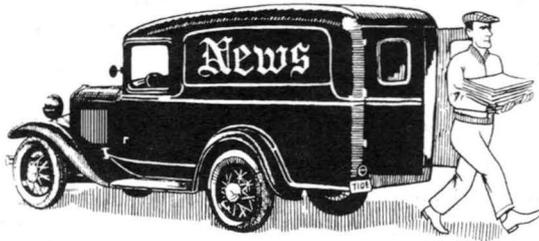


# SAH JOURNAL

The Newsletter of the Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

March-April 1999

Issue Number 179



## DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS

Chairpersons of the 1999 SAH award committees would like to have all nominations in their possession by April 30, 1999. Please check the last issue for addresses and committee chairpersons for the Cugnot, Benz, Brigham, Ingersoll, and Friend of Automotive History awards.

## FORD BUYS A VOLVO

After months of speculation, the Ford Motor Company purchased the automobile division of AB Volvo. The world's second-largest automaker bid on the Swedish company in January. Stockholders of AB Volvo approved the \$6.45 billion sale on March 8.

Volvo carved a niche as the world's largest independent automaker. The company's trademark grille has been on the front of Volvo automobiles for eight decades.

As part of the purchase, Ford will be able to sell Volvo cars and light trucks while AB Volvo retains the rights to use the badges for heavy-duty trucks.

## NOMINATIONS ARE IN ORDER

It is not too early to be considering nominations for officers and directors to be elected to serve terms beginning in 2000. Officers are elected for two-year terms, which means that the terms of our present slate expire this year. There will be openings as some of the present officers have indicated that they will not be candidates for re-election. Additionally, we elect three members every year to serve three-year terms as directors. I believe that these three positions will be open, as our present incumbents have indicated that they will not be able to run for another term.

Any member in good standing who wishes to become a candidate for any position is welcome to inform the nominating committee, and the sooner the better as we have only until about the first of July to finalize a slate. The by-laws

provide also that a member may submit the name of another, provided that the nominee so named gives his/her permission and that the petition is signed by ten members in good standing.

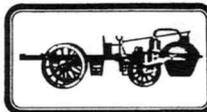
As provided by the by-laws, President *Sinclair Powell* has designated a member to be chairman of the committee and two members have been chosen by him to fill out the required positions. President Powell is also a member ex-officio. Any suggestions or commitments may be made to the members of the nominating committee as listed below in the near future. We are already making contact with prospective and previous candidates but this is a widespread and diverse organization and input from the membership is important and welcome.

**Fred Roe, Chairman, 837 Winter St., Holliston, MA 01746-1159**  
**Kit Foster, 1102 Long Cove Rd., Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812.**  
**Taylor Vinson, 1314 Trinity Drive, Alexandria, VA 22314-4726**  
**Sinclair Powell, 8 Ruthven Place, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2612**

Fax or email addresses for some of us may be found in your membership directory.

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THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

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## PAST EDITORS

	Issues	Dates
Richard B. Brigham	1-29	September 1969-(undated) 1973
G. Marshall Naul	30-50	July 1973-December 1976
John Peckham	51-59	Feb 1977-July 1978
Walter Gosden	60-87	Nov 1978-Dec 1983
Richard B. Brigham	88-117	Jan/Feb 1983-Nov/Dec 1988
Kit Foster	118-157	Jan/Feb 1989-July/Aug 1995

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR SAH

Our esteemed president, *Sinclair Powell*, broke the story last month of the Society of Automotive Historian's latest milestone. We're thirty!

Well, actually I can't name one of us who is thirty, but the Society marks the completion of its third decade this summer. Hopefully many people will hear this fact this year...many of whom had never heard of this group before. In all the excitement (I can barely contain myself), we may even get a few new members!

But in the meantime, life goes on and the *SAH Journal* continues to be produced. As I write this editorial, one issue of the *Journal* is at the printer's, one is on my computer screen, and one is on my hard drive. That third *Journal* is the one I want to discuss.

Early issues of the *Newsletter* were sporadically produced. An issue would come out as the editor had gathered enough information to fill it. The first ten issues were monthly. Ten issues were produced in 1970; eight in 1971; five each in 1972, 1973, and 1974. This somewhat sporadic production continued with as few as four in 1978. Since the January-February 1982 issue (No. 76) of *The Journal* (successor to the *Newsletter* and predecessor to the *SAH Journal*), this publication has been bi-monthly.

I elaborate on this because the irregular publication schedule has, somehow, allowed the issue numbers to denote (almost to the month) the age of the organization. The first issue was dated September 1969, and the editor stated that the Society needed members because "it has none at all." The second issue elaborates on the official organizational meeting of the Society on October 11, 1969.

While the Society will celebrate its birthday at the annual banquet in October, the *SAH Journal* will celebrate this anniversary with the 181st issue (dividing 180 by 6 annual issues would give you thirty years). This will mark the beginning of SAH's fourth decade of publication.

As a celebration, the *Journal* will have a theme. Submissions pertaining to the history of Cugnot and the other early pioneers will be greatly appreciated. A backbone for this issue is in place, so please contact the editor before embarking on a new project in order not to duplicate articles.

As always, everyone—young and old, from founding members to recently added members—are encouraged to participate. If this issue fills up, there's always No. 182 or No. 183 or...

Please keep your contributions coming. Putting together the *Journal* is a time-consuming project. I try to incorporate all of the criticisms offered in order to make the next issue better. I have a huge legacy to follow. Since taking over the reigns as editor three and a half years ago, I have felt the weight of those who have come before me. It is for this reason they have been added to the masthead. It is because of them, the *Journal* has been great for thirty years.

- Sam Fiorani

A trip to Paris in early February of each year in order to attend the annual SAH European dinner is fast becoming a tradition for a number of us. The 1999 dinner, held at the Automobile Club of France on February 11, was another very pleasant event. By general agreement the meal was found to be excellent, and the camaraderie outstanding. The twenty-four persons attending clearly enjoyed all aspects of the function. Our thanks are extended to *Taylor Vinson* and *Laurent Friry* for their fine work in organizing this event.

A few days later a new activity was added to the overseas program. At 8am on Monday, February 15, some nine of us gathered at the Gare de Lyon Station in Paris in Paris, to board the TGV (the French Railway System's super fast train) for a 200-plus mile trip to Lyon. It was exciting experiencing speeds en route which ranged up to 185 miles per hour! On our arrival we were transported to the Villa Berliet, headquarters of the Berliet Foundation and once the home in which our host, *Paul Berliet* (son of the founder of the Berliet firm), spent his childhood. While many features of the building were of interest, several of us found that the extensive Berliet archives in the basement and sub-basement deserved our close attention. In one flat file, we were shown the original scale drawings of the first vehicle produced by the Berliet Company. Other files contained extensive collections of the business records of the firm. Those of us who have spent long periods of time and endured endless frustrations seeking records of early automobile companies could only look with envy at those items which any automotive historians would have given his eye teeth to examine.

Following lunch at the Ostellerie de Vieux Perouges in the ancient village of Perouges, our group toured the collection of trucks and cars at the Berliet Foundation Vehicle Conservatory. Again, all of us found the vehicles on display—ranging from tiny early motorcars to huge trucks built for use in the Sahara Desert—of decided interest.

The lengthy but intensely interesting day ended with our arrival back in Paris about 10pm. Your president wishes to extend his thanks to Paul Berliet, Mme. Monique Chapelle and other persons on the Foundation staff for making possible this extensive tour.

While the west coast of America may have felt neglected in past years in terms of SAH activities, this is no longer the case. The very recent board meeting of our Society was held on March 19 and 20, at the Peterson Museum in Los Angeles. This facility will be very much in the limelight a year hence, when the third biennial Automotive History Conference is scheduled to be held in Los Angeles. This conference will again be sponsored by our Society and the National Association of Automotive Museums, with the Peterson Museum serving as host. The SAH Southern California Chapter has volunteered to assist extensively with the local arrangements, including tours. The spring board meeting of SAH in the year 2000 will be held at the same time and location as the conference.

All of us were delighted recently to learn from our Silent Auction Chair, *Jim Schild* (also the Society's vice president), that the anticipated proceeds from the 1998 auction will be several thousand dollars greater than is normally the case. The increase is due to generous donations by several SAH members of items sold in the auction (these individuals deserve our sincere thanks). Since the income from membership dues during the past two fiscal years has

been well below \$20,000 annually, the Society could not possibly carry on its present program of publications, history conferences, etc., without the supplemental income produced by the Silent Auction. Again, we must express our appreciation to Jim Schild and the donors of auction materials.

Our total membership continues to hold up well, but we are subject to the usual attrition from non-renewals, deaths of members, etc. All SAH members are urged, therefore, to continue to seek new members from the ranks of friends and acquaintances who have an interest in the history of the motor car.

Best wishes to all.

- Sinclair Powell

## ADDRESSES, NEW AND OLD

Just as a note of clarification. If you are paying for an advertisement in the *SAH Journal*, you should send your checks and requests to Ken Yerama (221 Freeport Drive, Bloomingdale, IL 60108). If you are a member and you are posting a classified ad, please send them to the editor.

Address corrections should be forwarded to Kit Foster (1102 Long Cove Road, Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812).

Please note that the editor's address has changed (now: 2102 Harrison Court, Norristown, PA 19401). This address may be only temporary and will probably change (and become more permanent) before the end of 1999.

All faxes to the editor (including classified advertising) should go to (610)277-2505. All email can continue to be sent to SAHJournal@AOL.COM.

## 25 YEARS AGO AT SAH

The March 1974 issue of SAH's *Newsletter* includes an editorial by *G. Marshall Naul*. The editor discusses the then current worldwide petroleum shortage and its impact on the automotive industry. Marshall "some historian" to record the happenings of the day, "now only a few months old." These events should be tracked for the possibility that "in the future [they] may be judged to be as to be as important as the Model T in the history of the automobile. While even Marshall noted that the scope of this "apparent shortage of petroleum" was questionable, his remark that it would have a lasting effect has held true. Cars today are much more efficient than those of just a quarter century past.

Among the new members on record as of the 34th issue of the *SAH Newsletter* were *Walter Seeley* (#219) and *John Dugdale* (#223). One organization joined the membership rolls in March, but has since lapsed. A quick scan through the membership shows only four organizations. More museums and foundations should be encouraged to join the ranks of SAH members. It could expand our name recognition and increase the usefulness of our group.

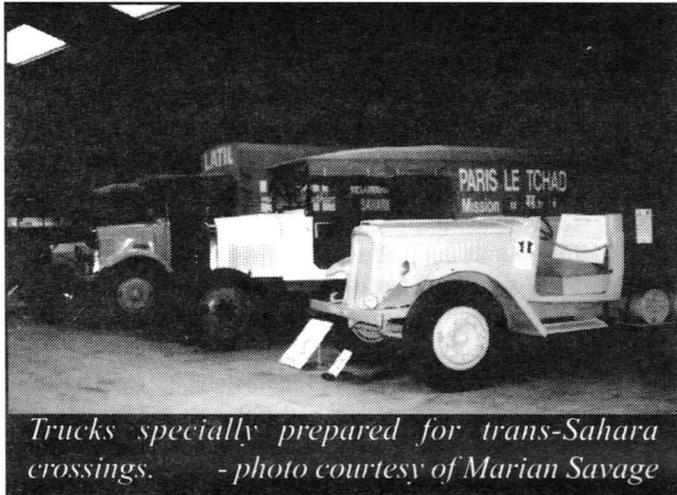
- Sam Fiorani

# SAH AT RETROMOBILE BERLIET FOUNDATION '99

March-April 1999

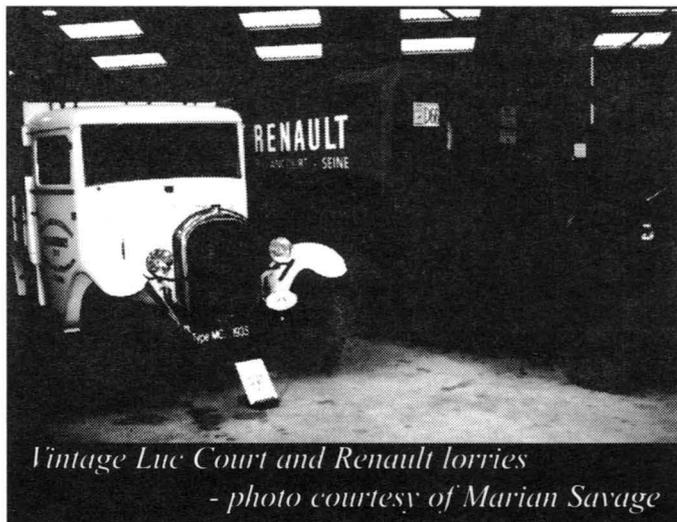
by Dave Brownell

It is, as they say, a sight for sore eyes. To gaze out on a February evening from the Bugatti Salon down onto the swirling traffic at the Place de la Concorde, past the obelisk Napoleon brought back from Egypt, to the goldfestooned Pont Alexandre and illuminated dome of The Invalides beyond, you have to conclude that the Comte DeDion chose an incomparable piece of real estate on which to establish the Automobile Club of France.



*Trucks specially prepared for trans-Sahara crossings. - photo courtesy of Marian Savage*

It's at this exclusive site that SAH members from throughout America and Europe have been privileged to gather to enjoy an informal dinner and get-together for the past four years, thanks in great measure to member *Laurent Friry*, who has cheerfully made the arrangements with the ACF.



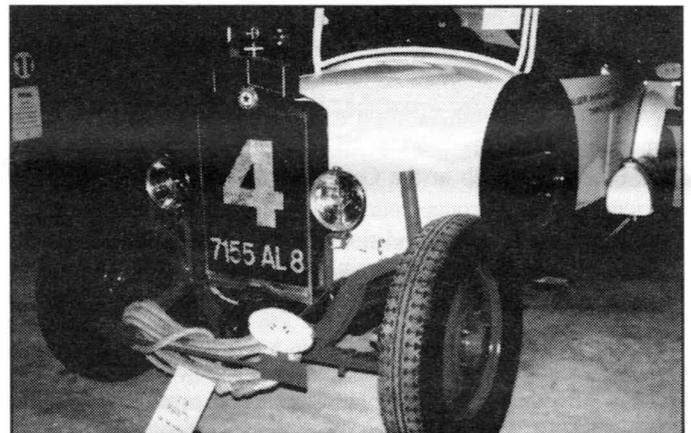
*Vintage Luc Court and Renault lorries - photo courtesy of Marian Savage*

For 1999, there was an added attraction to draw members to the magnificent Retromobile show and the SAH event: the chance to travel on the *Train Grand Vitesse* (TGV) from Paris to Lyon and enjoy a tour of the superb archives of the Foundation Berliet, personally conducted by our distinguished member and Friend of Automotive History Award winner, *Monsieur Paul Berliet*.

We were particularly pleased to see *Jasmine Borgeson* up from Provence to attend the dinner and the Berliet press conference held at Retromobile the next morning. UK members at the dinner were *Graham Orme-Bannister*, *Byran Goodman* and *Karl Ludvigsen* while the host country was represented by M. Berliet, *Mlle. Monique Chapelle*, *Patrick*



*A trio of 1930s Berliets. - photo courtesy of Marian Savage*

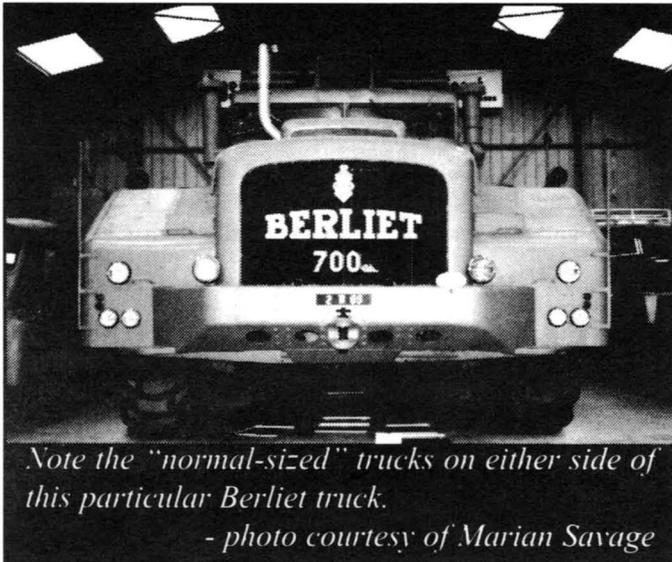


*Vintage Luc Court and Renault lorries - photo courtesy of Marian Savage*



*Fredenson* plus the aforementioned Mrs. Borgeseon and M. Friry. *Ferdinand Hediger* was there from Switzerland while US members and guests at the dinner were our president *Mr. Powell* and wife *Suzanne*, past president *Taylor Vinson*, *Tom Solley*, *Robert Straub*, and *Judd Holcomb*, *Alain* and *Elizabeth*

Cerf, *Thomas Kerr*, and *Charles Schalebaum*, your reporter and photographer and faithful West Coast attendees, *Jay Heumann* and *Richard Adatto*. Jay brought the sad news that his longtime friend and partner in the Pebble Beach Concours,



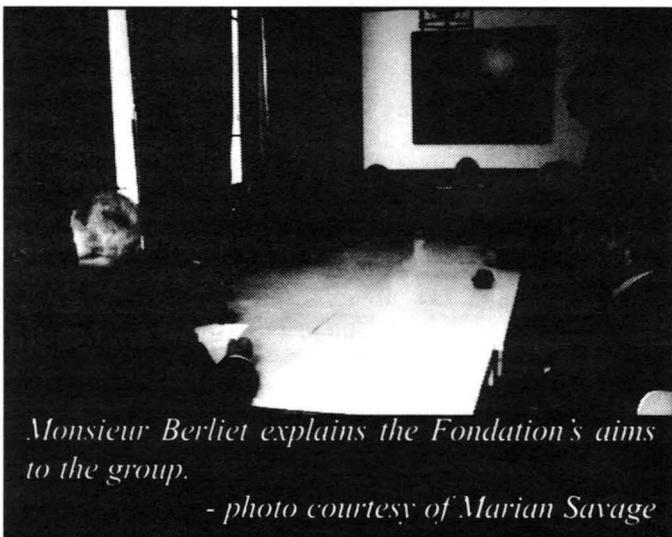
*Note the "normal-sized" trucks on either side of this particular Berliet truck.*

*- photo courtesy of Marian Savage*

member *Lorin Tryon*, was gravely ill. The next day, February 12, Lorin died of complications from a massive stroke, leaving a huge void in the collector car and concours movement.

Several of us met early on February 15 at the Gare du Lyon to board the TGV for the journey to Lyon and the Berliet Archive. For every one of us who may have suffered through the idiosyncracies of modern French cars, the TGV offers an amazing contrast in performance and technology virtuosity; literally an earth-bound complement to the Concorde supersonic aircraft. TGV can easily lope along at 200 mph while the passengers are insulated from the least noise and vibration. It's literally like riding on a cloud, albeit a very fast one. The US's Amtrak seems rooted in the 19th century compared to this swift, efficient and supremely comfortable rival to airplane travel.

Once in Lyon, we were whisked to the Berliet Archives, which is housed in la villa Berliet, the original home and office of Marius Berliet and an Art Nouveau building of subtle mastery in its proportions and decoration. A fitting setting for



*Monsieur Berliet explains the Fondation's aims to the group.*

*- photo courtesy of Marian Savage*

the 200,000-plus references housed within, it contains the automotive history of the Rhone-Alpes region and the history of all makes of French trucks and buses. Fabulous posters and original artwork from Berliet's history decorate the walls. The



documents are kept in the most modern archival conditions, and our group was the first to see the new storage wing which was about to be inaugurated. It would be the envy of any library anywhere.

Location of the lunch and the lunch itself was spectacular. We had traveled to the ancient hilltop town of Perouges, an unspoiled spot 35km from Lyon. There at The Hostellerie, we enjoyed a lunch hosted by M. Berliet which would make even the most dedicated dieter break training. The town itself is an utterly fascinating tour of medieval architecture and well worth a detour should you ever be in the area of Macon-Lyons.

Finally, a splendid extra dessert was a visit to the Fondations' collection of trucks and cars at Le Montellier. Take a look at the photos to see a cross-section of the excellent—and in some cases, unique—Berliet holdings.

It was a marvelous experience from beginning to end, and we're all grateful to Laurent Friry, Paul Berliet, Monique Chapelle and all those who arranged such a memorable dinner and excursion. If you have a chance to go to Paris and join us next year, you should do so. You'll never regret it.

# OBITUARIES

## LORIN TRYON (1927-1999)

Lorin Tryon of Danville, California, died on February 12, 1999, after suffering a massive heart attack. Best known as co-prime over, with his friend *Jules Heumann*, of the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, he was also president of the Blackhawk Automotive Museum.

Challenged to make good on ideas for improving the Concours, Messrs. Tryon and Heumann took over the event and drastically reorganized it over the next quarter century. They were joint recipients of the 1998 Meguiars Award for Hobby Person of the Year.

Lorin Tryon is survived by his wife Dolores, a daughter Catherine, a son Bill, and stepchildren and grandchildren.

- Kit Foster

## JAMES F. PETRIK (1920-1998)

Jim Petrik, of Madeira, Ohio, died on August 27, 1998. He had suffered a stroke earlier in the summer. A native of Davenport, Iowa, Jim graduated from the University of Iowa with a degree in mechanical engineering. He was a Navy veteran, with service in the South Pacific during World War II. A member of SAH since 1978, Jim's particular interests were Stutz, Packard, Cadillac and the Ford Thunderbird.

I first met Jim (figuratively speaking—despite extensive correspondence and many phone conversations we never met in person) when I succeeded *Dick Brigham* as editor of *Automotive History Review*. In the collection of pending manuscripts Dick sent me was an article Jim had written on the 1962-63 Thunderbird Sports Roadsters. It was well-researched and illustrated lavishly by factory photos from Jim's own collection, but I felt it was a bit narrowly focused. In my enthusiasm for my new job, I was eager to revise it significantly to increase its appeal to our demographically-diverse membership. Jim took my direction willingly enough, and together we completely rewrote his text. Only later did I realize how much I had stretched his patience: "You have drawn and quartered me without mercy," he wrote after seeing the final revision, "but all in all the article looks real good."

"Would it be presumptuous of the author to nominate it for a Benz Award?" Jim later asked. "It certainly would not," I told him, but offered to make the nomination myself if he felt uneasy about it. He did, so I did. As we all know, the Benz committee felt not only that SAH could consider its own publications for awards but that Jim's article deserved that year's prize. Jim, as usual, had the last word: "Wasn't it all worth it?" he said, referring to our six-month contest over revising the manuscript. In more serious terms, he felt the award was the "greatest honor" in his life.

Jim was a 33-year member of the Classic Thunderbird Club International, and served as associate editor of their publication *Early Bird* for a number of years. He also

belonged to the Early Ford V8 Club, the Cincinnati Special Interest Automobile Association, and The Stutz Club, which honored him with the Peter Helck Memorial Trophy. He was a contributing author for the Club's book *The Splendid Stutz*, which won SAH's Cugnot Award in 1997. Over the years, his articles have appeared in *Ford Life*, *Old Cars*, and *Cars & Parts*, in addition to SAH publications. His last contribution, to *SAH Journal* No. 175, concerned a special favorite of his, the "Fairlane Bird."

Jim Petrik is survived by his wife of over fifty years, Elsie "Jean" Petrik, a daughter, Mary "Sue" Petrik, a son, Robert, and one granddaughter. We will all miss him.

- Kit Foster

## STEFAN HABSBERG-LOTHRINGEN (1932-1998)

With the passing of Stefan Habsburg, the motor industry has lost one of its most creative and productive and—equally regrettably—one of its most charismatic personalities. Habsburg's deep personal knowledge of cars and their design came through clearly in the talks and presentations he gave in his role of director of educational relations at GM's Design Staff, his final responsibility before his retirement from a lifelong career at General Motors in 1987.

Joining GM in 1955, MIT graduate Stefan Habsburg was one of a number of engineering whom Harley Earl was then hiring to strengthen the technical capabilities of his Styling Staff. In its Research Studio, headed by Firebird I designer Robert McLean, one of his first projects was the never-built LeSabre II, a front-drive prototype with a toroidal CVT and a rear wing that also acted as an air brake.

This was a warm-up exercise for the important projects in which Habsburg played a major role: the creation of the turbine-powered Firebird II and Firebird III concept cars. As assistant chief designer of the Research Studio he contributed to many of their design elements including the automatic lane-following system, a technology that only now is nearing feasibility.

Habsburg was engaged in some of the first serious aerodynamic studies conducted at Styling Staff, including early efforts to develop aerodynamic downforce. A key contribution by Habsburg was the vehicle architecture, with wide-spaced frame rails, that led to Pontiac's adoption of the 'Wide-Track' tire/wheelhouse relationship that transformed the fortunes of the division. Pontiac promoted it well, but the concept that created the look was his.

A serious setback to Stefan Habsburg's career that almost cost him his life was his contraction of viral encephalitis in 1959. This caused a loss of retentive memory that in no way degraded his spirit and creativity but introduced severe practical problems in his daily life. Typically, he overcame these with the help of his friends and family to earn a Master's Degree in Business from Wayne State University in 1972.

Habsburg continued to make important contributions to the work of GM Design. "I worked on the very first computer graphics terminal in General Motors," he recalled, "which was in the basement at GM Research." He became active in GM Design's ergonomics studies as well. His transition to educational relations came, he said, "because I started giving lectures at colleges on the Firebird III."

Stefan Habsburg-Lothringen was born a hereditary Archduke, the son of Archduke Anton of Austria, a barnstorming pilot and pioneer ham radio operator, and Princess Ileana of Romania. His ancestry included both Queen Victoria and Tsar Alexander II. The turmoil of World War II found Ileana and her children first in Romania, then in Argentina and by 1949 in America, where Habsburg resumed his studies. He married the former Jerrine Soper in 1954 and soon thereafter became an American citizen.

Always intensely interested in and knowledgeable about cars, Habsburg was an early owner and driver of the Morris Minor, VW Beetle, Mercedes-Benz 180, and Jaguar XK120, not to mention a BMW motorcycle. Later, he was a fan of the Corvair Lakewood, pointing out its valuable, practical and unique attribute of two luggage compartments. A sign of his good taste in cars was his ownership of Buick Rivieras in his last years.

While he was studying mechanical engineering at MIT from 1951 to 1955, Habsburg's natural creativity was enhanced by the classes taught by Prof. John E. Arnold, originator of the concept of 'brainstorming.' Arnold invented a complete alien environment, that of the fourth planet circling the star Arcturus, to stimulate his budding engineers.

Desing Staff was the right environment for Habsburg: "I've always liked to draw and sketch and I love cars," he said. "I wanted to work in this building, not where they make engines and transmissions." Yet, his invigorating influence came to be felt throughout General Motors and the many outside institutions that nurtured its best people.

Stefen Habsburg is surviving by his artist wife Jerrine, three sons and two daughters and ten grandchildren. He left as well as hundreds of fine pen-and-ink sketches from his travels and a first draft of an autobiography of his adventurous life.

- Karl Ludvigsen

## DOING SOMETHING INTERESTING

### H-SPECIAL REPORT

SAH member *Mike Van Auken* publishes the semi-annual *H-Special Report*, a treasure-trove of history and information on GM's H-Special cars, the coupe models known to consumers as Chevrolet Monza, Pontiac Sunbird, Olds Starfire and Buick Skyhawk. A recent issue includes articles on a cloth top Sunbird concept car, a primer on documenting cars, and an interesting presentation of production figures by body style (two distinct coupes were offered) and engine size.

For information on the *H-Special Report*, contact Mike at P.O. Box 2653, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, call (949) 855-6339 or email [h07@earthlink.net](mailto:h07@earthlink.net).

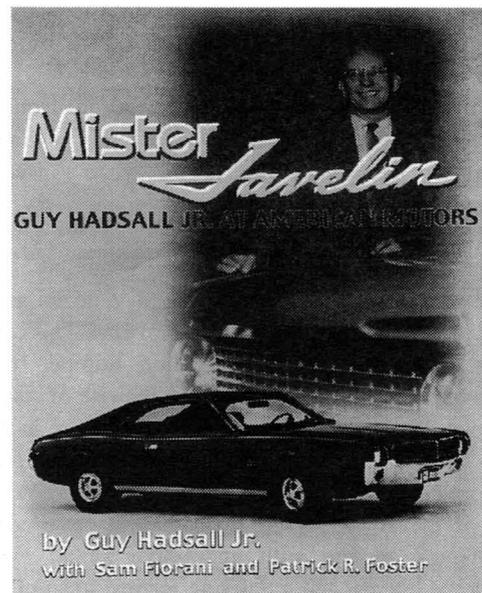
#### SAH Press

PROUDLY ANNOUNCES THE PUBLICATION OF ITS FIRST BOOK...

## Mister Javelin: Guy Hadsall at American Motors

Stories from behind the lines of the American Motors PR Machine as told by Guy Hadsall.

From the late 1950s into the early 1970s, Guy Hadsall worked the auto show circuit with America's fourth largest automaker.



"Mister Javelin" will be available in January 1999. Place your order today to ensure a copy.

Be a part of this historic event!

Send \$24.95 (plus \$5 shipping and handling) to:

The SAH Press, 1102 Long Cove Road, Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812 USA

# 'GM ENVY' CAN DISTORT HOW WE ANALYZE THE AUTO INDUSTRY

By Steve Salmi

The marriage of Chrysler and Daimler-Benz has sparked a frenzy of merger fever. The dominant theme in the automotive press is that this fever is an inevitable result of global production overcapacity. The only way for automakers to remain competitive, say the hubcap oracles, is to get big—really big—or get out.

What's fascinating about mega-merger hype is the degree to which it downplays obvious questions. Was not the over-consolidation of the U.S. auto industry after World War II a major reason for its subsequent humbling by foreign competition? Shouldn't BMW's troubles in absorbing Rover remind us about how many mergers have not lived up to their giddy expectations? And why is there so little discussion of management guru Peter Drucker's prediction that mega corporations will be dinosaurs in the 21st Century because they lack the flexibility to respond to increasingly rapid marketplace shifts, e.g., with paradigm-busting functional innovation?

Implicit in mega-merger fever is a certain "GM envy"—an assumption that whoever survives the long-predicted consolidation of the industry must be modeled along the lines of General Motors, still the world's biggest banana. This means, for starters, that all survivors must race to colonize the far corners of the developing world. But building gazillions of cars in China and India is not enough. Survivors must also offer a hierarchy of multiple brands, from plebeian to patrician, all sharing as many major components as possible. This GM-like strategy essentially requires much more emphasis on image differentiation than functional innovation.

Mega-merger fever has received inadequate questioning because GM envy permeates auto industry thinking. This has been the case since the 1920s, when Alfred Sloan began engineering General Motors' ascendancy. By the 1960s, the global reach of GM and its Detroit sidekicks, Ford and Chrysler, helped spawn the notion that the number of international automakers would dwindle to roughly a dozen, and the survivors would be patterned along the lines of GM. This consolidation has largely occurred in the U.S. and Europe, but it has been counterbalanced until recently by the rise of Asian automakers. Indeed, the initial success of Toyota and Co. in the U.S. market can be explained as a consumer revolt against an overemphasis on product image practiced by the Big Three. Yet in recent years all of the larger Japanese companies have adopted GM-like strategies, replete with aggressive global expansion goals, multiple brands, and a flagging interest in significant functional innovations.

The root cause of mega-merger fever is thus a growing level of conformity in the auto industry. Certainly a pronounced herd instinct has long been an industry hallmark, particularly in the United States. For example, back in the 1970s automotive journalist Brock Yates dubbed Detroit's lemming-like behavior "Grosse Pointe myopia." But global consolidation over the last

two decades has exacerbated these conformist tendencies. Whereas once upon a time one could point to a handful of automakers that militantly rejected GM envy, today it is rare to find significant examples of unlemming-like behavior anywhere in the world.

This new conformity poses serious dangers to the industry. Thirty years ago, if consumers weren't inspired by Detroit's baroque fare they could choose from a marvelous diversity of alternatives. Saab, for example, helped pioneer some of the most important innovations of the post-war period: aerodynamics, front-wheel drive and post-Fordist manufacturing processes. Today, the now-GM-owned Saab is so dominated by bean counters and image wizards that the marque has devolved into little more than a turbo-charged Opel disguised with warmed-over Saab styling clichés. Much the same can be said for other smaller automakers that have lost their independence.

Even recent industry newcomers now ignore a crucial lesson of automotive history: Most of the greatest post-war rags-to-riches successes were achieved by eschewing GM envy in favor of bold functional innovation. Instead of pioneering new paradigms on par with the original VW Beetle or the CVCC Honda Accord, the Korean automakers have dished out products whose me-tooness is all the more striking in light of reckless expansion goals. Alas, the Koreans are hardly alone. The recent global production capacity glut is a direct result of almost all major automakers participating in the pubescent competition, "Mine's Bigger Than Yours." Might this boom-bust cycle have been less destabilizing if we had more independent automakers that didn't succumb to GM envy? A careful look at automotive history would suggest the answer is yes. Well-run independents have always been the best antidote to the big boys' excesses.

Drawing the right lessons from the past sometimes requires disagreeing with automotive historians. Even some who write passionately about independent American automakers can succumb, at least partially, to GM envy. Case in point are accounts of the 1950s—a pivotal moment in automotive history. Within a short span of three years the number of independent passenger-car producers dropped from six to two. This trend was inevitable, according to the common wisdom. Nash CEO George Mason is frequently pointed to as the greatest visionary of this period because he sought to create nothing less than a fourth high-volume automaker with a GM-like hierarchy of brands sharing platforms. Only then, according to this logic, could the independents achieve sufficient economies of scale to compete with the Big

Three.

Why then were attempts by Mason and others to mimic GM abysmal failures? Historians tend to argue (explicitly or implicitly) that the mega-merger concept was sound but technical mistakes were made, e.g., the independents waited too long to merge and then married the wrong partners. This is not the only plausible explanation.

One can instead argue that the most successful independents of the post-war era were those that staunchly rejected GM envy. Most notable was American Motors, which under Mason successor George Romney adopted a strikingly unorthodox strategy: Mason's dreamed-for merger with Studebaker-Packard

was shelved, multiple brands were dropped, and the "Bigger! Glitzier! More powerful!" mantra of the Big Three was rejected in favor of a modest line of compacts with an unusual emphasis on functional innovation.

Romney's strategy resulted in the Rambler becoming one of the most successful brands in the history of U.S. independents. AMC might have even survived into the 1990s if Romney's successors hadn't saddled the automaker with a poorly digested merger with Kaiser-Jeep and a GM-like circus of image-obsessed products. (For example, while Chrysler was making a fortune on its uncharacteristically utilitarian Valiant and Dart compacts—the spiritual heirs to the Rambler—AMC was losing its shirt on glitzy Ambassadors, Javelins and Pacers.)

Or consider Packard. Historians tend to avoid challenging CEO James Nance's insistence that the venerable automaker could not have survived on its own.

Yet a leap of logic is required to envision a merger that would have been beneficial over the long run to both Packard and its most likely merger partners. Packard's strongest potential partner was Nash, yet such a combine would likely have either: 1) single-handedly torpedoed Romney's Rambler strategy because of the high costs of maintaining a competitive full-sized platform, or 2) led to Packard devolving into little more than a top-of-the-line compact Rambler.

Packard was more likely to have survived with its brand integrity intact if it had stayed independent and offered a slow-changing, conservative alternative to the Big Three's ungainly and problem-plagued premium-priced cars of the late 1950s. Even Hugh Ferry's complacent management may have kept Packard alive considerably longer than Nance's reckless effort to mimic GM.

Economies of scale do matter. But a 1980s MIT study echoed Romney's contention that independent automakers could be competitive if they developed savvy component-sharing partnerships and concentrated on products that didn't directly compete against high-volume producers. Subaru and (to a lesser extent) Volvo illustrate how this strategy can still be successful, e.g., Volvo has a higher profit margin than Ford, which recently announced its intention to buy the Swedish company's passenger-car operations. With more iconoclastic management Volvo might have prospered indefinitely as an independent. Instead, Volvo has been following in the footsteps of post-Romney AMC. Whereas Subaru has become profitable again by rekindling at least some of its zeal for functional innovation, Volvo's recent products are almost as undistinguished as a 1968 AMC Ambassador.

The bottom line? Every once in a while we might remind ourselves that historical accounts, no matter how seemingly matter of fact, require interpretations based on debatable assumptions. We could further the development of automotive history—and even contemporary automotive journalism—by discussing the insidious ways GM envy is distorting our interpretations about the past and the future of the industry.

Here we go again. With the merger of Chrysler and Daimler-Benz, the automotive press is awash in talk about industry consolidation into a handful of mega firms. Implicit in this analysis is "GM envy"—an assumption that the idealized automaker of the future must have truly global reach, a full line

of products with a hierarchy of multiple brands, and shared platforms that place more emphasis on image differentiation than functional innovation. Automakers that do not fit this model are viewed as marginal players whose days are numbered as independent companies.

What's fascinating about the mega-merger hype is the degree to which it downplays obvious questions. Was not the post-war consolidation of the U.S. auto industry a major reason for its subsequent humbling by foreign competition? Shouldn't BMW's troubles in absorbing Rover remind us about how many mergers have not lived up to their giddy expectations? And why is there so little discussion of management guru Peter Drucker's prediction that mega corporations will be dinosaurs in the 21st Century because they lack the flexibility to respond to increasingly rapid marketplace shifts?

Mega-merger hype has received inadequate questioning because GM envy permeates auto industry thinking. This has been the case since the 1920s, when Alfred Sloan began engineering General Motors' ascendancy. By the 1960s, the global reach of GM and its Detroit sidekicks, Ford and Chrysler, helped spawn the notion that the number of international automakers would dwindle to roughly a dozen, and the survivors would be patterned along the lines of GM. This consolidation has largely occurred in the U.S. and Europe, but it has been counterbalanced until recently by the rise of Asian automakers. Indeed, the success of Toyota and Co. can be at least partially explained as a consumer revolt against the overemphasis on product image practiced by GM and its most slavish emulators.

One of the most insidious aspects of GM envy is the distortion it introduces into historical analysis. Even automotive historians who write passionately about independent American automakers at least partially succumb to GM envy. Case in point are accounts of the 1950s—a pivotal moment in automotive history. Within a short span of three years the number of independent passenger-car producers dropped from six to two. This trend was inevitable, according to the common wisdom. Nash CEO George Mason is frequently pointed to as the greatest visionary of this period because he sought to create nothing less than a fourth high-volume automaker with a GM-like hierarchy of brands sharing platforms. Only then, according to this logic, could the independents achieve sufficient economies of scale to compete with the Big Three.

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*continued on page 10*

*continued from page 9*

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The bottom line? Every once in a while we might remind ourselves that historical accounts, no matter how seemingly matter of fact, require interpretations based on debatable assumptions. We could further the development of automotive history by discussing whether GM envy is distorting our interpretations about the past—and the future—of the auto industry.

*Steve Salmi is a doctoral student in urban affairs at Cleveland State University. He invites feedback at [salmi94@wolf.csuohio.edu](mailto:salmi94@wolf.csuohio.edu)*

## IT HAPPENED LONG AGO...

### *Ninety-five years ago...*

March 1, 1904 - Rolls-Royce was formed by salesman Charles Rolls and automobile manufacturer Henry Royce.

### *Seventy-five years ago...*

April 2, 1924 - Nash purchased the Mitchell Motor Company of Racine, Wisconsin, and introduced the Ajax car from that plant a short time later.

### *Seventy years ago...*

March 1, 1929 - General Motors purchased 80% of Opel. The other 20% would be purchased over the next few years.

March 5, 1929 - David Dunbar Buick died.

April 3, 1929 - Carl Benz died at the age of 85.

### *Fifty years ago...*

March 15, 1949 - The Volkswagen "Beetle" made its debut in the United States.

### *Forty years ago...*

March 1, 1959 - The first DAF automobile was built.

April 29, 1959 - Ford Motor Company built its 50 millionth Ford. The Galaxie rolled off the Rouge assembly line.

### *Thirty-five years ago...*

April 17, 1964 - Ford Motor Company introduced the Mustang.

### *Thirty years ago...*

March 11, 1969 - VW Porsche Vertriebsgesellschaft mbH was founded as a sales group.

April 1, 1969 - Chevrolet introduced the Monte Carlo and Oldsmobile introduced the Cutlass Supreme.

April 10, 1969 - Great designer Harley Earl died.

April 17, 1969 - Ford introduced the Maverick.

### *Twenty years ago...*

April 19, 1979 - General Motors introduced the infamous "X-cars," the Chevrolet Citation, Buick Skylark, Pontiac Phoenix, and Oldsmobile Omega.

April 10, 1979 - John Daniel Hertz, rental car magnate, was born.

### *Ten years ago...*

April 1, 1989 - The one-millionth American-built Honda, a Civic, rolled off the assembly line.

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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.



**THE GRAHAM LEGACY: GRAHAM-PAIGE TO 1932**, by Michael E. Keller. 232 pages, approx. 180 black and white illustrations. 11 x 8 1/2 inches, hardbound with dust jacket. ISBN 1-56311-470-4. Published by Turner Publishing Co., P.O. Box 3101, Paducah, KY 42002-3101. Price: \$34.95 plus \$6.00 shipping and handling.

This is a comprehensive study and evaluation of the Graham Brothers and the cars they built between 1927 and 1941. Superbly researched and well illustrated, it is also one of the finest chronicles of automotive history which has ever come across this desk. *The Graham Legacy* traces the activities of the three brothers, Joseph, Robert, and Ray, from their earliest activities in the family glass business to the building of trucks and tractors under their own names, before setting out with new worlds to conquer.

Enter the Paige-Detroit Motor Car Company, prominent in the field of quality automobiles since 1909, and the lower-priced Jewett (named for Paige-Detroit president Harry M. Jewett). The company had been one of the more successful independent automobile manufacturers in this country with a peak estimated at 70,000 combined Paige and Jewett sales in 1924 but which had been on a downward spiral in the subsequent years. The Grahams took over Paige-Detroit in 1927, continuing the Paige and simultaneously working on a design for an entirely new car for 1928.

Introduced at the New York Automobile Show in January 1928, the new car debuted as the Graham-Paige and a new car it was, both mechanically and aesthetically. It heralded what would become a banner car for the American automobile market and, to divorce themselves completely from earlier enterprises the three brothers sold the Graham Brothers truck business to Dodge. With a price range of \$860 for its smallest six to \$2,560 for its 8-passenger limousine, Graham-Paige production during its first year was indicative of the popularity it would enjoy in the marketplace for the next three years, although the production would never approach its first year of sales which exceeded some 70,000 units. The stock market crash of October 29, 1929, and the resulting Depression years saw to that! The name of the car itself would be changed in 1930 with the elimination of "Paige."

Despite its popularity and relatively high production at the outset and its subsequent excellent designs and reasonable prices, the Graham never recovered from the earlier days of the Depression. This, of course, will be chronicled in a projected follow-up volume covering the years 1932 through its final year, 1941.

*The Graham Legacy* isn't simply a well-researched history of a long forgotten car. It is outstanding. Moreover, one get a great deal indeed for a reasonable price. I strongly urge interested parties to avail themselves of a copy before it goes out of print.

- Keith Marvin

**THE OLYMPIAN CARS: The Great American Luxury Automobiles of the Twenties and Thirties (Second Edition)**, by Richard Burns Carson. 274 pages, 400 black and white photographs and eight color pages. 12 x 9 inches. ISBN 1-8906-76-02-0. Published by Beaver's Bond Press with the Upper Midwest Region CCA (P.O. Box 583294, Minneapolis, MN 55458-3294). Price: \$69.95 plus \$6.00 shipping.

The publication of a second edition of the magnificent 1976 historical automotive masterpiece by Richard Burns Carson is significant as one of the more outstanding moments of contemporary publishing in 1998. *The Olympian Cars* was widely and rightfully heralded for its excellence when it first appeared more than 22 years ago. And now, with numerous improved or new photos, revised captions, and an added section of color photos wedded to a new introduction by the author and a great forward by Beverly Rae Kimes, *The Olympian Cars* has emerged as one of the top volumes targeted to the Classic Car Era.

*The Olympian Cars* is confined to the Classic American makes covering the start of the Classic Era in 1925. Some of the coverage begins a bit later and, in one case—Lincoln—back to 1920, but there is little material missing, either in illustrations or the written word covering each make, the longest of the chapters being those of Lincoln and Packard, each of these comprising 26 pages with 56 and 45 photos respectively. Besides the standard Classic makes may be found ten additional brands under a "Noble Oddities" section in which the reader will find such lesser-known Classics as Brewster, Cunningham, Jordan Speedway, and Reo Royal. The color section consisting of advertisements from *Fortune*, *Town & Country*, the old *Life*, and other fine magazines which catered to an affluent society.

The book stands apart from a majority of others covering the same subject in a similar time frame in its coverage of the ongoing period and focusing on the rise and fall of Classic Cars and the varying reasons for that rise and fall. This includes observation and commentary on "The Luxury Impulse," "Ascendance: The Twenties," "Finest Accomplishments," and "Decline." An insight into the career of one of this country's outstanding Classic Car designers, Raymond H. Dietrich and sub-titled "An Artist's Life in the Automotive Industry" is also chronicled.

Frankly, I find it difficult to give this book the proper exposure it deserves and emphasizing its high points. This is perhaps that if it contains anything even average in its presentation, I didn't encounter it.

In addition to Richard Burns Carson's expertise of his subject which is obvious, the thanks of any enthusiast even remotely on the fringe of the confraternity of automotive

historians and those interested in both those cars and the times which spawned their very being, is in order to all those responsible for this second edition of *The Olympian Cars*. It is a work which should never be out-of-print. Hopefully, it won't ever be out-of-print again.

- Keith Marvin

**BRITISH TRIALS DRIVERS - THEIR CARS AND AWARDS 1929 - 1939**, by Donald Cowbourne. Hardbound, 740 pages, 282 black-and-white photographs and illustrations. 10-1/4 x 8-1/4 inches, ISBN 1 85825 107 9, published by Smith Settle, Ltd., Ilkley Road, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS 21 1YY UK, £36.00 postpaid UK (add £10.00 for surface overseas shipping) MasterCard/Visa accepted.

There are books and there are books and there are books. Some books are a joy to look at - coffee table books; some tell an engaging story - books that are a "good read;" still others are incredible founts of information. *British Trial Drivers...* is the last of these, though it also has excellent photographs and a smooth, though short, informative text.

Donald Cowbourne has completed the gargantuan task of compiling the results of the major British trials during the decade of the book's title, and published them all in a single volume. Trials are the uniquely (or nearly so) British form of motor sport that pits drivers and cars against unimproved roads, rural tracks, and difficult hills, these timed sections interspersed with longer, rally-like road courses. Scoring is by penalty points, assessed for such transgressions as failing to make it up a hill or, conversely, climbing in one "go" when a midway halt is required.

*British Trial Drivers...* is organized by venue, with a brief history of the event, a year-by-year summary of entries, course description, and list of awards. Rounding out each chapter is a series of tables organized both alphabetically by driver and by marque. The latter tables give vehicle details, such as registration number, model and engine size, so far as they are known. The information is compiled for surviving entry lists and photographs. Trials covered are the Motor Cycling Club's Land's End, Edinburgh, Exeter, Sporting, July, and Land's End-to-John o' Groats contests. (As may be inferred, trials began at the beginning of this century with two-wheeled vehicles. Though four-wheel cars soon took primacy, the MCC endured as the sanctioning body. Four wheel drive, however, is not allowed.)

Other contests included are the North West London Motor Club's London-Gloucester Trials, the Brighton and Hove Motor Club's Brighton to Beer Trials, the Sutton Coldfield & North Birmingham Automobile Club's Colmore and Colmore Trophy Trials, and the International Alpine Trials of 1928-36 (though only the British entries).

The work features a foreword by Michael Worthington-Williams, and an extensive collection of period photographs from the events in question, many dripping with drama and pathos. Included also are a number of contemporary participant and spectator accounts from some of the trials, which give life to the stark facts and figures.

While not quite a "good read," and certainly not a picture book for the casual car enthusiast, *British Trial Drivers...* is a valuable reference work for aficionados and students of motor sport, trials in particular. Marque specialists who are serious about competition history of their nameplate will also want this book in their libraries. The author's earlier *British Rally Drivers, Their Cars and Awards 1925-39* is still available from the same publisher at £45.00 (postpaid UK, add £10.00 for overseas shipping).

- Kit Foster

**WISCONSIN CARS AND TRUCKS - A CENTENARY**, edited by Val Quandt. Softbound, 224 pages, 265 black and white photographs and illustrations. 8-1/2 x 11 inches, ISBN 0-966480-0-6. Published by Wisconsin Chapter, Society of Automotive Historians, Inc. Order from *Wisconsin Cars and Trucks Book, Hartford Heritage Auto Museum, 147 North Rural Street, Hartford, WI 53027, \$27.95 plus \$3.95 shipping and handling (WI orders add \$1.43 sales tax).*

There are chapters of SAH throughout the USA and in Britain. They vary in size and interests; some are primarily social and others have regular historical programs for their members. A few, like the Wisconsin Chapter, carry on chapter-wide research and writing projects. This work has culminated in the publication of their first book, timed to coincide with the state's sesquicentennial celebrations.

*Wisconsin Cars and Trucks* is neatly organized into ten chapters plus an appendix listing over 80 automotive marques built in the state, and an index. Seven of the chapters cover vehicle manufacture: steam cars, trucks, major car and truck manufacture today, and four regional summaries covering vehicles built in Racine, Kenosha, southeast Wisconsin, and the Fox River Valley. Complimentary chapters concern component manufacturers, related auto topics (mostly a treatise on Wisconsin license plates), and an introductory section titled "Early History and Background," a bit of a misnomer as it deals not with the earliest history and includes some essays that are more philosophy than background.

The authors of the several chapters are authorities on their subjects; most are chapter members. Coverage of Wisconsin vehicles is exhaustive, from J.W. Carhart's 1871 steam-propelled "Spark" to present day Chrysler (née AMC) production in Kenosha, including the "mainstream" Nash, Kissel, Case and Mitchell, the not-so-well-known Harris Six and Wausau Flyer, and the very obscure Ballard and Radford. The various enterprises of the late Brooks Stevens are included, as is the Duesenberg II replica built in Elroy by Precision Classics.

The volume is nicely produced, with generally good quality photo reproduction (important for historical books) and a smooth-reading text that belies its origins on the keyboards of sixteen authors. Editor Quandt, who wrote a good many of the chapters himself, is to be congratulated on this book, which will tell you just about everything you could want to know about the automobile industry in Wisconsin, although there are works, like Quandt's own *The Classic Kissel*, which offer greater depth. *Wisconsin Cars and Trucks* is a pioneer example of what chapter members can accomplish working together.

- Kit Foster

**CHENARD-WALCKER FAR: THE LOST EMPIRE OF GENNEVILLIERS**, by Claude Rouxel with Jacques Dorizon, Marc Clouet and Francois Vauvilliers. Hardbound, 144 pages. 12.47 x 9.47 inches, ISBN 2-90818277-7. Published by Histoire & Collections. Price: \$44.95.

Do you remember a car called Chenard-Walcker?? To me, it will always be memorable because it's the car that won the very first 24-hour race at LeMans, back in the days when you had to carry ballast to simulate passengers, and you could not use tools and parts unless they were on board from the start.

Some of you may recall that in their last years, Chenard-Walcker made front-wheel-drive vans and minibuses. Much less known is the fact that the company produced important numbers of the Scammell Mechanical Horse under license, with the label FAR. It's been puzzling me for years, what did the letters FAR stand for? The FAR trade-mark first appeared in 1919, in connection with a "fast" road-tractor made by Chenard-Walcker and a semi-trailer made by Lagache & Glaszmann.

FAR does not mean Facile A Remorquer, Fabrication Anonyme de Remorques, or Fraternite Automobile des Remorqueurs. It is quite simply an acronym made up of the initials of the first names of the principal protagonists. The A stands for Andre—that's Andre Lagache, high-ranking Chenard-Walcker engineer and co-pilot with Rene Leonard in the winning car at LeMans in 1923. The F stands for Fritz—that's Fritz Glaszmann, and the R for his brother Raymond.

In this book, we get the full story of the racing activities of the company, its abortive alliance with Delahaye in 1928-31, and the final years of its auto production. Not only the straight account, but an analytical explanation of why things happened the way they did.

It's really the works. It's all there, from the bicycle-making days of Chenard family and the antecedents of the Walckers, who were Huguenots and fled to Germany after the revocation of Henri IV's edict of Nantes. Henri Walcker was the chap who told the Chenards about the wonderful future of the automobile back in 1896 when he was selling their bicycles in Paris.

The cars of the 1920s are described in intimate detail, and the reader gets acquainted not only with the chief engineer, Henri Toutee, but also with the main suppliers. There was nothing frivolous or frolicsome about Chenard-Walcker, it was a house of great dignity and severity, but not at all stodgy. Just look at their streamlined sports cars from the late 1920s and the front-wheel-drive models of 1934-36, developed with the full complicity of J.A. Gregoire.

In addition to FAR, the company had a truck division, both of which served to balance the cash-flow during the 1930s which nevertheless ended up with the shutdown of passenger-car production.

The last cars made by Chenard-Walcker had Citroën or Matford engines, and bodies made by Chausson to Matford design. The front-wheel-drive van business was sold to Peugeot in 1950 and the Chenard-Walcker company was merged with Chausson, which maintained FAR production until 1971.

- Jan P. Norbye



## POST WAR PRODUCTION

Do you know if any SAH members have ever had any information about dismantling the defense industries and converting them to civilian production after WW II?

I have heard anecdotes about tossing completed Merlin crankshafts out of the factory windows at Packard into gondola cars as scrap in 1945.

I am researching for a book After the Shooting Stopped on dismantling the US war machine. **Gordon White, Box 3067, Alexandria, VA 22302.**

## WHEN IS A FORD NOT A FORD?

I have been following closely the discussion about "brand management" and the difference between a "brand" and a "model." I didn't realize what the auto press meant when they refereed to the current phenomena of brand managers. I had assumed that a Pontiac brand manager managed the Pontiac division. But I now understand that a Pontiac brand manager only manages the Grand Prix line, or the Bonneville line. This approach seems to make sense, even if the name "brand manager" seems a bit hyperbolic (but then this is Detroit).

On the question of makes and models, my delving into Ford's activities in Europe has brought to light a curious schism in the marketing of Ford's European vehicles that seem blur the meaning of the make and model distinction.

I have noticed that Ford's European products of the 1950's and early 1960's were not really marketed as Fords in the same way that a Fairlane or a Thunderbird was in North America. The Consul, the Zephyr/Zodiac, the Taunus, I think even the Vedette seem to have been their own make of car, as the name Ford never appeared on their exterior. Like wise the Thames name was expanded to cover the entire range of British Ford-built trucks. Things really got loopy when the Consul name was placed before the model names of Classic, Capri, Cortina and Corsair. Around 1962, the blue oval badge began to appear on the front fender on the passenger side of both the German and English models. However it wasn't until the merger of Ford's English and German companies (beginning with the 1968 models) that FORD script began to appear boldly on the hoods and trunks of Ford's European cars (although such script was deleted on the Cortinas sold here).

I own a car that I refer to as a 1960 Ford Zephyr, although technically, I should probably only refer to it as a Zephyr (much like the 1970's Capris sold in North America through Lincoln-Mercury dealers). I would be interested in hearing anyone's thoughts on this issue. **Michael MacSems, 1716 Giles NW, Olympia, WA 98502.**

## MYSTERY OF THE HINGED WINDOW

I am a retired director of Bovis Construction and am engaged on writing a book of the history of the company.

In the archives I have come across reference to a Cadillac cars factory built by Bovis in England, probably documents I can find but no other information has come to light.

I spotted your organization in one book and am taking the liberty of writing to you to see if there is any help you can give me. It is possible that if I can locate where the factory stood then the reference library local to the area can give me some information including perhaps a photograph.

Can you help? **Bernard Hodgson, 116 Three Bridges Road, Crawley, Sussex RH10 1JL, United Kingdom.**

## MYSTERY OF THE HINGED WINDOW

My guess is the hub cap bears a Steven-Duryea emblem as shown here. **Hal Denman, 855 Dobbs Ferry Road, White Plains, NY 10607-1752.**

## ESSEX BY THE NUMBERS

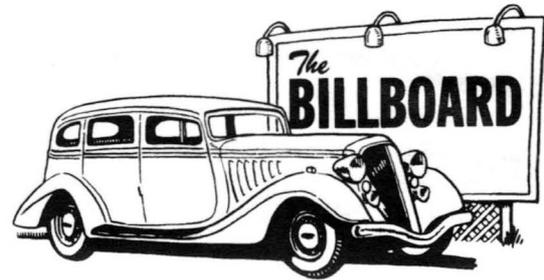
"The American automobile industry experienced a landmark year in 1929, production reaching five million cars for the first time ever. More remarkable was Hudson-Essex, shipments of over 300,000 cars placing them third in the industry."

We've all read variations on the above statements, which have become the "conventional wisdom." Unfortunately, none of it is true.

The United States did produce over five million vehicles in calendar 1929, but only slightly over 4.5 million were passenger cars. *Automotive Industries* gave the breakdown as 4,587,400 cars and 771,020 trucks. The industry would not fare so well again for nearly twenty years.

As for "Hudson-Essex," the Hudson Motor Car Company did ship over 300,000 vehicles in 1929, but again not all of them were cars. John Conde's *The Cars that Hudson Built* gives the total as 300,962, comprised of 71,179 Hudsons, 227,653 Essex cars, and 2,130 commercial vehicles, most or all of which were Essex-based but wore the one-year-only Dover badge. But the Hudson firm as third in the industry? Not when you total the four Chrysler Corporation brands. Jerry Heasley's *Production Figure Book for US Cars* shows 92,034 Chryslers, 64,911 DeSotos, 124,557 Dodges and 93,592 Plymouths, for a corporate total of 375,094, easily surpassing the Hudson figures and good for a solid third place.

But what about the third place *brand*? Whippet, the other upstart independent, was riding high during this period. Conde reports 252,846 Whippets leaving the Willys factory in 1928. Heasley does not break out the Whippet figures from Willys-Knight for 1929. The only Whippet figures I've found for 1929 come from a table in *SAH Newsletter* No. 5 (January 1970), compiled by Harlan Appelquist. The source of his figures is not attributed, and most of the numbers seem to have been rounded to the nearest hundred (many of them differ significantly, though not wildly, from Heasley's). He reports Whippet at 196,000 units, which, rounding errors or not, puts it decisively behind Essex. So can't we agree that Essex had the third highest production in the auto industry's first five million vehicle year? Or does someone have some different numbers of better pedigree? **Kit Foster, 1102 Long Cove Road, Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812, email <foster@netbox.com>**



The Billboard welcomes non-commercial advertisements from members. Ads are free, and should concern items of interest to historians: information, books, literature, photographs, illustrations, memorabilia; offered, wanted or to trade. Ads for vehicles or parts are not accepted. To advertise regular sales or services, contact ad manager Ken Yerama, 221 Freeport Drive, Bloomingdale, IL 60108 for display ad rates.

**OFFERED:** Automobile magazines, *Motor Trend, Road & Track, Mobilia, Thoroughbred & Classic Cars, Sports & GT Market, The Classic Car, Packard Cormorant, Motor Age, Car Collector & Car Classics, Cars & Parts, White Triangle, MG, Triumph, Healey & Jaguar* club publications and technical literature. **WANTED TO TRADE:** 1941 Packard Data Book for 1936 Data Book. Please send four stamps for description catalog. **The Classic Motorist, P.O. Box 363, Rotterdam Junction, NY 12150-0363.**

**WANTED:** *SAH Journal* for the years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Photo copies will be fine. Also need are *Cars and Parts* magazine for 4/76, 11/78, 4/79, 6/82, 2-3-4/83, and 2/85. All of the above are to complete my library. **George T. Balfe, 1487 Horseshoe Bend Drive #27, Campe Verde, AZ 86322.**

**WANTED:** Information on the Jarvis-Huntington automobile and truck manufactured in Huntington, West Virginia, circa 1912-15. Any information would be appreciated. **James H. Lackey, 457 New York Street, Huntington, WV 25704. Phone: (304)429-1180.**

**WANTED:** Programs of the Formula 5000 races at Riverside, Laguna Seca and Road America (1972-1976) and photos of the L&M Championship events in 1973. **Wolfgang Klopfer, Robert-Koch-Strasse 22, 04600 Altenburg, Germany.**

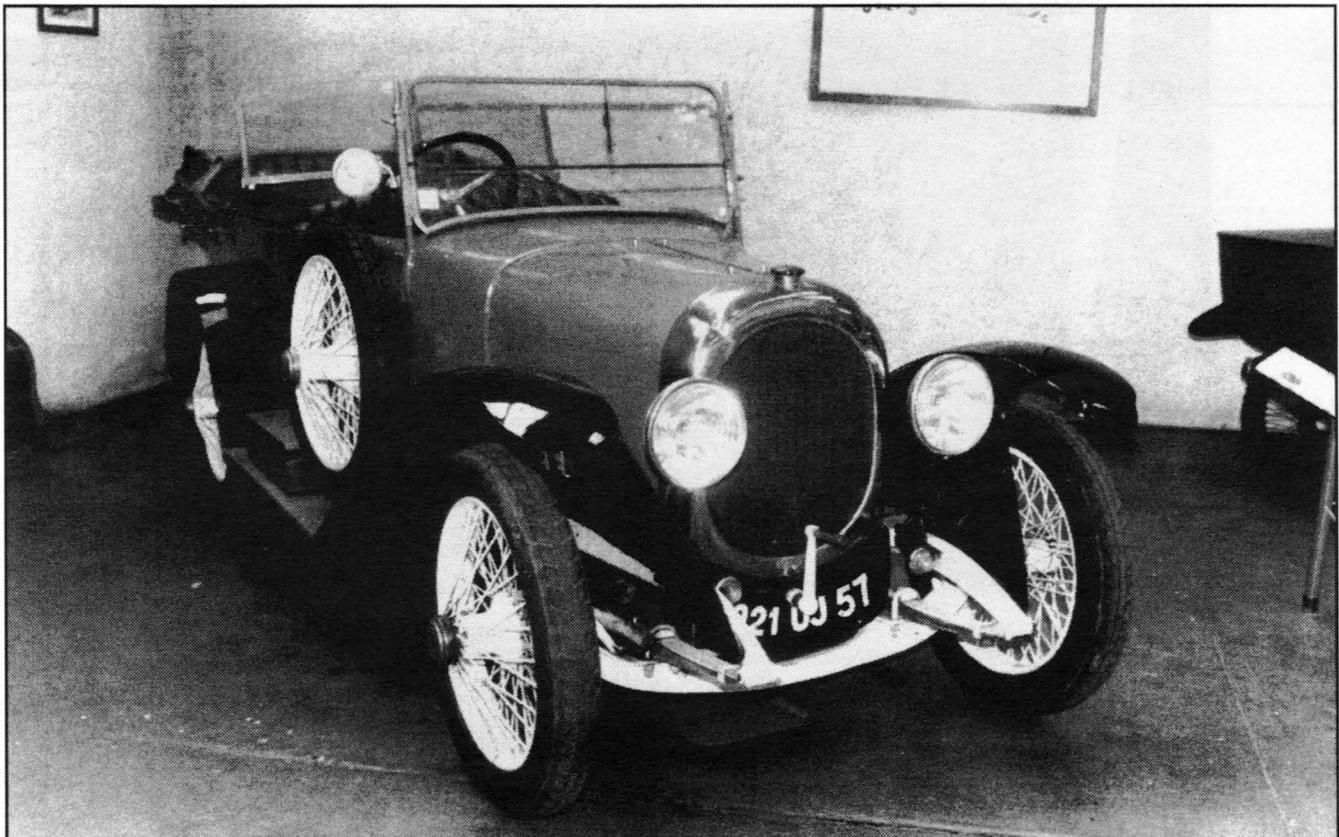
**WANTED:** Information about Brooks Stevens or Achille "Sammy" Sampietro and their association with Willys or Kaiser-Jeep. Also, information, first hand or otherwise, on the OHC "Tornado" engine and reasons why it was dropped in favor of the AMC six. **Bill Munro, 7 Galahad Road, Ifield, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 0PD, England. Phone: 01293 545556.**

**WANTED:** Any development, engineering, technical or production information for 1956 Dodge automobile, all models. Especially interested in Golden Lancer and Texan models. Any help would be appreciated. **Ralph Larson, 1715 E. Horne Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT 84106-3733. Phone: (801)467-1674.**

**WANTED:** Pierce-Arrow, Thomas Flyer, and any Buffalo-made transportation items: original signs, literature, automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, pins, trophies, photos, posters, etc. Genuine and original only. Please, no tools, magazine ads or liquor bottles. We purchase or accept full/partial donations. **The Buffalo Transportation Museum, Buffalo, NY (716) 855-1931 8AM-9PM EST (via Jim Sandoro).**

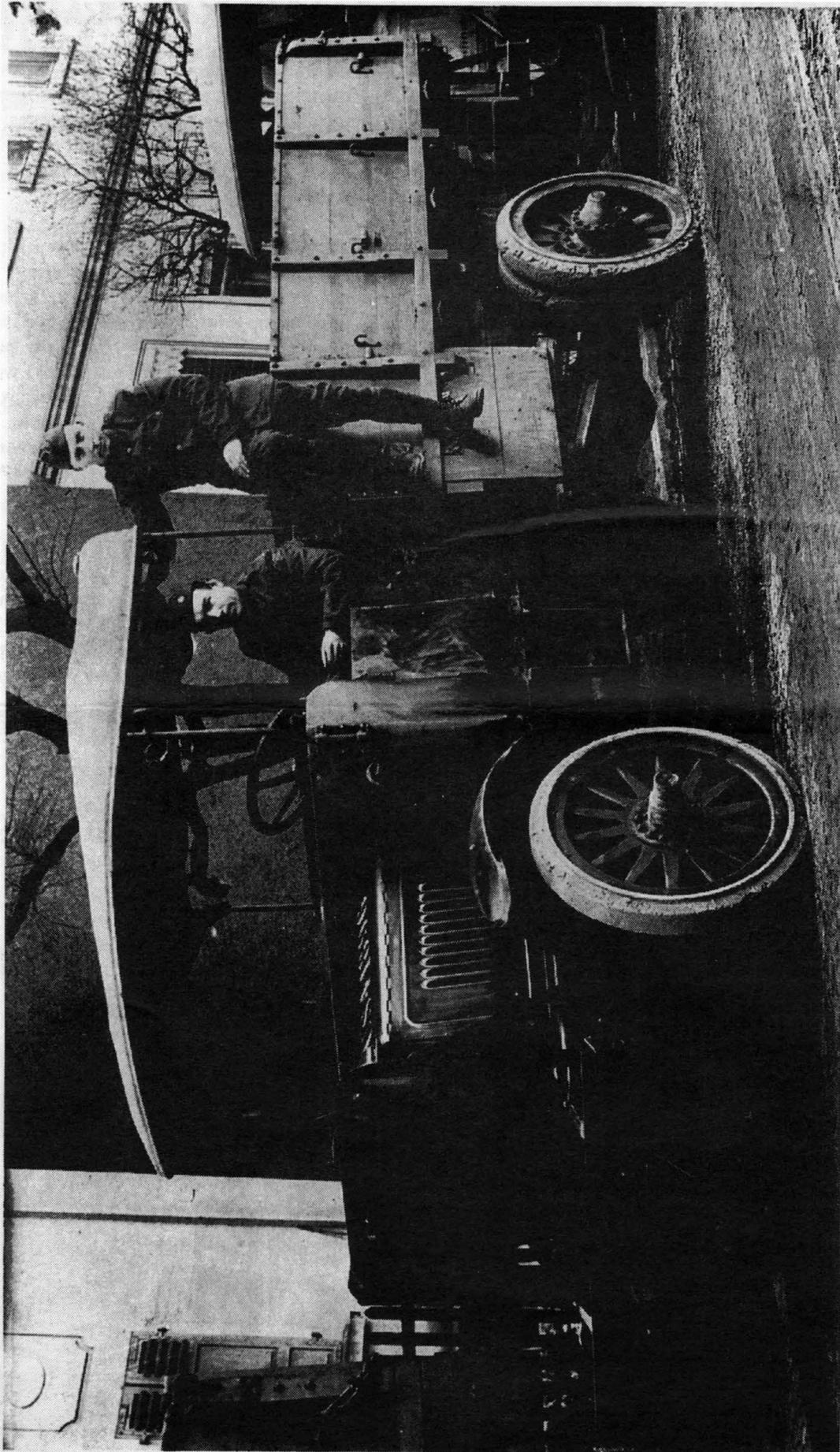
**WANTED:** I am researching the Frank Sinatra edition of Chrysler's Imperial. I'm looking for marketing information (who's idea was it?), any dialogue or relationship information between Lee Iacocca and Frank Sinatra, and if Sinatra received any payment (money, stock, etc.) for the use of his name. I would also like to purchase the sales brochure (or an excellent copy of one) that includes a picture of Sinatra. Please respond to: **Nathan Swanson, 5018 Green Oak Drive, Durham, NC 27712. Phone: (919)479-1430. Email: swans003@mc.duke.edu**

**THE HENRY NYBERG SOCIETY** is still looking for any literature pertaining to the Nyberg vehicles 1903-1913. A grateful "thank you!" to all those who have already sent articles. **Bob Youngberg, The Henry Nyberg Society, 17822 Chicago, Lansing, IL 60438, phone/fax (708) 474-3416; Email: Nyberg1Soc@aol.com**



*This beautiful 1921 Chenard & Walcker Type TT has been included here to illustrate the subject of Jan Norbye's review of the Chenard & Walcker book in this issue.*

*- from the collection of Jan P. Norbye*



Now, here's a real truck. This photo of an early Packard military truck clearly shows the solid rubber tires and heavy leaf springs characteristic of World War I-vintage trucks of this size.

- from the collection of Robert Zimmerman