

# SAH Journal



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## Billboard

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**Save the dates:** The SAH will be at Hershey, Pennsylvania, 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 Eastern Division Annual National Fall Meet of the Antique Automobile Club of America. All these will occur October 6-9, 2021.



**Front cover:** This is the 1938 "Embiricos" Bentley (chassis B27LE) at the 2019 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, honoring the 100th anniversary of the founding of the original Bentley Motors company. Its appearance on the cover was inspired by the 100th anniversary when Bentley automobiles were first delivered (1921), and to honor its coachwork designer, Georges Paulin, who was featured in the book *The Kellner Affair: Matters of Life and Death...* whose authors, Peter Larsen and Ben Erickson, have just completed the first volume of their new opus, *Joseph Figoni: Le Grand Couturier de la Carrosserie Française—Volume One: Alfa-Romeo*, where we feature a review on p. 10.

**Back cover:** This is artist Anna-Louise Felstead at work with kit, brushes (etc.) at hand, painting the 1938 "Embiricos" Bentley (you can see her on the cover too, in view just above the hood of the car). Automotive history includes a range of illustration art, from advertising to portrait art (as we see here and above). This "art theme" was inspired by the new book, *Making a Marque: Rolls-Royce Motor Car Promotion 1904-1940* by Peter Moss and Richard Roberts, a review of which we feature p. 11.

**Above:** This is finished art by Anna-Louise Felstead—it's of a Ferrari 400 SA (Superamerica) Coupe Aerodinamico. For more on Ms. Felstead's art, see: [alfelstead.com](http://alfelstead.com).

# SAH Journal

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## President's Perspective



### *Random Thoughts No. 1.*

It occurred to me as I prepared my remarks as a member of a panel for the topic, “An Automotive Century,” at Ave Maria University several years ago, that we have certainly lived in a dynamic era. I imagined how someone looking at the world of New Year’s Day 1801 would then attempt to consider that same world on New Year’s Eve 1900, as the century ended. The worlds of New Year’s Day 1901 and that of New Year’s Eve 2000 may have some vague similarities, but the ubiquity of the automobile and its impact would still surprise that observer from the beginning of the 20th century. At the end of the 19th century, the railroad was the fastest mode of land transportation and the coal-powered steamer on water. If the 19th century was the Steam Age, it was also an age that depended largely upon a fossil fuel, coal, to create the energy needed to power the steam engines. Although another fossil fuel, oil, was beginning to make an impact by the end of the 19th Century, coal was still the primary source for providing the necessary power for the age. Electricity also began to make its way into the fabric of that century during its latter decades.

Only in the waning years of the 19th Century did the automobile begin to make

an appearance upon the scene. When the 20th Century dawned, the number of automobiles worldwide numbered only in the several thousands. When the century ended, automobiles numbered in the millions upon millions. Roads for the automobile proliferated as the century opened, altering the landscape, both urban and rural.

As historians, we tend to be really good at explaining the events of the past, but our track record for “predicting” the future often leaves a great deal to be desired. We are scarcely into the third decade of the 21st Century and yet one can easily feel the tectonic plates shifting under us. If the impending return of the electric automobile seems like another episode of *Back to the Future*, don’t feel alone. Yet, we can understand the many issues connected with the development of the infrastructure that will be necessary, among other things, for the new generation of electric vehicles to replenish their batteries while in service.

Service stations for the replenishment of the petroleum needed to power the internal combustion-engined vehicles of the 20th Century did not magically, wondrously appear out of thin air. The story of the petroleum itself is another aspect of this tale that demands attention—and, so on and on. We can provide the context for how we got to where we are and some ideas regarding the azimuth—or azimuths—along which we are moving might encounter some issues. The notions of space and place regarding automobility will doubtless change thanks to the increased use of electric vehicles. Just as it did in the waning years of the 19th Century and the opening decades of the 20th.

As some have observed and reminded us many times: you can’t know where you are going unless you know where you have been.

### *Random Thoughts No. 2.*

Professor John P. Dolan, the author of *The Essential Erasmus* (New American Library, 1964), used to remind me of something every time he picked up the Sunday edition of *The New York Times* at the Capitol Newsstand in Columbia, South Carolina, where I often worked while in college. He would look at me and then say, “When I have a little money, I buy books; and if I have any

left, I buy food and clothes.” Doctor Dolan definitely had me pegged. A visit to his home demonstrated that we were kindred souls when it came to books. If his office was a typical university professor’s den of books with a little room for a desk and maybe a few chairs, his home was not much different.

Although I have downsized my professional library several times now since I retired, I still have bookcase after bookcase (...after bookcase after bookcase... according to *She Who Must Be Obeyed*) of books as well as the usual file cabinets and boxes of research material. Most of what I have retained in my library relates to my focus area, the history of motor sport, with several bookcases relating to the usual dozens and dozens (...and dozens...) of volumes relating to the usual historiographical sort one is reluctant to part with (Carr, Bloch, Kuhn, Said, and etc., that sort of stuff...) from one’s classes as well as some from my former life as a military historian.

Books about things automotive, whether marque histories, dealing with the many cultural or social aspects of automotive history, biographies, motor sport, and what have you, are important. So are websites, club publications, blogs, films and television productions, magazines, and so forth. So are museums and research centers dedicated to things automotive. Especially so are student papers on automotive topics from both undergraduate and graduate students.

Among the *raison d’être* for the Society of Automotive Historians is the recognition of excellence and distinguished achievements in the field of automotive history. We have a number of awards that we, the SAH, use to do so: the Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Awards (English language and non-English language) the Carl Benz Award; the E.P. Ingersoll Award; the Richard and Grace Brigham Award; the Richard P. Scharchburg Student Paper Award; and, the James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award. In addition, we have the Friend of Automotive History, given in “Recognition to an individual who has made a particular personal contribution to automotive history.” (For more on the awards, look here: [autohistory.org/awards](http://autohistory.org/awards))

Get involved. Make suggestions and submit nominations, volunteer to serve on an award committee, and come to the annual awards dinner in Hershey. Have your say, make your voice heard. Be part of the process.

—H. Donald Capps



"I think this image is from around 1950. Small dealership therefore very little inventory. New Oldsmobiles sold quickly back in these days." (Note the Oldsmobile "ringed globe" just above the door—the cars featured this emblem from 1949 to 1956. —Ed.)

## A SMALL DEALERSHIP

*The franchise and dealership business model is just one of the many subjects and disciplines within automotive history. How this model works today—or did for major dealers in the past—is an interesting subject for study. Here's a story from the other end of the spectrum... a small dealership, in a small town, in the southern USA from the mid-twentieth century. Our author, SAH member Jay Maggio, may ring a bell—his artwork appeared on the cover of SAHJ #306. —Ed.*

My paternal grandfather was the son of an Italian immigrant who came via the Port of New Orleans in 1899. They eventually settled in the very small town of New Roads in Louisiana an hour northwest of Baton Rouge on the Mississippi River. My grandfather would eventually own a Gulf gas station and garage originally called Maggio's Garage. My grandfather "Papa Joe" Maggio was known in the area as one of the best automotive mechanics around. The business would change names several times, to Maggio Motors, Maggio Oldsmobile, and about ten years ago to Maggio Buick-GMC. I don't want to lead anyone on so I will point out that I had a very difficult relationship with my father and my family and that it had always been planned that my oldest brother would inherit the dealership, which he fully owns now. I worked there in my childhood and early days as a teenager, but upon my finishing college I went on to work for other dealerships and eventually would pursue a completely different career.

After my father returned home from WWII, he and my grandfather acquired the Kaiser-Frazer franchise around 1947–1948. Many months went by and they never received any cars from Kaiser-Frazer. One day a gentleman in a brand new red 1948 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight convertible stopped by to fill up with gas. My father spoke fondly of how beautiful this car was

and carried on a conversation with the gentleman while filling the car up with gas. He would find out that the gentleman was a representative for Oldsmobile and was looking to establish new dealership points in the area. My father and the gentleman hit it off very well and the man offered my father the Oldsmobile franchise right on the spot. Yes, it happened just like that! It's a far cry from the long process one would have to go through to acquire a franchise today. I mean, this is really laughable. It did not take long with Oldsmobile; once my father signed the contract they started receiving new cars the very next month. It wouldn't be until the end of the year before they received their first two Kaiser-Frazer cars. At this point my father contacted the Kaiser-Frazer folks telling them he had secured the Oldsmobile franchise and was doing well with Oldsmobile and to please cancel their franchise agreement with Kaiser-Frazer. My father acquired the Oldsmobile franchise at the beginning of the golden years when the Rocket V8s were introduced and the Hydra-Matic transmission had become widely popular. My father used to say that in the 1950s he sold everything they shipped him and sold them quickly.

In the mid-1950s he added the GMC franchise for a few years but could not compete with the Chevy, Ford, and Dodge dealers in the area for truck sales at that time and quickly dropped the franchise. Around 1959 he added Renault and Peugeot franchises for just about a year. They sold many Dauphines but it's my understanding that he only sold around two Peugeots. I think it was late in 1959 that he also acquired the AMC/Rambler franchise. He kept AMC/Rambler until the end of 1966. I'm old enough to remember some AMC/Rambler in the shop and in the showroom from as early as 1963. 1963 and 1964 were very good years—he



"My grandfather, 'Papa Joe Maggio,' with a 1956 Oldsmobile 88 in the showroom. Doors open, south Louisiana with no air conditioning."

sold quite a few Classics and Ambassadors during those years. My fondest memory is of the last AMC in his inventory, which was sitting on the showroom floor. It was a turquoise AMC Marlin with the black roof band and white interior. I thought that car was so cool!

I think the very first car that hooked me as a car buff when I was a child was my father's ice blue 1964 Oldsmobile Starfire demonstrator. I can vividly remember the beautiful metallic blue paint and the two-tone metallic blue bucket seat interior. The interior had chrome everywhere and I distinctively recall how cool it was that the electric window switches rested on the center console.

I have very clear and fond memories of many cars that made their way through the shop doors of the dealership. It was such a small dealership that my father would rarely risk ordering cars like the early Toronados or convertibles for inventory. It was very rare that he even stocked station wagons. I was in awe when we received a special ordered white on dark blue 1968 Toronado with white interior for a wealthy local rancher. The gentleman ordered another Toronado with the same color combo for 1969. When new cars would arrive on auto transports I was like a kid in toy land waiting for them to roll off the auto transport trucks. This may surprise some folks, but there were rare occasions in the

1960s and early 1970s when my father and grandfather would actually have to catch a bus or have someone drive them down to the New Orleans automobile terminal to pick up one or two cars and drive them back to the dealership 150 miles away in New Roads. I accompanied my grandfather on one of those trips—I think in 1967—to pick up what I recall as a white on light blue Cutlass coupe. There were some cars that really stood out. The first car we received in 1969 was a Ninety-Eight Luxury Holiday hardtop sedan—the first year for the Luxury Holiday sedan and first year for split seats. It was light green with an off-white vinyl roof and matching interior in off-white brocade cloth—a beautiful car. Others that I remember fondly were the first cars we received in 1970 and 1973. Both were Cutlass Supreme coupes and in each of those years Cutlasses had been completely redesigned. The 1970 Cutlass was a sold order. It was a light copper metallic, no vinyl roof, off-white vinyl bucket seats, Super Stock III wheels, and the cutout bumper with dual exhausts. When this car was cleaned up all I could do was stand there and stare at it like a deer caught in the headlights. It was stunning! The very first car received in 1973 was a triple cranberry red metallic Cutlass Supreme Coupe. I really had the same reaction to this car. It just didn't look like anything else I had ever seen at that time. In those days you just didn't have good preview pictures of the new models so when the

new designs arrived it was really exciting, far more special than it is today to see an all-new model. There were many other great memories like this, but these were the ones that really stand out.

My hometown was very small and remains that way today. I think New Roads back then may have had a population of about 4,500 people and given the roads of those days the nearest large city, Baton Rouge, was easily an hour's drive away. I think if my father sold two new cars a week back in those days he had a fairly good week. He probably sold just as many used cars, which were more profitable. There are so many perks of growing up in a car dealership, especially if you like cars. However, it was not always as rosy as things may appear. A small dealership like this in a very small community wasn't nearly as profitable as people might be led to think. We always had very nice cars but the nice cars really created a false sense of wealth, which was far from reality with my parents trying to raise five children. On top of that the dealership was also providing income for my grandparents and, to a smaller degree, my father's two siblings. By the 1980s my grandfather had passed away and my father settled with his siblings and owned the dealership outright. I had moved on to work for other dealerships by this time. My father and my oldest brother were running the business at this point and by 1988 they nearly lost everything. They fell out of trust with the bank and my sister and I left our jobs for a few days to see what we could do to help my father. We each wrote checks for enough money to cover the employees' salaries my father had working for him for a couple of weeks. By that time my father arranged for a substantial loan from a close friend to fund the dealership until he could improve the dealership's credit rating. "Dealer floor plans" are something the average person is not likely familiar with. This is how dealers finance their inventory. Most people are unaware that dealers acquire huge escrow accounts—known as floor plans—to fund their inventories; and that the factories are paid via these loans in most occasions before the automobiles arrive on dealers' lots. For

a few months in 1988 my father had to pay cash for new cars to sell. I think it's amazing to this day that somehow my father and older brother were able to pull this off. Inadvertently, this may have been the best thing to happen to them both, in that years thereafter they became much more fiscally responsible in running the dealership and pledged to themselves that they would never let this happen to put themselves and their families in such a compromising position again.

Having no personal investment of any kind in the dealership today, and not having a close relationship with my brother, I am unaware of how well they are doing today. The dealership was completely remodeled a few years ago according to GM specs. It looks beautiful and they appear to be doing well.

After first attending LSU in Baton Rouge for a few years, and after dropping out due to finances, I later attended and graduated from Northwood University in Cedar Hill, TX, with a degree in Automotive Marketing in 1982. I went on to work for several dealerships around south Louisiana: Martinez Motors Volkswagen; AMC/Jeep/Renault; DeLorean in Morgan City; Ray Gross Pontiac - Oldsmobile - Buick - GMC in Franklin; Audubon Ford in Baton Rouge; Price LeBlanc Toyota and Price LeBlanc AMC/Jeep both in Gonzales; and last LeBlanc Hyundai - Subaru in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans. In 1990 I moved to Dallas to work for CSC-Logic, a software company that specialized in software for insurance companies. I was hired to work in their automotive warranty division adjudicating aftermarket warranty claims and helping to underwrite warranty programs. That job ended in 1995, so I moved on to pursue a much less stressful career as an artist, which began in 2000. You can view my art work at [jaymaggio.com](http://jaymaggio.com). I have been a member of Classic Chassis Car Club of Dallas and Lambda Car Club International. I still have a great passion for automobiles and the automotive industry, but I really enjoy the freedom and creativity that my art career affords me.

—Jay Maggio



Front of building, 1959. (Note the "ringed globe" is gone. —Ed.)



Service department with 1959 Oldsmobiles.



Architecture: The architecture is a simple gas station, circa 1973. It is crowded with cars as people sought to fill their tanks before the “No GAS” sign was posted. Note the lack of a roof over the pumps.

Source: unknown [author's collection].

## ART, ARCHITECTURE AND THE AUTOMOBILE PART VII

*Editor's note: This is the seventh 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.*

### VII. THE RECKONING, 1968 TO 1998

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

The publication of Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed* in 1965 marks a period of “Reckoning”—an era of a settlement for our excess. We had been living recklessly on high test leaded gasoline and a variety of big block hemi engines, but Ralph Nader's book as well as federal regulations pertaining to fuel economy and safety, and the ensuing gas crises brought us up short.

After the conclusion of World War II, W. Edward Deming was sent to Japan to rebuild its automobile manufacturing and its economy, and by 1968, 23 years after the peace treaty, Japanese imports to America had reached about 100,000 automobiles annually. We laughed and scoffed at the small trucks but the observant took notice in the exponential spread of Japanese vehicles. At the same time federal requirements weighed heavily upon the industry. The demand for safer cars seemed to require automobiles of size on the one hand and the demand for more efficient cars seemed to be solved by small cars on the other. This perplexity is represented by the artful expression for change on a flowered iconic VW Bus. It was a favorite of the “Flower Children” who were attracted 400,000 strong to the “Aquarian Exposition at Woodstock” in 1969. The architecture featured here is not an edifice but a rather diverse artistic

structure meant to reflect the uncertainty of purpose which gripped the industry.

Automobiles in this era do not have a common style because they are marked by a gradual progression from the muscle car of the late 1960s to the crash resistant, gas efficient vehicle of the late 1990s. The period offered some innovative styles such as the Pontiac Fiero, the Bricklin and the DeLorean, but also was distinguished by the prominent use of simulated wood trim typical of the early wood sided station wagon. That design element is useless and has no positive benefit. It increased drag and decreased fuel economy, but was offered for almost 30 years from 1968 through 1996 to attract consumers. It has not been repeated. Design and style had



Automobile: The 1981 Chrysler LeBaron Town & Country is wrapped with simulated wood décor that is nonfunctional, but offered a style intended to attract the consumer.

benefited sales in prior years of economic and social stress and were employed once again during these years of intense government regulation. Designers seemed to persist in the use of wood style decor because the public was attracted to it, in spite of Ray Dietrich's vigorous opposition; "wood is for boats not cars." The unnecessary trim could be considered an expression of confusion in solving the federal regulations or at the very least represented a desperate search for something that attracted consumers to the dealer's showroom.

The 1970 Dodge Charger was stylish and fast and was meant to reflect our passion for cruising on Detroit's Woodward Avenue before Nader's book, the gas crisis, the advent of lead-free gas and federal safety regulations. The 1998 Lincoln Mark VIII, while not shown here, is an example of the "final solution" for this period. The car weighed 3757 lbs., and its wheel base was decreased from a previous 127.2" to 113". The roof was designed to withstand 5,000 lbs of force to protect passengers in a rollover, and crumple zones front and aft provided a protective chamber that also included seat belts and front and side airbags. The car's computer-controlled air suspension lowered the car as its speed increased, reducing drag and preserving gas mileage. The solution was not perfect, but the changes were dramatic and the car sold well.

Bill Mitchell, head of styling at General Motors from 1958 to 1977, opined, and perhaps speaking in an untoward manner, that "it was like trying to design a stylish suit for a dwarf," referring to the design conflict between a large car for crash resistance and a small car for fuel efficiency.

—David O. Lyon



# UNSAFE AT ANY SPEED

The Designed-In Dangers  
Of The American Automobile  
By Ralph Nader

Art: The cover of Ralph Nader's book, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, emphasizes the beginning of the era of "Reckoning."



Automobile: We had been living on leaded hi-test gasoline, drag racing at stop lights and singing, "Giddy Up, Giddy up 409." The 1970 Dodge is the muscle car culture as the "Reckoning" began.





Art: The 1972 VW is presented as an art form and the revolution, when the “flower children” decorated their cars with flowers and peace signs.



Architecture: This outdoor artwork is not true architecture, but it is a reminder of the design variations and perhaps confusion in automobile style during this period.

# Book Reviews

## Joseph Figoni: Le Grand Couturier de la Carrosserie Française—Volume One: Alfa-Romeo

by Peter Larsen and Ben Erickson

Moteurs! (Summer 2021)

moteurs.dk/figoni-alfa

(Pre-orders available;

books ship mid-August)

436 pages, 8.6" x 12" hardcover, slipcased

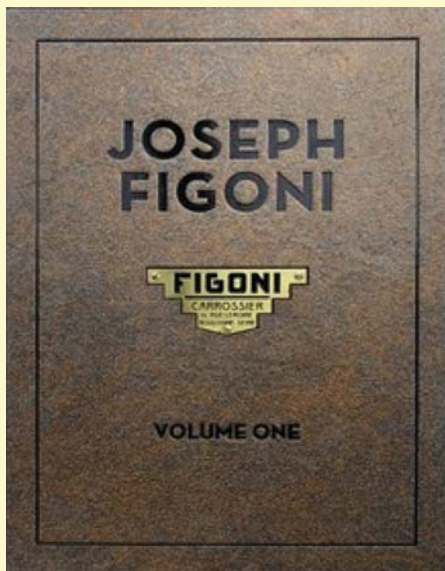
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Published books on carrossières (coachbuilders) are in the minority compared to marque-dedicated books, so the body of knowledge hungers for new quality entries to the mix. The authors of this new book are getting deep into this genre following their previous multivolume titles: *The Kellner Affair* and *J. Saoutchik Carrossier*. This Figoni project actually gave birth, while it was underway, to their Kellner book, which accumulated enough material to justify a separate work that created a detour for some time until it was published; now the

Figoni project is back on track. As the title states, this new book is “Volume One”—so unlike their previous books, this project will evolve with future volumes starting with this one dedicated to Alfa-Romeo, the next covering Bugatti bodied Figoni cars, then Delage, Delahaye, Talbot-Lago, an “A-Z” volume catching the various other marques and ending with a biographical volume.



The book is divided into three parts. The first part deals with Joseph Figoni and Alfa-Romeo in France, and other relationships and events, all in three chapters: “Alfa-Romeo in France,” “Joseph Figoni, Alfa-Romeo, Luigi Chinetti and Raymond Sommer,” and “Joseph Figoni and the Alfa-Romeo Le Mans and Road Cars.” (There’s a splendid “book report” summary of these chapters on the publisher’s site noted above.) Part two’s three chapters deal with bodies made for the 6C 1750, the 6C 2300 and the 8C 2300 by chassis number. Part three are the appendices (seven in all) dealing with aspects of total production, including tables of the cars listed by chassis number.

The arc and particulars of the book are covered in the Foreword and Acknowledgements section in helpful detail to align the reader (so don’t just skip these parts when you get the book). Here’s an example: it’s here that we learn (happily for this arguably pedantic reader) of why and when “Alfa-Romeo” would appear in the book with a hyphen: “French Alfa-Romeo advertising in the 1920s and the Alfa-Romeo radiator badge that French-assembled chassis were given used a hyphen between the Alfa and the Romeo of Alfa-Romeo. Since this book deals with the establishment of the Alfa-Romeo subsidiary in France and the Figoni-bodied Alfa-Romeo chassis, most of which were assembled in the Alfa-Romeo facility in Levallois-Perret, the hyphen has been retained whenever Alfa-Romeo is mentioned

in this book. There are a few exceptions e.g. when the title of a book is referenced where ‘Alfa Romeo’ is part of the title and the author did not hyphenate.” This reminded me of other occasions where the hyphen was used, e.g., the English ads on p. 5 of *SAHJ* #273; and as noted by *Michael Sedgwick* (UK) in *SAHJ* #57 p. 3: “Alfa Romeo lost its hyphen without anyone’s noticing, and neither Armstrong Siddeley nor Isotta Fraschini ever officially had ‘em.” The French hyphen treatment was a fun new item to learn. (Small pedantic note: Appendix 6 on the contents page differs from the appendix page in its missing hyphen.)

The point of the excursion into the pedantic above is to underscore a sense of the authors’ aim towards getting to a satisfying depth with the subject and the material. It is likely true that the reason marque books outnumber coachbuilder books has to do with the relatively scant and scarce material that survives for any given firm. Though the industry came to all but a complete end after WWII, it was on steady decline. Firms like Brewster, Fleetwood, Fisher, LeBaron were acquired by marque companies to secure their supply of designs and bodies. As noted in the Acknowledgements, a boost for this project came from Benoît Bocquet who “spent years amassing an archive of Figoni material”—and the Figoni family—and more, happily.

The scope of the Figoni enterprise was much smaller than other well known firms (“approximately 800 bodies from 1923 to 1954”), and the material used in the book (drawings, documents) rather reflect this. The tables covering production are well detailed (with only three chassis numbers listed as unknown).

The attention to detail is only rivaled by the number of period pictures and modern photos, often including detailed shots of the chassis plates and engine numbers. Each chapter ends with its reference notes, the bibliography is split between book and periodical sections, and the index is split between four categories (chassis, periodicals-organizations-places-events, people, and marques-models-carrossiers).

Perhaps it would be most appropriate to review the entire work when all the volumes are complete and published, but this first volume clearly leaves this reader with the hope that all the other volumes will come to be published.

—R. Verdés

**Making a Marque: Rolls-Royce Motor Car Promotion 1904-1940**

by Peter Moss and Richard Roberts  
Dalton Watson Fine Books (2020)

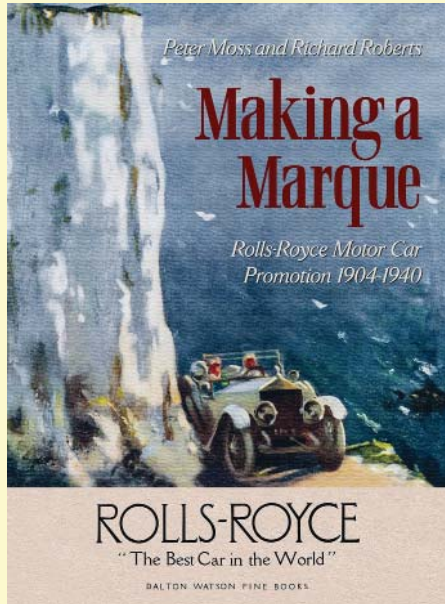
daltonwatson.com/

464 pages, 8¾" x 12¼" hardcover, dustcover  
932 b/w & color illustrations, appendices  
and index

Price: \$125

ISBN-10: 1854433105

ISBN-13: 978-1854433107



The book captivates from the first moment you open the box or spot it on a bookstore shelf, for it is that lovely and well-made and -presented.

The authors, engineers by trade, are each current directors of The Society of Automotive Historians in Britain (SAHB). Peter Moss and Richard Roberts also share in common the collecting of vintage automotive literature—especially that of Rolls-Royce—and have spent the last half-dozen years researching and compiling the material you read and see on the pages of this book. They acknowledge the help received from the publisher Dalton-Watson's Glyn Morris, a recognized R-R enthusiast/collector, as well as other prominent Rolls-Royce historians and fellow members of the SAHB. The combined talent, knowledge and collectible R-R literature enabled Moss and Roberts to present the 1904-1940 history of the *Rolls-Royce Motor Car* using exclusively period *Promotional* literature.

Moss's and Roberts's choice of storytelling medium makes this a rare book indeed. Two other titles come to mind

although neither uses promotional literature exclusively. The most recent is a 2010 McFarland-published work that is, as the subtitle says, *An Illustrated History of Packard Advertising*. In other words it is *about* Packard ads and is written by a man who owns his own New York City advertising firm. The other, *LaSalle, Cadillac's Companion Car*, published in 2000, relies heavily—but not exclusively—on published ads throughout in order to relate LaSalle's fifteen year history.

Our own Nov/Dec 2019 *Journal* #301 reminded us of the potential pitfall of reliance on vintage literature when restoring. Matt Sonfield even used a R-R 12-cylinder engine (pp. 7-9) as one example showing how the engine appeared in the 1935 sales catalog, then as it actually was on production cars. Sonfield's warning is supported by several mentions in *Making a Marque* of various creators of art used in ads "exercising artistic license" or subsequent retouching of photos for ads "in the name of telling a better advertising story." Photo retouching could be anywhere from masking or altering a number or ownership identification to completely changing the paint color to one that the car never actually wore. In one instance a car was made to appear as though it were part of The Royals' fleet. This in no way detracts from the book or its accuracy though it is a warning to beware or be aware to any reader-owner-restorer.

All credit, too, to Moss and Roberts for keeping the focus tightly on the subject marque even as the company acquired Bentley in 1931. About the only place Bentley receives mention is during the height of the two companies' publicity battle as the 1930s dawned with the introduction of the Bentley 8 Litre.

Taken as a whole, the book is a visual delight, for Rolls-Royce ads were nearly always elegantly presented with great attention to detail. Commissioned artists produced some of the finest, loveliest ads and photography was always well-posed and composed, sometimes quite dramatic even. It's interesting to observe the trends over time as earliest ads are text-dense, while as the 1930s drew to a close more and more imagery is featured letting that "photo is worth a thousand words" adage do the work.

The American adventure is given its own chapter. And, as what will become World War II approaches more Rolls-Royce ads also include words and images of its Merlin engine. Not counting the appendi-

ces and index, the book concludes with a dramatic and totally captivating two-page spread dissecting and detailing the Merlin engine's internal workings.

In the spirit of the marque, this is a very special book entirely worthy of "The World's Best Car."

—Helen V Hutchings

*Editor's note: As a Rolls-Royce enthusiast and marque specialist, I had the opportunity to review Making a Marque and found it to be completely engaging and a remarkable treatment on the subject for the prewar era. I am pleased to find that Helen Hutchings came to the same conclusions I did. Even if you are not a Rolls-Royce enthusiast or an enthusiast of the art of advertising, this book will keep your attention all the way through.*

**Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights**

by Gretchen Sorin

Liveright Publishing Corp. (2020)

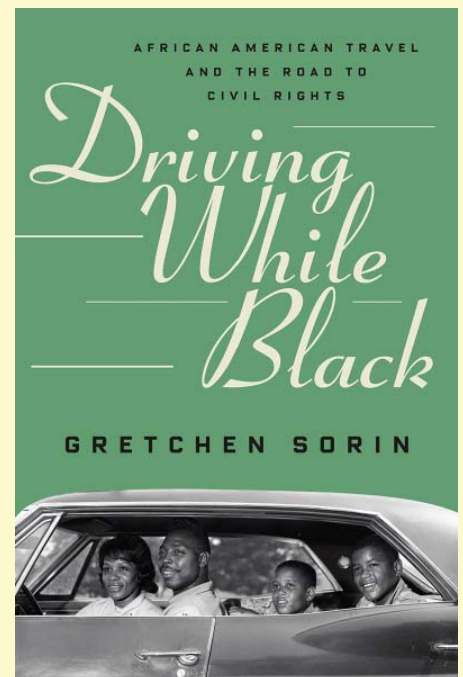
wwnorton.com/books/9781631498695

352 pages, 6.3" x 9.3" hardcover

Price: \$18.95

ISBN-10: 1631495690

ISBN-13: 978-1631495694



It has been said that the most creative is the most personal, and that is certainly the case of Gretchen Sorin's *Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights*. This engaging book is a story within a story. Each chapter begins

with the author's personal family narrative of automotive travel, whether it is back to ancestral roots in North Carolina, adolescent memories in New Jersey, or a vacation to Niagara Falls. I eagerly looked forward to each autobiographical preface, as these openings prepared me for meaty historical discussions on identity, emotions, and conflict within the context of racism. The author's own accounts made the academic material that followed more real and meaningful.

The author is a distinguished professor and director to the Cooperstown Graduate Program of the State University of New York. While scholars have discussed the African America 20th century automotive travel experience (and the importance of *The Negro Motorist Green Book*) piecemeal on numerous occasions of late, Sorin's work is the first book dedicated to the topic that I know of. Her monograph follows up on Cotton Seiler's seminal *Republic of Drivers: A Cultural History of Automobility in America* (Chicago, 2008), a study that first pointed out *The Green Book* as a rich source for understanding the 20th century past. Like Seiler, Sorin focuses on automobile users rather than makers, reflecting a more recent trend among academics.

In a nutshell, Sorin argues how the automobile had both profound and unexpected consequences in the lives of 20th century African Americans. As a self-directed mode of transport, cars allowed Blacks a way to avoid humiliating situations brought on by Jim Crow laws, took them with minimized risk between "black spaces" and "white spaces," challenged segregation, and took them on business travel and vacations. To do this, travel strategies were employed involving maps and itineraries, including the most significant of those tools, Victor and Alma Green's *The Negro Motorist Green Book* (later *The Negro Travelers' Green Book*). A close read of *The Green Book* reveals that its publishers firmly believed that travel by automobile was transformative for Blacks, as it elevated not only the traveler but also those encountered along the way. The 1940s and 1950s African American traveler could count on an infrastructure of Black-owned hotels, resorts, and service stations, such as American Beach in Florida; Oaks Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard; Idlewild in Northwest Michigan; and Val Verde near Los Angeles. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, however, these businesses began to suffer as Black consumer preferences changed.

While the automobile as an artifact is in the background in this book, I did learn something surprising that one would find in a more traditional automotive history. Namely, I had no idea that the most popular make among Blacks in 1950 in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. was far and away a Buick. Next were Ford and Chevys as one might expect. Interestingly, the Cadillac was in 8th place, although percentages do not reflect cultural preferences as mirrored in song and urban legend.

This book's 332 pages contain an overarching message that goes well beyond automotive travel, however. Sorin's big point centers on racism in America, on the justice system as being fair and equal and deep divisions that the automobile has done not enough to ameliorate. In sum, the United States remains a deeply divided nation. She closes this way: "Nowadays the phrase driving while black refers, needless to say, to the ongoing mutual distrust between African Americans and law enforcement in so many communities across the country" (p. 262). And while race is certainly important to any understanding of the American past, I would not at the same time neglect class. Class divisions are a second elephant in any room that purports to unravel the American past and present.

To conclude, I wholeheartedly recommend this work, as it gives us pause to think about ourselves and the nation during these challenging days. As required reading in my Fall 2021 class, I hope it makes an impact on my students as it did me.

—John Heitmann

**Shadow: The Magnificent Machines of a Man of Mystery**

by Pete Lyons

(2020)

464 pages, 9" x 11" hardcover, dustcover

274 b/w & 331 color photos, index

Price: \$99

ISBN-10: 1910505498

ISBN-13: 978-1910505496

and

**Lotus 72: 1970–75, Formula 1 Greats**

by Pete Lyons

(2019)

320 pages, 9" x 11" hardcover,

117 b/w & 258 color photos, index

Price: \$79.95

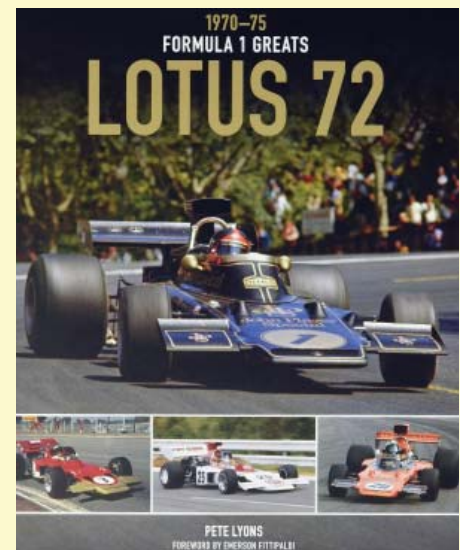
ISBN-10: 1910505331

ISBN-13: 978-1910505335

[Both: Evro Publishing | [evropublishing.com](http://evropublishing.com)]

Author Pete Lyons is a bit of a legend himself. Now "of an age" when he's no longer globe-trotting to cover races, and with a substantial photo and information archive from his own career plus that of his father, Ozzie Lyons, too, he's been producing themed remembrances—in a word, books. We have the privilege of telling you of the most recent two here. The contents of both warrant historians' attention.

Interestingly, although one book is about Don Nichols and the Shadow racing cars/teams he created, the other is about one very specific race car, the Lotus 72. One is a well-illustrated story, the other photos supported with some narrative. Both, published by Evro Publishing, are worthwhile contributions to the overall body of knowledge for the simple reason that the author and photographer of both is Pete Lyons—and he was there with camera and noticeably small-in-size notebook in which he neatly and meticulously recorded his observations at each of the races for two prestigious magazines, the British *AutoSport* and American *AutoWeek*.



To an automobilist, the word Lotus is synonymous with Colin Chapman (1928-1982) who was responsible for the design and creation of an incredibly long list of Lotus models, both street and racing machines. This book concentrates on just one racing model, the *Lotus 72*, conceived and constructed for Formula 1 competition and campaigned from 1970 to 1975.

With the 72 Chapman made some brave-for-then changes to then-accepted racecar design. He moved the engine cooling radiators from the nose to further back and out by placing them in the sidepods and

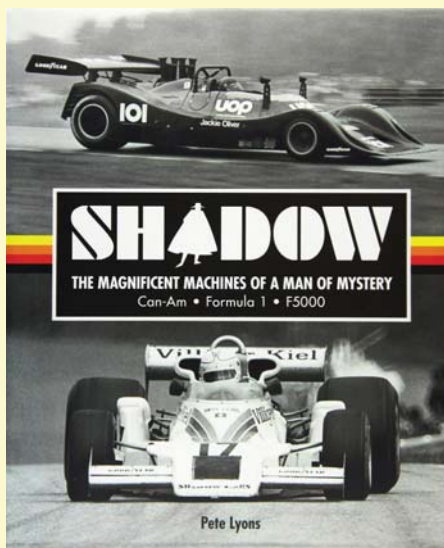
added an overhead air intake. The brakes were placed inboard. The overall shape of the car was tweaked as well. After a few new-design challenges were overcome, the 72s competed for—what for any single racecar design is a very long time—half a decade.

As Pete Lyons, aforementioned notebook in hand, attended all six consecutive years of those Formula 1 races, you now have the opportunity to relive them—year-by-year and page-by-page—as Pete Lyons recalls on this book's pages what he observed.

For a taste of his writing style and perspective we need look no further than the first sentence of Lyons' introduction: "Like the Lotus blossom of Oriental Mysticism, which springs from the unsavory depths of dark waters into beautiful, sunlit perfection, the legendary Lotus racing cars are rooted in the mud of trials courses and mire of rainy paddocks."

With each chapter covering one year/one season of F1, race by race in words and with some 375 images in all on the 320 pages, Lyons provides more than track action. He doesn't shy away from technical and well-illustrated mechanical explanations while also including human and behind-the-scenes stories.

When the Lotus 72s were retired after the 1975 season they went out covered with honors having won some twenty races and earned multiple drivers' awards and constructors' championships.



*Shadow* is a very different book but then the story it tells is different from the normal racing story.

Don Nichols was *the* Shadowman, a persona in which he reveled and took

care to nurture and encourage. It stemmed from his years of military service, details of which are sketchy but had included being a D-Day paratrooper as well as a counterintelligence officer, and those years of service had earned him an impressive chest-full of medals, pins, and badges.

Post-service he went on to create and build the team and the cars that were active for eleven seasons starting in 1970 and became phenomenal F1 and Can-Am competitors. Those cars were executed by a succession of stellar designer-engineers including Trevor Harris, Peter Bryant, Tony Southgate and, with his very last project, Nichols tapped Chris Willes, who has authored a wonderful book *Developing a Champion* about his years with *The Electramotive NISSAN GTP Story*.

That Nichols was mysterious and controversial only enhanced the reality of his achievements creating, financing, and fielding innovative cars and becoming the only US-based team to actually earn (win) a Can-Am championship. Also Don Nichols wasn't afraid to break with "the usual," thus he became the first to use—and boldly promote—lead-free racing fuels. He even took on a sponsor who made such, Universal Oil Products, UOP. It remains a source of head-shaking wonder that UOP turned upside down also just happens to spell "Don"—go figure!

Add to that in an era when nobody painted the body of their racecar black, Don Nichols' Shadow cars were painted black. Now they are "ho-hum" commonplace but then, that first one was the baddest—in its all-black livery—rig in the paddock, period.

# Fascinating Aspects of Automotive History

– Every Quarter –



rareandunique.media

In an era when team and crew members in garages and pits wore whatever they wore, Don Nichols mandated all *his* team members would be uniformly turned out in clean, matching uniforms.

BWTM ("*But wait, there's more*"—Ed.) for not only were Don Nichols' Shadow cars the first to be really, really low, in 1974 his transporter introduced to the world the power lift gate, such that three cars could ride at the top of the trailer over the rest of the equipment. Don had thought up the idea and explained it to his race engine-builder and car-hauler-driver directing Doug Meyer to build it, which Meyer did.

The above are but a few of the innovative, thus controversial, changes associated with Don Nichols and, as you've likely noted, none of them address those same changes to the racing machines themselves. That is part of all the previously unknown details that Pete Lyons shares—in words and pictures—on these pages of his already award winning\* *Shadow: The Magnificent Machines of a Man of Mystery*.

—Helen V Hutchings

\* 2020 Specialist Motoring Book of the Year awarded by Royal Automobile Club.

**A Race with Love and Death: The Story of Britain's First Great Grand Prix Driver, Richard Seaman**

by Richard Williams

Simon & Schuster UK Ltd. (2020)

[simonandschuster.co.uk/](http://simonandschuster.co.uk/)

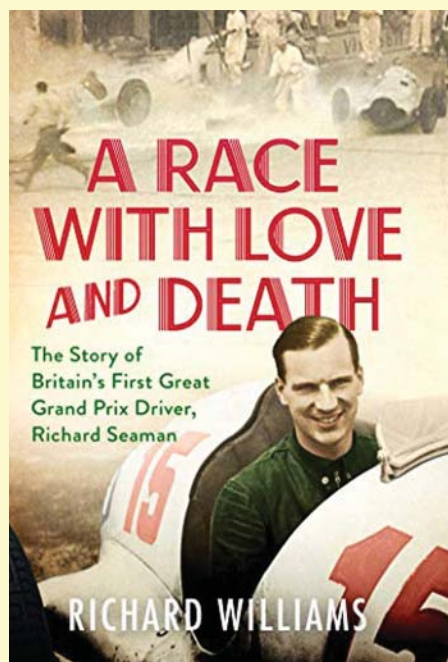
400 pages, 6¼" x 9½" hardcover, dustcover

40 b/w photos, bibliography, index

Price: \$26.34

ISBN-10: 1471179354

ISBN-13: 978-1471179358



*The Story of...* Richard Seaman is part of the subtitle of *A Race with Love and Death*. As you can see on the dust jacket, the rest of the subtitle is *The Story of Britain's First Great Grand Prix Driver*.

The book is well written and well told yet this reviewer initially had a difficult time embracing it. Thus the book was set aside while I puzzled my reaction. Then, the “aha” moment—it wasn’t the book but rather the contrast of time and place, plus being read on the heels of another similar time/place story of racers and racing with a very different approach and outcome. That other book, *Faster*, was reviewed in *SAH Journal* #301.

Richard Seaman, an only child, was very well born and indulged, sans limits, by his wealthy parents. He grew up polite, elegant, well-educated, attending—as author Richard Williams writes—“all the best parties” and utterly fascinated by—drawn to—driving cars competitively,

which he did immediately upon receiving an MG Magna in 1930 as his 19th birthday gift from his parents.

Turned out his driving skills and competitiveness earned him, a scant three years later, his first seat in a Grand Prix car. It wasn’t long after that that Seaman’s further racing successes earned him an invitation to join the German-government owned (read Adolf Hitler) Mercedes-Benz team. A condition of employment was relocating to Germany leaving behind his own country, the United Kingdom. Motor racing meant the world to Seaman, thus he gave only passing thought before accepting the opportunity to drive one of the top team’s vaunted Silver Arrows.

Now you can speculate, as do I, if my reading stalled just at the point Seaman was enjoying racing achievements in the M-B Silver Arrow W154s because I knew what was coming in those concluding chapters—namely Seaman losing his life while racing in the rain at Spa and smashing his car and himself into a tree—or my own inability to identify with his privileged/self-indulgent life. When I did

return to read those concluding pages, I realized what a skillful job Williams had done in recounting the history and breathing life into the main character Richard Seaman.

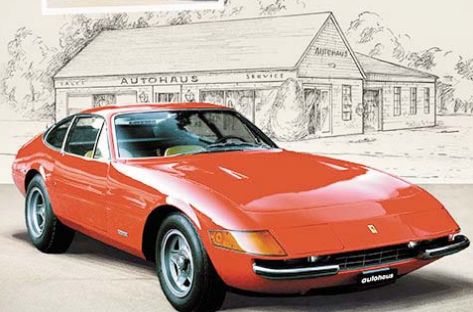
It was particularly striking to read Williams’ assessment of the cavalier attitude of Seaman and his driving peers of the time to adopting or wearing anything other than cloth headgear or any other equipment offered in an attempt to safeguard the driver—even a bit. And the Epilogue was especially moving for it brought full circle in a very respectful manner the lives of people and some of the places significant in Richard “Dick” Seaman’s life.

With this book historians have gained another perspective on the history of an era in racing told by a skilled writer thus making it an interesting and compelling read for pleasure. It’s a book with a story that doesn’t merely engage a reader but also has the ability to elicit a visceral reaction, a bar that every author and publisher strives to attain.

—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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310 pages \$39.95 softcover (7 × 10) 2021  
191 photos, index ISBN 978-1-4766-8122-1  
Ebook ISBN 978-1-4766-3969-7

The China Car: How motivated Chrysler engineers with their suppliers/partners created an affordable automobile for the world's poor using recycled plastic—and why the project was killed

by François Castaing

David Bull Publishing (2019)

bullpublishing.com/home/the-china-car

Description: 104 pages, 6" x 9" soft-cover

5 b/w illustrations & 7 color photos, glossary, no index

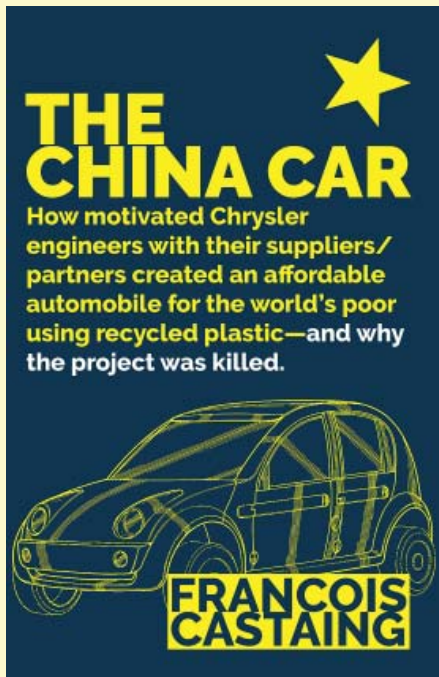
Price: \$24.95

ISBN-10: 1935007300

ISBN-13: 978-1935007302

The name of the author of this book, Monsieur François Castaing, is likely familiar to most reading this *Journal* as are many of his career accomplishments. He was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in 2010 for “being a visionary agent who helped transform the auto industry.”

Awarenesses and lessons learned while growing up in postwar France inspired Castaing in 1994 to set in motion a project that truly could have been transformative in the lives of many people. Castaing explains, “I saw how small, affordable cars created not just physical mobility but also



social and economic mobility.” So he challenged a special group of developmental engineers to conceive and develop a small, affordable auto intended for the world's poor, especially the rural poor, who could use such a vehicle to transport themselves and their produce or products to market.

Throughout the balance of that decade those engineers did just that. The

project came to be called *The China Car*. In concert with partner suppliers not only was a concept built but new, innovative production processes were developed along with the special presses and tooling to fully enable production. Prototypes were made and tested for durability and safety.

Then, just as production approval was on the cusp of being sought, all was tossed into the chaos and uncertainty that follows a merger—the merger that created DaimlerChrysler. New partner Daimler showed a decided lack of enthusiasm for *The China Car*.

Castaing had remained involved with the project since its inception despite his own changing job responsibilities and titles. Now retired, he felt it was important to tell the story revealing how the world—especially the world's citizens whose very lives the production of *The China Car* could have so profoundly positively effected—were denied this life-changing vehicle.

Castaing's writing is clear and comprehensive. He concludes movingly with: “Today, in our shrinking world, three out of four families still cannot enjoy the benefits of car ownership for the same basic economic reason.”

—Helen V Hutchings



The revival of the Pioneer Chapter was announced in the last email circulation with *SAHJ* #308 and *AHR* #62: “Its revival was sparked by like-minded members interested in the growing efforts of various institutions to digitize more and more of their collections, and the ways it can be searchable and available for research. The Pioneer Chapter does not have any intention of becoming a digital archive—instead the aim is to assemble and maintain an index of the

institutions that are doing this work, and the media that are being digitized. As this work progresses, the index could support researchers to learn where information could be found, and how to access it.” Work on that “index of the institutions” has been underway, see *Bob Schmitt's* site for the list so far (it's under “Auto History Resources” and you can add to it): [carlibrary.org/CarLibrary-AutoHistory.htm](http://carlibrary.org/CarLibrary-AutoHistory.htm)

The announcement also noted that as we look ahead, we also recognize and hold close the chapter's history. Looking back to issue #67 (Mar/Apr 1980) there was mention of a meeting of the chapter, and the presentation of a logo for the chapter, which was designed by *Peter Helck*. The car on the logo is the 1906 Locomobile “Old 16” Race Car. The chapter was active in the New England, New York, New Jersey area, and the car represented a strong connection to the history of that region. The car is still around—at The Henry Ford, see: [thehenryford.org/artifact/20463/](http://thehenryford.org/artifact/20463/) for all the details. —Ed.



Above, logo designer *Peter Helck* (l) and *Fred Soule*. Below (l-r), *Nat Dawes* (chapter president), *Lou Helverson*, *John Montville*, and *Walt Gosden*. (All images from issue #67).

