

THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

January-February 1985

Issue Number 94

CONCERNING THAT PROPOSED NAME CHANGE

A CORRECTION

On page 2 of *Journal* No. 93 it was stated that President John Conde, at the fall directors' meeting, had suggested the inclusion of the word "International" in the name of the Society of Automotive Historians. That statement is incorrect, and we offer our apologies to Mr. Conde.

He had mentioned that many people he had talked to did not realize that our organization was truly international, with a world-wide membership, albeit a small one. The motion to include the word "International" in our name was made by George Ward, and seconded by Walter Gosden.

Secretary Charles Betts, Jr., reports that comments received to date indicate strong opposition to adding another long word to an already lengthy name, with which your editor agrees. To quote an old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

SAH TO HAVE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Charles Betts, secretary, has announced that Shelby Applegate, Annville, Pennsylvania, has accepted his invitation to become the assistant secretary of the Society of Automotive Historians for the year 1985. Mrs. Applegate will be assigned some of the Society's secretarial responsibilities at the February meeting of the Board of Directors to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, early in February 1985.

CHAPTER NEWS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

The Southern California Chapter of the Society of Automotive Historians has elected William J. Lewis to a second term as chairman. Steve Richmond will serve as assistant chairman for 1985.

Jim Valentine has been named secretary-treasurer, and William A. Cannon retains the post of newsletter editor.

Randy Ema, who headed the Literature Swap Meet committee, has delivered the chapter's check in the amount of \$400 to the Briggs Cunningham Automotive Museum, a donation made possible by the recent very successful event staged on the BCAM parking lot. A date has not yet been selected for the third annual Literature Fair and Exchange, but it was decided at the late fall quarterly meeting that the Rio Hondo College campus will be the setting. (A move was necessary because of the uncertain future plans of BCAM.)

SoCal Chapter and SAH membership information may be obtained by writing to Bill Cannon, 175 May Avenue, Monrovia, California 91016

Bobbie'dine Rodda
Publicity Chairman

LETTERS

OF MUFFLERS AND CUTOUTS

From David Rice, 905 N. Gainsborough Drive, Pasadena, California 91107 — Cecil Stockard's essay on old mufflers and cutouts (*Journal* No. 92) was a lot of fun to read and a good discussion of the real use of cutouts that by-pass the muffler—the sound gives a feeling of POWER.

From my inspection of pre-1916 cars on various tours, it was easy to see that most owners liked cutouts, if only to divert pressure into exhaust whistles. Some cars have two cutouts, one for a whistle, the second for exhausting without the use of the muffler.

The earlier cars seemed to have little or no back pressure in the muffler. They worried about back pressure creating a cross-over in the manifold, I suspect. Later, the final pipe or muffler exit seems smaller, allowing for a tuning of back pressure, perhaps. Little "teuf-teuf" motors have very small pipes.

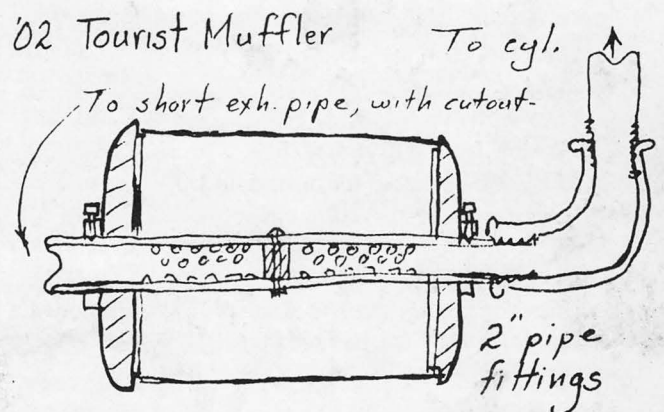
On my 1902 two-cylinder Tourist, a Los Angeles-built car, each 5½ x 5 cylinder exhausts into its separate muffler. The gases exit through a common two-inch water pipe at a final temperature in excess of 600 degrees F. The drawing below shows the simple construction, all of water-pipe and cast-iron headers with sheet-iron wrap. All is original, probably due to much oil in the exhaust emissions.

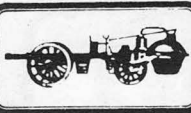
My 1912 Hudson, a mass-produced low-priced car, uses the same construction, but thinner components which were all rusted out—except the cast-iron headers.

My 1907 Panhard et Levassor has a gigantic original muffler, set crosswise at the rear, its guts apparently still intact.

In all cases, the use of a cutout does not increase speed or power, even on a hill, where the explosions are at their maximum. Nevertheless, I use the cutouts—especially when going through a tunnel or overtaking a stock Ford T on a hill with the old Tourist.

From my limited experience, cutouts are for the ego, especially that portion that causes one to rattle a stick down a picket fence.





THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

Editor
Richard B. Brigham
Art Director
John M. Peckham

Editorial Office: SAH Journal
1616 Park Lane, N.E.
Marietta, Georgia 30066

Publications Committee
Beverly Rae Kimes, Chairperson
George B. P. Ward, Jr.

Richard B. Brigham
John A. Conde
Frederick D. Roe

The SAH Journal published
six times a year by The Society
of Automotive Historians, Inc.

Copyright 1984
The Society of Automotive
Historians, Inc.

SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS' OFFICERS, 1984

PRESIDENT

John A. Conde
1340 Fieldway Drive
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

SECRETARY

Charles L. Betts, Jr.
2105 Stackhouse Drive
Yardley, PA 19067

VICE PRESIDENT

Walter E. Gosden
197 Mayfair Avenue
Floral Park, NY 11011

TREASURER

George B.P. Ward, Jr.
c/o Maryland National Bank
P.O. Box 987
Baltimore, MD 21203

Persons interested in joining the Society of Automotive Historians, write to Charles L. Betts, Jr., Secretary, 2105 Stackhouse Drive, Yardley, PA 19067.

If you have moved, forward your new address to Charles L. Betts, Jr., 2105 Stackhouse Drive, Yardley, PA 19067.

Material for publication in the Journal or Automotive History Review should be sent to Richard B. Brigham, Editor, 1616 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, GA 30066.

BACK ISSUES OF SAH PUBLICATIONS FOR YOUR FILES

AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY REVIEW

With the exception of number two, all issues are available from one to fifteen. Price is \$3.00 per copy, plus \$1.00 postage per order in the USA.

NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL

Out of print: 3, 4, 6, 7, 23, 26, 43.

Very limited supplies: 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 33, 34, 39.

These are priced at \$1.00 each, while they last, not to be included in quantity prices quoted below.

All other issues: The following price schedule applies;

- Single copies, each. \$1.00
- Any ten. \$8.00
- Any twenty-five \$17.00
- All available from #10 thru #75 \$33.00

Please add \$1.00 per order for postage in USA

For shipment outside the USA please make payment in US funds and add ten percent of the amount of your order for shipping.

Make checks payable to The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc., and mail to Fred Roe, 837 Winter Street, Holliston, MA 01746 USA.

RESEARCH AND CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: Auto registration lists, in original form or photocopies, of the following: Indiana, 1920-1940; Massachusetts, 1907-1930; New York, 1900-1940; Rhode Island, 1910-1930; California, 1920-1940. **Robert B. Myers, 116 River Street, Mattapan, Massachusetts 02126.**

WANTED: Sales literature on Zoe vehicles, on the Suzuki-Chevrolet sold in California, and on Fabco, MacDonald, and Scot trucks. Also need a Biederman nameplate (year and model not important.) **F. W. Crismon, 321 Godfrey Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40206.**

WANTED: I am researching the history of beach racing and record breaking for a proposed book, and would like to borrow any relevant material—photos, programs, cuttings, articles, etc. Costs would be reimbursed and items returned. **Martyn H. Flower, 2 Belbrough Close, Hutton Rudby, Yarm, Cleveland, England TS15 0EH.**

FREE STUFF TO SEND FOR

(but include a stamped self-addressed envelope)

From Dr. Charles W. Bishop, 89 Sherland Avenue, Fair Haven Heights, Connecticut 06513, we have received a bibliography entitled *Ancient History of the Automobile* which consists of a list of 36 periodicals cited in *Automotor Journal* of December 1899, October 1900, and December 1901. The list is far too long to reproduce here (it takes an entire page), but Dr. Bishop writes, "... you might mention its existence and that I would be happy to supply a copy to any interested member who sends a SSAE.

"Its principal virtue is that the titles might well elude a searcher, as few of them begin with 'Auto' and, as ephemera, had disappeared by the time lists of auto publications began to be turned out."

David M. King, of 5 Brouwer Lane, Rockville Centre, New York 11570, has sent in Issue Number One of the *Rolls-Royce Review*, a small publication full of bits and pieces of Rolls and Bentley information, which he describes as "The Journal of Rolls-Royce and Bentley Book and Literature Collecting." He says that future issues will cover the full range of Rolls-Royce and Bentley literature—ads, handbooks, magazines, and manuals, to name just a few.

A sample copy will be mailed on request. Include a stamped, self-addressed letter-size envelope (No. 10).

Do you have a friend—or just an acquaintance—who should be a member of the SAH? Tell him or her to write to the SAH Editorial Office, 1616 Park Lane, N.E., Marietta, Georgia 30066 for a free packet containing the latest editions of the *Journal* and *Automotive History Review*, plus a membership application form. No stamped envelope required for this one—SAH will pay the postage!

And if you're a member of any antique or classic car club, spread the word at your next chapter meeting. Increased membership in SAH can make possible larger and more frequent publications.

THE PERFEX, OF LOS ANGELES

(Adapted from the Newsletter of the SoCal Chapter)

by Jim Valentine

The Perflex automobile was introduced to the citizens of Los Angeles on June 21, 1912. A new roadster was christened by a member of the Chamber of Commerce, who broke a bottle of Owens River water across its radiator. Built by the Perflex Company, of 126 East Jefferson Street, Los Angeles, it was the first of a group of twelve under construction.

President of the new firm was Paul Brown, Jr., of New York City; secretary was Ora B. Hutchins; and vice president and general manager was James R. Fouch, the designer of the machine.

The new cars featured a tall, narrow, and thick radiator, with a 22-quart cooling system equipped with a centrifugal pump. Twenty-six horsepower was produced by its 3-3/8 by 4-1/2 inch engine, perhaps a Golden, Belknap & Schwartz unit. Later engines were definitely by G. B. & S., having 3 3/4 by 4 1/2 inch engines of 199 cubic inch displacement, with the cylinders cast in pairs. A three-speed Brown-Lipe transmission was used, with shaft drive. Wheelbase was 106 inches, tire size was 32 x 3 1/2, and the car sold for \$1050 with "an absolutely unlimited guarantee." Ignition equipment included Bosch dual magnetos, with coil and dry battery for starting. Advertised as a speedy small car, the roadster was to be the only body type. The driver sat on the right.

In October, the appointment of A. D. Perkins as the company's San Francisco dealer was announced. The new 1913 Model 2 did use the larger G. B. & S. engine, but the carburetor was changed from a Schebler to a Stromberg, and ignition was by Splittdorf. Elliptical springs, used on the original model, were retained, as were wood-spoke wheels. The car weighed about 1800 pounds.

Because factory space was limited, the company soon found larger, expandable space at 52nd Street and Santa Fe Avenue, in a building which still stands. Production had just begun in June 1913 of a half-ton truck—an open delivery unit, "strong, fast, and very economical." These trucks had a 116-inch wheelbase and were powered by a smaller T-head engine made by Massnick-Phillips, trade named Perkins (like the name of their Bay Area dealer, but not the same Perkins engine firm we know today). It was a 20-horsepower engine with 3-3/8 by 4-inch cylinders, 143 cubic inches. The delivery cars sold for \$900.

At the time of the factory's move, a model change was in progress, and the company made a decision to concentrate solely on the light trucks, with the roadsters dropped from the line. A deal was made with the Autocar distributor, M. S. Bulkley & Company, appointed sole distributor of the Perflex trucks. The remaining 1913 open delivery units were cleared out at \$800.

The 1914 Model 18 units had left-hand drive, a new clutch, and offered a choice of open or closed bodies. They sold at \$900, "complete with express body." They were equipped with 34 by 3 1/2 inch pneumatic tires, wood spoke wheels, a three-speed transmission, and had a 4/1 axle ratio.

Bulkley, from its 18th and Main Street South location, advertised: "Be convinced—you cannot afford a horse after you investigate Perflex economy."

Los Angeles' first Commercial Car Salon was held in November 1913, with the M. S. Bulkley & Company exhibit including a Perflex chassis and one complete truck. Bulkley had an excellent location just inside the entrance, and business was so brisk the factory announced an increase in production from the thirty units a month which had been projected.

In November Bulkley opened a showroom in San Diego for the Perflex and Autocar trucks.

Some trucks seem to have been built using larger engines. W. E. Miller, now deceased, recalled a local dry cleaner having a Perflex truck with a Perkins V-8, perhaps their 2 3/4 by 4 1/2 unit of 34 horsepower. There was talk of a one-ton truck to be produced, but this does not appear to have happened.

An oddity occurred in February 1914, considering the contract the firm had made with M. S. Bulkley & Company (i.e., that Bulkley should be sole distributor of Perflex trucks). The Perflex Sales Company was opened at 1148 South Olive Street in Los Angeles, staffed by Jack Crick and Richard Tiernan of Perflex.

In August 1914 the Mission Motor Car Company, a local auto dealer and truck manufacturer, bought out Perflex. It was a \$500,000 deal, expected to provide expansion space for Mission's own operations. Mission did continue to produce Perflex Commercial Cars until the existing parts and supplies ran out. The Perflex was not shown in the late October truck show, and it appears unlikely that any would have been built beyond the end of the year.

In 1920, production of Perflex automobiles began in England, said to have been mostly American but having British bodies. The Perflex Manufacturing Company Ltd. was set up in Bournemouth, England, and indeed the engines were G. B. & S. units, but the radiators were not the tall, narrow ones which characterized the American cars. The firm appears to have failed in 1920.

ANOTHER GEORGIA-BUILT CAR—MAYBE?

Printed below is the text of a news item published in the September 26, 1911, edition of the *Macon Daily Telegraph* (Macon, Georgia).

"There is a possibility that Macon may secure an automobile factory to add to her already long list of manufacturing enterprises. Yesterday, J. E. Keith, of Jackson, Michigan, arrived in the city and during the day called on local men interested in the automobile business, and also interviewed one or two bankers and other business men in the interest of such a proposition.

"It is understood that Mr. Keith has been in correspondence with the Chamber of Commerce for some time with the hope of being able to establish the factory here, and after learning many facts about the city, he decided to come here and see what could be done.

"Several months ago the factory opened up for business in Jackson, Michigan, after having installed \$50,000 worth of up-to-date machinery, according to Mr. Keith. Everything went along nicely for a time and ten cars reached that stage of construction where very little work was required to complete them. Then dissention arose in the company followed by a split-up, and the factory was closed down. Now, Mr. Keith says, he has the machinery and the unfinished automobiles on his hands. He has decided that there is a good field for an automobile factory in the south and wants to come to Macon.

"He agrees to put in a certain amount of money if a portion of the necessary stock will be taken by Macon people, but whether or not he met with any success yesterday was not stated."

So far we have found no references to Mr. J. E. Keith, or to the automobile he claimed to be promoting. Do any of our members have any knowledge of this man or his car—if actually there was such a car? If this was anything more than a stock-selling scheme, we'd like to add it to our list of motor cars built in Georgia.

The Lima Light Car Company et al

This article is one of several written by the late Dr. B. L. Mundhenk, of Lima, Ohio, which have surfaced since his death some years ago. Dr. Mundhenk was an interesting writer, an excellent photographer, and a collector of antique cars. His beautiful Packards were seen frequently at meets throughout Ohio and Indiana.

For many years, every list of antique cars has included the name of the "Lima" automobile. Finally, in one list, the year of 1915 was mentioned as the time of manufacture. This gave me a definite year to research, so over to the local museum I went. They have our Lima newspapers micro-filmed clear back to the 1880's, so I drew the first of the three rolls of film marked "1915" and went to work.

At first I was so diverted by the advertisements and news accounts that I could barely cull through three weeks of issues in one afternoon, but pretty soon I got so that I accepted the fact that a full quart of 100 proof bonded whiskey cost 80 cents delivered to your door, and that hamburger sold for four pounds for a quarter, so I got on with it.

I first hit pay dirt in the February, 1915, issue, when the *Lima Sunday News*, in large headlines, announced the fact that "LIMA GETS ANOTHER NEW AUTO TRUCK INDUSTRY." Reading the finer print, I found that a local groceryman, Mr. Clark Miller, was moving an existing factory, lock, stock, and barrel, from Auburn, Indiana, to Lima, and was going to manufacture the Lima in a garage back of his grocery store.

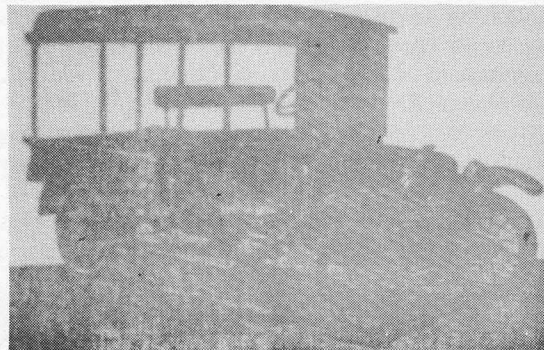
Mr. Miller was an old, old man when I knew him back in 1925. The paper of ten years before quoted him upon the arrival of the business. "Every time I see that big truck start out on a trip," said Mr. Miller, pointing to his heavy truck as it was about to leave on a delivery on a Saturday evening, "it makes me sick. It eats up twice the amount of gasoline that this new car does on account of the unnecessary weight it is carrying. It weighs twice as much as cars designed to deliver groceries or other light merchandise should weigh. Not only are expenses and upkeep cheap on this new car, but it is capable of making 45 miles an hour with a full load of 500 pounds. Its faculty of being light and strong will give the merchants an opportunity to give the public what it demands—quick service."

The newspaper went on to relate: "The car, which at present is being manufactured in Auburn, Indiana, has a light, strong chassis, with pneumatic-tired wheels and a body capable of carrying 500 pounds. The specifications of the car are: weight, 1350 pounds; four cylinders; 20 horsepower and overhead valves. The car will be sold complete with electric lights, windshield and speedometer, for \$550. It will have a wheel-base of 100 inches.

"From all appearances this truck should be a winner, and they plan several other models. The company is expected to put out a large number of machines within a very short time, as it seems there will be a great demand for them."

(Associated with Miller was A. C. George, of Lima, who apparently was a mechanic and garageman, and F. M. McGraw, buyer for the McIntyre Manufacturing Company, of Auburn, Indiana.)

On Sunday, April 25, 1915, there appeared another article telling how an agent from Minnesota wanted immediate delivery of 300 cars. Along with this follow-up article, there was a very poor picture of the Lima light truck which appears



Probably the only "Lima" automobile ever produced—and it was built in Auburn, Indiana! This is the "very poor picture" from microfilm at the Lima, Ohio, public library, to which Dr. Mundhenk refers in his text.

to be similar to the Chevrolet of that era. The article went on to say, "The first car which was assembled in Auburn, Indiana, is still being used by the grocery. . . . In all these tests, the merits of the car have been set forth, such as durability, economy, simplicity, and accessibility."

Mr. Miller was quoted: "If it were not for the fact that it is impossible to get the material for assembling the trucks, we could be turning out one or two cars every day even with the small force we now have employed in the plant. However, the manufacturers of these parts and materials for automobiles and trucks claim they are swamped with orders from truck factories all over the United States. This, they claim, is due to the excessive business which has been attained by the motor industry in America, because of the great demand for trucks by the belligerent countries at war in Europe."

The article went on to report that the Lima Light Car Company ". . . at present has three cars which it intends to turn out complete next week." It was stated that one agent, Mr. A. L. Brice, wanted 300 trucks immediately . . . and another agent wanted 500 as soon as they could be manufactured. (Second buyer was not identified except that he "was from Boston.")

Up to now, everything seemed to be rosy and it looked as if they'd start to roll. BUT, thus far, it looked as if there had not been one car actually made in Lima—although the pilot model was still chugging around Lima. Nothing more was recorded of the Lima being so busily turned out (on paper) in lots of 300 and 500, until November 21, 1915, and here's the sad story:

Way back near the end of the newspaper, and in suitably small print, is the following announcement: "AUTO MADE HERE TRANSFERRED TO FOSTORIA PLANT. Light Car is Now Manufactured by Fostoria Corporation. Original Conception of Clark Miller is Now in the Hands of Capitalists." The story continues, "The Fostoria Light Car Company, formerly a local concern known as the Lima Light Car Company, has effected an organization and is capitalized for \$500,000. Clark Miller, groceryman . . . was actively connected with the company when it was located in this city . . . Miller sold his stock to the company last May." The newspaper goes on, "The only member of the company at the present time, who was connected with the company in Lima, is A. O. George. He has taken up residence in that city and has been named factory manager of the company. He holds a large block of stock in the concern." (What happened to McGraw of Auburn is not mentioned.)

This account then parrots the original laudatory words about the car and how it is destined to fill a niche in the automobile world, and how orders continue to pour into the offices, and how it will be necessary to build a new factory and hire at least 70 men to take care of this flood of orders . . . all this was similar to the first account of the company's coming to Lima, but nowhere do these accounts state that there was ever one automobile actually made in Lima.

And so, the Lima as listed in all the rosters of cars no longer made was seemingly a figment of the imagination of a couple of promoters. It wasn't said, but if they were capitalized for half a million dollars, they had a lot of stock to dispose of to the people. I have a feeling that in this they succeeded. I have my doubts that they ever made an actual automobile, as they seem to have been better stock salesmen than manufacturers.

The story of the Lima apparently ends here unless someone in Fostoria will research it further. I have my suspicions that the Lima didn't end with a bang, but only expired with a whimper.

B. L. Mundhenk

EXIT THE LIMA—ENTER THE FOSTORIA

In the summer of 1915, while the only signs of life at the Lima Light Car Company consisted of optimistic reports of large numbers of orders on hand, the future of the Lima

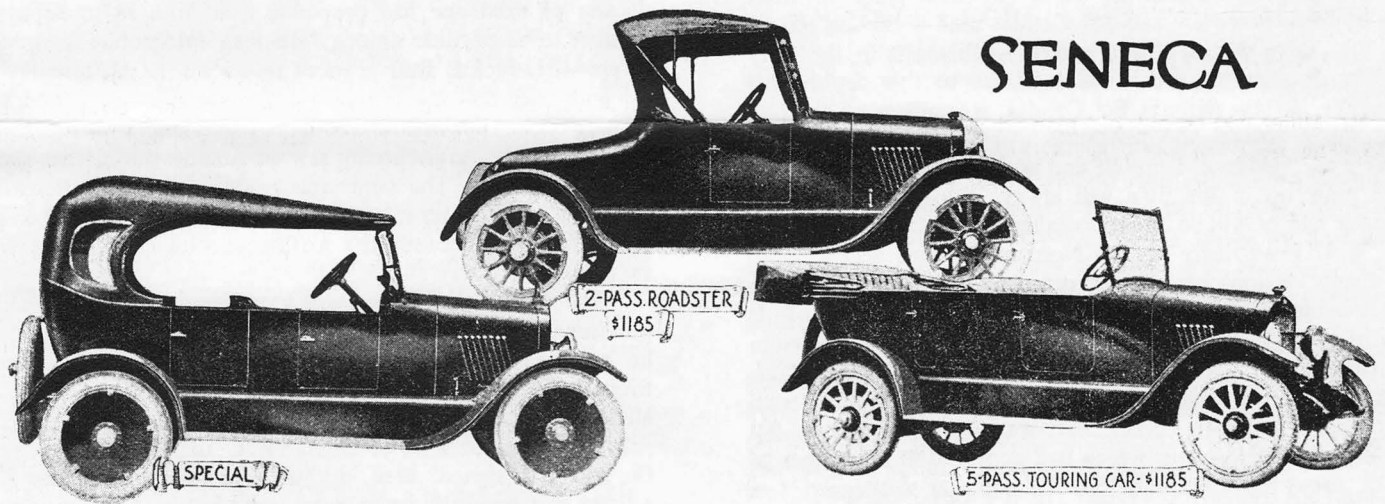
was being shaped in nearby Fostoria. Here a new company—the Fostoria Light Car Company—was quietly being organized by R. J. Ridgeway, Ira Cadwallader, J. H. Jones and Charles Ash, all of Fostoria, and A. C. George of Lima. Capital stock of the new company was \$100,000. A small car, bearing a strong resemblance to the Lima delivery car, but with a roadster body, was put into sufficient production to encourage the principals to reincorporate—this time for \$500,000. This reorganization was noted in *Motor Age*, November 18, 1915, followed three days later by the announcement in the Lima newspaper.

The Fostoria Light Car Company was now building a touring car, and delivery cars with open and closed bodies. In July of 1916, *Auto Topics* announced that the line had been substantially improved. The cars were about seven inches wider, and now were equipped with full-floating rear axles, all of which explained a price increase of about \$60 per car.

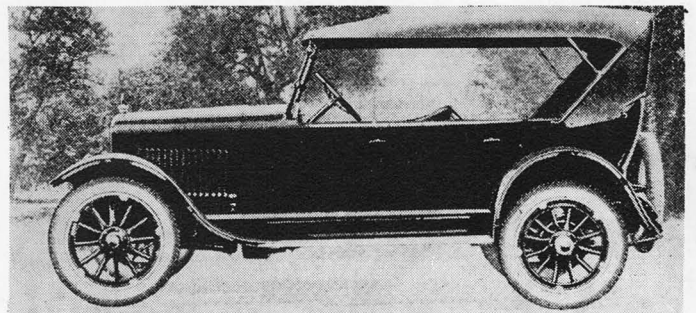
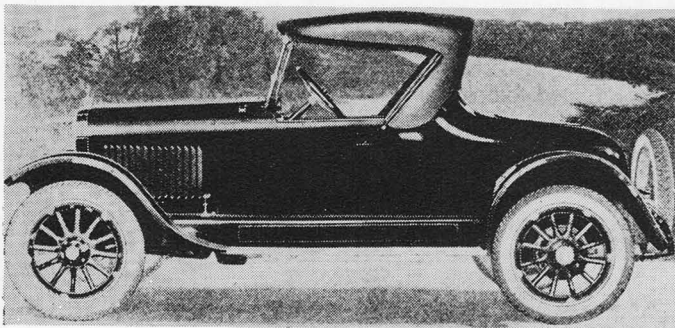
On January 4, 1917, the Seneca 4 was announced, to replace the former Fostoria, and on January 8, stockholders of the Fostoria Light Car Company met to once again reorganize the company, this time as the Seneca Motor Car Company. The same officers were re-elected—with one exception. Mr. A. C. George was not included in the new management, thus severing the last tie to Lima.

The Seneca Motor Car Company went out of business in mid-1924, marking the end of automobile manufacturing in Fostoria.

Richard B. Brigham



Three body styles offered by the Seneca Motor Car Company in 1921, as shown in *Motor Age* for January of that year.



These 1922 models of the Seneca phaeton and roadster show considerable improvement in body design, with wheelbase increased from 108 inches to 112 inches, improved springing, a larger clutch, and bigger gasoline tank. Prices had been reduced to \$1095 for each type. Photos from *Motor World*, June 28, 1922.

WHAT DID FRED REALLY SAY TO NORMAN?

This article by Ross MacLean is a reprint of his column Journey Through Airflowland as it appeared in the August 1984 edition of The Airflow Newsletter. It is reproduced here by permission of the author and that publication's editor, Jim Lightfoot.

Unless Fred committed his comments to paper, and that memo eventually turns up somewhere, the only version of the incident we'll ever have is Norman's, which appears, as usual, to be—well, er, ah—perhaps just a bit self-serving.

Fred, of course, was Fred Zeder, Vice President of Engineering at Chrysler, Carl Breer's long-time associate and brother-in-law, visionary, genius, and one of Walter P.'s most trusted lieutenants. Norman, on the other hand, was Norman Bel Geddes, gadfly, theatrical-designer-turned futurist, stylist of many things which never quite came to be, and the man whom Ray Graham hired in 1928 to waft the Graham-Paige into futurism. Unfortunately, the project died with the crash of October, 1929, and Graham committed suicide in 1932 without ever having breathed it back to life.

Bel Geddes wasn't even *Bel Geddes*. The name was a contraction of his own rightful name, Norman Melancthon Geddes and his first wife's name, Helen Belle Schneider, which they adopted as Norman-Bel Geddes when they went into theatrical designing together in the teens. The name stuck—without the hyphen, however—and Bel Geddes used it for the rest of his life, through three more wives, legalizing it in the early 1950's. It survives, and remains in use to this day by his daughter, actress Barbara Bel Geddes. Regardless of the fact that many writers and historians insist on referring to him merely as "Geddes," I myself and probably thousands like me who grew up in the 30's will always think of him as Bel Geddes, and he will be herein so called.

What Fred *really* said to Norman (at least according to Norman's version) was revealed only decades later in Norman's autobiography (on which he was working at the time of his death) in a memo said to have been written to Earl Newsom on October 26, 1933, following a visit to the Chrysler plant. Bel Geddes had signed a contract with Chrysler for design work only a month earlier, and we may be sure that Bel Geddes' book *Horizons*, which had appeared in November of 1932, some ten months before the contract was signed, was not only discussed in favorable terms on that visit but was in fact responsible, to a large degree, for the contract itself.

Bel Geddes had said, in *Horizons*, some thirteen months before the Airflow became public knowledge, that he predicted that "Within the next two or three years some far-seeing manufacturer will again turn attention to making his machine go and that this time his design will be the result of what has been learned in this motorized buggy era. This means that he will start afresh and that his objective will be the ultimate form of the future motor car. This car will be very different from those you see on the road today, but not very different from (his: Bel Geddes') car number 8 as illustrated here (in *Horizons*). It will take the public about two years to accept it but they will do so for the simple reason that it is right!"

Obviously, Bel Geddes was talking about—you guessed it—the Airflow! But . . . was he? Well, not if you look at the illustration of his design "Motor Car Number 8!" S'help me, Norman's "Motor Car Number 8" is like nothing in the world so much as Buckminster Fuller's "Dymaxion," birthed the following summer. Did Bel Geddes presage Bucky Fuller's

dreams, or could it be that Fuller spent some long, cold nights, that winter of 1932-33, studying the illustrations in *Horizons*?

In any case, whether Bel Geddes' "car number 8" looked like an Airflow or not, *Horizons* provided his credential as a True Believer, and the Chrysler Corporation took him on board.

There's little doubt that during that October, 1933, visit to Chrysler a lot of fancy verbiage was bandied about. Pleasantries, we can be sure, were exchanged by everybody. Including, of course, Norman and Fred. What Norman went home thinking Fred had said—and what he reported in his memo to Earl Newsom—was that *Horizons*, in November of 1932, had been "entirely responsible for giving the firm the courage to proceed with the Airflow."

Sure. And toads make warts. But the years in the theater had not been without their lessons—and Bel Geddes was never reticent.

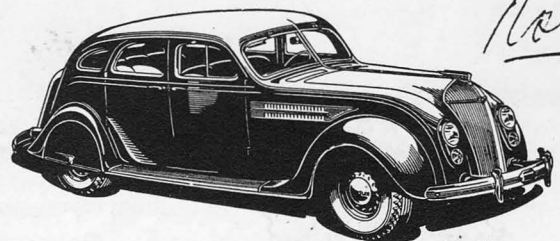
Let's look at that preposterous presumption for a moment. We can well believe that Fred Zeder was making jovial noises; that the conviviality of the moment ("Noted Futuristic Designer Joins Chrysler!") produced some pure and simple wind-bagging, but the fact remains that by the date of the *Horizons* publication the Chrysler Corporation—which in less than a decade of existence had propelled itself into an undisputed number three position among American automobile manufacturers—already had four years of research into Airflow development, and Bel Geddes or no Bel Geddes, there was no turning back. The Airflow would *be*, regardless!

Bel Geddes undoubtedly saw an Airflow during that visit. Probably *the* car. The same one you've all seen in the early magazine ads. Did he return home convinced that despite the vast differences between the Airflow and his "car number 8" he'd spawned it all?

The myth persists. In 1979 a man named Jeffery Meikle published a book entitled *Twentieth Century Limited* in which he repeated one more time, 46 years later, what Norman thought Fred had said, way back there in October of 1933. Meikle got it, of course, from Norman's autobiography.

What ever became of the contract that Bel Geddes and Chrysler had signed? Well, nothing, actually. Bel Geddes did a little experimental design work on a smaller version of the Airflow—or a car not dissimilar; he submitted, unsuccessfully, some redesigns of the Airflow grilles for 1935 and later years, when the decision was made to go to less radical lines, but the designs that were accepted were Ray Dietrich's, not Bel Geddes. All in all, no Chrysler production car ever carried a line that could indisputably be called Bel Geddes' work. But it was a great bandwagon, especially for a futurist. Bel Geddes was still riding it 25 years later as he dictated his autobiography in the late 1950's.

But, after all, theatrics always were Norman's forte!



MOTOR CAR PRODUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES DURING THE YEAR 1951

Compiled by Harlan E. Appelquist

1	Chevrolet	1,118,100
2	Ford	900,770
3	Plymouth	621,010
4	Buick	404,700
5	Pontiac	343,800
6	Dodge	325,690
7	Oldsmobile	285,630
8	Mercury	238,850
9	Studebaker	220,000
10	Chrysler	162,920
11	Nash	160,860
12	Willys	125,020
13	De Soto	120,410
14	Cadillac	103,270
15	Kaiser	99,330
16	Hudson	93,330
17	Packard	76,080
18	Lincoln	25,380
19	Crosley	5,600
20	Checker	3,090

PASSENGER CAR PRODUCTION BY COUNTRIES, 1951

U.S.A.	5,338,435
England	475,920
France	313,916
Canada	281,245
West Germany	267,417
Italy	119,267
Australia	20,934
Sweden	10,881
Japan	3,684
Denmark	3,027

THE MYSTERY CAR IN ISSUE NO. 93

In the 1920-1922 period there were at least four well-known cars which carried their spare tires in a well in the rear deck: Stutz, H.C.S., King, and Columbia. The clues, mentioned in the opening comments about the car were (1), the open left-side door. This at once eliminates the Stutz, which was a right-hand-drive car. (2), the rear window. Stutz and H.C.S. didn't have a real rear window, but just a pair of small oval "lights." (3), the high rear deck. The decks on the Stutz and H.C.S. were slightly lower than the tops of the rear fenders, and only slightly higher on the King. That leaves only the Columbia, which fits all three conditions. Had the photo been of a little better quality it would have shown that the car had cantilever rear springs, used only on the Columbia of this group of four possibilities.

ANSWER TO QUIZ NO 3 (ISSUE NO. 92)

Although a couple of very early auto makers experimented with large, low pressure tires, the first production make to be equipped with the balloon tire was the 1923 Cole, made in Indianapolis. The tires were made by Firestone.

The first car specifically designed to use the balloon tire was the 1924 Chrysler Model 70.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY CHANGES AND CORRECTIONS THROUGH DECEMBER 1984

NEW MEMBERS ENROLLED

Frederick A Usher	1068	Daniel W Westwood III	1070
1304 Dover Hill Rd.		6524 Dandison Rd.	
Santa Barbara, CA 93103		West Bloomfield, MI 48033	
David G Styles	1069	Mrs. Lawrence V Regan	1071
P O Box 9122		2841 Banyan Blvd. Circle NW	
Jeddah		Boca Raton, FL 33431	
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia			

MEMBER RE-INSTATED

Richard A Hickok	507
3113 Piper Drive	
Decatur, GA 30033	

MEMBER DECEASED

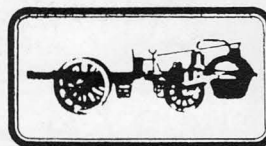
Lawrence V Regan	965
2841 Banyan Blvd. Circle NW	
Boca Raton, FL 33431	

CHANGES OF ADDRESS AND CORRECTIONS

OLD		NEW	
Roy Canfield	1042	Roy Canfield	1042
96 Geranium Ave.		12316 Coppola Dr	
Floral Park, NY 11001		Potomac, MD 28054	
Walter E. Wray	188	Walter E. Wray	188
Route 2		Route 2, Box 141	
Argyle, WI 53504		Argyle, WI 53504	
Robt de la Rive Box	913	Robt de la Rive Box	913
Kuferweg 4		P O Box 27	
5703 SEON		5703 SEON	
Switzerland		Switzerland	
Peter T Noonan	1021	Peter T Noonan	1021
58 Abbotts Way		58 Abbotts Way	
Remuers, Auckland 5		Remuera, Auckland 5	
New Zealand		New Zealand	
Brooks T Brierley	1007	Brooks T Brierley	1007
3126 Center Street		P O Box 330677	
Coconut Grove, FL 33133		Coconut Grove, FL 33133	
Carol L. Lee	847	Carol L Lee	847
315 N Church Street		1326 Gettysburg	
Bowling Green, OH 43402		Rochester, MI 48064	
William S. Locke	265	William S. Locke	265
2156 Ami Lane		RD 1, Box 296	
Lexington, KY 40516		Zionsville, PA 18092	
Edward Swain III	986	Edward Swain III	986
657 Brooke Road		P O Box 320	
Wayne, PA 19087		Bryn Mawr, PA 19010	
Kenneth C Bresaluer	910	Kenneth C Breslauer	910
300 N E 25th Street		P O Box 443057	
Boca Raton, FL 33431		Delray Beach, FL 33444	
Paul T. Scuphola	987	Paul T Scupholm	987
15138 Woodworth		15138 Woodworth	
Radford, MI 48239		Redford, MI 48239	
Patrick Fridenson	327	Patrick Fridenson	327
31 rue Campagne Premier		31 rue Campagne Premeire	
75014 PARIS, France		75014 PARIS, France	
Lawrence S Clark	562	Lawrence S. Clark	562
9238 Hillside Ave		1502 Carmel Drive	
Shreveport, LA 71118		Shreveport, LA 71105	
Robert C Lichty	553	Robert C Lichty	553
460 E Iola Street		c/o The Flea Marketeers	
Iola, WI 54945		1000 Bryn Mawr Road	
		Carlisle, PA 17022	



1922 HAYNES MODEL 75 SEVEN-PASSENGER TOURING CAR. This handsome six-cylinder car was made by the Haynes Automobile Company, of Kokomo, Indiana. This company was founded by Elwood Haynes, an automotive pioneer whose first car ran in 1894. The Haynes company went out of business in 1925. *Factory photo loaned by G. H. Brooks, of Tranmere, South Australia.*



THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Atlanta, GA
Permit No. 604

Return Postage Guaranteed
Editorial Office:
1616 Park Lane, N.E.
Marietta, Georgia 30066
U.S.A.

January-February 1985
Issue No. 94