

# NEWSLETTER

## *The Society of Automotive Historians*

BUSINESS OFFICE: 5 Queen Ann Drive, Christine Manor, Newark, Delaware 19711

PRINTING AND PUBLICATIONS OFFICE: P. O. Box 6465, Marietta, Georgia 30060

VOL. 1

SEPTEMBER, 1969

NO. 1

### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The beginnings of the Society of Automotive Historians came about in a most casual manner, as a result to correspondence between G. Marshall Naul, of Newark, Delaware, and Richard B. Brigham, of Marietta, Georgia. Over the years both of these men had carried on a wide correspondence with people of similar interests, and it was becoming increasingly apparent that the need for an informational "clearing house" existed.

It was obvious that no one or two people could, in a lifetime, track down the history of several thousand makes of automotive vehicles, produced all over the world over a period of some 200 years (if you go back to Cugnot). Letters from other interested correspondents added impetus to the idea, and questionnaires were prepared and mailed to a limited number of people who were known to be interested in such matters.

### RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Several months ago questionnaires were mailed to about 75 people who have had an apparent interest in the preservation of automotive history, in the hope of forming a nucleus of a growing organization. Replies have been received from about 60% of those included in this first mailing.

With a very few exceptions, response has been enthusiastic. A sampling of the comments received will be found in the "Mail Bag" section of this newsletter. Replies ranged from "mildly interested" (only a few of these) to what can only be described as "wildly enthusiastic".

The general consensus seems to be that the Society should be interested in the history of all types of automotive vehicles, both foreign and domestic, from the very earliest to the latest. Several names were suggested for the organization, but an overwhelming majority favored "Society of Automotive Historians".

Many prospective members are specialists in certain fields, such as automobiles made in a specific city or state. Others have compiled data on cars made during certain periods of time. Others have concentrated their efforts on a few makes of cars or trucks, some foreign, some domestic.

Replies indicated that prospective members definitely do not want the Newsletters to be a catch-all for the reporting of club and social events, all of which are well covered in the excellent club publications now available, nor do they want classified advertising of any materials other than books, photos, catalogs and similar items having to do with the history of automotive vehicles.

In the matter of annual dues, to cover costs of printing and mailing the Newsletter and other expenses, suggested amounts ranged from a low of \$1.00 to a high of \$25.00. The average figure was \$9.00 per year. This is a bit more than seems to be required at the moment. A membership application, included in this Newsletter, puts the figure at \$7.50 annually.

### A RESTATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As outlined in the questionnaire, the object of the Society shall be the preservation of automotive history; to rectify as far as possible the errors in existing compilations and articles; to explore and record the history of all types of automotive vehicles, especially the many obscure makes of which little or nothing is known; and to share this information with all members via this and other publications.

### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The answer to that question can only be determined from the response to this first Newsletter. A membership application is enclosed, and the future of the Society is in your hands.

As this Newsletter goes to press, the Society has no members at all. If a reasonable number of memberships are received, the next issue will follow in one month. If not, all checks will be returned.

It should be emphasized that this is NOT a commercial venture. This first issue has been prepared and printed by R. B. Brigham, Marietta, Georgia, who just happens to have the necessary printing equipment and a little paper, and it has been mailed from Newark, Delaware, by Mr. G. M. Naul, who fortunately has the price of the postage on hand.

Assuming that memberships will be received, future issues will be printed and mailed at cost, with funds provided by the Society's treasury. If, at the end of one year, funds available are not sufficient to cover these costs, then it is obvious that dues will have to be increased. On the other hand, if a surplus exists, dues can be reduced. The status of the treasury will be reported in each issue of the Newsletter. A membership roster will be published in the next issue, with additions reported in subsequent editions.

## THE HERSHEY MEET - SHALL WE GET TOGETHER?

One of those who replied to the questionnaire suggested that those of us who are planning to attend the Annual Meet of the Eastern Division of the Antique Automobile Club might get together there and discuss the future of the Society.

The dates of this affair are Thursday through Sunday, October 9-12, at Hershey, Penna. Several topics for discussion come to mind. Shall we remain a loose sort of organization, or shall we incorporate as a non-profit group? Is it time to elect officers? Do we wish to remain a small association, or do we want to encourage a large membership?

The time is short, and your opinions are requested. The final announcement concerning this get-together will necessarily have to be published in the next issue of the Newsletter.

## SOME EARLY AUTO HOUSE ORGANS

The term "House Organ" is a clumsy designation for a periodical published by an industrial organization for promotional purposes. Probably the best known and oldest is the *Ford Times*. Customer loyalty was (and is) a valuable asset to a business, and the early house organs were attempts to maintain this loyalty. They were distributed mainly to owners of the particular product.

Few copies of these early periodicals seem to have survived, as they were printed in small numbers. The few which the author has examined contain illustrations of satisfied customers in their automobiles, with proper testimonials from persons of importance.

From a technical standpoint these magazines do not, in general, include material of much importance, but they are important as association items. It can well be imagined that copies of *Mercer Magic*, for example, would be of considerable interest to those with a particular hankering for the *Mercer*.

G. M. Naul

Following is a list of some of the early house organs. Additions to this list will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.

TITLE	PUBLISHED BY	YEARS PUBLISHED
AUTO ERA	Winton Motor Car Co.	1900-1908-
AUTOCRAT	Daimler Mfg. Co., Long Island City	1906-
BUICK BULLETIN	Buick Motor Car Co.	-1914-
CHALMERS CLUBMAN	Chalmers Motor Co.	-1915-
CO-OPERATOR	Maxwell-Briscoe Motor Co.	-1908-1914
COLE BULLETIN	Cole Motor Car Co.	(?)
FORD TIMES	Ford Motor Co.	ca. 1908 to date
HALLADAY NEWS	Streator Motor Car Co. Streator, Illinois	-1912-
HAYNES PIONEER	Haynes Automobile Co.	1913-
HUDSON TRIANGLE	Hudson Motor Car Co.	-1910-
HENDERSON ACCELERATOR	Henderson Motor Car Co. Indianapolis, Ind.	-1912-1914
LOZIER LOGIC	Lozier Motor Co., Plattsburg, N. Y.	-1908-1912-
LYONS-ATLAS NEWS	Lyons Atlas Co., Indianapolis, Ind.	1914-
MARION BOBCAT	Marion Motor Car Co., Indianapolis	-1913-
MAXWELL FACTORY DEALER NEWS	Maxwell Motor Corp.	1914-
MERCER MAGIC	Mercer Automobile Co.	-1913-

## SOME ARTICLES CONCERNING AUTOMOBILES

Some excellent monographs on specific makes have been published from time to time in relatively obscure periodicals. The following are a few in such a category. There must be many others which deserve to be more widely publicized, if their existence were known.

The Cole Motor Car Co. - Howard R. Delancy

The Business History Review, Vol. 30, No. 2; September, 1956  
pg. 260-273. Illustrated.

South Carolina's Wonderful Anderson Car - John H. Moore

The Smithsonian Journal of History, Vol. 1, No. 2. Summer 1966  
pg. 51-68. Illustrated.

The Vanished Ventures of Virginia's Auto Makers.

Commonwealth, Vol. XXXII, April, 1965, pg. 27-31, 60.

No Fuel, No Flats, No Fuss.

American Heritage, Vol. XI, No. 5, August, 1960, pg. 70-73.

(Reprints from Woods Electric catalog, in color)

## THE MAIL BAG - LETTERS FROM READERS

Perhaps it is a bit presumptuous to speak of readers, since, up to now, there have been none. However, the following items are excerpts from some of the comments received in the questionnaires.

*I believe your idea of this new organization is wonderful. My personal suggestion (and I may not be alone in that field) is that a racing chapter should be incorporated. Research on old passenger cars has been the effort of individuals but there is still some connection among them; racing historians are absolutely disconnected and that "clearing house" is certainly overdue.*

V.A. - Buenos Aires, Argentina

*I would be willing to contribute my services as an artist or art director, as long as it doesn't interfere with my business too much.*

J.M.P. - Troy, New York

*Again, it was good to hear from you, even on a printed form. I hope this jells for you and all of us, for that matter. If there is anything in this region that I can do, don't hesitate to call on me.*

S.K.Y - Royal Oak, Michigan

*(Would like) feature articles on vintage 1920's popular cars such as Buick, Dodge, Nash, Franklin, Willys-Knight, etc. ...also suggest a liberal sprinkling of info on vintage motor trucks.*

D.C. - West Lafayette, Indiana.

*I hope that the Society will cover every period of automotive history, right up to the present day. It should not be too difficult to acquire information...on post World War II makes, and this information should be gathered before it is too late.*

G.N.G.- London, England

*I feel that one of the chief advantages of the Society would be the collaboration of like-minded individuals on a particular biography or car history of mutual interest. ..Roster should include age of member, and how much time he can devote to his automotive interests.*

C.L.B. - Yardley, Penna.

*I am extremely interested in the proposed Society. There is an area where some mutual interests would be available to both the Canadian and the American Historian.*

G.H.B. - Waterloo, Ontario

*I should think that gradually we might begin to amass a cross-indexed file of available material on various makes, which would be of great use to historians embarking on a specific project.*

K.M. -Troy, New York

*I think this is an idea long overdue. We are still in the first generation of the automobile in this country, yet if we do not glean this history within, at most, the next ten years, it will in some part be lost forever.*

W.S.J. - Herhsey, Penna.

*As a suggestion, select a particular make of car, and ask members to contribute as much information as they may have, for the purpose of amassing as much info as possible on that make.*

K.S.Z.- Rockford, Illinois

*Most interested in an association of this type. Many times I've been stumped in where to go or who to ask. This organization would offer a clearing house, for then we could reach someone who did know. Hope enough more feel as I do.*

B.L.M. - Lima, Ohio

*Since my own special field of competence is the custom body business of the 1920's and early 30's, and there are a few other survivors, quite a bit of currently accepted wrong information might be cleared up by an organization such as proposed.*

H.P. - Centerport, New York

*The publication of this proposed organization should help the researcher plan his work and to locate needed material. The present club magazines hardly do this at all.*

H.A.C. - Glen Cove, New York

*I can arrange to get lapel pins made up at cost.*

H.P. - La Crescenta, Calif.

*Interested in photo articles on obscure makes, famous events, personalities, etc. Articles separating fact from lore and local color.*

K.H.S. - Phoenixville, Penna.

*I congratulate you on starting this project. It is very much needed.*

F.T.S. - Hackensack, New Jersey

The above items have been selected as representative of the comments received. Since permission to print them was not requested, names and addresses have been omitted. In the future, it will be assumed that permission is granted to include the name and address of correspondents unless the writer specifically requests withholding of this information.

## INFORMATION EXCHANGE - QUESTIONS AND (HOPEFULLY) ANSWERS.

Since this is the very first issue of the Newsletter, there is a dearth of questions and requests for information. In the interest of saving space, letters will, whenever possible, be published in condensed form, such as:

*RESEARCHING - Need (any and all) information, (specific information) on (make of car or other vehicle) presumed to have been made by (name of maker, if known) at (city & state) during the years of 19xx to 19zz.*

Just as a starter, your printer has a question or two for this department.

*RESEARCHING - Need any and all information about the "Billy Four", presumed to have been built in Atlanta, Georgia by the McNabb Iron Works. Only reference found so far is an item in "Cycle & Auto. Trade Journal", March, 1910. Shows simple line drawing of car (no photo). Atlanta City Directories, both earlier and later, do not list any such company. R. B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, Marietta, Georgia 30060.*

*RESEARCHING - Need any and all information on "Shad-Wyck", presumed to have been made in Chicago in early 1920's. Would like firm evidence that any were made. Not interested in "Shad-Wyck" supposed to have been made at Frankfort, Indiana, 1917-19. Thorough research proves conclusively that none were ever produced at Frankfort, despite quite a bit of evidence to the contrary. R. B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, Marietta, Ga. 30060.*

*RESEARCHING - Need Serial Number tables for any and all cars made prior to 1910. Also, how early were Used Car Price Guides (N.A.D.A., Red Book, Blue Book, Branham's, etc.) published, and who published them? R. B. Brigham, 136 Park Lane, Marietta, Ga.*

By the time the next issue goes to press we hope to have many questions from many members. Somebody, somewhere, has the information you want - and probably you have information that others are seeking, too.

## ARTICLES WANTED

Readers are urged to contribute items concerning automotive history. Short articles about obscure makes, unusual items about well known makes, biographical sketches of people connected with the early automobile industry - anything which will add to the general store of information the Society is attempting to compile.

Photographs and line drawings can be reproduced in this Newsletter. For best reproduction, photos should not be more than twice the size to be printed. When sending photographs, avoid the use of paper clips to attach information to the pictures. They leave marks which usually appear in the printed picture.

Address all copy and photos to:

BRIGHAM PRESS  
P. O. Box 6465  
MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060.

Original manuscripts and photos will be returned after publication.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Society of Automotive Historians needs members. Right now it has none at all, and that's about as small as an organization can be.

Copies of this Newsletter are being mailed to all those who replied to the earlier questionnaire. Extra copies have been printed, and if you know of anyone who should have a copy, and who would probably want to become a member, send his name and address.

Future issues will be mailed only to members, but sample copies will always be available for interested prospects.

The one and only membership requirement is an interest in the preservation of the history of automotive vehicles - automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, racing cars, aircraft, etc.

A membership application form is enclosed with this Newsletter. Please print your name, address and zip code plainly, and mail it to:

THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS  
c/o MR. G. M. NAUL  
5 QUEEN ANN DRIVE, CHRISTINE MANOR  
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19711