 ONO. Tel: 07790 92833. Lancaster [BCW8]



R129 SL500 47,500 miles, FSH, Obsidian Black, panoramic hardtop, Helios nappa leather, automatic, airbags, cruise, Mercedes-Benz radio/cassette/CD changer, electric heated seats, registered 1998 by the 'Black' family of Black & Lizards, beautiful cherished example, £21,995. Tel: 07702 087915. Edinburgh [HIW5]



280SLC Only 57,000 miles, 1981, full Mercedes service book stamped history, all the old MOT certificates and invoices to support work done, MOT until October 2020, very rare car, air conditioning, manual gearbox, good Condition, excellent soft navy leather seats, last owner had car for eight years, hence the condition, original interior & carpets, runs very well, stereo, Cobra Alarm, alloys, good tyres, well maintained, £14,990. Tel: 07494 869469. Croydon [HIW6]



280SLC 1975, rare pillarless coupe, factory air con, very stunning, excellent condition, white, dark navy leather interior, alloy wheels, good tyres, been restored as its in immaculate condition, original interior and carpets, runs very well, Mercedes service history & bills from SL Shop, a good appreciating asset, priced very sensible at £14,990. Tel: 07958 431991. Croydon [ABW1]

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R129 SL500 1996/N reg, 108,000 miles, 320bhp, 5.0L V8, 12 months MOT until November 2021, service history from main dealer and specialists, great runner, everything works, hardtop included, free hard-op stand and Richbrook breathable cover, new distributor caps and rotors, four good tyres, £8,250 ONO. Tel: 07976 939572. Worcester **[ABW3]**



A124 E320 Cabriolet Left-hand drive, imported from USA (Texas) in 2017 after owning four years, 92,000 miles, runs beautifully, roof inoperative, leak from rear bow lock cylinder, service history from ownership, including \$6,000 service at Houston Mercedes-Benz in 2015 (less than 10k miles ago), £POA. Tel: 07522 978741. Banchory **[ABW5]**



A209 CLK 2003, designo, 95,000, full service history, four former owners, MOT until 20/07/21, Mocca Black, nappa leather, Alcantara windscreen pillars, new price was £48,750, £10,500 in options, in good order for any trial/inspection, £4,995 ONO. Tel: 01423 526842. Mob: 07946 837529. England **[ABW6]**



SLK32 AMG 2002, black exterior, black leather, 60,000 miles, xenons, full Mercedes-Benz service history, £11,950. Tel: 07818 420620, Goodwood **[ABW10]**



R107 500SL 1985, V8, auto, petrol blue, 108,000 miles, great condition, taxed to April 2021, MOT, original hardtop, soft top, rear seats & belts, wind deflector, radio, extensive history, owner's manual, original tools and service book, £16,500 ONO. Tel: 07956 116016. Middlesex **[CM33W10]**



C220 CDI Elegance 1999, low mileage of 89,250, immaculate condition, genuine one family owner, 220 CDI turbodiesel engine, very well specced car, garaged for most of its life, silver exterior paint in good order, immaculate interior, boot spoiler, more pictures available, £2,800. Tel: 07583 613521. Tamworth **[ABW8]**



CL500 2000, two-door coupe, petrol, automatic, 110,000 miles, maroon, beige leather interior, fully loaded, MOT until July 2021, a couple of minor issues, £2,995 ONO. Tel: 07749 606030. Ipswich **[CM33W1]**

S202 C280 Estate Sport Auto, 1997, silver, grey leather, rare low mileage example, M-B history, MOT'd and running well, £995. Tel: 01747 824018. Gillingham **[CM33]**



E320 Estate Rare petrol V6, Mercedes Piccadilly plus one owner, 48,000 miles, very special car, comes with heated electric memory seats, upgraded oval cut alloys, electric glass panoramic roof, heated seats, folding mirrors, CD stereo hi-fi, stunning condition, seven seats so great family car, future classic, £5,995. Tel: 07961 808069. London **[ABW11]**

INTERNATIONAL MERCEDES



560SEC 1989, excellent condition, 100 per cent original, black exterior, grey interior, 37,500 miles, left-hand drive, sunroof, Becker cassette AM/FM, ABS airbags, all factory options, new Michelin tires, garaged all lifetime, \$43,500 US. Tel: 1 412 817 8699. Pennsylvania. USA **[DEW7]**



240D Universal Extremely rare, coachbuild, LHD, Universal (not hearse), 1978, six places, new floors, rear suspension and tail lights included, in great condition, all original, Portuguese plates, £POA. Tel: +35 19162 69080. Santarém. Portugal **[CM35W4]**

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123-series 280E One of the best, dream condition, classic data 01/07/1982, black velour always in Germany, auto, electric sunroof, central locking, cruise control, Becker Mexico, etc, £POA. Tel: +49 17610 222255. Email: kaymel@web.de. Bremen. Germany **[CM34W4]**



560SEC 1987, rare 822 option, 300hp, tri-Y exhaust, Euro spec, low 113,313km, recent black pearl 199 glass-out repaint due clear coat issue, excellent black leather, burl wood interior, never any rust, recent service, carfax \$35,000 USD. Tel: 016046446631. Email: bleasdaleadrian@gmail.com Vancouver. Canada **[CM35W13]**



W114 280C USA spec, 1975, 69,000 original miles, with a shifter in the column, four-speed automatic transmission, factory equipment includes power steering, power windows, air con, cruise control, very rare Becker Europa II stereo with cassette, interior in mint condition, zero rust, £POA. Tel: +1506 6003 9000. Texas. USA **[ABW2]**



190E 1989, in mint condition, garage stored for all 30 years, no rust, 77,000 miles, new tires, retractable sunroof, \$4,000. Tel: +001 60980 41105. New Jersey, United States **[GHW12]**



SLK320 Roadster 2003, red, two-door, convertible, 30,116 miles, automatic transmission, traction control, slip control, RWD, power steering, telescoping wheel, leather seats, alloy wheel package, accident free, smoke free, \$12,500 ONO. Tel: 001 51326 49684. Email: lstewart1@cinci.rr.com. Ohio. USA [HIW16]

OTHER MERCEDES



U1500 425 series, approximately 74/75, Vs present, L/H drive, taxed as agricultural, no MOT required, 24-inch wheels, tyres approximately 90 per cent – high speed tyres, complete with snow plough bracket, hydraulic pick U-hitch and draw bar, three-way tipping body, £POA. Tel: 07811 914359 (after 6pm or weekends) [EFW7]



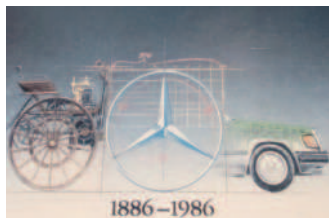
Mercedes 1834 1996, much sought-after model, unfinished project, 176,000 miles, mechanically ready for the road. £POA. Tel: 07977 460341. Lancashire. [FGW54]

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PARTS, MISC & ACCESSORIES



AMG hardback book Dealer supplied, dated 2004, 14 models, great photos, specs, unmarked pages, good as new, £12.50. Tel: 07399 359072 Canterbury [DEW1]



100-year calendar 1886-1986, large type, £35. Tel: 02083 997541. Surbiton [CM34P2]



17-inch alloy wheel A-Class, W176, B-Class W246, part number: A2464011400 with 225/45R17 tyre, £120 ONO. Tel: 07936 151814. Merseyside [CM34W1]



5x16-inch wheels Originally fitted to a 1996 Mercedes E320 Cabriolet Sportline (A124), now surplus to requirements, some have good Michelin tyres, £120 buyer collect. Tel: 07443 409694. Cornwall [CM34W3]

R107 450SL parts A load to choose from, call for more information, £POA. Tel: 07791 367651. Watford [DE]



Mercedes front grille Part no 1248880223M, excellent condition, £200. Tel: 07598 054620. Wrexham [ABW4]



Original photo archive Many makes and models, old and new, including road, race cars, rally cars, press, publicity, factory and private photos, please contact me with any wants and I will see what I have, £POA. Tel: 07809 221500. Peacehaven [CM33W13]



S-Class luxury boot liner This has come from my 2015 S350 (but can fit other models), it's a luxury padded boot liner to protect the boot from dirt and grime, collection only from Sandhurst, £10. Tel: 07708 037822. Sandhurst [CM35W6]



Owner manuals, first aid kits and grilles I have parts for W210, W123, W116, W126, W163, 124 and more, prices vary on model. Tel/Text: (224) 577 6676. Email: chrisszarek@yahoo.com. Chicago [GHW3]

NO. PLATES

A19 OEM

A19 OEM Perfect to add to any classic Mercedes Benz 190E, plate is on retention, available for quick transfer with costs already paid, £900. Tel: 07449 205448. Southampton [DE]

RAF 668

RAF 668 For sale, 668 was a WW2 squadron number, owned by me since 1973, has original registration book and 1973 MOT document, placed on retention in 2015, £POA. Tel: 07842 586858. Cheshire [CM33]

SMI4RTS

SMI4RTS Cherished numberplate, looks like 'SMARTS', would fit any car well, £5,250. Tel: 07583 613521. Tamworth [CM34]

12 RTP

12 RTP Private numberplate for sale, open to offers. Tel: 07858 264064. Malpas [BC]

MB 44

MB 44 Private numberplate for sale, £22,000 ONO. Email: annabella.blc@gmail.com. Lancs [BC]

WANTED

Set of genuine carpet mats for a 2006 W211 E320 Saloon Preferably a new or mint condition set. Tel: 07949 792278. Leeds [DE]
Old classic cars, motorbikes, vehicles or even aircraft Any condition, prepared to travel, please call Johnathan. Tel: 07753 931874 [DE]
W124 front/passenger or driver seat Black, the car is from 1994. Tel: 01516 390149. Wallasey [CM34]

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SLK32 AMG 2002, 94,000 miles, full service history, V6, superb condition, new wings, respray, wheel refurb, new set of Rainsport tyres, new battery, recent new discs/pads, secondary cat delete, sold with full MOT, Alpine hi-fi, iPod connection, call for more info and pictures, £10,000. Tel: 07539 935573. Wrexham [JKW48]



E320 Coupe 1994, blue/black over silver/grey, beige leather interior, sunroof, long MOT, very good condition, no rust, excellent engine and gearbox, lovely to drive, with many recent new parts to include, engine wiring loom, tyres, exhaust, suspension, £3,250. ONO. Tel: 07851 250111. Southport [JKW45]



280SL 2000, red with cream interior, excellent condition, fully loaded, 45,000 miles, full service history, £13,750. Tel: 07800 365076. East Sussex [JKW24]



123-series 230TE 1985, seven seats, automatic, Thistle Green metallic, this is a one off, collectors car with many extras and in superb condition, current recorded mileage is 7,519, top specification, heavily loaded with many extras, steel sliding sunroof, air conditioning, all electric windows, sun dim glass, graduated tinted front shield, electric mirrors, self levelling suspension, recommended at the beginning of the year, pristine condition, £23,800. Email: geminternational@newworld.com Hampshire [JKW40]



E240 Elegance 2000, 6,000 miles from new, full Mercedes-Benz service history, one previous owner, superb all round, no rust, garaged from new, too much to list here so please call for a detailed history, £7,250. Tel: 07850 012794. North Yorks [JKW47]



190D 1987, manual, five-cylinder 2.5, diesel, MOT has 11 months left, 65,000 miles, good condition, blue cloth interior, sunroof, radio/cassette player, car has been owned and garaged for the last four years, £2,500. Tel: 07791 651436. Glasgow [JKW44]



280E 1984, two lady owners from new, cherished and meticulously maintained, 112,000 miles from birth, genuine, cylinder head off with new valves in January 2016, brand new set of tyres, will be sold with 12 months MOT nearest offer, £15,000. Tel: 01225 425096. Bath [JKW43]



CLK430 Cabriolet 2001, good condition, well looked after, example of this model, dark blue metallic, good tyres, blue roof replaced two years ago, grey leather interior all good, the driver really well, 113,000 miles, serviced regularly and runs well, MOT until October 2017, new battery in June 2017, xenon conversion, Bose base boost system for music.



T24 E200 Estate 1994, great low mileage wagon, all MOTs, three owners, lovely condition inside and out, steel slide/tilt roof, mats and mud flaps, no issues, MOT until January 2018, serviced and brakes done, coil packs renewed, a really nice, honest car.



650B 2002, factory original, LHD, imported from Germany in 2002, 47,000 miles from new, finished in rare, Tekite Grey metallic, full black nappa leather interior, complete service history, original fully stamped service book, every MOT certificate since 2005, air conditioning, Command sat nav, electric sunroof, a truly outstanding example, unmolested and extra.



R129 280SL 1994, Brilliant Silver metallic, black leather trim, 58,322 genuine miles, MOT until July 2018, completely original, exceptional condition throughout, eight-hole alloy wheels, original hardtop, still has original driver's door lock barrel blanking grommet fitted, Blaupunkt Casablanca stereo, wind breaker, tool roll, original document pack, service history, two keys, old MOT's, receipts for work completed.

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From the archives > CLK GTR Roadster

CLK GTR Roadster

Delivered new to the Sultan of Brunei in 2006, this CLK GTR Roadster is chassis number two and one of just six made - we took it for a spin in 2011

WORDS LIZZIE POPE IMAGES ERIC RICHARDSON



The original CLK GTR of 1997 was Mercedes' first mid-engined production racing car, a joint project between AMG and Mercedes-Benz just a few years before AMG officially became part of the Mercedes family. It was created to compete in the then newly formed FIA GT championship. Cars competing in this series had to be based on road cars, of which at least 25 had to be built.

Information is hard to come by, but it seems the first 20 road cars were all coupes like the racing car. However, unlike the racers, the road cars used larger, 6.9-litre V12s that still gave a very impressive 604bhp. Following some prompting by the FIA, HWA (AMG's racing division), which had built the GTR coupes, set to work on the final few cars required to meet the regulations. This is when the Roadsters came into being, constructed, we understand, from spare parts left over from the initial planned run. Six Roadsters were built.

This car is Roadster chassis number two and the only right-hand drive example in existence.

Incidentally, there is also only one right-hand drive coupe. Both were made for the same owner and both were sold by RM Auctions in 2009 to private buyers, the Roadster going for £616,000, the coupe for £522,500.

While the first GTR Roadster chassis was used for promotional purposes, construction of this, the second, began in 2002. It was built to order for the Sultan of Brunei for a cool €1.3m and completed in August 2006.

Once inside, without a handle, closing the door is a case of flailing, grabbing bodywork and then pulling it towards you. Once shut and settled in the distinctive, deep purple leather seats, you realise how low you are sitting as the bodywork folds up and around you, not to mention how close you are to the person sat next to you. But

At only 3,000rpm the noise is exhilarating and deafening all at once.

△ GTR Roadster accelerates from 0-62mph in 3.8 seconds and maxes out at 199mph.

then this is a born racer, so it is only right that its occupants are assigned such a small portion of the car's length, the rest given over to technology with the sole aim of getting wherever you're going as quickly as possible.

That driving this car is a rather intimate experience is only emphasised as the V12 engine, sat just behind you, explodes into life. At only 3,000rpm the noise is exhilarating and deafening all at once – a raw, V12 blare that sets the hairs on the back of your neck on end. Its strong brakes are a reassurance as you approach a bend, its very direct, almost go kart-like steering making it easy to place in corners and quick to respond to your inputs.

▽ Subsequent owner and ex F1 team boss Vijay Mallya had this wider driver's seat fitted.

The real test was mastering the straight cut, six-speed sequential, hydraulic (not to mention recalcitrant) gearbox.

It is unusual – and somewhat counterintuitive – to have to pull a paddle and depress the clutch to engage a gear, the long travel on the clutch pedal making this process even harder to execute. Success brings a solid, heavy and rather harsh mechanical 'clunk' as the next gear engages. Yet this lack of refinement is part of the thrill of this car.

A few perfunctory nods to comfort and practicality do little to disguise the racer within. A phenomenal machine in itself, not forgetting the track success that led to its existence, the Mercedes-Benz CLK GTR Roadster is a star that deserves recognition.



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