



# TRI-ANGLES

**The Official MBCA Minuteman Section News-Letter Spring/Summer 2017 Edition**

**President's Message:**

**By Ed Owen**

Dear Minuteman Section Members,

I hope everybody is enjoying their summer and the open road season here in New England. I am happy to report our membership grew over the last quarter and we had some fun events including, Art of the Automobile, the EAS tech session, Track Day at Thompson Speedway, trip to Barrett-Jackson, and the tailgate party and the Myopia Polo Club. I would like to thank all that participated and all those who helped organize.

I hope more of you are considering getting involved and enjoying the events. I hope to see you all out there at Germanfest in September and Faberrallye in October. Ernie and Bonnie Fancy have been organizing a fun rally in Western Massachusetts and the room lock deadline is fast approaching. Spread the word and lets have some fun!

**Ed Owen - President**

**Mercedes Benz Club America, Minuteman Section**



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Copy Deadlines: 15th of March, June, September and December.

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MBCA's Main Homepage:

[www.mbcna.org](http://www.mbcna.org)

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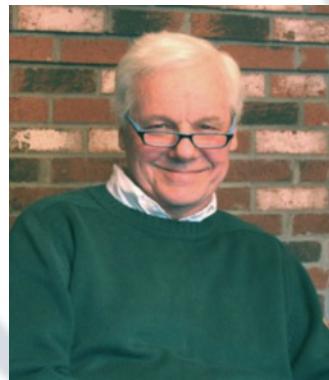
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## The Editor's Desk

Spring and Summer seem to go by faster and faster each year. We've had a number of events in the Spring and Summer, such as the Tech Session at European Auto Solutions, Track Day at Thompson, the Art of the Automobile in Government Center, and Barrett Jackson at Mohegan Sun. More recently, a group of us attended a polo match in Hamilton, MA under a catered tent and look forward to some more great events this fall including Germanfest and our biggest event, Farberrallye XL in October. Please fill out the sign up forms for Farberrallye in this newsletter, and sign up early to make sure you can get space in the hotel before it fills up! Also included in this newsletter, you can look forward to a great Headlight restoration article to help clear up those cloudy cataracts. I've also written a short piece about my experience attending the Formula 1 British Grand Prix at Silverstone Circuit.

Sincerely,  
Court Brannen



## Tech Article

### ON THE ROAD WITH MY SL500

By Peter Vanderveer

I recently joined the Mercedes-Benz sports car owners when I acquired a 1994 SL500. My light blue SL with a lovely dark blue interior and dark blue soft top arrived on a flatbed with 12 years of garage dust bunnies layered on the body. The mighty twin cam V-8 engine sat silent for all that time! The owner's idea was to have it fixed up to sell since the SL's storage arrangement had stopped working.

Getting this SL500 ready for the market included engine wiring harnesses, a pesky leaking power steering pump, tires, brakes, belts and the like plus a leak in the air conditioner plumbing system. The amount to do all this work was considered untenable so the car became available "as is" and I kind of went for it on a whim.

As soon as the SL was ready, I drove it for the first time and was thrilled with its performance. With 322 horsepower, the 1994 V-8 moves out with authority and typical Mercedes-Benz comfort and poise.

All fixed up with a nice set of 18" AMG wheels and sport tires I took it to Canada for this year's F-1 Grand Prix du Canada race weekend. From Boston, it is a pretty 6-hour tour thru Vermont and up to the biggest weekend of the year for the host city Montreal. In 1993, our Minuteman Section ventured up to the F-1 race in Montreal and I remember meeting Doug Dees, who was affiliated with the Mercedes-Benz club in Canada and who graciously hosted the club members in attendance.

The last couple of weekends, my wife and I needed to travel all over New England looking for a new Navigator SUV to pull the horse trailer, as our old truck got beyond fixing. This gave us a chance to really get into touring around in the SL500. Mary drove the SL home from where we purchased the truck and exclaimed "Don't plan on getting this back anytime soon!" Then and there it became a member of the family.

# Headlight Restoration 2004 E55 AMG

**By Peter Ladas**

There was a time when car maintenance meant oil changes, bulb replacements, and maybe the occasional coat of wax. But like everything else as time has progressed and our cars have become faster, stronger, and built from synthetic plastic, polymers, carbon and exotic metals; now it seems our cars not only need oil changes, bulb replacements and wax, they also need computer updates, Nano coatings on the paint, and the occasional headlight restoration.

Enter this 2004 E55,(Picture 1) the car has seen the top of Mount Washington, the race track and stop and go traffic along the 95 corridor from Washington D.C. to Bar Harbor. At 95k miles the engine is only just beginning to break in but unfortunately, the headlights have taken a beating along the way. (Picture 2) It used to be that headlights were made of thick glass, and laughed at the day-to-day abuse of driving. In the mid-80s, manufacturers decided that by moving to poly carbonate lenses would mean they could change headlight designs and move away from similar front-end designs between vehicle lines.

Unfortunately there is no equation to restoring headlights... but it's well within everyone's ability. You will need sand paper in various aggressiveness from 400 grit to 2000 grit, a polisher with medium to fine cut polishing compounds and although I didn't use it maybe some painters tape to cover the paint around the headlights. The goal here is to wet sand out the imperfections and oxidized plastics and polish the lens back to perfection. Special note: After each step, the headlight should have a consistent uniform appearance.

For this E55 we started with 400grit, frequently rinsing the lens off and swapping out the sandpaper for fresh pieces with a high cutting ability. As you sand the lens down, you'll see various spots where the lens may need more sanding than others. (Picture 3) In the zoomed in picture, you'll notice the lower left quadrant has some oxidation left... the name of the game here is Consistency. You'll want to sand that away till the lens is consistent in color and finish. (Picture 4)



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P2



P3



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Continued on the next page....

## Headlight Restoration 2004 E55 AMG Cont....

We repeated the steps with 1000, 1500, and finally 2000 grit sand paper(Picture 5 - next page) with each step up, the lens begins to get its clarity back. To finish we used a random orbital polisher with a finishing pad and 2 levels of levels of finishing polish.

For best results and future proofing, the lenses should now be sealed with a UV protective layer at this point which could mean spraying them with new clear coat or wrapping the headlights in a clear bra material. What we have upon completion is a lens with a fresh virgin surface that helps hide the true age of this vehicle.

## 2017 Formula 1 British Grand Prix By Courtland Brannen

My obsession with Formula 1 started in April of 2012 when my company sent me on part of a river cruise starting in Nice. Before getting on our river ship, our first overnight was in the Principality of Monaco about a month before the infamous Grand Prix of Monaco. I barely slept that night mostly because a group of us got a ride up to the Grand Casino, and then proceeded to walk the entire course of the Monaco Grand Prix. If you know a bit of geography, you probably know that it is like walking the entire country of Monaco. Yeah, we got lost as well and didn't get back to our hotel until well past 2am. I've always liked racing of some sort, but this was Formula 1, and the beginning of a new love in my life.

For the past 3 years, my wife and I have been attending the Montreal Formula 1 Grand Prix, so after torturing her with having to trek up to Montreal 3 years in a row, she proposed we try a new venue. We had talked about going to Texas, but we wanted to go international. As someone who works in the travel industry, my arm did not need twisting. In January, we booked our flights, bought our F1 tickets, and started counting down the days to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone Circuit.

Continued on the next page....



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## British Formula 1 Grand Prix Cont.....



Silverstone Circuit is the current home of the British Grand Prix, which it first hosted in 1948. The 1950 British Grand Prix at Silverstone was the first race [\[4\]](#) in the newly created World Championship of Drivers. The race rotated between Silverstone, Aintree and Brands Hatch from 1955 to 1986, but relocated permanently to Silverstone in 1987.



Silverstone was originally built on the site of a World War II Royal Air Force bomber station, RAF Silverstone, which opened in 1943. The airfield's three runways, in classic WWII triangle format, lie within the outline of the present track.

July 12<sup>th</sup> finally arrived; we hopped into our cramped airplane seats and flew across the pond to London Heathrow. Once we arrive, we hopped into our rental car and headed northwest of London.

Our drive took only an hour and a half from Heathrow to Cosgrove, which is part of Milton Keynes, and is where we stayed for the weekend. Silverstone was only 13 miles away. I felt like I did when I was a child on Christmas Eve. You remember what that was like, right? We unloaded our luggage, and did the last thing I tell travelers never to do when they arrive overseas, we took a nap. Okay, I'm a hypocrite, but I really needed it after working a full day before and then not sleeping a wink on our flight.

Two hours later my phone alarm went off and we got up for dinner at the Barley Mow, a true English pub. Even though I had been to England 20 years before, this was a new and fun experience. We walked in, and no one greeted us at the door to take us to a seat.

Hmmm, okay, let's go to the bar to find out what we needed to do. Immediately the bar tender knew we were not locals. After learning that we need to order our drinks AND food at the bar, we sat down at a table in the corner. Our food arrived shortly after and wow, was it hot! I found this was typical for all of our dinners the rest of the trip. Not a typical thing in the US. After dinner and a nice walk along the Grand Union Canal, we went to bed.



Free Practice 1 & 2 Continues on the next page.....

Formula 1 Continued.....

## Free Practice 1 & 2 – Friday

Getting to Silverstone Race Track was actually fairly easy, but only if you actually listen to the GPS rather than following the flow of cars going into the Hospitality Parking lots, which is what we did. Yep, we purchased a parking pass for the regular lots, on the other side of the entire race-track. At least when we turned around there was no traffic going that way. After 45 minutes, instead of the 20 minutes it should have taken us, we parked, walked half a mile and were on the grounds of the racetrack and stands. The adult child was now in the candy store!

On both Friday and Saturday during Free Practices and Qualifying, your tickets allowed you to choose your seats in any of the Grand Stands. Fortunately, we arrived early enough to get seats directly across the pits for Free Practice 1. I couldn't have been happier.

Between Free Practice 1 and 2, we did a bit of shopping for t-shirts, an AMG Petronas Team jacket, had some lunch, and then walked around the entire track. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the cost of food and drinks were not comparable to getting food at Fenway Park, even converting the Pound to the Dollar. It was reasonably priced, a lot of different ethnic choices, and darn good too!

No matter which team you're a fan of, there are plenty of places that you can purchase team garb, and of course, yes, we bought a jacket and another hat. Who couldn't use another hat? I wanted the special British Grand Prix Lewis Hamilton edition. After visiting several vendors and discovering that, either they were sold out, or the only option was one with the cheap plastic clasp at the back. The kind that kids have on their baseball hats in Little League that end up ripping by the end of the season because the kids heads are still growing. No thanks, I'll go with the Valterie Bottas hat instead. I think we were the only ones to buy that hat in England because of Lewis Hamilton's popularity. It might be worth something someday if Valterie ends up winning the Championship this year.....

British Grand Prix Continues on the next page.....



## British F1 Continued.....

For Free Practice 2, we ended up sitting in stands just before the final corner before the finish line. It was really interesting to watch how the veteran racers consistently held to their lines where the younger, less experienced ones were all over the place.

The next day for Free Practice 3 and Qualifying was very cold and rainy. About 55 degrees, which even for July was cold in England. Especially since outside of the valley that Silverstone is in, my cousin and aunts were enjoying 80+ degree weather. Strange. For the second day in a row, we were lucky enough to get seats across from the pits, and directly right in front of Mercedes AMG Petronas's garage. Formula 1 fans in Great Britain are die-hard fans and it was fantastic to be amongst them. Especially because they love Lewis Hamilton and boo Sebastian Vettel, just like I do from my couch on race day. I really felt like I belonged. I am after all, half British since my mother emigrated from Nottingham when she was 19. At the end of Qualifying, Lewis was on Pole with two Ferraris behind him.

On Sunday July 16<sup>th</sup>, the British Grand Prix commenced. The weather was warmer, mostly cloudy until about mid-race, but the Britons did not care. Cars 3 was being promoted at the race and Owen Wilson and Woody Harrelson were on track sitting in a 2 seater Formula 1 car experiencing the track at 170mph. Before the race, the British Red Arrows jet squadron put on quite an air show to get the high octane experience off with a bang. Out seats were now out in the open and fortunately it was not raining. Once the race began, Lewis Hamilton in the AMG Petronas car number 44 lead through the end. Valterie Bottas was fighting all the way through the other cars and ended up beating out both Ferraris to take second place. Brilliant! Going all that way to England to see Mercedes-Benz win was well worth the trip!

I highly recommend that if you ever get an opportunity to go to the Formula 1 British Grand Prix, do it. The race is very well organized, you can stay close to the Circuit, or you can actually camp at the circuit as well. Driving in and out is actually better than sitting in traffic on 93 South/North, and rotaries are extremely efficient when drivers actually know how to use them properly, unlike many drivers in the United States. The British fans are die-hard, and the experience is unlike any other.



## Events this Spring & Summer

### Track Day at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park

On May 23rd, twenty-two members attended the Track Day at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park. The perfect weather and the great staff at TSMP made the event one to remember.

The morning started with a Tech Inspection and Drivers Meeting outlining Safety Procedures and an explanation of the track and how the day would progress.

With the majority of the drivers never having been on a racetrack, the first sessions were run with instructors in the cars. This allowed the novices to learn the proper line, breaking points and their cars. By the end of the day, it was amazing to see the improvement in these first time drivers.

A track day like this is the best way to learn car control, the limits of your car and skills that might help you avoid trouble on the highway, and a heck of a lot of fun.

Hope to see more of you next year,

John S Piekarczyk

Event Chairman



## Art of the Automobile Spring 2017

By Peter Ladas

"How cool would it be to..." a line that resonates in minds everywhere for various reasons representing something that is almost always prohibited to imagination and not reality. Enter the Art of the Automobile. Organized by a who's who in the New England Automotive culture and Boston event planning industry. Art of the Automobile Boston brings together Enthusiasts that don't co-mingle often in locations around Boston that are generally off limits unless you're a part of one of the local championship teams.

This past April, the group partnered with the Martin Richard Foundation, Art Week Boston and The Boch Center to put together a celebration of all that is 4 wheels as a way to bring together the community in such a great and unique way. "When I was a kid my dad had one of those that he used to drive us everywhere in it" reminisced a local that stumbled upon the event. Participants were provided with select parking spots on City Hall Plaza and invited to munch on some food and refreshments in a VIP lounge overlooking the field of cars. This was a great opportunity for the public to get up close and personal with all of the cars.

There was something for everyone present on that day, and if you didn't find it parked on the plaza, there were 10 carefully curated vehicles that were special guests of the show. These Vehicles included an SLS Black series, the first ground up designed vehicle produced by AMG; The Hudson Hornet, upon which the Disney Character "Doc Hudson" was modeled in the movie *Cars*; and a BMW Z1, a car that was never released in the US. The Z1 debuted several safety and luxury technologies still used in BMW vehicles today.

The planning for the Spring of 2018 event is already under way and rumored to include a very special once in a lifetime drive for those who take part. In the meantime, for those interested in displaying or viewing, the group's next event is scheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup> in Copley Square.



## **Myopia Polo Club July 30<sup>th</sup>**

Approximately 40 -50 of us came together on July 30<sup>th</sup> in South Hamilton, MA to attend the US Polo Association vs South America polo match. Ed and Elvie lead the pack of horses onto the field prior to the beginning of the match in a beautiful W113. The event was catered with a ton of nicely prepared passed hors d'oeuvres and tasty strawberries dipped in chocolate along with an abundant selection of cookies. A number of members had never seen a polo match except from perhaps watching the movie Pretty Woman. This was a fantastic event that we hope to continue in the years to come.



## **IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS THIS FALL**

### **Germanfest/Mercedes-Benz Day**

Sunday September 17th, 2017

10:00am – 3:00pm



**LARZ ANDERSON AUTO MUSEUM**

America's Oldest Car Collection

### **Farberrallye 40**

Western, MA

October 13 – 15, 2017 Hosted by the Minuteman Section

**Full details for Farberrallye and the Registration Form on the next page.**

**Please do not wait. Sign up and book your stay now before the rooms sell out!!!**

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## **Faberallye XL**

October 13-15, 2017 Southbridge, MA

Faberallye XL will be held on the weekend of October 14 at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center in Southbridge, Mass. The Conference Center was created by completely redoing the American Optical Factory and Corporate headquarters and is a beautiful facility. Enjoy the indoor pool and hot tub. Also available in the Hotel is a full work out center. There will be a time and distance rallye, quiz rallye and combined (that is competing in both.) Prizes will be awarded for both as well as for best combined score. Plan which rallye you would like to participate in.

Reservations can be made individually with the hotel reservations department at (508) 765-8000 on, or before, September 13, 2017. In order to receive the contracted group rate, telephone callers must request their reservation be made in the MBCA Minuteman Region room block. King bed rooms and double queen are \$136.90 per night which includes two full breakfasts and choice of pillow type.

Friday evening is the reception and Saturday is the rallye and banquet . Sunday at 9AM we will be having a guided tour of The Optical Heritage Museum.

Rallye fee \$120. Includes Friday night's reception, two Banquet meals, and rallye cost. Grand Dinner Buffet

### **Grand Dinner Buffet**

#### ***Choice of Three Entrees:***

- Roasted Sirloin of Beef with Balsamic Red Onion Au Jus
- Sautéed Chicken with a Wild Mushroom Thyme Espagnole
- Mixed Seafood Newburg

Any questions. Email fancyer@cox.net Home: 413-391-1887. Cell: 508-377-8286 Detach and mail the form below with a check to: Ernest Fancy 1 Butterworth Rd. Holland, MA. 01521 Check payable to: MBCA Minuteman Section

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Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Rallye fee: \$120.00 X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number attending The Optical Heritage Museum tour \_\_\_\_\_