



# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 27

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## The Society of Automotive Historians

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### THE ANNUAL MEETING

The fourth annual meeting of the Society of Automotive Historians was held on the evening of Friday, October 6, 1972, in the Mosaic Room of the Hotel Hershey at Hershey Pennsylvania.

The turn-out for this meeting was the best we have had to date. A quick head-count (the accuracy of which is not guaranteed) indicated that 37 persons were on hand including a visitor, Gordon Buehrig, designer of the CORD automobile. It is evident that the time of the meeting - Friday evening, instead of Saturday afternoon as in previous years - was more convenient for most of our members.

Following are the minutes of the meeting, as submitted by retiring secretary Perry Zavitz:

*John Peckham called the 4th Annual Meeting of the Society of Automotive Historians or order at 8:15 P.M. Mention was made of the members who had passed away during the year and a moment of silence was observed. Minutes of the the last Annual Meeting were called for, but Secretary Perry Zavitz had left them in his car and didn't have the keys. Nevertheless the minutes were adopted and approved. Guy Seeley gave the treasurer's report which showed a balance of \$239.43 on hand. The presence of Gordon Buehrig was noted by John Peckham.*

*Committee reports were given. Dick Brigham reported on the Newsletter, outlining suggestions for more regularity in publication. Marshall Naul reported on the Society's library progress. Dave Brownell reported on the Monograph Committee.*

*The Cugnot Award, to be given annually, was jointly awarded. Charles Bishop, author of "La France a l'Automobile" was not able to be present. Co-winner Nick Georgano received his share of the Award from Mary Cattie for his book "A History of Sports Cars".*

*Stan Yost gave the Nominations Committee report. Nominated for the Board of Directors were: for three year terms, Harold Angel of Ohio and Keith Marvin of New York; for two year terms, Ralph Dunwoodie of Nevada and Perry Zavitz of Ontario; for one year terms, Harry Pulfer of California, and Bernard Weis of New York. A reasonable geographical representation was sought.*

*Nominated for offices were: President, John Peckham; Vice President, Richard Brigham; Treasurer, William S. Jackson; and Secretary, Vernon Vogel.*

*New business included a lengthy outline and discussion of suggested amendments to the constitution. Harry Pulfer suggested a memorial of some type to honor people who had made significant contributions to automotive history, but who had passed on. The subject of S.A.H. lapel pins was discussed and referred to Harry Pulfer.*

*A good number of authors and publishers managed to get in good plugs for their respective books just before the meeting adjourned.*

## A QUIET PASSING

The following item is an editorial which was printed in THE SUN, published at Hummelstown, Pennsylvania by SAH member William S. Jackson. This newspaper, a weekly, covers Hershey, Hummelstown and lower Dauphin County. The editorial, entitled *A QUIET PASSING*, was written by Bill Jackson, and appeared in the Wednesday, October 4th, issue of THE SUN.

A very sweet and lovable old lady died very quietly this past Sunday morning, and there are few who will note or mourn her passing. I, for one, will, and I'd like to tell you about her.

She was a "maiden lady", as we say, and her name was Grace L. Duryea. She had seen 80 summers, which is more than the Lord usually allows, and is probably more content now with her friends and relatives than with the world of hustle and bustle which had proven somewhat confusing, but never dominating, to her in her last years.

If the name Duryea brings a glimmer of memory, it should. It was her father, Charles E. Duryea, and her uncle, J. Frank Duryea, who are generally credited with the founding of the American automobile industry - the industry which today provides in the automobile, the final product of roughly 40% of the gross national product of this great land.

It was the Brothers Duryea who, in September, 1893, pushed off their first sputtering automobile into the streets of Springfield, Massachusetts. It was also the Brothers Duryea who, on November 28, 1895, won the first-ever automobile race held in this country - the Chicago Times-Herald road race.

The Brothers Duryea were also credited with being the first to build a series of automobiles of the same design, making them most likely the first manufacturers of automobiles in quantity.

It may seem odd to dwell on this history of the automobile in a eulogy, but so much of Grace Duryea's life was tied up with that of the automobile that it can't be ignored. She and her sister, Rhea Duryea Johnson, were most likely the first women drivers in this country, although they never laid claim to the title.

It was not until they were well into their 70's that I was privileged to know these two ladies, and I will treasure their friendship forever. They were living history to me, with a grace and gentleness of spirit that, sadly, seems to be passing along with their generation.

In her younger years, Grace Duryea was a missionary among the Mexicans, in the days when bandits roamed the plains and the Federalists were hard pressed to keep them in line. She had retired from this profession some years ago, and, with her sister, had spent her recent years much involved in the affairs of the Cornwall Methodist Home.

Also in recent years, she and her sister had spent considerable time doing research on their family and their father, hoping to keep alive his valid claim to fame.

His car has become the symbol of the Antique Automobile Club of America, the world's largest old car club, which holds the world's largest old car meet this weekend here in Hershey. Such is but fitting.

And so, on a quiet Sunday morning, in surroundings she knew and loved, a generation came to an end. She, like her sister before her, donated her mortal remains to medical science, which was not unexpected.

It isn't hard to visualize her presence this weekend at the Hershey old car meet. A wiry little lady with white hair, a book in her arm and a wisp of a smile on her face, saying "Don't you forget my Dad!"

Don't you worry, Grace . . . and Rhea, we never will.

# THE MAIL BAG

*Letters from Members*

## THE PFEIL

Most interesting the article on Herr Friedrich Lutzmann und his Motorvagen (that is the way it's pronounced) the Pfeil. Fascinating the cool sense of humor of those Germans - humor that is dry yet very much to the point.

For, you see, the word "Pfeil" in German means "Arrow", or, perhaps, interpreted as "Dart". It might therefore be concluded that our own Pierce wasn't the first Arrow mounted on four wheels.

Undoubtedly it was so named because of its great speed and unerring accuracy.

I find fascinating the wealth of personalized information in this little newsletter. Can easily envision the time when bound volumes of this publication could be a valued item in the library of a university, particularly one in which they might have Automotive Engineering or Styling as a course of study. An intriguing thought.

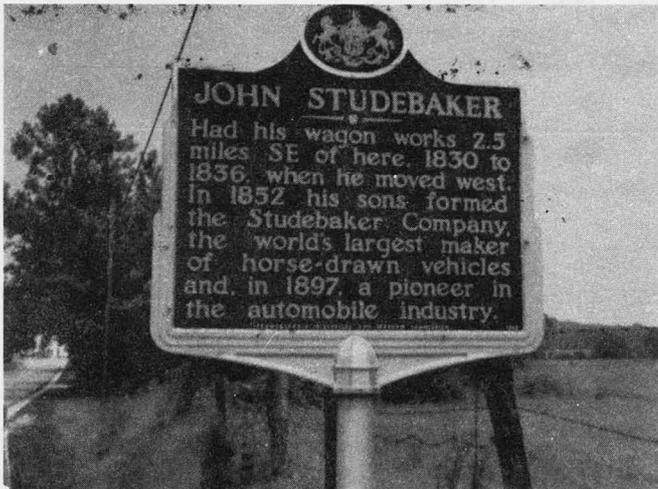
*C. H. Hebb, 3607 Brookcrest Circle, Decatur, Georgia 30032*

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## THE BEGINNING OF THE STUDEBAKER COMPANIES

Enclosed are two photos of the roadside marker on old Route 15, north of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, noting the nearby location of the original Studebaker works. I don't know if the color will print very well, but you're welcome to try. The car is our 1962 G.T. Hawk, which we've had going on four years now.

*Richard Langworth, "Dragonwyck", Hopewell, New Jersey 08525*



EDITOR'S NOTE: Color photos, if they are good ones (and these were) present no particular problem. We are constantly experimenting with the process of printing photos in an effort to get better reproduction with less trouble. Would you believe that we make photocopies of color prints so as to get black and whites? These photocopies are then combined with the rest of the page, and the whole works is photographed together on one negative. Thus the above pictures are photographs of photocopies of the original color prints.

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## SOME SURVIVING PENNSYLVANIA AUTO PLANTS

I have enjoyed reading about survivors among the old auto plants. Here are three pictures of such survivors in the southeast Pennsylvania area. The first is the CHALFANT plant in Lenover, Pennsylvania, mentioned by Marshall Naul. In the years 1906 to 1911 a total of about 50 CHALFANT automobiles were built there.

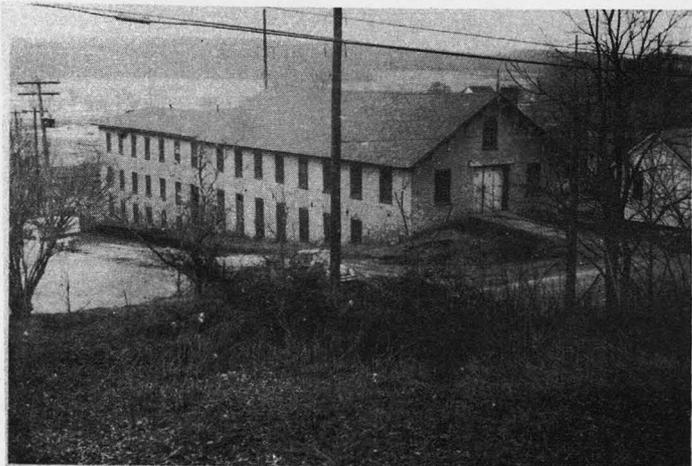
The second picture is of a building at 809 East Lincoln Highway in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. The BRINTON truck was built in this building from 1913 to 1917 by the Chester County Motor Company. In 1917 the company was reorganized as the Brinton Motor Truck Company and moved to Philadelphia.

The third picture is of a building on Fountain Avenue in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where the ROWE truck was built in the years 1923 to 1925. The building was built in 1922 for the Anderson Tire Manufacturing Company but was owned by Rowe-Stuart Motors Corporation, which controlled Rowe Motor Manufacturing Company. When the Rowe Motor factory was destroyed by fire in 1923, production was moved to the Rowe-Stuart building and Anderson tires were never made in Lancaster. The building is now very much changed and only the roof and part of one wall of the original building can be seen in the picture.

Other surviving buildings that I know of include the HART-KRAFT truck plant in York, the BRINTON plant in Philadelphia, the Charles Schutte Body Company plant in Lancaster, and the TRABOLD plants in Johnstown. One factory that has disappeared within the past few years is the former plant of the REBER, ACME and S.G.V. automobiles in Reading, Pennsylvania. I am in full agreement with Mr. Naul that such sites should be recorded photographically before they are destroyed.

Here also is a picture of the pilot car for the first tour of the Chester County Automobile Club. The picture was taken on July 25, 1908, in Coatsville, Pennsylvania, and was made available to me by the Chester County Historical Society. Can anyone identify this car as to make?

*Donald J. Summar, 607 West Lemon Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17603*



Above, left - The CHALFANT plant at Lenover, Penna.

Above, right - The BRINTON truck plant at Coatesville.

Below, left - The ROWE truck factory in Lancaster.



Pilot car for the first tour of the Chester County Automobile Club

#### THE IRREPRESSIBLE CHARLES E. DURYEA

Was Charles E. Duryea planning on building a revolutionary new car during the mid-1920s? It would seem that the iconoclastic builder of the 3-wheelers, Buggyauts and cyclecars did indeed have such plans in mind, according to a leaflet the writer acquired a few weeks ago.

Although no date appears on the leaflet, it was definitely issued by the Duryea Motor Corporation of Philadelphia, and was written by Charles Duryea. It reviews all the Duryea pioneering in automotive design and construction. But more importantly it mentions plans for a new small car. The text reads: "The small car had to wait. In other words Duryea had always been ahead of his time. But while heretofore he was tied up and could not move when he should, this time he is in a position to wait till the time ripens. It is ripening fast. In recent months many men have said this. It was seldom heard before. It is true. The market is bigger than ever before known. This time Duryea both has a leader and is ready to lead. His latest system is "destined to dominate the market."

And that's where Mr. Duryea leaves us hanging. No details about the car except that it will be small. Unless a typographical error occurred, the leaflet had to be issued in 1922 or later due to quoting an excerpt of a letter from Elwood Haynes dated July 3, 1922.

Does any member have further information on this phantom project? Frank Snyder's research eliminates it as the so-called Crowther Duryea since that company went into receivership in 1917 and also because the text mentions the first world war.

I would be interested to know what further information our members have on this apparently ill-fated Duryea project.

*Dave Brownell, Iola, Wisconsin 54945.*

## THE AMERICAN MOTOR VEHICLE COMPANY

This item started out as another letter for the Mail Bag section, but, as the pictures were being prepared for publication it became apparent that there was a lot more to these photos than might be noticed at first glance.

The letter was from Wallace Spencer Huffman, of 409 East Walnut Street, Kokomo, Indiana 46901. It reads as follows:

*I was very happy to receive the Research Supplement. On the back of page 7 is a reference to the American Motor Vehicle Company, of Lafayette, Indiana.*

*In my book of Indiana-built Automobiles there is a picture (page 39) of the inside of the American Motor Vehicle Company's plant. It shows one 3-wheel car. A sign in front of another car says "The Red Bug, \$125"*

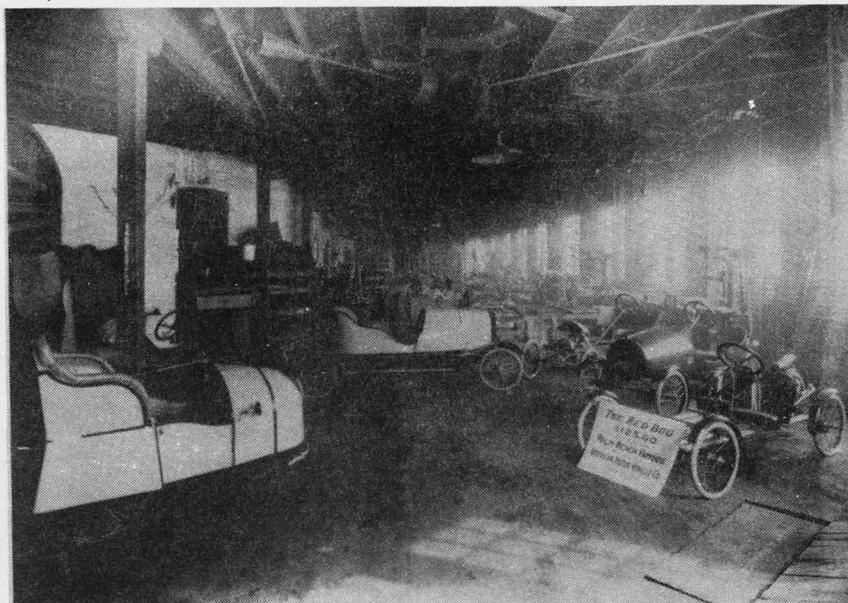
*I also list DUMORE as being made by the same company, but I don't list RED BUG as a make in my book.*

The picture to which member Spence Huffman refers is reproduced below, along with another one. These are from the files of Mr. Ed Hitze of Lafayette, and were sent to us by Huffman so many years ago that he's probably forgotten that we have them. (They have now been sent back).

This photo shows five cars, including the RED BUG with sign which reads (as determined with the aid of a magnifying glass on the original photo):

THE RED BUG  
\$125.00  
The Car That Made  
PALM BEACH FAMOUS  
Manufactured by  
AMERICAN MOTOR VEHICLE CO.  
Lafayette, Ind.

The RED BUG appears to be a buckboard type of machine, powered by a Smith Motor Wheel, and practically identical to the SMITH FLYER (later BRIGGS & STRATTON FLYER).



It seems incredible that even such an elementary vehicle as this could be priced at only \$125 - especially if that price included the Motor Wheel - even at 1916 prices.

The photo shows a total of five small cars, each different from the others. Just to keep things in order, let's number them (left to right) No. 1 through No. 5.

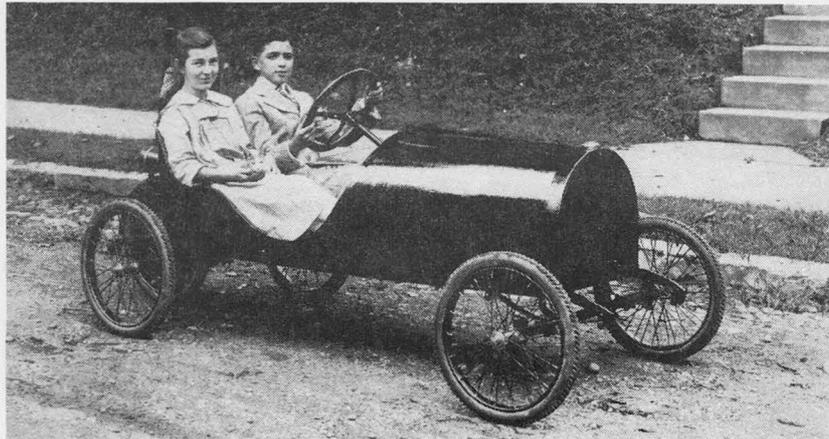
No. 1 is a three-wheeled, tiller-steered vehicle. Our guess would be that it was a battery-powered machine.

No. 2 is the only car in the group with running boards. No Motor Wheel is visible, and the front section of the hood appears to be removable, suggesting a small front-mounted engine. The front spring seems to be transverse.

No. 3 is just a chassis. It has semi-elliptical front springs, and seems to have a small front-mounted engine. The shape of its dummy radiator is not the same as that of the other models in the picture.

No. 4 is probably driven by a Motor Wheel, as is the RED BUG (No. 5) . It has cycle-type fenders and a transverse front spring.

Another picture which was sent by Mr. Huffman is reproduced here. In the original photo, the name AMERICAN JUNIOR is faintly visible on the side of the body just back of the front wheel. At first glance this one appears to be the same as car No. 4 in the other photo but there are differences. This one has no fenders, and the front springs are semi-elliptical, rather than transverse.



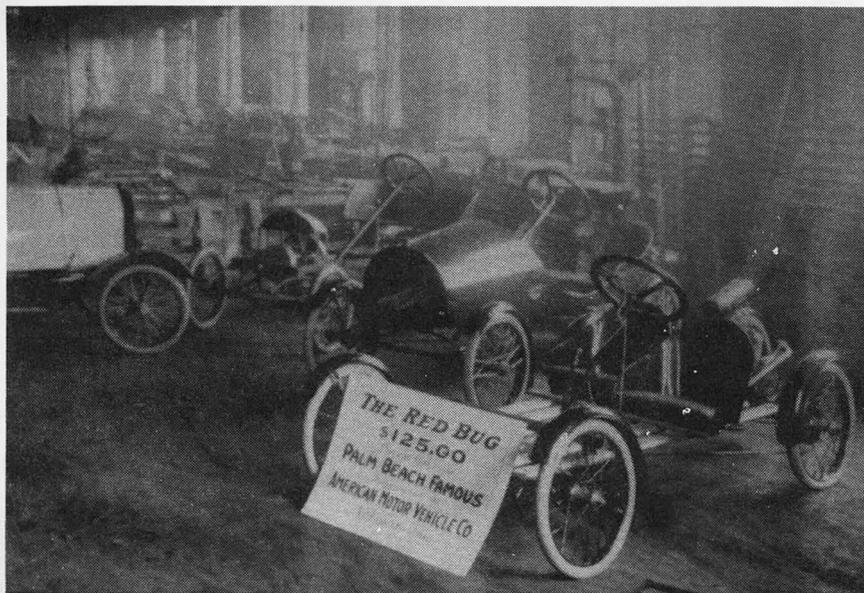
All of these machines were obviously built for the juvenile market - if there ever was one - and, because makers of such cars were largely ignored by the trade publications, good solid references are scarce. The Chilton Automobile Directory of July, 1917, mentions the American Motor Vehicle Company, 16th and Union Streets, Lafayette, Indiana, as makers of the GREYHOUND and the AMERICAN JUNIOR.

The same publication, dated January, 1918, lists this company as builders of the DUMORE and the AMERICAN JUNIOR. Issues of October, 1918, and later, do not list this company as an active manufacturer. The Chilton Directory of January, 1922, includes the GREYHOUND in a table of piston ring sizes (page 1016) for the year 1918 only, and lists the maker as American Motor and Vehicle Co., Lafayette.

Most published rosters give the life span of this company as 1916-1920. Some list the GREYHOUND and the AMERICAN JUNIOR. None of the more important lists include the DUMORE, although a list published by the Automobile Manufacturers Association mentions a DUNMORE, 1917-1918 - probably a misspelling of DUMORE.

Also missing from the rosters is the RED BUG, except for a small electric car of that name made in 1928 in Newark, N. J. One important list carries an entry of RED BUD, of Lafayette, Indiana, as an unverified entry.

Do any of our members have photos, or verified information concerning these interesting but confusing makes and models?



*This picture is an enlarged section of the photo on the preceding page, showing the RED BUG in more detail.*

WANTED: Information or references to:

BAILEY ELECTRIC, F. G. Bailey & Co., Manheim, Pa., 1902.  
Listed in American Car Since 1775.

CARROLL, Carroll Motor Car Co., Strasburg, Pa., 1913.

"DODGE" STEAMER, Safety Buggy Co., Lancaster, Pa., 1905.  
Two or more cars built by Dodge brothers, Arthur & Leon.

Thomas T. Coffin, Uniontown, Pa., circa 1902.  
Built at least six steamers.

Harry E. Edgerley, Lancaster, Pa., 1913-1916.  
Built automobiles on order.

International Mfg. Co., Lancaster, Pa., 1909.

"Steam-Mobile" built by Lawrence C. Killian, Lancaster, Pa., 1880.

Light Commercial Car Company, Marietta, Pa., 1913.  
My only reference is CCJ - Sept. 15, 1913 - p. 5.

A. M. Rowe, Martinsville, Illinois, 1906.  
My only reference is HA 4:18:06 p. 583.

Charles Schutte Body Company, Lancaster, Pa., 1917-1926.

L. S. Wenger & Co., Lancaster, Pa., 1907.  
Built automobiles on order.

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