

Mobile Tradition live

Facts and background

Facts

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BMW "Open" – the history of the BMW convertible



BMW 3/15



BMW 335



BMW 3 Series

In September 2003, BMW will provide an impressive link between the launch of the 6 Series and a tradition of convertibles extending back almost 75 years.

In a product range encompassing small cars through to luxury automobiles, convertibles were part of BMW tradition almost from the start. BMW launched the first convertible in 1929. The BMW 3/15 PS was just three metres in length with a 750 cc displacement and 15 bhp. It was manufactured under an Austin Seven licence, at that time the most successful small car.

The models got faster and more powerful until the 327 Type was manufactured as the first purely luxury model. The enthusiasm of car aficionados for convertibles started up again in 1954 following a break caused by the war. The trend continued with the "Topcabriolets" (semi-convertibles) of the 1970s and then the highly successful 3 Series convertibles. They are now produced in five basic models with an almost inexhaustible range of different versions.

For an overview of the history of BMW convertibles see page 14.



Dear Friends of the BMW Group,

BMW Group Mobile Tradition is launching a new medium: Mobile Tradition live. This is ideally timed to coincide with Europe's biggest classic car fair, the Techno Classica in Essen. Mobile Tradition live will bring you quarterly reports and background information from the history of the BMW Group, the products and the brands. There will also be information on associated historical events and people.

The BMW Group will use this new medium to reflect the successful developments of yesteryear. It will also provide an additional platform for enthusiasts of historic vehicles and friends of the brands manufactured by the Group. Recent years have highlighted a significant fact: classic car fans and owners are not the only people to appreciate tradition – we are experiencing this resonance throughout the public domain. Enthusiasm for historic vehicles has been growing continuously for some years now. BMW has played an important role in this process: after all, we have the biggest proactive club scene in this sector. Mobile Tradition live will bring history to life in detailed reports and documentary image material, examples of restoration projects from our extensive collection of vehicles, features and articles on the most important events across the world. We will show you all the other services offered by BMW Group Mobile Tradition at the beginning of this issue (page 6). We should now like to wish you a pleasurable journey down memory lane.

Read and enjoy!

Holger Lapp

Holger Lapp, Director of BMW Group Mobile Tradition



Ernst Henne at the world record attempt near Wiener Neustadt in 1931. Read all about it from Page 10.

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Dates and events

April 2003

10 to 13 April 2003 / Essen (D) Techno Classica

Exhibition, Essen Trade Fair, hall 12, biggest classic car show in the world.

25 to 28 April 2003 / Cernobbio (I) Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este

Rally of historic automobiles through northern Italy.

May 2003

22 to 25 May 2003 / Brescia (I) Mille Miglia

Rally, recreation of the legendary races from the first half of the 20th century. Showcase for great BMW successes.

29 May to 1 June 2003 / Schwerin (D) 27th International Annual Meeting

Rally, organized by BMW Veterans Club.

July 2003

3 to 6 July 2003 / Montafon (A) Silvretta Classic

Historic Alpine rally through the Austrian Alps.

4 to 6 July 2003 / Garmisch-Partenkirchen (D) 3rd International Bikers' Meeting

Exhibition and rally, a must for fans of historic motorcycles.

11 to 13 July 2003 / Goodwood (GB) Goodwood Festival of Speed

Exhibition and race on the site of the famous historic races and the new Rolls-Royce facility.

Facts | Fakten | Faits | Fatti

BMW Group Mobile Tradition at Techno Classica

Munich. This date is a must. Everyone taking part in this event has a good time: Essen's Techno Classica is the biggest meeting point for friends of classic cars across Europe. 2003 will once again see BMW Group Mobile Tradition presenting visitors with a wide range of exhibits in generous surroundings covering 2,000 m² in Hall 12. Here are the most important exhibits at this year's show:

The stand will feature some of the jewels in the rich tradition of the BMW convertible, focusing on the slogan "Bavarian Open": from the BMW 3/15 Convertible, reaching a speed of 75 km/h on 15 bhp, to the first BMW M3 Convertible, with a speed well in excess of 230 km/h. The highlight is absolutely unique: the BMW 3200 CS Convertible was a present from the Board of Management of BMW AG to Herbert Quandt, the major shareholder whose intervention in 1959 preserved the company's independence. Bertone converted the V8 Coupé into a convertible. Three anniversaries form additional focal

points: BMW has been building motorcycles for 80 years, the BMW M1 was launched 25 years ago, and in 1983 – 20 years ago – Nelson Piquet won the Formula 1 World Championship in the Brabham BMW BT 52. The first R 32 model manufactured in 1923, with a Boxer engine and cardan drive, is also presented on the stand, together with a new highlight in the collection: a BMW supercharger last used by racing legend John Surtees, in its original pre-war condition.

The BMW M1 is represented by a production model and two racing versions. The car that won the 1983 World Championship – an F1 Brabham BMW Turbo BT 52 – is a symbol of the BMW Group's commitment to Formula 1. In line with tradition, the brand clubs are again represented in the hall of BMW Group Mobile Tradition. A new communications profile for BMW Group Mobile Tradition is also being launched at Techno Classica. A completely restructured homepage can be found by clicking on www.bmwgroup.com/history.

Motorcycle parts catalogue 2003

BMW motorcycles have now been making a substantial contribution to the history of BMW for 80 years. A new expanded edition of the parts catalogue for historic motorcycles manufactured between the years 1948 and 1969 is being published to celebrate the anniversary year.

This edition also includes nearly 70 new products, ranging from wire spokes in various sizes to all types of contact breaker set, and from shock absorbers to speedometers for classic motorcycles. Once again, the catalogue has a very clear structure and parts can be easily identified in the layout. All parts can be ordered at BMW dealers.

The 40-page motorcycle parts catalogue will be available in two language versions (English/German) from the beginning of April at any BMW dealer. The order number is 01 20 5 590 032.

Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este 2003

Cernobbio/Munich. The Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in Cernobbio, Northern Italy, is the only traditional Concours d'Elegance still in existence that covers the entire spectrum from classic dream cars to modern concept cars and prototypes.

The organizers are expecting a fantastic cross-section spanning design and automobile history from the year 1920 to the year 1970 at Lake Como in Northern Italy on 26 and 27 April.

All vehicles have to meet strict FIVA criteria (Fédération Internationale des Vehicules Anciens) and are either pre-

sented in their original condition or faithfully restored in line with the original.

The Concorso was held for the first time in 1929. Recently, it has been given new impetus by selective integration of new sponsors. Dr Jean-Marc Droulers, President of Villa d'Este S.p.a., explained the role of the sponsors: "The BMW Group provides Villa d'Este S.p.a. with a principal sponsor that can be integrated perfectly within the concept. The image of a premium manufacturer with a long and illustrious tradition makes the involvement of the BMW Group exceptionally positive."

Third International BMW Motorcycle Bikers' Meeting

Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The first weekend of July 2003 is the date: the 3rd BMW Motorcycle Bikers' Meeting will be attracting lots of riders and fans of the motorcycles made in Bavaria to the Bavarian mountains.

The 2nd International BMW Motorcycle Bikers' Meeting hosted 17,000 motorcyclists and was a fantastic success. This event has now become an established date in the international bikers' calendar.

The dream landscape and the good experience has persuaded BMW to opt for Garmisch-Partenkirchen once again. This means that you too will be able to enjoy the unique hospitality in this part of Germany.

An extremely varied and exciting programme has again been put together for riders and visitors. It will ensure that the 3rd International BMW Motorcycle Bikers' Meeting from 4-6 July 2003 is a

truly special experience. A big exhibition featuring many highlights will celebrate the 80th anniversary of BMW motorcycle history. Naturally enough, BMW motorcycle riders' gear and accessories will also be available for sale, including T-shirts and caps specially designed for the bikers' meeting.

All drivers of historic vehicles are warmly invited to take part in our Classic Corso and experience the unique flair of history on the move in the company of like-minded enthusiasts.

Make sure you note this date in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in your diary right now. Book your room today at Tourist Information, Freya Hofmann, by mailing reservation@gapa.de or phoning Tel. +49 (0) 88 21-18 07 26. You can find more information by going to the website <http://www.bmw-motorrad.de/bikermeeting>, or calling Astrid Busch on +49 (0) 89-38 23 75 48.

Formula 1 exhibition cars in action

Munich. BMW Group Mobile Tradition is now responsible for handling the Formula 1 exhibition cars from BMW Williams. This covers the entire scheduling process, logistics, transport and support for the cars by operations management at Mobile Tradition.

This arrangement offers a lot of advantages. It makes use of an existing organization with outstanding professional expertise and an established pool of

transport equipment. Mobile Tradition can draw on more than 20 years of experience in handling vehicles from the historic collection and the BMW Art Car Collection throughout the world.

If you happen to see a vehicle like that in a TV studio during a sports broadcast, at a dealer presentation or some other event around the globe where BMW is involved, it will have come from BMW Group Mobile Tradition.

Parts catalogue now also online

The parts catalogue provides indispensable assistance if you are restoring a historic vehicle. As from May 2003, this catalogue will also be available on the Internet. There will be pictures of all spare parts in the section Parts Sale on the home page www.bmw-mobiletradition.com. Ongoing updates ensure that the latest data is always available for Isetta, 1500 – 2000 CS, 1502 – 2002 tii, 2500 – 3.3 Li, 2.5 CS – 3.0 CSL, E12, E21, E23, E24, E26 (M1) and Z1. There is also a list of part numbers. Spare parts can be purchased through your BMW dealer. Lists detailing monthly manufacture of replica parts over the past twelve months can be called up. A simple registration process gives you access to this database. Access is granted two working days after registration.

Accessories catalogue 2003

A new expanded collectors and accessories catalogue is being published this year. It includes a range of special products for motorcycle enthusiasts in celebration of the 80th anniversary of BMW motorcycles: lovingly designed miniatures, like the anniversary edition of the BMW R 32 on an acrylic plinth and the precision manufactured R 90 S, a beautiful motorcycle Knirps umbrella, a motorcycle cap and a hand-crafted Boxer key ring.

In addition, there are 32 additional new products focusing on BMW automobiles. 19 high-quality miniatures range from models in the 02 Series such as a 2002 Baur Convertible, two red M3 E30s and a light green Isetta with a camping trailer, through to the M1. Some model cars will be available in new colours from spring. Four miniatures from the "Art Car Museum Edition" will be available for the first time: the masterpieces by Alexander Calder, Andy Warhol, Sandro Chia and Jenny Holzer. The 120-page Accessories Catalogue will be available in four languages from the beginning of April 2003.



Anniversaries in BMW's corporate history

85 years

Start of volume production for first BMW product

1917 sees development of the first product to come off the production lines of Bayerische Motoren Werke at Schleißheimer Straße 288 in Munich – the BMW IIIa aeroengine. Max Friz designed the power unit for the 200 bhp class. The first design drawings were available in May and on 17 September the engine was on the test rig. After a successful maiden flight for the IIIa in December 1917, volume production started up at the beginning of 1918.

Large reserves of power at considerable altitudes and low fuel consumption made this engine an extremely interesting proposition for the armed forces during the First World War. It was primarily used in the Fokker D VII and in the Junkers Ju A 20 and Ju F 13 aircraft. Demand for the BMW IIIa very soon outstripped production capacities at BMW, so the military authorities ordered it to be manufactured in parallel at Opel. The military authorities were also responsible for the fact that the first BMW product was designated with a three instead of a one. At the beginning of 1917 the "Inspection of Flying Units" introduced uniform model designations for aeroengines. The Roman numeral referred to the performance class. Class I was reserved for engines from 100 to 105 bhp. The BMW engine was 185 bhp and was assigned to category III.

70 years

BMW 132 – the first big radial engine from BMW

BMW took over the licence for manufacturing air-cooled radial engines from US aircraft manufacturer Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Company on 3 January 1928. The nine-cylinder model Pratt & Whitney Hornet was initially manufactured virtually unchanged under the designation BMW Hornet.

Soon BMW embarked on its own development. The result was the BMW 132 that went into production in 1933. A number of different versions were built. Aside from the carburettor designs used mainly in civilian aircraft, versions with direct fuel injection were manufactured for the German Luftwaffe. The engines had a cubic capacity of 27.7 litres and generated up to 1200 bhp, depending on the model. Use of this engine in the Junkers Ju 52 turned the BMW 132 into one of the most important aeroengines for civilian aircraft during the 1930s. Numerous pioneering flights were undertaken with the BMW 132. The most impressive was the first direct flight from Berlin to New York in a Focke Wulf Fw 200 S-1 Condor fitted with four BMW 132 engines. It covered the distance to New York in 24 hours and 57 minutes on 10 August 1938.

70 years

The first BMW six-cylinder is launched

Even today, the sleek and powerful six-cylinder in-line engine forms the heart of most BMW cars. This story began 70 years ago in a small car. In mid-1929, the first BMW car was launched, a car developed further under the Austin Seven licence. The first car principally designed by BMW came in 1932: a small Type 3/20 PS.

BMW took the first step up into the next class in 1933 with the first six-cylinder model 303. Within a short space of time, the

BMW design engineers Fritz Fiedler and Rudolf Schleicher had created a completely new car. Customers could purchase the smallest six-cylinder engine in Germany at a price of 3,600 reichsmarks. It was packaged as a saloon in a modern all-steel bodywork, or, at a slightly higher price, powered a range of attractive, open-top models. After being in production for about a year, with 2,300 cars being produced, this 30 bhp original model in the BMW six-cylinder tradition travelling at 90 km/h was replaced by the more powerful 315 model in spring 1934.

30 years

BMW Head Office and BMW Museum

At the close of the 1960s, the central Munich plant was bursting at the seams. Years of expansion by the company had forced an increasing number of departments to relocate outside the complex. The objective was to build a new administrative building to prevent fragmentation of the BMW organization. This building would integrate the central control and planning departments of the Group on the site south of the plant.

The design of Viennese architect Prof. Karl Schwanzer created a striking ensemble by uniting an office tower – the "BMW-Four-cylinder-building" – with a circular museum building – the "Museum-silver-bowl" – and a flat functional building. The avant-garde suspended high-rise building was developed in an innovative lift-slab method of construction.

The new BMW Museum was not intended to present a static history of the company. It was projected as a "continuation of the road within an enclosed space", providing a dynamic tour of BMW's corporate and product history. The building was constructed in less than three years. BMW presented it to the public on 18 May 1973 in a grand opening ceremony.

20 years

The first BMW with a diesel engine

A diesel engine and typical BMW dynamic driving – can the two really be combined? This was the question customers and people at BMW alike were asking themselves in mid-1983 when the 524td came on the scene. It was the first BMW to be launched with a diesel engine.

One thing soon became clear: the 524td was a genuine BMW. Anyone who equated diesel cars with thrift, long life, and a stolid temperament had to revise their ideas on the last point in view of its performance. An acceleration of 0 – 100 km/h in less than 13 seconds and a top speed of 180 km/h preserved even "old" BMW hands from experiencing a loss of power.

The 85 kW (115 bhp) 2.4 litre six-cylinder diesel engine with turbocharger was developed at the factory of BMW Motoren Gesellschaft mbH in Steyr, Austria. The company started operating in 1980 and from 1983 this was one of the engines manufactured there. Success proved BMW right. During the five years it was in production, more than 74,000 cars with the first BMW diesel engine were sold. Today, BMW powers four model series with ultramodern diesel power units.



The first vehicle collection – opened at the facility in 1967.

Bayerische Motoren Werke and its history – keeping tradition alive with passion

The history of BMW goes back to the year 1917. BMW Group Mobile Tradition has been responsible for seamless documentation and presentation of corporate, brand and product history since 1994. However, BMW started to record its heritage at a much earlier date.

As early as 1930, BMW presented the R 32 as the first “classic motorcycle” at the Paris Motor Show. At that time, the motorcycle was only seven years old. Bayerische Motoren Werke had launched it as the company’s first motorcycle model seven years previously. Up to that time, the company had been solely concerned with the manufacture of aeroengines. Although this business was extremely successful, there were substantial restrictions in place following the Versailles Treaty.

The R 32 is the illustrious ancestor of all BMW motorcycles. With 500 cc and 8.5 bhp it propelled riders to a speed of 95 km/h. At the 1933 Berlin Motor Show, it marked the tenth motorcycle anniversary, living proof of the company’s ambition to manufacture classics right from the start.

The first reference to a works archive is recorded in 1943. At that time, the archive was part of the advertising department and any important technical information on all the products manufactured was filed here. Although this archive was moved during the war in order to protect it from destruction, it changed hands and came under different ownership. In 1947 BMW bought the archive back at a price typical for the times: it cost two cubic metres of wood.

BMW celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1966. Following the crisis at the end of the 1950s when the company was close to bankruptcy, full order books gave the company confidence to hold the celebrations with a new self-assurance. The high point of the celebrations was a lavish ceremony at the Munich Opera House. The first company chronicle with numerous historical documents was published to celebrate a Half Century of BMW.

The following year, the company housed its collection of automobiles in a

museum on the factory site and opened the doors to the public. Although the scope of the museum was rather modest, it laid down a marker. An exhibition area needed to be created to house the company’s history. This was a heritage that the founding fathers had already looked back on with pride in the early stages – even then they had a perspective on the future. 1973 saw the official opening of the BMW Museum.

Since that time, hundreds of thousands of visitors have passed through the museum’s portals each year to look back on the company’s history. The interest of BMW enthusiasts had grown over the years and three years later, in November 1976, the first BMW Veterans’ Club was established, with close links to BMW AG.

At the end of the 1970s, official interest was awakened in automobile and motorcycle history. At that time, the two-volume corporate history *The BMW Story* by Horst Mönnich was published. There were also two further extensive publications on automobile and motorcycle history at BMW by Halwart Schrader and Stefan Knittel.

Tradition was also given greater prominence within the company in order to enhance the profile of the brand. The in-house automobile collection was expanded from the mid-1980s and there was an increased drive to present the vehicles at ever more prestigious events – nationally and internationally. A dual strategy became established: complementing the BMW Museum at head office, a Rolling Museum enabled enthusiasts across the globe to experience the fascination of the BMW brand.

In 1994, the establishment of BMW Group Mobile Tradition firmly anchored the celebration of heritage within the corporate structure.



Celebration of the company’s 50th anniversary

BMW Group Mobile Tradition: tangible mobility, living history

For the past nine years, BMW Group Mobile Tradition has been established as an organization responsible for preserving and communicating the company's history across the Group.

In 1994, BMW created Mobile Tradition in order to provide the structural conditions for comprehensive, professional and complete integration of corporate history across the Group. Right from the start, the function of Mobile Tradition was not just preservation. Its main thrust was to make tradition a living experience in the present day. The primary concern at BMW Group Mobile Tradition is responsibility for all active and inactive brands – including MINI and Rolls-Royce, the inactive brands Triumph and Riley, while also including the Dixi and Glas brands as part of the BMW brand heritage.

The motto "History moves with us" should definitely be taken literally. All vehicles represented in what is very nearly a complete collection of vehicles at BMW Group Mobile Tradition are ready to take the road at a moment's notice. They frequently feature as mobile exhibits at events and tours. The mission of BMW Group Mobile Tradition is to preserve the heritage of the Group. Comprehensive presentation of brand history and BMW corporate history is always linked up with the company's current activities. The aim is always to present a living experience of historic mobility using dynamic approaches to exhibitions and activities.

BMW Group Mobile Tradition makes the arrangements for all the activities and services related to presenting the history of the company and the brands of the BMW Group. BMW Group Mobile Tradition is divided into the following areas: Archive, Historic Vehicle Collection, Service, Parts and Accessories, BMW Museum, Communication and Events. Another key element is management of the numerous BMW Clubs. BMW Group Mobile Tradition provides them with information, organization and in some cases even extends support to providing a degree of financial assistance.

Information and knowledge: the archive

The BMW Group Mobile Tradition archive is where all documentation is collected,



The head office of BMW Group Mobile Tradition in Munich – next-door to BMW's research and innovation centre.

stored and disseminated for further use. This archive includes information on company, brand and product history, for example information on all the vehicles, their technical data, design drawings and repair manuals. The archive centre is the central contact for all internal departments if they require historical information of any type.

The archive is also an important contact for queries from journalists, authors, historians and others concerned with the tradition of the BMW Group and its products. Anyone with an interest in BMW can carry out Internet research in the BMW Archive using an individual password that is provided free of charge. The most advanced archive technology is being deployed to organize the data. Many hundreds of thousands of documents ranging from instructions, photos and posters to files, prospectuses and trophies can be

called up by anyone who is using the archive. Databases can be accessed by simply clicking on the address www.historischesarchiv.bmw.de. These databases cover the period from the year of establishment of the company in 1916 to the 1970s and they are continually being updated by the addition of subsequent years.



The archive: central office for all documents on BMW history.



The vehicle collection of BMW Group Mobile Tradition.

For faithful restoration: the BMW Motorcycle Parts Catalogue.

The Archive IV System (HIAS) was developed as an in-house facility. It networks the archive landscape and the databases to give all users rapid access to the information they might be looking for. An interactive, user-friendly search function opens up the entire spectrum of historical archive material to interested researchers. Links allow users to extend and refine searches without hassle and in accordance with their requirements. This means they can target precisely the kind of information they are looking for. The archive does not just contain information on individual BMW models. It also provides facts, figures and information on design engineers, test reports, prospectuses, pictures, advertisements and all sorts of other topics across the broad spectrum of BMW's history.

Chronology of uniqueness: the vehicle collection

The historical collection is the core of BMW Group Mobile Tradition. It encompasses more than 400 automobiles and 170 motorcycles that have been manufactured in volume production since BMW started production. There are also exhibits featuring engines from automobiles, motorcycles and aeroplanes. Naturally enough, the exhibition also features some exciting and interesting exhibits taken from the long history of BMW's involvement with the motorsport scene.

You can find cars that took part in the Paris-Dakar Rally standing side by side with racing motorcycles from the historic period of motor racing before the war. There are touring cars alongside Formula 1 racing cars. Special models such as BMW Art

Cars designed by famous artists over the last 40 years are exhibited beside cars that have starred in Hollywood films. Each of these priceless treasures makes its own special contribution to this extensive collection that BMW is proud to make accessible to a broad public.

The name Mobile Tradition reflects the goal of bringing a tradition of heritage and engineering to life. This is achieved through the collection of historic vehicles and by faithful restoration programmes. The original purpose of mobility is thereby presented for the future generations. All the vehicles in the collection are in running order and regularly take their rightful place in several hundred missions each year, preferably in the fast-growing leisure

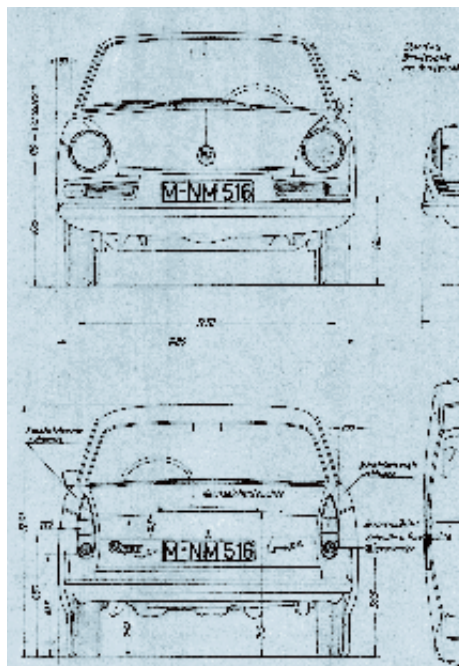
market of activities focussing on classic vehicles. One outstanding example of a mobile tradition is the historic Mille Miglia race, where the cars taking part drive 1,600 kilometres along the length and breadth of Italy.

The goal of turning history into an experience is given realistic and tangible form for millions of spectators. During the 1930s, BMW celebrated some big racing successes at this legendary pre-war racing event. Its fame lives on to this very day with the nickname "Mille Miglia" for the BMW 328 – a regular participant in these events.

Service non-stop: parts and accessories

BMW Group Mobile Tradition guarantees aficionados a comprehensive parts supply so that they can carry out faithful restoration of BMW classic cars. This ensures that the BMW tradition is kept alive and mobile, with historic BMW vehicles remaining a tangible expression of a motoring heritage driving along roads across the world. BMW Group Mobile Tradition supplies owners of historic vehicles with all spare parts 15 years after volume production ceases. This involves an inventory of spare parts, components and accessories running into tens of thousands.

BMW advises dealers and owners and manages the entire process of distribution and logistics. The workshop of BMW Group Mobile Tradition has a team of highly specialized mechanics and craftsmen working on repairing and restoring all the vehicles housed in the historic collection reflecting BMW's motoring heritage. In addition, friends of the BMW brand receive assistance and



Scale drawing of the BMW 700 from the archive.

information on their vehicle at first hand. BMW supplies replicas of repair manuals for the global fleet of 225,000 cars and 120,000 motorcycles.

All information is available in digital form in keeping with the times, and users can locate data in electronic or printed catalogues quickly and easily. Experts at BMW Group Mobile Tradition also design the comprehensive range of accessories that meet the requirements of classic cars.

A journey through time: the BMW Museum

The BMW Museum was opened in 1973. Since then, millions of visitors have taken a tour through BMW history. The exhibition Horizons of Time takes the visitor from the start of the 20th century to the present. It even looks at the future of the BMW brand and demonstrates the integration of the BMW company within the social and community context.

The BMW Museum was one of the first museums of this type and today it enjoys a worldwide reputation – not least because of the vision of the architect who placed a famous landmark in the cityscape of northern Munich.

His goal was to create an experience of the infinity of time within the finite realms of an enclosed space. Visitors are taken on a spiralling exhibition tour covering a total of 2,000 square metres and they experience the most illustrious automobiles, motorcy-



The BMW Museum: an architectural landmark in the north of Munich.



High point of the classic-car season: Consorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in Cernobbio at Lake Como, 2001.

cles and aeroengines manufactured by BMW. Supplementary information in a range of different media and temporary exhibitions on special topics complement the presentation of BMW history.

Living history: clubs, events and communication

Around the world every year, there are numerous exhibitions and events celebrating the tradition of the BMW Group and its brands, products and innovations. BMW Group Mobile Tradition prides itself on making a very big contribution to these occasions because it brings the BMW tradition alive for the people who are friends of the BMW brand.

Strong growth in the classic-car scene during recent years bears testimony to the rising interest in the concept and tradition of a motoring heritage.

It is all too evident at the world's biggest exhibition in the sector, the Techno Classica held in Essen, at a congress of the International Council, the umbrella organization of the worldwide BMW Club, at the Corcorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este held in Cernobbio on Lake Como, at the Festival of Speed in Goodwood, or indeed at any one of numerous other events held throughout the world.

The typical BMW spirit is also expressed in the BMW Club organization. This is the biggest organization of its kind anywhere in the world. Pioneering spirit, sporty motoring and creativity characterize the friends of the BMW brand – and there are

no less than 200,000 members in more than 180 clubs around the world.

BMW Group Mobile Tradition supports the clubs at their events. It also uses a wide variety of communication media to provide basic information about companies, brands and products. BMW Club members are active keepers and upholders of the BMW tradition and they constitute an extremely important partner when it comes to collecting information about the service and parts market relating to historic vehicles.

BMW Group Mobile Tradition provides an impressive showcase for the BMW heritage in three publication series: BMW Dimensions, BMW Profiles and BMW Portraits. The portrait of "Paul Rosche: Stories of History. A genial engine designer" is being published in 2003. There will also be a new edition of the profile volume "BMW Coupés. Tradition of Elegance".



Perfect support: mission control at events of BMW Group Mobile Tradition.



Racing as competitive factor

World records and overall victories: BMW and motorcycle racing

Motorsport costs money – the 1920s were no different to today, when the enormous budgets of the Formula 1 teams are often debated in the media. Companies are motivated by profit and this raises the question as to why a company like Bayerische Motoren Werke was already investing personnel and financial resources in motorsport during the 1920s and 1930s.

by Fred Jakobs

Bayerische Motoren Werke entered the German motorcycle market relatively late. When BMW launched its first model – the R 32 – in the autumn of 1923, hundreds of motorcycle factories had already started up production. In addition, numerous foreign makes were being imported to Germany from the years around 1910.

Although BMW had made a name for itself as an aeroengine manufacturer, the Versailles Treaty had taken away the core business. It was therefore necessary for the newcomer to establish itself fast as a motorcycle make. The company needed to win over the public with its products.

But how could you reach the public at the beginning of the 1920s? Radio and television had not yet started their triumphal march and outside the sports pages the daily press, which today devotes entire sections to the automobile and motorcycle, was only aware of the motor industry as a welcome advertiser for the small ads section.

“Despite its youth, remarkably fast”

The trade press was also thin on the ground. Even in the few trade publications that existed, vehicles were not put through the tests we know today. In many cases, there were only short subjective

descriptions that left lots of questions open. For example the magazine *Der Motorwagen* (The Motor Car) commented as follows on the launch of the R 32 at the 1923 Berlin Motor Show: “...finally the high point of the motorcycle exhibition, the new B.M.W. motorcycle with cylinders mounted transverse to the direction of motion, a remarkably fast and successful motorcycle, despite its youth.”

It’s true, this was a nice complement, but the reader was kept in the dark about what exactly the good features of the motorcycle were. None of the journalists had had an opportunity to experience the motorcycle outside the stand, let alone

Franz Bieber won the first German Championship for BMW in 1924.

drive it themselves. Descriptions like this failed to provide verifiable statements on the performance of a product.

And more than 50 years were to pass until tests carrying out direct comparisons came on the scene, like those you find today in motorcycle magazines. If customers wanted to have some kind of objective comparison between different models, they could only refer to lists of results from the race weekends. These were published both in the trade magazines and in the sports pages of the daily press. Readers were able to use these lists to make their assessment, relying on the maxim that the fastest motorcycle was also the best.

Success in the first season

BMW was extremely successful even in its first motorcycle racing season in 1924. The company gained first place in one of Germany's most prestigious sporting events at the Solitude Race near Stuttgart. The victory at the Schleizer Triangle brought them the title of German Champion for the first time. 240 trophies for first place had been won by the close of 1926 and this ensured sustained press coverage.

It was particularly fortunate if there was an extensive commentary on a race and the trade press devoted increased attention to special designs.

The British: full of praise

In 1926, BMW won the Six Days in England and gained an international reputation when design engineer Rudolf Schleicher lined up as an amateur rider on his R 37 motorcycle and won a gold medal.

The British press were full of praise for the fledgling motorcycle maker from Germany: "Probably the most exciting motorcycle in the competition," enthused the magazine *Motor-Cycle*, at that time the bible of the European motorcycle fraternity.

The article was generously illustrated with specially commissioned drawings and culminated in a conclusion that the BMW advertising department could not have put better: "After the most difficult days we were unable to detect oil leaks anywhere. The motorcycles were running

quietly and appeared to have massive reserves of power. They are miles ahead of any British motorcycle as far as the design is concerned."

This was the first notable mention of BMW motorcycles in the foreign press. Schleicher's "adventure" had paid off: The reputation of the BMW name had spread to motorcycle enthusiasts outside Germany.

The race: a victory for advertising

The manufacturers themselves made extensive use of sporting successes in their advertising: 95 percent of all motorcycle posters from the years 1923 to 1940 in the Historical Archive of BMW AG exclusively feature those victories and records. There were elaborately designed forms with spaces to enter the current results – on the basis of BMW winning – by a fast printing method on the actual day of the race.

These posters were faster to manufacture and distribute than any other form of print medium.

Like all other manufacturers and many suppliers, BMW also placed advertisements about the successes and referred to victories, championships and records in prospectuses.

During the 1920s, BMW even printed special prospectuses that only listed racing successes. However, around the end of the 1920s advertising related to racing became totally inflationary.

Virtually every manufacturer advertised with victories and successes, even if the event was completely insignificant.

An advertisement by the manufacturer Sunbeam gives an indication of the way things had gone. It advertised with 1,000 victories in the year 1927 alone.

This made the races rather arbitrary. All victories tended to be treated on an equal level because with so many different events, there was no benchmark for comparison.



Otto Ley and Karl Gall at the Avus Circuit in 1937.

European champion with one victory

Racing series were unknown – a single race decided the award of the titles of German Champion and European Champion until well into the 1930s. And the home advantage of the riders generally played a crucial role, as the story of the Tourist Trophy on the Isle of Man shows: This race was held for the first time in 1907 and it was not until 1938 that Ewald Kluge on a DKW became the first foreigner to achieve a class victory. One year later, Georg Meier with his supercharged BMW achieved the first win by a rider from



When Otto Ley and Karl Gall celebrated a twin victory at the Avus in 1937, posters were printed in advance and updated on the day of the race, the fastest form of advertising.



Ernst Henne and the first world record for a BMW motorcycle: poster from 1929.

outside the British Isles in the senior class, equivalent to overall winner.

It was clearly necessary to standardize conditions in order to obtain a truly fair and objective comparison as to which motorcycle really was the fastest and hence the best in the world.

The first standard: world record

They had to be valid in every European country, as well as overseas. World record runs, if they were carried out in accordance with the regulations of the FICM (Fédération Internationale des Clubs Motocyclistes) provided this kind of comparative benchmark.

Although there were numerous classes and endurance records, the jewel in the crown was the “absolute” world record: in

In September 1929, Ernst Henne was chasing the record for BMW for the first time. On the road to the bavarian city of Ingolstadt, he achieved a speed of 216.750 km/h, beating the previous best performance by around 9 km/h.

From that point on, BMW had a useful slogan that was ideal for use in advertising: “The fastest motorcycle in the world” adorned posters, advertisements and prospectuses in prominent positions. BMW was well aware of the advertising effect and poured resources into defending the title or winning it back as quickly as possible, because the slogan “second fastest motorcycle in the world” was not exactly effective in an advertising context.

tion. In 1937, BMW had positioned itself at the top of the league as a motorcycle builder. Victory in the Six Days had given it the most reliable motorcycle in the world. Ernst Henne’s world records gave it the world’s fastest. And in 1938, Georg Meier’s triumph in the first European Championship to be held over an entire season meant that BMW were quite simply building the best racing motorcycle in the world

Racing as engineering test track

However, a high-profile image was not the only benefit a company could gain from racing. Technology transfer from racing to volume production was a key factor in a company’s decision to take part in racing activities, for it advanced the development of the company’s own products. Technical innovations were generally test-

The pinnacle of motorcycle production: the and the best in 1937.

ed under race conditions where progress could be compared directly with the products and solutions fielded by the competition. This approach was already taken by BMW when the company produced its first model, the R 32.

In May 1923, five months before the official launch, BMW chief design engineer Max Friz went on the Rally through the Bavarian Mountains without incurring any penalty points, putting the reliability of the product to the test. In subsequent years, numerous sophisticated solutions were tested in racing down to the last detail. The most significant was undoubtedly the first ever telescopic fork with hydraulic suspension, introduced in volume production of the R 12 and R 17 models.

The design engineer wins

However, the riders were not always so enthusiastic when they had to test technical innovations. A case in point was the linear-guide rear-wheel suspension developed by Alexander von Falkenhausen. The BMW works team refused to test it under race conditions during the Six Days in 1936 because they suspected that it would compromise driving characteristics. BMW racing director Rudolf Schleicher was himself very sceptical about the rear-wheel suspension and informed von Falkenhausen without cere-



The most important product fairs also featured the world’s fastest motorcycle as the focal point – the 1930 Paris Motor Show.



Timing for Henne’s record.

order to eliminate external influences such as inclines or head winds, riders had to cover a distance of one kilometre in both directions once and within a specific time. Timekeeping was finite and there was no room for excuses.

Commitment to racing sport created a company with confidence in its products: a motorcycle that finished the race was reliable. A motorcycle that also crossed the finishing line in first place was technically refined and superior to the competi-



Racing director Rudolf Schleicher with a BMW R 37 designed by him.



Tough off-road test: Josef Forstner with the new rear-wheel suspension at the 1937 Six Days.



Advertisements inevitably feature Georg Meier's victory at the Senior TT.

mony that he should take the new model up to the starting line – after all, he had

fastest, the most reliable

designed it. Following the event at which he won the gold medal, von Falkenhausen said to the press that he had “never had such a comfortable ride and didn't get any hard knocks”.

This convinced the rest of the team and prompted BMW to fit rear-wheel suspension to all the off-road and road racing motorcycles ridden by the works drivers and also to Ernst Henne's world record motorcycle. When rear suspension was incorporated in volume production in 1938, the prospectus referred to “...several years of conscientious testing in major off-road tests and racing events in Germany and abroad...”.

Engineering like racing riders

Ernst Henne's last world record, five grand prix, the German Championship and winning the Silver Vase in 1937 were enumerated in the same breath as “...bearing witness to the much improved roadholding by virtue of the sprung rear wheel...”. Customers felt privileged – after all, their BMW incorporated the same innovations that the company was using in the racing motorcycles driven by the best riders of the time. Communication was along the same lines: “Tested in big races, proven in daily use, all BMW motorcycles are witnesses to peak technological perform-

ance,” was the proud comment by BMW in 1938 in an advertisement extolling the pioneering role of racing in the development of production models.

Foundation of today's image

Whether motorcycle construction at BMW would have been different without active participation in racing is inevitably a matter for conjecture. In the same way, it is now almost impossible to judge the extent to which racing successes influenced the motorcycle market at the time. The collapse of the German

motorcycle industry during the 1950s shows that even successful makes with a commitment to racing like NSU and DKW could vanish into obscurity. Meanwhile British Triumph motorcycles remained successful in the market although the company invested virtually no money in racing and left this area to the sphere of amateur riders.

However, it is undisputed that the racing successes in the 1920s and 1930s were a key factor in laying the foundation for the sporty and reliable image of today's BMW brand.

Outstanding victories from early BMW motorcycle history			
Year	Rider	Event	Motorcycle/class
1924	Rudi Reich	Overall victory at the Solitude	BMW R 37
1924	Franz Bieber	First win in the German Championship	500 cc-class
1925	Josef Stelzer	First win in the German Championship	250 cc-class
1926	Rudolf Schleicher	Gold medal in the International Six Day Race in England	BMW R 37
1927	Paul Köppen	First win in the Targa Florio in Sicily	500 cc BMW
1929	Ernst Henne	First world record in Munich at 216 km/h	750 cc super-charged BMW
1933	Stelzer, Henne, Mauermeier, Kraus	First win for Germany at the International Six Day Race in Wales	BMW R16
1937	Ernst Henne	World record in Frankfurt at 279.5 km/h	500 cc super-charged BMW
1938	Georg Meier	Win in the European Championship	500 cc super-charged BMW
1939	Georg Meier	Win in the Senior TT	500 cc super-charged BMW



BMW 326 Convertible, 1936 to 1941.

BMW “Open” – convertibles from BMW

Open-top cars come in all shapes and sizes – roadsters, spiders, tourers, phaetons and convertibles. And they raise many questions. For example, what is a convertible? In simple terms, a convertible is generally a 2+2-seater automobile where the hardtop has been replaced by a weather-proof folding roof, with fixed retractable side windows. The term convertible has been in general use for this type of open-top automobile since the 1920s.

by Walter Zeichner

Convertibles are always special cars, luxury vehicles in any category. They meet the requirements of motorists who are less concerned with practical criteria and will pay a premium price for aesthetics, leisure value and the individual touch.

BMW presented its first convertible in the autumn of 1929. At that time, Bayerische Motoren Werke had just started up volume production of automobiles. On 1 October 1928, BMW took

over Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach which had got into financial difficulties. The company had marketed its four-wheel products under the brand name Dixi. A small car – the Dixi 3/15 PS – was a key factor in the purchase. This was built under an Austin Seven licence, at that time the most successful small car.

BMW developed this model into the BMW 3/15 PS, its first automobile, with what was at that time an extremely mod-

ern all-steel bodywork manufactured in Berlin. This small saloon was complemented by a “touring car” or “phaeton”, a completely open three or four-seater with a lightweight emergency cover and insertable cellophane side windows.

BMW joined forces with bodywork builders Ambi-Budd in Berlin-Johannisthal to manufacture the first convertible for people who liked travelling in open-top cars but preferred to



avoid direct contact with wind and dust. This car was just three metres long, powered by a 15 bhp four-cylinder engine with a displacement of just 750 cc. It came on the market at the end of 1929.

A lady at the wheel: epitome of modernity during the 1920s

“A lady likes to be seen at the wheel with the breeze freely coursing through her hair when the sun is shining, but protected against the elements in wind and rain ...” – such was the purple prose in the prospectus advertising the first BMW convertible in the 1930s. “A lady at the wheel” had become the epitome of social modernity during the 1920s and BMW was adept at exploiting this fact in its advertising.

A two-seater convertible of the same type followed in the summer, also with fixed window frame in the side doors. When production ceased in 1931, BMW had sold an impressive 1,600 of the two versions of the first BMW convertible.

The new small car BMW 3/20 PS followed on the heels of the BMW 3/15 PS in early 1932. A joint-venture contract with Daimler-Benz AG meant that the bodywork of this car was manufactured at its Sindelfingen factory. The bodywork was then married up with the chassis in Eisenach. This model was also available in three-seater and four-seater versions, and almost 500 cars were built.

In 1933 BMW launched a completely new car, the compact six-cylinder 303 Type. This model packed 30 bhp and BMW had finally discovered its own style in building light-weight and powerful automobiles. Naturally enough, this type was also supplied as a convertible, with the folding roof projecting over the rear of the vehicle like an outsized rucksack. Soon there followed the more advanced and powerful models 315 and 319, which were also supplied as convertibles.

These models were referred to as four-window convertibles, to distinguish them from the sports convertibles that were being built at the same time with only two side windows.

Essential ingredients: a chassis and an individual bodywork

In the 1920s and 1930s things were not quite like they are now, particularly when it came to convertibles. Customers would quite often just order a motorized chassis and then select a bodywork company of their choice to manufacture the bodywork. Companies like Heinrich Gläser GmbH in Dresden, Wilhelm Reutter in Stuttgart, Wendler in



Extract from a 1930 catalogue.

Historische BMW advertisements



Drivers provide personal testimony in 1934: automobiles from BMW keep the promises made in the advertisements.



Leisure in the fresh air and great driving with the BMW 326 Convertible. This is what advertising promised in 1936, along with a comfortable ride.

Reutlingen or Gustav Drauz in Heilbronn mainly offered bodyworks for sports convertibles. They were manufactured in small batches or even as specials, and they were particularly fashionable, with the cachet of exclusivity. BMW listed cars with a Drauz bodywork in its official sales catalogues, and the company Autenrieth in Darmstadt became a “court supplier” manufacturing exclusive convertibles for BMW from 1936 onwards.

The 327 Sport: the first pure luxury car

The two-litre 326 Type took BMW into the circle of manufacturers of large cars.

The four-seater and five-seater convertible of this type was a model that was quite capable of taking on the competition in this class (Mercedes, Audi, Adler, etc.). Speeds of up to 120 km/h meant that driver and passengers could cruise down the new fast roads – the autobahns.



The dashboard of the BMW 327.

One year later, BMW launched its first real luxury car, the 327 Sport. Initially this was only supplied as a convertible. It was designed by BMW design engineers as an extremely elegant 2+2 seater. A very limited number were manufactured and the bodywork was built by

Autenrieth featuring wings with exceptionally generous curves.

The two-litre, six-cylinder in-line engine packed 55 bhp in the standard version and 80 bhp in the sister model BMW 327/28. This was propelled by the powerful engine for the legendary BMW 328 Roadster, attaining a speed in excess of 140 km/h. Later on, this luxurious automobile was also available as a coupé. They were typical sports cars for society’s crème de la crème, by no means an everyday occurrence on the streets.

Early in 1939, shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, BMW presented the 3.5 litre 335 Model, based on the 326 Type.

The engine under the bonnet was BMW’s most powerful at the time at 90 bhp. Soon afterwards, the manufacture of civilian automobiles was halted to make way for wartime production

and only a few hundred of the new BMW top-of-the-range models were produced. They included two-seater and four-seater luxury convertibles and these number among the rarest and most sought-after classic BMW automobiles.



BMW 327 Convertible on an Alpine tour in the 1930s.

The first production car after the war – the Baroque Angel 507

After 1945, the BMW automobile factory in Eisenach was cut off from the main works in Munich. The manufacture of automobiles based on BMW designs was started up again there under Soviet administration as early as 1946. Allied prohibitions on production and massive destruction at the BMW works meant that serious production of automobiles only became an option again at the end of the 1940s.

BMW launched the 501 Type at the 1951 IAA Frankfurt Motor Show. It was the first production car to be made in Munich, with manufacture commencing in December 1952. This opulent “heavy” car with its lavish design soon became known as the Baroque Angel. It was built on a massive chassis in accordance with the old tradition of automobile construction – an ideal basis for a convertible ver-



BMW 502 : reception in Munich for the conquerors of the north face of the Eiger during the 1950s.



real sales hits at the time. The big BMW cars remained exclusive vehicles for aficionados, with less than 100 cars being built in all. That's why the BMW 501 and 502 convertibles were only in production for one year.

Starting in 1956, BMW supplied the sports convertible 503 Type. This was even more exclusive and much more expensive with a price tag of DM 30,000. The design of the 503 was heavily influenced by the designer of the BMW 507, Albrecht Graf Goertz. The car was manufactured as a convertible with an aluminium bodywork and with windows and a soft top that were retractable at the touch of a button. This luxury convertible had a production run of just 139 cars and although BMW did not earn any money on this model, it continued the prestige cachet which had been attached to the brand during the 1930s.

The BMW Isetta convertible was a different story. Production started up in 1955 under an Italian licence, with the design being taken further by BMW. The bubble car quickly became a sales hit for people who were moving over from a motorcycle to a car. Apart from a version



Isetta Convertible: the open version of the bubble car quickly became a sales hit for people moving over from a motorcycle to a car.

The frame construction of BMW cars from the 1930s and 1950s was an ideal basis for a wide range of convertible bodyworks.

sion. The BMW management of the time was convinced that the future lay with building luxury automobiles in the best pre-war tradition. When the company Karl Baur near Stuttgart suggested building a luxury convertible, everybody agreed in 1954 to start working on this project. Well-heeled customers were able to order a two-door or four-door convertible as a special based on the BMW 501 or its eight-cylinder 502 version from 1955 onwards.

A BMW 502 Convertible cost DM 21,900 in 1955. At that time, Daimler-Benz was the only other company in Germany manufacturing a more expensive car with its 300 Series models.

There's no doubt that customers able to purchase the exclusive BMW convertible, largely built by hand, were few and far between.

Small and micro cars like the BMW Isetta, the Glas Goggomobil and the Messerschmitt Cabin Scooter were the

produced as a delivery van, the Isetta with a front door was also supplied from 1957 as a convertible with a folding roof replacing the rear panorama window. Only a few examples of the two versions were produced and today they are particularly rare.

Larger numbers of the BMW Series 700 Convertible were manufactured at Baur in Stuttgart between 1961 and 1964. The small coupés and saloons were designed by Michelotti and powered by the proven Boxer engine. They were dear to the hearts of small-car enthusiasts, and an impressive 2,592



The public's darling: BMW 700 designed by Michelotti (1961 to 1964).

customers were not put off by the relatively high price tag of DM 6,950 for the 2+2 seater convertible, even though they could have bought respectable saloons

like the Opel Rekord for less money. Introduction of the New Class models in 1961 and the two-door BMW 02 Series in 1966 saw the beginning of the success story for BMW on a scale that was in quite a different order of magnitude. The production of automobiles increased more than threefold between 1962 and 1970.

From 1967: Topcabriolets (semi-convertibles) and full convertibles

1968 again witnessed production of a convertible in the form of the BMW 1600. Baur in Stuttgart was again responsible for manufacture of the bodywork. A particular rarity was the BMW 2002 full convertible produced in



BMW 1600 Convertible from 1968

1971 as an intermediate type with a production run of only 200, before the 2002 Convertible was manufactured in the same year with a fixed roof frame and rollover bar.

When the first BMW 3 Series came onstream in the year 1975, Baur developed a convertible version soon after that was included in the official BMW sales range.

However, this was not really a convertible in the true sense of the word, but a convertible saloon with fixed roof braces and a rollover bar. This car was marketed as a semi-convertible. Baur also developed a semi-convertible for the BMW E 30 successor model series.

BMW had now been working for some time on a convertible manufactured entirely in-house based on the 3 Series. For the higher classes, the 5 Series and 7 Series, there was not sufficient demand to justify economic production of an open-top version.

The 3 Series Convertible was initially launched as the 325i Type at the IAA Frankfurt Motor Show in 1985.

Big hit: more than 140,000 3 Series Convertibles sold

The particularly appealing design of the open-top four-seater was coupled with the dynamic driving style of the BMW six-cylinder and subsequently four-cylinder engines. This was a sure-fire guarantee for success. More than 140,000 convertibles were sold on the basis of this second BMW 3 Series until production ceased in 1993.

786 BMW M3 Convertibles were a real gem, developed by BMW Motorsport GmbH for drivers who were particularly keen on performance.

Following this success, the tradition of the BMW Convertible was continued with subsequent generations of the BMW 3 Series. An astonishing variety of fittings and automatic features were developed, and anyone interested in purchasing a BMW convertible today has a fascinating choice between five basic models with all the associated potential for equipment and individual design. There really is something to satisfy virtually any requirement.



In good company for sport and leisure: BMW 2002 Convertible.

BMW Convertibles: the whole range from small car to luxury automobile

Right from the start of BMW automobile history up until the present day, the history of the convertible has been intimately bound up with the story of the brand and the blue-and-white logo. An astonishing variety encompasses all the stages from the small car to the luxury automobile.

In September 2003, Bayerische Motoren Werke will be continuing a tradition lasting almost 75 years in a particularly impressive way when it launches the BMW convertible for the new 6 Series on the international stage.



Festival of success: More than 140,000 convertibles based on the second BMW 3 Series were sold until production ceased in 1993.

BMW 3200 CS – a unique car

The BMW 3200 CS is one of the gems of BMW Group Mobile Tradition. It was manufactured for Herbert Quandt and was returned to the ownership of BMW in 2002. The fittings and the fact that there is only one of these cars in the whole world also make it a rarity in the vehicle collection. A further feature is the special connection between the former owner and the company BMW.



The BMW 3200 CS Convertible: the one-off model made for Herbert Quandt has "Polaris Silver" paintwork. The windows came down at the touch of a button.

The BMW Type 3200 CS was the last of the big BMW models with an alloy V8 engine. Together with the small cars, these models shaped the profile of the brand during the post-war period. After the sale of the company in 1959 was avoided at the last minute through the intervention of major shareholder Herbert Quandt, the BMW 700 small car from Bayerische Motoren Werke had finally brought rising sales.

Aside from the development of the completely new mid-range BMW 1500, the company once again went for the luxury of an expensive grand tourer coupé as successor to the BMW 503 which had ceased production in 1960.

So that in-house capacities did not have to be tied up in developing a new bodywork, this order was given to the well-known company of Nuccio Bertone in Turin. A modified version of 503 Type was used for the chassis with the engine of the BMW 507 Roadster tuned to 160 PS.

In September 1961, this BMW 3200 CS was launched as a prototype alongside the BMW 1500, and the first vehicles for customers were produced in spring 1962, mostly manufactured by craftsmen. Bertone supplied the bodyworks to Munich. The BMW Board of Management selected one of the first cars in order to present it to the company's major shareholder, the "company's rescuer", as a present. He had been largely responsible for the positive development of Bayerische Motorenwerke. But it was intended to be a very special BMW 3200 CS – a one-off convertible.

This one-off was finally built to the specification of BMW at Carozzeria Bertone in Grugliasco near Turin, where the production coupé bodyworks were also being manufactured. The classic construction of the BMW 3200 Coupé with solid box frame made it easier to undertake a perfect conversion of this one-off to a convertible from the perspective of torsional stiffness.

The interior of the car was in the unusual colour of silver grey, in keeping with the exterior paintwork in Polaris silver. The windows were operated electrically at the touch of a button, while the lined fabric top opened hydraulically.

After the convertible bodywork had been produced by Bertone at the beginning of December, the one-off model was completed in Munich, and in May 1962 the car was handed over to BMW's main shareholder Herbert Quandt in Munich.

Until 1968, the car remained in the possession of the Quandt family and travelled a distance of some 60,000 km during this time, also being a favourite with Herbert Quandt's wife Johanna. After the car had changed hands four times, BMW Group Mobile Tradition was able to purchase this one-off vehicle for the historical collection. This was a car that combined the fascination of a one-off with the heritage of an illustrious owner in a very special way.

After careful restoration, where the focus lay on retaining the natural patina, the BMW 3200 CS Convertible will be presented to visitors and aficionados at the Techno Classica Essen in April.

Herbert Quandt

Herbert Quandt was one of the big industrial personalities of the Federal Republic in the post-war period. His father was also an industrialist and left each of his sons Herbert and Harald 50 percent of the Quandt Group in 1954. Herbert Quandt was born in Pritzwalk in Brandenburg. He took over electronics, vehicles, fertilizers, oil and textiles, and was hence engaged in a number of different fields. During the course of his lifetime he held a number of Board of Management posts and mandates on Supervisory Boards, for example at Varta, Wintershall and at Frankfurter Bank. For 20 years, he was a member of the Board of Management at Daimler-Benz AG, in which the Quandt Group held 15 percent of the shares, until Quandt sold the holding to the government of Kuwait for around one billion marks in 1974. Herbert Quandt was an honorary citizen of the city of Dingolfing, he held an honorary doctorate of the University of Mainz, and he was awarded the Bavarian Order of Merit. He did not allow himself to be held back by an inherited impairment of vision that made reading almost impossible. In 1959, he even set up a world record in the 3-litre motor boat class.



BMW shareholder Herbert Quandt



DIES IST EINE SZENE AUS DEM LEBEN EINES MOTOR-
RADFAHRERS, DIE ZWAR BEDENKLICH AUSSIEHT,
ABER FÜR DEN BMW-FAHRER KEIN SCHRECKNIS
BEDEUTET, DENN ER WEISS, AUF SEINE MASCHINE
KANN ER SICH VERLASSEN UND IM MOMENT DER
GEFAHR GENÜGT EIN DRUCK AUF DIE BREMSEN,
UM DIE MASCHINE IM BRUCHTEIL EINES AUGEN-
BLICKS ZUM SOFORTIGEN STEHEN ZU BRINGEN.



BAYERISCHE MOTOREN WERKE A.-G. MÜNCHEN UND EISENACH