



**BMW Club of Canada
Club BMW du Canada**

BMW Club of Canada

Friend of the Marque Nomination: John G. Herbst
Supporting Information

Mr. John Herbst
3 Canova Rd SW
Calgary Alberta Canada



The BMW Club of Canada is pleased to support the nomination of one of its member club enthusiasts as a Friend of the Marque based on his passion for BMWs, and the time and effort he has given freely over the years to build his local club, promote interest in BMWs via the club and in many other ways.

Profile:

President of the Southern Alberta BMW Club, (SA BMW Club) a member club of the BMW Club of Canada.

Membership Coordinator of the SA BMW Club

Driving Instructor, SA BMW Club, and for other driving school events in Alberta.

Chief Instructor rep from the Alberta Advanced Driving Schools program (operated by the SA BMW Club and Northern Alberta BMW Club) to the BMW Club of Canada.

Active in numerous driving clubs and associations in addition to his local activities.

Retired businessman.

Married to Helga for over 50 years, they have three adult children and several grandchildren.

Background:

People that know John well say that he came by his passion for BMWs at an early age. In fact the story is told that as a 6 year old school boy in Berlin Germany, John used to walk by the BMW dealership and admire the cars, paying special attention to the then current model 1939 328 they had on display. The following excerpt from an article about John that appeared in the Calgary Herald helps explain his passion for cars and why the BMW Club of Canada has chosen to nominate him for the Friend of the Marque award.



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That early fascination for the BMW marque never left John, "Ever since the days I waked past that 328, I've dreamt about BMW," Herbst says. When he was finished his primary schooling, he began apprenticeship as a mechanic and worked on older BMWs.

But when Russia blockaded Berlin in 1948-49, the shop closed and Herbst lost his job.

"My dreams of being mechanic were shot." Herbst recalls, "So I ended up apprenticing as a painter and decorator."

Herbst says the living conditions in Berlin during the early 1950's were bleak, and he and his wife Helga, felt they had to leave the isolated city.

The visited the Canadian consulate in Berlin, and say they chose Calgary because they were told the city was going to boom, and people would be needed in the construction industry.

SO the Herbst came to Calgary in 1956, and John began work as a painter, and then as a furniture-maker. In 1971, in conjunction with a partner, he formed Contempra Carpet Co., and remained president for 30 years.

When he first arrived in Calgary, Herbst bought a 1950 Monarch, but soon he decided he couldn't afford to spend all his money on gas.

In 1959, he bought a new Volkswagen Beetle and drove it to work during the week and then competed in rallies, ice racing and gymkhanas on the weekend.

But BMWs were never far from his mind, and in 1974 he bought a used 1972 BMW 2002.

A succession of BMWs followed, including a show-winning 1988 BMW M6.

In 1994, BMW supplied only 45 of the specially prepared M3s – also known as the Euro M3 – to the Canadian Market. Herbst had originally put a deposit on a 1994 M3, but, as he says, "The cars were all sold before they even got off the boat."

But in 1997, while visiting his daughter in Toronto on a stopover during a business trip, Herbst happened to find a 1994 Euro M3 – No. 44 of the 45 imported to Canada – for sale in the Auto Trader. He went to look at the car, make a deal and cancelled his return flight back to Calgary.

"It was a Thursday nigh when we looked at the car, and I couldn't get a money transfer until the following Tuesday, as it was a long weekend. But when all the paperwork fell into place, we drove the car home."

John's daughter Janice told us of his car passion, as she fondly remembered spending weekends at various rally and race track events that her father participated in. He even got all the family involved with tasks on such weekends, including spotting and timing and reporting on the other cars that were participating.

She also recalls how passionate and meticulous John has always been about the care of his BMWs, as they were always in immaculate condition.

But despite that care for the cars, he also thought his then teen aged children how to drive them, including opportunities to learn how do drive them on ice.



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Over the last 15 or so years, John has been tireless in bringing his passion for BMWs to the public and other BMW owners.

Through his early association with the BMW Club of Canada, then based mostly out of Ontario, he was instrumental in forming the local club in Southern Alberta that he is currently president of.

Not only did he help found the original Southern Alberta club, but he was and is still active in their driver training and driving schools program.

Most every past and present member of the Southern Alberta BMW Club has at some time met John, who has been the driving force behind that club and its growth to its current numbers and position as the fourth largest member club in the BMW Club of Canada.

With 3 BMW M3s in the garage representing 3 generations of the model, it is clear he is passionate about the cars, and he has helped many people in southern Alberta and Calgary catch his enthusiasm and passion for the marque.

The BMW Club of Canada is proud to submit John's name as a nominee for the Friend of the Marque award for his years of tireless promotion of the marque, and the building of the Southern Alberta BMW Club, a member club of the BMW Club of Canada.



BMW Club of Canada - Friend of the Marque Nomination - John Herbst - Profile Photo Samples



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DRIVING

IT'S MINE

BMW dream began in 1939

HERBST IS STILL LOOKING FOR THAT ELUSIVE BMW 328 SPORTS CAR

GREG WILLIAMS
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

Children are highly impressionable. For example, Calgarian John Herbst can remember the first BMW automobile he ever saw, when he was just six years old.

As a youngster living in Berlin, Herbst would walk past a BMW dealership on his way to school and recalls paying special attention to a 1939 BMW 328.

The BMW 328 is a two-seater sports car, and today they are highly collectible and hard to find. When they do surface, they usually command a high premium.

His fascination with the German car never faded. Today, Herbst is the president of the Southern Alberta BMW Club, a chapter of the BMW Club of Canada, and he owns three BMWs, all of them M3 models.

He hasn't yet uncovered the first BMW he ever saw, the now elusive 328.

"Ever since the days I walked past that 328, I've dreamt about BMW," Herbst says.

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When he first arrived in Calgary, Herbst bought a 1956 Mercedes, but soon decided he couldn't afford to spend all his money on gas.

Greg Williams for the Calgary Herald

John Herbst is so passionate about his 1994 M3 that he gets up to speed on various tracks across the country, including Race City Motorsport Park.

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