

SAH Journal



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Billboard

Car Magazine Collection:

SAH member *Jan Fossum* would like to donate his car magazine collection to members of the SAH. "I have had a lot of pleasure from my library, maybe a younger person can take over. The collection must be picked up at my house, first come first serve. No partial pick-up." The collection is located in Norwich, CT, and includes *Motor Trend* (1950 to 1980), *Special Interest Autos*, most CCA, AACA twelve binders, and misc. British. Contact Jan at jgfossum@yahoo.com or by phone at +1.860.460.4435.

Get'm while they're hot!: The next issue of the *SAH Journal* will include a review for two books that are selling and pre-selling fast, so here are the details for your consideration: *Joseph Figoni, le Grand Coureur de la Carrosserie Automobile* (Volume 1: Alfa Romeo) by SAH members *Peter M. Larsen* and *Ben Erickson*. Though it will be out in mid-July, pre-sales are moving swiftly. For details and to pre-order a copy, go to this site: motors-mania.com/en/motoring-books/9989-joseph-figoni-volume-1-alfa-romeo.html. The other book, *Making A Marque: Rolls-Royce Motor Car Promotion 1904-1940* by SAHB members *Peter Moss* and *Richard Roberts* is already available. For

details and to order a copy, go to this site: daltonwatson.com/Making-A-Marque-p/making-a-marque-rr-promo.htm.

SAH Board Nominations:

The SAH Nominating Committee is seeking nominations for positions on the board through 2022. Please address all nominations to the chair, *Andrew Beckman*, at abeckman@studebakermuseum.org.

Announcements: SAH member *Dr. Pál Négyesi* is the editor and publisher of the new magazine: *Rare & Unique Vehicles*. Please see the ad on p. 13, and visit the website at rareandunique.media. SAH member *Richard Lentinello* (of Lentinello Publishing) has launched a new magazine: *Crankshaft*. Please visit the website at crankshaftmagazine.com. While you're waiting for those two magazines to arrive in the mail, see issues of *marque2market* online right now (produced by your editor). Please visit the website at marque2market.com, click on "see issues."

Save the dates: The SAH will be at Hershey in October for its annual meeting of members and gala awards banquet. Also, the SAH will have its annual presence in its hospitality tent on the Orange field (OBB 17-19) during the Annual Fall Meet of the Antique Automobile Club of America. All these will occur October 6-9, 2021.

Front and back cover: This car appeared at the 2020 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance (AIC). One of the neat things featured in this car was the record player—for more on this '50s novelty, see these sites: americanmusclecarmuseum.com/desoto-vehicles/6-1956-desoto-fireflite-indy-pace-car.html macsmotorcitygarage.com/1956-chrysler-highway-hi-fi-detroits-first-in-car-record-player/ At the AIC, each car appears with a placard and a description of the vehicle. This is how that placard read for this car:

1956 DeSoto Fireflite Pacesetter, American Muscle Car Museum, Melbourne, Florida
Introduced in 1955, the FireFlite became the flagship for Chrysler Corporation's DeSoto brand. Virgil Exner's "Forward Look" design with its two-tone paint and chrome accented trim, elegant fins topping fang-shaped panels, an aeronautic inspired cockpit featuring a driver and passenger dashboard that was beautiful in its simplicity and made the car a favorite with consumers. A pushbutton Powerflite transmission controlled the Hemi V8 that powered the car and produced 255 hp. Among those most impressed by the new FireFlite were Indianapolis Motor Speedway President Tony Hulman and his organizing committee who unanimously chose it as the Official Pace Car of the 1956 Indy 500 citing its "outstanding performance and superb handling characteristics." DeSoto produced about 400 Pacesetter Special-Edition convertibles with white and gold paint to commemorate the honor and supplied dealerships with stencils to recreate the lettering on the official race vehicles.

SAH Journal

ISSUE 308 • JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

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An Affiliate of the American Historical Association



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President's Perspective



"To Infinity and Beyond!"

Buzz Lightyear seems to have struck a nerve with me in recent days. The ongoing pandemic that the SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 bug is still active among us seems to be dragging on into yet another year. Although there seems to be some hope that by the end of the

year a certain level or at least a semblance of normality might return, much of 2021 will continue to be something of a mixed bag. The cancellation of the International Drive History Conference, which the Historic Vehicle Association (HVA) headlines with the Society of Automotive Historians (SAH) as a partner, for this year was a true disappointment, of course. Diane Parker and her crew at the HVA have turned it into an event that is top-notch in every respect. Along with many others, I am awaiting its return in 2022.

The Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium for International Motor Racing History is another event in which the SAH partners, in this case the International Motor Racing Research Center that is located in Watkins Glen, New York. Although it might not be until 2022 that the Argetsinger Symposium returns to its in-person form, this fall it should be joining a long—as in very, very long—list of conferences and symposiums that have gone digital.

Although it is now certain that it will be pushed to the spring of 2022, the European Automotive History Conference is another event that I can only say nothing but great things about. It will take place in Torino (Turin), Italy, and promises to be one well-worth making plans to attend. Those at our sister organizations in Europe (the Society of

Automotive Historians in Britain (SAHB); Automobillhistorische Gesellschaft e. V. Germany (AHG); Associazione Italiana per la Storia dell'Automobile (AISA); Patrimoine et Histoire de l'Automobile en France (PHAF); and Contactgroep Automobiel-en Motorrijwielhistorie (CONAM)) have put much effort into this conference and I strongly encourage all that can to attend.

And, as always, I am hoping that the annual conference of the Automotive Historians Australia (AHA) continues to be a success. I think that the conference at Castlemaine, which is just north of Melbourne, will be just as great as the previous ones. Alas, I might have to miss it, as much as I would love to be there.

If one begins to see a pattern, you are correct. As automotive historians, we have a public role to consider. While not everyone might be inclined to make a presentation at conferences such as those mentioned (as well as at those of the Popular Culture Association, which has a Vehicle Culture Group, or the Organization of American Historians (OAH) or a museum or the local car club, for that matter), we can attend and support such endeavors—in person or digitally.

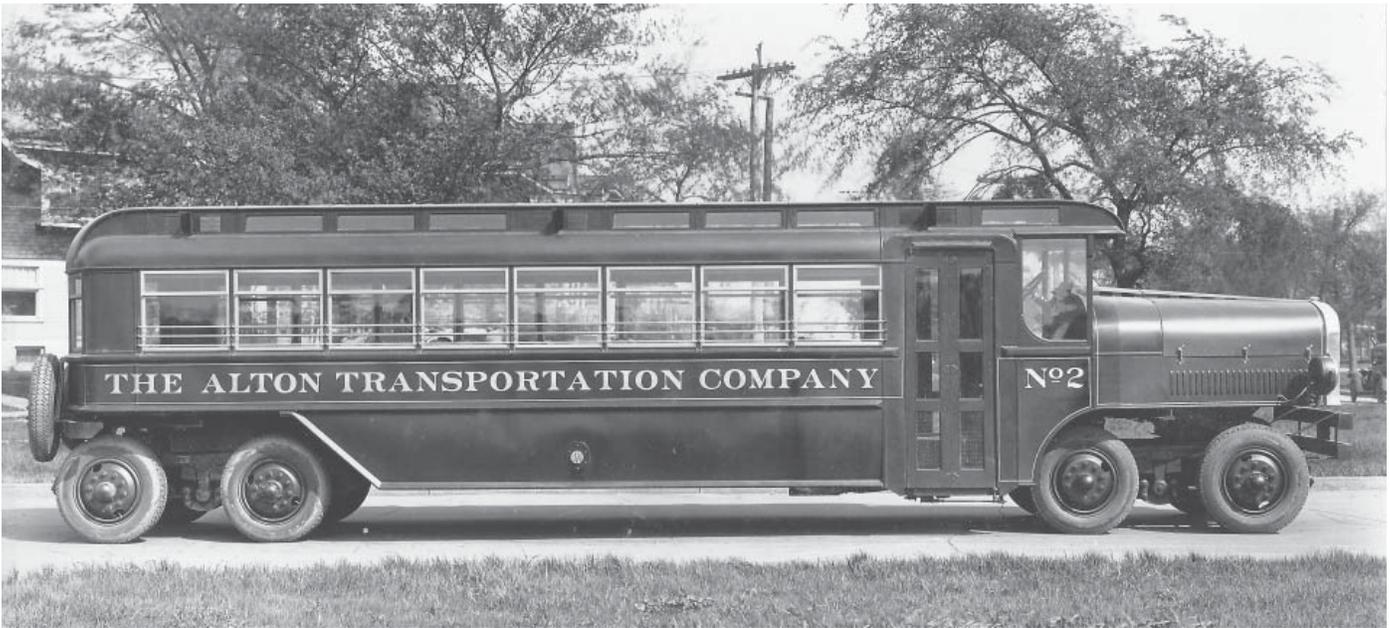
Make time for the Drive History Conference, the Argetsinger Symposium, the Euro Automotive History Conference, as well as any other opportunity that presents itself to present or discuss automotive history. It is what historians do.

—H. Donald Capps

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David Greenlees' eclectic website *The Old Motor* (<https://theoldmotor.com/?p=175004>) notes that the Alton Transportation Company was a subsidiary of the Chicago & Alton Railroad, which began operating in 1862 between Chicago and Alton, Illinois, located on the Mississippi River opposite St. Louis, Missouri. Apparently they had at least one Versare bus.

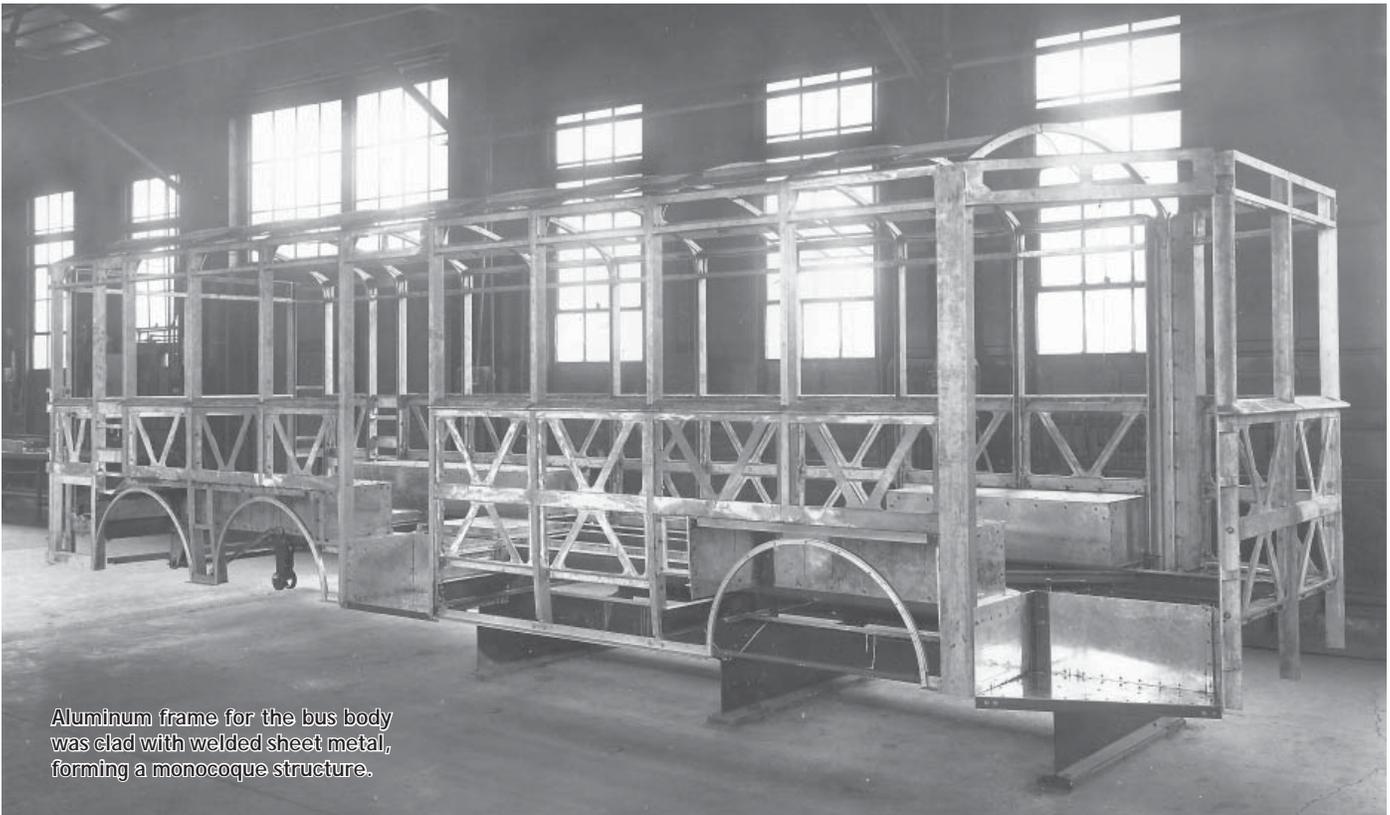
VERSARE, OH, OH...

Too far, eh? No, no, no, no! Referring to the Mystery Photo on page 2 of *SAH Journal* No. 307, *Bill Newton* writes: "I do not know the vehicle." So far, no one has. In fact, I wouldn't have known if the album in which the photo was bound had not been

imprinted with VERSARE on the cover.

Today, Versare is a brand of room dividers and portable partitions. In the original Latin, it meant "be employed, busy oneself," literally "to turn to, turn often; think over." The "Commercial Georgano" (*The*

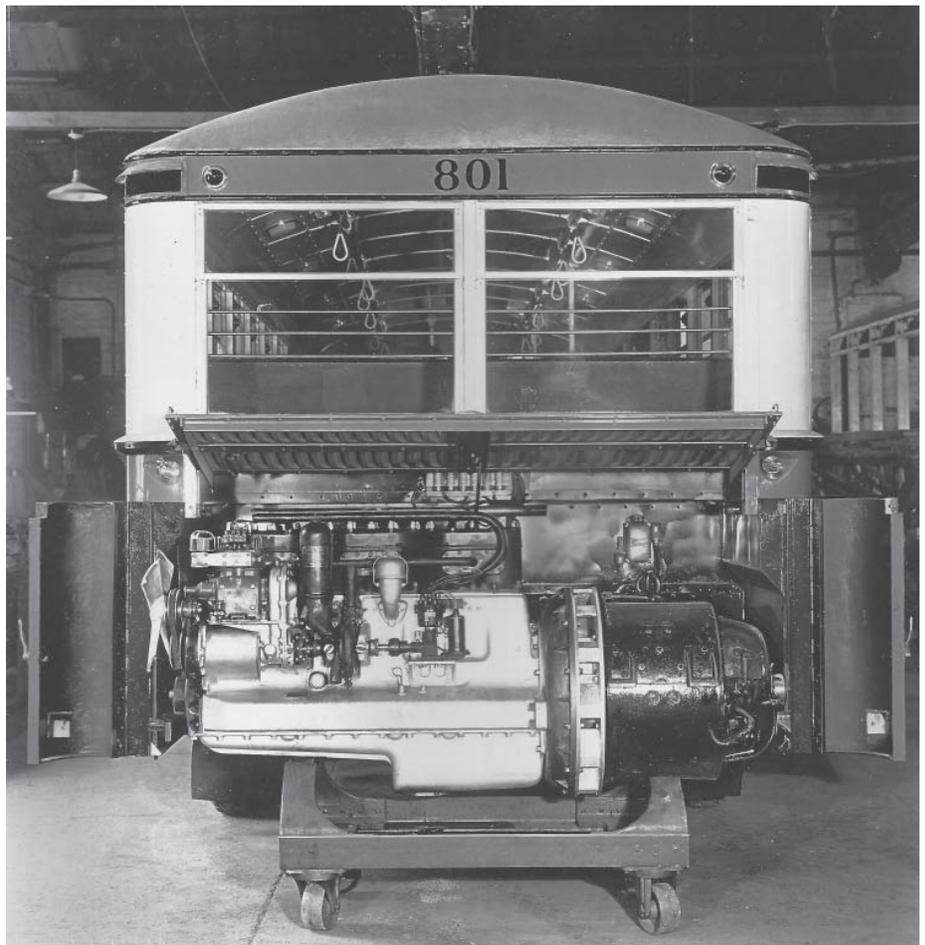
Complete Encyclopedia of Commercial Vehicles, G.N. Georgano, Editor, G. Marshall Naul, U.S. Consulting Editor, Motorbooks International 1979) has the answer: Versare Corporation of Albany, New York, built buses on the double-truck streetcar principle.



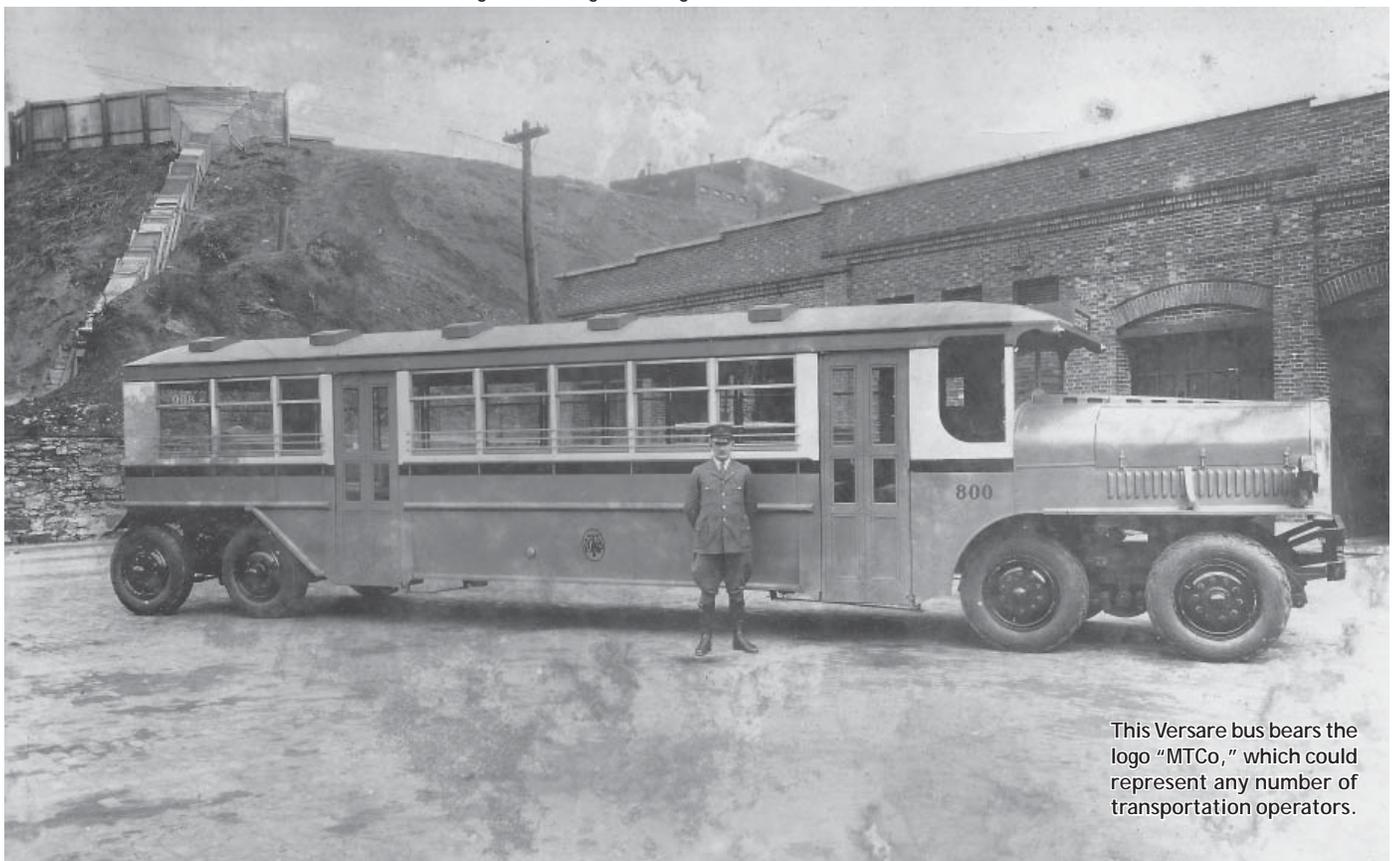
Aluminum frame for the bus body was clad with welded sheet metal, forming a monocoque structure.

“There were two bogies, each driven by an electric motor, with the current supplied by a generator driven by a Buda gasoline engine located under the conventional front hood. The power plant was said to be readily removable for repairs, as were the bogies.” Introduced “[w]ith great fanfare in 1925,” they had aluminum-framed and -skinned bodies. “Four buses and a prototype truck are known to have been built; there could have been more.” SAH’s late Founding Member *John Peckham*, whose imprint is on the back of all the photos, was a resident of upstate New York’s Capital Region. An avid historian of commercial vehicles, he “majored” in fire apparatus, particularly American-LaFrance, of which he was the official historian.

In 1927, a rear-engine model was announced, as shown in the photos seen here. This elicited further interest, and in 1928 the Cincinnati Car Company of that Ohio city acquired the firm. They marketed a trolley-coach version under the Cincinnati name, but buses continued with the Versare brand and may have been built at the Versare factory in Watervliet, N.Y. About 100 buses and 40 trolley-coaches were built, used by transportation companies in New York, Albany, Montréal, Cleveland, Boston and Salt Lake City. Production is said to have ended in 1931. At first I thought the truck in the



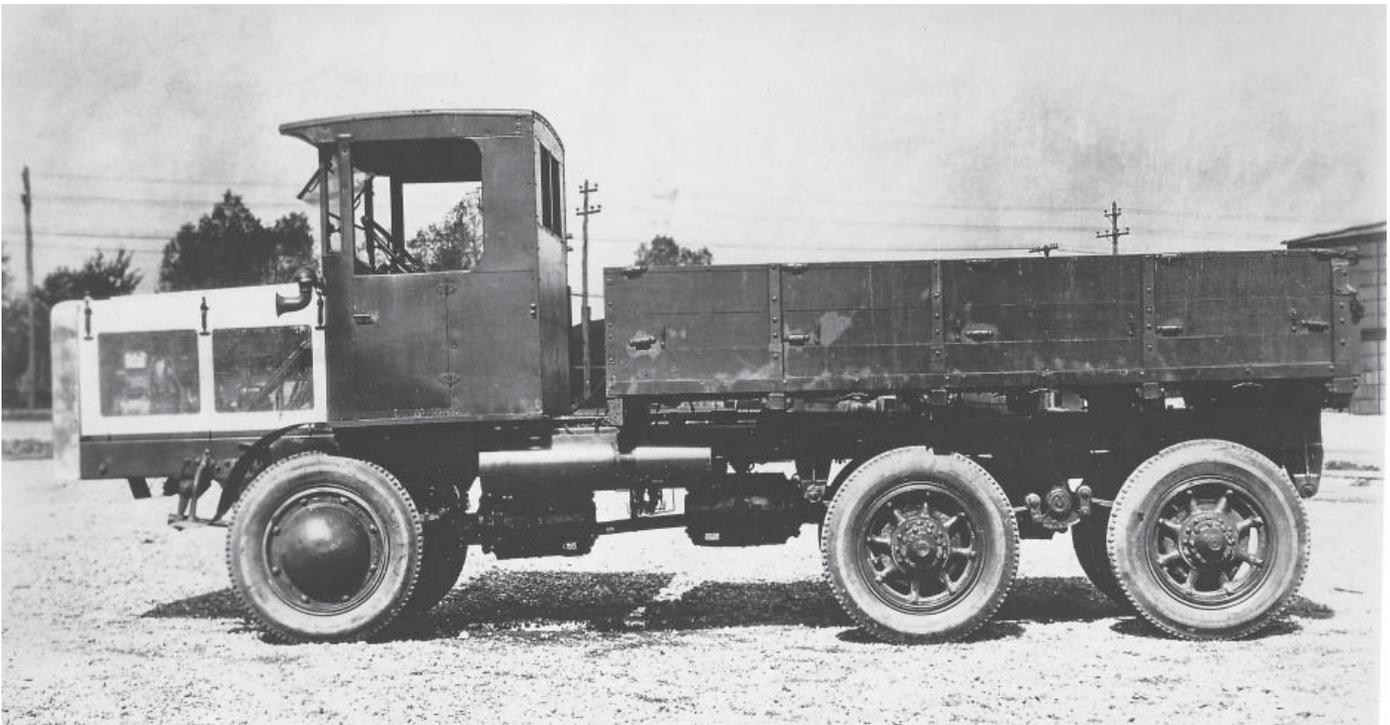
Rear view of the later model Versare bus illustrates the ease(!) with which the immense gasoline engine and generator can be removed for service.



This Versare bus bears the logo “MTCO,” which could represent any number of transportation operators.



[A] prototype “truck” (in terms of a vehicle of burden, as opposed to the railroad term that describes the rotatable framework that holds the axles on a rail car) [is] known to have been built. These images show there were at least two.



mystery photo was the prototype mentioned in the encyclopedia entry, but I think it’s just an early bus chassis used as a factory “mule.”

As for the “little boxes,” Bill says “the cargo reminds me of wooden crates used to carry the old glass 5-gallon Polar water jugs, so I guess they are crates used to ship glass bottles or jugs or crocks.

“When our reserve unit was mobilized for Gulf War I, one of the things I saw was pallets and pallets of rickety old wooden

crates holding Polar Water glass jugs. At that time I had not seen a glass jug in years. As I understood they wanted to get rid of the glass jugs so there was ‘no deposit no return.’”

At first, I, too, thought of large glass jugs. In looking more closely, however, I note that the arrangement is asymmetrical, with the “filler neck” off-center, unusual for a glass jug and probably difficult to manufacture. Looking even more closely at the “caps,” I believe they look just like the hub caps on the

vehicle’s axles. I’m pretty sure it’s the factory “mule” with a full load of axles.

Mark Theobald’s Ingersoll Award-winning website, Coachbuilt.com, has much more detail on Versare: <http://www.coachbuilt.com/bui/v/versare/versare.htm>

As this issue goes to press, we heard from long-time commercial vehicle historian *John Montville* (#163): The mystery photo on page two of *SAH Journal* #307 is a



Rubber-tired, steering rail-type trucks allowed maneuvering on city streets.

Versare double-tandem, gas-electric truck. According to research published by the Motor Bus Society, the Versare Corporation of Watervliet, New York, built this prototype in 1926 using tandem units with electric drive in the rear axle of each tandem.

“The Versare Corporation was basically a motor bus builder but is believed to have built three prototype heavy-duty trucks with various wheel arrangements. The one in the photo is believed to be carrying Eaton axles. [aha!] It was later sent to the Army

Ordnance Department at Fort Holabird, [Maryland,] for testing. Apparently, none of these prototypes resulted in any production models and the firm basically ceased operations by 1929.”

—Kit Foster



As seen in *SAH Journal* No. 307, this is believed to be a Versare bus chassis used at the factory for carrying parts, in this case axles.



Automobile: The 1959 Chevrolet was dubbed the “Martian Ground Chariot” by its detractors, but the commonality of the winged fenders of the Chevrolet and the vaulted roof line of the McDonalds is unmistakable.

ART, ARCHITECTURE AND THE AUTOMOBILE PART VI

Editor’s note: This is the sixth chapter of an eight-part presentation presenting a historical contextual triad of Art, Architecture and the Automobile. The series began with issue #303—the reader is encouraged to refer to that issue, which included an introduction, for added context and understanding of the entire series’ presentation.

VI. SPACE AGE, 1948 TO 1968

It is described by the dictum *Form follows Fantasy*.

Automobiles in this era are characterized by streamlined bodies, tail fins and other features which mimic the components of an airplane or at least suggest a space-age motif.

The small clouds drifted across the sky and the sun seemed to electrify the chrome trim of the 1959 pink Cadillac convertible as it quietly approached the judges’ reviewing stand. David Holls stared at the car without saying a word, a wry smile on his face as he seemed to take in the view of this stylish and perhaps defining automobile of the 1950s. He spoke quietly, but definitively; “It just seemed like the right thing to do,” he said. Those words have haunted me ever since for that one brief sentence captured the era, the ambience and the style envisioned by this famous automobile designer. He captured the essence of the Googie era, for it was not just the winged form of the automobile, but it was an entire culture of space fantasy in television programming, in clothing and in everyday conversation as reflected in the *Honeymooners* TV show; “One of these days Alice, you’re going to the moon!”

The Cadillac was iconic, and many Cadillac advertisements showed that image of the fin with a prestigious hotel, restaurant or vacation spot in the background. The word “Cadillac” was not

necessary; the form and the structural ambience was all that was needed to express the social prestige of the Cadillac automobile.

The art and architecture of this period is identified as Googie. The name arose from a renovation by Mel Weiss of Mels diner in California, which included spires and other details that suggested space travel. Googie was a nickname which Mel used for his wife, and the name, although the intent was unexplained, became applied to his favored architecture. Interestingly, the sound when the word is spoken also seems to suggest the somewhat outrageous space-age style.



Architecture: This McDonald’s restaurant was built in the late 1960s on Gull Road just northeast of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Architecture: The Radisson hotel in Kalamazoo, which was redesigned since the year 2000, appears to feature two landing platforms for spacecraft, making it an example of Googie architecture.



Googie art is fanciful and its commercial use includes expressive forms of spires, arches, vaulted roof lines and perhaps large areas of glass. The setting is often fanciful as though the object was suspended in space, and examples vary from the Seattle Space Needle to the St. Louis Arch. Commercial signage tends to instill a sense of flight and fancy with vertical spires and arrows surrounding a globe.

The era also is expressed quite clearly by the 1959 Chevrolet. Some critics were most clear in their assessment, and referred

to it as a “Martian Ground Chariot.” However, Tom Cahill opined that “it would bounce the eyeballs out of the low-price field buyer.” The car fits well with a McDonald’s restaurant with its prominent arches, vaulted roof and bright colors which give it a space age appearance.

The conglomerate of various uplifting forms which are often engaged with bright colors continues to this day in art and architecture, perhaps as an artful remembrance of a fantasy laden past.

—David O. Lyon



Art: The vertical spires and globe like structures at the top of this artwork are indicative of the Googie style.



Art: The Arch in St. Louis is presented as art rather than architecture because it has only an interior passageway and does not include functional space for people.

Book Reviews

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951

by S. Victor Fleischer

University of Akron Press (2020)

uaPress@uakron.edu | +1.330.972.7111

ext. 6962

292 pages, 8.75" x 11.25" hardcover

193 b/w photos, chapter end notes, indexed

Price: \$49.95

ISBN-10: 1629220469

ISBN-13: 978-1629220468

and

The Legend of Goodyear: The First 100 Years

by Jeffrey L. Rodengen

Write Stuff (1997)

WriteStuffBooks.com/

256 pages, 9.5" x 11.75" hardcover, dustcover

210 b/w and 110 color photos, chapter notes, indexed

Price: \$39.95

ISBN-10: 0945903359

ISBN-13: 978-0945903352

and

Tire Wars: Racing with Goodyear

by William Neely

Aztext Corporation (1993)

Various booksellers (publisher defunct)

192 pages, 8.75" x 11.25" hardcover, dustcover

226 b/w and 52 color photos, indexed

Price: \$29.95

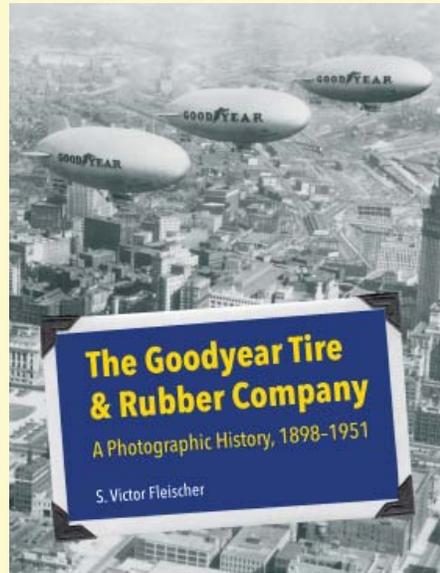
ISBN-10: 089404091X

ISBN-13: 978-0894040917

The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951 by S. Victor Fleischer becomes the third book in my library that are Goodyear histories. Strikingly, there is virtually no overlap or repetition among the three, a clear indication of the depth and breadth of Goodyear's history, products, and accomplishments which are ongoing to this calendar year.

As impressive—perhaps even more so—is that the company preserved its records, files and photographs documenting its existence and business activities for the

entire 123 (so far) years since its 1898 founding. More recently Goodyear has transferred possession of some 3,000 cubic feet of those files, documents and photographs—images alone number around one million—to the University of Akron's archives, now known as the American History Research Center, more commonly referred to as Special Collections, in order to preserve and make them available for research. To date, enabled by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, UA has digitized some 23,000 of those nearly a million images.



This book's author, S. Victor Fleischer, holds multiple degrees in history and is a trained professional archivist, today serving as University of Akron's Archivist and Head of Archival Services which has placed him most advantageously to create this book. A task he achieved in stellar style for *The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company: A Photographic History, 1898-1951*. Text and captions are notably erudite and motivate the curious reader to learn more in order to clearly comprehend all he's written.

As an example, do you know what a Magirus ladder is? Your commentator did not but what I found was wonderful to learn: Conrad Dietrich Magirus founded his company in 1867 in Germany. Today the company bearing his surname is still very much in business making all manner of highly-respected and desired top-of-the-line firefighting equipment in order to keep those individuals, whom Conrad Dietrich called "heroes," safest while going about their often dangerous work. It all began with the specialized multiple-extending movable ladders he invented and patented. Goodyear

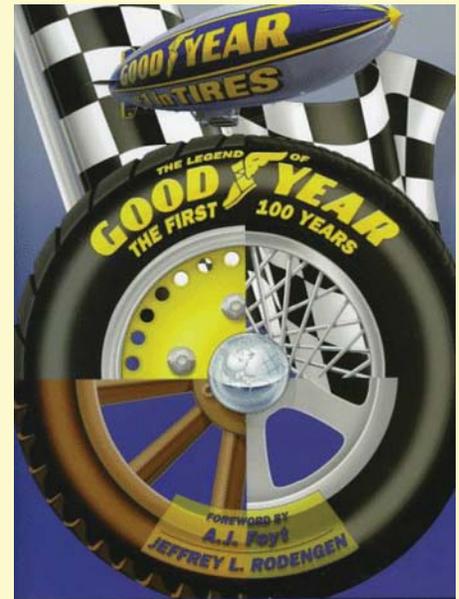
had utilized these ladders during construction of their giant blimps.

Another term unfamiliar to me was "goldbeaters' skin." Fleischer does explain this one and how it was utilized at Goodyear. The story of the Ghost Blimp may be familiar to some readers, but it was a learning experience for me and turns out to be one which, to this day, remains an unsolved disappearance.

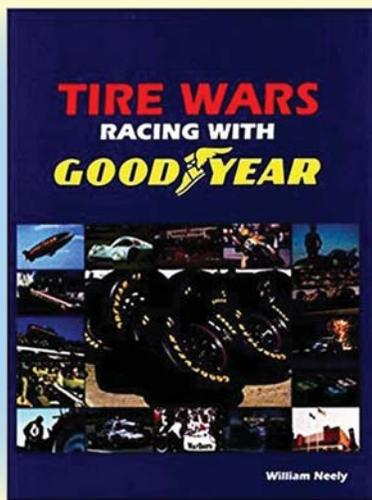
Over the decades, Goodyear has developed and made such wide-ranging numbers and types of products that showing and telling its story touches nearly every phase and aspect of life and living. This is essentially a picture book featuring nearly 200 of the 23,000 scanned images, accompanied by Fleischer's descriptive and explanatory captions. It is organized into sections in order to cover the panoply of items Goodyear has produced over the decades.

There are, of course, all manner of tires, road-going as well as those for equipment that does not traverse roads but rather works fields, mines and construction sites. Then come balloons and airships, followed by goods for home, office and industry. Goodyear, as with all other major U.S. makers of things, repurposed itself in order to create needed materials during both world wars as the book's concluding pages show and tell. Therefore what's put before the reader is a wonderful look at the diversity of mankind's inventiveness, achievements, and some of its entertainments, too.

Some words are in order about those "other two" books for, as mentioned, with virtually no overlap between the three, they very much complement one another.



Jeffrey L. Rodengen was (and still is) in the business of writing corporate and company histories. *The Legend of Goodyear: The First 100 Years* was published upon the occasion of Goodyear achieving its centenary birthday and, from the extensive list of names in the Acknowledgements, it's obvious Rodengen had the full cooperation of the company and its execs, current and past, as well as access to the archives (still in Goodyear's possession, as this book predates that transfer of custody to U of A). Rodengen actually opens his story half-a-dozen years prior to Goodyear being established so he can write about that vulcanization process Charles Goodyear developed. This book is very much populated with people important to the company in a myriad of roles and is an excellent read.



The third book, *Tire Wars: Racing with Goodyear*, is tightly focused on just one aspect of Goodyear's business: motorsports. But given that Goodyear's first racing experience began with a gratis shodding of Henry Ford's 999 prior to his 1901 victory on Detroit Driving Club's oval and continues to today, well beyond this book's 1993 publication, it's a long story encompassing nearly every type of racing imaginable. Written by one-time Goodyear racing public relations head turned motorsports writer Bill Neely, it too has authority behind what it imparts of ninety-two years of the history of Goodyear's participation in multiple racing series.

There's every reason to believe and hope that as the folks in the archives/Special Collections section at the University of Akron work their way through the vast amount of literature, photographs, and files another book may be in the offing one day. Certainly if it's anything like the quality and caliber of these three it will absolutely be welcomed!

—Helen V Hutchings

The Doble Steam Car

by Jim Crank

Doble Steam Press (2019)

doblesteampress.square.site/

667 pages, 14.25" x 11" hardcover, two volumes with slipcase

Profusely illustrated with b/w and color images and drawings.

Price: \$500

ISBN-10: 0578464632

ISBN-13: 978-0578464633



Longtime readers of *SAH Journal* will have seen an innocuous Billboard ad back in 1991 (No. 132), offering an entire automobile company for \$45,000. It described an “[o]pportunity to purchase the Doble Steam Motors Corporation. Assets include the California corporation, title, and rights to same; the eight remaining engineering notebooks; approximately 250 4"x5" negatives....and other items too numerous to list.” It was placed by James D. Crank, President, Doble Steam Motors Corporation (member #1153). Apparently no buyer came forward and that is fortunate; otherwise this book almost certainly would never have been published.

Jim Crank (1935-2017) was a Senior Research Specialist with Lockheed Corporation, and later a Senior Research Engineer at the Stanford Research Institute. Recognized as an authority on steam power systems, he had long been fascinated by Abner Doble and his iconic steam cars. This led to collecting Doble ephemera and eventually to discovering what remained of the Corporation. In 1981, he was able to acquire the actual rights to the Corporation and all its assets. With the assets secured, he was in the perfect position to chronicle the history of the Dobles and their exploits and it became his sole focus late in life.

Engineers are known for being persnickety and thorough, so it took a long time to put the whole project together, so much so that cynics began to doubt its eventual

completion. In the end failing health and a paucity of funds nearly vindicated the cynicism. Thanks to Jim Anderson, the impresario of the Doble Steam Press, which was organized to see the publication through, and 20 individuals named in the acknowledgements, *The Doble Steam Car* came to market in 2019, two years after Jim Crank's passing. He didn't live to see it, but there's no doubt he would have been pleased. So were the SAH judges, who blessed it with our Award of Distinction.

It is, in fact, much more than a history of the Doble steam car, itself renowned as the most technically sophisticated of its genre. It begins with three chapters considering the steam car in its era, the rationale behind it and it contrasts the various approaches by makers such as Serpollet, Stanley, White, Brooks, Delling and Scott-Newcombe. It then delves into some discussion about steam versus internal combustion and electric vehicles before concluding that “...gasoline and diesel engines have progressed to an astonishing high level of economy, reduced size, clean combustion and reliability and they still dominate the market and will for decades.” This, certainly, was written before today's manufacturers began betting otherwise.

In the fourth chapter we learn some Doble family history: blacksmiths and makers of miners' tools and other iron goods, exploiting water power for electricity generation and industrial uses. Abner Doble, the second son of the family to be so named (his grandfather was the first), was born March 26, 1890 in San Francisco, California. Abner and his brother, Warren, built their first steam car around 1908, a buckboard using a White burner and flash boiler, along with an engine of Abner's own design.

In 1910, Abner went east to study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, but left after his first term to concentrate on hands-on experiments with steam propulsion. With money from his father, he opened the Abner Doble Company in Waltham, Massachusetts. Within a year, he and his brother, John, had a running test chassis on the road, retroactively designated “Model A.” The Model B, completed in 1914, was, in Crank's words, “their first integrated, purpose-built automobile design.” Waltham is close to Newton, Massachusetts, where the famed Stanley twins were already building and selling steam cars. The Dobles delighted in taunting their neighboring automakers by

driving a Model B tourer up and down in front of the Stanley factory. Far from being insulted, the twins rushed out to examine the youngsters' condensing apparatus, a refinement they had not yet fitted to their cars.

Subsequent chapters detail the Doble models, including a chassis-by-chassis catalogue of the fabled Series E cars through to the downfall of the company in 1933. Abner Doble was not finished with steam however. Crank explores his later work in the USA, including with the Stanley company and Greyhound buses, as well as consultancies in New Zealand and with Sentinel in the United Kingdom.

Very well produced, the book is attractively laid out and profusely illustrated with black and white photos, drawings and charts. The prose of engineers is not often considered "a good read," but this book is just that. Jim Crank himself shines through with a number of clarifying and explanatory sentences rendered in the first person.

It is not without a few shortcomings. The citation of source material is spotty and

only in the text: there are no footnotes, no endnotes, no bibliography. There is, however, a plethora of technical material in two appendices, one for each volume.

Most annoying is the lack of an index, inexcusable in this era when technology makes it so easy. Fortunately, detailed, complete and identical tables of contents in each volume have page references for all the topical subheadings, of great help in navigating the entire work.

At \$500 it is not for the impecunious buyer, but this is inevitable for well-produced works on niche subjects. It is available from Thomas E Warth Esq Automotive Books in Minnesota, Autobebooks-Aerobebooks in Burbank, California, and the Stanley Museum in Maine. Of course you can get it from Amazon, but if you're really interested in steam cars you should probably belong to the Steam Automobile Club of America (www.steamautomobile.com). The SACA Storeroom offers a substantial discount to members.

—Kit Foster

Chris Pook & the History of the Long Beach GP

by Gordon Kirby

Racemaker Press (2020)

racemaker.com/ +1.617.723.6533

320 pages, 10½" x 10¼" hardcover, dustcover
39 b/w and 126 color photos, six track drawings, appendices

Price: \$80

ISBN-10: 0999875426

ISBN-13: 978-0999875421

and

The Cellini of Chrome: The Story of George W. Walker / Ford Motor Company's First Vice President of Design

by Henry Dominguez

Racemaker Press (2020)

racemaker.com/ +1.617.723.6533

384 pages, 11" x 10¼" hardcover, dustcover
250 b/w and 78 color photos

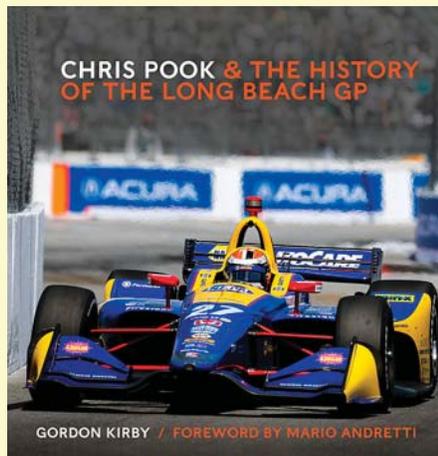
Price: \$90

ISBN-10: 0999875434

ISBN-13: 9780999875438

These books each tells their respective stories fully and well as each was written by a respected historian and author. Both are handsome, well-made presentations published by Racemaker Press, which is owned and operated by another respected historian. Thus, that neither book has an index and both display less than attentive proofing is all the more mysterious. However, as

each contributes significantly to different areas not previously written about in book form, both are worthy of being added to one's library. —hvh



Chris Pook & the History of The Long Beach GP is the life story of the man: Chris Pook. As (or more) importantly, it is also very much about the business of doing business that is professional auto racing. While most books tend to focus on a single team, this is about an entire series, along with the physical facilities and locations where they run—not a perspective usually shared on the written page.

Well-written by veteran racing journalist and book author Gordon Kirby, this book is characterized as a biography. In no way

should this next comment be misconstrued as a criticism for it is an observation based on the percentage of the book's 320 pages and the amount of words on those pages that are indicated as direct quotes of/from Chris Pook. It is unclear whether Pook wrote them or they are being cited by Kirby from taped interviews, but their quantity makes this book an as-told-to autobiography rather than a biography.

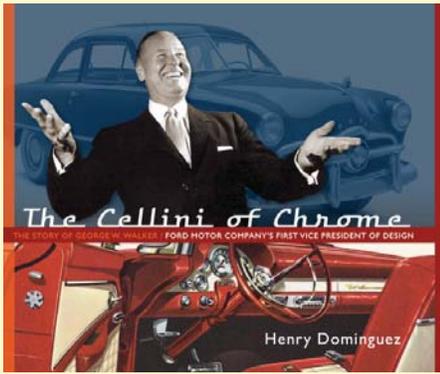
There's high energy on every page, for Kirby's wordsmith skills render this a fast-paced read that fully engages the reader from first page to last. The narrative progresses from Pook's childhood in England, his country of birth, during which he displayed a competitive spirit coupled with the tenacity to succeed at whatever task or challenge he'd taken on.

Graduated from the Sorbonne, Pook emigrated to America where his entrepreneurial spirit bubbled to the surface. The first company he established was soon bought out by a bigger one and by now, thoroughly an Angelino, Pook acted on an inspiration leading, in 1974, to establishing the Long Beach Grand Prix.

Details of the challenges encountered and met over the ensuing years will ring familiar to business folk who have attempted any new venture involving dealing with the bureaucrats in order to adhere to rules, laws and regulations. In Pook's case it wasn't only the city, state, and local authorities but race sanctioning bodies too. As Pook repeatedly iterates it all would have been more difficult, if not impossible, were it not for the early enthusiastic support and participation of one Daniel Sexton Gurney.

The book proceeds, chapter by chapter, sharing details chronologically, of the race series that ran on Long Beach Grand Prix weekends, drivers, teams and much more. The concluding appendices list the various teams and drivers that triumphed at Long Beach as well as diagrams of the various track configurations. Together Chris Pook and Gordon Kirby have shared between the covers of this book Chris' story and that of the Long Beach Grand Prix and open wheel racing from 1975 to 2019 in a grand way.

The Cellini of Chrome: The Story of George W. Walker / Ford Motor Company's First Vice President of Design is the first book-length biography of George W. Walker. That in itself is rather astounding since George Walker was one member of the triumvirate of designers directly responsible for bringing the style



and design functions to Detroit automakers. The other two were Raymond Loewy and Harley Earl, about whom reams of paper, in the form of both magazine articles and books, have been dedicated.

It is only now, thanks to author *Henry Dominguez*, that we have a book about Walker that takes its title from the November 1947 issue of *Time* magazine that featured Walker on its cover. There's some irony here for *Time* had featured Raymond Loewy on the cover of an October 1949 issue—but never published a cover feature on Harley Earl.

The Cellini of Chrome is an important book with Dominguez doing a fine job writing of Walker both personally and professionally, although he admits that he never met or interviewed his subject. A bibliography would have been a wonderful inclusion in the book but even without it is possible to discern many, if not all, of Dominguez's sources from a close reading of his Introduction coupled with the latter pages of his closing chapter.

Chapters in between tell Walker's story along with revealing some of the behind-the-scenes machinations at Ford.

Walker first worked for Ford in 1945-46 as a consultant when he, as head of the design firm he'd established, was asked to submit a design for what would be Ford's first new car produced since WWII had ended. The result was the notable-to-this-day 1949 Ford.

Walker's consultancy continued on and off—with other notable designs attributed to Walker—leading to Ford at last recognizing design as a separate function requiring a corporate level head. George W. Walker was asked to sell or close his successful industrial design firm and become Ford's first VP of design—which he did in May 1955.

To his credit, Dominguez doesn't shy away from writing about some of the more controversial aspects of Walker, offsetting those passages with pages also showing and telling of the wonderful family life that Walker provided his children and grandchildren. Taken as a whole, this book is an enjoyable and historically relevant read.

—*Helen V Hutchings*

Developing A Champion: The Electramotive NISSAN GTP Story

by *Chris Willes*

Chris Willes Auto Racing Books (2020)
ChrisWillesAutoRacingBooks.com/
444 pages, 9" x 12" hardcover, dustcover
36 b/w and 480 color images, and 45 technical drawings/illustrations
Price: \$72

ISBN-10: 0578568799
ISBN-13: 978-0578568799

and

McLaren: The Engine Company: A History of McLaren Engines, Inc. and its Successors

by *Roger S Meiners*

SAE International (2020)
books.sae.org/
271 pages, 12" x 9.25" hardcover

70 b/w and 126 color images, appendices and index
Price: \$110
ISBN-10: 0768095123
ISBN-13: 978-0768095128

Each of these books is about developing and contesting race machines. They share in common descriptions of the basic process of development, testing leading to refinements, competitive running, usually followed by still more refinements, etc. They also share a common thread clearly showing the ingenuity, intelligence, creativity, and ability of team individuals to perform under intense pressure. Even with all the common threads, including each being written by an insider, their stories differ in important details, as you'll read. —hvh

Fascinating Aspects of Automotive History

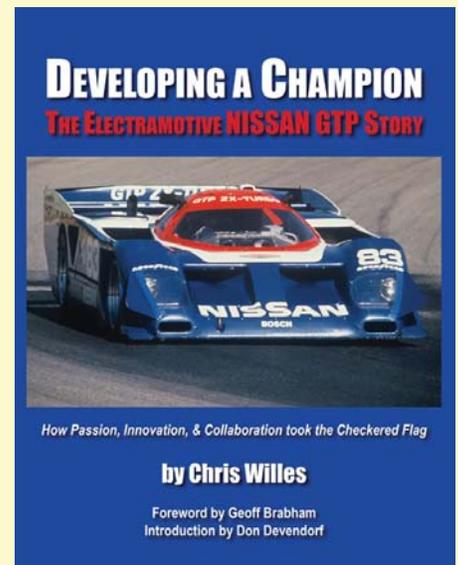
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Developing a Champion: The Electramotive Nissan GTP Story is nothing short of splendid at covering its subject which is documentably supported information relevant to IMSA and Nissan 1974 to 1989. It was then absorbed by Nissan and became Nissan Performance Technology, Inc (NPTI).

Self-published by Chris Willes, a first-time writer who was one of the Electramotive team engineers, the book does not contain an index but a thorough and comprehensive one is available for inspection and free

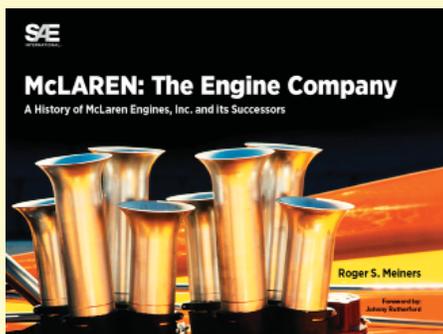


download at www.ChrisWillesAutoRacing-Books.com, the author's website. It may be of interest to some SAH members reading this that while Willes used InDesign to create the book's pages, he utilized a program available online called TExtract (see <https://www.texyz.com/textract/>) to create the index and described it as "working quite well and easily." Moreover there's nary a misspell, typo or misspeak anywhere on any of its 444 pages and the narrative is lucidly and well-written.

As Willes tells Electramotive's story, the company's history is also very much a people story, a racing history, and shares considerable well-explained technical details. Literally, the beginnings involve Peter Brock and his Datsun (remember that was the name Nissan used when it first arrived in America) BRE team. Driver John Morton continued his involvement once Datsun had completed its three-year name change.

Photographs are notable, for while there are some of the usual racing images, there are many taken in-shop to document work in progress, as well as engineering drawings accompanied by words (text and captions) of details including an entire chapter dedicated to the creation, function and subsequent charts/graphs of results of Electramotive's 1/7th scale wind tunnel. Similar detailed explanations and photos show the dynamometer installation, testing, and results.

Cover-to-cover *Developing a Champion: The Electramotive NISSAN GTP Story* relates its story in a satisfyingly comprehensive and readable manner. Racing history has been very well served, indeed, by Chris Willes (pronounced as though it were spelled Willis) for it is just excellent in the details that only an engineer who also carefully preserved records, drawings and files could chronicle as the Electramotive people devised "the solutions [that enabled them] to go from a mangled heap of metal to champagne-soaked celebrations."



The word "McLaren" brings to mind thoughts of driver/engineer Bruce McLaren. The company he established continued long

beyond the racing accident that claimed his life. Actually over the years there have been a multiplicity of companies with McLaren as part of their names and located in several lands. This Society of Automotive Engineers-published (SAE) book, *McLaren: The Engine Company*, authoritatively covers, untangles and delineates the entire history of the various McLarens from the middle-1960s to the current day.

Author Roger S. Meiners was and is a true insider. He has been part of all the various McLaren companies since 1980, sometimes as an employee, other times as a consultant. Additionally Meiners is also an amateur vintage-car road racer and a published automotive writer/photographer with a law degree.

The McLaren story encompasses a wide array of vehicles, experiences, racing series, and years. From '60s Grand Prix to '70s Can-Am, various Formulas, Indy/Cart, NASCAR and more were powered with McLaren-engineered motors based on Chevrolets, Cosworths, Buicks, Cadillacs, Saleens to Vipers. One of the latter day McLaren companies even merged with and acquired ASHA, a company established by Alain Clénet, the very same Clénet who

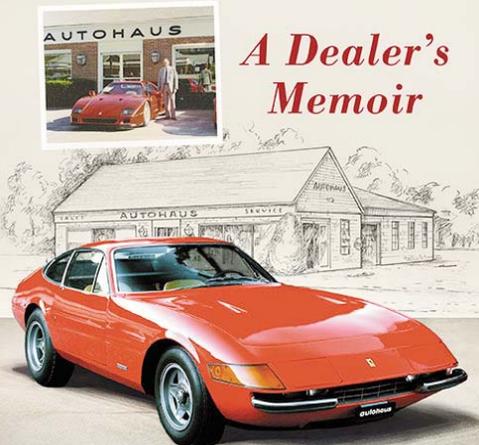
made the kit-car automobiles bearing his surname. ASHA had a patented all-wheel drive system with hydro-mechanical-type limited-slip differentials that it called Gerodisc. McLaren subsequently licensed use of the technology to a variety of other companies. As the book ends, McLaren itself became a part of Canadian-based Linamar Corporation and now operates as Linamar's McLaren Engineering meaning the complete history of McLaren is still being written.

The SAE-published *McLaren: The Engine Company: A History of McLaren Engines, Inc. and its Successors*, despite having the staff and prior publishing experiences, does contain some typographic "oopses" and the index is only rudimentary. It does have appendices but I also found myself wishing a timeline had been included as it would have facilitated keeping the various McLaren companies sorted out. I've made a note to attempt to create one when I reread as surely I will one day. It is also a bit mystifying why the oversize landscape format was chosen as most of the nearly 200 photographs don't take advantage of it although it certainly does provide the opportunity for the book's dramatic cover.

—Helen V Hutchings

Let Me Sell You a Ferrari

A Dealer's Memoir



ROBERT E. GUARINO

A Ferrari dealer from the 1960s to the 1990s, Robert E. Guarino recounts a lifetime with the iconic brand and other exceptional automobiles. Chapters detail a wide range of experiences, like a nonstop drive in a 308GTB from Chicago to Boston; rides with important figures like Piero Ferrari at Fiorano and Dario Benuzzi at Mugello; and visits to the Ferrari, Maserati and Lamborghini factories.

This book follows one man's all-encompassing journey with great cars and their owners and is packed with insights into the life cycle of a Ferrari, from production to sales.



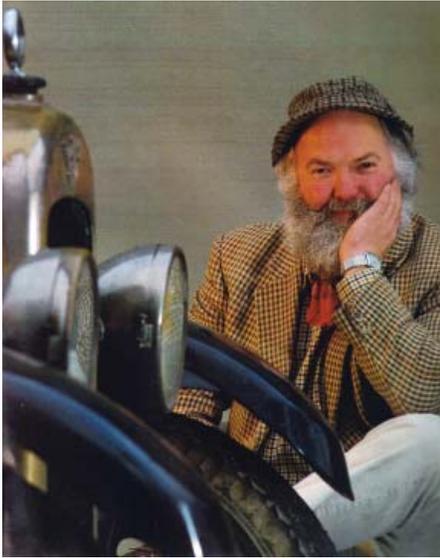
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In Memoriam

Michael J. Worthington-Williams MBE
(1938-2021)



Mike Worthington-Williams, British automotive historian, journalist and Friend of Automotive History, died on February 8, 2021, after a short illness. He had recently turned 83. A man of far-reaching interests, he had a fondness for motorcycles, cyclecars and unusual makes of all kinds. He wrote about them with great enthusiasm and authority.

Michael James Worthington-Williams was born in Wandsworth, southwest London, on January 30, 1938. As the city became a wartime bombing target in 1940, he and his family retreated to live with his grandparents in Hassocks, Sussex, where he grew up. After leaving school he worked in the insurance business, followed by a stint with the Royal Air Force, including service in Germany. Returning home to civilian life he settled into a job as a “repo man” for Bowmakers, a rent-to-own company.

The pattern of his professional life had actually been predetermined earlier. At age 18, an article he wrote about his discovery and recommissioning of a 1926 BSA 1,000 cc twin motorcycle with sidecar was published in in *Veteran and Vintage Magazine*. Founded by Lord Montagu, V&V, as it was fondly called, was published from the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. Mike had discovered the bike while searching with friends for old vehicles in sheds and barns, what we now celebrate as “barn finds.” Having negotiated for the vehicle, he then extricated it from a loft, convinced its engine to run after a 20-year sleep and drove it (most of) the eight miles to his home.

This would eventually lead to many columns on the subject, variously headed “Buried Treasures,” “Worthy” and, for nearly 40 years, “Finds and Discoveries” in *The Automobile*, the British magazine devoted to pre-1960 cars.

The BSA’s story, however, was not complete. Within days of that article’s appearance, he received letters from former police officers who recognized the registration number as one of their own service, in fact the first police cycle, and soon its entire history was pieced together. No doubt this influenced his dedication to discovering and rehabilitating old vehicles, along the way learning their histories. The

latter became a fervent cause, and a sub-career in helping British owners recover the original registration numbers of their own discoveries.

He was a long-time friend of *Keith Marvin*, though the two did not meet in person until the late 1990s. They shared a fondness (in Keith’s case more an obsession) with the assembled cars of the 1920s. Thus, readers of *The Automobile* were schooled on such topics as the Daniels automobile, Willys-Overland-Crossley of Stockport, U.K., and engineer Fred M. Guy, inventor of the disc-valve engine. At the time of his passing, Mike was the only contributor to have been published in every issue of that magazine, which was launched in 1982.

I was introduced to Mike by the late British historian and then SAH board member *Michael Sedgwick*. I was researching the activities of the Hudson Motor Car Company in England, for an article to be published in *White Triangle News*, magazine of the Hudson Essex Terraplane Club. I had met Sedgwick, and also *Nick Georgano*, while harvesting history at the National Motor Museum library in 1981. I also needed photos, and Sedgwick suggested I write to Mike W-W, who was known to have some. I did and he did, and we came to an arrangement that matured into a friendship. During one of our British trips, I visited him in Capel Iwan, a tiny Welsh village, while returning from a jaunt with my son to Ireland. Glaspant Manor, a derelict estate that he and his father-in-law had restored, became a regular stopping-off place whenever I was in the UK. We corresponded, sometimes erratically, on subjects of mutual interest.

In the early 1990s, Mike became editor of a start-up magazine, *Classic Car Mart*. Like many others of its ilk, its purpose was advertising, but Mike put his stamp on it with extensive editorial features and reader participation that ranked with the best of the genre. He was rewarded with the Journalist of the Year award. At his request I started a regular feature on American cars, “Yankee Ingenuity,” that ran for seven years.

Mike had joined SAH in July 1972, member #168, and served as vice president from 1974-75. For many years he chaired the UK Chapter, becoming Chairman Emeritus by the time of its separation and establishment as SAHB, the independent Society of Automotive Historians in Britain.

It was SAH, in fact, that convinced Mike to quit his job with Bowmakers and become a freelance writer. In 1973, he received a letter from *Mary Cattie*, then the awards chair, that he had won our then-Cugnot Award for Articles for “Dolphin Motors of Shoreham,” about Harry Ricardo, his company and many engineering feats, published in *Sussex Industrial History*. He would be honored again in 1982, for “The Autovia,” about the obscure Riley offshoot, published in *The Automobile*. By this time, the article award had been renamed to memorialize Carl Benz.

In 1998, Mike was honored with our Friend of Automotive History award. He rose to the occasion by traveling to the US for the first time, and attending the whole Hershey week with me, savoring the entire experience and staying on the field in our vintage Shasta camping trailer. He came away with enough historic literature, purchased from the likes of *John Conde* and *Bob Johnson*, that he nearly had to pay for excess baggage to get home. So captivated by the Hershey experience was Mike, that he returned each year through 2001. Among the most treasured of Mike’s Hershey-finds was a prestige Cole catalog bestowed on him by *Leroy Cole*. He was still chuffed about it the last time I saw him, in 2019.

In 1999 he enticed me to Britain for Beaulieu Autojumble, the UK’s admitted answer to Hershey. His routine entailed a journey of nearly 200 miles from western Wales in “Arthur,” his 1927 Austin Twenty, which had reportedly seen more than a million miles in taxi service at Henley-on-Thames. Thus began a tradition, Beaulieu in September and Hershey in October, that continued for many years. After Hershey week we would spend another few days hobnobbing with such luminaries as *Fred Roe*, *Keith Marvin*, *Bob Johnson* and *Charlie LeMaitre*, and visiting New England’s abandoned monuments to America’s automotive industrial past. Our last Autojumble journey in Arthur was in 2006, when we experienced ominous noises from the undercarriage. Not long after we returned to Wales, Arthur’s back axle disintegrated. Arthur was sold soon afterwards, but Mike spent the rest of his life trying to buy him back.

Mike was not a hands-on collector so much as a guardian of the realm. He employed others to work on his cars, each one being a substantial project worthy of preservation, such makes as Angus Sanderson, Storey (you can look it up), Crouch and Calcott. At one point he had a mighty Fiat Typo 56 limousine, built at Poughkeepsie, New York. It had come into his hands while he was managing Sotheby’s classic car auction department in the 1980s. When Sotheby’s exited the collector car business, he began consulting for Robert Brooks, continuing after Brooks acquired the Bonhams business.

Perhaps the pinnacle of Mike’s career was his place on the Queen’s Birthday Honours List in 2018, when he was instituted as a Member of the British Empire “for service to automotive history.” This represented not only his efforts for our profession, but also the importance of our field of study in the course of human life. He was presented with the award by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace that November.

Mike is survived by Pam, his wife of more than 40 years, their children Beth, Nicky, Nat and Jane, and three grandchildren. He is also survived by three children and three grandchildren from a previous marriage, as well as a brother, Richard. He was predeceased by a daughter who died during childhood.

He and I were an odd couple in many ways, very different in temperament. He loved holding forth and spellbinding friends and acquaintances with tales of his discoveries and adventures, while I’m content to avoid the limelight and take in what others are doing. We were, however, of one mind on most aspects of automotive history and the importance of getting it right. We also agreed about the preservation and use of old cars. He loved what he called “oily rag” cars epitomized by Arthur, unrestored vehicles that needed just a wipe with an oily rag to be driven far and wide. My fondest memories will always be of Mike at the wheel in Arthur, fearlessly challenging city traffic and double-clutching his way through the Downton Road roundabout in Salisbury, Beaulieu-bound!

—Kit Foster



