

Council News

3/06

Newsletter of the International Council of BMW Clubs



HAPPY BIRTHDAY BMW 328!

Autumn-Highlights

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The 70th Anniversary of the BMW 328 at Classic Silverstone

Saturday 29th July 2006

In its day, the BMW 328 was undoubtedly one of the world's most influential cars. Weeks before its official release world champion motorcycle rider and BMW dealer Ernst Henne drove a prototype to a class victory in the Eifelrennen on the Nürburgring in May 1936. What a way to greet the world!

In the following four years BMW built 464 of them virtually by hand at their Eisenach plant 400 kilo-

meters to the north of Munich in Thuringia. Combining light weight with a powerful and smooth six-cylinder engine, the BMW 328 was to prove unbeatable in its class for many, many years before and after the war. Not only that, it formed the basis of a wide variety of "specials" that in turn also competed successfully on the race tracks of the world.

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Further information

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<http://www.bmw-clubs-international.com>

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Dear BMW Club members,

When the International Council and BMW Mobile Tradition work to bridge the gap between BMW the company, and BMW the hobby, some say we attempt the impossible. For, as the sceptics note, BMW AG is a business while BMW enthusiasts might almost be described as followers of a religion. What dialogue can there possibly be?

I've always thought that the first potential connecting point is the people within BMW whose cold eye for the euro has been clouded by romance. By that I mean the executive or associate who sneaks off in his vacation time for a twisty alpine ride on a BMW bike or an auto "Treffen" dedicated to this model or that. Here you find the press guy like Rob Mitchell of BMW North America who does something like this every year. He is one among a number of BMW execs who have become almost as familiar at BMW gatherings as any club officer. Of course one also encounters the occasional BMW exec who wonders whether fooling around with clubs is "preaching to the choir", or "worth the trouble". And, make no mistake, sometimes there is trouble.

When it comes to passionate hobbies, some people will quarrel. In such cases sometimes the Council has to step in. Friction can arise from the fact that not all clubs have evolved in the same direction. While we like to think of ourselves as "bands of brothers", some clubs are simply there to leverage dealers for rally goodies or discounts on parts. Others have had ongoing personality conflicts with the subsidiary or (all too often) with each other. But most - thank goodness - just want to drive or ride with people who share their interest. That interest, in turn, can vary around a general BMW theme: For example, there are numerous model registries, because not all BMWs are created equal. As with wines there are special years when everything just comes together in a special vintage model that has just the right ingredients, providing pizzazz, mellowness or the right mixture of both. In time, around such wines and vehicles gather collectors. They form clubs. BMW M1 clubs, BMW 328 clubs, BMW R90S clubs, and oldies umbrella clubs. BMW Mobile Tradition is especially active here.

What all these organizations have in common is that they bring BMWs and their fans together. To outsiders, the clubs provide tangible evidence that BMWs are so unique that their owners wish not merely to own them but to identify with them. Other premium brands may trade in panache and snob appeal, but BMW has always had an added sporting appeal that transcends the pocketbook. That, after all, is why its owners have formed clubs as far back as the BMW Club Düsseldorf in 1928.

Since that day, we have come a long way, with clubs spreading wherever BMWs are sold and beyond. Indeed, much of the Council's work will be to integrate new clubs in unfamiliar territory into the International Council framework.



Dr. Robert Hellman,
Vice Chairman Motorcycles

Dr. Robert Hellman,
Vice Chairman Motorcycles
International Council of BMW Clubs

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BMW 328!

The 70th Anniversary of the BMW 328

Classic Meeting in Silverstone on Saturday 29th July 2006

By David Williams, Committee Member BMW Car Club Great Britain

To honor this legendary sports car, the Historic Section of the BMW Car Club of Great Britain invited all 43 of the known BMW 328 owners in the UK to the Silverstone Classic meeting from July 28-30. Section Chairman John Muschamp said "We were hoping for around 32-34 cars to be here but what with two or three changing hands in the past weeks and others that needed

Dezelsky now owns the ex-Gillie Tyrer car that has spent much of the past 45 years in the US but has now returned home. He brought along some of Gillie's trophies to prove the point! There was a pretty BMW 328 that had originally been bodied by the famous Darmstadt-based coach builder Autenrieth and had been completely restored by TT Workshops. Alongside it was another BMW 328 that was re-bodied by Autenrieth after the war. Owner Richard Wyldes has begun a complete restoration but it is far from finished. As Richard said, "Others may have been tempted to re-body it as a standard 328 but I had decided before I bought it, to restore the Autenrieth body and finish up with a one-off 328."



John Muschamp (right) congratulates John Giles (left)

some work to prepare them not being ready in time, we ended up with twenty-seven BMW 328 plus ten pre-war BMWs. Even though we would have liked more to attend, we believe we have had the largest ever gathering of BMW 328s in England." It is interesting to note that a total of 46 were imported into England, 40 complete 328s plus 6 chassis that were bodied after the war, two of them with non-standard bodies.

John and his committee did hope to have the anniversary of the BMW 328 recognized by parading the cars around the circuit, but although this was not possible three Frazer-Nash BMW 328s came to compete in the BRDC 500 race for pre-war sports cars, a race that was an hour in duration. The cars were entered by Ken MacMaster (a blue car built in 1938 and driven by Gary Pearson and David Franklin), Alastair Pugh teamed with Steve Stanton in a white car (built in 1939) with rear wheel spats, and the father-and-son team of Richard and Patrick Wills in another white car that was built in 1937 and once owned and raced by Alfred Moss and his even more famous son, Sir Stirling Moss. Richard has won the VSCC Pomeroy Trophy four times in this BMW 328 so its fame continues. Unfortunately the MacMaster car did not finish. For much of the early part of the race it was dicing with an Alfa Romeo for second place (behind an Alta) but at a time when the safety car was out a most extraordinary failure happened when a rear wheel adapter sheered off. It took driver David Franklin by surprise as he ended up in the gravel trap. This was not very good for the team's chance of winning the relay as the other two cars quite well up! Some of the BMW 328 on show have had an interesting past. For example, Paul

The display of cars lined up in the Club area caused a lot of interest and many favourable comments. The twenty-seven BMW 328 ranged in condition from concours to "barn find", with one example only appearing in public for the second time since being laid up in 1950. To add to the air of professionalism, a special Anniversary Banner had been prepared by Kate Moore. In recognition of the event every BMW 328 owner was presented with a boxed paper-knife engraved with the chassis number of their own car; as a bonus the presenter was no less than our honoured guest Rainer Simons, the researcher and author of the definitive book about the BMW 328 "From roadster to legend". Section Chairman John Muschamp in turn presented Rainer with a similar knife but engraved with his name. John Giles, former owner of TT Workshops, also received an award for the massive contribution he has made towards the preservation of so many BMW 328.

The Club had reserved a ground floor box at Woodcote corner where light refreshments were available, together with a TV



Bonnet line up.

Continued from page 03: The 70th Anniversary of the BMW 328

monitor to watch the racing. The beautiful summer weather meant that it was never crowded. Had it been wet no doubt there would have been more visitors but it was still appreciated by those there. At the end of the afternoon a large convoy left Silverstone to attend a splendid BBQ supper party in the beautiful garden of Richard Wyldes and Eliza's home with the other organisers, David Williams and Kate Moore. The Motor House, full of BMW memorabilia, was turned into a bar and was the envy of all the guests, male and female alike. You did not need a plate; the floor would have been fine! Lighting was by courtesy of numerous colourful petrol pump globes shelved on the walls. To celebrate attending their first Section event in their 319 sports after many years of restoration, Brooke and Lori Saunders asked Committee Member Mark Garfitt to offer by auction a rare porcelain plate depicting a BMW 328. Rain fell late in the evening as Oliver Penney found out when he left for home in his Williams and Pritchard 315 hoodless special. After a leisurely start on Sunday morning the cavalcade of 328s and other section cars drove through the countryside to Althorp. Beautiful cars deserve to be photographed in a memorable

location and Althorp certainly provided that. In Earl Spencer's words 'The exterior may be forbidding, but the inside is warm and welcoming'. Once inside, the true warmth and elegance of the house immediately became apparent. The saucy Lady Arabella Churchill would have adored the 328.

After a guided tour of the house there was one last cross country amble taking us to the lavish Chinese buffet which marked the close of our weekend. So what made the event such a success? Warm weather, warm welcomes and warm friendships, though elegant cars and elegant venues certainly had something to do with it too. This was not a static display, or a single location. The weekend epitomised what a really stunning car club should be about: using the cars to travel from a to b and amble around c and d if the mood takes you. Doing that in the company of like-minded and congenial companions made for an unforgettable weekend.

A commemorative DVD of this special event has been professionally produced. It has a running time of 40 minutes and is available from Kate Moore on +44 (0)1908 262433.

Many rare classic cars from several countries in Le Mans

LE MANS CLASSIC JULY 2006

By Bernard Blondeel, President of BMW Club de France

The Le Mans Classic event was born in 2002 and comes around every two years. The 24 hours races are split into 6 groups by era, running three times for 45 minutes alternatively. This year BMW Group is the new, active and official partner. The pace cars are BMW models and BMW Mobile Tradition presents a large range of very rare collectors, together with BMW France, in a 400 sq. m booth. Many BMWs are competing, ranging from the BMW 328 to the BMW M1, including BMW 2002 turbo, BMW 3.0 CSL and the very special CSL "CALDER", a perfect copy of the original, specially made for Le Mans Classic 2006. On the club side BMW Mobile Tradition has installed a nice motor home with very comfortable marquees. The BMW Club de France has placed round tables, chairs, decoration and drinks for the participants.

A group of 20 models of the BMW 02 Series from the Horizon 2002 Club was on show at on the BMW Clubs location. We hope this club will join the official BMW Club Organisation soon. Around 60 classic cars were gathered during the weekend, coming from several countries, France mainly, and Germany, Switzerland, England Belgium and Spain. Some efforts have to be made to let the European clubs know a little more about the event and the advantages of the clubs ticket.

Before the start of the races, on Saturday, a group of 20 BMW cars were allowed to do the "parade" on the long 24h circuit.



Final preparations for the manufacturer parade – Holger Lapp (Head of BMW Mobile Tradition) and the BMW 328 Mille Miglia Coupé

The unique BMW 328 "Mille Miglia" Coupé was the leader followed by a selection of classic models, a few modern top models, BMW M6, BMW Z4 Coupés and competition models.

The Le Mans Classic is now an well-known event internationally and one of the best!
See you in 2008!

The BMW Coupé with its classic elegance and impressive design has been around since 1938

BMW Coupés – Tradition of elegance

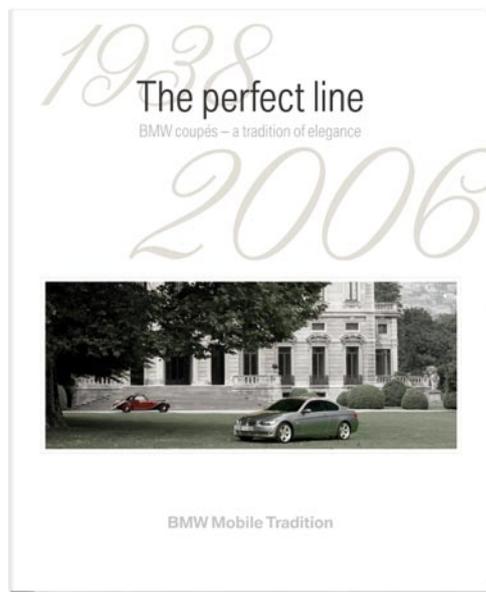
By Sinja Kaiser, Marketing and Communication of BMW Mobile Tradition

Elegance and impressive design – since 1938, these qualities have been reflected in every BMW Coupé. The fact that these automobiles always combine their outstanding aesthetic appeal with dynamic power is also demonstrated by the new BMW 3 Series Coupé. At the press presentation in Längenfeld in the Tyrolean mountains in the summer of 2006, the 335i Coupé was just as captivating as its predecessors such as the BMW 327/28 Sport Coupé of 1938 and the 700 LS Coupé of 1965.

With the current 3 Series Coupé, a tradition continues which goes back almost 70 years. Sportier and more elongated in its shape than the standard model, it is clearly aimed at automobile enthusiasts. It also maintains impressive continuity in the development of new powertrain technology in coupé models with the new bi-turbo in-line 6-cylinder engine with High Precision Injection. With 306 bhp, the lightweight body and the optional all-wheel drive system BMW xDrive it provides a new accentuation in the field of sportiness, innovation and dynamic performance.

To mark the launch of the latest coupé, BMW Mobile Tradition traces the fascinating development of selected coupé models. The question “What makes for a successful design – and what makes it timeless?” results in a thorough integration of the coupés in their contemporary context. Architecture, fashion and design exhibits from the relevant decades clearly show the importance of elegant shaping as a requirement for products with a timeless, classic appearance. This aspect is also expressed in the title of the communication campaign: “The perfect line. BMW Coupés – a tradition of elegance”, which highlights the aspirations being pursued by BMW with its coupé models.

The history of the coupé vehicle concept really started with the BMW 327 Sports Coupé in 1938. The current campaign shows just how successful this concept has been perceived to the present day. The elegant BMW 503 designed by Count Albrecht Goertz set a further exclamation mark in 1955 with the V8 engine and luxurious fittings. For the BMW 2000 C/CS a completely distinctive body was designed around the technology of the sedan in the sixties – a path which BMW has maintained to this day. The subsequent coupés were enhanced from the point of view of sporty flair. With new 6-cylinder engines, BMW drew uncompromisingly on its expertise in the field of engine construction. The 3.0 CS models were highly impressive in both design and performance. The new direction was thus clearly laid out. The BMW 6 Series Coupé perpetuated this from 1976, laying down a milestone with the M635CSi. The big coupés reached their high point in the BMW 8 Series. Its 12-cylinder engines accelerated the vehicle in just 7 seconds from 0 to 100 km/h. The 8 Series was also fitted with a series of innovations, making it not only outstandingly elegant but also a technological leader. A



Everything on the classic lines of the BMW Coupés in a book and a film

separate body was not developed by BMW until the first 3 Series Coupé in 1992. The huge demand proved the company right.

In the book and film “The perfect line”, the fascination of coupé history becomes visible. The elegant vehicles are set in the context of the design style of their particular era with their own design highlights which remain valid to this day. New shots show the elegance and currency conveyed by BMW Coupés even now. The secret of design is revealed even more intensively in interviews with experts, designers and BMW decision-makers.

The book and the film are available from the publisher HEEL Verlag in Königswinter (Tel. +49 (0) 2 22 39 23 00). The two products are available to BMW Club members as a package at the special price of 25 euros.



The noble classic: BMW 503 from the year 1955

A great tour across the USA from Boise, Idaho through Colorado

“Peaks of America Tour” Joins Two National Motorcycle Club Rallies

By Court Fisher, Ambassador and Global Touring Editor of the BMW Motorcycle Owners of America



The two North American national motorcycle club members of the International Council, BMW Motorcycle Owners of America (BMW MOA) and BMW Riders Association (BMW RA), joined their separate national rallies this year with a cross-country motorcycle challenge, the “Peaks of America.”. Approximately 150 riders successfully completed the challenge posted on both national club websites: “Three Rallies, Three Weekends, Three Thousand Miles”

In July of 2006 there were three major rallies within three weeks of each other spanning much of the United States. First was the BMW RA “Discover Yourself In Idaho” Rally in Boise, Idaho, July 6th through 9th. The following weekend was the famous Colorado BMW Club’s “Top O’ The Rockies” Rally, July 13th through 16th in Paonia, Colorado; and finally the BMW MOA “Vermont, It’s Not Flat!” Rally in Burlington, Vermont, July 20th through 23rd.

Even long-time members of both national clubs couldn’t remember such an alignment of national and regional rallies. If ever there was a reason bordering on a mandate to ride your BMW across the U.S., this was it. To recognize this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, all three rally sponsoring organizations cooperated to reward those hardy souls who showed the good sense to attend all three events with a special commemorative “Peaks Of America Tour” pin. In addition, participants in this cross country adventure were eligible for some traditional awards presented at the MOA closing ceremonies, including a POA long distance mileage award.

Participation couldn’t have been easier: 1. Attend and register at each rally (beer optional). 2. Keep wearing your rally wrist band from the Boise and Colorado rallies until you register in Vermont. You had to be wearing both prior rally wristbands or have complete registration paperwork to validate your ride. 3. As you passed through the MOA Country Store to get your MOA Vermont rally pin & patch your wrist bands (or paperwork) qualified you for the special “Peaks Of America Tour” pin. Inspired by BMW RA rally co-chair and MOA board member Greg Feeler, with the support of all club directors, the “Peaks Of America Tour” participants joined a record-breaking 9000 BMW riders at the MOA rally in Vermont, enjoying seminars, rides, several hundred vendors and presentations by BMW Mobile Tradition. As always, both national rallies and more than 100 regional North American rallies are planned and organized primarily by volunteer club members. BMW Motorrad North America also provides prizes, motorcycle demo rides or other support at national rallies, held at different locations each year. In 2007, BMW MOA and BMW RA each expect to sponsor 35th anniversary national rallies, and invite BMW riders to attend from around the world; watch the club websites for details and registration.

Further information

Visit the clubs on the Internet:

BMW Motorcycle Owners of America, www.bmwmoa.org

BMW Riders Association, www.bmwra.org

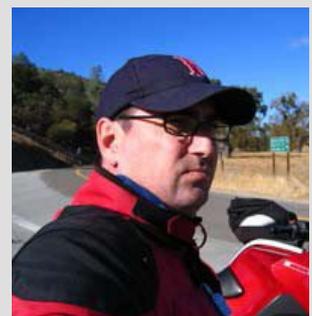
Colorado BMW Club, www.coloradobeemers.com

The BMW MOA has a new president!

By Ray Zimmerman, Executive Director of BMW MOA

Dave Swider is the new president of the BMW MOA and currently serving as delegate to the International Council of BMW Clubs. Dave has been actively involved in organized motorcycling for almost 15 years and has been riding for nearly 30. He has served twice as president of the Yankee Beemers, a New England based BMW Club, has worked as a committee chair on two BMW MOA national rallies and served as co-chair for the BMW RA’s national rally in 1998. Dave has been riding BMW motorcycles since he was in his teens, starting with a 1977 BMW R75/7 and has had a series of BMWs since, currently owning an airhead, an oilhead and two hexheads. He has amassed a couple hundred thousand miles on BMWs. Dave has been instrumental in the growth of the BMW MOA and the BMW MOA Foundation, the educational “arm” of the association.

In his professional life, Dave is active in local professional organizations that support the litigation support industry.



Dave Swider on the road

Dr. Philip C. Abrami on his BMW passion and BMW club membership

Building the Future on the Past

By Dr. Philip C. Abrami, Vice-Chairman Automobiles,
International Council of BMW Clubs & President of BMW Club of Canada

2006 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the International Council of BMW Clubs. While I discovered BMWs a few years before the International Council was founded, I did not become a club member until 1980, so I've been on the club scene just about as long as the Council has been around. Of course, BMW Clubs have been around much longer than that. But at least I can use my age and longevity on the club scene to speak with some authority about what the attraction of club life is and how together we can continue and expand on this tradition. That's why I've entitled this article "Building the Future on the Past".

A short history of BMW Clubs

According to BMW historians, here's how BMW Club life all began: "In view of the sporting success and the enthusiasm generated by the brand BMW, a group of BMW motorcyclists in Düsseldorf founded the first BMW Club in 1928. In England a loyal community of BMW enthusiasts linked to the then importer AFT Ltd was formed in the mid-thirties. They even visited the BMW plant in Munich in 1938 as part of their FRAZER NASH BMW Owners' Rally.

The enthusiasm for "Sheer Driving Pleasure" continued after the Second World War. Supported by the ongoing internationalization of BMW AG in the fifties and sixties, the BMW Club community gradually grew.

The example of the USA illustrates this particularly clearly. As a result of the increasing sales figures of the BMW 02 in the US, for example, the BMW Car Club of America (CCA) was established in 1969 in Boston. Today, the CCA is the biggest BMW Club in the world with 75,000 members. The US also has the largest BMW Motorcycle Clubs in the world: the BMW Motorcycle Owners of America and the BMW Riders Association International, which together total some 45,000 members.

A similar development took place in Europe and Japan: both regional BMW Club umbrella organizations have also existed for over 40 years. In 1981 the worldwide BMW Clubs formed an international umbrella organization - the International Council of BMW Clubs - so as to set out a clear and internationally standardized framework for the activities and public appearances of the clubs throughout the world.

As a result of decades of work, the BMW Clubs in North America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan and Europe have become a powerful community. At the end of the nineties and around the turn of the century, there was a new

surge of BMW Clubs. In Eastern Europe and the Asian markets in particular many new BMW Clubs were established. Today the worldwide BMW Club family encompasses some 200,000 members in around 600 officially recognized BMW Clubs. Expansion continues inexorably and will extend to South and Central America in the coming years."



Dr. Philip C. Abrami, Vice-Chair (Automobiles), International Council of BMW Clubs & President, BMW Club of Canada

My life as a BMW owner

All of us join our local, regional or national club because of these marvels on wheels, two or four-wheel variants, from Bavarian Motor Works. We are drawn to these marvels of aesthetic and functional engineering for a myriad of reasons. For some, they are the ultimate luxury on wheels; for others they are great performance vehicles; for others they are great value for money; and for others they are a historical record of automotive and motorcycle "mobile traditions" worthy of preservation. Some of us polish and clean them to concours condition; others drive them exuberantly but safely on public roads through mountains and along the sea, or for groceries at the neighborhood store; and others of us race and rally them, taking them to the ultimate form of motorized enthusiasm. I have done all of these happily and some of them sadly. (Fellow racers will know what I mean.)

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Continued from page 07: Building the Future on the Past

1978 E21 320i

It all began for me with a test ride in a 1978 BMW E21 320i, which we were comparing to a Porsche 911. Well, the P-car was neat and my girlfriend, now wife, managed to get a speeding ticket in it but there was something about the Bimmer which made us buy a new one. It was Sierra Beige, with tan cloth interior, sunroof and limited slip differential. I added an aftermarket sound system (Alpine & ADS) and we were blissfully happy for a couple of years. Joined the BMW Club too. Then I did a driving school with the BMW Club at Lime Rock Park and have never looked back. I caught the bug and did as many schools as I could, eventually becoming a high-performance driving instructor in the mid-1980s. I still instruct several times a year and enjoy it with the same passion as my first time on a race track.



International Council Meeting 2005 in Simmelsdorf

We loved our first BMW and drove it everywhere. On one Canadian trip, we drove in one day from Winnipeg, Manitoba after breakfast to Calgary, Alberta for dinner and on to Banff National Park in time to have ice cream along main street before the shops closed. A total of 900 miles in a single day with stops. And we arrived fresh and ready for more. Yes, we were young. But the car was really a joy to drive.

Concours? Been there, done that. Not up to the standards of professional competitors but I have an inkling of what's involved. We did one national clean car competition with the BMW 320i and so I appreciate the care and the cost of doing it right. Running your hand over the paint and feeling nothing but a smooth "greasy" surface. Looking at the paint and seeing deep into it. Using a host of chemicals - Autosol, 3M, Mequair's, etc.- and dozens of rags, er, proper cleaning cloths, to get every speck of dirt out of all those crevices. Wow. A real labor of love. And then you drive it away and hours of work are gone. Yipes!

So I remember with fondness getting the car super clean and how doing that was just the natural progression of an enthusiast's sense of clean. I still buy numerous car cleaning products a year and have my own cleaning rituals. Why? Not only because I like clean cars but because BMWs respond so fantastically to being clean. The paint, the (leather) seats, the carpeting are all first-rate quality and respond positively to TLC. And isn't a clean car a fast car? Hmmm.

By the end of its life with us, the BMW 320i had made a transformation from a street car to a track enthusiast's car. And a good one too. Suspension upgrades, in particular, helped make it nimbler, quicker, and less prone to oversteer. And boy, in stock trim, did it oversteer if you weren't careful and lifted in the middle of a corner. I even got those anti-shimmy kits and did all kinds of exotic things to prevent that dreaded shimmy at 50-70 mph. But life goes on and the arrival of children, the purchase of a home, and, well, bad thinking meant that the BMW 320i had to go. A hatchback arrived and sadness set in. Thankfully, the insanity of life without a BMW was only temporary and we moved onwards by going backwards.

1974 BMW 2002tii

What arrived next was a 1974 BMW 2002tii. It was not the round taillight version but the one with all the North American safety requirements. So it was heavier and not quite as pretty as the earlier models. But it was fast and well balanced and it soon became obvious to me what all the fuss was about. What an unbelievable car to drive hard.

Having now settled into a routine of annual modifications you know what happened next. My street tii became more and more of a track car. Amazing performance out of a car with only 130 HP because of the momentum you could take out of a corner - just like a sling shot. And more than even the BMW 320i, I learned how to drive at the limit. How to use driving technique and not engineering alone to go fast. On a tight course with short straights, there was little out there that was better. But especially because it was driven so hard and maybe because in its former life it had not been loved so much, the tii had this annoying habit of breaking parts and especially those which I had not brought with me. Not that unexpected for a car of that age but not always fun either. And then life changed again. It was love at first sight.

1988 BMW E30 M3

But what, pray tell, could be more beautiful and more scintillating to drive than a tii? A modern tii would be a good answer. And that's exactly what the engineers at BMW delivered to an unsuspecting world when they created the first and greatest BMW M3. From the moment I drove a student's BMW M3 at the track, I knew I had to have one. There was just no turning back. And after a six month search, I had my first one, a beautiful white one.

And what a joy it was to own and to drive. And how sad I was when I broke the lower control arm at a driving school and had to "sell it" to the insurance company. It drove home the hard lesson about careful, regular maintenance and the use of genuine BMW parts. Frankly, I was depressed for days. I remember watching the Indy time trials and one of AJ Foyt's driver's lost three cars in one weekend. Why, I thought to myself, did this not make me feel any better? It took a year to find a replacement. But we finally found a grey BMW M3 that

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was a worthy successor to the white car. This was the car that would take me to the next level - club racing. Everything about club racing is bigger and better. That includes the costs, the intensity, the joys, and the frustrations. Stories? I've got tons. Here's one of my favorites.

A few years ago, I ran in a club racing weekend at Mosport near Toronto, Canada. I don't have a lot of money to spend on racing and usually try to do it as cheaply as possible and still be competitive. Some of you would say that's impossible and actually, I can't disagree. Anyway, this weekend of racing ended with an enduro. My co-driver and I were positioned for a class win if we could find a way to get ahead of a team of experienced racers and deep pockets, also driving a BMW E30 M3.



Club racing weekend at Mosport near Toronto, Canada

Halfway through the enduro, I came in for a mandatory, timed pit stop and we did a driver change, having battled for half of the race with our nemesis. We were so close and now confident that the race would be ours. But after entering the track again, things were different. We were either one half lap ahead or, god forbid, one half lap behind. What was going on? Had our pit strategy worked that well? We had one member of our pit crew responsible for timing the stop. And he had two stop watches to do it with. But, yes, the unimaginable happened. He timed us incorrectly and added time so we would not be DQ'd for an early return to the track. He added an extra 30+ seconds to our pit time. We weren't ahead but half a lap behind. And so we snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

After the race, the three of us, my co-driver and I soaked with perspiration, sat along the pit wall and said nothing but stared dejectedly down. What a way for the weekend to end. From the elation and optimism we felt the night before the race to this, the pits of depression and frustration. Afterwards, we had a beer together and didn't need to say much to one another. We knew the mistake was honest but we all wished it had not happened. Today we laugh about it. It's actually better story than if we had actually won. Still...

1997 BMW E39 540i sport

If you are getting the idea that I'm a track addict, well you're right. But with a dedicated race car, the joys of owning a BMW get pretty limited to those weekends events at race tracks a few times a year. The body, mind, and soul need something more regular in the way of a "fix". So it was time to do something about that. Along came a 540i and an offer that we could not refuse. Six speed manual variant, of course.

Owning this car has been a return to my roots with BMW. "Roots" being a car in stock trim. And boy, do the roots run deep. Many car magazines and even consumer magazines have hailed this car as fantastic and one of the highest scoring ever tested. I could not agree more.

The big V8 launches the car like no other I have owned. The suspension means it can be driven quickly and with confidence on twisty roads and then settle in for hours of pleasurable driving on interstates (average MPG = 31.7 at 75mph). In fact, I just finished a 13-hour marathon ride through the Northeast with horrible weather at times. The car never even hiccupped and I arrived safe, sound and relaxed. For me, that's a BMW hallmark.

So despite all my urges to the contrary, I will not modify this car. Don't need to, for one. And I won't put it on the track either. Well, not now at least!

My life as BMW Club member

Much of what I have just described would not have been possible without the camaraderie, expertise and collaboration of my many good friends in the BMW Club community. Not only am I a member of my local chapter and national club in Canada but also a longstanding member of the American club too. In North America, we enjoy a very open and collaborative relationship between all the clubs, regardless of geography.

What has club life meant to me? First and foremost, without the BMW Club community, I would never have learned about performance driving and never have had the opportunity to race competitively and safely under vintage 13/13 "no contact" rules. I would never have met the many, many enthusiasts and friends who share my passion for BMWs and for driving. And I never would have had so many folks bail me out with parts, mechanical help, trailers, places to stay, beer and all those things that friends do.

You see, the BMW Club community, is more than magazines, informative websites, events, and discounts. It's really about the people. People who are just like you and me united around BMW cars and bikes but people who come to be more than just fellow enthusiasts. Folks who you wrench with, but then go to dinner with, or skiing, or somewhere together on vacation - driving BMWs, of course.

Diary

There is still a number of promising events coming up this year which you should definitely not miss. From now you find also the 2007 events. Your event isn't listed yet? Then simply send us the respective information.

You will also find a current calendar of events on our website at www.bmw-clubs-international.com



Autoclasica 2006 Argentina

October	October 07 – 08	VETERAMA Mannheim (D) http://www.veterama.de/de/presse.htm
	October 14 – 19	International Council Meeting in Pretoria (ZA) http://www.bmw-clubs-international.com
	October 26 – 29	BMW Mexico International Convention (MEX) http://www.cancunridersbmw.com

Preview 2007

March / April	March 29 – April 01	TECHNO CLASSICA 2007 in Essen (D) http://www.siha.de
	April 06 – 09	BMW Clubs Australia National Rally 2007 (AUS) http://bmwccv.bmwclubs.asn.au/
June	June 15 – 17	Annual Meeting of the BMW 3er Club (E21/E30) e. V. in Winterberg (D) http://jahrestreffen.bmw-e21e30.de
September	September 01 – 09	BMW Classic – Der Großglockner ruft (A) http://www.grossglocknertreffen.bmwklassiker.com

Further information

All websites given in this Newsletter are listed here for quick reference

Clubs:

- www.bmwmcfc.com
- www.bmwcarclubgb.co.uk
- www.bmw-mobiletradition.com
- www.bmwmoa.org
- www.bmwra.org
- www.coloradobeemers.com
- www.bmwclub.ca

Events:

- www.veterama.de/de/presse.htm
- www.bmw-clubs-international.com
- www.cancunridersbmw.com
- www.siha.de
- bmwccv.bmwclubs.asn.au
- jahrestreffen.bmw-e21e30.de
- www.grossglocknertreffen.bmwklassiker.com



Annual meeting of BMW Clubs Österreich: BMW Austria presents new BMW Z4 M Coupé