

# SAH JOURNAL

The Newsletter of the Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

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## WORTHINGTON-WILLIAMS WINS PRINCE HENRY TROPHY

Mike Worthington-Williams, of Newcastle Emlyn in western Wales, has been named to receive the prestigious Prince Henry Trophy. Presented annually by Britain's National Motor Museum, the trophy is awarded to an organization or individual who has made a major contribution to the world of historic vehicles and their preservation.

"Mike W-W," as he is widely known, has been writing about automotive history for over forty years; his credits include a number of books and literally hundreds of magazine articles, two of them SAH award winners. He is probably responsible for the preservation and restoration of more old vehicles than any other person in the United Kingdom, through his many columns on automotive finds and discoveries. He served as vice president of SAH in 1974-75, and is presently chairman of the UK Chapter.

He has been a tireless campaigner on behalf of historic vehicles and their owners. He lobbied successfully for the abolition of Britain's road tax on twenty-five-year-old vehicles, and has assisted hundreds of owners in reclaiming their cars' original registration numbers. He has also worked diligently to assist owners in dealing with tax and import duty difficulties with their old cars. Michael Ware, curator of the museum which organizes the award, said of Worthington-Williams, "There are countless enthusiasts who should be grateful to him for all his work on their behalf. Mike Worthington-Williams practices what he preaches; his daily transport being a 1927 Austin 20, known to hundreds of people as 'Arthur'."

The Prince Henry Trophy takes the form of a Gerald Wingrove model of the Vauxhall Prince Henry, generally regarded as the first British sports car. Nominations for the award are made by the Friends of the National Motor Museum Trust; judges are the Advisory Council of the Museum.

## PLUG PULLED ON THE FORD THUNDERBIRD

The longest continuously-running automobile model name in the history of the Ford Motor Company comes to an end at the finish of the 1997 model year.

In 1954, Ford introduced the 1955 Thunderbird as a response to rival Chevrolet's Corvette. The two-seat roadster has become a collector's dream in the intervening years, but was not a big seller. A four-seat version replaced the roadster after only three model years.

With the introduction of the 1958 model, the T-bird made its niche in the "personal luxury" market. Over the years, competition like Chevrolet's Monte Carlo and Pontiac's Grand Prix arrived to eat away at the 'Bird's home turf.

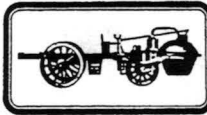
The Thunderbird sprouted two more doors for a short time in the late-1960s. Lincoln built the Mark and Mercury built the Cougar off the same platform, but the Thunderbird never lost its unique qualities.

Supercharged in the '50s, big-block powered in the '60s, over-weight in the '70's, turbocharged in the '80s and supercharged, again, in the '90s, the Thunderbird has come full circle in its forty-three year life-span. Peak sales of nearly 400,000 in 1977 have trailed off to less than 80,000 last year, but Ford promises that the name will not die. A radically new Thunderbird is in the planning stages for introduction in the new millenium.

What Alan Tost stated in his 1996 book *Thunderbird 1955-66* about the early 'Birds could be said for the entire model. "Perhaps in the future there will be follow-ups, but for now I hope you learn something new and exciting about the machines that have captivated the imagination of the automotive world since their debut in 1954." The excitement will not be back for 1998. How sad.

### Inside the Journal...

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Editorial Comment .....                          | 2  |
| President's Perspective .....                    | 3  |
| 25 Years Ago at SAH .....                        | 3  |
| 1996 Silent Auction Results .....                | 4  |
| Additional News .....                            | 5  |
| "Edward S. Jordan" by Kevin Murphy ..            | 8  |
| Doing Something Special .....                    | 9  |
| It Happened Years Ago .....                      | 10 |
| Book Reviews                                     |    |
| <i>Offenhauser</i> .....                         | 11 |
| <i>Laurin &amp; Klement - Škoda 1895-1995</i> .. | 11 |
| <i>The GM Motorama</i> .....                     | 12 |
| Letters .....                                    | 13 |
| Classified .....                                 | 14 |



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## EDITORIAL COMMENT:

### SURFIN' THE 'NET FOR HISTORY

The internet has opened thousands of avenues to the automotive historian. Open up any web browser and search for your topic. Suddenly, the World Wide Web is not just a home for a really large spider.

At first, I found the "web" a big waste of time. It seemed to be endless advertisements and singles chat areas. And then I discovered "Webcrawler."

Webcrawler assists in internet searches. Start a search for "automobiles" and more than 4,700 sites are listed. Many of these sites cover useless information in the eyes of the

automotive historian. Joe from Topeka may have pictures of his modified four-wheel drive '74 Pinto on the site. Another site may be entirely devoted to lovers of AMC Pacers (an actual site and I'm not implying that this one is "useless").

Some automobile manufacturers have their own sites. While most "pages" display the current products, allow you to spec out your own car, or find the local dealer, some sites link to other interesting sites. Some even allow access to a portion of the company's historical archives.

A few privately operated sites give detailed information about the history of a certain facet of the automotive industry. Nearly every brand of automobile has a number of sites.

The following are a list of a few interesting web sites (boldface text is not part of the address, just a note):

### Automobile Related Sites

**General Info** <http://loki.stockton.edu/%7Estk3557/cars/>  
<http://www.gatineau.com/auto.html> (**in French, Quebec**)

**AC Cars** - <http://www.pncl.co.uk/%7Ejepson/accars.html>

**Bertone** - <http://www.team.net/www/ktud/bertone.html>

**Chrysler Corporation** - <http://www.chryslercorp.com>

**Citroën** - <http://www.citroen.fr> (**in French**)

### Fiat -

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/gthylltun/fic00.htm>

**Ford Motor Company** - <http://www.ford.com>

**Honda** - <http://www.honda.com> (**American Honda**)

<http://www.xcs.com/hol/hol.html> (**Honda OnLine**)

**Lancia** - <http://www.c2.org/~mark/lancia/lancia.html>

**Mahindra & Mahindra** - <http://www.mahindraworld.com>

**Saturn Corporation** - <http://www.saturncars.com>

**Toyota** - <http://www.toyota.com>

**Triumph** - <ftp://triumph.cs.utah.edu/italian/images/>

**Volkswagen** - <http://www.vw.com>

### OTHER HISTORIC SITES:

#### Automotive History -

<http://www.comm.wayne.edu/auto100/OldestPlants.html>

**Vintage Racing** - <http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/1753/>

#### Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum -

<http://www.clearlake.com/auburn/>

**Josh Malks' Cord Site** - <http://www.automaven.com>

If you have a computer, a modem, and a little spare time, get a membership to one of many internet providers. Services like America On-Line, CompuServe, Prodigy, and an ever growing number of local systems charge around \$20 a month (some as low as \$14) for unlimited access to the internet and your own email address. Some may give hourly access for an even lower cost; one local provider (Bell Atlantic Net, the regional phone provider) has a plan for 5 hours a month for only \$4.95, if you just want to dabble in these new waters.

If you need help getting on-line, drop me a line. If you find an interesting site, let me know about it. From time to time, reviews of web sites of interest will appear in these pages.

Sam Fiorani, Editor

## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Elsewhere in this issue you will read obituaries for two long-time members who were well known in the automotive history community: *Frank Robinson* and *Bill Cameron*. These two men, each of them in his own way, exemplified with I think our network is all about.

It was I who initiated contact with Bill, at the suggestion of *Keith Marvin*. I had discovered that the Cameron automobile had been built, for a period, in New London, Connecticut, not far from my home. Bill was the world's Cameron authority, I was told, and so he proved to be. A swift correspondence ensued, and on his next trip through New England we met in New London for lunch, and afterwards I was able to escort him to the surviving factory of the former Reed Cotton Gin Company, which had built six-cylinder Camerons under contract from 1908 to 1910. I'm not sure who was more delighted in that visit, he in seeing the building or me in showing it.

We kept in touch after that, by post and his near-annual attendance at Hershey. He continued to work on a history of the Cameron company and its founders, who were not, as far as he could establish, related to him. It seemed a long shot that anyone would publish a book about so arcane an automobile, but Bill was not to be deterred and saw the project through to completion. His 1991 Cugnot Award of Distinction for *The Cameron Story* was well deserved.

In the early years of our friendship I didn't know how old Bill really was. His hair was white, but he had an exuberance that made him seem ageless. Year after year his Christmas cards pictured a car he had recently restored, a new project each year it seemed; by that time I had learned that he was in his late eighties. Having allowed my enthusiasm for restoration projects to ebb by the time I reached forty, I used to keep his cards as inspiration to be more industrious.

The event which really cemented our friendship came almost by accident. In 1985, the old Cameron plant burned. In the aftermath of cleanup, I helped myself to a couple of bricks from the ruin and gave one to Bill at our next Hershey reunion. It became, I learned, one of his most prized possessions. He had it mounted on a plaque to display in his study. I felt buoyed by the fact that my simple gesture would give him so much pleasure.

I don't recall exactly when or why I first made the acquaintance of Frank Robinson -- perhaps he was just the sort of person you felt you always knew. His terms as the Society's sixth president had occurred before I knew there was such an organization as SAH; we came in contact simply because we had common interests and each learned of the other through the "network." We corresponded for years on every imaginable subject related to the automobile, and many aspects of culture besides. He was a man whose intellectual curiosity knew no bounds.

Frank had an uncanny interest in technology, one that I share, and I always found it remarkable that someone schooled in the law would find such pleasure in understanding thin wall casting or overhead camshafts. He was aware of his reputation for, as he put it, "wanting people to write the articles and books I want to read." As self serving as that may sound, he was successful in encouraging many researchers and writers to get beyond the boiling pot and uncover some new stories behind the oft-recounted histories. His wide reading gave him many insights into history, and his library was the envy of any practicing historian. He was happy, too, to share it with others; many of us owed him a huge debt for allowing us to borrow works generally unavailable elsewhere. And when the fruits of this collaboration were published he was generous and sincere in his praise.

Frank's love of the automobile was total and unconditional, though not the exhilaration of sporting and spirited driving that captivates many "car people." He once wrote that he even enjoyed traffic jams, as the static solitude gave him a chance to think about things upon which he would not have had a chance to ruminate at home or in the office. That, to me, seemed like total devotion.

Frank suffered a stroke in the early summer of 1996. Although incapacitated, he was alert and enthusiastic in the months which followed and appreciated the many cards and letters from SAH members. I regret only that I did not write to him more often, for I can now think of many things I might have told him - about casting, or camshafts, or Terraplanes (on which he felt the definitive article had not yet been written).

Many of you have similar memories of Frank and Bill. You will appreciate, then, why I'm glad they were both friends of mine.

- Kit Foster

## 25 YEARS AGO AT SAH

From *Newsletter* No. 24, March 1972.

The Society's first Cugnot Awards were announced by President *John Peckham*: *Nick Georgano's* "A History of Sports Cars" and *Charlie Bishop's* "La France et l'Automobile." *Guy P. Seeley, Jr.*, reported that on February 17, 1972, production of the VW Beetle exceeded that of the Model T.

From *Newsletter* No. 25, April 1972.

*Dave Lewis* provided a thoughtful 8-page illustrated article "America's Forgotten Industry," suggesting automotive landmarks, such as factories and homes, worthy of registration as historic sites by the National Park Service. Dave, can you give us an update as to which of these remain in existence? For sure, Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue Assembly Plant is gone.

- Taylor Vinson

## 1996 SAH SILENT AUCTION FINAL BIDS

|    |         |     |        |     |       |     |       |
|----|---------|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| 1  | \$20.00 | 65  | 30.00  | 128 | 18.00 | 191 | 3.00  |
| 2  | 2.00    | 66  | 17.00  | 129 | 21.50 | 192 | \$.77 |
| 3  | 30.50   | 67  | 11.50  | 130 | \$.37 | 193 | 51.51 |
| 4  | 15.00   | 68  | 2.00   | 131 | 4.00  | 194 | \$.27 |
| 5  | 8.00    | 69  | 1.00   | 132 | 50.00 | 195 | \$.27 |
| 6  | 10.00   | 70  | 30.00  | 133 | 22.00 | 196 | \$.27 |
| 7  | 100.00  | 71  | 40.00  | 134 | 10.00 | 197 | \$.27 |
| 8  | 15.50   | 72  | \$.37  | 135 | 5.00  | 198 | \$.27 |
| 9  | 7.55    | 73  | 55.00  | 136 | \$.77 | 199 | 1.00  |
| 10 | 25.00   | 74  | 28.00  | 137 | \$.77 | 200 | 5.00  |
| 11 | 72.00   | 75  | 15.00  | 138 | 8.00  | 201 | 5.00  |
| 12 | 2.75    | 76  | 40.00  | 139 | \$.77 | 202 | 15.00 |
| 13 | 13.00   | 77  | 50.00  | 140 | \$.77 | 203 | 1.00  |
| 14 | 15.00   | 78  | 105.00 | 141 | 9.10  | 204 | 1.00  |
| 15 | 40.00   | 79  | 1.00   | 142 | 1.57  | 205 | \$.27 |
| 16 | 75.00   | 80  | 18.00  | 143 | 2.00  | 206 | \$.27 |
| 17 | 21.50   | 81  | \$.37  | 144 | 35.50 | 207 | 2.00  |
| 18 | 80.00   | 82  | 30.00  | 145 | 24.00 | 208 | 6.50  |
| 19 | 10.00   | 83  | 10.00  | 146 | 15.00 | 209 | 1.00  |
| 20 | 46.00   | 84  | 21.00  | 147 | \$.37 | 210 | \$.27 |
| 21 | 36.00   | 85  | 1.00   | 148 | 11.00 | 211 | 10.00 |
| 22 | 20.00   | 86  | 40.00  | 149 | 5.00  | 212 | 3.00  |
| 23 | 45.00   | 87  | 40.00  | 150 | 61.00 | 213 | 3.00  |
| 24 | 20.00   | 88  | 5.00   | 151 | 3.00  | 214 | 5.00  |
| 25 | 20.00   | 89  | 31.00  | 152 | \$.77 | 215 | 3.00  |
| 26 | 15.00   | 90  | 23.00  | 153 | 10.00 | 216 | 10.00 |
| 27 | 25.00   | 91  | 28.00  | 154 | 6.00  | 217 | 3.00  |
| 28 | 8.00    | 92  | 17.00  | 155 | 10.00 | 218 | 6.25  |
| 29 | 15.00   | 93  | 7.02   | 156 | \$.37 | 219 | 3.00  |
| 30 | 14.00   | 94  | 25.00  | 157 | 16.00 | 220 | 5.00  |
| 31 | 14.00   | 95  | 12.51  | 158 | 5.00  | 221 | 5.00  |
| 32 | 15.00   | 96  | 11.00  | 159 | 5.00  | 222 | 11.00 |
| 33 | 10.00   | 97  | 5.00   | 160 | 10.00 | 223 | 8.00  |
| 34 | 2.00    | 98  | 31.00  | 161 | 16.00 | 224 | 26.00 |
| 35 | 7.00    | 99  | 25.00  | 162 | 18.00 | 225 | 19.00 |
| 36 | \$.37   | 100 | 105.00 | 163 | \$.37 | 226 | 11.00 |
| 37 | 11.50   | 101 | 45.00  | 164 | 35.51 | 227 | 10.00 |
| 38 | 28.00   | 102 | 10.00  | 165 | \$.37 | 228 | 10.00 |
| 39 | 15.00   | 103 | 3.00   | 166 | \$.27 | 229 | 3.00  |
| 40 | 75.00   | 104 | 5.55   | 167 | 12.00 | 230 | 10.00 |
| 41 | 42.00   | 105 | 8.50   | 168 | 26.00 | 231 | 20.00 |
| 42 | 30.00   | 106 | 26.00  | 169 | \$.27 | 232 | \$.37 |
| 43 | 2.00    | 107 | 16.00  | 170 | \$.27 | 233 | 10.00 |
| 44 | 40.50   | 108 | 15.00  | 171 | \$.27 | 234 | 21.00 |
| 45 | 67.50   | 109 | 41.51  | 172 | \$.27 | 235 | 3.00  |
| 46 | 12.00   | 110 | 25.00  | 173 | \$.27 | 236 | 31.00 |
| 47 | 35.00   | 111 | 26.00  | 174 | 3.00  | 237 | 12.00 |
| 48 | 7.75    | 112 | \$.37  | 175 | \$.37 | 238 | 50.00 |
| 49 | 80.00   | 113 | 10.00  | 176 | 3.00  | 239 | 6.50  |
| 50 | 60.00   | 114 | 35.00  | 177 | 3.00  | 240 | 5.00  |
| 51 | 26.00   | 115 | 120.00 | 178 | 18.00 | 241 | 5.00  |
| 52 | 40.00   | 116 | 20.00  | 179 | 3.00  | 242 | 12.00 |
| 53 | 30.00   | 117 | 20.00  | 180 | 7.00  | 243 | 3.00  |
| 54 | 5.00    | 118 | 1.00   | 181 | 3.00  | 244 | 20.50 |
| 55 | \$.37   | 119 | 7.55   | 182 | 5.00  | 245 | 15.98 |
| 56 | 20.00   | 120 | 20.00  | 183 | 1.00  | 246 | 20.50 |
| 57 | 5.00    | 121 | 7.55   | 184 | 35.00 | 247 | 10.00 |
| 58 | 21.50   | 122 | 7.55   | 185 | 6.00  | 248 | 20.00 |
| 59 | 15.00   | 123 | 20.00  | 186 | 5.00  | 249 | 3.50  |
| 60 | \$.37   | 124 | 16.50  | 187 | 6.00  | 250 | 2.00  |
| 61 | 45.00   | 125 | 51.00  | 188 | 3.00  | 251 | 26.50 |
| 62 | 11.00   | 126 | 36.50  | 189 | 56.00 | 252 | 5.00  |
| 63 | 5.00    | 127 | 20.00  | 190 | 61.00 | 253 | 1.00  |
| 64 | 18.00   |     |        |     |       |     |       |



## MARK LLOYD DEES (1933-1996)

I have heard that Mark Dees was born in Portland, Oregon, in 1933. He was, however, a thoroughbred Southern Californian, with San Francisco Bay Area overtones, having spent his university years at Stanford. He was killed in a head-on road accident in the Santa Paula region of Ventura County, northwest of L.A., on December 23, 1996. He was 63.

I first met Mark during the Bonneville National Speed Trials in, I believe, 1955, making him then just 22 and me 38. He was winding up his stretch in law school and recovering from a car accident in which both of his lower legs had been shattered. That he was able to walk again was a miracle.

Mark had a very sensitive, richly cultivated mind, and cars were but one of his powerful interests. He had grown up with fine horses, and loved them. He loved good machinery and good cars, whether crafted in Northern Italy or in the best SoCal speed shops. He owned, built, and raced all manner of excellent iron.

When we met, I was well into my Miller trip and had zeroed in on the two front-drives that were decaying in Molsheim. Mark attached himself to that train and of course never got off. There was little communication between us after my move to Mediterranean Europe in '62 but he hand-delivered to me as I passed through L.A., the first copy out of the bindery of his *The Miller Dynasty*. It is nicely inscribed and dated 7 February 1982. I replied with glowing appreciation then, as I did upon receiving an early copy of the second edition, dated simply April 1994:

*"The Miller Dynasty is, more than ever, the bible in its field. It is a great monument to a great man and a great tradition. It is a great achievement in creative scholarship and a great landmark in the literature of the automobile and of American technology, as anyone must recognize. Well done!"*

- Griff Borgeson



October 1994 at the SAH Tent in Hershey (from left): Walter Robinson, Sinclair Powell, Kit Foster, and G. Marshall Naul. Photograph taken by Susan Robinson.

- photograph courtesy of Sinclair Powell

## WALTER F. ROBINSON, JR. (1917-1996)

*Walter "Frank" Robinson, Jr.*, SAH's sixth president, passed away on December 20th 1996 after a long illness. A resident of Bellevue, Washington, he was retired from the post of assistant attorney general for the State of Washington. A graduate of Reed College in Portland, Oregon, he earned his law degree at the University of Washington and spent his career in state government.

A member of SAH since 1970, Frank had served on the Board of Directors before his election as president in 1979. He later chaired the Writing Standards Committee and headed the Friend of Automotive History Award in 1991.

Frank's interests in history were particularly broad. In his most recent membership directory entry he admitted to a fondness for Marmon, Franklin, Chandler, Holmes, Cadillac, Pierce-Arrow, Haynes, Haynes-Apperson and Hotchkiss cars, but he would eagerly correspond with friends on topics as varied as Hudson, Pontiac, and Hispano-Suiza. Although schooled in the law, he read avidly on technological subjects, his interests involving such things as the automotive uses of aluminum and twin-cam engines. As befits his law background, he had an interest in automotive patents and patent law, and in yet another avenue he had a distinct fondness for cyclecars.

He is survived by his wife Susan Robinson, three daughters and one grandson. Sue writes that "Dorothy, Elizabeth, Peggy and I appreciate the many notes and cards that SAH members have sent him these past few months." *Griff Borgeson* best sums up the friend that many of us had in Frank: "He was a sweet, selfless person who, as many of us know, found fulfillment in giving of himself enormously to others."

- Kit Foster

## WILLIAM T. CAMERON (1904-1997)

*William T. Cameron*, long-time SAH member and former director, died January 4th, 1997 at Howard Young Medical Center in Woodruff, Wisconsin. Bill, who had lived in Minocqua, Wisconsin, for some years, was born in New Rochelle, New York, and grew up in Evanston, Illinois. He became an Eagle Scout on his sixteenth birthday, and later served as a Scoutmaster for many years.

Bill's early career concerned industrial safety equipment; before and during World War II he was a chief safety advisor for the US Department of Labor, his work setting the stage for what later became OSHA standards. Later he worked in industrial vision screening and lens design and manufacturing.

Although he had been enamored with cars from an early age, Bill's automotive interests took off after his retirement. He began restoring cars, and was completing a project every couple of years until he was in his nineties. Prominent in his collection was the namesake (though no relation) 1908 Cameron touring car. His experience with the car induced him

to study the history of the Cameron firm and its founder brothers Everett and Forrest Cameron. His book, *The Cameron Story*, which was the result of many years of research, was a Cugnot Award of Distinction winner in 1991. Another book, *The Best of Bill's Car Stories*, was published in 1993.

Bill edited several car club newsletters, noteworthy among them the *Crank Journal* of the Northern Lakes Region of AACA, for which he won AACA's Master Editor award on two occasions. In addition to serving on SAH's Board of Directors, he also headed the Wisconsin Chapter for a number of years and served on the board of the Minocqua Museum.

He is survived by a son, William S. Cameron, of Minocqua and a daughter, Suzanne Baker of Ware, Massachusetts. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Minocqua Museum, Minocqua, Wisconsin 54481 or to a charity of the donor's choice.

Bill Cameron is remembered by all who knew him as an eternally cheerful, energetic historian, and a clever raconteur. We will miss his friendship and keen wit.

- Kit Foster

## GIUSEPPE "NUCCIO" BERTONE (1914-1997)

Head of the great Torinese coachbuilding house of Bertone, the founder's son, Nuccio Bertone, died on February 25th, 1997, at the age of 83 after a period of failing health.

Nuccio was never a creative designer. His strength lay in knowing a good design when he saw one, and by extension, a good stylist when he found one. He was only a competent administrator but a first-class business politician, securing contracts for Bertone from the men who mattered in the auto industry, inside Italy and also beyond its borders.

Established in 1912 by Nuccio's father Giovanni, the company enjoyed some prominence in the Thirties but fell on hard times after the war. Nuccio took over in 1945 (his father lived in retirement until his death in 1972), but had some difficulty adjusting to the new realities of automaking and the coachbuilding craft.

Salvation came in the shape of S.H. "Wacky" Arnolt of Chicago, who placed firm orders for quantities of sports-car bodies on MG and Bristol chassis, beginning in 1952. In those days his chief designer was Franco Scaglione whose way-out streamliners on Alfa Romeo chassis (BAT-5, BAT-7 and BAT-9) opened new paths for a coming generation of designers.

Bertone maintained two separate and related activities, the supply of complete designs for production elsewhere, and series production of Bertone-designed cars for Italian and other auto makers.

Over a 13-year period, Bertone built over 40,000 Alfa Romeo Giulietta coupes, and in the same time span provided superlative styling concepts for NSU (Sport Prinz), Glas, Simca, Mazda and more. Giugiaro replaced Scaglione and designed the Fiat 850 Spider, Fiat Dino coupe and Bizzarrini GT Strada. Giugiaro also began the design for the



Lamborghini Miura, which was finished by Marcello Gandini. Gandini was in charge of Bertone styling for 14 years and is remembered for the Fiat X1/9 spider, Alfa Romeo Montreal, Maserati Khamsin and Lancia Stratos.

Nuccio was envious of Pininfarina's privileged styling contract with Peugeot, and finally secured a parallel relationship with Citroën, creating the BX body in 1982 and the XM body in 1988.

What will happen to Carrozzeria Bertone now that Nuccio is no more? He died without male offspring, but left two daughters, both of whom work for the company. Barbara is engaged on the production side and Marie-Jeanne, with an architect's diploma, works in styling. The family, headed by Nuccio's widow Lilly, says it will be "business as usual" under the continued management of Paolo Caccamo, chief executive.

The future will depend on their ability to attract the best stylists and develop industrial collaboration with the auto companies along lines clearly drawn up by Nuccio in his 60 years of activity.

- Jan P. Norbye

### WANTED:

**AUTOMOBILE  
LITERATURE**

**1900-1975**

**WALTER MILLER**

6710 Brooklawn Parkway  
Syracuse, NY 13211 U.S.A.

PHONE: 315-432-8282

FAX: 315-432-8256

I buy sales brochures, repair & owner's manuals, showroom items, artwork, models & toys, posters or any items pertaining to automobiles, trucks or motorcycles...I travel to purchase collections.

## AUTO HISTORY AT NAIAS

A new car show is probably the last place you'd expect to find materials of interest on automotive history. But at this year's North American International Auto Show press previews, an unusual number of press kits surfaced with items relating to the history of their marques.

The most impressive of these relates to Oldsmobile's 100th Anniversary. Contents include a poster showing a car for each year produced, and separate releases on Olds firsts, Olds's engineering heritage, a biography of Ransom E. Olds, a history of company logos, motorsport milestones, the Valiant project assisting disabled World War II veterans, Olds advertising over the years, and more. For further information, contact Mary Jo Ring (517)885-1750. Olds's display was enhanced by a replica of the Pirate, which established a land speed record for vehicles in its class in 1903.

Only half as old as Olds, Saab is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. The cover of its 1997 press kit features an embossed impression of its first car, the 92, and the kit contains a chronological outline of the company's history, and photos that include the Sonnett Super Sport of 1956, and Erik Carlsson at the wheel of a rallying 96. For further information on this and Saab's celebration planned for Sweden in June, contact Dan Prescott (770)279-6362. One of the first 92s, in the green that was the only color offered, adorned Saab's show display.

Although the firm was only founded in 1955, Lotus's press kit contains a 15-page handout with a detailed history of the company, factory information, and "notable innovations." On October 30, 1996, the Malaysian car manufacturer Proton obtained a controlling interest in Lotus, and the kit includes a financial summary of Proton as well. For further information, call Christopher A. Snyder (313)438-8017.

Saturn seems to have taken over marketing of the GM EV1 electric vehicle, and the press kit it put together for this vehicle contains a 2-pager titled "General Motors Electric Vehicle Historical Summary." This begins with GM's production of 682 electric trucks in 1912-16. Apparently the company lost interest after that, until 1964 when it showed a Corvair conversion, the Electrovair I. For further information contact Bob Tripolsky of Saturn Communications (810)528-6122.

As you may know, the second Peking to Paris rally will take place this year, from September 6 to October 18. This comes 90 years after the first race. Because a 1948 Special is entered (RHD no less), Buick has put together a press kit which includes a brief history of the 1907 race with glossy photos, a detailed itinerary of the new race, and a list of entrants. Apparently Edward Montagu intends to entrust his 1914 Vauxhall Prince Henry to the rigors of this voyage. Good God, my Lord! For further information, call Lawrence R. Gustin at (810)236-1418.

The astute may notice a minor error or two in the kits, but, as Dr. Johnson said comparing a woman preaching to a dog walking on its hind legs, the wonder is that it's done at all.

Other manufacturers simply chose to display notable vehicles from their own history -- the original 1948 Porsche, a 1938 Auto Union Silver Arrow (Audi), a 1946 Suburban (Chevrolet), and a 1960 Datsun 1200 sedan (Nissan). And if you tired of looking at Chrysler's 1997 concept dual cowl phaeton, you could visit three examples of the real thing on the floor below -- a 1931 Cadillac V16 Sport Phaeton, a 1931 Chrysler LeBaron dual cowl phaeton, and a 1934 Packard 12 LeBaron Sport Phaeton.

Yes, there was plenty for the student of automotive history at NAIAS.

- Taylor Vinson

## ANOTHER AMERICAN BRAND BITES THE DUST

In 1988, Chevrolet combined the Suzuki-built Sprint, Isuzu-built Spectrum and the Toyota/GM joint-venture Nova under a separate badge and told America to "Get to Know Geo." The Geo brand was designed to lure those people who would normally buy an import and bring them into the mostly domestic Chevrolet showroom.

The Chevrolet Sprint became the Suzuki Swift/Forsa-based Geo Metro. The Chevrolet Nova became the Toyota Corolla-based Geo Prizm. The Isuzu I-Mark/Gemini-based Chevrolet Spectrum became the Geo Spectrum for one year and was replaced by the Isuzu Impulse-based Storm. Suzuki rebadged its Sidekick/Vitara as the Tracker. These models and their replacements carried the Geo nameplate through nine model years. While some of these models were available in Canada as Chevrolets (Sprint and Tracker) and Pontiacs (Firefly, Sunburst and Sunrunner), more than one million of these Geo-badged vehicles were sold in the United States.

According to Chevrolet, the Geo brand has outlived its useful life. All remaining Geo models will revert to Chevrolet badging.

Geo follows the European Ford-based Merkur and the Isuzu-built Buick/Opel into the history books of uniquely American-badged cars.





## BEAULIEU AND BOURNEMOUTH SCHEDULE SECOND CONFERENCE

Buoyed by the success of their first conference on the history of motoring, Britain's National Motor Museum and Bournemouth University have set the date for a second event to be held in the autumn of 1997. The conference, to take place on October 11, 1997 at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hampshire, UK, will have the twin themes of "The Motor Vehicle and Leisure" and "Motor Vehicle Design and Manufacturing."

The closing date for submissions of papers was February 28th; correspondence in that regard should be directed to Professor *Bryan J.H. Brown*, School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University, Poole, BH12 5BB England, telephone +44 1202 595178, fax +44 1202 595255, email [bbrown@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:bbrown@bournemouth.ac.uk).

Requests for conference information or bookings for attendance at the event should also be sent to Professor Brown at the address above.

## SAH IN PARIS

That title doesn't have quite the ring of "April in Paris"; nonetheless 32 members and their guests gathered in Paris, France on February 6th for the second annual international dinner of the SAH. It was held to coincide with the annual *Rétromobile* salon and exhibit which would open the following morning at the Parc des Expositions in Paris's Porte de Versailles.

The event took place in the Bugatti Salon of the incomparable Automobile Club de France (ACF) headquarters at Place de la Concorde. It attracted a cosmopolitan mix from France, the US, the UK and Poland, including former SAH president *Taylor Vinson*, who acted as master of ceremonies, SAH vice president *Sinclair Powell*, and *Griffith Borgeson*, internationally-renowned author and historian who has lived in France for the past 30 years.

Like the first gathering in 1996, this one was arranged by *Laurent Friry*. On the following Monday, *Paul Berliet*, director of the Fondation de l'Automobile Marius Berliet, had made arrangements for members to tour the Fondation's vehicle collection at Le Montellier, near Lyon. The collection is the principal assemblage of French commercial vehicles in the world.

To be able to convene and dine at the ACF is a rare treat for non-members, and all those who came to Paris are grateful to the organizers for their efforts. The ACF is the oldest established automobile club in the world in the most beautiful club building imaginable, and is dripping with the history of the motorcar in its display cases which line the entrance hall.

Despite the prestigious setting, this is a very informal, low-key event with ceremonies kept to a bare minimum and no activities except for good conversation and bonhomie, renewing of old friendships and making of new ones, and useful exchanges of information about our favorite subject - all punctuated by splendid French cuisine and wines. It was one of the most pleasant automotive gatherings I have experienced and I hope that it continues into the 21st century.

- Dave Brownell

## EDWARD S. JORDAN: The Pioneer of American Auto Ads by Kevin P. Murphy

The automobile ads on television, radio and in our newspapers and magazines today sometimes resemble Hollywood extravaganzas. However, these ads are not entirely born out of Madison Avenue or these last years of the 20th Century. Throughout the early 20's into the early 30's, Ned Jordan wrote ads for American publications for his Jordan automobile that would make even today's advertising marketers envious.

The Jordan automobile was built in Cleveland, Ohio, throughout the 1920's and into 1932 when it fell victim to the great depression. The Jordan Playboy, Silhouette Five, Brougham, and Blue Boy were cars that played to a market from the wealthy to people seeking a sporty affordable auto that differed from the norm. The last Jordan, the Model Z Speedway Ace was a long sleek car that had its dashboard modeled after a fighter aircraft cockpit.

Ned Jordan's ads were paintings of his automobiles with descriptive prose creating a picture of happiness and excitement from his cars. One early ad extolling the Jordan Playboy stated that "What shall it profit a car to gain complete mechanical excellence if it must sulk under a drab and sombre body?" Another stated, "Some day in June when happy hours abound...life will truly slip its tether and the days will be full of promise that lies in gypsy eyes. Give a Jordan Playboy, the blue sky overhead, the green turf flying by and a thousand miles of open road." Other ads went on to paint vivid portraits of life in the American west and of the virtues of the Jordan. One ad titled the "Port of Missing Men" extolled the fact that the Jordan could get 24 miles per gallon. Other U.S. car makers didn't mention gas economy until the late 70's. Jordan's ads were vivid, colorful and poetic while other car makers ads were bland. Jordan was an American auto pioneer who understood that the automobile was not just a machine, but a growing aspect of American culture and imagination.

### A Million Miles from Dull Care (Jordan Motor Car Company advertisement)

*Somewhere far beyond the place where men and women and motors race through canyons of the town--somewhere on the top of the world--there is a peak which dull care has never climbed.*

*You can go there light-hearted in a Jordan Playboy--for it's always happy in the hills.*

*A car for a man's man--that's certain.*

*Or the girl who loves to take the open road with top down, in the summer time.*

*Lighter than any on the road, for its wheelbase, rare in beauty and supremely balanced, as a fine car must be--distinctive as only a car of personality can be--the Playboy is an apt companion for all Americans who dare never grow old.*



## DOING SOMETHING SPECIAL:

## REVIEW NO. 31 (SPRING 1997)

In the wake of *Automotive History Review* No. 30, "Duesenbergs in Europe", some of you have asked whether we have any more issues planned around a central theme. The answer is "No, but . . . ." The last issue didn't begin with the idea of dedicating it to a single topic, but it accreted material as we went along, until we reached the point that there was no room for anything else; indeed, No. 30 contained about half again as many pages as the usual *Review*. The "but" means that we're open to suggestions. So feel free. It also means that we're looking at articles already submitted or under consideration which treat related themes and could appear together as a cluster in an issue. For example, two of you have written about aviation engines of well known auto manufacturers. A third author has written about one of these engines used in a racing car. A fourth has written about the converse, an auto engine used in an airplane (and not for the first time). This cluster of related topics could appear in the same issue without necessarily filling it.

*Review* No. 31, however, returns to the eclecticism of yore, a variety which seems to please most readers. Ever an optimist, I'm calling it "Spring 1997" which means you should receive it in the second quarter of this year. We continue with *Grace Brigham's* acclaimed history of SAH and its times, the first two chapters of which appeared in *Review* No. 29 (Fall 1995). One of the rarer Knight-engined cars, the RAF of 1912-13, made in Bohemia, is the subject of an article by our member *Marian Šruman-Hrebaly* translated from German by our *Ferdy Hediger*. In commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the entry of the United States into World War I, you'll be reading about "The Cars of Kaiser Bill", a contribution by a Dutch historian, Frans Vrijaldenhoven.

Two articles treat postwar subjects. The first is by our man in Warsaw, *Robert Przybylski*, on "The Jelcz Truck and Bus of Poland," an informative article about a heavy vehicle manufacturer operating pursuant to the government's ideas of what seems best.

The second is a bit different from our usual fare. In the hoopla surrounding the centenary of the car in 1996, the significant half-century year of 1946 was all but forgotten, when the industry literally began anew around the world. In the U.S. in many ways it was the year of the dealer (about whom little has been written either), struggling to return to prewar normality amid a shortage of cars and a surplus of customers. Our nod to the first postwar year is "A Square Deal to All," a mood piece if you will. This was written by a small town Chevrolet dealer in Georgia in the spring of '46 as the four-month GM strike ended, on how he would prioritize his new car customers. It is prefaced with some background material on the prices and government regulations with which dealers had to contend in the "Brave New World." And, if space permits, there will be more.

- Taylor Vinson

## FIRST CROSS-CANADA AUTO TOUR

On August 27, 1912, a new Reo 5-passenger touring car dipped its wheels into the Atlantic, then left Halifax, Nova Scotia, to begin an epic automobile trip that would become the first ever auto trip across Canada, from sea to sea. The trip, instigated by an Englishman named Thomas Wilby and supported by various boards of trade, chambers of commerce, auto clubs, the Canadian Highway Association and even the Anglican Church of Canada, took some fifty-two days to complete.

The Reo Motor Car Co. of St. Catharines, Ontario, built the car and underwrote the cost of the car, driver and trip expenses. The Reo Co. driver, Jack Haney, was their top driver-mechanic. He and the car were sent to Halifax by railroad.

The Reo was driven over routes that consisted of everything from fair roads to trails and paths that were all but impassible; over railroad ties and open land with barely a trace to follow. On several occasions, there was no possibility of passage without resorting to boat or rail transport. In one roadless area where no alternate transportation system was available, the trip was forced onto U.S. roads for eighty miles.

On October 18th, the Reo front wheels rolled into the Pacific Ocean near Victoria, British Columbia, and with a ceremonial pouring of a flask of Atlantic water into the Pacific that event-filled trip was over.

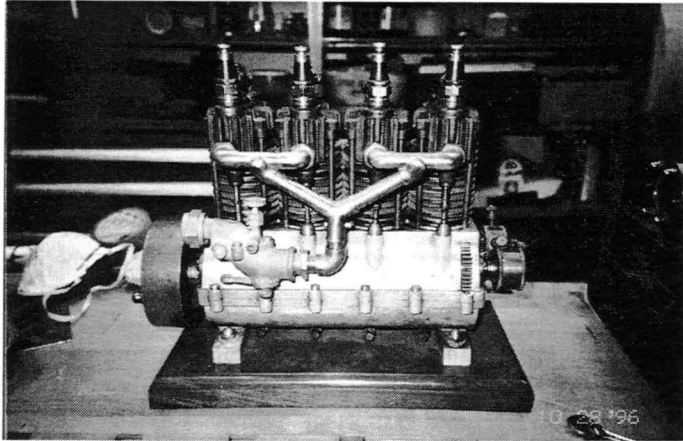
As a transportation historian of sorts, I have for many years been interested in this important part of Canadian transportation history and have collected quite an amount of related material, photographs and newspaper articles. In 1980, I acquired a 1912 Reo touring car; the same model as the one used on the original trip. Seventy years after the first trip, I redrove, in the Reo, the day of the trip from Chilliwack, British Columbia to Vancouver, accompanied by Chuck Davis of the *Vancouver Province* newspaper. At Expo 86 and again in 1996 at Expofest 96, I displayed my Reo as the original had been photographed in Vancouver on October 14th, 1912, complete with pennants from various centers visited en route.

I am laying plans to repeat the entire 1912 trip in my Reo in 1997, using as close to the same routes on the same dates as I can manage. I will trailer the car to Halifax in August in time to dip the wheels in the Atlantic and start the trip on the 27th, dipping them again in the Pacific at Victoria on October 18th as did the Haney-Wilby trip.

- John Lorne Findlay

## HOOSIERS PUBLISH HAPPENINGS

The Society's Hoosier Heritage Chapter has launched a newsletter, *Hoosier Heritage Happenings*; the first issue, dated February 1997, was published recently. In addition to news of the Chapter and the activities of its members, the initial *Happenings* contains an account of the SAH/Henry Ford Museum automotive history conference held in September 1996 and an article on the Indiana-built Cord 810. Editor of *Hoosier Heritage Happenings* is *Bob Barnard*; news and items may be sent to him at 3207 East State Road 44, Liberty, IN 47353.

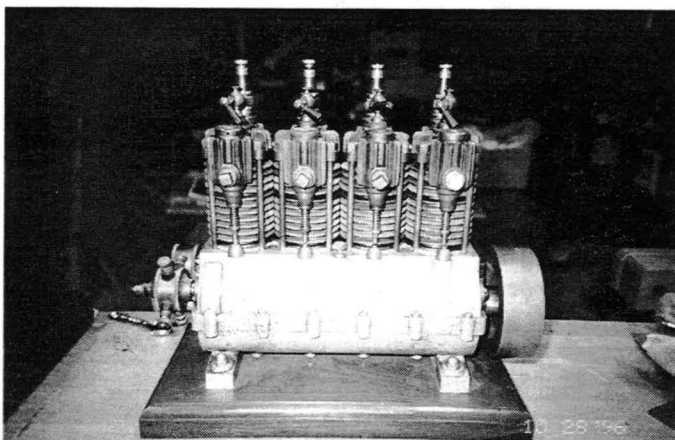


## MYSTERY ENGINE

This engine belongs to a friend of *Jim Cox* and *Beverly Rae Kimes* who purchased it in Massachusetts from a man who said that he picked it up in a flea market in New York state. The buyer was hoping that someone might know what the engine was, but nobody has a clue.

The engine is a four-cylinder "T" head engine with two gear-driven camshafts. It measures 16 1/2 inches long, 12 1/2 inches high, and 6 inches wide. The flywheel is 4 3/4 inches in diameter and 1 1/2 inches thick. Interior dimensions include a tiny 1 11/16 inch bore and 1 5/8 inch stroke. The interior of the engine is beautifully machined and hand finished. A pin in the flywheel pulls out for hand cranking.

Does anyone know anything about this engine. The owner would like to know who made it, when and what was it built for? Any information on this engine can be forwarded to the *SAH Journal* or directly to *Jim* and *Bev* at 215 East 80th Street, New York, New York 10021.



## IT HAPPENED YEARS AGO...

*One hundred and forty-five years ago...*

March 1852 - Henry and Clem Studebaker built their first horse-drawn wagon.

*One hundred years ago...*

March 27, 1897 - Electric Hansom cab service was introduced to New York City's Fifth Avenue. After only four months of service, twelve cabs logged 14,459 miles and 4,765 passengers. The cabs were built by the Electric Carriage and Wagon Company of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

*Ninety-five years ago...*

March 1902 - The first Horch car was produced.

March 4, 1902 - Regional automobile clubs joined forces to become the Chicago-based American Automobile Association (AAA). Frank G. Webb, treasurer of the Long Island Automobile Club, proposed the idea of a national car club back in November.

*Seventy-five years ago...*

March 30, 1922 - W.B. Knudsen became the president of Chevrolet Motor Company.

*Seventy years ago...*

March 1927 - Cadillac introduced the LaSalle brand of automobiles.

March 29, 1927 - Major H.O.D. Seagrave set a land speed record of over 200mph.

*Sixty-five years ago...*

March 9, 1932 - Ford produced its first V8 engine.

*Sixty years ago...*

April 1, 1937 - Ford Design Vice President, Jack Telnack was born.

*Fifty-five years ago...*

March 2, 1942 - Automobile rationing began.

March 3, 1942 - Civilian truck production stopped.

March 14, 1942 - A national speed limit of 40mph was set to save tires.

*Fifty years ago...*

April 7, 1947 - Henry Ford died in Dearborn, Michigan.

*Thirty years ago...*

April 21, 1967 - General Motors built its 100 millionth vehicle in the United States.

*Twenty years ago...*

April 15, 1977 - Detroit's Renaissance Center was dedicated by Henry Ford II.

*Ten years ago...*

March 17, 1987 - Subaru and Isuzu teamed up to build vehicles in Lafayette, Indiana.

April 1987 - Chrysler Corporation purchased Renault's 46.1% share of American Motors Corporation.

April 1987 - Chrysler Corporation purchased Lamborghini.

*Five years ago...*

April 14, 1992 - Ford and Nissan built their first North American joint-venture vehicle in Lorain, Ohio, a Mercury Villager minivan.

April 29, 1992 - Chrysler, along with Steyr-Daimler-Puch, set up Eurostar to produce Chrysler products for the European market. The first product were the Chrysler Voyager and Grand Voyager, EC versions of the popular American market minivans.



With General Motors and Honda bringing the electric car back to "volume" production, we cannot forget the early years of this market. This is a 1904 Columbia Electric.

- photograph taken by Elliot Kahn, March 8, 1997

## MY SAH CORRESPONDENCE

Since becoming the editor of the *SAH Journal*, I've received mail from dozens of members of the Society. None so interesting as one gentleman from Florida.

*Elliot Kahn* has sent me comments, compliments and criticism about each and every issue since May of 1995. Most of the time, he is right about my errors. I do not correct them enough in these pages and I should.

One point I would like to mention is that the *Journal* does not cover the field of truck in the depth that it deserves. One of the few articles to appear in the *Journal* was based on information from the *Wall Street Journal* about class eight truck sales. It has a few errors, as did the piece on which it was based. The term "Class Eight" includes more vehicles than were mentioned in the article and this inference led the reader to believe otherwise.

*Elliot* writes about once a month. About every other letter comes with photographs that he has taken around his home state. I don't know how one person can spot so many rare models and off-brands. He has seen, in the past two years alone, more interesting brands of cars and trucks than I have seen in my thirty years on this planet. I've always wanted to find a forum for these photos and here it is. Hope you find them as interesting as I have.

- Sam Fiorani



This 1981 Freeway was powered by a 3 cylinder 2-stroke air-cooled engine. Only one passenger could be carried by this little three wheeler.

- photograph taken by Elliot Kahn, March 8, 1997



*Offenhauser* by Gordon Eliot White, 1996. Hardcover, 200 pages and 280 photos, 10"x10". ISBN 0-87938-883-8. Published by Motorbooks International, \$39.95, plus 4.95 shipping and handling.

The dust jacket features an excellent artistic rendering of Andy Dunlop, chief mechanic, and Pete Salemi, car owner, working on the Central Excavating Special in pit lane at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. It also features the book title, *Offenhauser*. These eye catching elements literally shout at you to pick it up and let it familiarize you with a thoroughly definitive writing style detailing the life of the premier racing engine synonymous with the history of American auto racing. This book offers the memorable opportunity to meet and understand the drive behind the builder, Fred Offenhauser.

Chris Economaki, editor of National Speed Sport News, sets the scene with his thought provoking "Forward" which reads in part, "as you read the pages of this book which detail the painstaking development of the Offenhauser engine by some of motorsport's brightest minds over 48 long years, let the sounds described here wander through your mind."

The name Offenhauser, more familiarly known as "Offy," was the auto racing engine of the era from 1933 through the early 1980's. The author enumerates the fascinating fifty-odd year history of the engine, the men responsible for its uncanny performance and how the sport of auto racing succeeded because the Offy, with its built-in reliability, was relatively inexpensive to own and race until the rulemakers of the auto racing sanctioning bodies effectively dealt the destructive revisions governing racing engine sizes. Alas, the Offy was eliminated from competition.

Journey back to the immediate post-WW II period and follow the Offy's superior performance. Recall the unique and distinct deep throated roar of the racing cars competing in the thrill-packed events staged at Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Springfield, DuQuoin, Syracuse, Langhorne, and the very fast sprint car races at Williams Grove, Reading, Winchester, Dayton, Salem, and the exciting mighty midgets competing wherever there was an outdoor or indoor track.

Engine size was directed by the rules for each of various divisions of racing and the Offy dominated the power plant for the majority of the cars comprising the starting field resulting in closely contested wheel-to-wheel racing. With the Offy commonly used to power the racing cars in each of the various divisions of racing, the fans enjoyed a level playing field. The outstanding abilities of the mechanics and their endless quest



for speed, combined with the daring and varied driving talents of each of the drivers, the engineered handling qualities of the chassis and on-going development of the special racing tires, and reliability, were usually the elements that determined which Offy powered car won the race.

*Offenhauser* contains a listing of most of the wins for the engine, a table of original purchasers, along with serial numbers of the engines built from 1947 through 1965. Also included are rare historic and modern black and white photos, easily understood drawings, performance dyno charts plus eight pages of color photos. Everything is nicely explained and the reader acquires a significant insight into the total development of the Offy by engine designers/builders Miller, Offenhauser and Meyer-Drake and their efforts to produce a power plant capable of making the sport of professional auto racing a competitive business with devoted fans throughout the world.

- Jack L. Martin

*Laurin & Klement - Škoda. 1895-1995* by Petr Kozisek and Jan Kralik, 1995. Hardcover, available in English, 2 volumes. 12.5"x8.5". ISBN (Volume 1) 80-901749-2-2 and (Volume 2) 80-901749-4-9. Published by Motorpress Prague in cooperation with Milpo. Available through Bryan K. Goodman, 8 Pilgrims Way, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9LG, England. \$65 post paid.

These two new books were presumably commissioned by Volkswagen, who having acquired Škoda in 1991, wanted to give the company provenance back to 1895. But then I suppose BMW could say they have been making cars in coventry/Solihull since 1904 even though their first car, the Dixi, was a predecessor of their newly acquired Rover Metro made under license.

These two coffee-table quality books were written by Petr Kozisek, automobile curator of the National Technical Museum in Prague, and Jan Kralik, author and curator of bicycles at the same museum.

Part I traces the history of Laurin & Klement from its first bicycles, motorcycles and tricycles from 1899 and cars from 1905. By 1925 Laurin & Klement were short of capital and lacking a new car. Škoda was already a European industrial giant. Its automobile division had been formed just before the war and its early twenties' vehicles included the Škoda-Hispano-Suiza which was the 6.594cc model made under license and usually with Czech coachwork, the Sentinel Steamer and Tilling-Stevens petrol-electric lorries were also made under license. Laurin & Klement was merged with Škoda in 1925 and the second book charts the Škoda story through to 1995. Profusely illustrated and easy to read there are occasional quaint phrases such as "the destitute state of the road surface" when writing of a 1921 race. In Part II, "the main road became the axle of the new factory" completed in 1964 and the Russian domination post-war is described in fascinating detail including a summarizing of the position in 1982. "After such a debacle, even party secretaries concluded what had been obvious for years: a new automobile had to be built."

The last third (approximately) of each book gives a technical listing of all models with many more illustrations. The enthusiast of coachwork will be fascinated at some of the Czech styles.

These books deserve a place in any motoring library. They are not expensive. The text and presentation are worthy of much more prestigious marques.

- Bryan K. Goodman

*The GM Motorama: Dream Cars of the Fifties* by Bruce Berghoff, 1995. Softcover, 136 pages, 200+ color and black & white photographs, 8 1/4 x 10 1/2 ins. ISBN 0-7603-0053-4. Published and distributed by Motorbooks International, 729 Prospect Avenue, P.O. Box 1, Osceola, WI 54020. (800)826-6600. \$19.95.

For many auto enthusiasts, the glamorous and elaborate GM Motoramas of the 1950s and early 1960s have attained a larger-than-life status that grows ever stronger as the years go by. From the Broadway-level dance productions to the futuristic displays and, of course, the one-off dream cars, the Motoramas set a standard for innovation and extravagance that has never been equaled in any other car show.

The Motoramas evolved from the annual "Industrialist's Luncheons," which were held at New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in the 1930s and '40s. When the 1953 Motorama opened in New York, a new era had begun. Auto show and show business were melded into one shining spectacle that was greater than the sum of its parts.

By the time that the last Motorama show closed in 1961, more than 10 million people had attended these spectacular shows. They introduced such dream cars as the GM Firebird gas turbine cars, the Buick Wildcats, the 1955 La Salle IIs and the 1956 Pontiac Club de Mer.

The passage of time has made the Motorama mystique stronger than ever, and the quest for more new information on the topic continues to grow. With the release of *The GM Motorama: Dream Cars of the Fifties*, author Bruce Berghoff has seemingly accomplished the impossible, compiling an incredible amount of "new" information and never-before-seen photography for an eager audience. This feat is even more impressive when one considers the passage of time and the vast number of previous research efforts on the topic.

The reason that Berghoff was able to bring so much to the table was his first-hand experience with the Motorama. The firm he worked for, the H.B. Stubbs Company, was contracted by GM to transport and set up the shows at each location. Berghoff was in charge of the huge task from 1955 until the last show closed in 1961.

Even then, Berghoff knew he was in the middle of something very special and recorded much of what went on during the setups, in both written and photographed form. This foresight, combined with a very conversational and frequently humorous writing style, have produced a truly unique and close-up look at what really happened behind the scenes at the GM Motoramas. The Motoramas were as much a part of show business as any Hollywood big-screen attraction, and this central theme flows throughout the book.



Berghoff also profiles some of the more prominent personalities in the "Dream Car Cult," those who still research and write about these long-obsolete cars of tomorrow. Those personalities profiled include photographer Skye Van Dwyne, automotive industry consultant Tony Ciminera, computer artist Bob Eng, and SAH members *John Gunnell* and *Bill Warner*.

If you have any interest in the GM Motoramas, dream cars or even cars of the 1950s, this book is a must-have. Even if this is not a topic that you have been interested in before, one flip through the book could quickly change that forever.

- Don Keefe



## What Ever Happened To...

In response to your Editorial Comment in *SAH Journal* No. 166, I contacted Nick Butler who founded the Gold Motor Co., Ltd.

I have known Nick for a number of years and he is still carrying out his business of building and modifying cars to customers' requirements.

Nick told me that it took him 13 years to build the Cirrus—a totally unique two seat, mid-engined, four-wheel drive Targa top sports car—but despite rave reviews in various motoring journals he found it almost impossible to get the car into production. Nick says he now realizes you need three things to be successful: "Marketing, product and an established name." And, although he was confident of the car's quality and potential, he wasn't able to provide the wherewithal to get things under way.

Consequently, Nick sold the Gold Motor Co. to a Mark Halladay about 4 years ago. At the time, Mr. Halladay was in an acquisitive mood, buying several other similar UK companies (kit car manufacturer Dutton and the Ford Model A moulds from Yorkshire Street Rods being mentioned). Since then, Mr. Halladay has apparently fallen out with his partner(s) and the whole project is tied up in legal proceedings.

Nick Butler would still like to see the Cirrus get into production, and says if there are any backers with the necessary finance available, he would love to hear from them. In the meantime, it seems the car is very much 'on the back burner.'

Hope this helps fill a small gap in automotive history. **Tony Beadle, 30, Fore Street, Eastcote, Middlesex HA5 2HY, England.**

### A Double Coincidence

With the passing of *Bill Cameron*, I feel impelled to share with SAH members a curious double-coincidence which became apparent at our first meeting. This was in 1980, by which time I

had been living in Menands, New York, for a year. I knew Bill through some of his writings, but had never met him. I only wish I'd known him longer!

That summer, he called me on the phone from Albany, and asked if he could stop by. I said it would be my pleasure. He knew of me, he said, through my articles and book reviews, and wanted to stop in.

Menands is a small village which connects Albany and Watervliet, and it is easy, if the traffic lights are all green, to drive straight through in about two minutes without breaking the speed limit. The only problem, thought I, is that Menands doesn't appear on most road maps, so I went into some detail to tell him how to find me.

"Is the old Jermain house still there?" asked Bill, and this came as a surprise. I allowed as how it was indeed still there, just across Menands' main drag from the entrance to my apartment complex.

"I'll be there in about fifteen minutes," he replied. He made it in thirteen! We talked automotive history, went out for dinner, and returned to the apartment to resume our conversation. He spent the night on my rollaway bed.

I asked him how he had heard of Menands. "I once lived in the Jermain house, some years ago," he replied, when I was doing some work for the state, in Albany, for perhaps a year. Then I went to a tiny place in Connecticut called Pomfret."

I could hardly believe it, because my wife and I had also moved from this area to Pomfret in the 1970s, where we were on the staff of the Pomfret School. It turned out that Bill and I had several mutual friends and acquaintances in both places.

I saw him that October at the SAH dinner at Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, and we kept up a close personal friendship by mail and phone. He also stopped overnight twice afterward.

### WHICH ISSUES OF THE SAH Journal ARE YOU MISSING?

### MISSING ANY ISSUES OF Automotive History Review IN YOUR COLLECTION?

Most back-issues of the Society of Automotive Historians' newsletter, including the *SAH Newsletter* and the *SAH Journal*, and the *Automotive History Review* magazine are available for sale.

For complete availability contact:

**Fred Roe  
837 Winter  
Holliston, MA 01746**

Bill Cameron was an amazing person. An automotive historian, author of two books, owner and connoisseur of fine automobiles, and active in SAH, he was one of the finest gentlemen I've ever met. We talked several times about the double-coincidence which had existed between us.

Bill has left us, and I shall miss him sorely. I know I'm not alone. **Keith Marvin, Apt. A-13, The Village One Apartments, 587 Broadway, Menands, NY 12204**

## Porsche Corrections

From reading *John Dugdale's* review of BIOS Report No. 1755, I was shocked to see that the reissued copy will set you back \$60. I paid one pound and five shillings (approx. \$5 in 1948) for my first-edition copy.

I hate to carp over trifles, but when *John Dugdale* writes, "poor old Porsche went to Renault to advise on a rear-engined car but was imprisoned by the dastardly communist element there in 1947," I feel I have to speak up.

The facts are:

1) Dr. Porsche was arrested and incarcerated at Baden-Baden in the French occupation zone on December 15th, 1945, by civil servants of the French ministry of justice, armed with a warrant for his arrest signed by the justice minister, Pierre-Henri Teitgen.

2) They didn't do it because they were communists (where they stood politically is not known and not relevant), but because of Dr. Porsche's prosecution resting not on his position as Panzer Commissioner from 1940 to 1943, and thus head of all combat vehicle engineering for the Third Reich, but on a vague accusation that he had been instrumental in the deportation of Peugeot production workers to the Volkswagen plant at Wolfsburg.

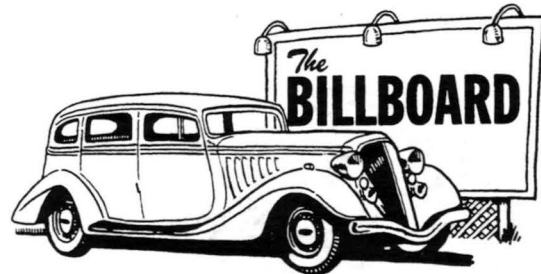
3) On May 2nd, 1946, Dr. Porsche was transferred to house arrest in the Paris area, housed in a villa not far from the Renault plant at Billancourt. Here he was interviewed by executives and engineers of the Regie Nationale des Usines Renault. What little we know about the advice he gave them boils down to his declaration that the Billancourt plant did not seem well suited for mass production of a small car.

As for his influence on the design of the Renault 4CV, I submit that it was absolutely nil (though it is true that Louis Renault started the 4CV project after having seen the Volkswagen at the Berlin Motor Show in February, 1939). Anyway, the 4CV was assembled in a brand-new factory at Flins, a little way downstream on the Seine.

4) On February 17th, 1947, Dr. Porsche was transferred to the Meudon prison for a brief stay before being taken to a prison cell at Reims to await trial.

5) The trial never took place. Dr. Porsche was liberated on August 1st, 1947, and joined his son at Gmünd in Austria. His son Ferry paid the French authorities a ransom of one million French Francs, reducing them to the role of kidnapers rather than juridical sages.

It was arranged by a long chain of meetings and communications, involving Piero Dusio, who was building the Cisitalia Grand Prix car to Ferry Porsche's design, with help from Porsche's resident engineer in Italy, Rudolf Hruska. Dusio and Hruska laid their plans in consultation with Tazio Nuvolari and Count Lurani, who enlisted the support of Louis Chiron. Chiron was friendly with Charles Faroux, who at that time had some political clout in Paris and could open doors at ministerial level. **Jan P. Norbye, F-83380 Les Issambres, France.**



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**POSITION AVAILABLE:** The *SAH Journal* is looking for someone to pursue and acquire advertisers for the newsletter. Opening currently available and applications are being taken immediately. Contact the editor or **Kit Foster, 1102 Long Cove Road, Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812. Phone: (860)464-6466. Fax: (860)464-2614.**

**ARTICLES NEEDED:** Submissions to the *SAH Journal* would be greatly appreciated from members of the Society of Automotive Historians. Any automotive short subject will be accepted. *SAH Journal*, P.O. 7073, St. Davids, PA 19087-7073. Fax: (610)277-2505. Email: [SAHJournal@aol.com](mailto:SAHJournal@aol.com).

**WANTED:** Copies of, or information on how to find copies of, the auto-show edition of the French magazine *L'ILLUSTRATION*, from the years 1949-1953. **Michael MacSems, 1716 Giles NW, Olympia WA 98502, USA, Micalcedar@aol.com**

**WANTED:** "Vanderbilt Cup, Long Island Motor Parkway" and other pre-1917 auto racing historical material. All responses answered. **George Spruce, 33 Washington Street, Sayville, NY 11782. Phone: (516)563-4211.**

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**WANTED:** Original or video copy of the 1946 Packard film "Men Bet Their Lives On It." Photo of the engine of one of the 1923 Packard Indianapolis 500 cars and of the engine of Russ Snowberger's Packard-powered 1937 Indianapolis 500 car. Anything on Packard marine, aero or industrial engines. **Robert Neal, 25403 144th Avenue, SE, Kent, WA 980042. Phone/fax: (206)6331-2912.**

**WANTED:** Information on serial/engine numbers of Canadian-built Ford cars and trucks 1932-34. I am particularly interested in four-cylinder vehicles. **Emmanuel Bogiatzis, 3 Pambula Street, Kaleen, ACT 2617 Australia.**

**WANTED:** *Corvette News* Volume 1, 2-2, 4-1, 5-1, 5-4, 5-5, 6-2, 6-3, 6-5 and 7-4; also wanted information on 1959 Ariel Square Four serial and production numbers and any method of tracking what and where such were sent on import into U.S. **Loren Lundberg, 15257 N. 52nd Lane, Glendale, AZ 85306. Phone: (602)938-5942. Fax: (602)547-2253. Email: lundberg@gesd.k12.az.us**

**WANTED:** Winton automobile, bicycle and diesel literature, postcards, letters, factory magazines *The Auto Era*, ephemera, photos, miscellaneous memorabilia. Anything Winton. **Bernie Golias, P.O. Box 392, Twinsburg, OH 44087 (216) 425-4744 fax (216)425-4840.**

**WANTED:** Any information regarding John W. Oehrli (1902-1965) B.S. Syracuse Univ., 1924; 1923-24? toolmaker at Franklin Motor Car Co.; 1925-1932 Lycoming (various increasingly responsible positions); 1932-35 extended illness; 1935-1937 Lycoming; 1937-1939 John Deere Waterloo Tractor Works; 1939-1941 Lycoming; 1941 Ass't Prof. State College of Penn. (now Penn State); 1947?-19??; visiting Prof. Claremont Colleges (CA) and Salsbury Motor Scooter Co.; 19??-1965 McCulloch Corporation. **Darwyn Lumley, 1225 Naples Ave., Placentia, CA 92870. Phone: (714)524-3119. Fax: (714)961-8140. Email: LitFaire@AOL.COM**

**WANTED:** Any literature, ephemera, maps, route guides, photos, postcards, memorabilia and souvenirs of the Lincoln and Dixie Highways. Especially interested in any material on the collaboration of the Boy Scouts of America and the Lincoln Highway Association in the marking of the highway on September 1, 1928; and on the Henry Joy monument at the Continental Divide in Wyoming erected 1938. I am a researcher with the new Lincoln Highway Association currently studying the marking of the Lincoln Highway and its final route 1928-1930. I have an extensive collection of roadside Americana (postcards, maps, etc.) to trade. **Russell S. Rein, 522 Maulbetsch St., Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Phone: (313)434-2968 evenings. Email: Ypsi-Slim@JUNO.COM**



One of the most interesting ways to haul your golf clubs around. This 1996 Golden Classics is based on the chassis of an E-Z-Go gasoline-powered golf cart. The fiberglass body has been formed to look like the Raymond Lowey-designed 1950 Studebaker Champion.

- photograph taken by Elliott Kahn, February 20, 1997



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*Although this looks like it could be thirty or forty years old, this is from a press release issued by Autokam, Ltd. of Scottsdale, Arizona. According to the newspaper clipping that accompanied the brochure, the Russian-designed, Chinese-built GangStar was planned for sale in the United States beginning January 1996 and more than 10,000 vehicles a year were expected to be sold starting around \$10,000 each. The vehicle is built by the Beijing United Automobile-Motorcycle Manufacturing Corp. and sold only in China.*

*-from the editor's collection*