



Das Heimatblatt

Newsletter for the Alabama Section
Mercedes-Benz Club of America
2014 Printed Newsletter of the Year

September • 2015

Inside this Issue...

Sternblick	1
Calender of Events	2
Coming Events	3-4
Event Recap	8-10
In Der Presse	11

Sternblick

(View through the Star)

Mason Beale
President, Alabama Section MBCA

The transition from Summer to Fall is upon us. With the change means beautiful foliage for country driving. We plan to offer such a scenic drive.

Most recently (August) we staged Heimatfest 2015. Over 70 members from across the country participated in various activities to include MBUSI factory tours, "The Club" dinner, and MBUSI sponsored Car Show (Concours) at the Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs complex. During the Car Show (Concours), four Alabama Section club members attained "Silver Star" car certification. Congratulations to Skipper Colin, Dodie Roberts, Ben Webster, and Bruce Webster for achieving this prestigious award. A big thanks to all Heimatfest 2015 volunteers for making it a huge success!

The Board has scheduled several excellent Fall activities. Events include Oktoberfest Car Show in Cullman (October 10), Fall Drive (Nov 7), Holiday Party at "The Club" (December 19), and Winterfahrt (Jan 2016). Other events are being planned during this timeframe. E-mail "blasts" will be sent as friendly event reminders. I encourage you to attend these events to renew former friendships as well as create new ones.

Fall also brings our annual officer election. Candidates for election include Mason Beale for President, Ken Champlin for Vice-President, and Bob Melton for Treasurer. The Secretary position is vacant and we request your consideration or nomination. Also, there are vacant Board Member positions available. Let any officer know of your interest.

It is an honor to serve as your section President. I look forward to visiting with you at our next event.

Welcome, New Member(s)

Tania Adams Birmingham, AL	Eddie Hardaway Livingston, AL	Bea Mohsenin Hoover, AL
Michael Bogenreif Santa Rosa, FL	Britt Heffernan Madison, AL	Sherry Parks Gulf Shores, AL
Harold Brown Birmingham, AL	Shelley Hickman Panama City, FL	J.C. Peters Dothan, AL
Charles Burke Huntsville, AL	Spain Hodges Birmingham, AL	H. Lee Phillips Elba, AL
Barry Butcher Lynn Haven, FL	Michael Jacobus Cantonment, FL	Christopher Power Cullman, AL
James Davis Mobile, AL	Greg Long Miramar Beach, FL	Thomas Sanor Birmingham, AL
Alvis Ferguson Perry, FL	Carlton Mason Tallahassee, AL	Michael Watson Spopchoppy, FL
Sam Ferlisi Birmingham, AL	Mike McDevitt Leeds, AL	Robert Wein Pensacola, FL
Jerry Griffies Birmingham, AL	Mark Mitchell Birmingham, AL	Ronald Workman Athens, AL

Schedule Of Events

October

- 3-4 Driver Education with PCA
- 10 Cullman Oktoberfest
- 16-17 EuroAutofest - Greenville, SC
- 20 Birmingham Stammtisch - Logan's on 280
- 28 Huntsville Stammtisch - Hildegard's

November

- 7 Farbenfahrt (Color Drive)
- 13-14 MBCA National Board Meeting
Burlington, Mass
- 17 Birmingham Stammtisch - Logan's on 280

December

- 19 10th Anniversary of Alabama Section
Birmingham, AL - The Club

January

- 9 Winterfahrt (Tentative)
- 19 Birmingham Stammtisch - Logan's on 280

MERCEDES-BENZ CLUB OF AMERICA ALABAMA SECTION www.mbca.org/alabama

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Coming events

Drivers Ed with PCA

October 3-4

Our friends with the Porsche Club will be staging a Performance Driver Education event on the Barber Motorsports Park's 2-3 mile F.I.A. Formula One certified track that hosts the Indy car race every spring.

Skilled instructors will ride with you to help you learn the nuances of driving this challenging 17 turn track that has become known as the finest road course in North America.

Whether your Mercedes-Benz is an AMG or not, it was designed for this. Here is your opportunity to hone your skills to enjoy the design and engineering in your car.

MBCA Eastern Region Director, Performance Driving Committee member, and several time SCCA and HSR National Champion racing driver Jim Roberts will be instructing

Register at clubregistration.net and ask for Jim as your instructor

Cullman Oktoberfest

October 10

We will meet at 7-7:30 am at Klingler's European Bakery in Birmingham or at a convenient location in Huntsville for breakfast.

We will leave by 8:30 from both locations to be in Cullman by 10am. After this the street access will be closed.

Kuhlmann was founded in 1873 as a place of welcome for Germans opposed to the Hoenzollern (Prussian) hegemony of all the German states. The spelling was changed during WW I due to pressure from local authorities.

This suppressed the German language and culture for 80 years. Only the local beer survived this and prohibition. These old line microbreweries set up in an area across from the Festhalle where there is conventional beer, band, and dancing.

Alabama Section MBCA has been asked to display our cars. The North Alabama VW Club will also be there with their antique VW buses and the antique hippies that drive and hang out in them.

This is the only time of year that the restaurants serve authentic German food.

Please let us know that you are attending and whether you will meet us in Birmingham (Jim Roberts- jertoosaver@gmail.com) or Huntsville (Mason Beale- masonbeale@msn.com)



Celebrating Oktoberfest at Cullman's Festhalle

Coming events

EuroAutofest

October 16-17
Greenville, SC

This massive European car show has outgrown the grounds around the BMW Factory and now is staged on a fairway of the golf course at the Embassy Suites Hotel. There are places for 450 cars this year.

MBCA has embraced this as a regional event hosted by Carolinas, Tarheel, Triangle, and Peachtree sections. To register go to www.euro-autofestival.com



EuroAutofest 2014

Farbenfahrt (Color Drive)

Event Planner: Jim Roberts
November 7th

The northeastern part of Alabama has great roads and breathtaking scenery that is most beautiful in the brilliant colors of autumn.

We will start from the Attala Cracker Barrel on Alabama 77 (I-59 exit 181). Join us at 7:30 for breakfast. We will depart by 8:45.

The drive begins with Noccalula Falls in Gadsden and continues along Lookout Mountain Parkway. The cornice down the Eastern face brings us to Canyon Mouth Park where we will ascend the western rim of Little River Canyon for 23 miles of challenging roads, canopies of brilliant colored trees, magnificent vistas, waterfalls, the national park visitors centers, and finally Desoto State Park for lunch. After lunch we continue to Desoto Falls, Mentone and then into a hidden valley in Georgia.

Please let us know you will be participating, so the restaurants will be prepared.

10th Anniversary Celebration of the Alabama Section

December 19th, 11am
The Club, Birmingham, Al

Join us for this very special celebration of ten years of Alabama Section. It seems like only yesterday that the section was formed.

Alabama Section began with about 100 members and has now grown to about 230. There are, however several of the original members.

We extend a special invitation to the charter members.

Winterfahrt

January 9th (Tentative)
Birmingham to Tuscaloosa

From the Barber Museum to Tuscaloosa via some challenging roads. And the Brand Immersion Center at MBUSI. We will reach the Cypress Inn across the river from Tuscaloosa in time for lunch.

Thank You, Loyal Member(s)

Richard Alexander Hampton Cove, AL	Ernest Colin Huntsville, AL	Delbert Hiestand Hoover, AL	James Kotis Mobile, AL	James Roberts Birmingham, AL	Steve Watkins Birmingham, AL
Charles Baggett Talladega, AL	William Cook Pike Road, AL	James Moore Sylacauga, AL	Ira Laney Huntsville, AL	Donald Sandaal Niceville, FL	Louis Weiner Huntsville, AL
Jason Bardis Meridianville, AL	Jeff Davis Birmingham, AL	Douglas Hughes Niceville, FL	William Morris Lillian, AL	Jack Schilleci Hoover, AL	Richard Williams Decatur, AL
Mason Beale Hoover, AL	Rick Dodd Pelham, AL	Frederic Jackson Gulf Breeze, FL	Ray Osborne Albertville, AL	John Somsel Madison, AL	David Zammit Rainbow City, AL
Andreas Bergmann Navarre, FL	Robert Fargo Pensacola, FL	Steven Jenkins Wetumpka, AL	Kitti Outlaw Mobile, AL	Danny Sterling Oneonta, AL	
William Binder Daphne, AL	John Fishman Huntsville, AL	Edward Jones Birmingham, AL	Joe Petty Tuscaloosa, AL	Mary Anne Thomas Hoover, AL	
Darrell Bittle Fort Walton Beach, FL	Frank Frantzen Kingsport, TN	David Kelly Madison, AL	Jack Pickett Montgomery, AL	Jerry Tucker Madison, AL	
Mark Bussard Panama City, FL	Ernest Hasselbrink Lynn Haven, FL	John Kiesling Santa Rosa, FL	Rupert Powell Athens, AL	Todd Underwood Magnolia Springs, AL	
Harold Cochran Alexander City, AL	Carlos Heaton Tallahassee, FL	William Kinney Madison, AL	Franklin Reyher Niceville, FL	Carol Wadley Birmingham, AL	

Cruise-ins and Gatherings

If you are close enough to Birmingham for a Saturday morning visit. The 3 events listed welcome Mercedes-Benz cars. Even if you don't see one already there, chances are that many participants own a car with the three pointed star. In order of seniority.

Krispy Kreme, Hoover US 31

1st Saturday year round

Older cars start to gather about 7:30 and dissipate by 11:30 -12 noon. You will get a free cup of coffee and a donut, if your car is at least 25 years old. This event is staged by the Dixie Vintage Car Club which was founded back in the 1950's. This will be about 75-80% domestics as well as a few street rods. Euros are mostly British with 2-4 Mercedes-Benz's.

Logan's on US 280

11:30- 1pm Most Saturdays

This is organized by M.O.B., INC, so you will see mostly newer European exotics. Most of them own and occasionally bring a Mercedes-Benz SL, SLR, or SLS. Don't be put off by them, as they love cars and greatly respect Mercedes-Benz. They will almost certainly invite you to have lunch with them.

Cars & Coffee, Brookwood Mall

Every Saturday 8:30-10:30am

Yes, the name is the same and the ambiance is similar to the event in Los Angeles that you have seen on T.V., because a recent California transplant was not satisfied with the existing car club scene.

The location is the top floor of the parking deck of the Merrill, Lynch, office building between the west end of the Brookwood Mall building and the new Target store. There is a coffee shop in the building. This attracts both Asian and European cars including exotics.

Questions? Call your Section President at 205.837.7003 or the National Business Office at 1.800.637.2360 M-F, 8am-5pm MT. Or visit www.mbca.org

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A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, positioned below the testimonial text. The signature appears to be "J. H. Hester".



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Event Recap

Car Corral at Indy Grand Prix

Jim Roberts, Event Planner

For the first time ever the car corral was completely filled, and the Mercedes-Benz places were over filled for the 2015 Indycar Grand Prix of Alabama on 26 April. As you will recall the weather was rainy until Sunday morning.

Additional treats for participants were the not yet for sale GLE 63 AMG coupe (577 hp) and the new C63 S AMG (520 hp) brought by MBUSI. The GLE will star in the new Jurassic World movie that opened 12 June. Many thanks to Felyicia Jerald and Scott Malloy for arranging this.

The 22 inch wheels on the GLE and the subtle but striking styling cues on the C63 along with the performance specs drew attention all weekend.

This display was punctuated with a CLA 45 AMG in red that Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham brought. This car also got massive attention --- especially from people who said that while they were not real M-B enthusiasts, this car was striking and surprisingly affordable. I was most relieved when General Sales Manager Sam Cavett and AMG manager Nicholas Saban arrived on Sunday to retrieve the key with the car still intact.

Many thanks to our friends at MBUSI and M-B Bham for bringing these great cars and to Zoom and Alan Thacker for providing the space for this great display.

Our MBCA members brought everything from classic to current SL's and SLK's and classic to current sedans to even a Smart. We had a great representation of the diversity of the cars that Mercedes-Benz builds.

Our members had a great time, and we made some new friends who vowed they would join MBCA. We always seem to meet as many from other areas as we do from the local area.

By the way the races were great with late passes that changed the outcomes.



Top: L to R GLE 63 AMG coupe, new C 63 S AMG, CLA 45 AMG

Middle and Bottom: MBCA members' cars in the car corral

Event Recap

Huntsville EuroBrit Car Show

June 5-6

Alabama Section MBCA was well represented at this traditional event in Madison's Dublin Park.

All the entrants judge all the cars in this show. Skipper Colin and Ken Champlin were voted first and second respectively in the SL class.

Jim Roberts and Mason Beale finished in the same order in the Sedan class.

Next year we will have our cars also judged by MBCA rules.



Members' cars on display at EuroBrit car show in Madison's Dublin Park

Tech Session

Event planner: Mason Beale
July 11th

Members gathered at Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham for a multi-purpose Tech Session. The event was coordinated by Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham's service manager Paul Bishop. Also contributing to the event was Nicholas Saban with AMG insights, Shelby Weidrich with car computer answers, and David "Klink" Kalinkiewicz with performance issue resolutions.

Members were appreciative of the cordial welcome, refreshments, and hospitality offered by the dealership. The Section welcomes the growing partnership with Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham as Brand Ambassadors.

After the Tech Session members gathered at Jim & Nicks for a delicious lunch. The event was a huge success.



From L: Delbert Hiestand, Don Roberson, Del Hiestand, Mason Beale, Nicholas Saban, Ken Champlin, Kathy Beale, Jack Schilleci, Paul Bishop, Carol Ann Melton, and Bob Melton



L to R: Kathy Beale, Ken Champlin, Delbert Hiestand, Del Hiestand, Bob Melton, Jack Schelleci

Event Recap

Heimatfest 2015

August 28-29

"O Freude, nicht diese Tone..." (Oh Joy these words cannot express) was the way Schiller began his "Ode to Joy" that Beethoven incorporated in the last movement of his ninth symphony. This was the feeling Alabama Section felt after another very successful Heimatfest that drew 70 participants from Colorado to Virginia and from Ohio to South Florida and Germany.

Each Heimatfest is different, but each includes a visit to Mercedes-Benz US International, the factory in Alabama. This year we were able to see the new C-class in full production including the new C63-S AMG. Some Alabama Section members have been trained as tour guides, and their insights personalized the tours to the interests of MBCA members.

This year included a concours to benefit the military veterans of Alabama which was sponsored by MBUSI. In addition to the MBCA concours classes seven Silver Stars were awarded for preservation of cars over 25 years old in essentially original condition.



Sak & Bebe Reeves from the Lone Star and Texas Hill Country Sections receive their concours award from Mason Beale



Stanley and Clarissa Lewis receiving concours awards from Mason Beale

A special treat to help celebrate Alabama Section's tenth anniversary was dinner at Birmingham's private "The Club" atop Red Mountain overlooking the city.

Guests welcomed Star columnist Bonnie Fancy, MBCA Northeast Region Director Ernie Fancy, Eastern Region Director Jim Roberts, MBUSI Community Relations specialist Subrina Champion, and MBUSI Brand Immersion Center team member Terri Ritchie.



George Smith receives concours award from Mason Beale



Left: Alabama Section Pres. Mason Beale addressing Heimatfest participants in the MBUSI Brand Immersion Center.

Right: There was plenty to do and talk about. Registrar Don Roberson looks on as Liz Roberson talks with Donna Kalinkiewicz and Dodie Roberts



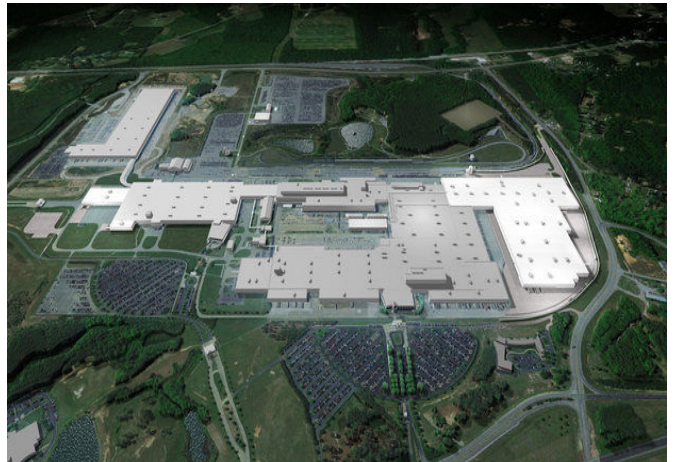
In der Presse

Mercedes-Benz US International Expansion

On 17 Sept MBUSI spokesperson, Felyicia Jerald announced that a \$1,3B, 300 job expansion is underway at the Vance, Alabama factory between Birmingham and Tuscaloosa. If you were at Heimatfest 2015, you could see construction underway.

To put things in perspective the initial investment for the entire factory in 1993-97 was \$900 million to produce 60,000 vehicles. This year production will exceed 300,000 and the new expansion to the body shop, SUV lines and other logistics will increase this significantly. This expansion will result in a significant increase in hybrid SUV production even though the present diesel powered ones equal hybrids in fuel consumption.

This new expansion is necessary to keep up with increasing demand for the next generation SUV's. The new GLE replacement for the ML has only recently been introduced, and the new GLS replacement for the GL is due early in 2016. Since the new GLC is based on the new C-class platform which is also built at MBUSI we may see even more different models built in Alabama.



Aerial view of MBUSI from above I-20/59. The white areas represent the new construction

As it now stands, Mercedes-Benz will now be effectively building a third Alabama factory. This will bring the total investment to \$5.8 billion and bring the total M-B permanent full time workforce to 3800. Add in the temporary and supplier employees at MBUSI, and there are over 5000 people working at the factory on any given day. This makes MBUSI the third largest Mercedes-Benz factory in the world and it is closing in on second. The present local suppliers employ another 15,000 people. At least one of them announces a major expansion almost every week.

M-B Sales Record

Alabama built models contributed to helping Mercedes-Benz set first half year record of more than 180,000 vehicles from Jan-Jun. This was up 15% from the previous year's first half.

There was a 25% increase in SUV sales. All the ML (soon to be called GLE) and GL (soon to be called GLS) for the entire world are built at the Alabama factory. The new C-class is up 60% for 2015 with 214,000 sold worldwide in the first 5 months. All the North American C-class cars are built in Alabama.

U.S sales also increased 6% in June to set a new record at 28,044. Best sellers were the new C-class and ML, both of which are built in Alabama.

Production has already started on the new GLE that will replace the ML. The new GLE coupe is a very distinct variation of the GLE platform.

Monthly Membership Meeting

Where: Logan's Roadhouse
100 Resource Center Pkwy
Birmingham, AL 35242
205-981-9950

When: 3rd Tuesday of every month

Time: 6:30pm dinner, 7pm meeting

Logan's is on the right if you are headed eastbound on US280 in between I-459 and Valleydale Rd.

Huntsville Membership Meeting

Where: Hildegard's German Cuisine
2357 Whitesburg Dr.
256-512-9776

When: 4th Wednesday of even numbered months

Time: 6:30pm

Directions from I-565 towards Huntsville: Take S. Memorial Parkway (exit 19A), turn left on Governors Drive, turn right on Whitesburg Drive. Hildegard's is approximately 1/2 mile on left at the corner of Bob Wallace and Whitesburg Dr.



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