



# The Circle and Star

## Mercedes-Benz Club of America Nashville Section

July/August/September 2013

Volume 35, Issue 3

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**HOTLINE: 888-800-0982**



From the Nashville Section  
President's desk:

## Randy Bibb

### Arrington Vineyard Wine Outing Sunday, September 29, 2013

The Nashville Section will host a trip to [Arrington Vineyards](#) on Sunday afternoon, September 29, 2013. The Club's winery trips have proven to be one of the most popular events on the Club's schedule. This will be the Section's first trip to Arrington Vineyards in more than two years, so don't be left out.

Arrington Vineyards is located at 6211 Patton Road in Arrington, Tennessee, just off Highway 96 between Franklin and Murfreesboro. If you are traveling from Nashville, follow Interstate 65 South to Exit 65 (Highway 96) and turn left. Stay on Highway 96 East for 7.4 miles, and then turn right on Cox Road. Proceed on Cox Road for two miles and turn left on Patton Road. The winery entrance will be on the right in less than one-quarter mile.

Those who wish to caravan to the winery should plan to meet at 1 p.m. at Mercedes-Benz of Nashville (630 Bakers Bridge Road, Franklin) for the 20-minute drive to the Vineyard. Please note that this will be a rain or shine event.

Once at the Vineyard, members and their guests can enjoy the wine tastings and the [Music in the Vines](#) con-

cert by the [Reed Pittman Trio](#). Be sure to bring some cheese, bread and fruit to enjoy with the wine, or you can buy gourmet chocolates, cheese, crackers and sausage from the winery. And yes, wine is available for purchase from the wine shop at Arrington Vineyard – even on Sunday. But please don't bring your own wine or beer or pet on the trip – those are all strictly verboten!

For more information about Arrington Vineyards, its history and its wines, call (615) 395-0102, or visit their website, [www.arringtonvineyards.com](http://www.arringtonvineyards.com).

While we will try to snare enough picnic tables for everyone who comes, you should plan to pack a blanket and some lawn chairs in order to spread out and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

If you are planning to attend this event, please let us know through the Nashville Section website, [www.mbcnashville.org](http://www.mbcnashville.org); by dropping me an e-mail at [rbibb@lewisking.com](mailto:rbibb@lewisking.com); or by calling me at 615-294-7325 or 615-259-1349, so we can let Arrington Vineyards know how many to expect.

We hope to see all of you at Arrington Vineyards on Sunday afternoon, September 29.



## Nashville Section Leaders



**Randy Bibb**  
*President*  
rbibb@lewisking.com



**Joel Morris**  
*Vice President*



**Jan Diehl**  
*Secretary / Treasurer*



**Ed Johnson**  
*Membership Director*  
wizardofgraz@yahoo.com



**Kelly Graham**  
*Website / Newsletter*  
MBCANashville@yahoo.com



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# 2013 Monterey Car Week



Jay Leno at the Rolex Historic Races at Laguna Seca Raceway on Saturday, August 17

Some of the Pagodas in the Concours on the Avenue Tuesday, August 13, in Carmel-by-the-Sea. Randy Bibb's Pagoda, here shown in front, was an invited entry in *Legends of the Autobahn* at Monterey Car Week



Some of the Pagodas in the Concours on the Avenue Tuesday, August 13, in Carmel-by-the-Sea



Patrick Dempsey with Craig Jackson of Barrett-Jackson auctions at the Rolex Historic Races on Saturday, August 17



Dario and Marino Franchitti at The Quail, a Motorsports Gathering, on Friday, August 16

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# 2013 CALENDAR

Saturday,  
February 16  
Mercedes-Benz  
of Nashville  
Open House

Saturday,  
March 16  
Lambert Auto  
Open House

Saturday,  
April 20  
Precision  
Autohaus  
Open House

Sunday,  
May 5  
Shadowbrook  
Clean Car  
Classic

May 18 – 20  
StarTech 2013  
Birmingham,  
Alabama

Saturday,  
June 22  
Historic  
Carnton Tour

Sunday,  
July 14  
Sensuous  
Steel,  
Frist Center

Sunday,  
July 28  
Concours  
d'Elegance  
of America  
Plymouth, MI

Saturday,  
August 24  
Luxury Imports  
of Bowling  
Green Open  
House

Sunday,  
September 29  
Arrington  
Vineyards  
wine-tasting  
and lunch

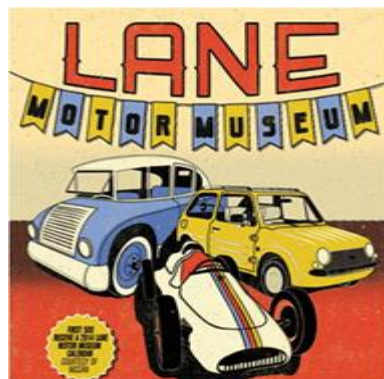
Saturday,  
October 19  
Lane  
Motor  
Museum

Sunday,  
November 17  
Nashville  
Section  
Member of the  
Year Brunch,  
Sunset Grill

Updates are ongoing; check our website, [www.mbcnashville.org](http://www.mbcnashville.org), for news and details



**Arrington Vineyards  
Sunday, September 29**



**Lane Motor Museum  
Saturday, October 19**



**Sunset Grill  
Sunday, November 17**

## Carnton Plantation, June 22, 2013

On Saturday, June 22, 2013, members of the Nashville Section of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America toured historic Carnton Plantation in Franklin. Many members met at Mercedes-Benz of Nashville for the 20 minute drive to Carnton.



[Carnton](#) was built in 1826 by former Nashville mayor Randal McGavock (1768-1843). Throughout the nineteenth century it was frequently visited by those shaping Tennessee and American history, including President Andrew Jackson.

On November 30, 1864, Carnton was witness



to what is believed to be the bloodiest five hours of the Civil War, the [Battle of Franklin](#). It included a massive frontal assault larger than Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. The majority of the combat occurred in the dark and at close quarters. Carnton served as the largest field hospital in the area for hundreds of wounded and dying Confederate soldiers. The floors of the home are still stained with the blood of men who were treated there.

In early 1866, Carnton's owners, John and Carrie McGavock, designated two acres of



land adjacent to their family cemetery as a final burial place for nearly 1,500 Confederate soldiers killed during the Battle of Franklin. Today, the [McGavock Confederate Cemetery](#) is a lasting memorial honoring those fallen soldiers and the Battle of Franklin. It is the largest privately owned military cemetery in the nation.

### **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  
 Social Events  Technical  The Star

Please enroll me as an MBCA Member for:

1 Year (\$49)  2 Years (\$95)  
 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:

Visa  MasterCard  
 Discover  American Express

\_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Account Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

#### **Nashville Section**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Referred by (Member name/number)

Mail: MBCA  
P.O. Box 50291  
Nashville, TN 37205

Web: [www.mbcanashville.org](http://www.mbcanashville.org)



**Club Event  
Hotline  
888-800-0982**

# Sensuous Steel: Art Deco Automobiles

## July 14, 2013

50 members and guests of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Nashville Section, enjoyed a tour of the Frist Center for the Visual Arts *Sensuous Steel* exhibit on Sunday, July 14. *Sensuous Steel* was organized for the Frist by guest curator Ken Gross, former director of the Petersen Automotive Museum.



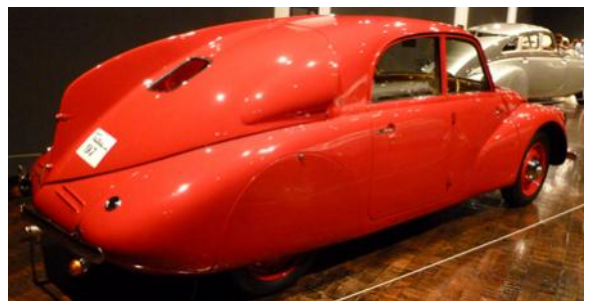
Beginning about 11:15 a.m., the group gathered in the parking lot behind the Frist. It was a beautiful sunny (and warm!) day and as the group grew, we walked across the street to sit in the courtyard until the Frist doors opened.



Promptly at noon, the group entered the (nicely air-conditioned!) Frist and headed to the Rector Room where our lunch was waiting for us. Turns out the chicken salad sandwich was pretty popular, and there was a tiny glitch with the number of those boxes, but it was quickly remedied and we all had lunch. Reports are that all three sandwich choices were



great! President Randy Bibb welcomed everyone and noted the event was a sell-out and we had the maximum capacity of 50 attending. Randy reminded



the group of the upcoming October 19 visit to Lane Motor Museum, noting that Lane Motor Museum had provided one of the cars we would see in the Sensuous Steel exhibit.



## Sensuous Steel...continued



We had a nice surprise in that Ellen Pryor, Director of Communications for the Frist, offered to lead a personalized tour for our group. A longtime [automobile enthusiast](#) and author of the NDrive column for *NFocus* magazine, Ellen brought a wealth of knowledge to the tour and it was much appreciated.



For the first time in the history of the Frist, pictures (*sans* flash, of course) were allowed in the gallery, so many in the group snapped away during the tour, and you see some of those pictures on these two pages.





# Bowling Green, August 24, 2013

Some 25 members of the Nashville Section traveled to Bowling Green, Kentucky on Saturday, August 24, for an Open House at Luxury Imports of Bowling Green. It was a beautiful sunny day, perfect for the drive just over the border to the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Kentucky.



General Manager Brett Denver and his staff welcomed our group and offered us the run of the dealership for the day.

Doughnuts, fruit, and other treats were offered, and each Nashville Section member left with a Mercedes-Benz coffee cup and a “Mercedes Star” pin from the Mercedes-Benz Collection.

Nashville Section members met Jamie Posey, Customer Relation/BDC Manager; looked at the beautiful cars on the floor; visited with Parts Manager Tom Hill; and took some test drives.



Afterward many in the group met at Rafferty’s for a terrific lunch, then made the drive back home. We want to thank Brett, Jamie, Tom, and everyone at Luxury Imports of Bowling Green for a terrific day!



# Welcome to New Members

2013 has been a great year so far for new memberships for the Nashville Section. THANK YOU to all who have referred new members to us, bringing us to 202 members to date.

Remember, you benefit from referrals as well, with an extra month added to your membership for every new member you refer!

New members since our second quarter newsletter include:



Ralph Cadenhead  
 Alice Choate  
 Dell Crosslin  
 Stuart Doane  
 Janet Mills

# Welcome!



Seated L-R: Jeff Coker, Kevin Pomeroy, Richard Coker. Standing L-R: Ray Coker, Rick Wolfe



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## Interview With Our 4th President: Bill Rucinski

We have been re-visiting each past president of the Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Nashville Section, in recent editions of *The Circle & Star*.

In our last edition, we spoke with the Nashville Section's third President, founding member Joel Morris. In this issue, we have a conversation with the fourth President of the Nashville Section: Bill Rucinski.

### **The Circle & Star: How did you become a fan of the Mercedes-Benz marque?**

**Bill Rucinski:** My wife Susan wanted a Mercedes-Benz, and she selected a 1981 300D. They lasted a long time and were very reliable. They were number one on the Consumer Reports list and had great rankings from JD Power, in part because they had the European idea that parts should be repaired rather than, for example, replacing a whole dashboard if one component went out.



Then I bought a 1983 240D in 1987 for \$12,500. It had 30,000 miles on it and it was pristine. At 350,000 miles I put another engine in it, and ultimately I put 368,000 miles on that car. Sold it in 2005 for \$5,000, and it was still in really good shape. I sold it because my wife bought a new diesel when they came out again in 2005, so she gave me the 1999 320D she had purchased new.

### **C&S: How did you source the new engine?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I got a factory rebuilt zero-time engine. Probably paid \$3,000 or \$4,000, and it came with every accessory except the air conditioner compressor. And it came with a new car warranty, so when I sold that car it didn't just have 368,000 miles on it – it also had a new car warranty on the engine.



### **C&S: How did you like the 320D?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I hate to say it, but that was a real troublesome car. Had to install three radiators, three sets of glow plugs, and had to get into the air conditioner at least twice. At only 150,000 miles it had a cracked head. I thought about a new engine, but Mercedes-Benz

## Interview...continued

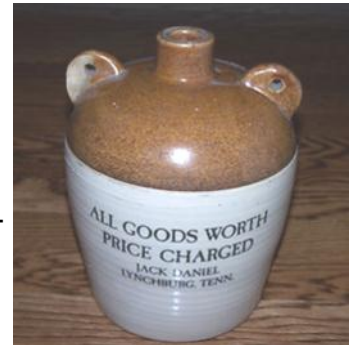
no longer had a program like they used to have for a factory rebuilt engine. I got an estimate from the dealer, and it was \$8,000 to \$10,000, which was more than the car was worth. I just didn't want to do that, so I traded it in.

### **C&S: What was the next vehicle?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I traded it in on a Honda. Ed Johnson asked me, "Why Honda??!" I said I had to have a car to rely on while the 320D was in the shop! It was in there every few months for something. Right now, I don't have a Mercedes-Benz, and my wife has a 2005 diesel.

### **C&S: Are you in the market for a Mercedes-Benz again?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I've found the reliability has gone down on some of the newer models. Now there are computers and other components that tend to break. I'm looking now for a Mercedes-Benz – maybe an SL, an older one, maybe really old. Or I might just try to get another 240D. The reliability is really important to me and I think some of the newer models are overpriced for the reliability they have. I'm an aircraft mechanic – not by trade, but I happen to be one – and I understand maintenance, preventive maintenance, and reliability. I do all the maintenance on my airplane. Mercedes-Benz offers very expensive cars, and that used to be justified: Like Jack Daniel's says, "Worth Price Charged."



### **C&S: Speaking of being "worth it," didn't that 240D literally take a bullet for you?**

**Bill Rucinski:** Yes: my wife Susan and I were driving back home from Dickson, Tennessee, and went through Franklin. We were heading east on Highway 96 between Franklin and Murfreesboro, and as we came up over a rise the windshield just exploded on the right side. A bullet hit the windshield and ricocheted off. The impact spiderwebbed the windshield of the car. It was a strong windshield, but some debris flew back into the rear window area. I realized what happened, floored it and drove about a mile down the road before calling Tennessee Highway Patrol. They came out and looked around. It had to have been someone with a rifle, pretty far off the highway. It was the day before deer season and THP suggested it might have been someone sighting his rifle. But I'm pretty sure it was deliberate – it was an ivory colored car and made a pretty obvious target, and the bullet was aimed straight into the passenger side of the



## Interview...continued

windshield. That windshield probably did save our lives. The bullet didn't penetrate the windshield, so THP duct-taped the area and reported it as an "unknown cause" incident. We didn't pursue anything else; it seemed silly to take law enforcement time for that.

Another time, I was just going to work, minding my own business, stopped at a traffic light. A woman from Kingston Springs came flying up in a Jeep and directly hit the 240D in the rear. It messed up the car, but it was still drivable. My father-in-law had a similar situation when he was driving a GM car, and the damage was much, much worse. The Mercedes-Benz system worked to protect me.

### **C&S: How did you get involved with the Nashville Section?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I had a friend who was a Mercedes-Benz enthusiast who invited me to a Nashville Section picnic in Edwin Warner park. I found it to be a really nice group of people. I liked the social events and especially the amount of technical information that was available.



Frank King was for years and years the tech advisor, and he knew everything: you just had to start talking and he knew what the issue was. The amount of expert technical advice you could access was most valuable to me, and now, of course, the dealership gives discounts.

There's great camaraderie in the club; I got to know a man named George Murphy who had a lot of parts for the old cars. Back then sourcing the parts was really important because you could fix things pretty easily. At one point I needed a speedometer and couldn't find exactly the right one, so George rebuilt my old speedometer for me. While I was waiting for that one to be rebuilt, Ed Johnson gave me one to use in the meantime.

### **C&S: So how did you become the Nashville Section's fourth President?**

**Bill Rucinski:** I was drafted into becoming President. My attitude was, "If nominated I won't run, if elected I won't serve" – but we had a member, Catheryn Horton, who was so persistent it became easier to accept being President than argue with her! She was "Mrs. Mercedes," she had a heart of gold and was a very active hands-on type member. She was a lovely person, one of those members who always "spoke Mercedes." I remember she

## Interview...continued

won one of the national Club raffles — she won the 1999 diesel. That was the last year diesels were being imported, and I remember the one she won was Smoke Silver. Several Nashville Section members bought that 1999 diesel: Tom Diehl, Karen Johnson, and two other members.



**C&S: One of the things people remember about your tenure as President is the blue newsletters. What made you decide on blue?**

**Bill Rucinski:** My newsletters were, shall we say, Spartan. I used the blue paper because I just thought it looked better than white paper, and it didn't cost any more. Ed Johnson was always a lot of help. I don't consider myself a great public speaker and he would often fill in for that, but of course he has always been the driving force of the Club.

**C&S: Anything else people should know about Mercedes-Benz or the Club?**

**Bill Rucinski:** You know, I drive a lot of cars, I rent a lot of cars. Nothing rides like a Mercedes-Benz. I drive Porsche, Jaguar, BMW – and even the smaller Mercedes-Benz models ride better than any of those other cars. Mercedes-Benz is a truly fine car. For example, even the paint quality is better. The paint holds up so well that even though a car is 7, 8, 9 or more years old, an excellent body shop like Benchmark can match the paint. I have never seen paint “go bad” on a Mercedes-Benz like you see on some other cars. And we have a great relationship with the dealership. They have some good mechanics and technicians. The dealership really does help the Club. The Nashville Section is a group of wonderful people, and the camaraderie is great. The technical advice is terrific, and the Star magazine is an excellent benefit.



**MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA**

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# My “Benchmark” Experience

by Kelly Graham

One afternoon this summer, as I headed home in bumper-to-bumper traffic, I was involved in a small auto accident. Said accident involved the front fender, grille, and hood of my cherished E500 being bent (smashed, twisted, wrecked) by contact with the rear bumper of the truck in front.

After exchanging insurance information with the other driver (which was pretty quick, since the first words out of his mouth were “I don’t have insurance”), I knew there were other important calls I needed to make: to the insurance company, for example, to report the incident.

However, I have my priorities straight (!), and I made the most important call first: to Benchmark Collision. It was well after 6 p.m. and they close at 5 p.m., so I was pretty sure no one would answer. But I wanted to try anyway, because the most important thing to me was getting my E500 in to Benchmark as soon as possible. I had been grocery shopping right after work, and the groceries slowly melting in the back seat were a concern; but my E500’s body repair was even more important.

To my surprise, shock, and joy, someone at Benchmark picked up the phone: Paul Hubbard. I explained the situation, and his first question was “Are you okay?” I explained that I was fine and the car was drivable, and I just wanted to get it there as soon as possible. I added that I had called someone to meet me at Benchmark so I could catch a ride home. Paul said not to worry, that he would wait for me, and to take my time and be careful. And he said if my friend couldn’t meet me there, he would take me (and the groceries) home.

I appreciate Benchmark as a longtime sponsor of the Nashville Section. But Benchmark is my body shop of choice because, in addition to great work, they understand the importance of their relationship with their customers.

I always hope I won’t need ’em again — but if I do, there’s no other place I would trust with my car.



# Member Classified Ads

## MEMBER CLASSIFIEDS

**FOR SALE:**

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](mailto:adam2002blackwell@yahoo.com)

**FOR SALE:**

1985 300CD Turbo, Petrol Green, 150K miles. New tires, battery, belt & hoses. Strong; dependable; drive anywhere. \$5000 O.B.O. Contact J.T. @ 615-289-4667 [jtbenzman1@aol.com](mailto:jtbenzman1@aol.com)

**FOR SALE:**

'59 190 SL. Red/Camel. Restored by Bud's Benz, Weber carbs, electric fuel pump & ignition. Both tops. All records dating back to original factory delivery in 1959. Many pictures. \$36,000 OBO. Details at (615) 859-0526.

**FOR SALE:**

1985 300TD, Sedan, Manila Beige/Palomino, Florida car, 164K, from original owner, a snowbird, pristine, \$8500. Call Don @ (615) 298-1801 or email [mrdonday@gmail.com](mailto:mrdonday@gmail.com)

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