



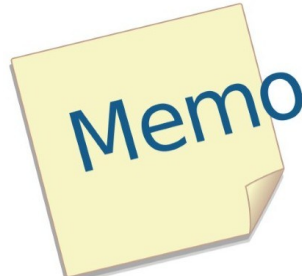
The Circle and Star

Mercedes-Benz Club of America
Nashville Section

January/February/March 2013 Volume 35, Issue 1

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From the Nashville Section
President's desk:

Randy Bibb

Mercedes-Benz of Nashville Open House – Saturday, Feb. 16, 2013

Mercedes-Benz "Autohaus" design standards. Everything from the exterior columns to the technicians' tool boxes was updated and highlighted with a liberal coat of "Mercedes-Benz Blue" paint.

Dear Nashville Section Members:

On Saturday, February 16, 2013, Mercedes-Benz of Nashville will host the Nashville Section for an open house and tour of the newly remodeled sales and service departments.



Star Sales Specialist Kirt Kuhn, 2012 Nashville Section Member of the Year, will be our host and tour guide.

We will plan to meet in the sales lobby starting at 10:00 a.m. for coffee and donuts. At 10:30 a.m., Kirt will lead us on a tour around the facility, including the service department, and at the end, test drives in some of Mercedes-Benz's latest products will be available for those interested. If you have not visited the boutique at the dealership lately, there is a host of new accessories and gifts available, and Club members are entitled to a 10 percent discount!

Mercedes-Benz of Nashville has been a loyal sponsor of the Nashville Section for many years. A number of us have purchased new or pre-owned cars there or take our cars there for service. Here is an opportunity to take a "behind the scenes" look at the dealership.

After the tour and test drives, we will take a five minute trip over to Buca di Beppo on Galleria Boulevard for lunch.

(continued on page 2)

"Spring Cleaning"



Even though Mercedes-Benz of Nashville has been at its current location for only about a decade, in 2012 it underwent a complete makeover to



Nashville Section Awards Dinner, November 10, 2012



Kirt Kuhn, left, receives the 2012 Nashville Section Member of the Year award from President Randy Bibb



Ed Johnson, left, congratulates President Randy Bibb as he receives the 2012 Central Region Officer of the Year award

Memo from the President, continued

Buca di Beppo features many Italian classics, including pizza, pastas, salads and soups. Those who have joined us for lunch at Buca di Beppo before know how good Italian "comfort food" can be.

Mercedes-Benz of Nashville is conveniently located at 630 Bakers Bridge Avenue, just off I-65 in Cool Springs. For more information and directions, call (615) 742-8000 or visit www.mercedesbenzofnashville.com.

Buca di Beppo is located at 1722 Galleria Boulevard, (615) 778-1321, www.bucadibeppo.com. There is no charge for this event, although lunch will be on your own. In order for us to let Kirt know how many to expect, **please RSVP to me by Friday, February 15, 2013, by calling (615) 259-1349 (office) or (615) 294-7325 (mobile) or by e-mail at rbibb@lewisking.com.**

Sincerely,

Randy Bibb, President, Nashville Section

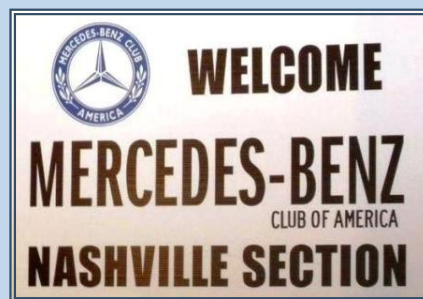
Nashville Section Leaders



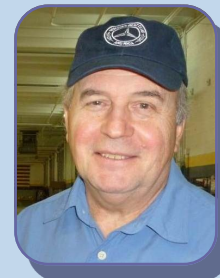
Randy Bibb
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Joel Morris
Vice President



Jan Diehl
Secretary / Treasurer



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MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA

More Than a Car. We're a Community.™

2012 in Review



2013 Calendar



What a great year 2013 is shaping up to be for the Nashville Section! First on the agenda on February 16 is the open house at Mercedes-Benz of Nashville, located at 630 Bakers Bridge Avenue in Franklin, Tennessee (pages 1-2). In this issue you'll also see a write-up from President Randy Bibb on our March 16 event, a tour of Lambert Auto (page 13). April 20 sees our first Open House at longtime sponsors Precision Autohaus, and May 5 is the ever-popular Shadowbrook Concours d'Elegance. May 18-20, of course, is StarTech 2013 (page 6), and many members are planning to attend that event. We'll tour the Carter House on June 22, head to Arrington Vineyards on July 21, and visit Leiper's Fork on August 24. We visit Lane Motor Museum October 19, and end the year with the Nashville Section Annual Dinner on November 16. There are a couple more possible outings in the works as well: **check our website, www.mbcnashville.org, for news and updates!**

StarTech 2013



MBCA's StarTech

StarTech is the Mercedes-Benz Club of America's **National Technical Event held every other year** to educate members on the technical aspects of Mercedes-Benz vehicles. StarTech brings together experts on a variety of topics related to restoration, maintenance, performance and general topics, so that members can learn more about the marque, allowing them to improve their own mechanical skills as well as better understand the advanced technology that is a hallmark of the brand.

About StarTech 2013

Hosted by the MBCA|Alabama Section, **StarTech 2013** is being held at the Mercedes-Benz United States International production facility and AIDT Bill Traylor Training Center **in Vance Alabama**. Nearby Birmingham also offers activities of interest such as Barber Motorsports Park and Museum, Classic Car Motoring, and a number of Alabama's Mercedes-Benz dealerships.

Special tours of the MBUSI Plant will be made available to StarTech 2013 attendees during the event, as well as plenty of one-on-one time with Mercedes-Benz engineers and experts.

StarTech 2013 Speakers will be a select group of experts on the restoration, maintenance, performance and repairing of Mercedes-Benz vehicles, from not only Mercedes-Benz corporate, but from throughout the Mercedes-Benz Club of America community. StarTech 2013 seminars are focused on technical subjects, but the event will be more than just all about automotive mechanical topics. StarTech 2013 will also feature a number of seminars and educational opportunities of interest to all MBCA members, from photographing to understanding the value of your vehicle.

Come learn more about the history, operation and maintenance of the Mercedes-Benz Brand, and enjoy learning more about a wide variety of Mercedes-Benz vehicles, yesterday, today and in the future.

REGISTER ONLINE: <https://www.regonline.com/mbcastartech2013>

Interview With Our Second President: Tom Diehl

It was primarily the work of three people that brought to life the idea of a Mercedes-Benz club in Nashville, and they are all still active members today: Ed Johnson, Tom Diehl, and Joel Morris.

In our last edition, we spoke with the Nashville Section's founding President, Ed Johnson. In the July 1980 issue of *The Circle & Star*, Ed wrote he would be stepping down as President, and the August 1980 issue reported that Tom Diehl's name had been placed in nomination for the office of President.

In this issue, we have a conversation with the second President of the Nashville Section: founding member Tom Diehl.

The Circle & Star: How did the Nashville Section get started?

Tom Diehl: In high school the cars that were cool to drive were Mustangs or GTOs—that sort of thing. But I had a 4-door Ford Falcon. Having a Mercedes-Benz in the early 80's sort of gave you the same feel as that GTO. In the 80's, that Mercedes-Benz was exotic. The local Mercedes-Benz dealer was gracious if you were buying a new car, but if you went there with a 10-year-old car, he wouldn't give you the time of day. If you were in the showroom and didn't look like you were going to buy, he would kind of cringe in fear that you might take a brochure home (and we did). So we needed to find people of like mind to talk to each other and find parts sources so we could keep those cars on the road. In some ways, the beginning of the club was that there was a group of us who all owned a Mercedes-Benz and we were just trying to keep them running and on the road!



Tom Diehl

What started your interest in Mercedes-Benz?

Tom Diehl: Well, I've always, all my life, had an interest in classic cars. I loved them, even loved to look at them in books. My grandmother had Chrysler Imperials, and—well, I just always liked classic cars. There's nothing more classic than Mercedes-Benz.

In my opinion, Mercedes-Benz has brought a lot of innovations to the industry that they don't get credit for. I think they're the best made car in the world.



Tom Diehl, Joel Morris

Interview...continued

When I was in school, back at Memphis University, there was a business in downtown Memphis that focused on classic car investments. There was a big showroom full of great stuff: they had a Gullwing, they had Rolls Royces, all different cars. I got a job there. All I did was hang out there, talk to people about cars, and answer the phone. I got interested in Gullwings just being around them. I remember the one they had was the same color as Joel Morris's Gullwing.

One of the real draws for me with Mercedes-Benz is I got caught up in the history – the racing history and all that stuff. I'm sure other people feel the same way about their Fords or Cadillacs. In the early days of the Mercedes-Benz Club we would have meetings from time to time where we showed movies about cars. I remember we saw a Mercedes-Benz documentary called "Mercedes-Benz in Aller Welt" – it showed the cars all over the world in all sorts of conditions.

C&S: You and Ed Johnson were two of the founders of the Nashville Section. How did you meet?

Tom Diehl: I graduated from college, moved to Nashville, and got a job at Cain-Sloan. Around 1977 or 1978 I got a promotion to Department Manager at the Green Hills store. The Divisional Manager there had a picture of a Mercedes-Benz on the wall of his office, so I knew he was a kindred spirit: it was Ed Johnson.

My first day, as I walked out of work, I saw Ed driving away in his 1962 220 SB. It was leaving a smoke plume, and I thought, "Man, that is a beautiful car, I want one of those!"



Ed Johnson, Tom Diehl

Well, I talked to him about it, and said if he found one to let me know. So he looked around for another 220, and remembered a neighbor of my parents had one. So I bought a 1964 220 from Mrs. Cox for \$300. It was barely running and I barely got it home. Ed helped me a lot.

I enjoyed the heck out of driving that '64 220. At that point in time, a Mercedes-Benz in Nashville Tennessee was an exotic car. People who were driving them were mostly wealthy people. They would buy them at Madison Smith, and the cost of upkeep was—well, you know, it was expensive.

So to have one back then, you were either living way beyond your means, or you were doing well and making money, and that was the mystique of the whole thing.

Interview...continued

C&S: What was the Club like in the early days?

Tom Diehl: I mentioned Joel Morris's Gullwing. Joel owning that Gullwing since the 1950s is *extremely* exotic. One of the first meetings we had, back before we were even officially chartered, was at Percy Warner Park. We had all the cars lined up on the road, just a long line, one Mercedes-Benz after the other.



I remember a guy was driving by with his girlfriend. He stopped his car in the middle of the road. He got out, left the door open, left his girlfriend in the car, left the motor running, and he walked up to Joel's car. His jaw dropped, and he said "I never thought I'd see something like this!"

We did so many different things. We sponsored a car show at Belle Meade Plantation. We included the Porsche car club and the Classic Car Club. We had the whole front lawn covered with all sorts of cars: the Mercedes-Benz Club, Rolls-Royce, Cadillacs, Packards, even a Stanley Steamer. This was before "Fall Fest" or any of those sorts of things happened at the Plantation. I like to think we started it all.

C&S: You've owned several cars. Which one has made the biggest impression on you?

Tom Diehl: I bought the 1959 220 S I have now in January of 1979. [\[Editor's note: at the end of this interview, see an email about the origins of this car\]](#) I can't tell you how strong an attachment I have to that car. It may sound strange, but it was an emotional experience.

That first Mercedes-Benz, the '64 220 I bought from Mrs. Cox, truly was a \$300 car. It needed everything. I took it down to Wurster's Foreign Car Repair in Franklin, Alfred Wurster's shop.

In those days, it was an effort to get your car out there to get it repaired. If you drove it there for an oil change or other work, you tended to just wait there while they worked on it. And while you waited, you might "nose around" the parking lot. Fred Wurster always had a lot of cars parked out behind his shop – some were being worked on, and some had been given up on.

This time, I saw the 1959 220 S. It was for sale. And I thought: "Oh yeah, that car's for sale, let me start it up." When I heard the engine, I was hooked. I had to have it. I took it for a test drive down Franklin Road, and I had to have it.

Interview...continued

C&S: So, since these cars were so “exotic” back then, did you have to be a shade-tree mechanic in order to keep them going?

Tom Diehl: I was not a mechanic, but if I messed up and the car caught on fire, well, heck, the car only cost \$300! I learned so much. Ed had been working on his, and he helped a lot. At the time, we tried to do all the work ourselves. Back then, when we were working for Cain-Sloan, we weren't taking home all that much money, so we had to learn “do it yourself” mechanic work.

I remember one day, close to payday, Ed and I headed to a restaurant to eat lunch. Neither of us knew it at the time, but he was planning to borrow from me to buy lunch, and I was planning to borrow from him. So here's the Department Manager and his boss the Division Manager, both driving a Mercedes-Benz, wearing suits and ties, and we couldn't buy lunch!

There were a lot of people like us, people who bought a Mercedes-Benz because it was a very durable car and a good value for the money.

That '64 220 had faded paint and the inside was rough. It had lived a hard life. The rocker panels were rusted out, so I made a set of rocker panels for the car. I took an old screen window, fashioned it around the old rocker panels, then I took a fiberglass repair kit and covered the screen with fiberglass. When I painted it, I had a rocker panel that would never rust, and it looked pretty good.

Sometimes with that car I had to do a little mechanic work at night to get it where I could drive to work the next day. About this time I was working in the insurance industry and I had to visit clients, and I used this car. One day we had a snowstorm, and on the way home that night, the generator light came on. So I dug a trench in the snow to get under the car, and plugged a work light into an extension cord. When Ed Johnson showed up to help, he found me under the car by following the extension cord.

Despite those situations, people really did notice that car. People would call into my office and say they wanted to speak with “the fellow that's driving the Mercedes-Benz.” That car was a great learning experience. I got ever dime I ever put into it out of it when I sold it.

C&S: Anything you'd like to tell people about Mercedes-Benz or the Nashville Section of the Club?

Tom Diehl: Everybody's time is valuable and everyone is over-committed nowadays. Sometimes people think about joining a club as just another commitment. But for 49 bucks, you get a wonderful magazine, help with technical issues, a ready marketplace to buy or sell Mercedes-Benz, the Nashville Section's newsletter, discounted parts and labor at the local dealer – heck, why *wouldn't* somebody join? In 2013 already I've made back the annual

Interview...continued

membership fee through some work done on my car. All the events you can attend and friends you can meet are just icing on the cake.

The Mercedes-Benz Club truly has been a positive force in my life. It's a way that people can communicate with each other without politics or religion or anything else entering into the picture. And the result has been driving the best car in the world, getting to know a really nice group of people, and forming great friendships. I will always be a member. If I live so long that I can't drive, I will still be a member.



The Origin of Tom Diehl's 1959 220 S

From: BeBe Bryant

To: Tom Diehl

Subject: The Story of the Traveling Mercedes: 1959 220 S

Tom, the beginning of this story starts in West Germany, in 1959. The city is Frankfurt and the event is a car accident between a German gentleman and my father, Welch Bryant. No one was hurt, but my father's car was a complete wreck.

Gunter Loher, a good family friend, suggested to my father to come with him to visit a friend who managed a car factory. He said that my father then could return to the States with the best-made car in the world.

Needless to say, it was the Mercedes-Benz factory!

After selecting the make, model, color inside and out, and accessories, my father re-

Interview...continued

turned home to collect the money to pay for the car. The next few weeks were filled with paperwork and with the help of USAA and the local German bank; we collected the cash and returned to the factory.

My family laughs even today about the trip from the bank to home. You see, the cash was placed in brown paper bags and my 7 year old brother held them in his lap.

My father was to leave Germany within the next few weeks and needed the car to be in the USA upon his arrival. The factory was able to send the car on ahead, and when we arrived in the USA we picked up the car. The stares and comments were very unique and we enjoyed the car for many years.

Fast forward to 2012. Jan Diehl purchased a new Mercedes-Benz and I admired it, with the return of fond memories of my old friend, the 1959 220 S. In our conversation, I told her my story and she produced a picture of Tom's Mercedes-Benz. My heart dropped: the car in the picture looked so familiar!

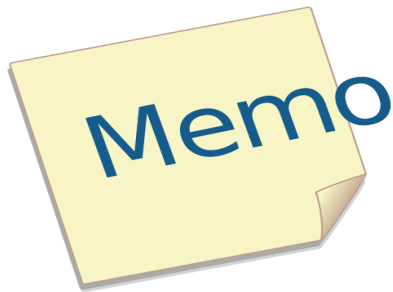
In September 2012, Tom drove his car for me to see it. It fit everything I remembered from our Mercedes-Benz: from the roof, to the colors, the make, the model, the reclining front seat, and many more small details.

I will not absolutely swear that this is the same car—but if it isn't, it is a perfect replica. It is hard to believe that this car has been taken care of with loving hands and thoughts, and has lasted for these many years.

Mercedes-Benz is truly the best made car in the world.

BeBe Bryant





From the Nashville Section
President's desk:

Randy Bibb

On Saturday, March 16, 2013, the Nashville Section will have a rare opportunity to tour the workshop of one of the country's leading specialists in classic cars. [Mark Lambert](#) will show us around his garage, [Lambert Auto](#), starting at 10:00 a.m. Afterwards, we'll go next door for lunch at [M.L. Rose](#), one of Nashville's hottest new diners. I can assure you that you won't want to miss this event.



Located in an old firehouse on Charlotte Pike in Nashville, Lambert Auto specializes in servicing the [Full Classics™](#) along with other pre-war American and post-war European cars. It's a "Back to the Future" experience as the overhead door opens, and you step into the workshop. **Currently, one of Lambert's projects is a rare Dietrich-bodied Packard convertible sedan.** It's a really BIG car. Not only will you have an opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes look at the restoration of classic cars, but Mark will also answer your questions concerning what makes a car a classic, how classic cars should be restored, how they are judged and what trends he sees in classic car collecting.

Mark has been in business for more than 30 years, and his customers are located around the globe. Lambert Auto was featured, along with Jay Leno's garage and 23 others across the U.S., in author Phil Berg's best-selling book *Ultimate Garages*.

Mark is a veteran judge at several major Concours including the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, The Elegance at Hershey and The Glenmoor Gathering.

Getting to Lambert Auto is easy. It's located at 4406 Charlotte Pike, just to the east of the 46th Avenue North exit on I-40 in West Nashville.

Lunch for those interested will be at 11:30 a.m. at M.L. Rose. Located at 4408 Charlotte Pike, M.L. Rose is in the old Lavender Motors building. The restaurant specializes in craft beers and burgers, and the decor is automotive, including a number of pieces donated by Mark Lambert. There are literally dozens of draft and bottled beers, and while burgers are the house specialty, there are also soups, salads and sandwiches. For more information, check out their [website](#).

There is no charge for this event, but lunch is on your own. In order to let the restaurant know how many to expect, please RSVP no later than Thursday, March 14, 2013, by giving me a call at 615-259-1349 (office) or 615-294-7325 (mobile) or by e-mail at rbibb@lewisking.com.

We hope all of you can join us for what will be an unforgettable experience.

Sincerely,

Randy Bibb, President, Nashville Section

MBCA Membership Form

Please print clearly

Full Name

Associate Member (spouse or dependent)

Address

City State Zip

(_____) (_____) _____
Home Phone Business Phone

Occupation

E-mail Address

Mercedes-Benz cars now owned (model/year)

New Member Renewing Member (check one)

If Renewing, Member Number: _____

Interests:

Driving Events Car Shows Car Care
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Please enroll me as an MBCA Member for:

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 3 Years (\$139)

Make check payable to MBCA; Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express also accepted. If using a credit card, please complete the following:

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1990 Mercedes-Benz 560SEL. Bought another car so this one needs a good home! 2 owner Tennessee car, 198,400 miles, non-smoker, all records. Smoke Silver / Cream Beige. \$6,500 negotiable. More information, lots of pictures, all details: adam2002blackwell@yahoo.com

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FREE text-only classified ads for members! 35 words max. Use your phone or email or the Club's email for contact. We can link to your pdf flyer too. Display ads with pictures are **DISCOUNTED** for members!

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Two-owner turbo diesel, 94,000 miles. Very clean car, nice interior, plenty of power. Good tires, good brakes, good air conditioner and heater. New water pump, thermostat, belts and door seals. \$4,800 OBO. Pictures, details: correahector77@hotmail.com

Stay Connected: www.mbcanashville.org

If you have not yet given us your email address, please send it to MBCANashville@yahoo.com so you can be notified of any updates to our website AND be the first to get news as it happens!

The screenshot shows the website header with navigation links: Home, News & Events, About Us, Partners & Links, Contact Us, and Phone 888-800-0982. Below the header is a large image of the Nashville skyline. Text on the page includes: "Nashville Section: Southern Kentucky through Middle Tennessee to Northern Alabama", "For more than three decades, the Mercedes-Benz Club of America's Nashville Section has been a gathering point for Mercedes-Benz enthusiasts in the central South. Founded in 1978, the Nashville Section hosts activities each month from February through November: winery tours, rallies, luncheons and dinners, tech sessions, driving events, new product ride-and-drive introductions, and a year-end dinner and awards ceremony.", "2013 Events: take a look!" with a blue arrow pointing down, and a "2013 Calendar" section with links for February 16 (Mercedes-Benz), March 16 (Lambert Auto tour and M.L. Rose lunch), April 20, and May 18-20 (StarTech 2013 and MBUSI tour, Birmingham).

The screenshot shows a "Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Nashville Section" page. It features a "Happy Valentine's Day" announcement: "Hector Correa is the lucky Nashville Section member who won the drawing. Congratulations, Hector!" with a "Follow us on Facebook" link. Below this is a "REMEMBER: Valentine's Day is Thursday, February 14!" graphic with hearts. To the right is a photo of an awards dinner with the caption "MBCA Nashville: A Look At 2012". At the bottom, there is a photo of Kirt Kuhn receiving an award from Ed Johnson, with the caption "Nashville Section Awards Dinner at Stoney River, November 10, 2012: Take a look!" and "Kirt Kuhn, left, receives the 2012 Nashville Section Member of the Year award from President Randy Bibb".

Art Deco Auto Exhibit — Frist Center

It's not strictly Mercedes-Benz news—but this should be exciting for all automobile enthusiasts: the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville will present an exhibition this summer of Art Deco automobiles from some of the most renowned car collections in the United States. **The exhibition, *Sensuous Steel: Art Deco Automobiles*, will be on view in the Center's Ingram Gallery from June 14 — Sept. 15, 2013.**

Sensuous Steel is organized for the Frist Center by **guest curator Ken Gross, former director of the Petersen Automotive Museum.** Gross served as guest curator for *The Allure of the Automobile*, a nationally acclaimed exhibition displayed at Atlanta's High Museum of Art in 2010; additionally, he developed a revised version of the exhibition for the Portland Art Museum the following year. Most recently, Gross curated *Speed: The Art of the Performance Automobile*, currently on view at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the opening exhibition for LeMay—America's Car Museum in Tacoma, Wash.



A highly respected automotive journalist for over 40 years, Gross writes for numerous publications including *AutoWeek*, *Playboy*, *Hagerty's Magazine*, *Sports Car Market*, *Motor Trend Classic*, *Popular Mechanics*, *msnautos.com*, *Old Cars Weekly* and *The Rodder's Journal*. A noted authority on automobiles, he **has judged at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance for 24 years. Gross also judges at the Amelia Island Concours and was the Chief Judge at the Rodeo Drive Concours d'Elegance.**

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