

SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.
Issue 220
January–February 2006



www.autohistory.org

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Also Inside:

Silent Auction Catalog

Reminder: The deadline for 2006 SAH Awards submissions is April 15, 2006.

The Turnpike Is Coming Your Way

by Michael Bromley

The passage of H.R. 3, the \$286 billion, five-year highway funding bill that politicians have called the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users," arrives with the usual complaints of pork and misguided priorities. *SAH Journal* readers, for example, might be glad or otherwise to know that some \$3 million of it is headed to the National Packard Museum of Warren, Ohio, with the Henry Ford Museum picking up another mil or so. Quickly enough the headlines have disappeared and the arguments will hibernate for the next half a decade. Perhaps the only reason anyone outside of Washington (or outside of certain museums and their congressmen) paid attention to the bill is the current price of gasoline, which is amplified, of course, by the fuel excise tax that starts with the federal share of 18.5 cents and goes from there, state to state, upwards and beyond the 25-cent squeeze in Connecticut and the 30-cent smack of Rhode Island. (Moral of the story: when on the way to Maine, gas up in New Jersey or pray for the Massachusetts line.)

Since the now textbook history "Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways" was launched in 1956, there has been precious little debate over its meaning. Its most vigorous opponents have merely slowed or redirected it, but never changed the fundamental idea of a national system of main arteries constructed by the states and financed nationally in a pay-as-you-go scheme drawn from excise taxes on gasoline, diesel and truck tires, wherever purchased or used. Sure, environmentalists have saddled the program with regulations or city planners and activists have stopped an extension or two, but its largest obstacle has been the system's own success: congestion and too much money. The Highway Trust Fund is bulging and ever tempts Congress to such inanity as the 6,371 "pet projects" of the latest authorization and its myriad of other programs that have nothing to do with highways. Solutions to congestion call for reduction in traffic or more building rather than any fundamental change in the system. There was, however, a strenuous and successful opponent to the national system back in 1956 whose day, amazingly, is ongoing and whose particular triumph may well arrive for the rest of us: the New Jersey Turnpike.

When something becomes normal we often don't think of what was normal before it. The Interstate System and its gasoline tax are normal to us today. We don't worry about its nature, only its particular functions. What is forgotten is how much debate went into the original idea. That it was not until 1956 that Congress acted upon a truly nationalized system is telling enough—for that's halfway into the Motor Age. The Interstate System didn't just happen. Indeed, but for the hydrogen bomb it might never have happened. Of all the variables, politics, safety, economics and so on, the one difference between 1956 and earlier periods was the Soviet threat. Serious proposals in Congress for national roads date back to the early Motor Age. In August 1953 the Russian bomb gave urgency to nationalized roads. Those roads would be built.

In the old days, to get from Washington, D.C. to Maine one followed, variously, what became Route 1. My mother recalls the old path for summer trips to Maine taking from fifteen to twenty hours of driving. These days, with the traffic stars aligned—and no

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Thomas S. Jakups, Editor

Only the Cars Are Hibernating

swap meet in Springfield. Although the quantity of used parts keeps shrinking, replaced by more and more diecast models and cheap tools, it's still a can't miss event to catch up with everyone you haven't seen since the fall's last shows or all the holiday get togethers.

This time of year is also a great time to catch up on some good reading. I just finished reading *Don Bent's A Place Called Buick*. Don did a good job of detailing the physical growth of the factory site, but I would have liked some coverage of the people who worked there *à la* a book I picked up at the Buick Centennial in Flint, *The Good Old Days at the Buick*, by Lynn Reuster. The book is a look back at life there by former workers and is very enjoyable. I look forward to next reading *The Story of Reo Joe, Work, Kin and Community in Autotown U.S.A.*

Yes, there are a lot of good automotive books out there. Speaking of books, enclosed with this *Journal* is the latest

Silent Auction catalog. *Leroy and Cora Cole* do a great job with this time consuming task each year and deserve the gratitude of all SAH members.

Also in this issue SAH News kicks off with *Gregg Merksamer's* report on *Beverly Rae Kimes* receiving the International Automotive Media Awards Lifetime Achievement Award for 2005. I thank Gregg for attending the luncheon and filing his report. To say this is a well-deserved honor is like saying Mother Teresa was a well-regarded nun. Bev has devoted her working life to automotive history and personifies the mission of the Society of Automotive Historians. She has also been a generous member, frequently contributing her expertise to the *Journal*.

While checking out SAH News please note the reminders about the Paris Dinner, the April Automotive History Conference and the deadline for SAH award submissions.

—Tom Jakups

One month into the new year and here in snowy Connecticut us old-car folks are engaged in our version of the hot stove league. With our cars safely tucked away, it's time for auctions, swap meets and holiday parties.

Like weekend golfers enviously watching as the pros tackle courses in Maui and Arizona, we gather around the TV getting our vicarious thrills watching the bidding at Barrett-Jackson. For the same thrills but now in the flesh we then hop on a bus to the auction in Atlantic City. Even closer to home is the annual

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Copy Deadline for *Journal* 221
February 28th



Michael L. Berger, President

In 1965 I journeyed to New York City to attend the 1964–65 World’s Fair. Back then, such fairs were big events, featuring awe inspiring, one-of-a-kind exhibits. At this particular fair one of the most impressive exhibits was the General Motors Pavilion. I’m sure there were Ford and Chrysler buildings as well, but the one I remember was GM’s. The GM Pavilion was the successor to the wildly popular and influential GM Futurama exhibit at the 1939–1940 New York World’s Fair. It could also be viewed as the culmination of the GM Motorama promotion, wherein General Motors piqued the fancy of the buying public by featuring “dream” and experimental cars, plus the latest production models, in eight traveling auto shows from 1949 through 1961.

The 1964–65 GM Pavilion featured futuristic cars, a trip to the moon and a piece of road equipment that in one, continuous motion felled forest trees at its front and laid a finished asphalt road at the rear, a technological feat that was awesome to this 22-year-old. In 1965 General Motors was lord of the automotive world and created memories for me that have lasted for over four decades.

Recently, as part of the events connected with the IX World Forum for Motor Museums, I had the opportunity to visit the GM Technical Center in Warren, Michigan. It is there that GM cars of the future are conceived and developed. As one might imagine, in an age of industrial espionage, security is a major concern at that multi-building facility, or

On Star, or Badly Off Course?

“campus” as they call it. Therefore, it did not surprise my fellow conference attendees and me when we were all warned a day in advance that all photographic equipment would be collected at the GM Heritage Center (our preceding tour site) and returned to us after we completed our visit to the Tech Center. There was an air of excitement as we contemplated the futuristic designs and engines that we believed we would see the next day, something akin to the feeling that one used to experience when purchasing car magazines to view photographs of the partially disguised vehicles of the next model year.

That morning, in preparation for the Tech Center trip, GM’s Stu Shuster gave a brief PowerPoint introduction. Technically brilliant and flawlessly delivered, it curiously did not feature a single car, but rather focused on the architecture of the Tech Center’s campus, which was built back in the mid-’50s and designed by internationally-acclaimed architect Eero Saarinen. I thought for a moment that Mr. Shuster’s speech writer had confused his audience with a meeting of the American Institute of Architects, but reasoned that this was background information that GM would rather present there than on the tour.

Three hours later we had deposited our cameras and boarded buses for our trip to the Tech Center, just a few miles away. As we traveled from one campus building to the next, it was obvious that our tour guides shared Mr. Shuster’s enthusiasm for the architecture of the place. It also became painfully evident that we were not to be allowed to pass beyond the public lobby of each building.

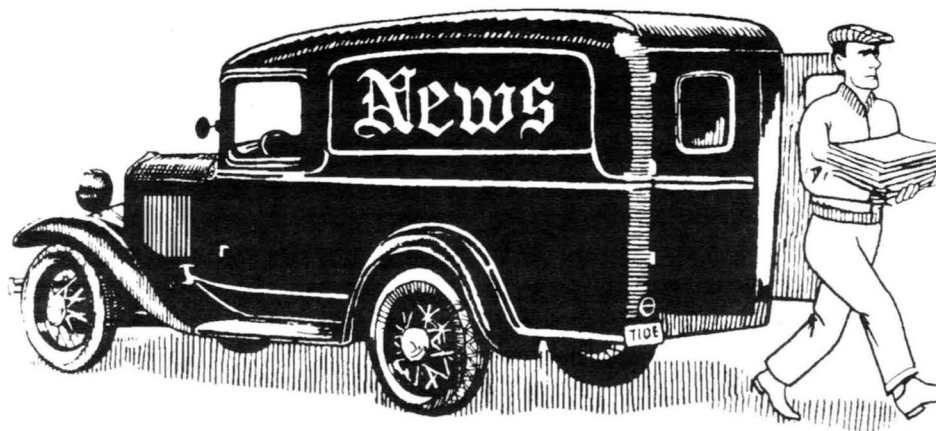
Finally, as the last stop on the tour, we were deposited at the Vehicle Engineering Center, a recent (2003) addition to the Tech Center campus and the “cornerstone of GM’s strategic plan to consolidate vehicle engineering functions formerly performed at several locations.” Surely here, I thought, we would finally

see something automotive—and indeed we did. On display were the 2006 General Motors models, in effect a large showroom for a dealership that carried all the GM marques. Nothing more, nothing less. There was much joking on the way back to the Heritage Center of the “insider” photographs that we might have taken with hidden cameras and then sold at top dollar to *Road & Track* or *Car and Driver*.

I have tried to enliven what was in reality a rather deadly couple of hours. Why devote so much space to it? Because I think it is indicative of a corporate mentality that threatens to destroy the house that Sloan built. After all, it appears that General Motors cannot even relate effectively to enthusiasts of the product they manufacture. Given a collection of executives from motor museums around the world, the best that GM could muster at its Tech Center was a tribute to the 1950s architectural brilliance of Eero Saarinen. It was almost as if the award-winning architecture symbolized the height of GM’s glory and they had chosen to freeze that moment in time. If anything, it was a visual preview of an op-ed piece that appeared later that month in *The Wall Street Journal*. Therein, freelance writer John Schnapp indicted GM for inadequate corporate governance, a culture of management non-accountability, technological followership, brand proliferation and, most importantly, vision failure.

There is probably little we can do to reverse the downward spiral that threatens to drop General Motors behind Toyota as the world’s largest manufacturer of automobiles. After all, GM ignored our pleas and allowed Oldsmobile, then the oldest continuously manufactured American marque, to expire a few years ago. Nonetheless, the possible demise of General Motors is a sad development, and one that we, as students of automotive history, should mourn.

—Mike Berger



Kimes Is Recipient of IAMA Lifetime Achievement Award

[Editor's Note: I received word of Beverly Rae Kimes receiving the International Automotive Media Awards Lifetime Achievement Award for 2005 just as *Journal 219* was going to press. Following is more complete coverage of the honor bestowed on her.]

On November 15th, an impressively diverse group of Beverly Rae Kimes's professional colleagues and admirers gathered at Sardi's restaurant in New York City to hail her contributions yet again, this time as the 2005 recipient of Lifetime Achievement honors from the International Automotive Media Awards.

Iola, Wisconsin, SAH member and *Old Cars Weekly* founder Chet Krause was just one of many luminaries who traveled great distances to witness the presentation hosted by IAMA Executive Director Walter Haessner and his wife, Elaine, which took place at the monthly meeting



Beverly Rae Kimes with Ralph

of Bruce and Genia Wennerstrom's Madison Avenue Sports Car Driving & Chowder Society.

A highlight of the luncheon was a "This Is Your Life"-style slide show that included images of pioneer auto hobbyist Henry Austin Clark serving as the best man at her wedding, Grand Prix champion René Dreyfus (Beverly helped him pen his autobiography *My Two Lives: Race Driver to Restaurateur*), and a 1930 Auburn 8-125 Sport Sedan named "Ralph," in which Kimes and her husband Jim Cox have clocked more than 50,000 miles on CCCA and Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Club tours.

All-in-all, the afternoon presented a worthwhile opportunity to reflect on the somewhat-unlikely path that had brought Kimes to her current position as America's most-honored automotive historian. Having grown up in Wheaton, Illinois, she double-majored in journalism and history at the University of Illinois and earned herself a Master's at Penn State before heading to New York City, where she split the rent with an aspiring actress and searched for a magazine job that would allow her to write. In 1963, she landed a job as editorial assistant at a fledgling year-old publication named *Automobile Quarterly*, even though, as she conceded in her interview with editor Scott Bailey, her possession of a driver's license was the extent of her automotive knowledge at the time.

"My first assignment was a history of the Curved Dash Oldsmobile and I

was hooked," she once recalled. "What could be more exciting than automobile history? I told myself that one day I would know enough about it to tell everyone else how exciting it was."

In stark contrast to the yearlong stint she originally anticipated, Kimes would spend eighteen years at AQ, the last seven of which were served as editor.

"Needless to say, I am thrilled and vigorously thank everyone involved for recognizing me for this significant award," Kimes said after the 2004 IAMA Lifetime Achievement recipient, longtime *Forbes* magazine automotive columnist Jerry Flint, called her to the podium.

"The automobile is the most important invention of the last century, indeed the modern age. Nothing else comes close. As early as 1913, *The New York Times* reported that, and I quote, 'The invention of the automobile has literally changed the face of the earth.' 1913, mind you. Henry Ford's mass production was in the birthing stage and already the universal impact of the automobile was recognized.

"Even though people take the car for granted today and, except for the committed, don't give automobile history a second thought . . . the automobile covers all the facets of history: industrial, technological, social, cultural and political. It's all pervasive. And biography? Think about it. What other industry produced the fabulous characters of automobile history? What other saga could boast a cast like Henry Ford, Billy Durant, Alfred Sloan, Walter Chrysler, Charles Kettering, Henry Leland and Barney Oldfield?"

She pledged in closing that "It is my mission to make people aware of all this, to persuade them to respect and enjoy automobile history as much as I do. I plan to spend the rest of my life spreading the gospel."

In addition to her Lifetime Achievement Award, Kimes also received the IAMA's Best of Books honor for *Pioneers, Engineers, and Scoundrels: The Dawn of the Automobile in America*, published by the Society of Automotive Engineers.

—Gregg Merksamer

Obituary LJK Setright (1931–2005)

Leonard John Kensell Setright, probably Britain's best-known and certainly most erudite motoring journalist, died September 7th of cancer. He was 74.

Most closely associated with *Car* magazine, he took up writing in the 1960s after doing his national service. Educated in the law, he found he hated practicing it, and his aptitude for engineering made him an excellent technical writer. Educated in the classics, he was wont to season his prose with erudite allusions, interspersed with copious quotations in Latin or Greek.

A talented musician, Setright was a skilled clarinetist and co-founded the Philharmonia Chorus. A dedicated student of Judaism, he practiced his religion all of his life. He loved Bristol cars, fast driving, motorcycles, Honda engineering and Russian cigarettes. It is tribute to his standing (or perhaps to British regard for the profession of motoring journalism) that all the London dailies ran his obituary. The *Daily Telegraph* carried it with the subhead "Motoring journalist, musician, scholar of Judaism and smoker."

—Kit Foster

Reminder for Paris

As announced in the last *Journal*, the 10th anniversary of SAH dinners in Paris for members and guests will take place on February 9th. See Issue 219 for details.

By the time you read this, members resident outside the United States will have made their reservations with *Laurent Friry* by January 23rd, and paid him 89 euros. His e-mail address is Laurent.friry@ericsson.com, and his home address, 22 rue d'Antony, F-91370 Verrierès le Buisson. Those coming from the United States should have contacted me (ztv@comcast.net) for the final price of the dinner (\$108.50) and mailed a check, to my order, at 1314 Trinity Drive, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Members wherever resident who intend to attend the dinner and would like to go to the Le Mans museum on Saturday, February 11th, should contact

me no later than February 5th so that we may have a headcount and see whether we qualify for a special price on the TGV.

For those who did not attend *Rétromobile* last year, you will find that the exposition has moved from Hall 2.1 to nearby Hall 7.2 at the Porte de Versailles where wider aisles make the show more enjoyable.

—Taylor Vinson

Engine of Change: The Automobile and Its Influence Sixth History Conference in South Bend, Indiana April 5–8, 2006

SAH and the National Association of Automobile Museums will jointly sponsor their sixth biennial automotive history conference from April 5 to 8, 2006, at the Studebaker National Museum in South Bend, Indiana. Entitled "Engine of Change: The Automobile and Its Influence," the SAH sessions will explore, among other things, the development and impact of the automobile in the world. The conference will also feature workshops directed toward museum professionals and several tours of area auto and local heritage resources.

Attendees will congregate on Wednesday evening, April 5th, for an opening reception at the museum. Conference sessions are planned for Thursday, April 6th and Saturday, April 8th. Friday April 7th is reserved for tours to local points of interest, automobile collections and heritage sites.

Concluding the conference will be a social hour and keynote dinner on Saturday evening, featuring a presentation on renowned football coach Knute Rockne and the Rockne automobile.

Cost of the conference, which includes registration, refreshments, tours and meals on Thursday and Saturday, is \$250 for members of SAH or NAAM and \$285 for non-members. Early-bird rates of \$215/\$240 will be available until February 27th. A one-day rate of \$100 is available, as well as a full registration for spouse, including meals, of \$175. A fee of \$50 will be charged for the tour alone.

Final deadline for registration is March 16th. Checks should be made out to SNM–NAAM Conference and sent to Studebaker National Museum, 201 South Chapin Street, South Bend, IN 46601. Visa, MasterCard and American Express payments are welcome. Registration may also be made via the Studebaker Museum website, www.studebakermuseum.org.

Accommodations are the responsibility of attendees and should be arranged directly with the host hotel, Holiday Inn City Center, 213 West Washington Street, South Bend. Mention the Studebaker Museum to get the conference rate of \$84.95 per night plus tax, which is valid through March 16th. Call +1(888)465–4329 for reservations. The main hotel number is +1(574)232–3941.

A mailing with complete information and registration details is being sent to all members. Inquiries may also be directed to the Studebaker Museum at +1(574)235–9714, which will handle conference registration. Museum Executive Director Becky Bonham is general chair of the conference. Program chair for NAAM is Andy Beckman of the Museum. *Kit Foster* serves as program chair for SAH; he may be reached at +1(860)464–6466 or email treasurer@autohistory.org.

Just Out

I've been collecting annuals for several decades, and plenty of interesting ones have come around. Recently, a new one from Poland has been published and I had to get a copy. These fellows have been doing this for the Polish market since 1991 and realized that the rest of the world would like one, too.

The 2005–2006 edition of *World of Cars* (Media Connection SP. Z O.D. Modlińska 175A PL 03–186 Warszawa, Poland) is the first in English. The annual claimed coverage of 60 countries, 1,400 makes, 8,000 models with 3,500 photos. I was not disappointed, as it is well put together and very up to date, having in it models that are just coming to market now.

I counted 211 British specialist and kit car makes, all with a picture or more. The staggering array of Chinese cars and

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When Heaven Was at the Corner of Sycamore (or Maple) and Main

By Pete Whittier

In the "Letters" section of a major car magazine, a reader writes of Tom McCahill's road tests for *Popular Mechanics* magazine and of his sizing trunks with his own body. Wait—the McCahill era ended only thirty years ago. Tom of course wrote for *Mechanix Illustrated* and his friend Jim McMichael was his trunk tester. Every car person knows that.

In a recent write up in another magazine the author describes the transverse mounting of the V-8 engine in the original Olds Toronado. But all the old pictures and not-so-old memories recall a north-south engine placement. The '60s weren't that long ago.

In the "Auctions" column of another buff book, the reporter notes that "Jaguar XK120s are surprisingly small inside." Why the surprise? The 120 Jag was "small" mainly in driver's legroom because the engine was set well back in the chassis for better balance. Legroom went up when the engine was moved forward in the XK140. This is well known.

What do these excerpts have in common? (a) Their writers didn't have copy editors with long memories. (b) The writers are younger than their subjects. (c) They contain trivial errors not worthy of comment, picked up by readers with way too much time on their hands who know nothing of space limitations or deadlines.

The answer is (a), for sure; (b), very possibly; and (c), then why do they call them "buff" books? It's because car buffs expect an exceptional level of expertise to be reflected in everything that gets into print in the books.

If that level is lower today, I'd suggest it's because many automotive journalists have much less first-hand knowledge of what they are writing about and nowhere near the enthusiasm of their seniors.

They don't, in other words, have the "Sycamore and Main" syndrome. That's short for "When Heaven was at the corner of Sycamore and Main," the lead of a magazine ad for a 1938 Packard. It depicted the view from a showroom out to a young boy looking in, experiencing

the beginnings of what, the text tells us, was his car consciousness.

Some who have been happily afflicted with the syndrome and graced with gifts as writers have built careers communicating on our shared interests with us less gifted mortals. For others not of this persuasion, whose work is vocation more than fascination, well, it shows.

For this kid that showroom was at the corner of North Maple Avenue and Main Street at the end of the block I lived on in East Orange, New Jersey, in early June 1948, where behind the soaped up windows of a newly built dealership awaited the new 1949 Ford. In due course my father took note of my interest and upped my allowance so that I could afford the 50 percent price increase to switch from *Blackhawk Comics* to *Mechanix Illustrated*.

Three years later I was reading Harry Bennett's *We Never Called Him Henry*, and fifty-four years after angry old Harry entertained me I read whatever automobilia I can get my hands on, noting the obvious: there are too few good old editors to go around.

Compensation comes from reading the masters who are still writing: *Michael Lamm*, *USA Today's* Jim Healey, David E. Davis, Jr., Peter Egan, Denise McCluggage, *Brock Yates*, Patrick Bedard, Joseph White of *The Wall Street Journal* and (insert your favorite here). They all, in their own ways, combine meticulous respect for facts and their readers' intelligence with superb writing.

It may not be fair to expect younger journalists to communicate so well or to write about the past as though they had been there. They should, however, recognize the limitation when it matters, and compensate. That means deeper and more careful research for the

time and space available, and some effort to convey a sense of the times and circumstances being written about.

The result won't often rise to the levels reached by the masters so often and for so long, but excitement will always show through. It was rarely better shown than in the morning of the auto age in Ned Jordan's "Somewhere West of Laramie" advertisement. Ever make a point of heading out "west of Laramie?" I did, a few years ago, just to see what it looked like. I-80 never looked better, rolling out toward the horizon as other roads must have in Jordan's time.

Any wordsmith who can connect to that kind of sensibility will always have company at the showroom window. ■

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trucks is documented. Each listing tells which models are produced at that location and some of the history of the company. In the back are charts of specifications of the mass produced models and another section with sales statistics for each country. It will likely be more useful to the future auto historian than many of its competitors.

I got my copy direct from the publisher's web site, www.worldofcars.pl for about \$28.00 including postage. The current price is 16.48 Euros. It took about six weeks and came by registered mail.

—John E. Lloyd

SAH Awards Reminder

April 15th is the deadline for nominations for books, magazines, articles, organizations and people worthy of being honored in 2006. You will find the chairman and address for each award in *Journal* 219. The deadline for the Student Writing Award is June 1st.

Get Your Review Here

Automotive History Review No. 44 (Fall 2005) was posted to non-residents of the U.S. on November 3rd. One has been returned with its label missing. The issue was destined for the UK/Western Europe. If you live there and have not received your copy, please e-mail *Taylor Vinson* at ztv@comcast.net.

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cops, hopefully—I can make the trip in 10 hours. The savings go well beyond time: the roads are safer, the traffic flows free of stop lights and there are no directions to follow but a simple arrow pointing north. There are, however, a couple stops on the way, for homage must be delivered to certain roads, tunnels and bridges that defy the politics and funding of national roads. Where tolls exist along I-95 it is by legal exception to the original system's rule banning them or a matter of coming out of pre-existing toll roads or new projects that the federal system could not accommodate. In New Jersey, though, it's an altogether different game. At the top of Delaware the freeway splits northwest towards Philadelphia and from there dumps the traveler upon either Trenton or Route 1 towards Princeton. There's not a northbound blue and white sign until just before the George Washington Bridge, whereupon it's I-95 again, straight to Maine.

New Jersey, you see, didn't want the federal competition to its golden road, the world-famous, hated, envied, cursed and beloved Jersey Turnpike. You want a quick ride through the state, you take the state's road. And you pay dearly for the honor, these days \$6.45 for a one-way run paid in cash. While New Jersey's was not the first state-wide toll road, New Jersey's was far and away the most successful. From its first opening of a 40-mile stretch in 1951 the road exceeded all expectations. As a financial instrument, with bonds underwritten by tolls, the road paid magnificently, and every subsequent subscription for expansion, operations or repairs has been devoured by Wall Street. Traffic volume, of course, outpaced plans from the get-go, as the road's success has from day one created more demand.

And so it has been ever since—and in defiance of the Interstate System. While New Jersey has played the federal game with such routes as Interstates 295, 78, 278 and the I-95 designation of the upper Turnpike (that, too, a whole other story), the state has stood by its fee-based roads and protected them from the “free”

competition and its not-so-free funding. Now, with the Interstate System running into walls of politics, congestion, finance and public transit, it is to New Jersey and not the Highway Trust Fund that innovation turns. The turnpike is back.

States with existing turnpikes are re-committing to them and others have found order in road fees as the way through the dilemma that is the modern highway and how to pay for it, especially for sorely needed new ones. There's a re-revolution going on. Maybe Congress will catch on in five years. Or maybe we'll all be riding a bus. Either way, states are headed back to the 1930s and '40s, when the failures of federal aid inspired the turnpikes of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New Jersey, Florida, Maine and others—roads that were as important to building the nation as the Interstate System itself.

One wonders where it'd have gone had the New Jersey model prevailed across the nation. The Turnpike remains innovative and customer friendly, with some of the best traffic management and information and danger warning systems in the world. And while critics complain that the per-mile fee is far and away higher than what gasoline excise taxes translate to per vehicle mile, the fact remains that whenever you pump gas you are not paying for the New Jersey Turnpike. You only pay for it when you use it. And as for the tolls themselves, for all the problems in its introduction, EZ-Pass is the default modern way. And

modern experiments in “congestion pricing”—adjusting tolls to traffic flow—are but a copy of an original ploy of the New Jersey Turnpike. Back in 1951 the AAA wailed and moaned that the northern portion of the road was more expensive by the mile than the lower half. Of course it was, went the state's unspoken reply, for therein lay more demand.

Those ninety or so minutes I give the Turnpike on my way to Maine account for a good part of the five-plus hour savings in my trip over what my mother used to take. It furthermore means that the gasoline tax is that much less in New Jersey and across the land. Hate it, laugh at it, curse it—and use it and get used to it. The turnpike is coming your way. ■

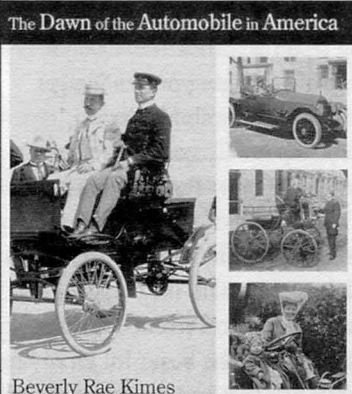
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and the close links between company, work and staff. The index is most helpful.

This thorough chronicle of the DaimlerChrysler works at Untertürkheim certainly is not a book for the casual reader who might be interested in one or the other Mercedes models. For those who want to learn about the background and working men and women connected with automobile production of the past 100 years, however, it is a mine of information. With hundreds of illustrations and information on many aspects of production it offers an insight into the fascinating world of the automobile industry.

—Ferdinand Hediger

Pioneers, Engineers & Scoundrels
The Dawn of the Automobile in America



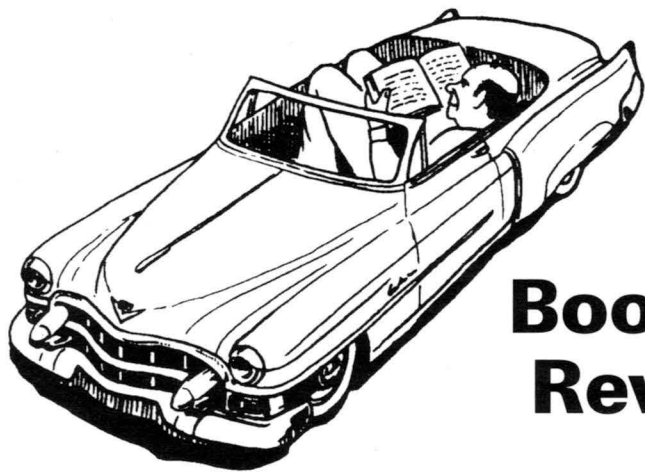
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Beverly Rae Kimes



Book Reviews

• **Ferrari, A Champion's View**, by Phil Hill, photography by John Lamm, 2004, ISBN 1-85443-212-5. Hardbound, 191 pages. Dalton Watson Fine Books Ltd, England and USA, www.daltonwatson.com. UK£45, US\$80

World Champion racer, writer and vehicle restorer Phil Hill has driven and raced an awful lot of Ferraris. Long-time friend and collaborator John Lamm has photographed most of them. This beautiful book focuses on the sports racing cars (not the single-seaters) from the one surviving (is it really a Ferrari?) 815 of the two built for the 1940 cross-country Mille Miglia through the car Hill calls "the only modern sports racing Ferrari," the 333 SP of 1994. Not surprisingly, the book's dominant color is RED.

Nineteen lavishly illustrated chapters are devoted to generations of racing Ferraris: "Barchetta," "250 MM," "The Big Fours," "250 TR," "The Dinos," and so on. While some artists' paintings are praised as realistic enough to be mistaken for photographs, these pages are rich with Lamm photos so spectacular they could be paintings. The breathtaking 250 Testa Rossa shots on pages 108-111 are prime examples.

One short, poignant chapter deals with death—a frequent visitor to top-rung racing in the 1950s and '60s—primarily that of Hill's early hero, Alberto Ascari. This 1955 tragedy elevated Hill into an opportunity for a Le Mans 24-Hour drive in a new 121 LM—the same LeMans that saw the worst racing accident in history.

The final chapter, "Big Rig, Driving a Ferrari Transporter," is another departure, which resulted from a stint behind the massive wheel of a fully restored 1957 Ferrari transporter. "This might seem a little odd," Hill writes, "but in addition to my team members, there were other Ferrari drivers I held in high esteem: the men who drove our race car transporters. It was a job with tremendous responsibility, one that was highly regarded at the factory. . . . Just think what a disaster it would have been if a race transporter, laden with three race-ready Testa Rossas or Grand Prix cars, had ever crashed. . . . There were times in the 1950s when such a disaster could have endangered the existence of the Ferrari factory."

Those who have read 34 years worth of Hill/Lamm collaborations in the pages of *Road & Track* can be forgiven for wondering whether they are actually written by Hill (who is listed as a contributing editor) or ghost-written by Editor-at-Large Lamm. "These stories are not ghost written," Lamm asserts. "In fact, Phil knows more about the English language than I do. They are very much his words . . . Phil's stories as told by him."

The result is a wealth of always interesting, oft-engaging prose: "Forget everything you know about Ferrari," begins the chapter "Corsa Spyder, the First Ferraris." "Forget the six-figure price tags, the social level of the clientele and the magic of the name. Pretend the world has yet to hear a Ferrari V-12 ripping its way up a rev counter. Pretend that nobody has ever seen the beautiful Pininfarina bodywork that has graced so many

Ferraris. Imagine the Tifosi not waving flags at Monza or Imola to celebrate another Ferrari victory, because there isn't yet a Ferrari Grand Prix team."

Other random samples: "Monza's banking was rough and could beat you up. Worse yet, the 412 MI cockpit was so hot that new openings had to be cut in it after almost every track session. . . . The track was so rough all the drivers were being thrown around the cockpit. This might have been the first time I ever used a seatbelt in an open race car . . . not for safety, just to stay anchored in the seat."

"A Sicilian snuffed his cigarette out in my face just before his friend smacked me on the back of the head with a board. If Benoit Musy hadn't shown up with his pistol, I don't know what would have happened, and all because the Ferrari 500 Testa Rossa was so quick."

"You'd treat a wide, flat airport hairpin with plenty of run-off area in a different manner than a tight, tree-lined course. On the former you can gain valuable tenths of a second lap after lap as you edge your way to that one time when you bobble, slide a little farther on the flat expanse of concrete and lose a few tenths with no penalty other than time . . . so in the end there was a net gain. You never gain, however, if you hit a eucalyptus tree."

Though an engineer by education and (some) experience, I never enjoyed reading the textbooks and there is at times too much technical detail for my taste. But readers not enthralled by nuts and bolts can skip those passages and revel in the wonderfully related driving experiences. Hill does not just describe these technically and aesthetically beautiful machines, which most any decent author could do. He has the rare ability to put his readers in their cockpits to share the sights, sounds and sensations. He sometimes even lets them drive.

With forewords by *Road & Track* editor-in-chief Thos L. Bryant and General Racing, Ltd. chairman Steve Earle and a Lamm Introduction on Hill the man and his many impressive achievements, this big-format tome is a hefty investment at US\$80. But it's a

beautiful browse for the photos alone and a fascinating, entertaining read guaranteed to be a treasured addition to anyone's book collection.

—Gary Witzenburg

Future Retro: Drawings from the Great Age of American Automobiles,

by *Frederic A. Sharf*. 2006, ISBN: 0-87846-690-8 Softbound, 8 x 10-1/2 inches, more than 50 illustrations in full color. MFA Publications (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), 485 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115. \$19.95.

This is a book for students of American automobiles of the '50s and '60s to revel in. The title deftly says what it's about. Books on American automobiles of the period are rife; rare is the volume that examines design only. And even amid that small number, this book is unique.

Believing that their design drawings had no intrinsic interest, automobile companies routinely destroyed them at the end of the model year. A limited number of these original renderings survive, however, and *Frederic A. Sharf* has made it his mission to find them. All of the illustrations in this book are from his collection, and much of what you will see here you've never seen before.

Future Retro begins with a fine essay by Sharf entitled "Designing the American Dream" and ends with two never-before-published manuscripts on the subject by Richard Arbib that were discovered following his death.

Prior to 1927, except for Locomobile, the American automobile industry in general regarded a car's body as an afterthought. Harley Earl changed that with Art & Colour, which soon had a design studio for every company within GM. Ford followed with a single studio for all cars, trucks, even tractors. Chrysler's design department mimed GM even to the spelling of "Colour."

By the late '40s, forgetting the long, terrible war was very much on the American mind, and what better way to do that than with exciting new products which Americans coveted, the most exciting of

which for most was their automobile. With its studio system well established, the industry was well suited to serve up a plethora of designs to dazzle the eye. Harley Earl started the parade with the 1955 Motorama; Ford's Stylerama followed. Interestingly, Chrysler was the only one of the Big Three to employ a professional illustrator in its design studio.

The preponderance of renderings shown are General Motors, but Ford, Chrysler, American Motors and Packard are represented, and there are concept-for-concept's sake proposals, some of them wonderfully outrageous.

This splendidly produced book is a trip back to one of American automobile history's most colorful eras. It is very much recommended that you take it

—Beverly Rae Kimes

DaimlerChrysler Werk Untertürkheim, by Wilfried Feldenkirchen. 2004. ISBN 3-613-02448-9. Hardbound, 280 pages, about 300 illustrations in b/w and color, German language. Published by Motorbuchverlag, Stuttgart, Germany. Price about \$36.

While there are many books available on the various Mercedes-Benz vehicles, there so far has been little published on the subject of their production, the staff, the economic and social environment. This book addresses this in describing the main works in Untertürkheim near Stuttgart. It contains a vast amount of information going back to the founding days of the company. In five main chapters the development of the works is very competently described and nicely illustrated with many hitherto unpublished pictures, graphs and reprints.

In the Foreword Dr. Harry Niemann, responsible for the historical center of the company, points out the huge importance of the Untertürkheim works, which covers an area of more than 500 acres and provides working places and income for a staff of about 21,000 people. Every year the engines, gearboxes and axles for more than one million vehicles are produced.

The first chapter covers the beginning of the automobile industry in the Stuttgart area. From the invention of the gas engine through the early motor-coaches and automobiles, the devastating fire of 1903 and the construction of the new works in Untertürkheim, and the booming growth of production leading up to the First World War there is much new information. The author, as in all the other chapters, pays special attention to the working conditions, the professional education and training and the works organization.

The next chapter deals with the rapid development of the company, especially in producing aero engines for military planes up until 1918. Interesting insights into the production space and the working places are provided along with illustrations. After difficult times dealing with the hyperinflation in Germany there comes the merger with Benz to form the new Daimler-Benz AG in 1926.

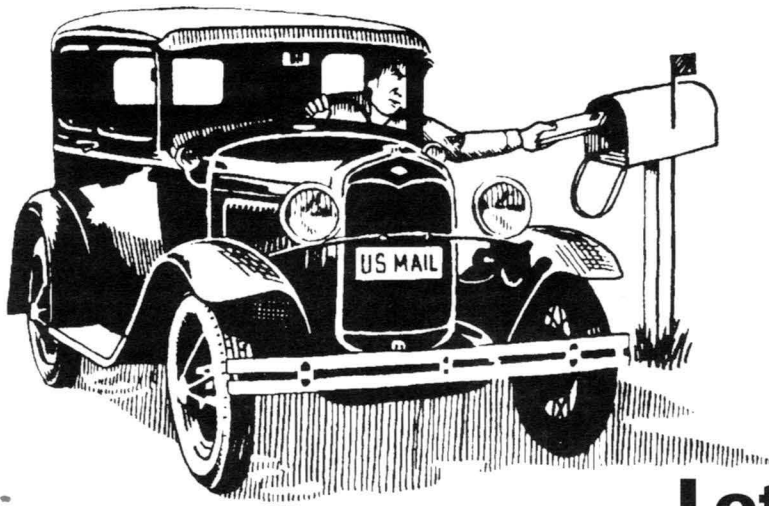
Chapter 3 covers the period up to 1945. In the beginning there were considerable economic difficulties, which reached their peak in the crisis of the early 1930s. Production dropped to below 3,000 units in 1931. When the Nazi government took over, things changed and by 1935 more than 15,000 cars were delivered and production nearly doubled once again by 1938.

During WWII the vast percentage of production was for the army, navy and air force. In addition to the traditional products there were big engines for airplanes, ships and tanks. The employment of forced foreign labor is also mentioned. In 1944 about 70 percent of the works was destroyed by allied bomber attacks.

Reconstruction and growth make up the content of the next chapter. After a slow start production boomed, reaching its peak in the 1960s. About 175,000 engines were annually made and this figure doubled by 1970.

The final chapter shows the development of the works Untertürkheim up until 2003. Apart from the modernization of the cars as well as the production methods, the author offers interesting information on the organization, the staff politics

continued on page 7



Letters

True History Should Be Warts and All

We note *Maurice Hendry's* letter, "Magic of a Name—Fact and Fiction," in the September-October 2005 *SAH Journal* and feel that some comment would be in order.

The original book *Magic of a Name* was written, as Hendry states, for Rolls-Royce as a company give-away. It was placed in bedrooms in the company's guest house near Derby and distributed among visitors to the company. It was never intended as an objective analysis and its style belongs to the 1930s. For this reason, a successor was commissioned in the 1950s, but a Board member took umbrage at it and almost all copies were burned. More recently, a three-volume corporate history was commissioned, using the original title.

For all its faults, Nockolds' *Magic of a Name* established a cornerstone of understanding. He had little to build on: Pemberton's *The life of Sir Henry Royce*, Morriss's *Two Brave Brothers* and the writings of Massac Buist being about the best there was. So let us look at some of Hendry's concerns.

Captions: The picture opposite page 34 is of the surviving Rolls-Royce two-cylinder 10-h.p. car which was taken for a drive by Royce late in his life. It is not captioned the "original" Royce car as Hendry suggests. It is not even stated to be a Royce. The caption reads "Originator and original." It is the origi-

nal model of Rolls-Royce car, although placed in a chapter on the Royce prototypes. As to registration plates, those used on the Royce cars present a complex saga, now fully resolved. (See *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce* 1994.)

Hendry criticizes the caption for the Vimy of Alcock and Brown in that it reads "First across the Atlantic" when in fact the US Navy accomplished this. He fails to note that the text on page 128 opposite states quite clearly that it was the *first direct crossing*. The indirect crossing by the U.S. Navy was not relevant as the chapter is about the prize offered by the *Daily Mail* for a direct crossing.

Hendry might have added that the U.S. Navy used three Curtiss flying boats, flying from Newfoundland via the Azores, and supported below by 27 destroyers and three depot ships. The Curtiss NC4 alone succeeded, departing Newfoundland on May 16, 1919 and landing at Lisbon eleven days later. She flew on to Plymouth Sound on June 1st, landing close to where the Mayflower had set sail in 1620. America tends to overlook both achievements, fixing on the much later flight of Lindbergh.

The Liberty engine was not designed by Packard. Jesse Vincent of Packard did propose that the output of engines would be far greater if America, unlike Europe, agreed on a single design. Colonel Edward Deeds saw that minds would only be focused on such a project if the government ran it rather than a

specific company. The engine was a U.S. government initiative, the name Liberty being the first ever to be registered by the government. Vincent was a leading light under Deeds, along with Elbert Hall from the Hall-Scott Motor Car Co. Packard, Lincoln (set up by the Lelands for the purpose), Ford, GM (in their Cadillac and Buick Divisions) and Nordyke & Marmon turned out a total of 20,478 engines. A number were also built by the Trego Motor Corp., but were judged sub-standard.

Hendry should read the monograph published by the Smithsonian in their *Annals of Flight* series (*The Liberty Engine, 1918–1942*, 1968.). It was utterly remarkable for the way America turned out so many and so quickly, although it might have benefited from further development first.

Austrian Alpine Trials: No R-R Alpine Trials team was entered in 1912, as Hendry states; the year was 1913. It is quite possible that both assertions he quotes about the Ghost on the mountain passes were true—further depression of the accelerator pedal might have had no additional effect under certain driving conditions.

Mercedes and the R-R Eagle aero engine: The Mercedes welded cylinder jacket was an influence, although not the only one, on what Royce chose and Royce ensured that no German patents were infringed. All but the cylinders and valve gear evolved from the "Silver Ghost" engine, with its "state of the art" bottom end technology; the Mercedes still incorporated the mistakes Royce had eliminated in 1906!

Curtiss D-12: The Curtiss D-12 was a very fine engine, used in America's Schneider Trophy seaplanes of the 1920s. It was designed as a response to the Hispano Suiza V-8, which Henry M. Crane was building under license at Crane Simplex. John Willys, boss of Curtiss, wanted to create something better and the outcome was the D-12.

Hendry is wrong in suggesting Rolls-Royce copied the D-12. Richard Fairey, the British aircraft designer and manufacturer, wanted to make engines

as well as airframes and took a license for the D-12. He used one in his Fox bomber which could outrun any fighter the RAF then possessed. The British government already had Bristol, Napier, Siddeley and Rolls-Royce making engines; they didn't want Fairey as well. Rolls-Royce was working on an X-16 called the Eagle XVI when the British Ministry contracted them instead to design a monobloc V-12 in July 1925. Design was completed by the end of the year and the first FX (Falcon X) ran on March 3, 1926. It is true that the Government sent a D-12 (no. 252) to Derby for Rolls-Royce to examine but not until months later, in July/August 1926. The D-12 may have spurred the Government into funding a new class of Rolls-Royce engine, but it had little direct influence on what became the Kestrel.

Hendry should read the Smithsonian *Annals of Flight* volume *The Curtiss D-12 Aero Engine*, by Hugo T. Byttemier, 1972. Byttemier states, "The FX was an entirely new project, starting where the D-12 had left off"; the concluding words in his book are "No D-12 ever roared in anger. That engine was foreordained by Fate to be the peacetime American link between the French lightweight engine building of World War I and British supremacy in aero engines during World War II. America may well be proud of the achievement."

The testing of McLaughlin's Phantom I in 1928 at GM's Milford Proving Ground: Again we find that Hendry refutes the story. One of us had extensive correspondence with the late Maurice Olley, and a letter in our possession dated March 18, 1966 throws light on the subject.

During World War I Rolls-Royce was greatly encouraged in launching the Eagle engine by the British Admiralty, notably in the person of Commander Briggs, head of the aero engine section. Let us quote from the letter:

"After WWI Comdr. Briggs left the Naval Air Service and for several years worked with R-R on 'rationalizing' the custom coachwork on R-R cars . . . he supervised the construction of a Barker

limousine on a PI . . . chassis for Sam McLaughlin of Canadian Buick. When the car arrived it was much admired by GM officials, and it appears to have occurred to several of them (O. E. Hunt and Henry Crane, and probably A. P. Sloan) that the coachwork on Cadillacs for example lacked a certain something! So Briggs was hired and in the following years he fought hard to improve the GM vehicles in all sorts of ways, working with the various divisions and residing at the Proving Ground."

It is almost beyond question that details of the testing of the Phantom, as related by Olley, came from Briggs whom he had known since 1914. GM cars from 1928, and American cars in general, had a spate of problems with big ends and journal bearings, resulting from a series of causes, not just one. That was what created the interest in Detroit. The cure, inter alia, was introducing pressure lubrication as used on the Phantom.

In his life's chronology Olley wrote on February 3, 1958: "September 1930, talk in Detroit with [Ernest] Seaholm, chief engineer of Cadillac, about joining Cadillac as chassis engineer. General Motors had completed [their] speed loop at Milford Proving Ground in 1928. Sustained speed had run out big ends on every GM car. Only car which could maintain 80 mph indefinitely was a Rolls-Royce Phantom supplied originally for Sam McLaughlin of Canadian Buick. Hence Rolls-Royce cars had very high standing with GM (and have maintained it ever since)." See *Chassis Design, Principles and Analysis, Based on Previously Unpublished Technical Notes by Maurice Olley*, by William F. and Douglas L. Miliken (SAE, 2002) p.32-33.

Merlin: The Merlin presents a complex story. Derby was its home, a vast jobbing shop which had turned out every car and aero engine (the U.S. Springfield plant excepted) since R-R left Manchester. It developed and built all the latest high performance variants for the RAF's fighters, taught all others how to build and overhaul Merlins and, at the same time, had the Vulture, Griffon, Eagle 46H24, Crecy and several jet engine prototypes to

develop, as well as guns, and the Meteor tank engine. Other factories such as R-R Crewe and Hillington, Ford at Trafford Park and both Packard and, later, Continental Motors in the U.S. were designed to produce Merlins in large numbers. Among them, Packard's achievement of 55,523 engines was remarkable.

All did a magnificent job. Ford was very good on crankshaft balancing and valves. Packard taught R-R how to cadmium plate without hydrogen embrittlement and so on and, yes, Allison bearing technology was licensed, but no source was judged better than any other. Alec Harvey-Bailey ran Defect Investigation on UK Merlins and Jack Broadbent on U.S.-built engines and this was their experience. Many of the mods introduced by Packard were Derby instructed. Some were to adapt to U.S. ancillaries and others to American volume production capability. Hendry is wrong in stating that Packard engines all had an epicyclic supercharger drive gear. Single stage two-speed engines built by Packard for the RAF, and V1650-1 engines for the USAAC, used the Rolls-Royce gear based on the French Farman design. Two-stage two-speed intercooled engines had the epicyclic gear, both for the RAF and USAAC. The best explanation offered is that the epicyclic gear better matched American production capability. Packard's design was based on that used on Wright aero engines, which were being produced in quantity. No one in a position to judge has ever suggested that either gear was superior to the other.

Bendix Stromberg: the Bendix Stromberg fuel injection carburetor was a real bonus on fighters because it was not "g" sensitive. The Merlin had been developed the way the British government wanted it, with an SU carburetor and mods that gave it negative "g" capability, but the Bendix coped with zero "g" too. It was used on UK-built 60 Series Merlins. Hendry is wrong, however, in stating that this unit was fitted to all Packard Merlin engines. A Bendix fuel injection system (different from the Bendix Stromberg) was used on the V-1650-11, and Merlin 300 and 301.

Massive Technical Assistance:
Returning to cars, Hendry tells us of the “massive technical assistance” given to R-R by GM between the wars. There was a lot of mutual interchange, especially after Maurice Olley joined the Chevrolet Division. Then, as war approached, there was much help given by Olley in sourcing parts for experimental cars when British plants were up to their ears preparing for war. Beyond that, it would be interesting to learn what else may have happened.

Buick did advertise that “The self-styled makers of the best car in the world always have a Buick in their stable.” Often true, but the Experimental garage also had Peugeot, Mercedes, Hispano-Suiza, Bugatti, Graham—the list goes on.

As to “abandoning magneto ignition and adopting the Delco system,” both magneto and battery systems were fitted on all UK-built Silver Ghosts. In 1906 the battery system used a trembler coil, but this gave way to coil and condenser many years before World War I. “Boss” Kettering at Delco did phenomenal things for the motor car, but his high tension ignition system did not predate Royce as far as we know.

True history should be “warts and all” and in that sense we differ from the single perspective offered by Nockolds, as Hendry’s letter asserts. For that reason we wonder about the absence of context in his comments, as well as his many errors of fact. Has he followed in the footsteps of Nockolds in this regard?

—Mike Evans, Emeritus Chairman,
Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust, Derby
Tom Clarke

Rolls-Royce vs. the Yanks

Maurice Hendry, in his characteristically erudite and exhaustive letter about Harold Nockolds’ book *Magic of a Name*, makes reference to the “longstanding R-R practice of buying a Buick every year for technical evaluation.” The casual reader may attach particular significance to this interest in the “better automobiles” built by Buick. In fact, Rolls-Royce Ltd. had a habit of carefully evaluating many makes

of cars, from all price ranges and from many countries.

Whether this truly arose from Henry Royce’s purchase of a Buick in search of inspiration for the 20 hp cars I cannot say. It is matter of record, however, that Rolls-Royce purchased an Essex touring car on March 15, 1921. Hudson’s spunky little companion car was a bit rough for the luxury automaker’s taste. Royce himself wrote in his evaluation, “This car has nothing to teach us.” It was sold that same July.

Years later, however, Hudsons and Terraplanes were received more warmly. R-R engineers were amazed at the manners of the 1933 Terraplane eight, finding it smoother than their own 20/25 model. A ’34 Terraplane six drew similar praise: “There seems to be a good deal in the American saying that a pound of rubber is worth a ton of theory.” This interest was not regarded as industrial espionage. Stuart Baits, Hudson’s chief engineer, recalled that his company hosted Rolls-Royce personnel in Detroit for up to two months each year.

Equally telling are the remarks on the supercharged Graham eight purchased in April 1934. They were impressed with the blower. Arthur Sidgreaves, Rolls’ London managing director wrote, “This is another example of a very excellent American car with an 8-cylinder engine.

“The springing seems to be very good, also the steering, brakes, clutch, etc.

“The supercharger seems to work satisfactorily and comes in automatically at a certain engine speed so that the owner cannot abuse its use. It does not seem to make any undue noise such as we were told was a sine qua non with a supercharger when we were trying to evolve one for the early Bentley.”

Ernest Hives, head of R-R’s experimental department at Derby, was similarly impressed: “As requested, I was able to give this car a short run last night, and in comparing it with our Phantom II one appreciates that there are a number of features about this car from which we have a lot to learn.”

Rolls-Royce had a particular inter-

est in the centrifugal supercharger. They had been experimenting with various types of blowers on the Bentley, then in its “Silent Sports Car” period but a bit underpowered. Their first inclination was to fit the Graham blower to a Bentley for experimentation, then decided to order a separate supercharger unit from Graham. Graham’s assistant chief engineer Floyd Kishline was so enthralled by this attention that he sent one free of charge. Hives was “very enthusiastic” about the centrifugal blower: “This type of supercharger is likely to be standardized on quite a number of cars in twelve months time.”

The Graham was subjected to the standard Rolls-Royce evaluation. After driving impressions from staff members it was disassembled and each of its parts weighed. Upon reassembly, cars were usually sold, but the Graham was kept a bit longer. Hives wrote, “With regard to selling the Graham, we do not want to part with it until we have a better example of a supercharged car available. None, so far as I know, is in existence at present.”

The Terraplane that was under evaluation at the same time had served its purpose. “We want to dispose of the Terraplane, however, and should like to obtain in its place one of the latest 120 Packards.” We now know, of course, what came of that liaison: Rolls’ first independent front suspension.

As it happened, the Graham-designed supercharger did not find its way onto any production Bentley. Rolls-Royce chose the simple expedient of boring the engine out to 4.2 liters.

W.O. Bentley may have said that the 20 hp Rolls was “essentially a Buick.” Given what I know of him I suspect it was not meant as a compliment.

I am indebted to SAH members *James Fack*, for acquainting me with the “American files” at the Henry Royce Memorial Foundation, Hunt House, Paulerspury, Northamptonshire, England, and to *Philip Hall*, the chief executive, for access to the collection. Inquirers with similar interests will spend many happy hours there.

—Kit Foster

Concepts of Range and Marque

The letter of *Fred Summers* regarding the commercial policies of Renault (“A Template for Success” *Journal* 219) calls for several remarks.

I am totally in accord with him when he talks of the quality and the robustness of the French auto industry. On the other hand, I regret to have to say that if French vehicles are in fact the most popular imports in Germany their sales in Japan are, alas, infinitesimal. But above all, I am not in accord with the parallel he has made between the distribution systems and policies of the model range of Renault and those of General Motors, confusing a little the concept of range and that of marque.

As far as I know, there has always been within each GM marque several ranges of models, even if each marque had its own character, increasingly luxurious, from Chevrolet to Cadillac.

One is able to find today the same hierarchical system in the Volkswagen Group (VW, Skoda, Seat, Audi, Lamborghini, Bentley, Bugatti) or at Fiat (Fiat, Alfa-Romeo, Lancia, Maserati).

With the French manufacturers, things are different. Automobiles Citroën became part of Peugeot SA in 1974. The Talbot name was revived by PSA at its 1978 purchase of Chrysler’s European operations and used on various Simca and Rootes descendants. At PSA there remain two strong marques, Peugeot and Citroën (Talbot ceased to exist in 1986, contrary to the letter), and two sales networks, but the production of the two marques are on the same level and directly competitive: their ranges are parallel. At Renault, there is only one marque and one sales network with several ranges: Twingo, Clio, Mégane, Scenic, Laguna, Vel Satis, Espace, etc., each being available in a great number of models.

In the case of Renault between the two world wars, the formula was the same: there were very diversified ranges, but it would be wrong to want to absorb each of them within a single GM marque. Renault intended to meet all the needs of the country (hence the slogan Renault, l’automobile de France,) and its catalog was therefore

immense. In the middle of the 1930s there was an impressive number of different models, but in fact things were more simple than appeared at first sight.

For example, the model range for 1934 was composed as follows: Two 8-cylinders: the Reinastella (7.125 litres), the most luxurious, and the Nervastella (4.825 litres), of a more affordable price. (The Reinastella had gone out of production in July 1932 but continued to be listed because of a stock of unsold cars.

One 6-cylinder: the Vivastella (3.620 litres)

One 4-cylinder, middle size: the Primaquatre (2.120 litres)

One 4-cylinder, small size, the Monaquatre (1.463 litres), replaced in the course of the year by the all-new Celtaquatre.

For each of these models, there existed a multitude of variations, in function and finish, wheelbase, body type (sedan, limousine, cabriolet, coupe, etc.)

Moreover—and it’s here that things get a little complicated—Renault created additional models by mounting the motor of one on the chassis of another, always to respond in the best possible way to the needs of its customers. In addition to the models listed above, one also found the Reinasport: motor of the Reinastella and chassis of the Nervastella, Nervasport: motor of the Nervastella and chassis of the Vivastella, Primastella: old motor of the Vivastella and lengthened chassis of the Primaquatre, Vivasport: new motor of the Vivastella and chassis of the Primastella and Vivaquatre: motor of the Primaquatre and chassis of the Vivastella.

But I don’t see how one is able to say that the Reinastella was the Cadillac, the Nervastella the Buick, the Vivastella the Oldsmobile, the Primaquatre the Pontiac, the Monaquatre the Chevrolet. To which marques would one assign the Reinasport or the Vivasport or the Vivaquatre, etc.?

Other comments on the letter: There were never Renault passenger cars with a V-8 engine; all the 8-cylinder cars were straight eights. On the other hand, Renault produced V-8 and V-12 aviation

engines before and during World War I.

Beginning in 1935, the suffix Grand Sport was used for 6- and 8-cylinder cars with the normal chassis; the name “Stella” was reserved for the long chassis.

The Juvaquatre was not introduced until 1938.

It is wrong to say that the names Monasix, Vivasix, Nervahuit and Reina-huit were “used after 1934.” In fact, Monasix and Vivasix were names used from 1928 to 1931. Nervahuit was used in 1931 only. There was never a car called the Reina-huit; the name was planned, but not used, for the Reinastella, introduced at the 1928 Paris Salon.

Renault never used a three-speed transmission with overdrive but generally a three-speed with direct drive. Only some Reinastellas and Nervastellas had four-speed gearboxes with the fourth speed an overdrive.

There was no Nervastella in the 1940 range. Perhaps Mr. Summers drove a 1939 model.

The term “La Regie” no longer identifies the company. In 1945, the Société des Usines Renault was nationalized and became la Regie Nationale des Usines Renault, or, colloquially, “La Regie.” However, the term was dropped when Renault became once more a company of private shareholders several years ago.

—*Claude Rouxel*

[**Editor’s Note:** Claude Rouxel has written extensively on Renault for *Automobilia* and other French publications. He was awarded the Nicholas-Joseph Cugnot Award as co-author of the best book in a language other than English for *Renault-des automobile de prestige* (2002).]

Interesting and Challenging

Jim Crabtree’s call for a history of our hobby (“Writing the History of Our Hobby,” *Journal* 218) is both interesting and challenging. Challenging very possibly to the point of impossibility.

There is a saying, “For most people history is restricted to what happened in their lifetime.” In my opinion there is more than just a grain of truth in this.

Mr. Crabtree wonders if Barney Pollard was the first collector. If his 1939

date is correct, I can recall a number of people who predated him.

D. Cameron Peck and his friend Major Lennox Lohr (curator of the Museum of Science & Industry in Chicago) started extensive collections in the 1930s.

A Mrs. Barnhart had a mansion at 47th and Drexel with a coach house stuffed with two Argo electrics and five Packards ranging from the mid-1920s to the late 1930s. The cars were saved by a Chicago cop before the mansion was torched by more recent residents of the area. He sold the Argos to Harrah.

Sergius Lloyd, a farmer near Genoa, Illinois, never traded in his old cars so over the years cars from the '20s to the '40s accumulated in one barn and behind it. One, a '20s Willys-Knight, had so many spiders living in it a fumigator was needed before a restorer would touch it.

On the east coast Henry Austin Clark bought his first piece of literature and his first old car (a Model T for \$1) in 1929.

Jim Crabtree's characterization of Barney Pollard's "unpatriotic act . . . cheated the WWII scrap drives of a lot of badly needed metal" is, in my opinion, balderdash. The entire country was loaded with junkyards full of worn and wrecked cars that the government could have commandeered had there been an urgent need. Since no new cars were being produced at the time all the metal they would have consumed was being directed to the war effort.

I have read that much of the rationing, scrap drives and tire confiscations were instituted less on the basis of war production needs and more on the basis of making the populace keenly aware that there was a horrific war going on and this was something they could do to help.

Jim Crabtree's idea regarding the history of the hobby is a very good one. The AACA was founded in the mid-'30s. Maybe their records would be a good place to start.

—Bill Snyder

Encourage the Passion

Jim Crabtree wrote most thought-provokingly about several aspects of automotive history. I'm responding on the topic of the work that car history hobbyists do to research and record the histories of the cars in which they're interested.

I see no reason why enthusiasts with an interest in car history, perhaps because they fancy a particular marque or era, shouldn't carry on with their research and writing just as they do today. My reasoning is simple: there's no substitute for their passion, their enthusiasm for a subject that causes them to go far beyond the call of mere duty to find out all they can about a car, company or person.

No one else can match this passion. Certainly not the academics, certainly not professional writers, who have to consider the time that they spend on their manuscripts. In fact such professionals—among whom I count myself—often count on the work done by enthusiasts for the detail that they need. For example, I couldn't have written my new book on V-12 cars without help I received from private researchers and clubs dealing with Hudsons, Lincolns, Packards, Tatras, Pierce-Arrows and Daimlers, to name only a few.

This isn't to say that we should cold-shoulder the academics, some of whom are SAH members. In fact I'm often dumbfounded to read academic works on the motor industry that would have benefited greatly from access to writings by SAH members. Thus I think it's important and very good news that SAH is increasing its links with historical bodies that command the attention of academics. We want to be sure that the efforts made by enthusiasts get the visibility that they deserve.

This reminds me that we need to find ways to get SAH writings onto the world-wide web. Increasingly this is the source used by academics to track down references that may help them in their work. I'm embarrassed to say that when I wrote the V-12 book I didn't go back and look through the *Automotive History Reviews*, though I certainly would have accessed their texts if they'd been on the

web. I know what a big project this would be, struggling as I am with my own web efforts, but putting the contents of past *AHRs* on the web would be of immense benefit, especially because it would reduce the duplication of effort that inevitably occurs otherwise.

—Karl Ludvigsen

Writer Out of Tune with Aims of SAH

I was appalled to read the outburst by James Crabtree (to which you gave so much space). It appears to me that the writer is totally out of tune with the aims and objects of SAH and is therefore probably in the wrong club. I know that I am not alone in this opinion and I have no doubt that you will receive similar letters to mine.

As one who has devoted his working life to recording the doings of obscure small manufacturers (and managed to make a reasonable living doing so) I know that fortunately there are plenty of enthusiasts out there (including SAH members) who enjoy what I produce.

If Mr. Crabtree feels so strongly that the area he mentions is neglected, perhaps he should write it himself.

—Michael Worthington-Williams

The 771st "Mobile"

The ignominious pimpmobile (Billboard item *Journal* 218) became the 771st real or imaginary vehicle name with a "mobile" prefix or suffix in a historical A-Z list I have kept up to date through the years.

The illustrious Cugnotmobile is probably the first with such a designation.

These names emanate not only from the U.S. but also from Germany, France, Great Britain, etc. They include production vehicles (Locomobile), news media designations, entertainment world offerings, comic strips, prototypes, concept cars and coined words by authors and designers. About 15 new ones are added to the list annually as they reflect a creative panorama of our emerging transportation culture.

—George W. Green

Looks Like an Orient to Me

The photo on the back cover of *Journal* 218 looks very much to me like an Orient Buckboard. The wire wheels, tiller steering, seat design, cylindrical fuel tank, rear-mounted engine and the lever on the righthand side all say Orient to me, as made by Waltham Mfg. Co., of Waltham, Massachusetts. What makes anyone think Beckel made it himself?

—Michael Worthington-Williams

GM's B-O-P Plants

In *Journal* 218 (Letters "Asking Questions") Pete Whittier asked if the GM "BOP plant" at Linden, New Jersey, ever made Buicks, Oldsmobiles and Pontiacs at the same time. B-O-P plants were dedicated to making all three lines of cars.

The B-O-P plant idea grew out of a Depression era expedient to help struggling General Motors dealers. The Buick-Oldsmobile-Pontiac Sales Company was created in 1932 to allow single-line dealers to offer a second line of GM cars. This venture ended in 1933, but the con-

cept was revived for new assembly plants at South Gate, California, in 1936 and Linden, New Jersey, in 1937. Both plants assembled Buicks, Oldsmobiles and Pontiacs. In 1945 these two plants and four other assembly plants were combined to form the Buick-Oldsmobile-Pontiac Assembly Division, which existed until the creation of General Motors Assembly Division (GMAD) in 1965.

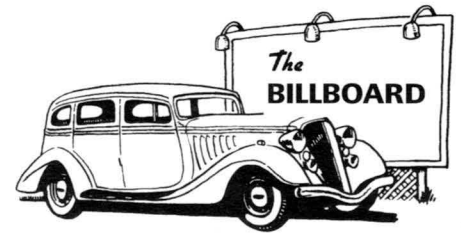
—John Perala

Coincidence or Grave Robbing?

After reading Pete Whittier's "Asking Questions" I have this question: Who is taking credit for designing Chrysler's new models as far as styling is concerned? I looked at the Dodges and Chryslers driving by me and swore it was 1952 all over again.

Briggs Cunningham originated the styling concept I see over 50 years ago. He died recently and now Chrysler reincarnates it. Is that coincidence or grave robbing?

—Don Chew

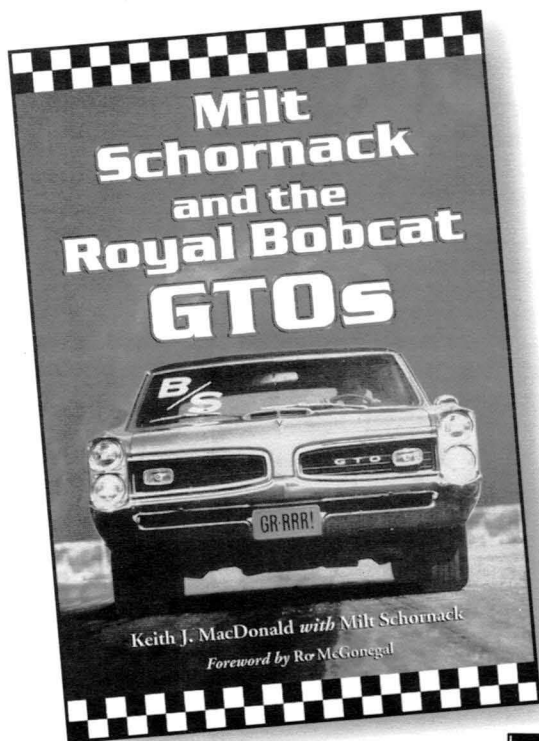


Information Wanted On the Auto Redbug made in New Bergin, New Jersey. This was a small electric vehicle. **David Kolzow 1486 - 95th Street, Hampton, IA 50441, (641)456-3300 oakridge@myncs.net**

Information Wanted We have discovered two unique items from circa 1934: a large plaster model of the Ford Rotunda as it appeared at the Chicago World's Fair (66x30x9 inches) and a lifesize plaster bust of Henry Ford. These came from a disintegrating warehouse north of Detroit that was being razed. They were the only automotive items among thousands of architectural castings found. This was the 70-year storage place of a long-gone company called J.I. Jungwirth of 58 Broadway in Detroit. We want to know if these were displays, test casts for bronze molds or what. E-mail for several pictures of each in jpeg. **Dan Bower sales@factoryautomaneals.com (810)743-3297**

Verification and Information Wanted Found: the world's first outboard motor in London, Ontario. Owned by an elderly gentleman for 55 years, who doesn't want to sell it. It was built by two students at a college in Wisconsin as a patent model. The students' names were Johnson and Evinrude. Is this something the outboard world has been looking for? I am concerned for its fate. Pictures available. **Dan Bower (810)743-3297 sales@factoryautomaneals.com**

Periodical Wanted *The Chronicle* (Fall 1997 issue), a publication of the Automotive Hall of Fame. I collect everything Jordan and this one eludes me. **James H. Lackey 110 Deer Run Road, Huntington, WV 25704 (302)429-1180**



This insider's history details the development of the now-legendary Royal Bobcat GTO, from the people—including Milt Schornack, the mechanic who raced for Royal Pontiac and was largely responsible for the custom Bobcats—to the fabled midnight test runs on Detroit's Woodward Avenue. Fourteen chapters, with photographs of vintage GTOs, the infamous *Car & Driver* road test photos against a Ferrari GTO, and more, chronicle a car that changed the Detroit auto industry for the next decade.

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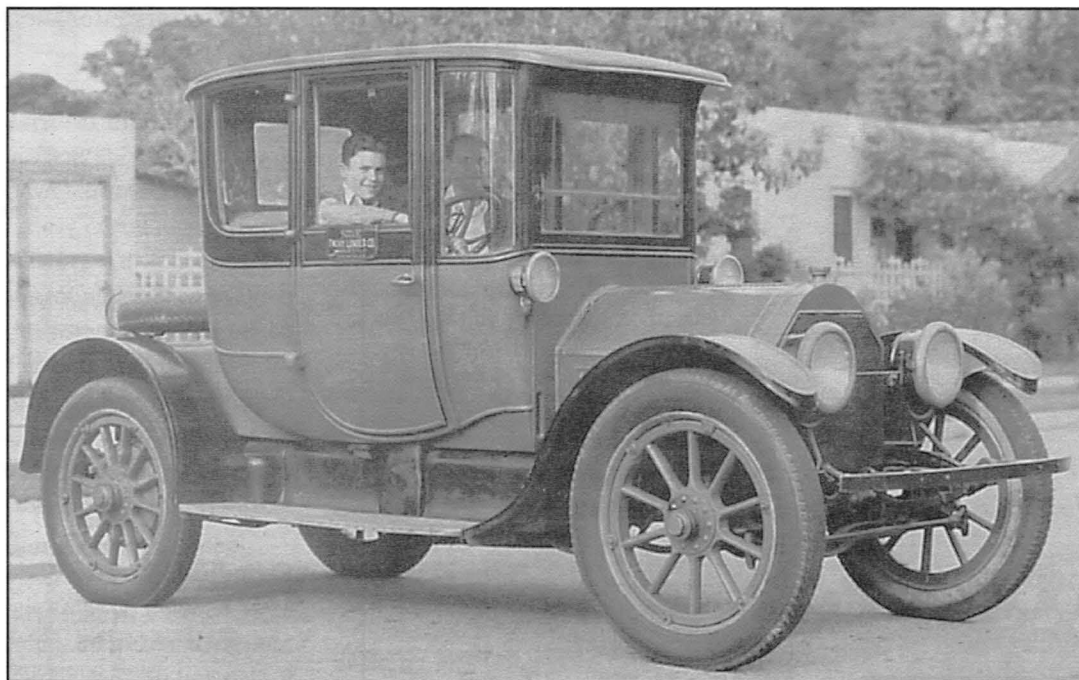
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This is a 1912 Cadillac coupe, taken circa 1935. Inside are Art Twohy and his son, Dick Twohy. Two years after this photo was taken, Art would become one of the founders of the Horseless Carriage Club and hold the first meeting at his home in Los Angeles. Art had about a dozen vintage cars at one time and rented many to the film production companies for use in Hollywood movies in the '30s. Art was a also a wholesale lumber broker—note the small sign “Twohy Lumber Company” hanging from the door. *Steve Twohy collection*