



# THE Ottawa Tri-Star

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## Driving Season Is Here! (Finally)

It seems like summer was never going to arrive. The cool, rainy Spring went on far too long. It's nice to finally get some hot, sunny days so we can enjoy the outdoors.

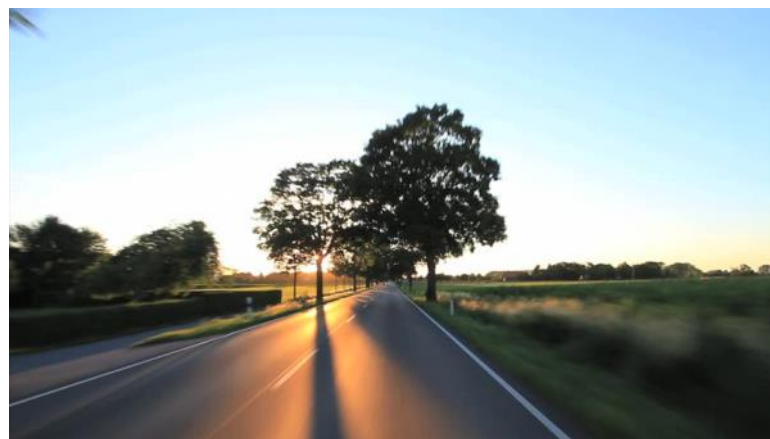
Our first event of the year, albeit under less than ideal weather conditions, was held in May with the Club participating in Benzfest hosted by Star Motors. We had a great turn out and enjoyed the event. An article on Benzfest is included in this edition.

We had our second event on June 22 where Club members went on a boat cruise in the Thousand Islands to visit two historic castles. See the article in this edition for more details on this interesting event.

We have several more events planned for this summer so hope that you will be able to make it to these fun activities. Check out the details in this newsletter.

Hope to see everyone soon.

### Drive Safe!



Mike McKinnon  
President &  
Ottawa Tri-Star  
Editor

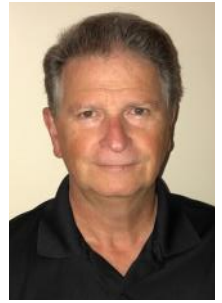
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## President's Message

By Mike McKinnon



The Club's Executive has been quite busy over the last couple months planning and organizing this year's events.

We've held two events so far, Benzfest at Star Motors and the Two Castles Boat Cruise.

We've tried to vary the types of events this year to offer our members new experiences and also to attract the participation of members who may not have attended events in the past.

The Two Castles Tour and upcoming Driving Skills events are examples of new types of events. We have also increased the number of events in the hope that members might be able to attend at least one or two of the activities.

Membership recruitment continues to be a priority for the MBCA. Our section has taken several steps to try and attract new members. Star Motors and Young St Garage have agreed to display our recruitment flyer and we hope to be able to broaden the distribution of the flyers further in the coming months.

We also are getting membership application forms from MBCA that members can give out to other MB

owners who might be interested in joining the MBCA.

Benzfest was a great venue to showcase the MB brand and our Club. We had lots of interest from visitors in joining the Club with at least one new member already signing up. We hope more will follow.

The MBCA is not alone in trying to attract new members. In the area where I live near Ottawa, I know our local curling club and golf course are also very active in trying to recruit new members.

With today's busy lifestyles and demands from raising families and work, it is difficult for many people to find time for leisure activities or to commit to joining organizations.

We welcome any suggestions existing members might have to help gain new recruits.

We have several great events upcoming. One in particular is quite unique and should be a lot of fun. Joe Ferner, our

Club VP and Secretary has done a tremendous job organizing a

Driving Skills event that will be held on August 17th. Information on this is included in the Events Section of this newsletter.

We also have outings planned to the Nepean Sailing Club and the Opinicon Resort. Both of these should be great activities.

Ron and Marlene Caterall have again graciously volunteered to host a picnic at their cottage. This was a very popular event last year and we are looking forward to holding it again this year.

We are looking at holding another event at or near Montebello as our final driving event of the season. More details will follow as they become available.

One final point. Unfortunately Dean Dounev had to resign as our Webmaster due other commitments. We would welcome anyone who can offer to take on this important position in our Club.

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## Mercedes-Benz Club of America



### Member Benefits

- Subscription to Star Magazine
- Discounts at MB Dealers on new vehicles and service
- Participate in national and local section events
- Receive local section newsletters

*The Mercedes-Benz Club of America (MBCA)* is a non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating, preserving and promoting the Mercedes-Benz brand. The MBCA is made up of numerous local sections throughout North America with an overall membership of nearly 30,000 members. One of those sections is located here in Ottawa.

The **Ottawa Section** is a group of people who enjoy getting together to share their love of the Mercedes-Benz brand. The Section provides its members with:

- **Regular social events** - held throughout the year
- **Driving events** - tours during summer months to interesting destinations throughout Eastern Ontario and Quebec
- **Technical sessions** – at Mercedes dealerships and service providers
- **Driving courses** – to improve driving skills and knowledge of your vehicles
- **News and articles in local Section newsletters**

Please go to [www.mbca.org](http://www.mbca.org) or [www.ottawa.mbca.org](http://www.ottawa.mbca.org) to learn more about the Club as well as further contact information.

Hope to see you soon!



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# 2019 Benzfest at Star Motors

By Bob Richer and Joe Ferner



Star Motors of Ottawa and the Mercedes-Benz Club of America | Ottawa Section again this year came together for the second annual Benzfest. Benzfest 2019 was attended by over 400 participants including 40 from the Ottawa Section.

This year's Benzfest went from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm and focused on

1956 300 SL Gullwing;  
1960 190 Db;  
1973 450 SL;  
1975 450 SL;  
1985 380 SL;  
1987 560 SL;  
1995 SL 74;  
1997 SL 600;  
1998 500 SL;  
2003 C 320;

The event allowed members to reconnect after a long winter. Pre-1990 cars were treated to an exterior wash, which was appropriate as many cars were just taken out of winter storage. The event included a tour of the dealership including the service area – where mechanics answered questions and Star Motors had the AMG Tour setup.



Cont'd next page...

everything Mercedes-Benz with great music, classic and modern Mercedes-Benz vehicles and new AMG vehicle displays, giveaways and Ask-The-Expert sessions.

The Ottawa Section displayed 20 vehicles at the event and had an information booth with MBCA materials for attendees. Following is a list of the vehicles the Ottawa Section displayed:

2005 SL 500;  
2005 CLK 320 Cabriolet;  
2005 E 320 CDI;  
2008 SLK 350;  
2008 CLK 350;  
2009 SLK 300;  
2009 C 300 4MATIC;  
2011 E 550 4MATIC;  
2013 SL 55; and  
2015 C 250 Coupe.



# 2019 Benzfest at Star Motors Cont'd

The AMG Tour featured an AMG GT C Roadster, AMG C 63 S and AMG C 43 Cabriolet.



It turned out to be a sunny morning and then the rain came at around 11:00 am, which resulted in a free interior wash for some. Some members with older SLs were scrambling to manually put up their convertible tops before



The thrilling part of the experience was the ability to start the cars and hear the fabulous sounds emanating from the exhaust! That's what the R, S+ and S modes are for!!! I jest; I have been lucky enough to participate in the AMG Experience with the AMG Driving Academy on track at Le Circuit Mont-Tremblant and know firsthand that those modes do more than just enhance the sound of the exhaust. The modes actually alter the handling characteristics of the car changing it from a mild mannered daily driver into a track demon. Nothing but the best!

Star Motors provided a delicious BBQ including steak, hamburgers and chicken with all the trimmings and French fries or poutine.

they got too wet! It is amazing how nimble we become in an emergency! The day was topped off with the arrival of our newest member with

to MBCA.org. For more information about the Ottawa Section please go to [Ottawa.mbca.org](http://Ottawa.mbca.org) or [mbca.org/section/Ottawa](http://mbca.org/section/Ottawa).



his 1956 300 SL Gullwing. Needless to say Star Motors put on another stellar event which was enjoyed by all.

For more information about Star Motors of Ottawa contact them online



Everyone had left by 4:00 after a wonderful and enjoyable day. The event resulted in the Section gaining a new member with hopefully more to follow. We all look forward to "Benzfest 2020". For more information about the Mercedes-Benz Club of America please go

**Star Motors**

Star Motors of Ottawa  
[starmotors.ca](http://starmotors.ca)

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## 2019 Coming Events

By Mike McKinnon

We've had two successful days so far this season but there are more great events yet to come!

Coming up next is a dinner being held on Sunday July 7th at the picturesque Nepean Sailing Club. Details have been provided by email. Be sure to join us for a wonderful summer evening on the waterfront!



We are holding a second event in July this year. Lunch Reservations have been made for July 27th to host our Club at the Opinicon Resort located at Chaffey's Locks on the Rideau Canal. The resort has recently been extensively restored and offers a great venue for a day trip. This outing will offer the opportunity to do a group drive from Smiths Falls to Chaffey's Locks where we will have a dedicated parking area reserved for us. Details will be provided by email and RSVPs will be required. Come and join us for a drive through

beautiful countryside and visit a historic resort and canal lock.



In August we will be holding one of our premier events of the season. Joe Ferner, our VP and Secretary, has organized a Safe Driving event in conjunction with MBCA. We are pleased to offer the Safe Drivers|Safe Families program at Algonquin College's Visitor Parking Lot #7 on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

The overall objective of the program is to provide teens and experienced drivers with a basic set of fundamental skills and attitudes on which they can develop all the knowledge, experience, and techniques of a competent safe driver.



The event is open to MBCA | Ottawa Section members and their families, friends and especially learning or new drivers. The program is limited to thirty (30) participants on a first-come first-served basis. Details will be sent out by email. Come and experience your car in a fun and safe environment and give any new or learning drivers a unique opportunity to improve their skills behind the wheel. We look forward to seeing you there.

There are a few additional events that will be held later this season. These include a picnic at the cottage of Ron and Marlene Catteral. Ron and Marlene have again graciously offered to host us at their cottage for what has proven to be a very popular event. This event will likely be held in early September. Dates and details are yet to be confirmed and will be provided by email.

We are planning a driving event to the Montebello region in late September or early October. Dates and details have yet to be confirmed and will be provided in upcoming Tri-Star newsletters and by email.

Our final event of the year will be our Annual General Meeting. This is normally held in November and all members are welcome to attend. Details will be provided closer to the event.

We hope you will be able to participate in at least some of the events and welcome any feedback.

### Ottawa Section Upcoming Events—2019

- Nepean Sailing Club Dinner – July 7th
- Opinicon Resort Luncheon– July 27th
- MBCA Safe Divers – Safe Families Driving Event – August 17th
- Constance Bay Cottage Picnic – early Sept TBD
- Driving Tour to Montebello Area - Sept/Oct TBD
- Annual General Meeting - November



## Thousand Islands Two Castle Tour

By Mike McKinnon

Two castles but no Game of Thrones! On June 22, eleven members of the Ottawa Section had a great day enjoying a boat tour and visiting two historic castles located in the Thousand Islands region of the St Lawrence River.

We met at Rockport around 9:00 which meant an early start for most of us! At 10:00 we boarded the Sea Prince II and headed out under sunny skies and calm winds for Boldt Castle.



Both castles are located on the US side of the river so passports were required for this international event. The story of Boldt Castle is one of romance and tragedy. The castle was built by George C. Boldt, who became a multi-millionaire in the late 1800's through his involvement in the hotel business including the famous Waldorf Astoria.

In 1900 George Bodlt decided to build a castle as a gift to his beloved



wife Louise. At one point Mr. Boldt owned as many as 64 islands in the Thousand Island region. The castle was to be built on Heart Island. The "heart" theme is prevalent throughout the castle and shows the deep love George had for Louise.

Three hundred craftsmen, including stonemasons, carpenters and artists fashioned the six story, 120 room castle along with its extensive



gardens, power house and a tower, (complete with two bowling alleys) as a playhouse for their children. No expense or detail was spared.



Four years after construction of the castle had started, tragedy struck when Louise died at the age of 42 in 1904. The heartbroken George, immediately sent a telegram to cease all work on the castle.

Boldt never returned to Heart Island, leaving behind the structure as a monument of his love for his wife.



For 73 years the castle was left to the mercy of the rain, wind and snow. Vandals caused significant damage and the walls were covered in graffiti. Thankfully in 1977 the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority acquired the property and decided to restore the castle to preserve it for future generations to enjoy. The restorations done to date are amazing and give a sense of what the castle would have been like in its prime.

Once we cleared US Customs, we had about 1.5 hours to explore this magnificent structure and its grounds.



We noted that the water levels in the St Lawrence are still quite high necessitating the construction of raised platforms over the normal docking areas as they were underwater!





## Thousand Islands Two Castle Tour Cont'd



When we re-boarded the Sea Prince, they had laid out our lunch which we enjoyed as we sailed through Millionaire's Row, home to many of the rich and famous Americans at the turn of the century. We then turned back and headed to our next stop—Singer Castle.



Singer Castle is much less known than Boldt Castle and located about 45 minutes down river from Boldt Castle. We enjoyed the ride taking in the scenery and watching the expensive yachts sail by. Singer Castle, located on Dark Island, is the only remaining castle on the St Lawrence to be completed, fully



furnished and resided in, during the heyday of the great builders and industrialists. The castle was built by Fredrick Bourne, starting in 1902 and completed in 1905. Fredrick Bourne was the fifth president of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, hence the



name of the castle. Originally built as a hunting lodge, the castle has a medieval theme and is quite different in its style and finishings from Boldt Castle. Similar to Boldt Castle, Fredrick Bourne built the castle as a surprise for his wife Emma and their children. The castle is built from granite, has 4 stories and 28 rooms. The castle also has a boat house and power station. There are several mysteries, including the numerous hidden passages throughout. It also includes a dungeon in one of the towers.

One interesting fact is that 2000 loads of topsoil were brought from Canada to

cover the eighty-seven acres of rock on the island. So although we were in the US we were walking on Canadian soil!

Singer Castle is now owned by a European Consortium who collect castles—quite a hobby! We had a guided tour of the castle by a very knowledgeable young man. While it is good they are trying to keep the castle with its original furnishings, we found that the current owners are not putting in the necessary funds to preserve the items and there was a general lack of maintenance in the castle. After our tour we again boarded the boat and headed back to Rockport, arriving around 4PM.



We all had a great time on this event. Thanks to Bob Graham for suggesting it and to Uwe Rutenburg for his assistance and the info he provided.







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