

Star Tracks 2019



Third Quarter 2019

Volume 14 Issue 3

Mid-Atlantic Regional Picnic – Sept. 14, 2019

By Valerie Cristiano

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Picnic was once again held at Falkenhorst, the country estate of John and Marina Bleimaier, and was co-hosted by the Northern New Jersey and the South Jersey Sections.

We were fortunate to have members from DeVal, NEPA, NNJS, and SJS in attendance. It was a picture-perfect day, the cloud cover kept the temperature delightful and the little bursts of sun

and the quick rise in temperature made us glad for the clouds.

Thanks to the “early bird worker bees” the tents were set up – Tom Elder, Don DeRosa, Ralph Esposito, Terry Connor, Ernie Schirmer, Carl Janson; the music was ready to go – Dave Hall; and registration station– Valerie Cristiano; tables – John and Marina Bleimaier; coffee, bagels, and donuts – Lucille Chabala and Julie Ann Morrison; we were set for the arrival of our guests.

As the members and guests arrived, they were given their window sign for the popular vote and their vote pack. After parking their vehicle in the designated area, they proceeded up to the house to drop off their shared food item and for some, their “Silent Auction” donation. Some of the “Silent Auction” items this year included a beautiful Oriental silk with a very interesting history, Mercedes Benz prints, Mercedes Benz hats, a remote controlled helicopter, hot/cold travel mug, Mercedes Benz books, a bottle of Crown Royal, and other items (sorry, but I can’t remember all of them).

We enjoyed good food, good conversation, and plenty of time looking over the beautiful Starships that were on display. The center of attention was the magnificent 1953

black 300 S and the other one that garnered a great deal of attention was the 2005 Sprinter camper – which we even had the opportunity to enter and look around!

Thanks to all who attended and especially to Don DeRosa and Ralph Esposito for cooking up the delicious hot dogs and hamburgers and to Lucille Chabala and Julie Ann Morrison for serving them Thanks to Pat Mignon, Loni Spingarn, Lucille, and Julie Ann for clearing up the food and setting out the desserts.

George and Mary Terry did a wonderful job of counting the Popular Votes. Once again, Dave Hall did a fabulous job of providing the photos in this issue and music for our listening pleasure.

Loni Spingarn, Queen of the 50/50, continued to do her magic – her helper this year was Zane, who pulled the winning ticket for Dave Hall.

Thanks also go to SJS for providing the water, soda, coffee, bagels, and donuts and to NNJS for providing the hot dogs, hamburgers, condiments, paper products, and silverware for our dining pleasure.

NNJS continues with its charity donations

The leftover hot dogs, hamburgers, rolls, cheese, and cookies were donated to SHIP – the Samaritan Homeless Interim Program in Somerville, NJ. Clients coming to SHIP are in desperate need of help. Many are the working poor. They include those that suffer from homelessness or being near homeless. Many are hungry or suffer from substance abuse dependency, HIV/AIDS, mental health issues, or neglect and isolation.

NNJS also supported the Cystic Fibrosis Charity by sponsoring a hole at the charity golf event held on Friday, September 13, 2019.



The prizes were of an automotive car theme and the winners were able to choose the one that they wanted from the following:

ArmorAll Air Freshening Protectant Wipes; ArmorAll Original Protectant; ArmorAll Leather Care; Turtle Wax – Wax & Dry Spray Wax; Turtle Wax Bug & Tar Remover; and Black Magic Bleach White Tire Cleaner.

And the winners are!

New Sedan – 2014 to present

1 st	Don Boop	2015 CLS 400
2 nd	George & Mary Terry	2018 GLE 43
3 rd	Carl Janson	2016 GLE 300d

New Sport – 2014 to present

1 st	Omar & Janet Montague	2014 E350 cab
2 nd	Frank Donnangelo	2018 CLA 250 4matic

Modern Sedan 2004 – 2013

1 st	Cynthia Gilbert	2008 E350
2 nd	Dave Hall	2012 E350
2 nd	Joe Grattan	2011 E550
2 nd	Loni Spingarn	2005 E500 wagon
3 rd	Bob Fini	2005 Sprinter camper
3 rd	Homer & Gigi Mosley	2013 E300 4matic
4 th	Christine Fini	2007 E350 wagon

Modern Sport 2004 – 2013

1 st	Bart & Janet Champion	2008 CLK350
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Old Sedan 1994 – 2003

1 st	Pat Mignon	1995 E300d
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Old Sport 1994 – 2003

1 st	Tom Elder	2000 SL500
2 nd	Roger Egolf	2003 SL500

Vintage pre 1994

1 st	Wil DeGroot	1953 300S
2 nd	Ross Wilson	1985 300TD
3 rd	Howard Pulaski	1988 190e
4 th	John Gibson	1987 10d 2.5 turbo





Big thank you goes to Dave Hall who photographed the entire Picnic



Upcoming Events

Mercedes-Benz of Flemington would like to invite our members to participate in a Fall Service Clinic to be hosted at their dealership on Friday, October 25 from 1 to 5 pm and on Saturday, October 26 from 9 am to 3 pm.



You MUST send an email to Patrick Muhler and let him know that you would like to attend. You will then receive an invitation where you can pick your time slot. Only those members who respond to the invitation and set up a time slot will have their cars put up on a lift and checked out. If you wish to just come and observe, you are free to do so, but your car will not be given a complimentary once over.

On Saturday, October 26th from 10 am to 3 pm, we will have a private room at the dealership where we can gather.

They are also looking to display classic (50's – 80's) Mercedes and if you would like to display your car either day, please let Patrick know in the email that you send to him.

Please send an email to Patrick with the subject line I would like to be invited to the Fall Car Clinic. Patrick's email is pmuhler@cioccadealerships.com

Once you receive your confirmation time and/or are willing to display your classic Mercedes, please email me so that I know how many to plan for on Saturday, October 26.

Thanks, Valerie Cristiano

My email is: mercedeslady1@verizon.net Subject line: I am attending the Fall Car Clinic

Mercedes-Benz of Flemington

135 NJ-31

Flemington, NJ 08822



Deutscher Club Biergarten

The Deutscher Club of Clark once again opened their Biergarten to us on Friday, July 26, 2019 for another fun filled evening. Heinz had reserved tables for us where many of us gathered when we were not eating or admiring the cars. As in the past, we parked along the drive and placed a window sign in our car in order to identify the model and the year for all those in attendance.

Members of the Deutscher Club were very interested in the cars on display and we even signed up some new members! There were over 20 cars on display including the following: 2010 AMG E63; 1980 450SL; 1984 300D; 2015 350 GLK; 2015 CLS 400; 1990 & 1999 SL500; 1980 300CD; 2011 E350; 1968 250SL; 1970 280SL; 1991 420SEL; 2019 E450; 1989 560; 1972 280 SE 4.5; 1970 280SL; 2015 E400 cab; and a 2018 Sprinter which was being converted into a camper. (Please forgive me if I didn't mention your car.)

Some of our members took advantage of the air conditioning and decided to have dinner inside and others stayed outside listening to the music and enjoying the fresh air while enjoying some delicious food and adult beverages. As in years past, the beer was cold and delicious and the desserts were decadent and scrumptious. It was a wonderful evening for our club members and their families.

A special "Thanks" goes to Karla Schwedt, a member of both clubs, for arranging this event for us and to Heinze Ricken for once again taking care of registration and parking. If you haven't been able to attend this event in the past, hopefully you will be able to attend the one in 2020.

President's Message

Thank you for re-electing me as your President at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Picnic on September 14, 2019. My fellow officers, board members, and I appreciate your continued support. As I mentioned at the picnic, we would LOVE to have our members get more involved in planning and running events. At this point we are planned through the end of the year and have one new event already in the works for next year – we just need to firm up a date. We are always looking for volunteers. If you are willing to volunteer your time in order to organize and run a rally or other type of event, possibly even an overnight one, please let me know.

Valerie Cristiano



Where Modern America Was Invented

Thomas Edison's home and laboratory are a step back in time, when machines were run by belts and pulleys and music was played on phonographs.

Where to the passerby, the buildings betray little evidence of the industries they once started. Discover where America's greatest inventor changed our world forever.

Come join us for a visit to Thomas Edison's Glenmont Estate and his West Orange Laboratory on Saturday, November 23, 2019. Please be at the lab located at 211 Main Street West Orange, NJ 07052 between 9:00 am and 9:15 am in order to purchase your tickets (\$15.00 each unless you have the National Parks Senior Pass – then you have free admission). At 9:30 am sharp – we will then caravan to Llewellyn Park to see his home.

Llewellyn Park is a gated community so we need to go together as a group in order to gain admission. At 10:00 am we will have a guided tour of the house and garage, after the tour we will caravan back to the lab for a tour of the facilities. Lunch will be on your own – we can, however, decide where members of the group would like to eat and make a reservation that morning.

Please RSVP to Lucille Chabala either by phone 973-731-9133 or by email Luluchab@aol.com Space is limited, so please reserve a spot early.

12 and under – no charge

Save the date!

NNJS Holiday Party Sunday, December 8, 2019 11 AM – 3 PM

Fox Hollow Golf Club

59 Fox Chase Run

Branchburg, NJ Cost: Adults (18 & over) \$40

Children (13-17) \$16



HIGH GEAR

The Ripple Effect at Pebble Beach

by John Kuhn Bleimaier

photography by Marina Bleimaier

For those who regularly attend the Pebble Beach Concours d' Elegance it's easy to get jaded. Every year we see a new selection of historic vehicles which qualify as the crème de la crème of art and engineering on wheels. For example virtually every year there are 540K Mercedes-Benz roadsters from the late '30s and Cricklewood Bentleys from the period before W.O. sold out to Rolls Royce. These are super classics which the average vintage motorcar enthusiast will only ever see in photographs published in a book or magazine. I realize that I am very fortunate to feast my eyes on these beauties in the aluminum, steel, hide and gutta-percha.



This year's best of show award went to a 1931 8 litre Bentley tourer with coachwork by Gurney Nutting and the Mercedes-Benz award went to a 1936 540K cabriolet built by Erdmann & Rossi. These disparate yet beautiful conveyances share some interesting bloodlines. W.O. Bentley was never reluctant to admit that his engine designs were heavily influenced by the fact that the British government gave him permission to disassemble the 1914 Mercedes grand prix car which had been impounded in London after the commencement of the nastiness which we now know as World War I. In a manner of speaking, the 1931 Bentley and the 1936 Mercedes-Benz which came away with coveted trophies at Pebble Beach this year were cousins... just like King George V and Kaiser Wilhelm.

At the top of the tree, on the other side of the pond, there has always been a degree of kinship between people and motorcars "of quality." Note that the chief designer of coachwork at the Berlin firm of Erdmann & Rossi was Johannes Beeskow. During the interwar period, Herr Beeskow frequently traveled to Chelsea, near London, where he enjoyed a special relationship with his British counterparts at Gurney Nutting. No surprise here. You see the German carrossiers Erdmann & Rossi were also the central European sales agents for both Bentley and Rolls Royce motors. Interesting interlocking relationships between co-venturers and competitors; paralleling the family ties/love-hate relations between the crowned grandchildren of Queen Victoria.

Having a historical bent of mind tends to enrich the classic car experience on the green overlooking Carmel Bay on the Monterey peninsula. But even at a purely aesthetic level, it is a joy to behold works of art, craftsmanship and engineering which have justly attained immortality. The restrained use of curves; the honest integration of sturdy materials; the careful application of bright-work; the fitness for the purpose of attaining speed. These are the hallmarks of the classic era.

As I recapitulate my impressions and emotions associated with the Pebble Beach experience for 2019, I experience a certain wistfulness. Once again, historical perspective intervenes. During the massive nastiness which characterized the period from 1939 to 1945, Erdmann & Rossi built aircraft fuselages for the Luftwaffe, while Gurney Nutting fabricated wing components for the Royal Air Force. In 1943 the Erdmann & Rossi facilities in Berlin were obliterated in a bombing raid, including all the artwork associated with design work in process. Gurney Nutting, on the other hand, survived the war, but closed their doors forever, shortly after VE Day, when the British Empire contracted and then disappeared.



And, here we are, today, left to contemplate the glorious remains of the day of classic automotive design and construction.