

Standard form of "THE ONE HUNDREDTH AND FIRST CROSSING" Proposal!

Mr. Robert Mitchell

BMW of North America, Inc.

Montvale, NJ 07645

Dear Robert Mitchell:

A One Hundredth Anniversary doesn't come along every day or grow on a tree, so we should make the most of one when it does turn up. As Mercedes-Benz certainly did in this One Hundredth Year of the Automobile.

In 1987, in the One Hundredth and First Year of the Automobile, I propose to have a 101st Anniversary of my own...that is, I plan to make my One Hundredth and First Crossing Of The United States By Car. An event of some note in this day when most people fly if traveling more than a hundred miles.

What adds additional interest and color to this occasion is the list of motor cars driven on my previous crossings...a Bugatti Type 57, an SS Jaguar 100, a Lancia Aurelia Spyder, a Land Rover, a Saoutchik-bodied Talbot-Lago, a Mercedes-Benz Motor Home, a DKW, a Castagna-bodied MG, A Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith, a Figoni-bodied Talbot-Darracq, an Armstrong Siddeley and a Model A Ford. Just to list a few. Even a Hudson.

But no BMW, I regret to say. As I will turn 75 in 1987, this 101st Crossing will be the last one I plan...and so it should be

in a car that will make the crossing memorable. Not just for me but for the readers of the articles that I will write to celebrate the event. One for AutoWeek, one for a general readership magazine here, one for The British Autocar (which carried my articles on three or four previous crossings and will certainly provide good space and world-wide coverage for this anniversary event), one for an automobile journal in the country of origin of the car I use, and one for a general readership publication there. If the car should be a BMW, I'm sure your press and PR people can think of other ways to effectively exploit this event.

This is not to be a fast-as-possible run from New York to Redondo Beach but, rather, a leisurely three week trip that will enable me to produce a wealth of interesting photographs in many of the most entertaining and spectacular sites in this country - from Sea to Shining Sea, from Pikes Peak to Death Valley. Mrs. B, a stylish ex-fashion model and enthusiastic motorist, will serve as co-driver and on-board model. She will do a woman's point of view article on the premise that if you want to see and get to know this, or any other country, you must travel over its roads and not just over its clouds in a jet at 35,000 feet.

Unfortunately, automotive articles do not produce much revenue and I doubt that what we write will even cover our expenses...fuel, living and photographic. Therefore, I must look elsewhere for funding that will adequately recompense us for the time and effort we put into this event and the writing. The only commercial beneficiary will be the maker of the motor car utilized

on this 101st Crossing; but rather than request a cash return of our expenses (in the amount of \$3000-\$3500) plus actual payment for our writing efforts in behalf of BMW, assuming the company is interested in this proposal, let me suggest the following...that, instead of any payment whatever from BMW, I be allowed to purchase a 524 turbo Diesel for the sum of \$10,000 if it is to be used for this trip.

But BMW might well prefer to take advantage of all the promotional possibilities inherent in the 101st Crossing and have it done in a 12 cylinder 7 Series car in early summer - with the articles appearing just at the time of the Frankfurt Show. Now, much as I would like to own a 12 piston Bimmer I can't afford one presently, even at \$20,000, so I would still settle for the 524TD at the price I suggested; regardless of which BMW would be used for the trip.

I realize that your Diesel sales in the US at this time are low, but as Diesel sales all over Europe are still booming, and one of these days will pick up again here, the use of a 524TD for the 101st Crossing would still provide very useful publicity for you simply because it is a BMW. If the 101st Crossing would be made in a BMW Diesel, there would be other "One Hundred and Firsts" to add color and interest. It would be the 101st Diesel car we will have owned or had on test. We would arrange to drive it 101 miles in the hour at one of the tire company test tracks in the southwest. We would end the trip in California by coming south on Highway 101. I have now driven no less than 101 marques.

Marques, mind you, not models. Marques. And the total for these builds very slowly after it reaches 60 or thereabouts!

So 1987, the One Hundredth and First Year of the Automobile and Barlow's One Hundred and First Crossing of the US, has lots of possibilities for BMW in utilizing the figure of 101, be it Diesel car or 7-series V12. A hundred and one things to write about!

Will you be so kind as to pass this proposal on to the appropriate people here and in Germany. I'd appreciate a decision fairly soon as 1987 isn't so far off and I must present the idea to other appropriate car makers if BMW is not interested.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,