

SAAH Journal



ISSUE 259
NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2012

1928 Mercedes-Benz
Scoutchik Torpedo
Built at
Mercedes

SAH Journal

SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS
ISSUE 259 NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2012

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April 15: Nomination deadline to the committee chairs for the following awards (for full details on all awards see autohistory.org/awards):

Carl Benz Award (*Don Keefe*, donaldkeefe@aol.com)

E.P. Ingersoll Award (*Tom Jakups*, tjakups@gmail.com)

Friend of Automotive History (*Leslie Kendall*, LKendall@petersen.org)

Nicholas-Joseph Cugnot Award, English

(*Doug Leighton*, jleight@huron.uwo.ca)

Nicholas-Joseph Cugnot Award, Non-English

(*Bill Kreiner*, bill.kreiner@gmail.com)

Richard and Grace Brigham Award

(*Jack Juratovic*, 712 Novak Lane, Big Rapids, MI 49307)

June 10: Nomination deadline to the committee chair for the **Richard Scharburg Student Paper Award** (*John Heitman*, jheitmann1@udayton.edu)

August 1: Nomination deadline to the committee chair for the **James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award** (*Judith Endelman*, judith.endelman@gmail.com)

Submission Deadlines:

Deadline:	12/1	2/1	4/1	6/1	8/1	10/1
Issue:	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/June	Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec
Mailed:	1/31	3/31	5/31	7/31	9/30	11/30

Note: the SAH Journal is a bimonthly publication (printed 6 times a year) and there is a two-month horizon for submitted material before it is mailed (e.g., material submitted by February 1st appears in the Mar/Apr issue and is mailed on or before 3/31.) All letters, manuscripts, and advertisement submissions and inquiries go to the editor.

Reminder: Please consider the Society of Automotive Historians in your tax planning. Remember, a donation to the Society is tax deductible and, more importantly, it will help keep the Society a strong and vital voice for the preservation of automotive history. For more information about making a donation contact Treasurer Pat Bisson at patrickdbisson@yahoo.com.

Cover: 1928 Mercedes-Benz 680S Saoutchik Torpedo (Berthold Algrecht, Germany) at the 2012 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elégance, featuring Saoutchik. **Photo:** Ed.

Back Cover: 1928 Mercedes-Benz 680S Saoutchik Torpedo (Paul Andrews, Texas) Best of Show: 2012 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elégance. **Photos:** Ed & as credited.



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The SAH 2013

RICHARD P. SCHARCHBURG STUDENT PAPER AWARD

In order to encourage research and writing effort among university students in the area of automotive history, the Society confers its annual award for the best student paper in the auto history field. The award is named for *Richard Scharchburg*, the late Professor of History at Kettering University, eminent automotive historian, and former director and vice-president of the *Society of Automotive Historians*. Persons submitting papers must be enrolled at educational institutions (upper-class undergraduate or graduate level) at the time of submission. This competition is international in scope, but papers must be in the English language. Papers already published or accepted for publication will not be accepted.

Manuscripts should not exceed 10,000 words, and should be double-spaced. An abstract is requested. Judging criteria include clear statement of purpose and testable hypothesis, accuracy and thoroughness of research, originality of the research, documentation, quality and extent of bibliographic resources, and writing style. Diagrams, graphs, or photographs may be included. Submissions are to be electronic, in Word 1997-2003 format or PDF files only, to the email address below.

In the "Chairman's Comments" in the winter edition (No. 71) of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain's *SAHB Times*, Chairman Peter Card re-



Possible subjects include but are not limited to historical aspects of automobile companies and their leaders, regulation of the auto industry, financial and economic aspects of the industry, the social effects of the automobile, highway development, environmental matters, and automotive marketing, design, engineering and safety.

A cover letter should be included stating the student's address, school, program, advisor, and stage in studies. The student should indicate how the paper submitted will relate to his or her professional future. Submissions must be emailed by June 10, 2013. All papers submitted will be acknowledged.

Upon recommendation of the judges, the winning paper will be considered for publication in the Society's *Automotive History Review*. The award consists of a plaque and a cash prize of \$500.00.

Submissions should be sent to:

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Chair, Student Awards Committee
Department of History
University of Dayton
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Dayton, OH 45469-1540
jheitmann1@udayton.edu
tel: +1.937.229.2803
fax: +1.937.229.2816

ports that membership in the SAHB is at 170 (a huge increase over the 30 mark when he became Secretary in 1992), and it's still growing. While not a large number by some measures, it is significant given its share of "motoring writers, collectors and those within the automotive industry."

Peter went on to say that the SAHB "had a highly successful Autumn Seminar with 65 people in attendance at the Hunt House, the headquarters of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club and the Sir Henry Royce Memorial Foundation. Given the nature of the clubs, to get a turnout of over a third of the membership at any one event is a cause for celebration."

Another bit of news came during the seminar, where the Philip Hall Award was presented to *Tom Clarke* and *Will Morrison* for their excellent publication, *The Roycean*. Now in its third year, this annual publication is dedicated to producing authoritative in-depth articles regarding

Rolls-Royce history. (Rather fitting that the seminar was held and the award presented at The Hunt House!) The award was created by Mrs. Brenda Wright, the daughter of Rupert Nicholson, who was the appointed receiver for Rolls-Royce Ltd. when the company collapsed in 1971 under the weight of developing the RB211 engine that was to be used on the Lockheed L-1011. Under enormous pressure, Nicholson managed to give Rolls-Royce a new lease on life to both, the aerospace and motorcar businesses. His accomplishments cannot be overstated and his daughter introduced this award, as well as others, to keep Nicholson's accomplishments visible, while recognizing the achievements of its recipients. The award was named for *Philip Hall*, who has worked endlessly to maintain and promote Rolls-Royce heritage.

Wanted: Contributors! The *SAH Journal* is in need of contributors for articles and book reviews. With your help, we can continue to feature a steady and consistent stream of authoritative material advancing the record of automotive history. Please contact your editor directly. *Thank you!*

Wanted: CAR BOOKS. Send an email to receive a "Title Priced Want List" from Warth Motor Book Buyer.

Contact: Tom Warth +1.612.801.5335
email: btew1@me.com

Wanted: There is a new edition in the works for the Dalton Watson book: *Rolls-Royce in America* by John W. de Campi. The book will be faithful to the original, but will also contain additional material, including an expansion of the current production listing of chassis data to include chassis with first delivery to America, as well as update, advancing the history of Rolls-Royce in America since its publication in 1975, and more. The aim is to cover the subject as exhaustively and inclusively as possible. Accordingly, this is a call for anyone who may have material (photographic or printed) and/or a contribution of information (e.g., sources and contacts) that is believed to be relevant to the history of Rolls-Royce in America to please contact your editor. *Thank you!*



This 1947 Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith (WTA45) with Sedanca Coupé coachwork by Saoutchik is pictured here in Paris when new, and in Miami after restoration and winning a class award at the 2010 Pebble Beach Concours d'Élégance. Owner: R. Matteucci, FL.

J. SAOUTCHIK THE ICONIC COACHBUILDER REVISITED

In the time it would take to read this article, you could have summoned up more text and photos on the internet regarding Saoutchik than could possibly appear here. Still, we won't ignore the basics: Iakov Saoutchik was born in the Ukraine in 1880. He was a skilled cabinetmaker when he moved to Paris around 1900 and started going by Jacques Saoutchik. (Iakov, Jacques, both are a form of Jacob.) By 1906 he managed to start operations as a coachbuilder in Neuilly-sur-Seine, a suburb of Paris. Saoutchik worked with the finest marques and produced high quality, stylish coachwork for a wealthy clientele, and he was off to a good start with his first body, reportedly mounted on an Isotta-Franschini. In the 1920s–30s, Saoutchik produced the iconic coachwork he is most known and admired for—stylish designs often accented by chrome trim. After the Second World War, Saoutchik did not escape the general decline in coachbuilding. Some coachbuilders took steps to change with the times in various ways with mixed success. However, Saoutchik became increasingly flamboyant with his designs—producing extraordinary cars, but this level of visual excess failed to resonate with the times to generate enough business to save the firm. By the time Jacques' son Pierre took over in 1952, the decline was severe until they eventually became insolvent, closing their doors in 1955. Jacques died in 1957 and Pierre in 1984.

Most accounts, in the internet or otherwise, will not go far beyond the above. Treatments in hard cover appear in two issues of *Automobile Quarterly*; Vol. IX, No. 3, Spring 1971, with a page and a half of text by Don Vorderman, followed by a visual selection of Saoutchik designs painted by John Amendola, and Vol. 42, No. 2, Second Quarter 2002, with great pictures and just more than half a dozen pages of text, by *Ferdinand Hediger*. The definitive book on Saoutchik has yet to be written—or even the first book! That is about to change; Peter Larsen, coauthor of the excellent new book: *Talbot-Lago Grand Sport*, (published by Dalton Watson Fine Books, ISBN 13: 978-85443-247-6) is currently working on a book on Saoutchik, also to be published by Dalton Watson Fine Books.

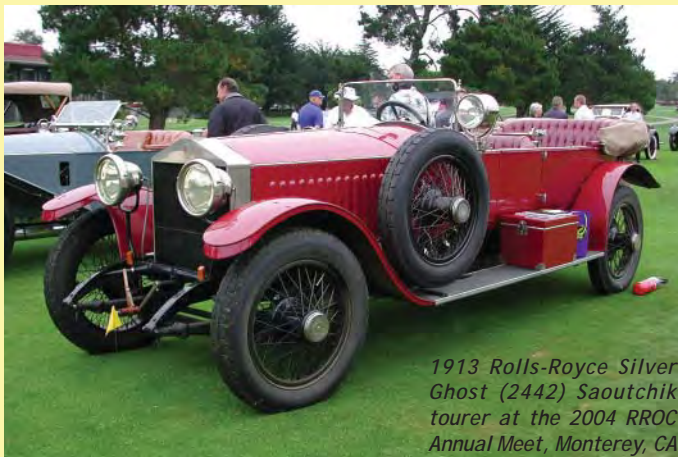




The lineup of Saoutchik cars, on one end (above), the 1938 Hispano-Suiza Dubonnet "Xenia" Coupé and on the other end (below right), the 1948 Talbot-Lago T-26 Grand Sport Coupé, both owned by M. Mullin, California.

The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elégance featured Saoutchik coachwork for the 2012 show along with the cars of the Maharajas, and the show produced a hefty program containing articles for these themes and more. The Saoutchik story was told with satisfying depth relative to space available in such a program, and we can help clarify one item that seemed to be elusive: "In 1913, Rolls-Royce company records indicate that a 40/50 hp motor car was bodied by the Saoutchik house, although we have no details of the final coachwork that was applied." A possible answer is chassis 2442,

similar programs at various other shows) have evolved and, at times, even break new ground, e.g., the 2001 Pebble Beach program was the first to report that the real Blue Train Bentley was not the iconic rear-swooping Gurney Nutting Speed Six (HM2855) but was likely to have been Woolf Barnato's other Speed Six, the H.J. Mulliner saloon (BA2592) because Bentley records indicate that HM2855



1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost (2442) Saoutchik tourer at the 2004 RROC Annual Meet, Monterey, CA

a 1913 40/50 "Silver Ghost" with Saoutchik touring coachwork. This car is currently identified as the earliest surviving Saoutchik example and is owned by SAH member *Mermie Karger*. (Speaking of *Automobile Quarterly*, chassis 2442 appeared in an article about Rolls-Royce on page 105 of Vol. II, No. 1, Spring 1963, but was captioned as a 1912, and the text on the previous page states that "they named their first car the Silver Ghost"—the first Rolls-Royce was the 2-cylinder 10 h.p. model—the "Silver Ghost" was a specific car, an early 40/50 Rolls-Royce (chassis 60551) and famous trials car, so celebrated that eventually all cars of that model were called Silver Ghost.) As reported in *The Edwardian Rolls-Royce* (1993, Fasal and Goodman, ISBN 13: 9780950648958), the other two possibilities in 1913 are chassis 2604 and 2690, both reported to have received Saoutchik touring bodies. These show programs (and



wasn't passed off Final Test until ten weeks after Barnato beat the Blue Train. (And there is more evidence—all in a story for the next *SAH Journal*.) From the view of auto history, we can be encouraged and encourage the progress and further progress of show programs to chronicle the cars and present history as accurately as possible.

The two 1928 Mercedes-Benz 680S Torpedo examples on the front and back covers were the earliest of the twelve examples in the Saoutchik class at the 2012 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elégance. On the front cover, Berthold Albrecht, Germany exhibited chassis 35964, and on the back cover, Paul and Judy Andrews, Texas, took Best of Show with chassis 35949. Along with the 500K, 540K and their Special Roadster kin, the Mercedes-Benz cars bodied by Saoutchik are perhaps the most coveted cars of the marque. ED.

J. SAOUTCHIK

A VISUAL STUDY OF THE COACHBUILDER

If a picture is indeed worth a thousand words, what follows are volumes on Saoutchik design. These were the Saoutchik cars on display at the 2012 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elégance: 1954 Pegaso Z-102 B Coupé (Caballeriza Inc., CA) **1**; 1936 Hispano-Suiza J12 Cabriolet (W. Connor, Hong Kong) **2**; 1948 Cadillac series 62 Cabriolet (Blackhawk, CA) **3**; 1939

Bugatti Type 57 Cabriolet (Robert M. Lee Trust, NV) **4**; 1949 Delahaye 175 Coupé de Ville (D. Williams and C. Swimmer, CA) **5**; 1948 Talbot-Lago T-26 Grand Sport Coupé (M. Mullin, CA) **6**; 1953 Delahaye 235 Coupé (Blackhawk, CA) **7**; 1949 Delahaye 135 M Cabriolet (R. Temperli, Switzerland) **8**; 1928 Mercedes-Benz 680S Torpedo (P. Andrews, TX) **9**; 1928 Mercedes-Benz 680S Torpedo (B. Albrecht, Germany) **10**; 1939 Delage D8-120S Cabriolet (J. Rich, Jr., PA) **11**; 1938 Hispano-Suiza Dubonnet "Xenia" Coupé (P. Mullin, CA) **12**.





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Leslie Henry's Comet

THREE MERCURY COMETS FOR LIFE BY GENE D. DICKIRSON

Editor's Note: This is a story involving one of our founding members, Leslie R. Henry, and an article from 1972 claiming that due to imminent emissions regulations, he purchased three Mercury Comets to last him the rest of his life. Mr. Henry's opinion was of interest as he was Curator of Transportation at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, and author of many books and papers. For more on his life, see his obituary in SAHJ #202, Jan/Feb 2003, pg. 6. Gene D. Dickirson, has degrees in Drafting Technology and Mechanical Engineering, and he began his career at Ford Motor Company in 1963 as a draftsman and retired in 1998 as a manager in the Product Engineering Office. He is a registered professional engineer in the state of Michigan and has four U.S. design patents to his credit and has had several technical papers published. He is the author of GDT Speedster from dream to reality, The Sheldon Road Project and Automotive Climate Control 116 Years of Progress, ISBN-13: 978-0615173269, 978-0578010991 and 978-1105183614 respectively. For more on the history of automotive emissions, we recommend: Cleaner Cars: The History and Technology of Emission Control Since the 1960s by J. Robert Mondt, SAE; ISBN-13: 978-0768002225.

This story was sparked by a *Detroit News* article I remember from the 1970s. I recalled the story was about the curator of the Henry Ford Museum who purchased three new Mercury Comets with the intent of driving them for the rest of his life. He felt that the next generation of cars would be no fun to drive because of the forthcoming safety and emissions requirements. He planned to drive the first one and store the other two. After the first one wore out he would retain it for spare parts and drive the second one until it wore out. He figured three would last him for life. I did not clip the article at the time, however, I kept this story tucked away in the corner of my memory and pulled

it out every few years for a moment or two and wondered how the story had ended. On September 20, 2012, while visiting the Henry Ford Museum, I decided to find out how the story ended. I asked several people about the story, at the museum, the Ford Motor Company archives and automotive writers/historians that I knew. Some of the people I contacted had never heard of the story and others had a vague recollection but no details. A few weeks later, I received a call from Randy Mason and he had the answer to how the story ended.

Randy had heard that I was interested in the story from Terry Hoover, one of his Henry Ford Museum colleagues. He indicated the *Detroit News* article was not accurate and sent photocopies of a typewritten discussion of the story that he wrote around 1998, the window sticker from one of the three Comets, a clipping of the original *Detroit News* article and a typewritten letter from Leslie Henry to Randy Mason.

The October 22, 1972 front page article by James A. Treloar included a photo of Leslie Henry in the foreground with three Mercury Comets in the background with headlines that read "Buys 3 to beat pollution devices" and "Auto expert will hoard his '72s," quoted Leslie Henry numerous times and stated that he expected the three Comets to last him up to 30 years at his driving rate of 15,000 miles per year. Leslie expected vehicle performance to decrease significantly and prices to increase due to the pending emission requirements for the 1973 models. The article also quoted Ford Motor Company chief engineer Fred Bloom, saying he was pleased Leslie had selected Mercury Comets to drive for years to come. Mr. Bloom also predicted that the forthcoming vehicles would be continuously improved just as they had in the past.

This from Randy's 1998 account: "In 1970-72, I ran a Ziebart Rustproofing franchise. When Leslie R. Henry, well-known Ford historian and Curator of Transportation Collections at Henry Ford Museum, bought this special order Comet in 1972, he brought it to my shop for rustproofing. Also in 1972, he asked me to apply for the position of assistant curator at the Museum, working directly for him. I did, they hired me, and I worked there for 20 years until 1992 (and two more years as a contract consultant). When the Comet was brand new, I frequently rode in it with Les. It so happened that, in 1972, not only did Les buy a Comet, but his wife, Audie, and his

son, Charlie, were in the market for new cars, and Les decided to buy each of them a Comet as well. Les was an outspoken critic of the newly-passed emissions standards, and felt that perhaps Ford was building its last decent cars due to the new restrictions. (He was right. I have called the decade from '74 to '84 the "lost decade" of the American car.)

A well-known newspaper reporter got wind of the fact that Les had bought three new Comets, and decided to do a story on him, which ended up on the front page of the Oct. 22, 1972 edition of the *Detroit News*. In the article, it was alleged that Les had bought three new Comets and was going to "stockpile" them, so he would always have a good car to drive! Nothing, of course, could have been farther from the truth. Audie's car was stolen a few years later, and Charlie turned his 302 V-8 two-door into a race car! I bought Les's car in 1990, and have driven it every summer since. I also pull my 1962 16' boat with it. It now has 103,000 miles on it. The car has been licensed and driven every year of its life for transportation purposes. Les special-ordered the car with a 302 V8, a 3-speed manual transmission with a floor shift, heavy duty suspension, and air conditioning. He then added cruise control and Michelin radial tires. The color is "Ivy Metallic Glamour", which was \$34.66 extra! I guess Les wasn't totally correct, I think they have made some better cars since 1972, but this one has treated me pretty well!" Randy sold the car in April 2001 to Ed Tietz with 104,718 miles on the odometer.

Epilogue: Ed Tietz works at the Ford Motor Co. Michigan Assembly plant in Wayne, MI and still owns the car, which now has 115,000 miles. Audie's Comet was recovered within three or four days in Nebraska. The Nebraska state trooper who recovered the vehicle eventually purchased it. It would have cost more than the Comet was worth to return it to Michigan. Charlie permitted his high school auto shop students to modify his Comet as class projects after the 12-month/12,000 mile warranty expired. The students added three carburetors, a high performance camshaft, custom exhaust, a four-speed transmission, dual point distributor, Koni shock absorbers and Fairlane/Mustang sport wheels. After a few years, Charlie sold it to a young fellow in his neighborhood. The new owner promptly modified the engine and painted the car red and totaled the car in an accident within just a few weeks.

Charlie Henry was a car guy from youth as his father Leslie took him to antique car

shows every weekend rather than playing little league baseball. As an adult Charlie taught auto shop at John Glenn High School then worked for Kelsey-Hayes as a sales and service engineer. Beginning in 1982 he began his career at Chrysler MoPar Direct Connection. He was involved in developing performance and race parts for the Prowler, Viper, Neon and PT Cruiser programs. Charlie raced his own 2.2 Dodge Shelby Charger in SCCA and drove for Chrysler's "Team Shelby" in the SCCA Escort endurance race series. He is now an adjunct professor at Indiana State University teaching a course in automotive history.



Charlie Henry's Comet

THE HENRY FORD RESEARCH RESOURCE

One of the aims of the *SAH Journal* is to inform and remind our members of the research resources that can help support and inform their interests. *The Henry Ford* segues nicely from our Comet article. Most know about the Henry Ford Museum, which won the *James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award* in 1987 (see *SAHJ* #111, Nov/Dec 1987 pg. 2), but The Henry Ford is much more: it's an entire complex of attractions, making it tourist destination. In addition to the museum, there's Greenfield Village (an "Americana" presentation), the Ford Rouge Factory tour, an IMAX Theater and, the object of our focus here, The Benson Ford Research Center.

The internet has allowed many organizations to present and offer up parts and aspects of their collections for easy and immediate access. On www.thehenryford.org you can click on "Research Center" on the



top menu banner and on the "Benson Ford Research Center" page there's a grey bar to the right titled "search" followed by different avenues to follow: the Research Center

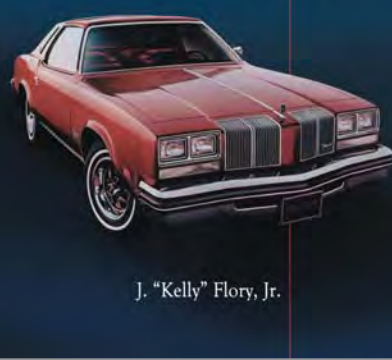
Catalog, Image Source and the Henry Ford ArteHouse. Here we show the screen for the Research Center Catalog that's a gateway to peruse their holdings.

Like many facilities, holdings cannot be removed from the premises, but research services can be engaged. The best way to contact them is probably by email at research.center@thehenryford.org to answer questions and make appointments. Right under the "search" options one finds "remote services" detailing the research that they can perform for you. All requests are handled in writing, but you can call with questions +1.313.982.6020.



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Book Reviews

Cars I've Loved and Hated: Michael Lamm's Unauthorized Auto Biography

by Michael Lamm

Lamm-Morada 2012; 9428 Hickory Avenue, Stockton, CA 95212

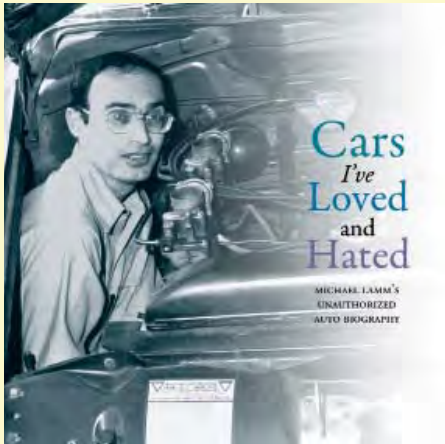
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ISBN-13: 978-0932128157



Who hasn't read a "car guy" story in which the teller recounts how he got into the hobby, tells about the cars in his life and so on? What sets this tale apart from the tongue-in-cheek title, *Cars I've Loved and Hated, An Unauthorized Auto Biography*, is the author. Michael Lamm is not your average writer nor is the story he relates that of an average hobbyist.

Lest anyone reading this be a tad unclear regarding the author, as a starter Michael Lamm has been part of SAH virtually from its inception. Then as his career developed he wrote and published numerous books, many of which earned SAH awards ranging from the Cugnot and Carl Benz (multiple times for each) over the decades. He co-founded and edited a periodical called *Special Interest Autos* that today is considered a backbone of any automotive researcher or historian's library. He tossed his hat in the ring, running for an SAH board seat in the '70s and was rewarded not merely with the membership's votes but also that of fellow board members

who "crowned" him president. There's more still, but you get the idea.

This particular tome is (sadly for this reviewer who is an admitted fan of books printed on paper and bound between covers) only available on a computer disk. So you'll need to be at least minimally computer-able in order to enjoy reading Mike's experiences as well as seeing and reading about the just-a-few-shy of 100 different cars, domestic and foreign alike of all makes and models, with which he's become intimate (can one describe the author deeply ensconced inside the compartment alongside the engine as is shown in the image that is the "cover" in any other way?)

The narrative begins in 1950. Mike having just achieved his 14th year celebrated by buying his first car, a 1931 Hudson. Very quickly an old Chevy and an old Ford also joined the stable. Is that handwriting on the wall or what? Throughout the fifteen

generously-illustrated chapters you'll discover how a guy who thinks cars are the "be all and end all" finds a way to turn his nearly all-consuming interest into a career, without losing sight of or compromising his honesty and integrity, all while winning the girl of his dreams, and then of the family they raise. Please note: this greatly foreshortened description is far less colorful than Mike's own entertaining telling.

Of particular note and interest to readers of this *Journal*, especially given Lamm's dual perspective of active hands-on hobbyist/collector and equally active writer/product reviewer/historian, will be his assessments of the growth and changes within the hobby over the decades that have catapulted it into the realm of real business too. While Lamm's *Unauthorized Auto Biography* is entertaining to read it also is a seriously useful document for an automotive historian.

—Helen V. Hutchings

User Unfriendly: Consumer Struggles with Personal Technologies, from Clocks and Sewing Machines to Cars and Computers

by Joseph J. Corn

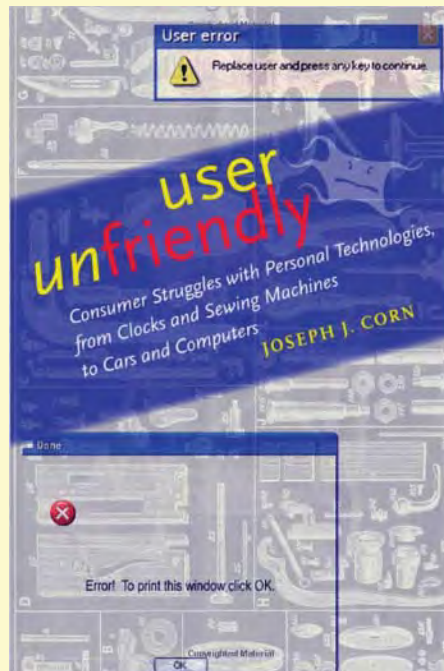
The Johns Hopkins University Press; 1 edition (October 11, 2011)

296 pages, hardcover, 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

List Price: \$55

ISBN-10: 1421401924

ISBN-13: 978-1421401928



It seems the older we get the more we wrestle with the new technologies that we acquire. And particularly when it comes to

digital technologies, including systems found on new car dashboards and consoles, the experience can turn us into technophobes. Personally, I can handle the tuning and synchronization of Weber carburetors and the setting of Porsche 944 cams, but just attempting to understand the controls of an Audi A5 results in high levels of frustration and defeat. Thus Joseph Corn's easily read and sometimes amusing *User Unfriendly* struck a chord with this reader. And while this study covers a rather broad array of consumer technologies that includes clocks, sewing machines, appliances, and personal computers, at its heart is the automobile during its period of diffusion, namely up to the 1930s. Historians have spent the past two decades examining the process of consumption in considerable detail. Yet, as Corn points out, the consumption of technological devices is rather different, and beginning in the mid-19th century posed difficulties to its owners. Learning about those technologies in historical context, then, is the subject of this book.

The introduction of the automobile proved to be a daunting challenge to its first generation of owners. First and foremost was the issue of what car to purchase, made especially difficult not only by the plethora of manufacturers and models but also the lack of knowledge on the part of consumers concerning the technologies associated with the automobile and the performance and quality of the various makes. On this topic

the author is at his best, drawing on popular literature, trade magazines, manufacturers sales manuals directed towards the training of salesmen, and advertising. In the subsequent chapter "Running a Car," however, little new is brought to the reader. Corn discusses the difficulties of hand cranking, fixing flats, steering, shifting gears, braking, and "supervising performance" once the vehicle was underway. Suffice it to say that driving automobiles before the 1930s was as much an intuitive art as a skill, and the process of making controls and instrumentation less idiosyncratic and more uniform took several decades to achieve. By the Great Depression, however, American automobiles were far more reliable and safer than the first generation of vehicles that hit the road. And of course the fact that roads became better changed the entire equation.

What follows are chapters centering on

maintenance, repair, and operation. Drawing on a wide variety of sources including popular and scholarly literature, numerous owners' manuals, and archival material, Corn's engaging narrative brings in the insights of a good number of historians of the automobile and technology without bogging down in esoteric academic prose. If you have worked with old cars and done restoration, these chapters will be familiar, but nevertheless freshly packaged. Perhaps what is missing in the author's discussion centers on generational issues. Namely, young people have no difficulty in adapting to new technologies; however, as one gets older learning becomes increasingly difficult. Was that the case at the beginning of the automobile age as it was with the coming of personal computers? If so, what does that mean in terms of reexamining the early history of the automobile?

—John Heitmann

Crosley and Crosley Motors: An Illustrated History of America's First Compact Car and the Company that Built it

by Michael Banks

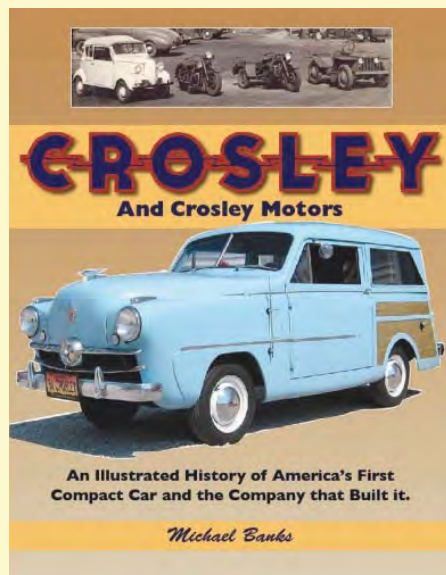
Iconographix (2012)

128 pages, 202 b/w & 44 color illustrations, softcover

List Price: \$37.95

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There are good reasons why America was never drawn to the small car—long driving distances, extremes of climate, low gasoline prices and a prosperous economy. And yet from time to time American promoters, inspired by design creations of the European industry, convinced themselves that minimal vehicles could also have a

future on this side of the Atlantic. We are not referring to the Ford Model-T size cars, today called 'compacts,' that have always occupied the bottom rung of the domestic market. Elsewhere small cars are those of minimum dimension and power able to serve as acceptable if not luxurious family transport at the lowest possible cost. The economy and, may we say it, the charm of these modest vehicles has seduced some to the belief that they might find favor in North America. Among those would-be manufacturers and importers the name of Powel Crosley Jr. comes to mind as the only one in recent memory to tilt at the windmill of American automotive culture. In his *Crosley and Crosley Motors*, Michael Banks has given us a well-researched balanced history of his crusade, setting out the high and low points of a business that spanned fifteen years bracketing the period of the Second World War.

Powel Crosley was born at the dawn of the automotive era and, like many of his peers, was drawn by the magnet of the motor vehicle. At college, in defiance of his father's wishes (a familiar story), he enrolled in engineering. Then, finding technical subjects challenging, he transferred to law school, but quickly became bored of it and dropped out to enter the business world. He soon found his natural talent in sales and promotion, starting with municipal bonds, then moving on to a six-cylinder assembled car, a cyclecar and then to employment as an advertising copywriter. None of these efforts were successful but, through his ad-

vertising work, he made a connection with a group involved in mail order automotive accessories including a gasoline additive, tire patches, a steering stabilizer and a system of water injection sold to Ford owners through auto magazines and later through its own catalogue. In the 1920s, he founded the *Crosley Radio Corporation* and became the world's largest radio manufacturer bringing the fortune that enabled him to set himself up as an automobile manufacturer.

Crosley never said why he chose to target the lowest price segment of the market but Henry Ford was his idol and he had a strong belief in underselling the competition. The earliest surviving design document is a rough sketch in Powel Crosley's hand of a tiny four-seater from which the final car was developed. It is believed that he served as his own chief designer although the bodies were built by Murray. An assembled car like his previous efforts, it was powered by an air-cooled 12 horsepower two-cylinder engine purchased from Waukesha Motor Company and intended for an orchard sprayer. Equipment was limited, dispensing with independent front suspension, synchronized gears, differential, hydraulic brakes, gas gauge, spare wheel and tire. The reviewer remembers carpooling in a neighbor's Crosley during the war years, its tiny motor loudly straining in low gear to climb the long hill to school. The owner was often congratulated for having the foresight to anticipate gas rationing that kept conventional cars in the garage.

Crosley's only competition in the midget class was Bantam, built during the same three-year period. With sales of 6,700 Bantam outsold Crosley's 5,757 but neither could be considered a success. Bantam closed down in 1941 and Crosley might also have been terminated had it not been organized as a division of the prosperous Crosley Radio Corporation, soon to be awarded war production contracts. Immediately following the end of hostilities, Crosley decided again to attack the field that had brought it so little success before. The new model, built on a similar 80-inch chassis, would be powered by a 45-cubic inch four-cylinder motor designed as a power unit for stationary generators and constructed from brazed steel stampings rather than cast iron. The company now employed a chief engineer and some testing was done although many of the cost-saving features of the prewar model were retained. Between 1946 and 1952 about 83,000 cars were produced but when sales

tapered off the business was closed down.

Crosley abandoned the small car market on the eve of its expansion and some historians have claimed it was ahead of its time. The author frankly sets out the facts of its primitive design and poor build quality which resulted in extensive warranty costs. It would have been severely challenged by the innovative new models soon to arrive from European manufacturers and, of course, the car would have fallen far short of compliance with today's environmental and safety regulations. Michael Banks has done an outstanding job, covering Powell Crosley's personal history as well as the development and technical

history of the car and the business history of the company. He has had access to company financial records, contemporary publications and photographs and has interviewed surviving actors in the drama, an impressive performance when constrained by the publisher's standard 128-page format. Unfortunately there is a dearth of footnotes or bibliography, another of the publisher's standards. This book is a must read for those who categorize the American automotive industry as producers of look-alike drive-alike cars. We are unlikely to be given a more thorough treatment of the subject.

—Arthur Jones

Parking Cars in America, 1910-1945: A History

by Kerry Segrave

McFarland & Company, Inc.

www.mcfarlandpub.com (800-253-2187)

194 pages, 6" x 9" softbound, June, 2012

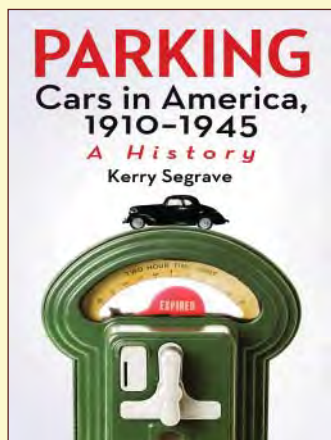
Notes, bibliography, index, no illustrations.

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This book chronicles how American cities of all sizes have dealt with (or in the belief of the book's author: not dealt with) the ever spiraling issue of the storage of the automobile within the metropolitan downtown area, specifically at the core, or central business district.

Urban planners and architects have long felt that roadways and thoroughfares are created for the movement of vehicles and traffic. As the urban population expanded, in lockstep with the explosion of automobile ownership, the general public believed that the parking of vehicles, curbside, on downtown streets was a given right, and not a privilege.

The author details the various attempts to address and solve this ever-increasing urban congestion through the thirty-five year time frame of the book.

Cities of all sizes and geographical area are discussed. Focus is directed toward the larger metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago in particular, due to the size of the problem.

The numerous methods attempted by the governing agencies of the municipalities included early attempts at time restrictions, outright parking bans, street width, and direction modifications, among others.

The pros and cons of the open parking lot are covered in detail as another attempted solution.

Architectural solutions attempted included roof decks, subterranean parking levels, parking integrated into the core of office structures, and of course the free-standing parking garage, complete with various approach ramp designs, and automated mechanical, 'hands free' parking.

As the problems and solution attempts are traced chronologically as the century unfolded, it is discussed how the depression of the 1930s relieved the parking pressure to a small degree. Financial distress did not end the parking dilemma, it simply slowed it down. By the time of the war years of the early 1940s, the problem was far from being solved.

In the mid 1930s, a new technological device, the parking meter, was introduced. The meter did bring a degree of order to parking chaos. It became easier and more efficient to monitor parking, and enforce time limited parking in orderly defined spaces. The meters also slowed the action of 'cruising' (the mobile hunting for a space). With the almost universal presence of the

parking meter as a fixture of life on the downtown street, it certainly had its impact as a mitigating factor.

By 1945, as World War II and gasoline rationing ended, the traffic and parking problems in American cities cores exploded. The author notes that passenger automobile traffic increased 52% from 1945 to 1946. Planners proposed the same litany of solutions used in the past; widened streets, on-street parking bans, one way and express streets, traffic circles, and of course more parking meters and restricted zones.

And here the book ends... the explosive suburban growth in the 1950s of both population and automobile production, along with the building of the Interstate highway system and the decay of the urban environment, etc. are left out of the discussion.

One can only assume that by terminating the narrative in 1945, that the author proposes to write a sequel to cover the tumultuous post war decades and the traffic and parking problems that they generated.

—Stanton A. Lyman

Sportscar Racing in the South:

Texas to Florida, 1957–1958

by Willem Oosthoek

Dalton Watson Fine Books (July 21, 2011)

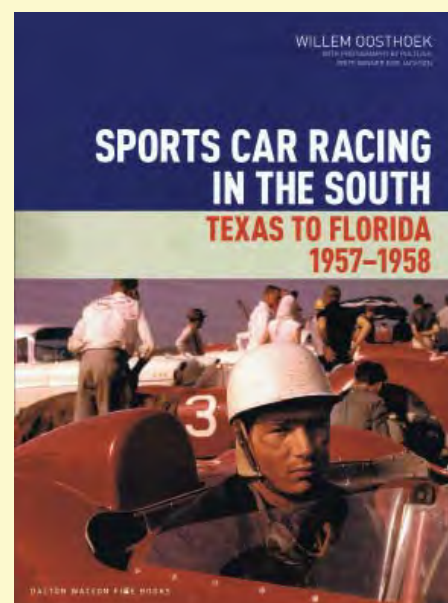
www.daltonwatson.com

264 pages, 343 b/w & 121 color illustrations, hardcover

List Price: \$125/£80

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Editor's Note: This book was awarded the 2012 Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award (English

Language) in October. The following review is courtesy of SpeedReaders.info, directly from the site's owner: Sabu Advani.

To the serious student of racing in the US, this book and its two future companions will be inevitable purchases. To the more casual reader it won't be the hard data so much as the abundance of photos that will make this acquisition worthwhile.

The entire trilogy will encompass the years 1957 to 1963. The starting year is perhaps a bit arbitrary but Oosthoek pegs it as the year in which sports car racing in the South "surged," *fueled*, as he rightly notes, by Texas and Oklahoma oil money. From then on proper, big-name racecars joined the home-built specials, and drivers began to attain regional and possibly national prominence. Both the machinery and the drivers, and the race venues themselves of course, will be more recognizable in the coming two volumes but you'll not want to miss the first one.

The very fact that these early races were of mostly local relevance, often held for nothing more than the drivers' or local community's entertainment, is the reason period press coverage and record-keeping are so shoddy. Readers with an interest in this subject will obviously know Terry O'Neil's books. Both authors were propelled into action by the same lack of reliable, cross-checked race data. In the case of Oosthoek, whose several painstakingly-researched books on competition Maseratis (also by this publisher) have made him the recognized authority on that subject, the matter was of particular urgency because Maseratis on the auction market increasingly claimed implausible but difficult to refute race history from just these years to substantiate their ever rising asking prices.

Even compared to his own Maserati books, this new book attains new heights in terms of data mining and also organization. It's one thing to "connect the dots" in an intelligent and verifiable way but it is another entirely to first of all *find* dots to then connect. Unless

you have done this yourself you simply cannot fathom the vastness of the task of sourcing piles of magazines, race programs and Monday-after newspaper race results, and then compare the data, fill the gaps, spot and reconcile conflicts, and construct a correct paper trail. A name that may be mentioned in a race program may not show up in the reported results—did the driver drop out, did the race get cancelled, was s/he too unimportant to get written up, did only the top three get a mention? Endless, endless questions.

Oosthoek was able to interview 25 participants, just in the nick of time, as some of them did not live to see the finished book. Material from personal scrapbooks and diaries may not settle all questions but it adds insights and human interest to the text that statistics alone can't convey. More importantly, this brought to light photos that had not been published before. These amateur photos augment the many professional ones by photojournalist Robert H "Bob" Jackson (whose name you may recognize as the 1964 Pulitzer winner for his photo of Kennedy assassin Lee Harvey Oswald being shot by Jack Ruby). There are also a number of race programs and ads.

Covered are 52 events in chronological order. Each race is introduced by Oosthoek's commentary, accompanied by a uniform data set (Status, Sanction, Track Details, Crowd, Weather, Chief Starter, Entries, and Program), tables of *select* race results, and thoroughly captioned (and credited) photos. While the narrative touches upon all races from Novice to Featured, the results tables (race number, number of laps, race distance, number of starters, overall positions, car numbers, drivers, cars, class finish, completed laps, winner's time, average speed) only list schedules for the *modified* races and not production classes. (Reasons are explained in the book.)

Each of the two seasons ends with a list of all identified chassis numbers (marque, model, driver/owner) in order of race appearance (Dick McGuire's

Monza is missing from the Ferrari list). Appended at the back of the book are lists of sources consulted and of interviewees, and a map. The Index is extraordinarily thorough.

For the purposes of this book, the "South" comprises the eight states of Florida, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. The reader new to this era really should also look at Big Picture books about international racing in those days. FIA regulations would limit cars to three liters for the 1958 season which meant the previous season's "big" cars trickled down the food chain. From the perspective of our modern "been there/done that" world it simply boggles the mind that there was a moment in time when the finest thoroughbred European race cars money could buy should all of a sudden be careening around a few hay bales on obscure American airfields in front of an audience that had probably never seen such exotica before.

Even if the race commentary and all the stats should not interest you, the photos alone offer hours of distraction—not least in the context of today's stratospheric prices for many of the machines you see flung about here with great abandon! That photo reproduction and paper are of a high order is a foregone conclusion in a Dalton Watson book. Typographically there is a distinct 1950s flavor and the book is a generous 13" tall.

—Sabu Advani

BEFORE THE HAPPY ENDING



This is WTA45 before restoration. See page 4 for the "after" version. Photo courtesy: Vantage Motorworks, N. Miami, FL. ED.

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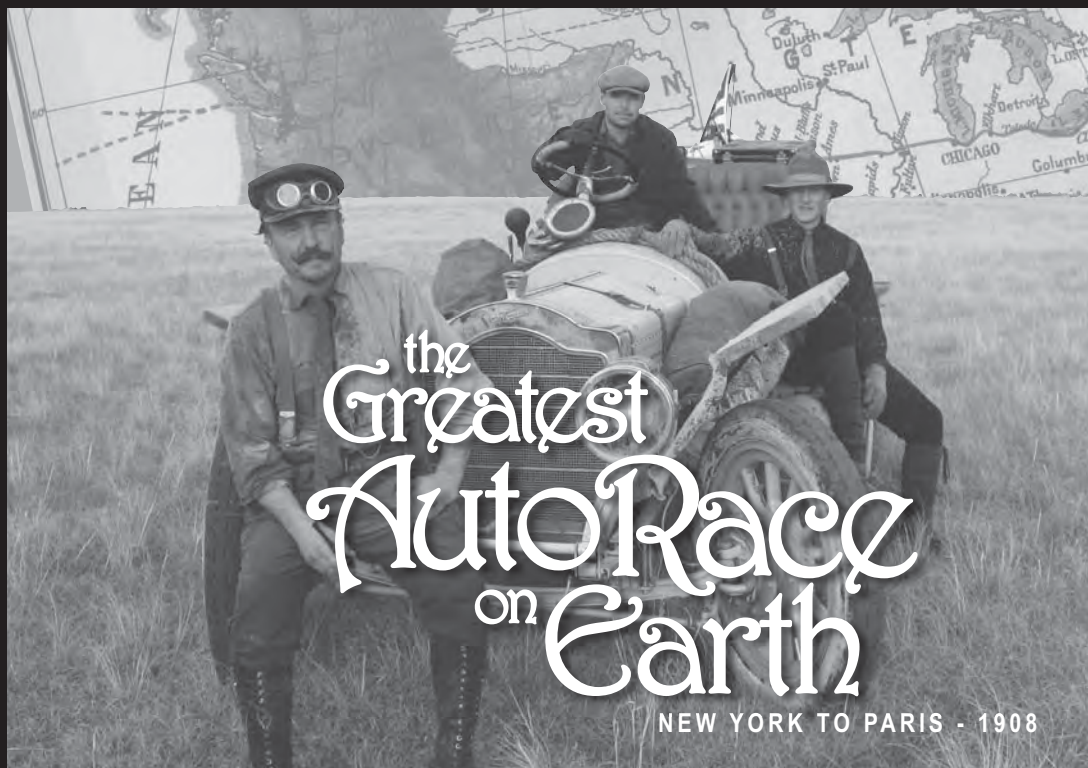


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This ad appeared in the January 1929 edition of "MOTOR" (p. 151) and featured the Mercedes-Benz models with Saoutchik coachwork appearing at the 29th National Automobile Show at the Grand Central Palace, January 5-12. Note that the "Model S, two passenger torpedo" in the ad is the 2012 Pebble Beach Best of Show car on our back cover. (The Grand Central Palace was the city's principal exhibition hall for 40 years on Lexington Avenue, just around the corner from the Park Avenue address on the ad.)

