

BMW 2000 C/CS by Mike Greening

This article is a short description of the BMW 2000 C and BMW 2000 CS, along with a short history of my car, and its restoration. The pictures below are of my 2000 coupe as it is now, including a picture at the wedding of Irene and myself.



BMW 2000 C/CS

The BMW 2000 C and 2000 CS is part of the BMW Neue Klasse range built from 1962-1977. They included four door sedans, two door sedans, and two door coupes. These three body styles led to the familiar BMW 3 series, 5 series and 6 series. The range started with the four door sedans, which were built from 1962-1972 with a total production of over 360,000 vehicles and led to the BMW 5 series. In 1965, the two-door coupe (2000 C and 2000 CS) was added with a total production of less than 14,000 vehicles from 1965-1969. The two door coupes led to the BMW E9 series, and then to the BMW 6 series. The two door sedans, widely known as the 02 series, were built from 1966-1977 with a total production of over 860,000 vehicles and led to the BMW 3 series of cars. All the Neue Klasse range shared the M10 engine (in sizes of 1.5, 1.6, 1.8 and 2.0 litres), along with many other mechanical components. The Neue Klasse series of BMWs are widely regarded as having saved BMW from bankruptcy.

The two door coupes (2000 C and 2000 CS) were added to the Neue Klasse range to provide a luxurious and stylish car in the line-up and was the top range BMW before being replaced by the E9. These cars have fully independent suspension front and back; disk brakes on the front; and two independent brake circuits with one operating on the front brakes, and one operating on both the front and back. This way, if either circuit fails, the front brakes will still work. The 2000 C was also the first car BMW made with an automatic transmission, with approximately 3500 autos built. All 2000 coupes had electric windows in the back, with either electric or manual windows in the front. This is a curious option until you realize that it means that the driver can control all windows.

Moving away from facts and getting into subjective opinion; the description of “stylish” is definitely in the eye of the beholder, and I have heard many opinions on the style of the 2000 coupe. Even when new, the front-end style of the coupe was very controversial, and that is still true today. It is a very polarizing style with some people loving it, and some people hating it. I definitely fit into the former category, and love the style, and the fact that it is indeed so different. One description I have heard is that the front end looks like

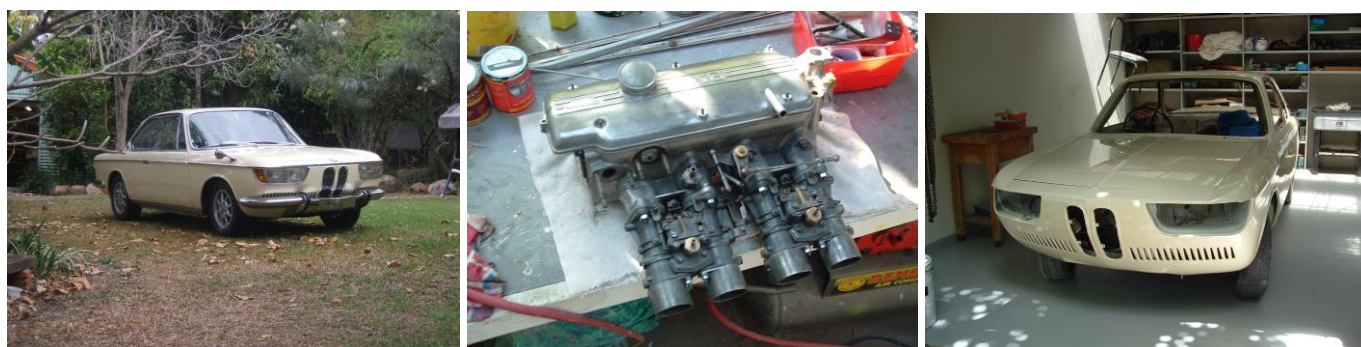
Hitler wearing ray ban glasses. Many other people think it looks like a boat and should be in the water. Curious thought, given that it is the first “shark nose” BMW, complete with teeth. One friend commented that when he first saw my car, he approached it from behind, and thought it was like walking up behind a beautiful woman (sorry for the sexist comment). Unfortunately, when he got to the front of the car and turned around, he thought it was an ugly man instead. On the other end of the scale, I have had many people comment on how beautiful they thought the car looked. On one occasion while stuck in traffic, an elderly couple was crossing the road in front of me and stopped to look at my car. At the median strip, the lady turned around, came back to stand in front of my car, and then came up to the window to tell me that it was the most beautiful car she had ever seen. When it comes to seeing a 2000 coupe, the small production number of less than 14000 cars means that very few people have seen a 2000 coupe in real life. The chances of seeing a real one now, are even less with an estimate of fewer than 500 left worldwide. I have been told that only 12 were sold new in Australia, and possibly as many as 15 others were later imported from other countries, so seeing one in Australia is indeed a rare occurrence. I would love to be able to confirm these numbers, and if anyone knows how this could be done, please contact me through the BMW drivers club of South Australia. My car is one of the originals, sold new in South Australia to a lady in Angaston.

Buying my 2000 Coupe

I bought my 2000 coupe from a gentleman in Brisbane. He had owned the car for nine years and restored the car when he bought it. The restoration included:

- Stripping to almost bare shell, rust removed, new metal welded in and repainted. The car was originally white, but he changed the color to Manila – a rare color, but one which was available new for the coupe, and a color which I happen to really like.
- Engine reconditioned including re-bore, new Mahle pistons, crank reground, cylinder head reconditioned, new valves, new camshaft
- Transmission rebuilt
- Carburetor changed from single downdraft of C model to twin side-drafts of CS. Carburetors rebuilt.
- Brakes, steering box, steering joints rebuilt/reconditioned
- Various trim pieces and interior pieces reconditioned or replaced.

The car was driven most weekends for about 2-3 years after the work was completed, but then sat for 4 years due to a protracted divorce during which the owner did not have access to the car. After the divorce was finalized, the owner decided to sell the car to help finance buying a Daimler SP250 (another car with very quirky styling). Having grown up in Germany and Canada, the BMW 2000 coupe is one of the first cars I can remember as a kid. After all, it was **very** different to anything else on the road in the late 60s. I never thought I would find one (especially in Australia), so when I saw it, and it looked in good condition, I was very interested. I contacted the seller to get more details, and he was exceptionally helpful, providing all the information I requested, including having the car inspected by a classic car shop. After receiving a favorable inspection report, I flew to Brisbane to inspect the car myself, and bought the car. The pictures below show the car as it was when I bought it, along with some pictures of the previous owner’s work.



Some of the issues I wrote down after inspecting the car were:

- Car is very hard to start, and runs rough while warming up, likely because of not having a choke. Even after warming up, it would change from running smooth to running rough, and back.

- The vacuum advance on the distributor was removed.
- There was an automatic transmission leak around the speedo drive and gear selector seal.
- The gear selector lever in the car seemed to shake more than it should. Does the car need new engine or transmission mounts?
- Windshield wiper motor is not working. Also, missing one of the windshield washer sprayers.
- There is a slight smell of petrol in the trunk. Possibly a leak here somewhere.
- Brakes definitely need some attention.
- Car will require general servicing for a car that has not been driven for the last 4 years.
- Outside mirror is not mounted at the correct location - has caused the panel to flex and paint to crack
- Small paint (rust) bubble on the passenger sill where previous rust repair was performed
- Hole in the dash where the radio is supposed to be
- Windows are very slow, or do not move at all

Continuation of Restoration, and Now

After getting the car back to Adelaide (its original home), I took the car in to have the above work done, and also started looking for some parts such as a radio, original wheels, and twin mirrors. Other than adjusting the windows, and giving the car a good detailing, I took the car to a BMW specialty shop for the repairs. Mechanical repairs included changing the twin Solex Carburetors to twin Weber 45 DCOE carburetors, rebuilding the brake system again, installing Bilstein shocks, fixing the leak around the transmission, replacing the windshield wiper motor, getting a new windshield washer sprayer, and tuning the car. Although the Solex carburetors are original to the CS version, the mechanic believed they were the main problem with starting and rough running and suggested replacing them with the Weber carburetors. Although the Weber carburetors are not original, they were original on the Neue Klasse 1800 TI/SA model, and also on the few Alpina versions of the coupe that were built. Given that I was not interested in a concours car, but instead wanted a reliable car that I could drive regularly and be proud of, I agreed with putting in the Weber carburetors. The mechanical work was performed exceptionally well, and I have had only two mechanical issues with the car. The first was a strange occurrence when one of the access caps to the jets in one of the carburetors came off and wedged itself between the intake manifold and the starter motor, cutting through the wiring to the starter, shorting it out, and requiring a new starter motor. The only other issue was one caused by myself when I tried to tune the car, and foolishly changed the carburetor synchronization. Having tuned many old cars, I thought this was within my capabilities, but I had never tuned twin carburetors before, and it is definitely not as simple as a single carburetor set-up. I bought an air flow meter, which helped, but decided to take the car in to an expert to have it done properly again. I am glad to report that the car drives exceptionally well again.

Although the mechanical issues were pretty small, the body issues were not. I took the car to a body shop to fix the issue caused by the mirror, fix a small issue in the paint on the trunk, and fix the rust bubble in the passenger's sill. The body shop gave me a quote based on the worst possible case, and it turned that the worst case was probably underestimated. A few weeks after having the car, the shop phoned me up to tell me that I needed to come down to see something. When I got there, I found out that the previous sill was replaced by cutting out a small section and tack welding a new section in. Only spot welds were used, and only on the top edge, with no welds at all on the sides or bottom. This left a metal flap that was held in by bondo (and lots of it – about 1 cm thick). Basically, it was just a cosmetic job. After telling the shop to fix it properly, I got a phone call a few days later to come in again. They had cut out the outer sill and found that the middle and inner sills were also rusted out. Being a pillar-less coupe, it has inner, outer and middle sills for added body strength, and all were rusted. When I saw the mess, I almost cried. The previous owner (or previous body shop) ignored the middle and inner sills, and simply covered up the mess. At this stage, the shop told me that to do the job properly would definitely cost the full value of the quote and wanted to know if I wanted to go ahead. I told them I wanted the job done properly, and to go ahead. The shop owner was very happy to hear that, because he thought the car was unsafe as it was and didn't want to simply cover up the problem. He did an absolutely fantastic job of replacing all three sills. I was worried that the driver's sills would be the same, but they all seem good – you can see them when you take out the interior panels. While

the car was at the body shop, I found a set of Talbot Berlin mirrors at a good price, so he installed them instead of the original mirror. The Talbot Berlin mirrors were an option on the car, and also used on many high-performance cars of the era like Porsches, Ferraris, and Lamborghinis, so they aren't easy to find at a good price. I had been looking for a long time and found a set one week before my birthday – nice birthday present. The shop owner was a real gentleman, and after finishing the work, he started working on many other details of the car that he didn't think were up to his standards. After many additional touches, I told him that he either had to stop, or charge me more. He wouldn't stop until he was happy, but he wouldn't charge me more either. To say I am happy with his work would be a huge understatement.



After having the restoration work done, I have been driving the car about once a week (never in the rain) and have had no trouble with the car other than the shorted-out starter, and the unsynchronized carburetors. The car is a pleasure to drive, keeps up with modern traffic, and handles amazingly well for a car from the 60s. I intend to keep the car until I am a little old man, probably until I can't drive anymore. I have found a set of original wheels and hubcaps and have mounted them along with whitewall tires. I found the hubcaps while looking through a German car parts website before taking a trip to Germany. The gentleman lived only about 30 km from my family in Germany, and while there, he found me a set of wheels from Wallothnesch – which also turned out to be only an hour drive away, and from whom I had already bought several parts for my car. Both the gentleman with the hubcaps, and the gentleman from Wallothnesch were extremely kind, giving me quite a few parts for my car for free. I have thoroughly enjoyed driving my car, showing it, and meeting other great enthusiasts. The picture below shows my car at the Adelaide festival of motor-sport where Adelaide Motors gave it a place of honor between a BMW 328 and a BMW 3.0 CSL.

