

# SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
Issue 240 Electronic Edition Summer 2009



[www.autohistory.org](http://www.autohistory.org)

## Inside

|  |    |
|--|----|
| SAH News                                 | 1  |
| Spring Meeting Minutes                   | 2  |
| President's Message                      | 5  |
| Obituaries                               | 6  |
| Letters                                  | 7  |
| Book Reviews<br>The English Ford Model T | 9  |
| Editorial                                | 10 |

## Date Reminders

### July 31

Bradley Award Nominations to:  
[jimmywags@aol.com](mailto:jimmywags@aol.com)

### September 1

2009 SAH Official Ballots to:  
Leroy D. Cole  
SAH Nominating Committee Chairman  
P.O. Box 183  
Goodrich, MI 48438

### September 30

SAH Awards Banquet Reservations to:  
Kit Foster  
1102 Long Cove Road  
Gales Ferry, CT 06335-1812

### October 9

SAH Gala Awards Banquet  
Hershey Country Club, Hershey, PA

## Eighth Biennial Automotive History Conference

Tupelo, Mississippi, March 25-27, 2010

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Society of Automotive Historians and the National Association of Automobile Museums are seeking proposals for papers to be presented at their eighth biennial automotive history conference to be held in Tupelo, Mississippi, USA, from March 25 to 27, 2010. Entitled "The Automobile in a Time of Crisis – Lessons of History," the conference will be a symposium exploring the response of the automotive industry and of public policy when confronted by changing economic conditions, political imperatives and cultural preferences. Of interest to a wide range of people, from academic researchers to lay historians to museum professionals, it will be hosted by the Tupelo Automobile Museum.

Proposals are invited on such topics as automobile manufacturing, design evolution, labor conditions, competitive pressure, directed marketing, the effect of industrial concentration and the international motor trade and may address the effects on individual manufacturers, national markets or the industry worldwide. Other potential subjects of interest include the transformation of society through the adoption of the automobile in developed and developing regions and the impact of growing constraints on the utilization of resources and the environment. Proposals unrelated to the conference theme will also be considered. Papers dealing with the interpretation of automotive history to the general public are particularly sought, especially involving the museum setting.

Proposals should include the title of the submission, names and affiliations of presenters, chairs, participants etc., together with addresses, phone/fax numbers, e-mail addresses of contact personnel, proposed format (paper, panel, workshop, etc.) and a one-page abstract describing the content of the presentation. The deadline for proposals is September 30, 2009; notification of preliminary acceptance is anticipated by October 31. Proposals should be submitted to:

Arthur W. Jones, Program Chair  
504 South 26<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19146-1009 USA  
Telephone +1 215 985-4714  
email: [nomecos@verizon.net](mailto:nomecos@verizon.net)

## Keith Marvin (1924-2009)

*Keith Marvin*, SAH member #0007HF, died Monday, June 22, 2009, at Larkspur, California, after a brief illness. He would have turned 85 on July 1<sup>st</sup>. A founding member of the Society, he served as president in 1986 and 1987. A full obituary will appear in *SAH Journal* issue 241.

# SAH News

## Kitman Wins National Magazine Award

SAH member *Jamie Kitman*, longtime contributor and regular columnist for *Automobile Magazine*, has been honored by the American Society of Magazine Editors with a National Magazine Award. His column, "Noise, Vibration and Harshness," was cited in the Columns and Commentary category, specifically his September, November and December 2008 pieces, all dealing with the recent plight of the U.S. auto industry. It is unusual for ASME to recognize an automotive periodical. The bulk of their 44 awards are typically given to the likes of *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker* or *Esquire*.

In addition to serving as New York Bureau Chief for *Automobile*, Kitman is a principal in The Hornblow Group USA, management consultants for the music industry. His collection of esoteric British cars is unrivaled in North America.



## Spring Meeting Minutes

Hampton Inn, Golden, Colorado  
April 17, 2009

Present: *Pat Bisson, Susan Davis, Kit Foster, Arthur Jones, Paul Lashbrook, Doug Leighton, Darwyn Lumley, Steve Wilson, David Woodhouse*

Guests: *Robert Ewing, John Heitmann*

Absent: *Michael Berger, Robert Ebert, Judith Endelman, Stan Lyman, John Marino*

### Minutes and Reports

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Darwyn Lumley. Directors absent have given proxies as follows: Robert Ebert to Doug Leighton, Stan Lyman to Darwyn Lumley, John Marino to Steve Wilson. The minutes of the October 9, 2008, meeting of the Board were approved as published.

Secretary Arthur Jones reviewed electronic voting by the Board since the past meeting. A motion submitted on March 1 by Kit Foster establishing a policy of the Society in regard to the acquisition of archives was carried unanimously. A motion submitted on March 27 by Paul Lashbrook to amend the by-laws to revise the spelling of the name 'Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot' in the award bearing that name was carried unanimously.

Vice President Susan Davis reviewed arrangements and schedule for the weekend.

President Lumley expressed our regret that Taylor Vinson was not able to be with us and wishes for his speedy recovery. With Kit Foster giving up many of his responsibilities and the reassignment of other positions, there continues to be a need for members to step forward. Directors in particular must shoulder some of the burden. As noted by Judy Endelman, electronic meetings have not been working well. More discipline should be brought to the process. The Board

# SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
Issue 240 Summer 2009

A small illustration of a vintage car, possibly a 1920s model, shown from a side profile. It has large spoked wheels and a boxy body.

### Officers

|                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Darwyn H. Lumley</b>      | <b>President</b>      |
| <b>Susan S. Davis</b>        | <b>Vice President</b> |
| <b>Arthur W. Jones</b>       | <b>Secretary</b>      |
| <b>Christopher C. Foster</b> | <b>Treasurer</b>      |

### Board of Directors

Through October 2009  
**Robert R. Ebert** **J. Douglas Leighton**  
**Steve Wilson**  
**Michael L. Berger, ex-officio**  
Through October 2010  
**Paul N. Lashbrook** **Stanton A. Lyman**  
**Judith E. Endelman**  
Through October 2011  
**John A. Marino** **Patrick D. Bisson**  
**David M. Woodhouse**

### SAH Journal

**Allan C. Y. Meyer, Editor, Adv. Mgr.**  
P.O. Box 1948  
Vashon, WA 98070-1948 USA  
206-304-3872  
journal@autohistory.org  
allan\_g\_y\_meyer@yahoo.com

### Publications Committee

**Thomas S. Jakups, Chair**  
**Christopher C. Foster**  
**Michael Lamm**  
**Taylor Vinson**  
**Allan Meyer**

### Past Editors

**Richard B. Brigham**  
Issues 1–29 Sept. 1969–(undated) 1973  
**C. Marshall Naul**  
30–50 July 1973–Dec. 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  
**Christopher C. Foster**  
118–157 Jan./Feb. 1989–July/Aug. 1995  
**Samuel V. Fiorani**  
158–194 Sept./Oct. 1995–Sept./Oct. 2001  
**Thomas S. Jakups**  
195–236 Nov./Dec. 2001–Sept./Oct. 2008

### SAH Journal (ISSN 1057–1973)

is published six times a year by the Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

Subscription is by membership in the Society.

Membership dues are \$40 per year. Send dues, membership inquiries and changes of address to

**Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.**  
**178 Crescent Road**  
**Fairport, NY 14450 USA**

©2009

**The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.**

Find the Society of Automotive Historians on the web at [www.autohistory.org](http://www.autohistory.org).

**Copy Deadline for Journal 241**  
**August 15, 2009**

must resist the temptation to act as a committee of the whole. To maximize the effectiveness of meetings, committees should submit specific recommendations for review and action by the Board.

**Treasurer's Report:** Kit Foster submitted a Balance Sheet and Statement of Income/Expenses for the half-year September 30, 2008 through March 31, 2009. Net worth has declined from \$81,197 to \$69,592 reflecting a slower than usual receipt of dues and other one-time expenses, but additional funds have been received since the preparation of the report. The transition to new membership services is underway and has been difficult to coordinate. Susan Davis moved the report be filed for audit. Carried unanimously.

**Membership Report:** Kit Foster submitted a report compiled by Don Keefe showing 78 new members in the past twelve months. The placing of ads in club magazines does not appear to have had a significant effect. As always, final results will not be known until renewals are complete. **Membership Committee:** Arthur Jones, reporting for Stan Lyman, reviewed actions taken over the past three years and their effectiveness. The committee plans to evaluate and propose new initiatives. Winter 2010 will be the third anniversary of the previous call to expired members and the action should be repeated.

**Annual Meeting and Banquet:** Kit Foster reporting for John Marino. Lower costs have been negotiated and will permit the charging of \$40.00 without subsidy. Recommendations accepted by consensus.

**Hershey Tent:** Paul Lashbrook reporting. Space arranged through Taylor, Kit and Kirk Gibson will again be available. The transfer of the lease by the Hershey Region continues to be difficult, but we hope to be able to reserve our site on a permanent basis in the future. Paul plans to retain refinements introduced last year although the provision of DVD entertainment did not prove popular and may be discontinued.

**Nominating Committee:** Darwyn Lumley reporting for Leroy Cole. Nominations are in progress for publication in the July-August issue of the SAH Journal. Leroy will accept recommendations which may be submitted directly to him.

**Academic Committee:** John Heitmann reporting. Preparations are complete for a seminar at the AHA Annual Meeting in San Diego in January 2010. The session, for which a detailed proposal was submitted, is titled: 'New Directions in the History of the Automobile in America.' The Board endorsed the project and commended the committee for its work.

**Archives Committee:** Kit Foster reviewed the Society's history in regard to the acceptance of archival materials and submitted an article planned for the next issue of the SAH Journal setting out the policy adopted by the Board in electronic meeting. The committee plans to offer a session on archives at the next Automotive History Conference and create a brochure to guide donors to appropriate repositories.

**Paris Meeting:** Kit Foster, reporting for Taylor Vinson, attended the meeting at which attendance was smaller than in

## SAH News

previous years. There was discussion concerning the need for a succession policy.

**Silent Auction:** Kit Foster, reporting for Leroy Cole, noted net receipts of about \$4000. Bless you, Leroy and Cora.

### Awards Committees

**Brigham:** Darwyn Lumley, for Jack Juratovic, reported nominations are underway.

**Cugnot:** Doug Leighton reported 12 nominations have been received, with more on the way. The committee needs to rotate members.

**Cugnot, Non-English:** Kit Foster, for Taylor Vinson, reported eight nominations have been accepted.

**Benz:** no report

**Bradley:** Darwyn Lumley, for Jim Wagner, reported two nominations have been received.

**Ingersoll:** Arthur Jones reported two nominations have been received. Additional committee members are needed.

**Friend of Automotive History:** Bob Ewing reported four nominations are under consideration.

**Scharchburg Student Award:** Doug Leighton, for Bob Ebert, reported letters have gone out to 200 colleges and universities.

### Chapter and Sections

*Leland Chapter:* Leroy Cole reported a meeting is planned for early June.

*Southern California Chapter:* Bob Ewing reported the chapter has 165 members, of whom not all are members of the parent organization. Popular activities are tours to private collections and the annual Lit Faire.

*International Motorsports Section:* no report. Despite no action, there continues to be a lot of interest.

Darwyn will reach out to attempt to resolve the situation.

*Society of Automotive Historians in Britain:* Kit Foster reported the chapter continues very active.

### Publications and Media

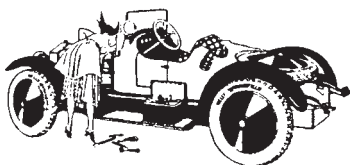
*Publications Committee:* Tom Jakups has been appointed committee chair.

## WANTED: AUTOMOBILE LITERATURE 1900-1975

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

**Walter Miller**

6710 Brooklawn Pkwy.  
Syracuse, NY 13211 USA  
315-432-8282 fax 315-432-8256  
e-mail: [info@autolit.com](mailto:info@autolit.com)



# SAH News

*SAH Journal:* Kit Foster stated concern with problem of timeliness. Tom will talk with Allan Meyer and report back to the Board.

*Automotive History Review:* Taylor Vinson submitted expenses for No. 50 (Fall 2008), contents of No. 51 and some possibilities for No. 52 (Fall 2009). No. 51 will be the final issue under Taylor's editorship and two candidates are under consideration for the position.

*Membership Directory:* Publication has been postponed to summer 2009 due to the transition with Keefe Media. The index to member interests needs to be updated.

*Autohistory.org:* There are plans to add criteria for awards nominations to the site.

## Continuing Business

*Fund Raising Campaign:* Susan Davis asked the Board for direction on timing. It was agreed that the appeal will be made in September and the letter signed by Darwyn Lumley as President. Susan agreed to write, produce and send out all materials by the scheduled date.

*Publicity:* Arthur Jones circulated a copy of the press release issued following the annual meeting.

*Invitation of Jack Middleton:* The Board agreed to accept the invitation of Jack Middleton for dinner on Wednesday prior to the Thursday fall meeting of the Board.

*On-line Membership Directory:* Kit Foster reporting. Don Keefe will undertake this in collaboration with Dave Duricy. The need for searchable interest areas complicates the task.

*NAAM/SAH Award:* Judy Endelman reporting. Conditions at NAAM may not be right for a new award this year. SAH might want to consider whether it would be useful to institute another award when so much of our effort is consumed in this activity.

*2010 SAH/NAAM Conference:* Arthur Jones has been appointed SAH Conference Chair. An effort will be made to attract a wider group of presenters than in the past.



*Centennial Certificate:* Sinclair Powell reported the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club will accept the 2009 award.

*Automotive Industries proposal:* A letter was sent to Mr. Larkin explaining that SAH cannot fund his project. No response has been received.

## New Business

*Directors' Responsibilities:* Darwyn Lumley stated that directors are expected to take on other duties, such as committee assignments.

*Electronic Meetings:* Judy Endelman reports she finds the SAH style of round robin emails disconcerting and voting often unclear. As an alternative she proposes that two regularly-scheduled conference call meetings, spring and fall, be added to the present format and that Board business be formalized under these four meetings. In discussion, there was concern that the format was too rigid and that the standard order for motions would not be followed. It was agreed that an electronic protocol is needed. Susan Davis and Doug Leighton will consult on this and report back to the Board.

*Immediate Past President:* Michael Berger has noted the position has no specific duties and asked the Board be more specific. After discussion, it was considered that the current flexible format is appropriate.

*Vice President Duties:* Management of the Fund Raising Drive was assigned in 2008 to the position which previously carried no specific duties.

*Tent Recruitment of New Members:* Paul Lashbrook asked that the Membership Committee take a more proactive role in soliciting new members at the Hershey tent.

*Michigan Connection:* A memo submitted by Pat Bisson suggested that the Detroit area may contain many retired automotive personnel with a deep knowledge of the

industry and that they could be a fruitful source for oral history and/or new members. SAE has a similar program. The Leland Chapter might be willing to take on this task. Pat will explore the concept with Leroy Cole.


*Brochure:* The design is considered attractive but some information is incomplete and our supply is exhausted. There was a consensus that we should reorder a two-year supply. Steve Wilson has connections to printers and will manage the project, with review of proofs by Kit.

*By-laws Amendments:* Text is required for two amendments: Article I, Section 4, and Article X, Section 2(a), correction to spelling of the name 'Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot' and Article X, Section 2(c), following 'presented' addition of the phrase 'to an individual or an institution' to clarify eligibility.

*Society Administrative Archives:* Taylor Vinson has asked if a location can be found to store the Society's administrative and business archives. Paul Lashbrook volunteered to provide space in his storage barn now under construction in Kentucky.

*Financial Audit:* Stan Lyman and Joe Freeman will audit the treasurer's files when the new treasurer takes office.


There being no further business, President Lumley adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m. —Arthur Jones, Secretary



**Join the Buick Club of America**  
and 9000 other members worldwide who love old Buicks.

72 BCA chapters - one may be near you!

With BCA membership, you'll receive our outstanding monthly magazine, *The Buick Bugle* - 48 pages, 36 in full color, free monthly classified ads for members  
Pete Phillips, Editor (S.A.H. member)



\$40/year national dues, foreign higher  
www.buickclub.org  
(614) 472-3939 for information  
Buick Club of America  
PO Box 360775  
Columbus, OH 43236-0775

## President's Message

### Analogy

In the midst of the present turmoil involving the U.S. automobile industry, I have found that my friends and relatives have assigned me a new identity. My new identity is that of pundit. You may recently have had the same experience, and have been asked the same questions. The new identity, and the questions, all stem from being identified as interested in automotive history. The assumption is that having some knowledge of automotive history gives me some predictive abilities about what is going to take place regarding the three remaining U.S. auto manufacturers. My response is usually not well accepted, as I attempt to explain that automotive historians can give a reasonably good explanation of how we got to the present situation. But looking ahead, or over the horizon, is quite another matter. That is about the time when somebody brings up a variation of the quotation attributed to George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." or, "Those who forget the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them." That is when I attempt to explain what Gerda Lerner, has written:

"What we do about history matters. The often repeated saying that those who forget the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them has a lot of truth in it. But what are 'the lessons of history'? The very attempt at definition furnishes ground for new conflicts. History is not a recipe book; past events are never replicated in the present in quite the same way. Historical events are infinitely variable and their interpretations are a constantly shifting process. There are no certainties to be found in the past."

After a discussion on "lessons of the past," I wondered about the predictive successes made in the earlier years of automotive history. So far I have not found any predictions of what would take place in the automotive industry, except one general view that there



**Darwyn H. Lumley, President**

is an inexorable movement toward consolidation. In attempting to find other predictions I think of Norman Bel Geddes. Geddes presented the General Motors Pavilion "Highways and Horizons" and "Futurama" exhibits at the 1939 New York World's Fair. The Futurama diorama was GM's utopian conception of the future urban/suburban city of 1960. Geddes was a theater and industrial designer, who had design contracts with varied automotive companies over a span of years. (*Michael Lamm* has written about Norman Bel Geddes in the March-April and May-June, 1977 issues of *Special Interest Autos*.)

As you might expect, Geddes' vision of the future as exemplified by the Futurama exhibit, and in his book, *Magic Motorways* (1940) did not consider issues such as uncontrolled growth, pollution, or other similar matters. However, many of his predictions or views have been enormously influential, especially

relating to the Interstate Highway System. He is reported to have said, "there should be no more reason for a motorist who is passing through a city to slow down than there is for an airplane which is passing over it." Copies of *Magic Motorways* sell for about \$32.00 through on-line used book sellers.

Just as Norman Bel Geddes did not consider uncontrolled growth or pollution in his vision of the future, not many folks in the auto world would have predicted the growth of a world-wide auto industry some years ago. There are too many unknowns over the horizon that prevent accurate predictions. So, how do we respond when asked to use our historical knowledge to predict the automotive future? Gerda Lerner has provided a response on which our responses might be based. She has written,

"We can learn from history how past generations thought and acted, how they responded to the demands of their time and how they solved their problems. We can learn by analogy, not by example, for our circumstances will always be different than theirs were. The main thing history can teach us is that human actions have consequences and that certain choices, once made, cannot be undone. They foreclose the possibility of making other choices and thus they determine future events." —Darwyn Lumley

**books4cars.com**  
**Automotive Books & Manuals**  
4850 37th Ave S Seattle Wa 98118  
Tel: 206.721.3077 Free: 888.380.9277  
[www.books4cars.com](http://www.books4cars.com)

# Obituaries

## John A. Conde (1918-2008)

John Conde was the godfather of all Hudson and AMC historians. Old timers recall with fondness when John would send his famous catalogs on these and other makes; they often offered interesting one-off items. His personal collection of literature and photos was one of the most extensive in the country. One of my "John treasures" was an original Yousuf Karsh photo of A.E. Barit, long lost by a previous editor.

He was born March 25, 1918, in St. Louis, Missouri. One of his interests was all the autos built there. His career at Nash started right after World War II and continued into the AMC era. He started building Nash-Kelvinator historic archives and in 1951 published the first *Nash Family Album*. He's credited with nine in total. The green-covered Rambler edition was printed in three editions between September 1961 and November 1963. My first purchase was the AMC February 1969 brown cover with gold lettering. Former AMC President Bill Luneberg called him "the company's greatest used car salesman" for his efforts to preserve materials about AMC's past.

During the Nash-Hudson merger as Director of Nash Public Relations he had access to all the Hudson archives and was responsible for a donation of factory ad man John N. Hill's bound set of factory dealer letters from the very first solicitation in 1909 to July, 1929 along with a truck load of other material. John would later serve as a trustee of the Detroit Public Library's National Automotive History Collection.

When AMC acquired Jeep there were recurring rumors of a vast library of treasures at the historic Toledo factory. John dropped a note to historians that he'd been in every building looking for literature and there was none.

John was interested in auto history his whole life. In 1969 he was a founding member and an early director of the fledging Society of Automotive Historians. He served as president of SAH in 1984 and 1985. After his 1976

retirement from AMC he worked as Curator of Transportation for the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn. While there he published his photo essay *The Cars That Hudson Built* in late 1980. His second book, *Cars With Personalities*, with hundreds of photographs of famous personages and their automobiles, appeared in 1982.

He was a fixture at Hershey, selling literature and photos of Packard and other makes. In the early days he always traveled with his good friend Jim Bradley, curator of the NAHC. After Jim's untimely passing in 1980, John was a moving force behind the creation of SAH's James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award, which is given to deserving libraries and archives for exemplary efforts in preserving the history of motor vehicles worldwide. For all his personal contributions to the preservation of history, John was named a Friend of Automotive History by SAH in 1992.

In his later years, when driving distances became a problem, he hired a driver and visited many small town museums and libraries, looking for information on obscure local makes.

John died August 29, 2008. He was 90 years old. Interment was in Pine Lake cemetery in West Bloomfield, Michigan. He is survived by a daughter, Carmela Pascarella, grandchildren Jennifer Jarrells, Timothy Pascarella and Christina Herr, and five great-grandchildren. His wife Louise and son Jeffrey predeceased him. —*D.J. Kava*

## Vladimir M. Kabes, Jr. (1918-2009)

Vladimir M. Kabes, Jr., who joined SAH in 1993, died on April 12, 2009. He was 91 and lived in Bethesda, MD.

Vladimir told the story of his early years in "The Aero Family – A Memoir of 80 Turbulent Years" which appeared in *Automotive History Review* No. 38 (Winter 2002). He recounted his birth in Prague in the last days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the founding by his father, Vladimir M. Kabes, Sr., of Aero Tovarna Letadel, which became Czechoslovakia's largest producer of passenger planes. The company also manufactured the Aero car from 1929-39, and Vladimir assisted his father in a number of positions. In his later years he was an enthusiastic supporter of rallies of Aeros in the Czech Republic and Germany, as a number of these well-loved two-cycle engine machines survive.

He and his family separately escaped from Czechoslovakia in 1948 and, after they were reunited, came to the U.S. Vladimir returned to Europe to work for several international organizations, including the International Touring Alliance, a UN-affiliated automobile club of which he was chief executive.

His was a life that reflected the twin tyrannies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, Fascism and Communism. To listen to this mild-mannered man and his wife tell of life under the Germans and then under their own Communist countrymen was an education in history and makes one thankful indeed that we have not experienced such horrors in the U.S.

Vladimir leaves behind his wife of 68 years, two daughters, and a granddaughter. —*Taylor Vinson*

## RICHARD P. SCHARCHBURG ARCHIVES

PRESERVING AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE



ENTRUST YOUR COLLECTIONS TO AN INSTITUTION THAT WILL PROTECT THEM FOR YEARS TO COME AND SHARE THEM WITH HISTORIANS AND RESEARCHERS ALWAYS. COLLECTIONS PRESERVED AS THEY WERE FORMULATED!  
NO COLLECTION TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL.  
ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

CONTACT US TODAY

DAVID C. WHITE, ARCHIVIST  
RICHARD P. SCHARCHBURG ARCHIVES KETTERING UNIVERSITY 1700 W. THIRD AVE. FLINT, MI 48504  
810.762.9661 DWHITE@KETTERING.EDU

**Thomas Heath Brownell  
(1941-2009)**

*Thomas H. Brownell*, a longtime SAH member and a Friend of Automotive History, died on May 2, 2009 of complications arising from Multiple Systems Atrophy. MSA is a rare neurological disease that blends the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

He was born in Syracuse, New York, on June 6, 1941, to Wayne J. and Margaret Leslie Brownell. He was named after the original Brownell ancestor in North America, who arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony on the ship "Whale" in 1638. Thomas was raised in the fruit-farming region of New York State along Lake Ontario, and was graduated from Dartmouth College and The Ohio University. Before pursuing his career as a technical writer and teacher of technical writing, he was employed by Pan American World Airways on the Atlantic Guided Missile Test Range in the Bahamas, by NCR Corporation in Cambridge, Ohio, and St. Johnsbury Academy in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.

His educational studies took him through sojourns in law and graduate history, but his true interest was writing. He authored 18 books, mainly on automotive topics, and taught technical writing, automotive management, and journalism as a tenured, full professor at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan.

## HORSELESS CARRIAGE GAZETTE

As you might expect from a club publication, the *Horseless Carriage Gazette* is chock full of exciting four-color photographs showing brass-era automobiles in action. First-generation cars don't get out often but, when they do, it is a real privilege to be along for the ride.

History buffs will enjoy a feature or two in each *Horseless Carriage Gazette* about marques both popular and obscure. In addition, more than 240 black & white images from the pre-1916 era were used as illustrations in the six 2007 issues.

Membership is \$45 (\$55 outside of the USA).

There is no better place to connect with nearly 5,000 enthusiasts who appreciate pioneer vehicles than in the Horseless Carriage Club. We'll be honored if you decide to join.

**Horseless Carriage Club**  
PO Box 62, Bakersfield CA 93302  
888/832-2374 or office@hcca.org

For over 25 years Brownell wrote the "Questions & Answers" column for *Old Cars Weekly* magazine. He was founding editor of *Vintage Truck* magazine, and had been a syndicated columnist for Motor News Media syndicate. His writing received awards from the International Automotive Media Association.

Tom joined SAH in 1979. Until the onset of his illness, he had presented at every one of SAH's biennial automotive history conferences. He was named a Friend of Automotive History, the Society's highest award, in October 2008.

Brownell met and married Joyce TARRIER while teaching in Vermont. They have two sons, Nathan and Anthony. He is survived by his loving wife of 39 years, their sons and daughters-in-law, four grandchildren, and a sister, Ann Kulik of Omaha, Nebraska. Brownell belonged to Ferry Memorial Reformed Church in Montague, Michigan.

Tom was a physically active person for much of his life and at Ferris he was known as the professor with the automotive passion who always rode a bike. Summers he hiked the White Mountains of New Hampshire and he had once skied the challenging Tuckerman's Ravine headwall on Mt. Washington. He contended in his retirement years with progressive and increasingly debilitating MSA. Gifts in his name can be made to the Ferry Memorial Reformed Church, 4687 Church Street, Montague, Michigan 49437. A memorial "graduation" service will be held at Windy Cove condominiums in Whitehall, Michigan, on a date to be announced.

*When Tom learned of his terminal diagnosis, he began to put his affairs in order, finding a home for his library, assigning to SAH the rights for a book he had written, and designating a successor for his Old Cars Weekly column. He also wrote his obituary, which you read here with only the final details inserted. We have lost a consistent supporter and a faithful friend. To Joyce and his family we extend the sympathy of the Society.*

—Kit Foster

## Letters

I am sure readers will recall the time when insurance agents, for lack of anything else, displayed large professionally-done easel-style posters in their store front windows. These photos featured the less-fortunate of their clients, those who found themselves in a mind-boggling array of accidents. The main office sent posters to subscribers weekly.

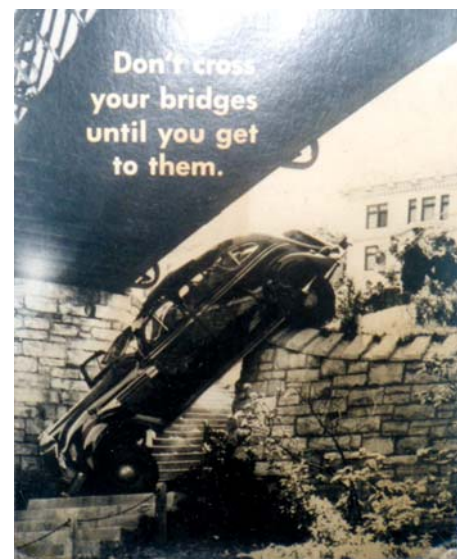
Viewing these posters was one of the high points of walking home from elementary school. What fresh disaster to these hapless drivers would this week bring? Boys always stopped, looked and talked about the car. We would then speculate on the occupants' survival. Girls showed no interest.

Robert Radel, a long-time friend and carnik, was gifted with one of these long-ago window displays. The problem was this car picture was heavy cardboard with a self-easel, and had dimensions of 3 1/2 by 2 feet. Bob experimented by taking photos of photos.

The car is a 1937 Chrysler C-17 Imperial Airflow 4-door sedan on a 128 inch wheelbase. The Airflows showed a long list of safety features.

Without a doubt, these cars were the safest car in the U.S.A. and very possibly the safest in the world in 1937. So this bone-headed driver chose the ideal car for his or her misadventure that day.

—Fred Summers



## Letters



I am enclosing a picture of an ancient truck (above) which may be of interest to our readers. The owner and driver was a gentleman called Frank Wilbur who lived and farmed at Rochester, Vermont. The reverse side of the original bears the following inscription, probably written by his wife, "This is Frank and his truck. It was taken on the road while at work drawing gravel."

The truck looks new and my guess is that would place the picture at 1930 or earlier. You can see the logo of the make on the radiator but you would have to be knowledgeable to determine the manufacturer. —*John J. Hogan*

Here are photos I took in the mid 1950s of two different Canadian DeSoto automobiles. The 1951 2-door (above right) has U.S.A. bumpers, front and rear, with modified grille, parking lights and chrome hood decorations. The name plate on the side of the fender says "Diplomat" which was also the name for the U.S.A. 1951 DeSoto 2-door hard top. This was the first year



DeSoto had a 2-door hard top. The only change at the rear appears to be "DeSoto" on the trunk lid. This 1951 has a Florida license plate, which seems unusual to see a Canadian car and license and being a daily driver so far from Canada.

The 1955 station wagon (center below and bottom) has "DeSoto" on the tailgate which appears to be the only non-U.S.A. item on the rear. The 1955 station wagon also has U.S.A. front and rear bumpers as well as the modified grille and parking lights and hood decorations. I cannot make out the name on the side of the front fender between the headlight and wheel opening.

During the 1950s Groucho Marx' television program was sponsored by DeSoto. Buick sponsored Milton Berle and later Jackie Gleason. Chevrolet sponsored Dinah Shore, Dodge sponsored Lawrence Welk and Lincoln-Mercury sponsored Ed Sullivan during the time when those shows were at the peak of popularity.

Groucho died at age 86 on August 19, 1977, three days after Elvis Presley died. —*Nelson Bolan*

SAH members are invited to join  
**the Classic Car Club of America  
(CCCA)**

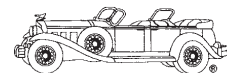
founded in 1952 to promote the  
preservation and restoration of  
distinctive motorcars built between  
1925 and 1948.

The club publishes its *Bulletin* eight  
times a year and the quarterly *Classic  
Car* magazine.

The club maintains a museum and  
research library on the grounds of  
the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory  
Corners, Michigan.

For membership details contact the club  
at either of the addresses below.

CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



1645 Des Plaines River Road, Suite 7  
Des Plaines, IL 60018-2206  
(847) 390-0443  
[www.ClassicCarClub.org](http://www.ClassicCarClub.org)





## Book Reviews

### The English Model T Ford –

**A Century of the Model T in Britain**, by Martin Riley, Bruce Lilleker and Neil Tuckett. 288 pages, 373 black-and white and 61 color photographs. The Model T Ford Register of Great Britain Ltd. in association with the Michael Sedgwick Memorial Trust. Available in the United States from Ross Lilleker, 8437 Turkey Creek Road, College Station, Texas 77845. <http://www.modeltbook.com>. \$60.00 plus \$9.00 shipping and handling.

The recent centenary observances for what Henry Ford called “The Universal Car” have understandably spawned a carload of books. The Model T has never lacked for attention, so many of these have simply rehashed the conventional wisdom, newly packaged. Among the chaff, however, are some real kernels of wheat, and this book is one of the best.

We rightly think of the Model T as an American icon, but it was also the first “world car,” an automobile built and sold in its basic form all over the globe. Such was its reach that overseas assembly began early, in the case of Britain in 1911. So successful was the T that by the mid-1920s half the cars on British roads were Fords. It took an even

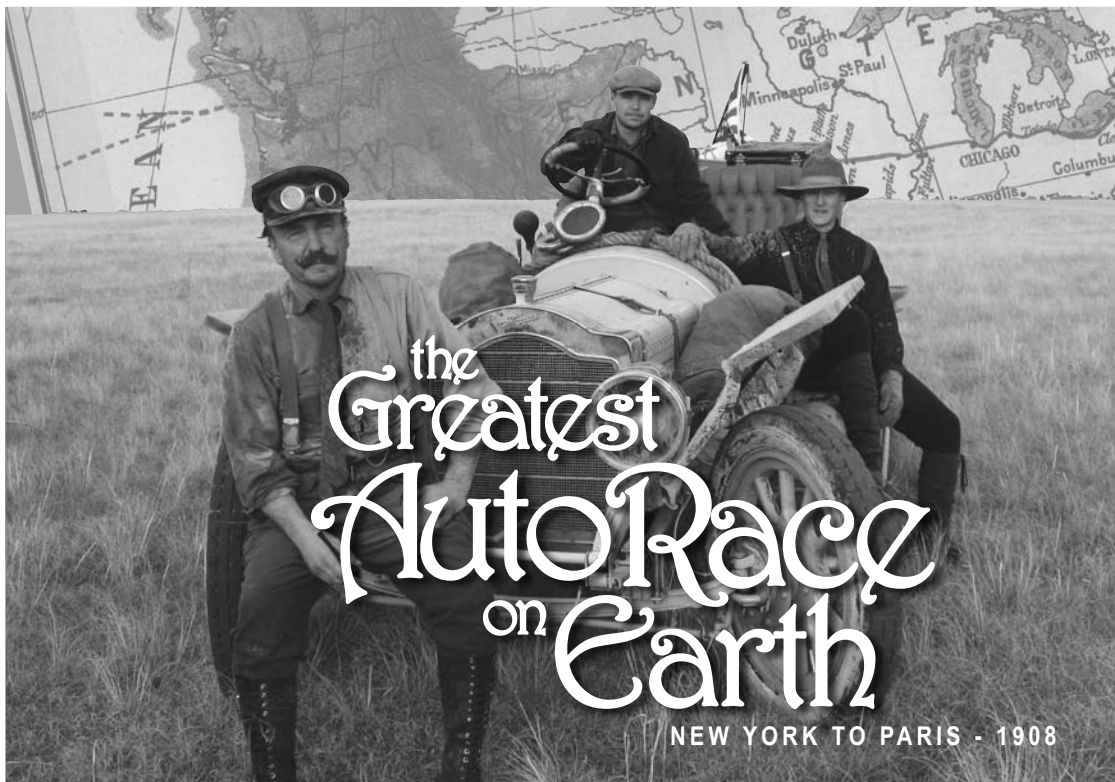
simpler, smaller imitator, the Austin Seven, to dislodge the T from its perch.

The authors begin with a chapter about Ford in Britain before the Model T; the first Model As were imported in the winter of 1903-04. Seven successive chapters take the story through the end of production, and a final chapter deals with post-production matters, the launch of the new Model A and the subsequent history of the Trafford Park plant where British Model Ts were built. Included is a short history of the Model T Ford Register of Great Britain. Useful appendices cover sales and production, prices, serial numbers, early dealers, management and biographical notes on Sir Percival Perry, the driving force behind Ford in Britain.

There is a tendency for books by marque and model enthusiasts to become mired in details, which are craved by the faithful but often boring to a general audience. This book strikes a good balance, for just when the text seems to be headed into obscurity the pace picks up and the story takes a new turn. The cars of each year are discussed in some detail,

but accompanied by commentary on manufacturing techniques and company management. It is well written and extensively researched, the latter evidenced by plenteous citations. The latter are occasionally worked into the text, where essential to understanding the topic, but otherwise left to chapter endnotes, which are mercifully concise and to the point. There is a useful index, which sadly is made less useful by its construction. For example, for “demountable rim” and “wire wheel” one is directed to the larger category of “wheels,” in which there are no fewer than 81 citations, some of them covering several pages.

The book is illustrated comprehensively with period photos and diagrams, interrupted just briefly for a 16-page color spread of recent and relevant photos. Production quality is very good, particularly the photos, which exhibit exceptional detail. Obviously essential for enthusiasts of the British Model T, it is a worthwhile resource for anyone with interest in Model Ts, British motoring in the ‘teens and twenties, and the global reach of the car that put America on wheels. I can highly recommend it. —Kit Foster



**E**ight years in the making, **The Greatest Auto Race on Earth** is now available on DVD, telling the story of the 1908 New York to Paris auto race.

Through never before seen photos and exact running replicas of the Thomas Flyer, German Protos, and Züst, the story of these brave men and their machines is told as they travelled 22,000 miles in 169 days.

With stunning cinematography and cutting edge computer graphics, we look at the hardships and accomplishments of such heroes as George Schuster, Lt. Hans Koeppen, and the popular Italian, Antonio Scarfoglio. Mastered to HD, this 95 minute program has already garnered numerous awards.

Use PayPal and order online at [www.thegreatestautorace.com](http://www.thegreatestautorace.com) or send your name and address with a cheque or Money Order for \$35.44 (\$29.99 + \$5.45 S/H) to **The 1908 Great Auto Race Film Company Ltd.**, #202, 10816A-82 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta. Canada. T6E 2B3

# Editorial

## A Big Pile of... Plans

We are living through the “interesting times” of the old saying. A frustration for me as a historian is that I want to fast-forward to find out how the story resolves itself. The only solution is patience.

Consider how complex the process is of introducing a new car to the market. It has to start with plans. Say two groups of people want to “build a car.” What is the difference between the the car built in a home garage versus one appearing at a dealership near you? The difference is a design and engineering team, prototype and testing facilities, DOT-NHTSA-TÜV certifications and the like, a factory, a marketing department, a dealer network and hundreds of millions of dollars, to say the least.

Ironically, one area that is not so different is the time involved to create a new car, several years for the home builder or the multinational.

The task of bringing a new car to market is so overwhelming that the majority of endeavors fail, in the sense that a fully driveable, consumer-ready product is available in a business setting. In addition there is the issue of selling sufficient volume and earning enough profit to sustain the venture. *The Beaulieu Encyclopædia of the Automobile* demonstrates these points. That is not taking into account every person who ever decided they could build a better car than was available at the time, which would increase the size of the *Beaulieu* several times over.

The process of bringing a new car to the public has several distinct stages, most of them behind



Suzuki Fronte 360 (above), a mysterious example showing left-hand drive, MPH speedometer, and headlamps without the Japanese home-market clear glass covers. Yet there is no indication of US or Canadian market penetration. Use of English is a bit spotty, as shown by the color palette descriptions, below. Perhaps these cars were sold in the state of Hawai'i or Puerto Rico and the Carribean?



THE REVELLE

Twentieth Century Motor Car Corp.  
16055 Ventura Boulevard • Encino, California 91436 • (213)990-3577



THE VANAGEN

Twentieth Century Motor Car Corp.  
16055 Ventura Boulevard • Encino, California 91436 • (213)990-3577

Twentieth Century Motor Car Corporation's Revelle and Vanagen (above): these illustrations propose additions to the Dale model line. The Revelle appeared larger than the Dale, and was a more sedan-like model. The Vanagen was an unlikely station wagon, given that the single wheel of these three-wheelers was at the rear. The entire venture was as dubious as the persona of company founder "Geraldine Elizabeth (Liz) Carmichael."

A BIG VALUE in a SMALL PACKAGE

THE

# SAMBAR

TRUCK & VAN

Manufacturer:

**FUJI HEAVY INDUSTRIES LTD.**

TOKYO, JAPAN

Sole Importer-Distributor:

**SUTHERLAND CO.**

303 WEST 42ND, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Subaru Sambar (above): The first-generation version is shown which ran from 1961-1965. If these vehicles made it to American customers, the importer Sutherland Company would have approximately a five year head start on imports of the Subaru 360 and Star which didn't start until the early 1970s. Where are these Sambars now?

**BODY COLORS**

- Standard & Deluxe
- Smoke-Gray
- Sunset-Red
- Canary-Cream
- Alpen-Blue
- Super deluxe
- Abyssmal-Green metallic
- Brown metallic

## Editorial

the scenes. The public's exposure generally begins with a press release or news conference. Then, if a vehicle is available, a consumer clinic or road tests, and coverage in the automotive press. Presence at new car shows with display models and information falls in this area as well. Then the first models show up at dealerships for customer test drives, usually in parallel with advertising in the local press. After this point, the vehicle must survive on its merits in the marketplace, aside from fleet sales.

The stories of Preston Tucker, Malcolm Bricklin, and John Z. DeLorean



**Subaru Rex (above):** The kei-class car, Round 2. Subaru must have forgotten the American market experience of the Subaru 360 at the beginning of the 1970s as they propose a similarly tiny car. This version is improved mechanically with a four-stroke overhead cam rear engine, and very importantly for the US market, four doors. Are any here?

are relatively known. These high-profile stories are exceptional in the sense that, starting nearly from scratch, actual driveable cars were produced, and reached customer hands. Occasionally, one of these ventures achieves infamy, such as the Dale, or a sort of wry interest as with the Vector. The larger-than-life personalities of the founders of such ventures capture more attention than the products.

Less well known are the low-profile tales of businesses that merely wanted to import already existing cars to the desirable North American market. Daihatsu and Daewoo could not continue on their own, while Subaru had several false starts and faux-pas along the way. Isuzu, Simca, Opel, and Sunbeam had mainstream brand partners in North America, yet where are these brands today? Opel models are sold as Saturns or Cadillacs, but the brand is for sale. Isuzu has slowly faded in this market.

A big pile of plans is squishy and ever-changing, so it is no surprise that in the scramble to the top, most ventures get stuck somewhere halfway up. —A. Meyer



**Renault 30 (above):** The text indicates that this V6-powered front drive car was to be introduced to the Canadian auto market, without indicating the year. The car is shown "federalized" with side marker lamps and presumably impact-absorbing bumpers but these details are not verifiable from the text. Did any of these vehicles reach Canadian shores?

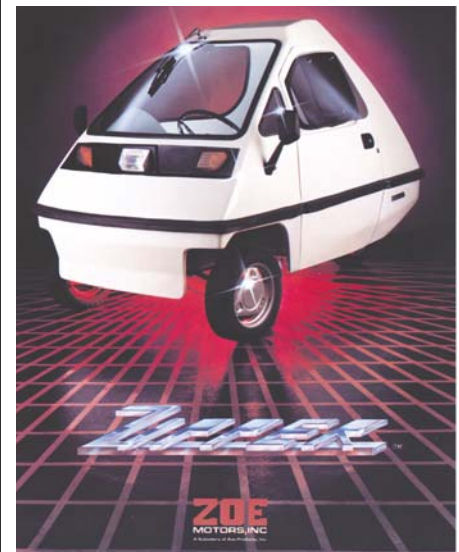
### CONY 360 "Mini Wagon"



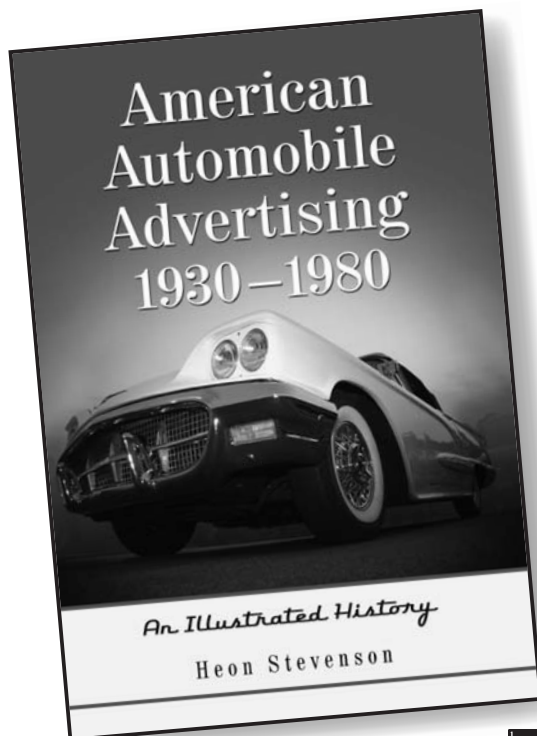
The "Mini Wagon" will keep dollars in your pocket. This small station wagon has big ideas and includes as standard what others call accessories. White wall tires, lock-up lights, wiper and useful variants and dual horns are included in base price.

• LOW INITIAL COST  
• 41 MILES PER GALLON (AT 40 MPH)  
• FITS IN SMALL SPACES  
• PARKS IN TINY SPACES  
• AIR COOLED ENGINE

**Cony 360 Mini Wagon (above):** This Japanese "kei-class" car had an air-cooled flat-twin engine mounted in an unusual center underfloor location. The car is shown in a suburban North American setting, but it is not known if any examples reached American customers.



**Zoe Zipper (above):** These highly-specialized three-wheelers were shown at the Los Angeles Auto Show for two consecutive years. The vehicles were for low-speed neighborhood use, powered by a 50cc moped engine. Zoe later began a project to import the British Reliant three-wheeler, with modifications. Importer Zoe Motors was a subsidiary of Zoe Products, Inc. Zoe Products, a vitamin vendor, was accused by the SEC of stock fraud directly related to importing cars rather than vitamins, according to the *Los Angeles Times* of June 21, 1985.



A comprehensive history of American automobile advertising over a half-century span, from the entrenchment of the "Big Three" automakers during the Depression through the fuel crises of the 1970s and early 1980s, this heavily illustrated study examines the evolution of graphic style, themes and selling techniques that accompanied changes in buyers' tastes and concerns.

296pp. \$75 hardcover (8½ × 11)  
282 photos (21 in color),  
notes, bibliography, index  
ISBN 978-0-7864-3685-9 2008



McFarland

Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640 • Orders 800-253-2187 • FAX 336-246-4403 • www.mcfarlandpub.com



Presort Standard  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit 1  
Whittier, CA

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1948  
Vashon, WA 98070-1948

---

## *A Big Pile of... Plans.*

*See page 10.*



*Pontiac proposed this G8 truck (above and right) at the Los Angeles Auto Show in mid-November 2008. General Motors had already cancelled its entire press conference for the event. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell below 8000 that week. Only time will tell how these big plans play out. Images from the Editor's collection.*