



BMW Clubs' **World** 2/13

BMW Clubs International Council Newsletter

90 YEARS OF BMW MOTORRAD.



**BMW BIKE FEST
IN WESTERN CAPE,
SOUTH AFRICA 2013**

**BMW GROUP
CLASSIC UNDER
NEW MANAGEMENT**

**INTERVIEW WITH
TIM DIEHL-THIELE,
BMW MOTORRAD**

Stranger in a Strange Land

Academics like me take pleasure in word games and expressions with double meanings, such as the title of this editorial. I recently traveled for 24 hours to attend a Board Meeting of the International Council in Cape Town, South Africa that followed immediately after the 2013 BMW Bike Fest of BMW Clubs Africa. Yup. Halfway around the world from winter to summer and a car guy trying to mix in with over 500 bike folks. Strange.



Robert A. Heinlein, who wrote an entire novel with the title I borrowed for this article, also wrote: "There is no safety this side of the grave" a somewhat ghoulish sentiment that conveys one aspect of our collective attachment to BMWs, whether we are talking about the two-wheel variants or the four-wheel kind. Strange.

Over the course of a couple of days with this gang of riders, I came to admire their appreciation of BMW motorcycles as wonderful conveyances, their mechanical knowledge of how stuff on their bikes works, their riding prowess, and their enjoyment of riding. But you know what? This list is identical to the list held by four-wheel BMW aficionados. Strange.

Where the difference lies is in the extent to which our bike club members socialize. The riding experience is most definitely a shared experience. You ride together, you eat together, you drink together, and you most definitely have fun together – lots of it for two, three, or more days. Strange.

These riders have great senses of humor. They laugh a lot and tell all sorts of jokes, like this one (you be the judge): "Question: What's the best way to burn fuel without producing any horsepower? Answer: Harley-Davidson." Strange.

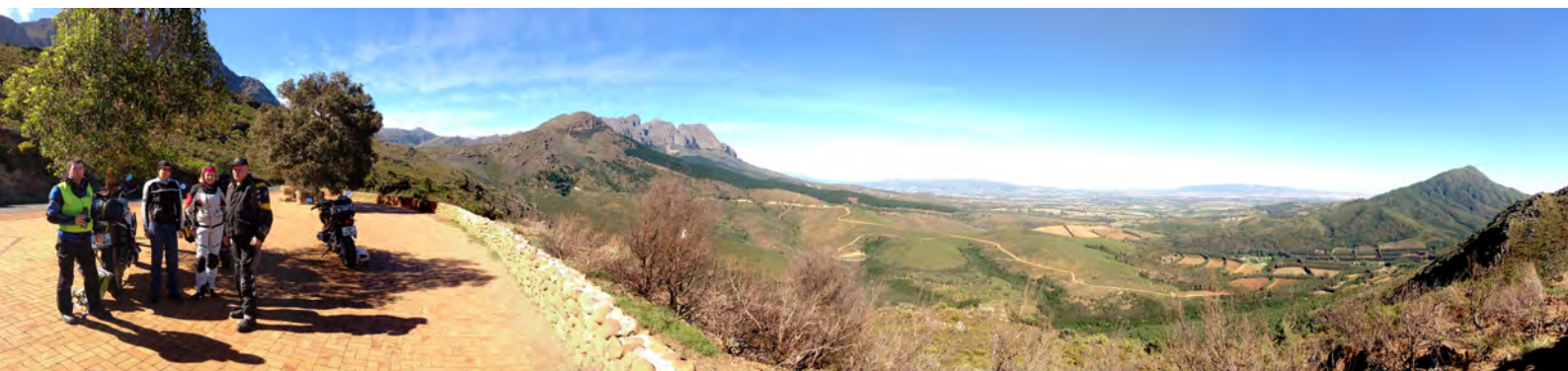
The BMW Bike Fest and the Board Meeting were organized by Rita and David de Bruyn (our Vice-Chair, Motorcycles) and a team of volunteers with wonderful support from BMW Motorrad South Africa. The events, activities, and venues were all first-rate. The weather was perfect and the scenery was well beyond my high expectations – spectacular mountain views, valleys rich with farms and vineyards, and wonderful views of the sea. The roads complemented all this and made us wish the rides and drives never ended. Strange.

Oh yeah. We also held a Board Meeting. A long one that stretched over two days formally and that consumed many hours informally. Play hard, work hard. Strange.

Phil C. Abrami

Vice-Chair Automobiles

BMW Clubs International Council



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The BMW Club Office has moved.
Our new address is:

Petuelring 130
80788 München

**IMPRINT**

Publisher
BMW Group Classic

**Responsible for
content**
Ulrich Arendts

Postal address
Petuelring 130
80788 Munich

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BMW GROUP CLASSIC UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

BMW Group Classic was headed by Karl Baumer (59) from 2007 until his retirement in 2013. His position at the helm of BMW Group Classic was taken by Ulrich Knieps (53) as of 1 March 2013, who also continues to be responsible for the main department for product, technology and sport communications. Regarding the assumption of his additional duties, Mr. Knieps said, 'it is a unique joy to be responsible for an area that arouses so much passion and enthusiasm. I am particularly looking forward to my activities with the BMW Clubs, because they are an international community of enthusiasts who hold the brand dearly in their hearts.'

Ulrich Knieps is an engineer who has been with the BMW Group for

more than 25 years. He has performed several functions over this time in sales, marketing and communication. One of his major tasks was building up the marketing network and the dealerships for the Rolls-Royce brand.

Ulrich Knieps will also be performing the presidential duties for the first time at this year's Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este. He has already successfully presided over the Mille Miglia and the Hamburg-Berlin Classic on several occasions in the past. However, his passion extends even beyond classic motorcars, for he is also an enthusiastic motorcycle rider, frequently guesting at the BMW Motorrad Days in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.





THE DTM 2013 – A MUST FOR EVERY MOTOR RACING FAN.

Kati Hockner, BMW Clubs International Office in collaboration with International Customer Events BMW

Passion means setting your sights ever higher – even when you have already reached the peak. When BMW achieved triple success immediately upon its return to the DTM last year, winning the driver, team and constructor titles, nobody was more surprised than BMW itself. And it will not be a simple matter of repeating that kind of success next time around. But what it does mean is that BMW will be working even harder this year. Because if you look carefully enough you will always find a little more room for improvement.

To ensure that it is as well prepared as possible for the challenges of the new season, BMW has enhanced the quality of its personnel. This year, BMW will be competing in four highly motivated teams made up of eight top drivers. Whether hopeful rookies, a team with tradition, or newcomers, what they all have in common is their love of motor sports.

Join in the action and experience motor racing up close. Secure for yourself the attractive ticket packages offered by BMW for each DTM race. This year, BMW Motorsport has again put together a special offer for official BMW Clubs and their members. The first 100 tickets in the categories BMW Power and BMW Passion will be sold at a 20% discount, on a first-come, first-served basis.

DTM RACE CALENDAR 2013.

Date	Country	Race
05.05.2013	GER	Hockenheimring
19.05.2013	GB	Brands Hatch
02.06.2013	AUT	Red Bull Ring Spielberg
16.06.2013	GER	Lausitzring
14.07.2013	GER	Norising
04.08.2013	RUS	Moscow Raceway
18.08.2013	GER	Nürburgring
15.09.2013	GER	Motorsport Arena Oschersleben
29.09.2013	NL	Circuit Park Zandvoort
20.10.2013	GER	Hockenheimring II



Once again, here is the information about the various fan packages that are available online from bmw-motorsport.com/tickets together with an overview of the dates.

“BMW Power Package” – Cost per ticket from €36,00:

- Weekend grandstand ticket – silver or gold category
- Paddock ticket (optional, available at extra cost)
- BMW Fan scarf

“BMW Passion Package” – Cost per ticket from €57,90:

- Weekend grandstand ticket – silver or gold category
- Paddock ticket
- BMW Fan scarf
- BMW Motorsport Team brochure
- BMW Motorsport seat pad
- Exclusive BMW Motorsport gift
- Chance to win a VIP upgrade for 2 persons for the race Sunday

“BMW Performance Package” – Cost per ticket from €595,00:

- Access to BMW Hospitality on Saturday and Sunday
- Exclusive BMW car park with BMW Shuttle Service
- Premium catering on Saturday and Sunday
- Weekend grandstand ticket – gold category
- Paddock ticket
- Guided tours through BMW Team Garages
- Exciting guest programme with prize draws, entertainment and exclusive live stream
- Exclusive interviews with BMW Motorsport drivers incl. autograph session
- BMW Welcome Package with premium BMW M and BMW Motorsport products



ORDER YOUR BMW TICKET WITH SPECIAL FAN ADVANTAGES NOW!





BMW CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF BMW MOTORRAD.

Kati Hockner, BMW Clubs International Office

Nine decades ago, when their success story was only just beginning, BMW motorcycles not only repeatedly proved their functionality and reliability in sports competitions but they also satisfied motorcycle riders' fundamental desire for independence on the road. Indeed, it is on this aspect of pure riding enjoyment that more and more attention was focused over the ensuing decades. And still today, it is this fascination for engineering and the experience of freedom on the road that continue to fire the imaginations of more and more fans of the BMW Motorrad brand all over the world. "Pioneering spirit, ingenious engineering, and an never-ending desire to vie against the competition in sporting contests – these are the success factors that over the course of 90 years have made BMW Motorrad what it is today: a brand that you will never want to give up once you have become familiar with it." These are the words with which the current **BMW Classic live special edition** sums up the BMW Motorrad success story. The BMW Classic live magazine will of course once again be available from the BMW Clubs International Office for all official BMW Clubs at the preferential price of 4.40 euros plus shipping.

The 2013 jubilee year will be celebrated in several ways. In particular, BMW are paying tribute to its success story with the launch of **three exclusive special models**: the BMW R1200GS Adventure, the BMW R1200R and the BMW R1200RT. The jubilee celebrations kicked off with the world's biggest exhibition of classic models, the **Techno Classica**, which was held in Essen on 10 – 14 April. The main objective of the BMW Group Classic stand in Hall 12 was to present BMW Motorrad's entire remarkable history. As every year, BMW Group Classic again enjoyed the

support of the International BMW Classic and Type Clubs, who provided 21 of the 23 BMW models on display, and also supplied voluntary specialist personnel to man the stand.

From 4 July, the **BMW Museum** will be hosting a **special exhibition** on the theme of 90 Years of BMW Motorrad, while the party of the year will of course be taking place at Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The anniversary celebrations will also be a major aspect of the **thirteenth BMW Motorrad Days** to be held on 5 – 7 July of this year. Several important milestones of BMW Motorrad's success story will be on display for visitors to admire, thanks to the support of BMW Classic. For the second time, the BMW Club community will be present at the site and in the BMW Classic tent.

Several umbrella organisations from Europe and further abroad have already announced their participation and will be passing on information about the events via their organisation and through their club activities. Be sure to visit the clubs on the site and meet club members from all over the world. Come and be part of the celebrations of 90 Years of BMW Motorrad!





ONCE AROUND THE WORLD.



THE JOURNEY TO MY BMW LIFE.

David de Bruyn, South Africa

The year was 2000 – when I made a grudge decision against the Johannesburg traffic congestion which caused me to be permanently late for all meetings that required me to travel. I'll admit that there may have been a bit of mid-life crisis involved as well – as this was also my 40th year – and it resulted in me buying my first BMW – a K 100RT – and began my never-ending journey into the BMW lifestyle.

The K 100RT served to confirm everything that I wanted in a bike – enough space for my large frame, a comfortable pillion seat for my better-half, and all the technology that makes for a safe ride and an economical but low-maintenance means of transport.

Travelling in Southern Africa took me from the barren West Coast to the tropical East Coast resulting in visiting all the extremes – doing it with our local BMW Club along the 29th latitude and 29th longitude was an excellent excuse to visit game reserves, the big dams, waterfalls on the way and take in all the cultures found in Southern Africa. Visiting Botswana and the Makgadikgadi Pans Nationalpark, riding the stunning Katse Dam in Lesotho and going to Maputo for Mozambique prawn being some of the highlights of these journeys, all done on a succession of BMW RT's and GS Adventures.

Then along came an opportunity to expand my riding horizons in 2006 when



I was asked to serve on the BMW Clubs International Council's board. This led to some of the best shared riding experiences riding available on this planet – together with BMW Club members from around the world.

From the northern tip to the southern tip of New Zealand's South Island, the Alps and the Dolomites in Europe, Cherahola Skyway, Deals Gap with its never ending curves and the stunning Blue Ridge Parkway in the Carolinas, USA. And it permitted me to attend the biggest BMW party in the world – BMW Motorrad Days in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Doing a solo ride on an R1200RT through Australia's Alpine National Park with its blue gum natural forests and snow gum trees will always be one my best riding memories. My BMW journey has allowed me to explore our own country and those of our neighbours, as well as most of the other continents – Asia still to be done – and to meet so many other BMW owners. And there is so much more too – the trip to Zanzibar, meeting up with friends that I have made along the way in Japan, Chile, Russia and elsewhere.

As I write this – I realise again that am actually still on the trip of my BMW life.

A TRUE STORY.

Matz Rosenquist, Sweden

We, i.e. Mariana, my friend Kalle and I, were on a train back from Moscow. Of course the train was delayed and we ran into the traffic jam in St. Petersburg. On top of all that, we could not get into the garage where we stored our bikes.

Finally, we got our bikes and it didn't take us long to reach the Finnish border: A fast ride, hazardous roads and roadblocks set up by the police made it exciting. We made it without problems, they were still to come.

We knew the border crossing could easily take three hours. Taking this into account we were far from sure to catch the ferry in Helsinki. We took our position in line and not before long it was our turn. We handed in our documents: the first passport got stamped, the second too but then suddenly my passport was missing. A big argument started with the Olga behind the glass: No, only two passports had been handed over. I blew a fuse and after one hour I got hold of the highest-ranking officer at the border crossing.

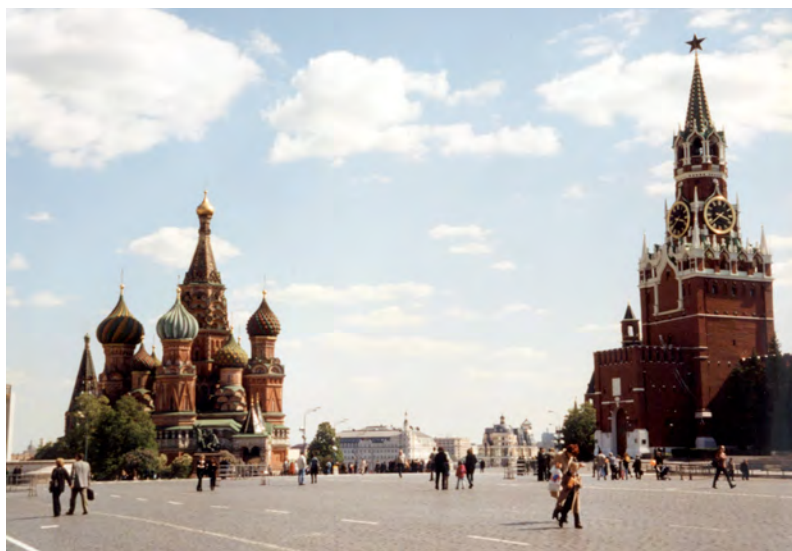
The officer talked to the Olga and my passport re-appeared. Kalle had passed the checkpoint and waited on his GS at a guarded barrier further ahead. Mariana and I got on my 1100GS and approached the barrier. The guard said something to Kalle in Russian and suddenly he was sitting on the rack behind him, pointing in the direction of the Finnish border.

The guard wanted to go faster. We were doing 100 km/h in a 15 km/h zone, the guard holding on for dear life, grasping his cap tight to his chest. We passed over a crest doing 90 km/h with less than 100 meters to the last checkpoint. We ground to a halt and suddenly the place swarmed with guards with machineguns, all aimed at us. The big boss came out, half dressed, very upset and angry. He certainly didn't like to have his lunch-nap disturbed.

It was all quickly resolved when his guard friend appeared behind Kalle. Suddenly the big boss broke into a huge, roaring laugh and while he was patting our backs, he said in broken English: This was even worse than the Germans last week.

We reached Finland, stopped for a quick coffee and kept up the speed to reach Helsinki. Needless to say, we finally reached the ferry with less than 10 minutes to go.

And we didn't end up in a Siberian Gulag and as for what happened with the Germans at the checkpoint, we never did find out.



FROM MOSCOW TO FINNLAND.



THE BEGINNING OF MY BMW LIFE.

Rubén Tenorio, Mexico

It was the summer of 1985. We were planning a family trip to Puerto Escondido, which is in the coast of the State of Oaxaca. We were supposed to go in my dad's car, because all of us who lived at home at that time were going together: my father (56), my mother (51), my sister (15), my kid brother (13) and I (22).

The night before, my sister decided not to go, because she was interested in attending a junior high graduation party. So I told my dad : "let's make the trip on the bikes", and he said: "YES, you ride with your mom and I'll ride with your younger brother".

I didn't expect that answer. My father had a 1980 R65 and I was riding a 1982 Honda CB900F. The main problem for me was taking my mom on my bike for more than 350 km on one of the twistiest roads in my country, with more than 200 km of bends. I had 6 years of riding experience at that time, but the task was too



FAMILY TRIP TO PUERTO ESCONDIDO.

much for a young man. I knew the road very well, but that didn't mean it would be an easy trip. I was kind of stressed all the time. I did not have fun at all. There were seven brothers and sisters in my family, and everyone of them was expecting me to bring mom home safe and happy.

We left our city on Friday and, after five hours or so, got into Puerto Escondido during the afternoon. We spent the rest of the day on the beach as well as the day after, and got back on Sunday. The way back was kind of easier, but still with a lot of stress. We finally got home that afternoon, safe and happy, and, well, it turned to be one of the greatest adventures a motorcyclist can tell. My mom, who is 79 now, repeatedly asks me "when are we going to do it again?"



2013 BMW BIKE FEST SOUTH AFRICA

Dani du Preez, BMW Motorcycle Club Pretoria

Combine the following: Hundreds of BMW motorcycle enthusiasts; a well-managed resort in South Africa's beautiful Western Cape; splendid roads to traverse and a passionate organising team ...

The result is another successful BMW Bike Fest. This annual event, held at a different venue every year, has the full support of BMW Motorrad SA and the dealer network. 2013's BMW Bike Fest took place at Goudini Spa. This leisure resort is located in the Slanghoek Valley just outside Rawsonville, in a part of the Western Cape that includes the Breede River Valley, the Boland Mountains, the Coast line and Winelands area – ideal for BMW motorcycles of all kinds. The Goudini Spa was an ideal home base from which to explore the world's longest and most diverse wine route and many other fascinating tourist attractions.

The first visit to the site was done by members of BMW Clubs Africa in June 2012. Several re-visits followed with frequent correspondence between the teams of BMW Clubs Africa with David de Bruyn at the helm, Goudini Spa and the capable team of the local BMW Motorcycle Club.

A nominal registration fee covered the three nights' dinners, live entertainment and an event shirt. A variety of support was available:

- Atlantic Motorrad's on-site workshop and technical team
- bike recovery facilities in the form of three BMW on-call cars
- and medical standby was ready to assist where needed.

The concept behind a long weekend such as this is firstly for BMW bike enthusiasts to enjoy their bikes but also to experience the pleasures of the area and to relax in the evenings with club members and friends from all over the country.

The BMW Motorcycle Club Cape planned several routes, both tar and off-road that were provided as MapSource or BaseCamp routes before the event. Riders planned their own activities for the day, with some leaving at first light with the pleasing sound of their beloved machines to explore what the area has on offer. Locals were amazed by the sight of almost 400 BMW motorcycles coming and going all day long in groups of their choice.

Those who preferred to stay on made roads had their choice of routes and mountain passes. Du Toitskloof Pass, Bainskloof Pass and Franschoek Pass, to name but a few, have enough opportunities to satisfy the appetite for tight corners and twisties. The GS bikes and their owners were not disappointed by the dirt routes in and around the Cedarberg area, Overberg, the Swartland as well as the Karoo.

Many riders and their pillions, especially those who came the 1,000 kilometers and more to attend this event, chose the coastal route. The most difficult thing of all was to decide where to have coffee and lunch as there are so many places available on this splendid scenic route with mountains on the one side and the ocean on the other.



Among the riders, who came from just about every corner of the country, as well as from Namibia and even a tour group from Dubai, was a special group of guests: The board of the BMW Clubs International Council. David de Bruyn, Vice-Chair of International Council and also the main facilitator of the BMW Bike Fest is from South Africa and it was on his invitation that the Board agreed to attend the BMW Bike Fest prior to their working meeting in Blouberg close to Cape Town. It was a privilege to introduce Chairman Ian Branston with Vice-Chairs David de Bruyn, Bernard Knöchlein and Phil Abrami as well as Andrea Sommer and Ilka Huss from the BMW Club Office in Munich and Ulrich Arendts from BMW Classic to the 500+ people in the festively decorated hall. My trusted BMW F800GS managed some of the off-road routes very well but in a group of trusted friends time flies and before we knew it was time to head back to home base. Riders were enjoying the area's scenery so much that the organisers had to postpone the start of the gymkhana, a timed skills event open to any attendee who wanted to show off their riding skills and what his or her bike is capable of. To loud applause from spectators the men were soon separated from the boys. At the final evening function, over over R30,000 (ca. €2,290) worth of prizes – sponsored by BMW Motorrad, Touratech, Wild@Heart, Donford Motorcycles and others were handed out to the brave winners and participants.

Although several non-club members attended, history shows that many of those will soon join a club in order to share their passion with like-minded friends and the happy times that go with that. BMW Motorrad and the participants of the BMW Bike Fest donate to a local charity each year and this year the Mizpah School and Home in Elim were selected as the fortunate recipients. Mizpah School caters for 115 children who suffer from Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. Elim Home is a residential special care centre which caters for 50 children with mental and physical disabilities. Both institutions are situated in the town of Elim and rely on donations to meet most of their needs. An astonishing amount of R40,000 (ca. €3,052) was handed over to the BMW Motorcycle Club Cape to be administered on behalf of the children in Elim.

The 2013 BMW Bike Fest was an outstanding event: The venue, food, the rides, the artists and above all the sense of belonging put events like this high on my priority list.



BMW CLUBS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL RALLY 2013.

Stewart Garmey, BMW Clubs Australia Delegate to the International Council

110 BMW CARS.



The three east coast Australian states – Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria – take turns at hosting the prestigious BMW Clubs Australia National Rally over Easter on a biennial basis. This year was the turn of the southern state of Victoria and the BMW Car Club Victoria to host the event. The venue was the picturesque and beautiful seaside village of San Remo, a leisurely two hour and 190 kilometre drive south east of Melbourne, the state's major city.

Over 200 BMW Car Club members and their 110 cars from many Australian states registered and attended the event, which started on Good Friday with registrations and a welcome dinner. The afternoon was spent preparing cars for the following day's "Celebration of Excellence", which attracted 75 cars for display and judging. Cars on show ranged from the earliest 1959 Isetta 300 to the latest BMW E92 M3 and with everything in between. The Isetta was awarded People's Choice while Australia's Delegate to the International Council, Stewart Garmey, took home top honours with Best of Show for his BMW E28 M5.

Easter Saturday evening saw rally entrants enjoy dinner at Phillip Island's "Nobbie's Discovery Centre" ... a spectacular venue overlooking the raging Southern Ocean and a huge seal colony, sadly spoiled by torrential rain. Phillip Island is home to one of the last remaining mainland colonies of Fairy Penguins, the smallest breed of penguins in the world. These amazing birds swim up to 80 km out to sea to feed and return to their burrows each evening at sunset and it was to see the returning birds that the rally guests

went next.

Easter Sunday saw track action at the fabulous Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit, arguably one of the best motor racing circuits in the world, with 80 cars competing for class prizes. Guests who didn't want to compete enjoyed a drive over very scenic roads to lunch at the seaside town of Kinloch before one of the major events on the programme, the presentation dinner where all the weekend winners received their awards and trophies.

The event is sponsored by the national importer, BMW Group Australia, and a selection of BMW dealers from Melbourne and nearby along with after-market businesses who are always pleased to support the Australian BMW Club community. The event brings together car club members from most Australian states, with many travelling over 5,000 km on a return trip from their homes to take part. The 2015 rally will be hosted by the BMW Drivers Club New South Wales and BMW Car Club Canberra.

It is pleasing to acknowledge the organisation of BMW Car Club Victoria and the support of BMW Group Australia and its dealer network in presenting this event.

THE “FRIEND OF THE MARQUE” AWARD GOES TO ...

JOSEPH A. CHAMBERLAIN II, LAKEVILLE, MA/USA.

BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA)

Back a few months ago, Bruce Hazard, CCA President, gives me a call and informs me that on December 5, 2012 he is going to be at the Boston Chapter quarterly meeting to be held just north of Boston at “BMW of Peabody”. He plans on making a special presentation to that chapter for its role in starting the BMW CCA some 43 years ago and wants me to come up with a fifteen-minute talk about how things were in the early days. No problem, says I, never one to turn down a chance to run off at the mouth.

Soon, as word kind of informally spread about this award, some of the “old guard” started e-mailing around to others and asking whether or not they were going to go to the meeting. Many responded so it was decided to have an earlier get-together at a restaurant just around the corner from the dealership where the Chapter meeting was to be held.

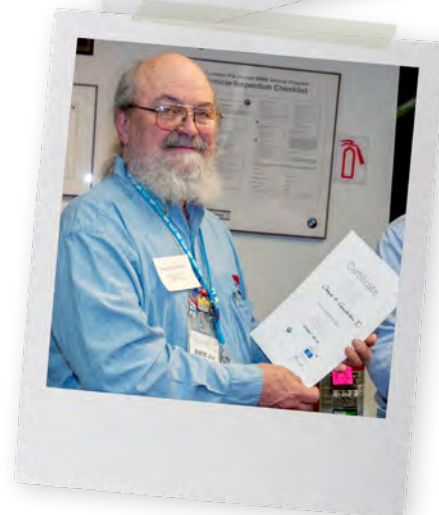
About fifty of us got together at “Matty’s Grille”, seriously diminished their beer supply, finished off some appetizers, and showed off BMW CCA and BMW related “stuff” some of us had dragged along for a Bimmer show-and-tell. Now, it was round about halfway through this get-together that I kind of noticed that there were a lot of pictures being taken of me but I put it down to the fact that everyone today seems to have a phone that takes pictures.

OK, time for the Chapter meeting and we traipse around the corner to the dealership. Again, there are quite a few people taking pictures of me and me with other members but I attach no real significance to this other than the fact that I have been around the CCA for a long time, have made 41 out of 43 Oktoberfests, and have worked on or contributed in some way to every single issue of the “Roundel” from the time it was a single photocopied page to what we see today.

Bruce makes some opening remarks and I deliver my talk about the early days. Then Bruce returned to the microphone and instead of presenting a special award to the Boston Chapter began speaking about the Friend of the Marque award, pretty much the highest honor you can receive in the world of BMW. I’m running through my mind who might be receiving this award because we have some heavy hitters sitting in the audience and about thirty seconds before Bruce calls out my name, the few active brain cells I still have ever so slowly start putting things together. Hack Mechanic Rob Siegel has been snapping pictures of me all night, there is a guy with a professional grade video camera on a tripod at the rear of the audience shooting the entire meeting, every time I look around at the group, lots of people seem to be looking at me, and isn’t it interesting that virtually everyone with a camera has somehow managed to make their way to the corner of the room where I am sitting?

Yup, I was getting the Friend of the Marque award. And it was co-presented by both Bruce and good buddy Michael Izor, also a Friend of the Marque recipient. I am not saying that I was speechless but nearly so and that is a highly unusual situation for me.

I am truly grateful that so many people and organizations took the effort and spent the time necessary to go through all the steps required to first nominate me, write the supporting documents, and make the arguments for presenting the award to me.



FRIEND OF THE MARQUE.

THE “FRIEND OF THE MARQUE” AWARD GOES TO ...

ROB MITCHELL, SPRING CITY, TN/USA.

BMW Car Club of America (BMW CCA)

In January, longtime BMW CCA member Rob Mitchell was recognized as a “Friend of the Marque”, joining a dozen fellow CCA members who have been honored by BMW Classic and BMW Clubs International Council with this prestigious award.

To surprise Mitchell, BMW CCA president Bruce Hazard was on hand at a monthly BMW Riders of Chattanooga motorcycle-club meeting for the presentation. Also on hand were members of the BMW CCA’s Choo Choo Bimmers Chapter, and employees and management from “Pandora’s European Motorsports”, the local BMW motorcycle dealership.

“There are many who, through their particular commitment and exceptional hard work, have quietly promoted the BMW marque, investing time and effort in the interest of their beloved brand”, said Hazard. “However, a few have done still more – individuals who regard BMW products not just as a means to an end, but as a compelling passion. BMW Classic and the BMW Clubs International Council honor the outstanding achievements and exceptional dedication of these individuals with their “Friend of the Marque” award.”

Mitchell has been a BMW CCA member for more than 40 years. He began his love affair with BMW with the purchase of a BMW 1600, and then began working for “Foreign Motors West” in Natick, Massachusetts. After a few years at the dealership, he went to work for BMW of North America, which established a corporate presence in North America by buying out importer Max Hoffman in 1975.

During his thirty years with the company, Mitchell served in many capacities – car and motorcycle – most prominently as product-communications manager for the company, responsible for all media communications involving BMW cars, motorcycles, motor-sports, and technology.

However, as Hazard pointed out, this history alone would not qualify anyone for “Friend of the Marque” status. “What does differentiate Rob from other BMW employees and enthusiasts,” says Hazard, “is his encyclopedic knowledge of the BMW brand, both cars and motorcycles. But this is no key to the Friends inner circle, either; what truly makes Rob a Friend is his willingness to share his vast knowledge of the BMW marque and all its history and technical detail with his fellow BMW owners, members of the press, and members of the car club.” In addition, Mitchell is widely regarded as the key element in the cordial relations enjoyed by the BMW CCA and BMW of North America. Nor is Mitchell particularly idle in his retirement. He is currently president of the BMW Riders of Chattanooga, and he continues to ride frequently. His excursions include annual bike tours that take him to exotic locations around the world.



FRIEND OF THE MARQUE.



INTERVIEW.

“BMW CLUBS AS BRAND AMBASSADORS”

Interview with **Tim Diehl-Thiele**, BMW Motorrad

What is your position in the company?

I am the head of marketing strategy and marketing communication

This year BMW celebrates 90 years of BMW Motorrad. Of all the bikes throughout the whole ninety-year history of the brand, which is your favourite motorcycle model, and do you personally ride a classic or a current vehicle?

The legendary GS. As a motorcycle rider, the GS models have accompanied me all my life, and one of my first motorcycles was an R 80 G/S. My current bike is an HP2 Megamoto, a pure amalgamation of raw emotion and unique performance. I simply love this bike.

What is the most interesting journey you have ever made with a BMW motorcycle?

Only this year in March, I had the opportunity to accompany our tour winner Stéphane Gautronneau on his motorcycle trip through California in connection with our ‘One World One GS’ round-the-world trip campaign for the new R 1200 GS. Those twelve days spent riding along the Pacific coast, through deserts, canyons, and national parks, as well as cities like LA, San Francisco and Las Vegas, were the greatest thing I have ever experienced on a motorcycle – a GS of course.

What in your opinion are the essential differences between driving a BMW motor car and riding a BMW motorcycle?

BMW Motorrad and BMW Automobile appeal to customer groups who are at times very different and expect very different things from their vehicles. Motorcycle riders and car drivers have different needs when it comes to their mobility, and these needs need to be addressed quite differently.

Cars and motorcycles feel different, look different and take a very different approach towards their drivers and riders. But what always remains the same is what BMW stands for – and this is enjoyment, vitality, innovation and aesthetics – both in the two-wheel and in the four-wheel segment.

How and where did you become acquainted with the BMW Clubs?

It was when I was asked to present the content of our communication at the annual meeting of the BMW Clubs International Council in 2011, where I got to know many club delegates over the course of the event. I also came into contact with many different people from the BMW Clubs at our biggest international BMW Motorrad event, the Motorrad Days in Garmisch.

What importance do the BMW Clubs have for the BMW brand, from your point of view?

From a marketing perspective, it is an absolute must these days to turn customers into fans. We want our customers to be loyal, long-term fans of the brand and our products and to do this we wish to enter into and remain in a dialogue with them. We need our customers and fans as brand ambassadors to ensure our long-term success. And of course, the BMW Clubs play a major role here.

How do you imagine the cooperation will be in future between BMW Motorrad and the BMW Clubs? What plans do you have?

What we would like is to involve the BMW Clubs more closely in our marketing activities. There are several possible areas in which we can expand our level of cooperation, in particular in the fields of communication and events.

JUNE

Annual Meeting of the BMW Clubs Latin America Federation, Antigua, Guatemala

20.06. – 23.06.2013, www.bmwclubslaf.org

41st International BMW RA Rally, Asheville, NC, USA

20.06. – 23.06.2013, www.bmwra.org

1st International BMW Youngtimer Meeting, Lucerne, Switzerland

21.06. – 23.06.2013, www.bmw-youngtimer-club.ch

JULY

BMW Motorrad Days, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

05.07. – 07.07.2013, www.bmw-motorrad.de

BMW MOA International Rally, Oregon, USA

18.07. – 21.07.2013, www.bmwmoa.org

AUGUST

41st AVD-Oldtimer-Grand-Prix, Nürburgring, Germany

09.08. – 11.08.2013, www.service-zum-nuerburgring.de

2nd International BMW Z3 Meeting, Seefeld am Pilsensee, Germany

24.08.2013, www.z3-roadster-club.de

49th BMW Clubs Europa Meeting, Bled, Slovenia

29.08. – 01.09.2013, www.bmw-clubs-europa.org

SEPTEMBER

Annual Meeting of BMW 3er-Club E36, Kalletal, Germany

06.09. – 08.09.2013, 3er-club-e36.de

International BMW M1 Treffen in Constance, Germany

12.09. – 15.09.2013, www.bmw-m1-club.org

BMW Clubs International Council Meeting, Bled, Slovenia

14.09. – 18.09.2013, www.bmw-clubs-international.com

OCTOBER

BMW GS Eco 2013, Eastern Cape, South Africa

17.10. – 20.10.2013, www.gseco.co.za