

SAH Journal



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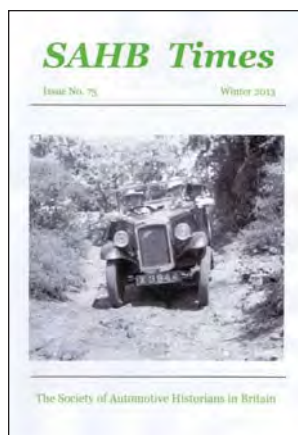
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April 10-14: the Tenth Biennial Automotive History Conference at the Vail Automotive Innovation Facility, Palo Alto, California. (See autohistory.org for details.)

Billboard



For Sale: Collectible Corvette paper items: NOS jigsaw puzzle still in shrinkwrap featuring David Kimble cut-a-way of ZR-1, 526 pieces, if worked finished size 21" x 15" (see photo) \$35 each. Early 1980s Michael Antonick d/b/a Michael Bruce Associates, Inc., produced *The Sensuous American* series of Corvette reference materials including these 21 unfolded posters featuring outstanding photos of outstanding cars. Range of images 1953-1982 include StingRay concept drawing and production car, split window and many more, very few duplications. Original marketing letter and entire set of posters (sizes and quantity per size as follows: eleven 16"x20"; four 9"x10"; four 9"x19.5"; one 9" x 13"; one 5" x 16") all for \$40, domestic postage included. *Helen V Hutchings*, 805-492-7621; hvhent@juno.com



The winter edition (No. 75) of the Society of Automotive Historians in Britain's *SAHB Times*, contains stories ranging from **The Evolution of the Dune Buggy** by *James Hale*, to a one-horse power carriage piece **When We Were Young(er)** by *Bill Munro*, offering this insight: "Although until recently I've not been actively interested in the very early years of the motorcar, my experience in driving horses has given me a different angle on just how revolutionary the first motorcars were, and how, what seem to us to be disadvantages and encumbrances, i.e. slow speed, the time *continued on page 3*

Cover: Third piece—Corvette early production (1953).

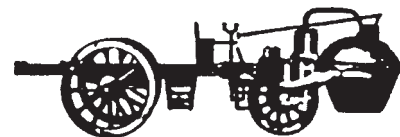
Back Cover: 1954 Corvette (R. Patrick, Florida) 2014 Boca Raton Concours d'Elégance.

SAH Journal

SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS

ISSUE 266

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014



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President's Perspective



As I write this it is -11°F in Dayton, Ohio this morning and the University of Dayton is closed for the day. Back when I was going to school they never closed it just for cold temperatures!

Of course the good that comes out of all of this is that I have some time for reflection. We have had so much snow and cold that the Porsche and Mercedes just sit in the garage on life support, so to speak, namely the battery tender. I see them only when I go in there to start the snow blower. I relish taking the cars out whenever the salt on the roads is gone, but that has not been in at least two weeks and perhaps even longer. I do not have a heated garage so the idea of working on the cars—and they do need some work (always, really, even if they don't need it)—is out of the question. So what is left to do is read, and since I am teaching my “The Automobile and American Life” seminar this term, I thought I would share with you some of the assigned materials used in the course.

In addition to a number of books I have students read, including my own, each student must report on one scholarly paper that in my opinion has special significance, if one is to truly understand the place of the automobile in American life. You can get these journal articles on the JSTOR database, typically available online at many public libraries. If you have difficulty acquiring them let me know and I will send you a hard copy. I just hope not many of you respond to this offer!

Here are three of my top choices. To begin with, I can think of no better introductory essay—although now somewhat dated (like many of us!)—than James Flink's “Three Stages of American Automobile Consciousness,” in the *American Quarterly*, 24 (October, 1972), pages 451-473. Flink pulls things together so that the reader sees the forest, which puts our own scholarly interests in better perspective. A second article that shifts the focus of the history of the automobile from innovators and manufacturers to users is Peter Norton's “Street Rivals: Jaywalking and the Invention of the Motor Age Street,” in *Technology and Culture*, 2007, pages 331-359. Ever wonder where the term jaywalker comes from? This article will

answer that question and far more. A final short read that I would recommend is Cotton Seiler's, “Statist Means to Individualist Ends: Subjectivity, Automobility, and the Cold War State,” in *American Studies*, 44:3 (Fall, 2003), pages 5-36. Despite the imposing title, this work does an excellent job of outlining some of the contradictions associated with the notion of the automobile as a freedom machine in post-WWII America. Seiler opens the door to an imaginative view of automobile history, whether you agree with him or not.

I have plenty more readings to share with you, if your appetite is now whetted. I also have in my files a good number of readings that will deaden your mind, particularly useful if you have insomnia. Let me know what you are looking for and perhaps I can suggest something before better weather is here and driving time takes the place of time spent reading on my couch. I wish all of you a shorter winter and early spring!

On a wholly different topic, the Society needs folks to step up and participate in our various activities. If you are an academic, join me on the Academic Committee. If your gift is in the area of hospitality, get involved when the SAH comes to Hershey in October. Or perhaps you would like to serve on one of the award committees—we certainly need readers who have foreign language skills. And there is always a need for contributors—to the *SAH Journal* in terms of book reviewers, or in terms of short essays and photo pieces. Member *Louis Fourie* is now heading up our website, and is looking for worthy content. If at all possible consider attending our **Biennial History Conference** at Stanford, April 10-12. *Arthur Jones* has put together a strong program that includes a number of distinguished speakers, including Rudi Volti, who will deliver concluding remarks. Details are on our website. We need you if we are to move forward! We need you also to spread the word to those who are unaware of our organization and yet who are passionate about auto history.

Finally, at the October, 2013 Board meeting in Hershey, the Board voted to increase membership dues to \$50 a year. (The last increase was to \$40 in 2001. Ed.) This decision was not taken lightly, but a necessary step if the Society is to operate in a “break even” manner. For the past three years we have been working in a deficit condition, as the cost of doing business for this all-volunteer group has been annually increasing. By increasing dues at a membership level of 763 we will gain approximately \$7,630 a year, a necessity if we are to fund our website and publications. Considering that my membership dues to the American Historical Association is \$190 and to the Society of the History of Technology is nearly \$100, the SAH is a genuine bargain given the knowledge that I gain from the interaction with members like you. Our collective knowledge in the field is unparalleled, and we all need to take further advantage of this, whether we pursue auto history in terms of our professions or as a hobby.

—John A. Heitmann

Billboard continued from page 2 involved in preparing a car for a journey in comparison to even the cars of the 1920s, were great improvements on keeping a horse.” The “Bentley Special” pictured on page 20 is referred to being “in the likeness of the famous Speed Six Blue Train car”—for a look at real *Blue Train Bentley* see *SAH Journal* issue 260. For more information about the SAHB and their upcoming

Spring Seminar on March 30th, visit: autohistory.org.uk

Correction: *SAH Journal* issue 263 highlighted the “Legalimit” Rolls-Royce V8, which was exhibited at the 1905 Olympia Motor Show. The cover photo caption on page 2 read, in part: “It is believed that the passenger was Henry Edward Victor Bliss with his driver, Henry G. Hayes, but there

is no record of Bliss purchasing the car or of him being loaned the car.” This should have clearer by stating that there is no *company* record of Bliss purchasing the car or of him being loaned the car. Bliss' name appears nowhere in Rolls-Royce records. The photo and its connection to Bliss is supported by Hayes' account appearing in *The Autocar* (March 18, 1949, page 259), which is part of the story in *The Flying Lady* article referenced in issue 263.



THE ANNUAL SAH AWARDS PRESENTATION HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA

The 45th Annual Meeting of Members & Gala Awards Banquet took place on a very rainy Friday, October 11th at the Hershey Country Club during the AACA Eastern Regional Fall Meet (October 9-12), otherwise known as “Hershey” to enthusiasts. The highlight of the evening was the awards presentation. Here are the awards, descriptions and the 2013 recipients:

Richard P. Scharchburg Student Paper Award

The Soft Sell: Gender, Advertising, and the Chevrolet Corvair

by *John Emerson Mohr*, Auburn University.

The Student Paper Award recognizes the best paper by a thesis-level student at an educational institution. The award is accompanied by a cash prize and publication of the paper by the Society. The award was first presented in 2001. It was renamed in 2008 in memory of SAH director, officer and professor Richard P. Sharchburg.

Carl Benz Award

Trans Am Memories

by *Sam Posey*, published in *Hagerty Classic Cars*.

The Benz Award recognizes the periodical article or series published during the previous calendar year which exhibits the most original research and outstanding writing in automotive history. The award is named for Carl Benz, who built the first vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine. Benz's three-wheeled vehicle was built in 1885 in Mannheim, Germany. The Benz Award was first presented in 1982. From

1972 until 1981, awards for periodical articles were made as part of the Cugnot Award.



Don Keefe presents the Carl Benz Award for “Trans Am Memories” with Dennis David (left) accepting the award on behalf of author Sam Posey.

Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award English Language:

Talbot-Lago Grand Sport: The Car from Paris by *Peter M. Larsen* with *Ben Erickson*, published by Dalton-Watson Fine Books. ISBN: 978-854432476

Award of Distinction:

Rippon Bros: A Coachbuilder of Renown by *Jonathan Wood*, published by James Hinchliffe and Annabel Sleigh. No ISBN

Language other than English:

Historische BMW-Gespanne: Serien- und Spezialmodelle 1924-1976 by *Hans-Jürgen Schneider* and *Stefan Knittel*, with *Horst Ihling*, *Axel Koenigsbeck* and *Josef Wild* ISBN: 978-3768858014



Doug Leighton presents the Cugnot Award (English Language) to Dalton Watson. Owner Glyn Morris accepts the award.



Doug Leighton presents the Cugnot Award (English Language) Award of Destination to publishers James Hinchliffe and Annabel Sleigh.



Arthur Jones presents the Cugnot Award (Language other than English) to author and publisher (left) Hans-Jürgen Schneider.

Award of Distinction:

La Ferrari secondo Forghieri dal 1947 a Oggi by *Mario Forghieri* and *Daniel Buzzonetti*, published by Girogio Nada Editore. ISBN: 978-8879115377

The Cugnot Award is presented for the book published during the previous calendar year which represents the most outstanding writing and original research in automotive history. The award is named for Nicholas-Jo-

seph Cugnot, a French Army officer who is generally acknowledged to have built the first self-propelled vehicle. His steam-powered fardier, built in 1769, was designed to be an artillery tractor; its likeness appears on the Society's emblem. The Cugnot Award was first presented in 1972, and the award for books written in a language other than English was first presented in the year 2000. The Award of Distinction in each category recognizes works of exceptional merit.

James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award

International Motor Racing Research Center at Watkins Glen, New York.

Award presented to a deserving library or archive, or to an individual within such an organization, for the preservation of historic materials relating to motor vehicles of the world. It is named in memory of James J. Bradley, noted curator of the National Automotive History Collection at the Detroit Public Library. The Bradley Award was first presented in 1982.



Edward Garten presents the James J. Bradley Award to the IMRRC at Watkins Glen. IMRRC President J.C. Argetsinger (left) accepts the award.

Friend of Automotive History Award Frederick A. Simeone

A person who has exhibited outstanding service in, and made outstanding contributions to, the field of automotive history may be named a Friend of Automotive History. This award is not limited to members of the Society. It was first presented in 1983.



John Heitmann presents the Friend of Automotive History Award to Frederick A. Simeone (left) accepting the award.

E.P. Ingersoll Award

Not awarded for 2013.

The Ingersoll Award recognizes excellence in presentation of automotive history in other than print media. E.P. Ingersoll was editor and proprietor of *The Horseless Age*, the first motoring magazine in the United States, and was instrumental in organizing the first vehicle trade organization. The Ingersoll Award was first presented in 1992.

Richard and Grace Brigham Award

Not awarded for 2013.

The Brigham Award is presented to the periodical which exhibits the best overall treatment of automotive history over all issues published during the previous calendar

year. A publication may receive the Brigham Award only once in a five-year period. Mrs. Brigham and her late husband, both founding members of the Society, started the Society's newsletter, now SAH Journal, and magazine, *Automotive History Review*. The Brigham Award was first presented in 1990.

Each of the awards was presented with an introduction by each award committee chair, followed by a few words by the award recipient. Dennis David read a message from Sam Posey, who could not attend. The awards presentation was followed by our keynote speaker, M.G. "Pinky" Randall, who charmed everyone in the room with his remembrances of a life devoted to all things Chevrolet. A longtime SAH member (and past AACA president), he first appeared in the *SAH Journal* (issue 95, Mar/Apr 1985, page 2), with a letter asking for help with a 1914 Light Six, Model J he had purchased. He's known as "Mr. Chevy" and was described in a December 15, 1996 article in the *Chicago Tribune* as Chevrolet's "best non-paid employee."

—R. Verdés



M.J. "Pinky" Randall delivers the keynote address, speaking about a life long passion for the Chevrolet.



The SAH board met the evening before the awards banquet (see the minutes on pages 10-11) and volunteers ran the tent all week long (see page 6). Here (above) everyone arrives for the cocktail hour.



Susan Davis readies her camera and past SAHJ editor Sam Fiorani (left) shares a moment with Don Keefe.



THE SAH AUTHORS' BOOK SIGNING EVENT AT THE AACA FALL MEET, HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA

P. Lashbrook



Left: Bob Ebert, Kit Foster and Kit's daughter, Harriet. (Note the two cups of coffee and half-eaten donut: it's rainy day sustenance!)

The Society of Automotive Historians' hospitality tent has been an annual fixture at the Hershey AACA Fall Meet for decades—and on the same spot since 2008: Orange Field/OBB 17-19. This year the event was all but compromised by continuous rain. Opening from Wednesday, October 9th to Friday from 8-4, this year the SAH featured an Authors' Book Signing Event on the Friday, from 12:30-3, and despite the rain, the tent was full—or was that because of the rain?

Promotion was sent to 83 organizations and about 15 publications. We were also featured in the *Old Cars Weekly Hershey Edition*—with thanks to its editor and SAH member *Angelo Van Bogart*. It was great to see SAH members, once again, getting “all hands on deck” and pulling to make our presence at this event a success year after year. There are so many to thank—from the members that come out to support the tent to the authors who came to the book signing—but the SAH owes an extraordinary measure of thanks and appreciation to *Paul Lashbrook* who is behind all the organization and makes this all work year after year with his tireless efforts!



Author *Tom Cotter* came prepared with various copies of his titles and good signing pen!

With vehicles from every era on the show field, this Moxie Car caught many eyes. The Moxie softdrink company used a fleet of these horsemobiles to promote its product. This reproduction on a 1923 Buick chassis was made by Howard Mark (DeLand, FL) for John Wissink (Spring Lake, MI). For a great Moxie reference, see: *The Moxie Encyclopedia, Vol. 1: The History* by Q. David Bowers (Vestal Press, 1985, ISBN 078-0911572438).



Above: the Moxie fleet at its height. From “The Horsemobiles That Sold Moxie” by J. de Campi and R. Verdés, *The Classic Car*, Vol. LV, No. 1, Spring 2007, page 44, CCA (ISSN 0009-8310).



P. Lashbrook

Paul Lashbrook does it all with a smile!



A handsomely two-toned 1956 Chrysler New Yorker shared by Anthony Scarpelli and Leslie McGinn of Newport News, VA—joined by John & Wendy O’Conner’s 1967 Pontiac GTO convertible from Morris Plains, N.J.—poses with one of several murals decorating barns and other buildings alongside U.S. 30 to foster awareness and appreciation of the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor spanning six central and western Pennsylvania counties.

CROSS-COUNTRY TOUR MARKS LINCOLN HIGHWAY’S CENTENNIAL

The Lincoln Highway—connecting New York City to San Francisco over what is now mostly U.S. 30 and U.S. 50—achieved everlasting significance as America’s first transcontinental auto road almost as soon as construction started in 1913. To mark its 100th anniversary in suitably-epic fashion, the Lincoln Highway Association spent almost five years organizing two tremendous tours that ultimately saw 140 vintage and modern vehicles (representing “each of the ten decades that the Lincoln Highway has existed,” LHA President Kay Shelton noted proudly) depart New York City on June 22nd and San Francisco on June 23rd, anticipating an end-of-month link-up in Kearney, Nebraska, where an official Centennial Celebration took place at the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument on July 1st.

Even if an 1,100-mile round trip to the Canton Classic Car Museum in Ohio was the most I could manage time-wise, I couldn’t resist the opportunity to share my expertise on the Pennsylvania sections of the Lincoln that have been entrancing me since I was a Lehigh University student in the early 1980s, all the while edging the odometer of my Pale Jade 1978 Ford LTD four-door pillared hardtop past the 30,000-mile mark. Having bought this original, unrestored Pennsylvania car with 22,080 miles in October, 2006, the achievement

was arguably overdue, and would be made doubly-sweet if I could actually manage it somewhere—anywhere! —on U.S. 30, so off I went to the Eastern Tour’s assembly point at the Holiday Inn Meadowlands in Secaucus, New Jersey.



As demolition appeared imminent, the Lincoln Highway Association’s 2013 Centennial Tour offered one last look at the tremendous Elizabeth, New Jersey plant where Fred & August Duesenberg manufactured aircraft engines during World War I. Willys-Overland and Billy Durant also produced cars here in the 1920s and 30s, and Walter P. Chrysler also developed the first car bearing his own name on the premises though he built it elsewhere.

Speaking for twenty-plus drivers who opted for the extra-early Manhattan departure over the Weehawken ferry terminal where Lincoln Highway travelers started their southwesterly trek through New Jersey after crossing the Hudson River, Wes Neal—a Virginia Beach, Virginia denizen driving a festive, Springtime Yellow 1966 Ford Mustang drop-top—ruefully recalled

afterwards how “it was every man for himself” beyond the Lincoln Tunnel toll booths. “By the time we got to Times Square, other cars in our group were going by us, coming at us, turning toward us, or turning away from us. Still, I can tell you the taxi drivers proved very tolerant of our chaos.” In retrospect, it seemed smart that Milton Wheeler—a Sara-



Having explored many western Lincoln Highway sections closer to his Saratoga, California home, Milton Wheeler had been looking forward to bringing the 1947 Packard Custom 8 Touring Sedan he’s owned since 1973 to such eastern route landmarks as the 131-foot tower at the 1876-1883 site of Thomas Edison’s lab in Menlo Park, New Jersey.

toga, California registrant helming a 1947 Packard Custom Eight he'd owned since 1973—had already made a pre-departure trip into Manhattan on Friday, affording him ample time to find the easternmost Lincoln Highway marker some 12 feet above pavement level on a lamppost at the northwest corner of Broadway and 42nd Street.

Though the Garden State is no Garden of Eden with it comes to logical roadside signage (why are there *two* Westfield Avenues in adjacent towns?) the Lincoln's New Jersey highlights could not be more delectably-diverse, ranging from the huge plant in Elizabeth (evidently undergoing demolition) that produced World War I Duesenberg aero engines and 1920s Willys-Overland and Durant cars to the 1939 hilltop tower marking the site of Thomas Edison's Menlo Park laboratories (where an astounding 400 inventions were developed in just seven years from 1876-83) and a 1790 stone bridge that still handles U.S. 206 traffic between the university town of Princeton and the state capi-

the Amish farm stands closed for Sabbath, but it was still fun to read the signs touting local specialties like goat milk, shoo-fly pie, "HOME-MADE ROOT BEER" and "COLD HOME-MADE ROOT BEER." After scoring some breakfast scrapple at the Smoketown Diner, the Lincoln Highway's old PA-462 alignment took me through the heart of Lancaster (an area creek gave its name, by the way, to the sturdy Conestoga Wagons that settled the Western wilderness) and across the Susquehanna River on a magnificent 1930 concrete arch bridge con-



Larry & Lynn Carter's 1965 Plymouth Barracuda from Kissimmee, Florida arrives at the Haines Shoe House outside of York, Pennsylvania, which was originally built to promote the shoe stores Mahlon N. Haines operated in the surrounding region. Having modeled the structure on his best-selling work boot, he even ran a contest for two years where retirees and honeymooners could win a weekend stay complete with butler, cook and chauffeur.

necting Columbia, Pennsylvania, on the east shore (site of an interesting clock museum) to Wrightsville on the west shore. The tour's official midday stop was the Haines Shoe House on York, Pennsylvania's eastern outskirts—its builder, Mahlon N. Haines, was the owner of a chain of footwear stores who modeled the structure on his best-selling work boot—after which we headed to Gettysburg for a 150th anniversary battlefield tour.

Though no injuries resulted, thankfully, Sunday's leg through south-central Pennsylvania also witnessed the truly unfortunate destruction of the oldest car participating in the Eastern Tour. Not long after leaving the Haines Shoe House, John McTaggart of Wallingford, Vermont—towing a 1916 Oldsmobile V-8 roadster he'd spent four and a half years transforming into a faithful replica of the car used by Amanda Preuss to set a new cross-country Lincoln Highway record of 11 days, five hours—narrowly averted head-on tragedy with a nick-of-time swerve that took him out of the path of a 24-year-old Chevy driver who had fallen asleep at the wheel after working an all-night

shift. Damage to John's Dodge Ram diesel pickup was confined to the left rear quarter, but John recalls that the Oldsmobile's enclosed trailer was hit "full force—it looked like it had imploded, like a tin can shot by a projectile! The main thing I remember about the first moments after the crash was that I had no idea what to do next—I must have towed the trailer another 200 feet without its axle or wheels in denial."



Mark Ounan's fully-authentic 1918 Dodge Brothers Army Staff Car from Fairfield, Pennsylvania—specially-fitted with tan roof canvas and 7-bolt wheels in place of the standard 6-bolt rims—visits the Eternal Light Peace Memorial dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during Gettysburg's 75th anniversary commemorations in 1938.

Day three's crossing of the Allegheny Mountains lived up to Eastern Tour Coordinator Jim Peters' billing it as "one of America's most-beautiful drives and it also shows how transportation has changed (since) the Lincoln Highway goes up and over where the Pennsylvania Turnpike (opened in 1940) goes through." Notable landmarks between each cycle of climb and descent included a colorful series of barn and building murals commissioned by the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor (which also runs a museum in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and puts out



As the last of three steep Allegheny ridges separating Chambersburg from Breezewood, Pennsylvania, the 2,195-foot summit of Siding Hill was a real change of scenery for the 1959 Cadillac Series 62 four-window "flattop" sedan that Lincoln Highway Centennial Tour publicist John E. Peters brought from The Villages, Florida. Fifty-four years and 65,000 miles ago, his grandfather bought the car brand new from Tri-Town Motors in Jackson, Ohio.



Gregg D. Merksamer's 1978 Ford LTD 4-door pillared hardtop makes a stop at Philadelphia's 1899 city hall.

tal of Trenton. After the tour cars crossed the Delaware River on a recently-restored 1884 truss that proved the motorist's equivalent of threading a needle for 1,274 feet, central Philadelphia's approach was heralded several miles in advance by William Penn's statue atop the 1899 city hall, which remains the world's tallest masonry building at 548 feet.

Sunday morning's drive through the Pennsylvania Dutch Country found all



With the heat and humidity raging at Everett, Pennsylvania, Lincoln Highway Centennial Tour registrants truly welcomed their ice cream break at The Igloo, which is painted to resemble a sundae topped with chocolate syrup and a cherry.

a truly-clever guidebook detailing 200 miles of roadside landmarks in both west-to-east and east-to-west order); The Igloo, an ice cream stand east of Everett that's painted to resemble a sundae topped with chocolate syrup and a cherry; and Dick Dunkle's



Having been moved at least three times since it was first erected as a giant root beer barrel beside the Lincoln Highway's previous alignment through Chester, West Virginia, the "World's Largest Teapot" remained an irresistible U.S. 30 diversion for Mike Curtis and his daily-driven, 350 V8-powered 1972 Chevrolet Monte Carlo from Brevard, North Carolina.

evocative, Art Deco 1933 Gulf Service Station on the west end of Bedford, Pennsylvania's Historic Business District. Following lunch at the 1769 Jean Bonnet Tavern—a historic meeting place for farmers during the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion—several tour participants made pilgrimages to the Flight 93 National Memorial via its convenient



Only a tasty cruller "tribute" could save John O'Conner from a ticket once his "Arrest Me Red" 1967 Pontiac GTO drop-top was stopped in Lisbon by a 1963 Ford Galaxie driven by "Ohio's Own Barney" Todd Beckett, who declared "no one has the gumption to do Andy as he left such big shoes to fill."

new U.S. 30 entrance between Buckstown and Stoystown. The final summit separating them from a traditional Polish dinner of pierogies and kielbasa at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh—2,684-foot Laurel Hill—was preceded, suitably, by a Western Pennsylvania Region AACA marker noting the nearby spot where Fred Duesenberg crashed while returning a customer's SJ to his Indianapolis factory on July 2nd, 1932, dying 24 days later.

While I was well satisfied to see my 1978 LTD clock, as hoped, its 30,000th mile on U.S. 30 about five miles west of Pittsburgh's International Airport—my last day on the Eastern Tour would also prove memorable for offering the World's Largest Teapot in Chester, West Virginia and several miles of original, brick-paved Lincoln Highway (driven in a hailstorm!) east of Robertsville, Ohio—I truly envied those who made it all the way to the Lincoln's west coast terminus in San Francisco once the Nebraska festivities were history. Anthony Scarpelli and Leslie McGinn—a Newport News, Virginia couple who turned lots of heads with their hand-

some, Cloud White-over-Turquoise 1956 Chrysler New Yorker hardtop—ultimately celebrated their successful, cross-country transit with an exchange of wedding vows in Sacramento, California, after which they took part in Lewistown, Montana's 4th of July parade so the announcer could ask if anyone knew anything about a previous owner who resided locally in the 1970s.

—Gregg D. Merksamer



The largest, most-imposing import on the 2013 Lincoln Highway East Tour was indisputably this 1969 Mercedes-Benz "short wheel-base" 600 owned by Mark Margetts of Knoxville, Tennessee. His passenger, Hans Dietz, actually hailed from Nuremberg, Germany. The Jean Bonnet Tavern hosted the June 24th lunch stop—it was a favored meeting place for Bedford, Pennsylvania, area farmers involved in the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion.



Lincoln Highway Centennial Tour cars were furiously-pelted by hailstones while exploring this rare surviving stretch of early brick surfacing outside Robertsville, Ohio. Luckily, there were trees right on the shoulder to offer shelter until the worst of the storm had passed with no obvious damage to hoods, roofs and trunk lids.



After passing through Bedford, Pennsylvania's Historic Business District, this 1932 Packard Model 903 Convertible Sedan—owned by C.W. "Bill" Wilcox of Virginia Beach, Virginia—seemed right at home refueling at Dick Dunkle's colorful, Art Deco 1933 Gulf Service Station.

Society of Automotive Historians Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes October 10, 2013

Location: Hershey Country Club, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Present: Douglas Leighton, President; John Heitmann, Vice President; Patrick Bisson, Treasurer; Robert Ebert, Secretary; Directors Andrew Beckman, Bob Casey, Thomas Jakups, Paul Lashbrook, Stanton Lyman, John Marino, James Wagner, Susan Davis (*ex officio*); Editors; Kit Foster (*Automotive History Review*), Rubén Verdés; (*SAH Journal*) Directors elect Ed Garten, Chris Ritter; Guests/Committee Chairs Arthur Jones, Don Keefe, Louis Fourie.

Note: These minutes contain only the summaries of the committees and officers' reports. The full committee reports that have been submitted and the full President's and Treasurer's reports are filed with the minutes and are available upon written request to the Secretary of the Society.

President Leighton called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm, EST.

Upon completion of the roll call, Secretary Ebert declared that a quorum was present.

- Minutes of the April 25, 2013 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Society of Automotive Historians upon motion made by S. Lyman and seconded by P. Lashbrook were approved as distributed without dissent.

- **The President's Report** was discussed by D. Leighton and is attached hereto. The President noted the following:

- The challenges to the SAH in the future are noted in the attached report.
- President Leighton particularly noted the following:
 - The SAH leadership is aging and it is noteworthy that the newly elected officers and directors include some younger persons.
 - The way the SAH Board is organized it is highly dependent on volunteers and wonders if it may be time to hire a part-time person to look after some of the details.

- **Treasurer's Report: P. Bisson**

- The detailed Treasurer's Report was distributed to the directors in attendance and is attached hereto.
- Significant details of the Treasurer's Report are as follows:
 - The approved deficit for 2012-2013 had been \$5379 but ultimately was only \$2977.19.
 - Deficits in recent years have meant the bank balance of the SAH has declined to \$21,386.24 which raises the question of what can and should be done to stop the decline in the fund balance.
 - The question must be raised of when to increase the dues which have not been increased since 2001.
 - The proposed budget for 2013-2014 has a projected deficit of \$6600.
- The Treasurer noted that the two big items in the budget, the *Automotive History Review* and the *SAH Journal* present very little opportunity for a reduction in costs of production and mailing.
 - There followed an extensive discussion of the costs of producing and distributing the SAH publications. A number of ideas were raised and discussed including:
 - J. Heitmann noted that the electronic version of the Journal comes through very nicely.
 - K. Foster noted that the SAHBritain charges extra for hard copies of the publications which forces people to make a choice.
 - R. Verdés noted that a valuable component of SAH membership is access to the Directory.
 - S. Lyman observed that the *Journal* in hard copy is a good sales tool for the SAH.

- A. Jones noted that the ability of the SAH to raise dues may well be linked to services provided including the publications and a directory and that having those SAH received publications up-to-date is necessary before raising the dues.
- J. Marino suggested that we could have a checkoff for people to choose an electronic copy of publications.

- S. Lyman moved and T. Jakups seconded the following motion: *Resolved that the report of the Treasurer of the Society of Automotive Historians is accepted.* Motion passed without dissent.

- P. Bisson moved and T. Jakups seconded the following motion: *Resolved that the annual dues of the Society of Automotive Historians be and hereby are increased to the amount of \$50 per annum effective November 1, 2013 or as soon as practicable after that date depending on the ability to have the necessary and appropriate forms distributed to the membership.* Motion passed without dissent.

- R. Casey raised the question of why funds of the SAH are being kept in the Vanguard funds.

- K. Foster replied that this originally was due to a relationship with the Franklin Mint in which the SAH received approximately \$10,000 for permissions related to items produced by the Franklin Mint. Also, some of the money was used to print items by the SAH such as the book on AMC Javelins. Periodically the funds have been drawn down.
- The current amount in the Vanguard Funds is \$56,566.
- R. Casey asked if we derive income from those funds and K. Foster responded that they do generate interest.
- R. Casey moved and S. Lyman seconded the following motion: *Resolved that the funds of the Society of Automotive Historians held as Vanguard funds be examined by the Board of the Society of Automotive Historians with the objective of determining the best use of said funds.* Motion approved without dissent.
 - As a result of the passage of this motion, President Leighton appointed P. Lashbrook, S. Davis, and R. Casey as a task force to study the Vanguard funds and bring an appropriate recommendation to the Board.

- Treasurer P. Bisson noted that with the projected dues increase the income of the SAH for the 2013-2014 fiscal year would be \$48,730 which would yield a surplus of \$1030 if all other aspects of the proposed budget for 2013-2014 remain the same. As a result, P. Bisson moved and R. Casey seconded the following motion: *Resolved that the budget of the Society of Automotive Historians for the fiscal year of October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014 be and hereby is approved as presented by the Treasurer showing a projected income of \$48,730 and a projected surplus of \$1030 if all assumptions in the projections are realized.* Motion approved without dissent.

- **Membership Report, P. Bisson**

- Total current membership of the SAH is 937 including 174 members of the SAHBritain. At this point the number of members represents a decline of 135 from the previous year. P. Bisson noted that there were 99 new members joining the SAH in the past year even without an organized membership campaign. He noted that it appears when there is publicity for the SAH such as occurred in the *New York Times* that there is a surge of membership.
- A far ranging general discussion occurred on how new members could be solicited and what materials they should receive upon joining.
 - R. Verdés noted that the next issue of the *SAH Journal* will be a draft directory of the SAH with members asked to check their entries with instructions how to go to the website and make any corrections. He noted that this issue could

be sent to new members.

- K. Foster noted that to solicit members we have traded ads for the SAH with other clubs.
- A. Jones stated at one time we had an active membership committee for about five years which traded free ads with other clubs, sent reminder letters to people who had not rejoined, etc. and it seemed to help. However, after a few years the efforts dissipated.
- P. Bisson noted that Cornerstone sends letters and renewal letters as your membership is close to expiring.
- L. Fourie complimented R. Verdés on the e-mail message sent to members. R. Verdés responded that using an application called Constant Contact he is able to determine how often e-mails are opened and that the rate for most applications is about 20 percent but for the SAH messages it is about 60 percent.
- J. Heitmann recommended that P. Bisson be maintained as Membership Committee Chair, but that, given his responsibilities as treasurer keep him very busy, that two other people be chosen to work with him on membership. After further discussion, A. Beckman and C. Ritter agreed to serve on the Membership Committee.

- **Academic Committee:**

- J. Heitmann reported that he has renewed his membership in the American Historical Association and updated the AHA affiliate page for the SAH (which had not been done since 2006). Also, he noted that it is necessary for affiliates to send proposals for presentations at AHA conferences in order to maintain affiliate status. He stated he will send a proposal for the 2015 conference.
- D. Leighton noted that the Canadian Historical Association is interested in having a session on automotive history at an upcoming conference. Further information on that is in an attached document. He also noted that in order to present at a CHA conference it is necessary to be a member of the CHA.

- **Nominating Committee: Susan Davis Reporting**

- Full Nominating Committee report with the persons elected and re-elected to positions in the SAH is attached hereto. As required, the Secretary, R. Ebert, certified that the ballots were counted accurately.

- **Awards**

- **Brigham Award: No report.**

- **Cugnot Award:**

- Nine submissions published in 2012 were received for the Cugnot Award. Both a Cugnot Award and an Award of Distinction were made.

- **Cugnot Award in language Other Than English: A. Jones reporting**

- Six qualified nominations in three languages were received. The award was presented to *Historiche BMW – Gespanne* by Hans-Jürgen Schneider and Stefan Knittel published by Schneider Media UK Ltd. An Award of Distinction was presented to *Ferrari Secondo Forghieri dal 1947 a oggi* by Mauro Forghieri and Daniele Buzzonetti published by Giorgio Nada Editore.
- The committee continues to search for a resolution to the problem that books are nominated in languages of which committee members do not have a reading knowledge. In the past the award has been given to books that the committee has not been able to review and have been judged mostly on their visual appeal. This seems inappropriate for one of SAH's most prestigious awards. A request for volunteers with linguistic skills was placed in the *Journal* but generated only one response and we now have only four languages at our disposal. Any suggestions for a way forward will be received with thanks.

- **Benz Award: D. Keefe reporting**

- The winner of the 2013 Benz Award is "Trans Am Memories," by Sam Posey, published in the

Winter, 2012 issue of *Hagerty Classic Cars*. A Total of 16 articles were nominated in both commercial and club publications.

- o **Bradley Award:**
 - This year's Bradley Award winner is the International Motor Racing research Center in Watkins Glen, NY.
 - After five years in the position, Judy Endelman is stepping down as committee chair but will remain as a committee member. New chair of the Bradley Committee is Ed Garten.
- o **Ingersoll Award: T. Jakups reporting.**
 - The Ingersoll Award Committee received three submissions, none of which were deemed worthy of the award so there will be no Ingersoll Award presented this year.
- o **Friend of Automotive History Award: J. Heitmann reporting.**
 - The Friend of Automotive History Award for 2013 is presented to Dr. Frederick Simeone of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, author, automotive history museum owner, and judge at Pebble Beach.
 - General discussion occurred regarding the problem of lost nominations with a consensus that persons in that position be told they were not elected but to encourage renominations in a future year.
- o **Sarchburg Student paper Award: J. Heitmann reporting.**
 - Four students submitted papers. The award is presented to John Emerson Mohr, a graduate student in history at Auburn University, for his essay "The Soft Sell: Gender, Advertising, and the Chevrolet Corvair."

• **Publications**

- o **SAH Journal: Rubén Verdés, Editor**
 - SAH Journal #262 has been mailed. *SAH Journal* 263 is in production as a draft directory. Advertising currently is concentrated with Racemaker Press and McFarland. Also, McFarland intends to include their catalogue with the mailing of the next SAHJ.
 - Communication with members and submission of articles, etc., is increasing as well as offers of help with things like book reviews.
 - General feedback regarding the production and content of the SAHJ has been very favorable.
 - A continuing challenge is to close the gap in the production time to make the SAHJ ahead of the calendar with a timely print schedule.
- o **Automotive History Review: Kit Foster, Editor**
 - AHR55, which is in the final layout stage, will comprise several papers and transactions of the April 2012 Automotive History Conference held in Philadelphia. Publication is expected in November 2013.
 - Expanded use of drop-shipping to countries with a large membership will aid in reducing postal cost and effort.
 - The editor does have a backlog of papers for future publication.
- o **SAH Web Site and Facebook update: Presented by D. Leighton for Mark Patrick**
 - Mark Patrick relates that the web site is in good shape. He is willing to work with someone to bring the web site up to date.
 - D. Leighton relates that, essentially, Mark Patrick has resigned his position with the website and a replacement is needed.
 - T. Jakups stated that the web site itself is in good shape but what is needed is content.
 - A. Beckman noted that Facebook is an opportunity for the SAH, but requires attention to bring members up-to-date.

• **Silent Auction Report:**

- o S. Davis reported that the Leland Chapter is hoping to take over the Silent Auction.
- o It needs to be worked out whether the Leland Chap-

ter will receive any part of the proceeds.

• **SAH 2014 Conference Report: A. Jones, Chair**

- o Pre-planning is underway for the Automotive History Conference to be held April 10-12, 2014 in Palo Alto, California on the Stanford University campus on the theme *Evolution of Automotive Technology*. A call for papers has been placed on the SAH web site and on three list servers that connect us to the academic world. Reilly Brennan, our Stanford coordinator, has begun the task of making the Conference known in the university community. Proposals are due October 31, 2013. To date there are five firm proposals with an additional four persons expressing interest in presenting papers. The program for the Conference will be published in February 2014.
- o A challenge at present is where the Conference will go for the tour.

• **Chapter and Sections Report: T. Jakups**

- o The Leland and Wisconsin Chapters remain SAH's most active and the Southern California Chapter has been revived.
- o Patricia Yongue has resigned as chair of the International Motor Sports Chapter.
 - D. Leighton noted that the IMSC has had an uneven history.
 - S. Lyman stated that the lack of having someone to run this chapter successfully is hurting the SAH because motor sports are an important part of automotive history. He stated that he and Joe Freeman have discussed the matter in some detail including some discussion about who could replace Pat Yongue. Among the other suggestions they have is for SAH to create a separate Cugnot Award for Motor Sports.
 - The Board engaged in a general discussion on the issue of the future of the International Motor Sports Chapter. It was observed that a list of persons interested in this topic does exist.
 - D. Leighton stated it is necessary to find someone to head this section and to pursue the idea of an equivalent of the Cugnot Award for Motor Sports.
 - After some discussion and weighing the proper procedures to follow, by consent the Board requested J. Heitmann to contact Janos Wimpffen of Sports Car Racing Research Associates, Ltd., and a member of SAH, to work with Joe Freeman on revitalizing the IMSC of SAH.
- o Society of Automotive Historians in Britain: Peter Card, Chair; K. Foster reporting:
 - SAHB has some 169 members, including five or six in mainland Europe and Ireland. There has been some attrition of members in the past year, made up for by an influx of new members. SAHB has two seminars per year, and publishes the quarterly *SAHB Times* and annual *Aspects of Motoring History*. SAHB continues to be SAH's most active chapter.
- o Annual Euro Meeting: K. Foster, Co-Chair, reporting:
 - Consensus of the organizing team, and award winners attending, is that the dinner should be on the eve of the Rétromobile opening. The 19th annual SAH European Dinner and Meeting will be held Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at the Automobile Club de France in Paris.

• **Hershey Banquet Report: John Marino**

- o The SAH Board meeting and Annual Meeting/Awards Banquet will be held in conjunction with the AACA Fall meet in Hershey, PA at the Hershey Country Club. The Board meeting will be on October 10 at 6:00 p.m. and the Annual Meeting/Awards Banquet will start with a reception at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, October 11, 2013.
- o By general consent of the Board, J. Marino is instructed to continue the ongoing relationship with the Hershey Country Club.
- o J. Marino noted that he is in charge of organiz-

ing the logistics of the events with the Hershey Country Club – i.e., food service, facilities, etc. He is not in charge of program and suggested that a program chair be appointed. After discussion, C. Ritter agreed to work with John and to work with the programming.

• **Hershey Hospitality and Tent Report: P. Lashbrook:**

- o The Hospitality Tent has been rented and Board members have been asked to sign up to help in the tent.
- o P. Lashbrook noted that the tent is an excellent opportunity to recruit new members and it is incumbent on everyone to make new members and friends feel welcome.
- o P. Lashbrook agreed to once again provide refreshments in the tent.
- o 2013 sees the return of the authors' book signing event in the tent. This was requested by the Board. P. Lashbrook noted that every Board member and other friends and members must step up and contribute the necessary time to make the event a success. Approximately 20 authors had agreed to participate in the book signing.
- o P. Lashbrook thanked all for their labor at the tent. There had been some problem covering all of the time slots, but in the end a number of people came forward and to the rescue. He also observed that, although it had been agreed at the Flint Board meeting to open the tent a day earlier, it was found that not enough folks could take off from work to make this a reality. In the end, by the end of the day on Tuesday the tent was ready to go.
- o Publicity for the tent and the book signing went out to 83 organizations and 15 publications.
- o P. Lashbrook raised the issue of the budget for the tent having been kept the same for a number of years. He noted that he donates the refreshments and the cost of printing the publicity. However, it is time for the Board to take a look at the funds allotted for the tent and to consider the fact that to be effective, the budget allocated to the tent will need to be increased. J. Heitmann stated that more funds need to be allocated to the tent event. P. Bisson responded that after all receipts from the tent are received, we will know better where things stand and what further should be recommended.
- o P. Lashbrook asked and a general discussion followed on whether to continue the book signing at the 2014 Hershey event. P. Lashbrook moved and T. Jakups seconded the following resolution: *It is hereby resolved that the Society of Automotive Historians will sponsor a book signing at the organization's tent at the 2014 Hershey Swap Meet of the Antique Automobile Club of America on Friday afternoon between the hours of approximately noon and 3:00 pm.* Motion passed without dissent.
- o D. Leighton expressed deepest appreciation for all Paul Lashbrook has done this year and over the years to make the SAH Hospitality Tent a success. This comment was followed by a round of applause of appreciation to Paul Lashbrook.

• **Old Business: none**

• **New Business:** The new business topic of the Canadian History Association session on automotive history was covered earlier in the meeting.

• **Miscellaneous Business:**

- o The Board by acclamation wishes to recognize the service of outgoing President, Douglas Leighton and Board member Stan Lyman.
- o The Board by acclamation wishes to welcome the new Board members Chris Ritter and Ed Garten.

• **Adjournment:** Upon motion duly made by R. Casey and seconded by S. Davis and passed without dissent, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, *Robert R. Ebert*, Secretary

Book Reviews

Chevrolet 1911 – 1960 and
Chevrolet 1960 – 2013

(two volumes)

by Michael W. R. Davis

Arcadia Publishing (2012)

www.Arcadiapublishing.com

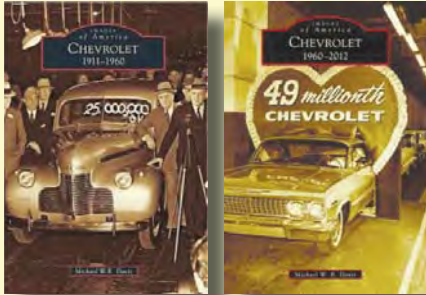
127 pp. each volume; extensive black-and-

white photographs with captions

\$21.99 each volume; paperback

ISBN-13 978-0-7385-9394-4

ISBN-13 978-0-7385-9090-5



Chevrolet's 100-year history nominally began in November 1911 when the legendary Billy Durant, in Flint, Michigan, incorporated the Chevrolet Motor Company. As SAH member *Michael W. R. Davis'* photographic history of the marque reveals in the first of these two volumes, the company's roots actually go back another 60 years to Durant's grandfather Henry Crapo, who in the 1850s produced a line of exquisite buggies at the Durant-Dort Carriage Company in Flint. Davis does a fine job, through photographs and accompanying narrative, setting Chevrolet's beginnings within an earlier context although as we know such a bridge to the past could also apply to a number of other brands including, prominently, Studebaker.

Many potential purchasers of these two volumes may recognize Arcadia as a leading local and popular history publisher, often selling its relatively high quality and attractive paperbacks through smaller bookstores, gift shops, and airport newsstands. Those familiar with this line of Arcadia's books – the *Images of America* series – will be aware that these offerings are mainly photographic archival histories, often presented with minimal caption narrative under each photo resulting in a failure to provide the reader

with adequate context. Having followed the series for many years, however, this reviewer would argue that these two volumes are the exception to the typical Arcadia monograph what with Davis' generous commentary that serves both to place any given image into its proper chronological place and to robustly engage the reader with the fascinating evolution of Chevrolet.

In its first full year in 1912, "Chevy" as it became quickly and affectionately called, still only managed to produce at most 2,999 new and what was generally noted at the time—overpriced—cars, exemplified by the \$2,150 Classic Six. That same year cross town rival Ford turned out 170,068 Model T vehicles plus another nearly 12,000 in its Canadian plant.

While Davis does a splendid job of exploring, through substantially captioned photographs, the range of Chevrolet models that would eventually lead to the brand surpassing Ford in sales, he fails to note the one man under Durant who, through his extraordinary salesmanship, provided the leadership and innovation that enabled Chevy to leap-frog over Ford in sales. Richard Grant, beginning in 1924, who served as Vice President and General Sales Manager of Chevrolet, quickly and dramatically in-

* SAH special by mail or telephone order only; website orders will need to be reimbursed the price difference

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creased sales to make Chevrolet the largest single seller of cars in the world. Pointedly, through the building of a strong network of dealers, Grant provided inspiration and training in the most modern of sales methods. His efforts paid off as GM's market share climbed from 12 percent to 43 percent thus allowing the corporation to become the largest volume seller in the world. While perhaps a minor oversight, it was in this period when strong engineering worked hand-in-hand with progressive marketing to achieve the goal of market leader.

With the second volume, the author explores the brand from 1960 through 2012, again through captioned archival photos. His topical divisions include those of *Product Proliferation: 1960 – 1964; Proliferation Continues: 1965 – 1969; Regulation: 1970-74; Dissolution: 1981-1990; Transition: 1991-2000; and Globalization: 2001-2014*. Davis does a respectable job in the "Regulation" section, illustrating and commenting on some of the challenges Chevrolet faced in the wake of federal imposition into, in particular, safety and emissions issues. As for the section titled "Dissolution" it is unclear as to how Davis employs that term since the pictorial and narrative focus seems to be on the trend, from 1981 through about 1990, for Chevrolet (and certainly some other GM divisions) to import and badge engineer a host of economy vehicles including light trucks, resulting in no small measure to the brand "dissolving" into a marketing dominated organization. Among these cars, we likely do not remember with fondness the Suzuki Sprint or the Isuzu Spectrum, although the Toyota-based, and generally dependable, Nova had its following. And, of course, as mentioned in the text, the imported Chevy LUV laid the groundwork for the future successful and widely popular S-10 Pickup. Arguably, some would contend that the early 1980s was the point in Chevy history when parent GM began to lose its way in terms of engineering prowess; the time when marketing folks and the bean-counters reigned supreme. Finally, the sections marked as "Transition" and "Globalization," taken together, move the reader visually through the half-dozen or so years prior to the GM managed bankruptcy and into the more hopeful early days post-reorganization when such products were launched like the Volt, Spark, the new generation Camaro, and the just-coming-to-market Holden-based full-sized Chevrolet SS.

While these volumes portraying the now 100 year history of the marque will likely be of limited interest to pure automotive historians, they will be appreciated by a host of enthusiastic Chevrolet hobbyists as well as anyone endeared to the legendary and often storied vehicles that wear the Bow Tie badge.

—Ed Garten

Co-Operative Transport

by Bill Aldridge

Crecy Publishing (www.crecy.co.uk) 2012

64 pgs. color and b/w photos

Price £7.95

ISBN: 978-1908 347107



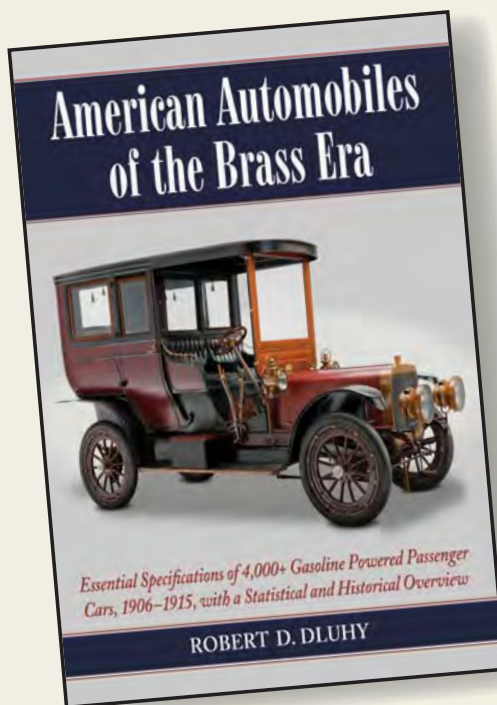
I am so glad there are publishers prepared to produce booklets such as this, which act as an excellent introduction to a niche

subject in our wide motoring history. In his introduction the author says "Readers might consider that the Co-Operative Society was simply a milk supplier and shop owner with numerous small stores across the country," he goes on to tell us that it had over 200 manufacturing sites as well as farms, a shipping operation and, at its peak, around 35,000 motor vehicles.

It would appear that individual Co-Operative Societies had the freedom to buy vehicles from whom they liked. The Co-Op as a whole did not build its own chassis, but had its own coach building business, which was quite happy to build almost any style of commercial vehicle bodywork. It also built coachwork for private customers. The array of different makes of lorry which were fitted with a very wide range of coachwork is fascinating. While milk production and distribution was a very important part of the Co-Op's business, it also ran fleets of mobile shops to reach areas where it had little other coverage. When it came to an overall livery for all the Co-Op vehicles there was strong resistance from the independent local areas!

It is unlikely that I would purchase a full scale hardback book on this subject, if there was one, but I did enjoy this very interesting overview.

—Michael E. Ware



From Abbott-Detroit to Zip, this unique reference book documents American gasoline-powered automobiles manufactured for the model years 1906–1915. In these explosive early years, short corporate lifespans and constant change left a fragmented historical record, with data about specific models scarce in later sources. Here the basic facts of 4,000+ cars, painstakingly researched in all available period sources, are collected and trends of the era are analyzed.

220pp. \$49.95 softcover (8½ × 11)
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ISBN 978-0-7864-7136-2
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© General Motors

Here is the frequently published photo that has appeared in numerous books including *Corvette Racing* by David Kimble reviewed in SAH Journal #260, the 2002-published biography of Zora Arkus-Duntov authored by Jerry Burton, Dave McLellan's *Corvette* from the Inside published 2002, Randy Leffingwell-authored *Corvette* book published by Motorbooks in 1997, as well as any number of magazine articles.

UNEXPECTED REWARD

The face and profile were familiar. By his dress, nearly always a white shirt and tie, and his proximity to who or what was (ostensibly) the subject of the photo above, as in this case Zora Arkus-Duntov during the 1956 development of the SS Corvette, it was obvious he was someone who mattered. So it was mystifying that no matter how many times photos in which he was present were published he was never identified—not by name, not by job title, nothing.

The act of conducting research and subsequently publishing the findings is supposed to be devoid of emotions. But there

is one reality that no researcher or writer should ever forget: real lives are involved as discovering the identity of this man proved most poignantly.

In 2006 I learned his name—Frank Meer; his job at the time of the photo—team or crew chief of the design and engineering group charged with developing the purpose-built racing Corvette SS; and also given a possible current contact. Thus I “met” Meer’s daughter, Judy, and learned her dad’s health was declining rendering any phone interviews with him problematic. But with my guidance she managed a few opportunities

to get her dad reminiscing and talking about his years at GM as she took careful notes.

She shared with me that: *interviewing Dad was a bittersweet time for both of us. Sweet, so sweet, to share the wonderful memories with him, but bitter watching him struggle to find the words. When we finished he had a tear running down his cheek and he said, “I wish they would have called me 15 years ago.” I assured him that he did a good job and what he did remember would be most appreciated. I then read this to my Dad (omitting the bittersweet part) to make sure it met with his approval before sending it.*

Thus these edited words of Frank Meer are published for the first time by SAH for its members—and for posterity.

Once the Corvette project was approved, Zora tapped Meer to head the development team. It was, as history records, a crash program to develop and build the car in time to run at Sebring where it had already been entered. Judy records, *Dad said they were given a large open space in the Warren, Michigan Tech Center and access to draw from Chevy resources as might be needed. Work and decisions all filtered through Zora and Dad.*

I asked Dad what it was like working for Zora. He laughed and said “Oh, Zora was a character.” Probing for a bit more, Dad went on, “You did things the way Zora wanted it done or you were in BIG trouble. He was a no nonsense guy.” Then I asked Dad if he liked working for him? “Oh, yes. I was the same kind of guy he was; driven, get it done, take no excuses. I was Zora’s right hand seeing that things got done. We had a mutual understanding and respect for each other.”

Two weeks before the Sebring race, the car still in pieces, and equipment needed to complete it, were trucked to Florida where work went round the clock to complete it. Dad described it as “the damndest two weeks I ever spent!” Dad’s words were “Zora was a dictator but if he hadn’t been, the car would never have been in the race.”

Next Meer related what happened culminating with, *“It was a heartbreaking decision to take that car out of the race. Ed Cole was in the pit and asked me what I thought should be done. I said ‘she ought to go out like a lady and not all tore up.’”*

Dad worked for Chevrolet until 1959 when he became a Senior Project Engineer at Buick Motor Division. He retired in 1986 as an unclassified Director of Manufacturing Engineering at Buick City which by then was part of Buick-Oldsmobile-Cadillac Group



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In GM's records, the above photo is dated July 27, 1953, but that is likely the date it was recorded, not the day it was shot. The first car was completed on June 30th. These are believed to be VINs 4, 5 and 6, so it is likely the photo was taken between July 15 and July 21 when those left the assembly line.

GM archives does not have the names of the people in the photograph and inquiries have not yet revealed their names as of this printing, so the call goes out: if anyone knows who these employees are, please contact the editor.

GM records the photo (right) as the 1953 Corvette Motorama Show Car. The photo below is another view of the Chevrolet Customer Delivery facility temporary plant in Flint, Michigan.



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(BOC) as a result of the 1984 corporate reorganization.

Buick City was the name by which GM's assembly complex in Flint, Michigan came to be known after its at-the-time-risky and massive early 1980's interior redesign. Frank Meer played a significant role in the ultimate success of the project as is made clear on the pages of longtime SAH member, the late *Terry Dunham (Journal #258)*, and Lawrence Gustin's book *The Buick, A Complete History*. Meer's photo appears in the book as director of the group of less than a dozen key personnel who were charged with

implementing then-BMD general manager Lloyd Ruess' directive to (re)create Buick City as GM's first-ever experience with just-in-time production, robotics, and other then-new innovations. Ruess would later become president of the entire corporation as would his son Mark another two decades on.

The reward referred to in the title is, of course, that happenstance has afforded me an opportunity to let a wider audience know a bit about the man Judy and the rest of his family are already so very proud of: Frank Meer.

—Helen V Hutchings



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