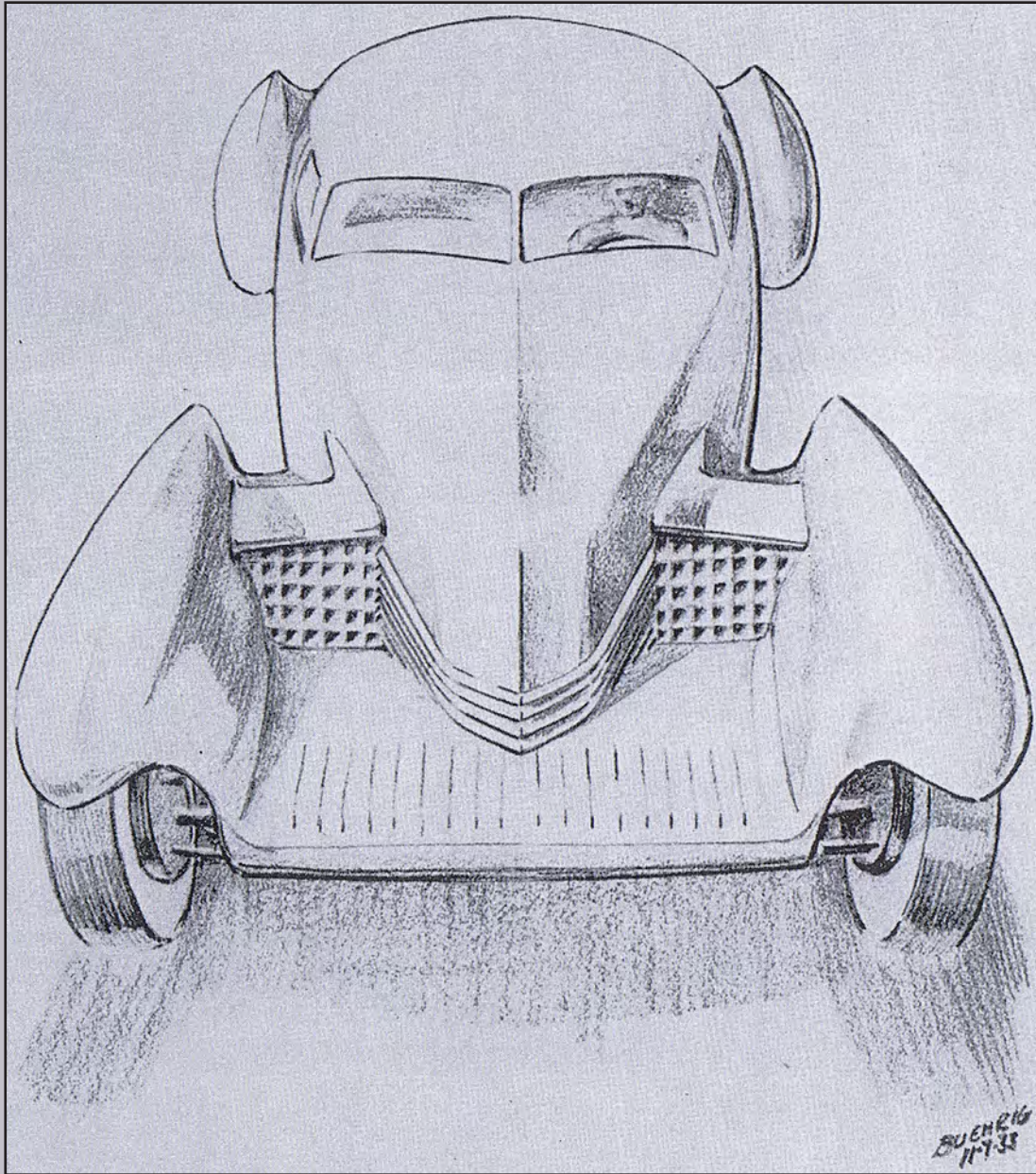


SAH Journal



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Billboard



SAH in Paris (maybe): In the past the Society's European Meeting would take place in Paris during Rétromobile,

usually at the revered Automobile Club de France, the world's oldest motoring organization, located at 6 Place de la Concorde. With the continued uncertainty associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, plans have not been set. At this point, we can report that the 2022 dates for Rétromobile are February 2nd (Wednesday) to the 6th (Sunday), and ask that you save those dates and stay tuned for updates.



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Or weatherwoman, as the case may be. For with the exclusive new Comfort Control, which combines heating and air conditioning in a single unit, the interior weather never changes. Even humidity is under perfect control. This system, now available as an extra-cost option, actually anticipates outside conditions and adjusts for them before they occur. All in all, the Cadillac for 1964 is more than a hundred ways new. It has amazing new agility and responsiveness in traffic. Its ride is smooth and quiet as never before. And its luxury and styling are the finest of all time. Arrange a date with this new Cadillac someday soon. It's more tempting than ever—and just wait till you drive it!

Quoted from the 1964 Cadillac Sales Literature—Bureau of Motor Vehicle Information

Front cover: The cover is inspired by our story on Gordon Buehrig. It appears on p. 63 of Gordon Buehrig and *Bill Jackson's* book, *Rolling Sculpture*. Dated November 7, 1933, it clearly shows the DNA of what would come to be the 810 Cord.

Back cover: *Esquire* magazine is mentioned often in this issue, and here is the first automotive ad they printed (in the Autumn 1933 issue). The text is clearly tuned to its day. Compare that with the Cadillac ad in the Virgil Exner issue (December 1963) above. Note the gloves, an extinct fashion item.

SAH Journal

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THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.
An Affiliate of the American Historical Association



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President's Perspective



As part of an ongoing effort to begin developing a sense of permanence for the holdings of the Society of Automotive Historians (SAH), a working group is in the process of establishing a formal relationship with the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum (ACDAM) in Auburn, Indiana. Although the ACDAM had been receiving those books nominated for the Cugnot Award for what turned out to be over a span of many years, this relationship somehow managed to slip through the cracks. Once this association was recognized, we then contacted the leadership of the ACDAM to both open a discussion regarding the relationship and then to initiate an effort to formalize that relationship.

Our talks with Brandon Anderson, the executive director and CEO of the ACDAM, and his staff could not have been more cordial and have been very productive. We hope that in the very near future the SAH and the ACDAM will be able to announce a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations for the continued placement in the care of the ACDAM of those books being considered for the Cugnot as well as any other books that the SAH may wish to place there. This would include books such as those received for reviews in our publications. We feel that this is a win-win for both the ACDAM and the SAH.

Alas, once again, we have been faced with a very difficult decision regarding the annual SAH Awards Dinner held at the Hershey Country Club in October. Although the COVID-19 epidemic seemed, finally, on its way to being under control and with a very welcome and anticipated return to “normalcy” now upon us, the sharp increase in cases thanks to the Delta variant gave us serious pause regarding our plans for Hershey. After closely monitoring the situation and then with some very serious discussion regarding the many factors that hosting an event would entail, it was with much reluctance and with the health and welfare of our members as the primary consideration, the decision was made to not hold our annual Awards Dinner in 2021.

As much I may personally have wished to conduct our usual activities at Hershey—the fall Board of Directors meeting, the Annual General Meeting, as well as the Awards Dinner—the decision quickly became self-evident: there were simply too many unknowns and too many possibly negative consequences to going ahead. We simply could not in good conscience do anything but err on the side of caution. If nothing else, this means that the annual Awards Dinner for 2022 will be quite an affair! The awards for 2020, 2021, and 2022 will all be presented in one evening. We hope that the attendance for the 2022 annual Awards Dinner breaks the record—and then some.

While there has been some level of a return to in-person activities since late spring, in no small part due to what must be thought as pent-up demand, our SAH activities in Hershey during October are not the only ones to bite the dust during 2020 and 2021. Once again, this year we lost the International Drive History Conference. Held in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in partnership with the Historic Vehicle Association (HVA) as our Automotive History Conference, this conference was growing and growing and growing, not to mention becoming THE premier automotive history conference in the world. This was result of the combined efforts of Diane Parker and her staff at the HVA, those here at the SAH, and the Historic Preservation Program at the College of Charleston. We are hoping that we can pick up in 2022 where we left off in 2019.

The level of excellence in the presentations, panels, and the truly unique driving experience all made for an amazing and delightful conference. I am not alone in missing this conference and looking forward to its return.

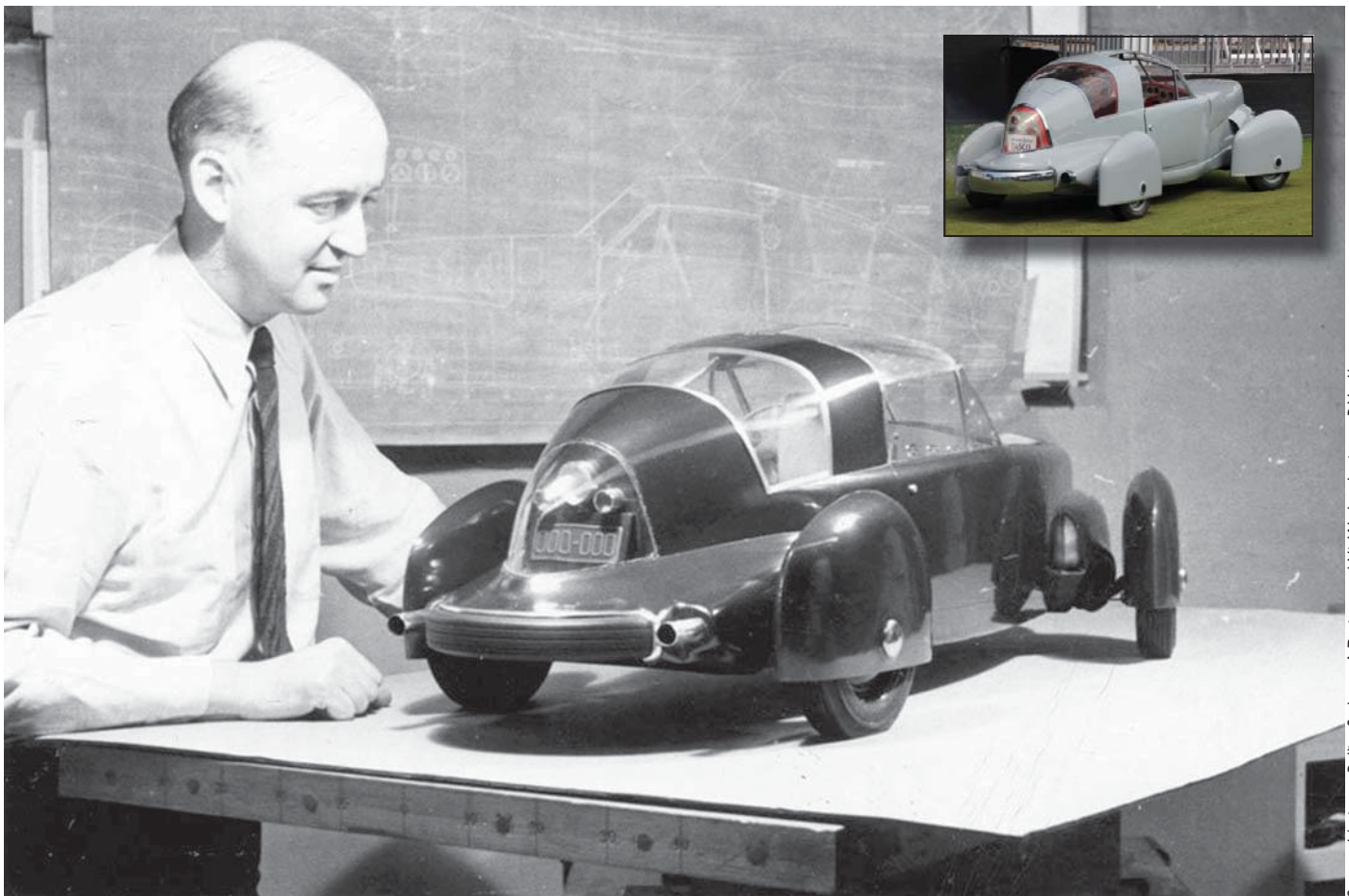
The SAH also partners with the International Motor Racing Research Center in Watkins Glen, New York, to host the Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium on International Motor Racing History. Alas, it will also be missing from the calendar for 2021. The Argetsinger Symposium is the only such conference focused upon the presentation of scholarly papers and discussions relating to motor sport history. Over the years it has had speakers from places as widespread as Belgium, Italy, and New Zealand (!) present to offer their papers to the symposium. The symposium takes place at the Media Center of Watkins Glen International, the track that hosted the United States Grand Prix from 1961 to 1980. Originally named for Jean S. Argetsinger, the wife of Cameron Argetsinger, the person who brought road racing to post-WWII America, it was later renamed for their son, the late Mike Argetsinger, noted author and racing driver. We are eagerly anticipating its return in 2022.

At this moment, the European Automotive History Conference is still set to be held in Turin, Italy, in the spring of 2022, the first of the automotive history conferences for 2022, with the return of the annual conference of the Automotive Historians Australia also returning as well.

—H. Donald Capps

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NEW MEMBERS



Sources: b/w image: Rolling Sculpture: A Designer and His Work; color image: R. Verdés.

Gordon Buehrig with a model of his Tasco prototype in late 1948. It was built and is still around (inset: seen at almost the same angle as the 1948 photo, driving up to receive an award at the 2021 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance where it was shown by the ACD Museum).

REMEMBERING GORDON BUEHRIG

The complete run of 19 ads promoting the new Cord 810 printed in *Esquire* magazine from December 1935 through June 1937, which appeared in the September/October 2020 issue 306 of the *SAH Journal*, brought back many memories of the late Gordon Miller Buehrig (June 18, 1904 – January 22, 1990) who designed the 810 and 812 Cord during the years he was chief designer for the Auburn Automobile Company of Connersville, Indiana.

My connection to Gordon Buehrig began one evening in the early 1970s when I received a phone call. The person on the other end of the call said something like “Mister Jackson, my name is Gordon Buehrig. You may not ever have heard of me, but I was chief designer for Auburn, Cord and Duesenberg.” I stopped him right there and said, “Mr. Buehrig, you might just as well said my name is Mickey Mantle, you may never have heard of me!” As the then-owner of a 1929 Auburn 8-120 seven passenger limo, I well knew who Gordon Buehrig was.

Gordon went on to tell me he was writing his autobiography and had submitted some early efforts to *L. Scott Bailey*, publisher of *Automobile Quarterly*, who suggested he needed a writer to work with him and he had suggested me. At the time, I had left the editorship of *Antique Automobile* magazine (publication of the Antique Automobile Club of America) in June 1970 and one month later taken on the editorship of *The Classic Car* magazine (publication of the Classic Car Club of America).

As I recall, I didn't even ask him if I was going to be paid. I was simply over the moon that I would have the opportunity to work with probably the greatest designer of automobiles of what had come to be called “The Classic Era.”

What followed was a two-year long-distance collaboration, with Gordon living in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, and me living in Hershey, Pennsylvania. There was no such thing as email or cell phones then, so it was totally by phone or U.S. Post Office. Also, Gordon wintered in Sun City, Arizona, so that was added to the mix.

We worked with *Walter R. Haessner's* Haessner Publishing Company of Newfoundland, New Jersey, whom I had gotten to agree to publish the result of our efforts. I also contacted automotive artist *John M. Peckham* and he agreed to do two original paintings for the book, one of a 1936 Cord 810 sedan and one of Gordon's design for a Duesenberg Model SJ Cabin Speedster (which was never built). I called on my friends Scott Bailey at *Automobile Quarterly*, *John R. Bond* at *Road & Track*, *James J. Bradley* at Detroit Public Library, *Leslie R. Henry* at The Henry Ford Museum, *Henry Austin Clark, Jr.*, at the Long Island Automotive Museum, *David W. Brownell* at *Old Cars* and Stan Yost, who had the Jeffrey Godshall Collection on Hupmobile Skylark and Graham Hollywood, who across the board responded with needed photographs.

The result of two years of work was the 1975 publication of the book *Rolling Sculpture: A Designer and His Work*, 192 pages in



William S. Jackson with a copy of *Rolling Sculpture: A Designer and His Work* by Gordon M Buehrig when it was published in 1975.

a 9 x 11¼-inch format. It covers Gordon's entire career: from his first job at Gotfredson Body in 1924, Dietrich Incorporated in 1926, Packard in 1927, General Motors in 1928, Stutz Motor Car Company later in 1928, and his becoming, in 1929 at the age of 25, the body designer for what was then Duesenberg, Incorporated. From that point until the end of the Model J Duesenberg run in 1937, Gordon was responsible for roughly half of the body designs fitted to that chassis.

In early 1934, Gordon and his staff were tasked with "rescuing" the newly-introduced 1934 Auburns, which had been poorly received and were not selling. Working with a budget of \$50,000, they redesigned the radiator grille and fenders to a more pleasing flowing design and introduced them mid-year as 1935 models. The "hit" of the line was Gordon's design of what became the 1935 Auburn Model 851 Speedster, which he based on the boat tail speedster bodies he had done for Duesenberg.

Following the rescue of Auburn, Gordon and his staff were tasked with what was initially called a "smaller Duesenberg" project, but was to be badged as a Cord and utilize front-wheel drive and a V8 engine reminiscent of the 1930 L-29 Cord. The new Cord project was nearly ready to go to the production phase by late December 1934, was killed by management, then again was given the green light on January 8, 1935, with a goal of having the required 100 cars produced in time for the opening of the New York Automobile Show on November 2, 1935. (Ref: "The thirty-sixth national automobile show, which has been running at Grand Central Palace since Nov. 2, closed last night at 11 o'clock" *New York Times*, November 10, 1935, Section GENERAL, p. 1. —Ed.) How this was accomplished is a story in itself, but they did make it and the 1936 Cord Model 810 was the hit of the show and the automotive world.

To this day, the 1936-1937 Cord Models 810 and 812 have remained one of the outstanding examples of automobile design as art, having been recognized as such as early as 1951 when an 810 Cord was included in the New York City Museum of Modern Art exhibit of what was called "Hollow Rolling Sculpture – 8 Automobiles," the first time automotive stylists were elevated to the level of contemporary architects and sculptors. (To elaborate on this important exhibition in automotive history: In the museum's press release the exhibition was called "8 AUTOMOBILES" and the quote from Philip C. Johnson, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design, included this: "Automobiles are hollow, rolling sculpture, and the refinements of their design are fascinating." The exhibit's booklet included a subtitle: *8 automobiles: An exhibition concerned with the esthetics of motorcar design, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, autumn 1951*, and the first sentence after the Foreword reads: "Automobiles are hollow, rolling sculpture." For a look at the release and the booklet on the internet, scan the QR code boxes on this page. —Ed.)

The exhibit also gave Gordon and me the basic title for our book.

At the conclusion of the Cord 810/812 project at the Auburn Automobile Company, there was little on the horizon for Gordon to work on as the end was in sight for the company. Thus he went job hunting, which led to one of the hardest sections of the book I was able to get Gordon to face.

When we started working together, he sent me a number of photographs of various automobiles and designs. Included were some photos of designer models of cars somewhat reminiscent of the Cords, but also several pictures of an elegant design studio. I asked Gordon what the latter were and he said they were photographs of the design studio of the Budd Company at their Detroit plant, but little else. I knew when he left the Auburn company in 1936, he had been employed by Budd, but he obviously didn't want to talk about it.



Above: the cover of the MoMA "8 automobiles" exhibition program. Below left: the QR Code to access the full exhibition program. Below right: the QR Code to access the press release for the exhibition.





*Taken at the
Meadowbrook
Concours d' Elegance
in August —
We haven't changed
much since then.*

*Merry Christmas!
Kay and Gordon*

This photo-card dates to 1983 (Author's collection)

I finally convinced Gordon that we couldn't tell his whole story and leave obvious holes in it. He then reluctantly told me the story, confessing it was one of two times in his career he had let his emotions get the better of him.

At the conclusion of the Cord 810/812 project at the Auburn Automobile Company, Gordon saw the end was near. He began looking for a healthier company to further his career. He made contact with Ed Deisley, chief engineer for the Budd Company in Philadelphia. He outlined a plan developed by Edward G. Budd, Jr., then president of the Budd Company, to increase the company's production of bodies for the major automobile companies by establishing an automobile design or styling studio in Detroit, which would give the sales department another tool in developing more business. After meeting with Mr. Budd, Gordon was hired to put together a small staff and start creating designs which could be sold to the auto companies with Budd getting the body building business. Mr. Budd visited Detroit, liked what they were doing and authorized the building of the elegant design studio at Budd's Detroit office.

Unfortunately, Gordon soon found there was one major problem. Budd's vice president in charge of sales (he never named him) was opposed to the plan from the start. He not only killed a planned press party to introduce the new studio and its staff to their Detroit customers, as the months passed, he never introduced any of the fresh designs Gordon's team was turning out to their customers.

Finally, in frustration, Gordon wrote a letter to Mr. Budd complaining about the situation, saying he was wasting his time and the Budd Company's money. The response from Mr. Budd was rapid and to the point. He asked for Gordon's resignation.

Gordon returned to Auburn where he did some freelance design work for White Truck company and then King Seeley. In 1940 he did a number of instrument panel designs for King Seeley and was hired full-time, moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was working there when World War II started and all civilian automotive design came to a halt.

He then acquired a job as a draftsman with Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego, California, and worked there through most of the war years.

Near the end of the war he returned to automotive design when he was hired by Raymond Loewy to manage his South Bend, Indiana, studio where they were already at work designing what would become the postwar Studebaker line. This is where I had a problem getting Gordon to tell me about the second time in his career he was involved in something he was not proud of.

Loewy had been Studebaker's design consultant since before the war, the 1939 Studebaker Champion having been one of the Loewy team's designs. When Gordon took over as head of the South Bend Studebaker design team, he replaced his friend Virgil M. Exner in that position. Gordon knew he was walking into the middle of not only a design fight, but a management war as well.

Loewy would make frequent trips to South Bend and if he didn't like the progress on the designs, he would demote Gordon and put Exner in charge, then on the next trip, still unhappy, he would demote Exner and put Gordon back in charge! Gordon and Exner continued to operate the design office as a team.

The political firestorm Gordon walked into featured Roy Cole, Studebaker's vice president of engineering. He liked the work Virgil Exner had been doing and had ambitions of creating Studebaker's own design department with Exner in charge and eliminating the contract with the Loewy organization.

Here's how the situation came to a head. For several weeks Exner had been arriving for work about 11 AM, noting he had been at Roy Cole's office. What Gordon didn't know and didn't suspect was that Exner and Frank Althroth had been designing a car at night in Exner's basement. This was a scheme developed by Cole, with the Studebaker board chairman Harold Vance's approval.

Some time later, Roy Cole invited Gordon to his office. Exner was there and Cole explained what Exner had been doing; it was a special small car with a different package layout than the one Gordon's team had been working with. He explained the one-quarter



scale model of Exner's design had been sent to the Budd Company in Philadelphia to create a full-size wood model. He asked Gordon to accompany Exner to Philadelphia to inspect the finished Exner/Budd model. Cole also told Gordon to turn in his expense account to him rather than through Loewy channels, thus the first time Gordon became fully aware of Cole's dirty tricks.

A few days later the Studebaker Board of Directors was called in for a viewing and selection of the design for the 1947 Studebaker.

Raymond Loewy was present for the occasion and when the Loewy/Buehrig full size clay model was displayed along with the Exner team's full size wood model, the Exner version was selected by the board. Unbeknown to Gordon and Loewy, the die models were already half finished at Budd for the Exner model!

Needless to say, Raymond Loewy was furious and immediately fired Virgil Exner. Roy Cole immediately hired him to run a new Studebaker in-house design studio.

It was only a few weeks later that A. Baker Barnhart, a Loewy associate, came to South Bend and advised Gordon to resign, which he did, and very soon left the Loewy organization, feeling Raymond Loewy never believed he was not aware of the subterfuge until it was well underway.

To this day, I don't think Gordon would ever have told me this story unless his friend Virgil Exner, who had later served as a vice president at Chrysler, had not died while we were still working on the manuscript for *Rolling Sculpture*.

Gordon's next project was to build a car of his own design called the Tasco and which Gordon laughingly recalled as "The Tasco fiasco!"

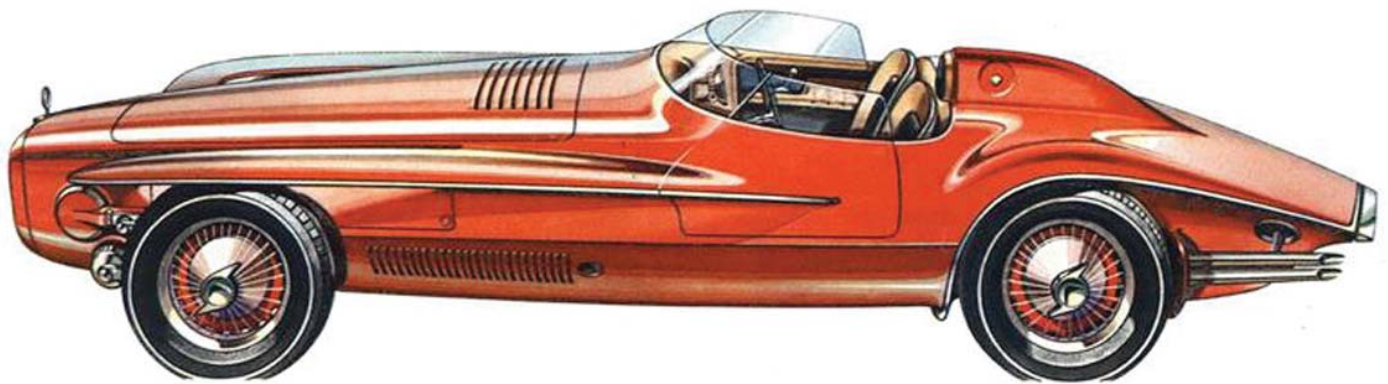
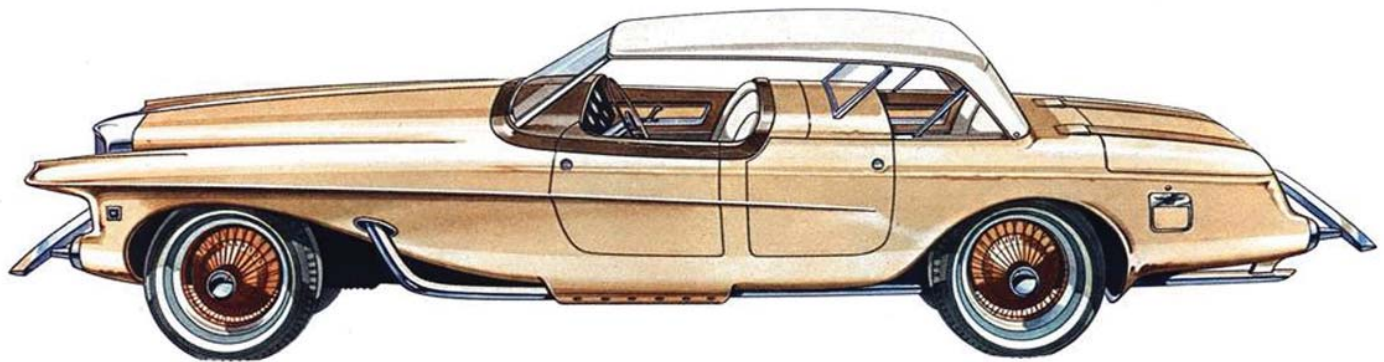
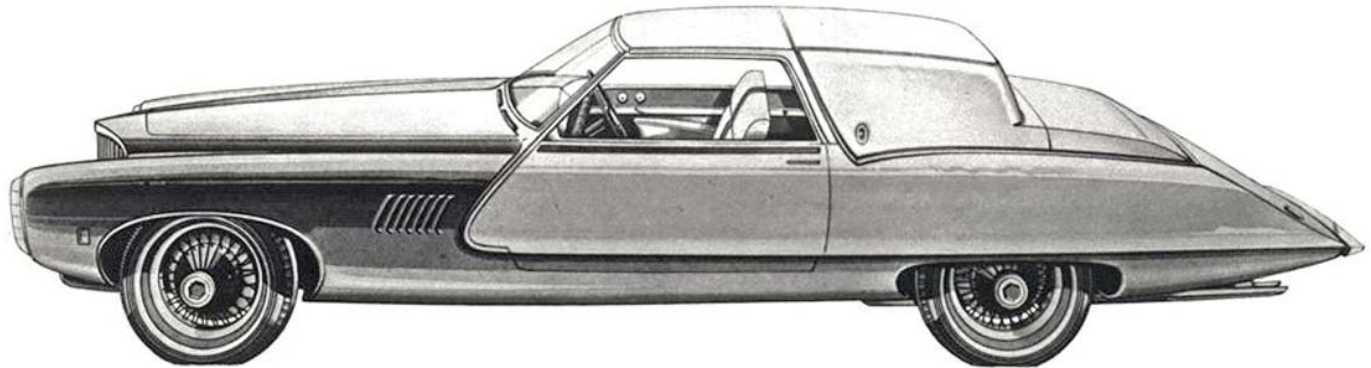
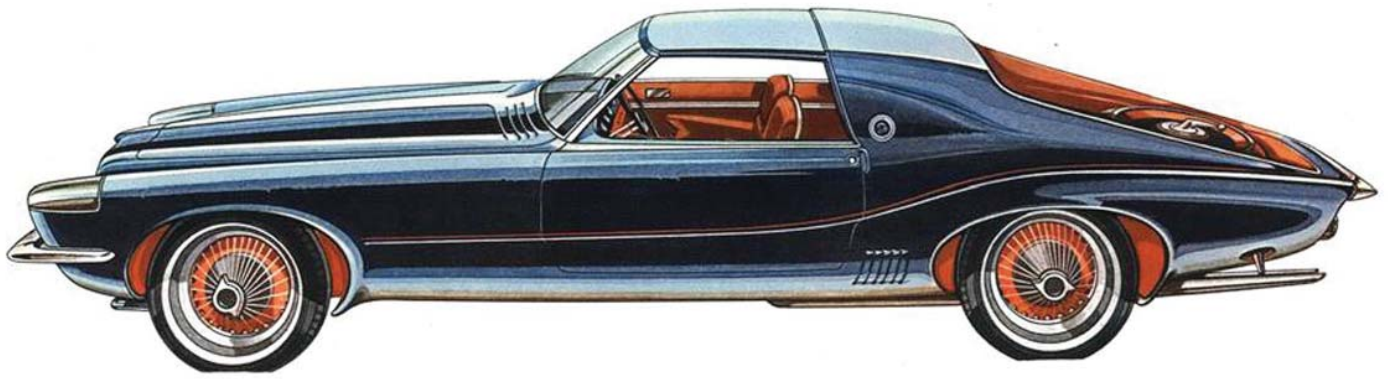
But that's another story.

—William S. Jackson

Editor's note: In addition to the editorships the author held, he is also SAH founding member no. 2, (see SAHJ #300, p. 15, and SAHJ #295, p. 5, for the patented drawings for the 810 Cord). The author named the editors mentioned in a familiar way, but their full names were used herein for the benefit of the reader. Rolling Sculpture: A Designer and His Work by Gordon M Buehrig with William S. Jackson (ISBN 978-0877990451) was published in 1975 by Haessner Publishing, and a second edition was published by the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum in 2008 (ISBN 978-1934703137).

"The two tone coloured Cord (grey with dark blue fenders) in the picture is 810 Serial No 1586A. This car was originally sold in Canada April 9th 1936 to Amos Mason of Acton, Ontario. The picture was taken during the second Auburn Reunion September 1957 in 9th Street." (Terry Cockerell on acdclub.org)





Designs by Virgil M. Exner, Sr. & Jr. appearing in the December 1963 issue of *Esquire* magazine, from top: Stutz, Packard, Duesenberg and Mercedes

REMEMBERING VIRGIL EXNER

Just as the entire *Esquire* Cord ad run printed in *SAHJ* #306 inspired *Bill Jackson* to write about Gordon Buehrig while collaborating on *Rolling Sculpture* in the previous pages, his mention of Virgil Exner in those remembrances inspired this article.

Virgil Max Exner Sr. (September 24, 1909—December 22, 1973) earned many accolades—and they can be quickly referenced on [wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org) and in more depth in *Virgil Exner: Visioneer* by Peter Grist (ISBN 978-1845848637). Our “remembrance” will

come in the form of expanding, if not answering, an entry in “Letters from Members” from issue #7 (March 1970) of this publication, on p. 2 (only 51 years later).

One of the stated goals of the SAH from its start in 1969 was to “record . . . the many obscure makes of which little or nothing is known” (issue #1, p. 1). A list to advance the cause was submitted by *Frank T. Snyder* and printed in issue #6, p. 6. In the aforementioned issue #7 *Hugo Pfau* offered comments on that list that included this: “Virgil Exner at one time sketched both a new ‘Bearcat’ and a new ‘Mercer,’ but I do not believe either one was ever built.”

Actually, there were four sketches—and they appeared (of all places) in *Esquire*, (December, 1963, pp. 200 – 203) in the article “Introducing the 1964 Duesenberg, Packard, Stutz and Mercer!” by Diana Bartley. Since she has not been mentioned in any previous SAH publication, we’ll recognize Ms. Bartley now. There were two automotive editors on the masthead at *Esquire*, the other being Tony Hogg. Her article “Luxury Motorcars” appeared in *Automobile Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Summer 1962) p. 133, and the issue included this contributor bio. on p. 215: “As an automotive journalist, her articles appear in the leading motoring magazines on both continents. She contributes a regular column to automotive publications in France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium. In America, her versatile and authoritative writing is also to be found in *ESQUIRE* and *SATURDAY REVIEW*. She is a steady contributor to various encyclopedias including *AMERICANA*, *BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE*, and the *OXFORD JUNIOR ENCYCLOPEDIA YEARBOOK*. She is a member of the British Motoring Guild.”

Indeed, the four sketches of those cars appear at the head of this article. In the *Esquire* article, however, each car’s design progression is juxtaposed with the design elements of classic era examples in four partial sketches for each car. Despite the article’s title, these were intended as studies—as stated: “The drawings on these pages—all of them done by the Exners themselves, incidentally—truly are just openers.” Of note, in a story by *Graham Gauld* (“Mercer Cobra” May 17, 2021), he states that “In 1963 Diana came up with the brilliant idea of asking a noted automotive designer to come up with a modern take on four classic U.S. cars” (see: velocetoday.com/mercercobra/). The *Esquire* article doesn’t mention the author commissioning the drawings (from Virgil Exner Sr. and Jr.), so that appears to be a “scoop.”

Back to the *Pfau* comments, the “Mercer” was indeed built. The 1965 Mercer Cobra Roadster was sold by RM Auctions (not yet RM | Sotheby’s) at their August 20, 2011, Monterey auction (Lot 231) for \$660,000 (see pictures and the full description [which also attributed the designs to Ms. Bartley’s solicitation] at: rmsothebys.com/en/auctions/mo11/monterey/lots/r241-1965-mercercobra-roadster/192333). The Gauld online article has great pictures of the car appearing at the 1966 Paris Automobile Salon.

One last “remembrance” from the perspective of previous issues of this journal, see *SAHJ* #288, p. 5, for a look at Exner’s 1960 Plymouth XNR Concept by Ghia (“XNR”... named after himself), and *SAHJ* #308, front and back cover for a look at the Exner-designed 1956 DeSoto Fireflite Pacesetter.

—R. Verdés



The 1965 Mercer-Cobra Roadster (chassis CSX2451) at the 2011 RM Monterey auction (source: author’s collection).

A Packard to kill for

Wisconsin man murdered for a 1921 Packard Twin Six

BY MATT MCLAUGHLIN

Editor's note: The following story by Old Cars reader Matt McLaughlin contains crime details not usually found in Old



Source: Old Cars, Vol. 49, No. 25, August 27, 2020, p. 36

ANOTHER PACKARD TO KILL FOR

*Editor's note: The author lists the "Three P's" among his SAH member "interests" profile [i.e., Packard, Peerless and Pierce-Arrow]. In tune with the other articles in this issue that were inspired by previous articles, here the author shares perspectives and opinions on a similarly infamous incident as the story was told in a recent Old Cars article. With full awareness that criminality may appear to be a subject beyond the study of automotive history, we know that it's not. Instead, the penetration of the automobile into all aspects of human culture is inescapable—even anecdotally, as in the letter (now at [The Henry Ford](http://TheHenryFord.org), see: thehenryford.org) from Clyde Barrow (of Bonnie and Clyde infamy) to Henry Ford complimenting his V8—and in scholarly books, as in *Stealing Cars: Technology and Society from the Model T to the Gran Torino* by John A. Heitmann and Rebecca H. Morales (see the review in SAHJ #276, p. 13).*

In the August 27, 2020 issue of *Old Cars* there was a story bearing the title "A Packard to Kill For" about a man named Harvey Church who lived in Wisconsin and brutally murdered two men in order to steal a 1921 Packard Twin Six touring car. Once he got possession of that Packard, he did little if anything with it. It brought to mind a story that happened in my home city of Lincoln, Nebraska, that involved a serial killer who, often accompanied by his girlfriend, brutally murdered seven people. They then murdered three more people in order to obtain a 1956 Packard V8 Sedan. After an additional brutal murder, he put its V8 engine through one of the best tests that engine was ever put through. Also, the Packard's torsion bar suspension was put through an equally hard test!

Prologue

Packard introduced its V8 in 1955. It had "teething" problems but with the making of the basic V8, the smaller Clipper V8, and a detuned version of the Clipper V8 that was sold to American Motors

for use in eight-cylinder Nashes and Hudsons, the lion's share of that engine's problems had been worked out by the 1956 model year. Charles Starkweather (1938–1959) was an eighth-grade drop-out who was poor and worked as a garbage collector. Despite his poverty, he was familiar with the well-to-do neighborhood where C. Lauer Ward (1910–1958), his wife Clara Olson Ward (1907–1958), and their maid, Lilyan Fencil (1906–1958), lived. He had often seen Mrs. Ward drive the family's 1956 Packard and wished he could get possession of it. In December of 1957, he brutally murdered a filling station attendant named Robert Colvert (1936–1957) because Mr. Colvert would not let him buy, on credit, a large teddy bear that he wanted to give to his girlfriend, Caril Fugate (1943–). In late January, 1958, he murdered Caril's stepfather, Marion Bartlett (1900–1958), her mother, Velda Bartlett (1921–1958), and their daughter, Betty Bartlett (1955–1958). All three were brutal murders and Charles and Caril hid in the Bartlett house before going south of Lincoln to the vicinity of Bennet, Nebraska. There they murdered an old farmer named August Meyer (1887–1958), and a young couple, Robert W. Jensen (1940–1958), and his girlfriend, Carol King (1941–1958). Their transportation was provided by "shoebox" Fords, 1949s and 1950s, one of which they stole from Robert W. Jensen. They then planned to go to Washington State, where Charles had a brother, Rodney. They felt they needed a better car and Starkweather now figured that it was time to go grab that Packard.

Procuring the Packard

Charlie Starkweather and Caril Fugate now headed back to Lincoln and affluent neighborhood in which the Wards lived. The garage was empty, so Charlie parked Jensen's Ford in it. He then forced his way into the house where they murdered Miss Fencil and Mrs. Ward via multiple stab wounds and some gunshot wounds. They then waited for Mr. Ward to come home. Mr. Ward was stabbed and shot as he entered his home. The keys to the Packard

were taken from his body and Charlie and Caril set off on their overnight drive west. Charlie Starkweather at one point during this drive dyed his red hair black with shoe polish. The bodies of Miss Fencil and the Wards were found the next day. This finding threw the whole city of Lincoln into panic. School classes were dismissed so that everyone could be safe at home until Charles Starkweather and Caril Fugate were captured.

The Great Test

Meanwhile, Charlie and Caril had reached Wyoming and were getting close to the town of Douglas. For some reason, Charlie figured that it was time to trade cars, despite the service the Packard had given them. He found a 1957 Buick owned by Merle Collison (1922–1958), a shoe salesman who lived in Great Falls, Montana, parked on the highway shoulder with Mr. Collison sleeping in it. Charlie parked the Packard ahead of the Buick and for some reason shot a couple of holes in the driver's side window. Mr. Collison was found shot twelve times in the face. A sheriff pulled up at this time and disarmed Starkweather. Caril ran to the sheriff crying "he's crazy!—he's going to kill me!" Charlie broke free of the sheriff and jumped into the Packard and took off. Another patrol car chased after him. They reached speeds of 120 miles per hour or more. Those old Wyoming highways were not the best roads to travel on at such speeds. Here, the Packard's torsion bar suspension helped. The patrol car had a hard time keeping the Packard in sight when a deputy fired a shot that went through the Packard's rear window and through its windshield. A piece of glass from the windshield nicked Charlie Starkweather's ear. He felt the blood on his neck and thought a bullet had passed through his neck. He pulled over to the side of the road and stopped. Jumping out of the Packard, Charlie Starkweather surrendered, pleading for his life.

Epilogue

Unlike Harvey Church—who did little if anything with the Packard he stole—Charles Starkweather (unwittingly) put the Packard he killed for through some interesting and grueling tests to its V8, its torsion bar suspension, and a few other such severe tests. Charles R. Starkweather was executed in June of 1959 at the age of 20 years and 7 months. He went to Nebraska's electric chair rather calmly. What he hoped to accomplish by going to Washington State will always be a mystery to me. His brother, Rodney, would probably have turned him in to the law. I always thought that Baffin Island would have been a more realistic goal for Charles Starkweather as it would have gotten him out of the country. There may have been problems with getting over the U.S.–Canada Border. That Packard never made it back to Lincoln, Nebraska. It was later owned by a Mr. Alvin Vieselmeyer who lived in outstate Nebraska and was later sold to a collector who, at last report, is restoring it. ("Outstate" is a local colloquialism referring to areas in Nebraska outside the cities of Omaha and Lincoln. —*Ed.*)

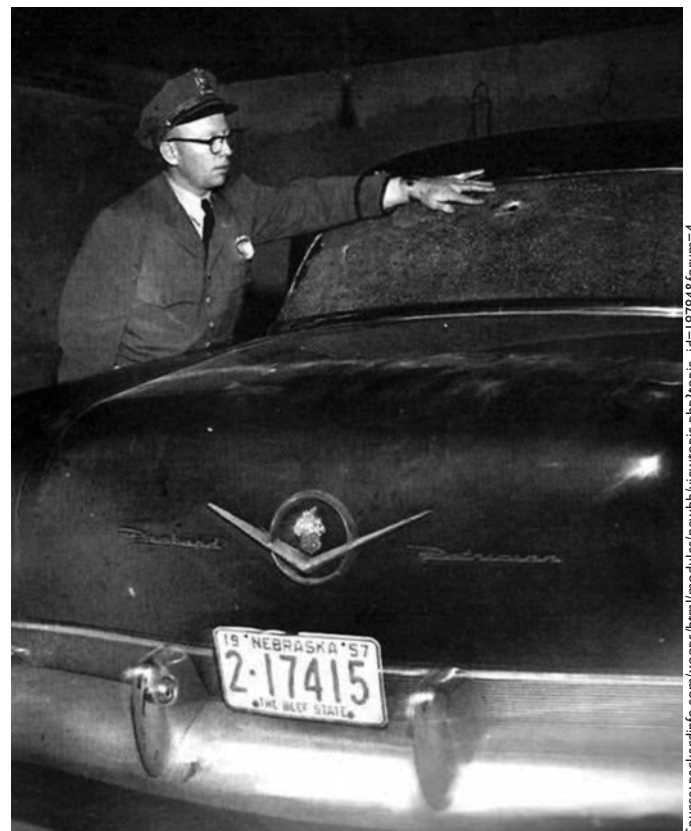
Peerless & Pierce-Arrow Epilogue

The use of high-speed runs to test and prove engines was nothing new with the Three P's by the late 1930s. All Three P's were associated with a famous race driver. Peerless was the first of these.

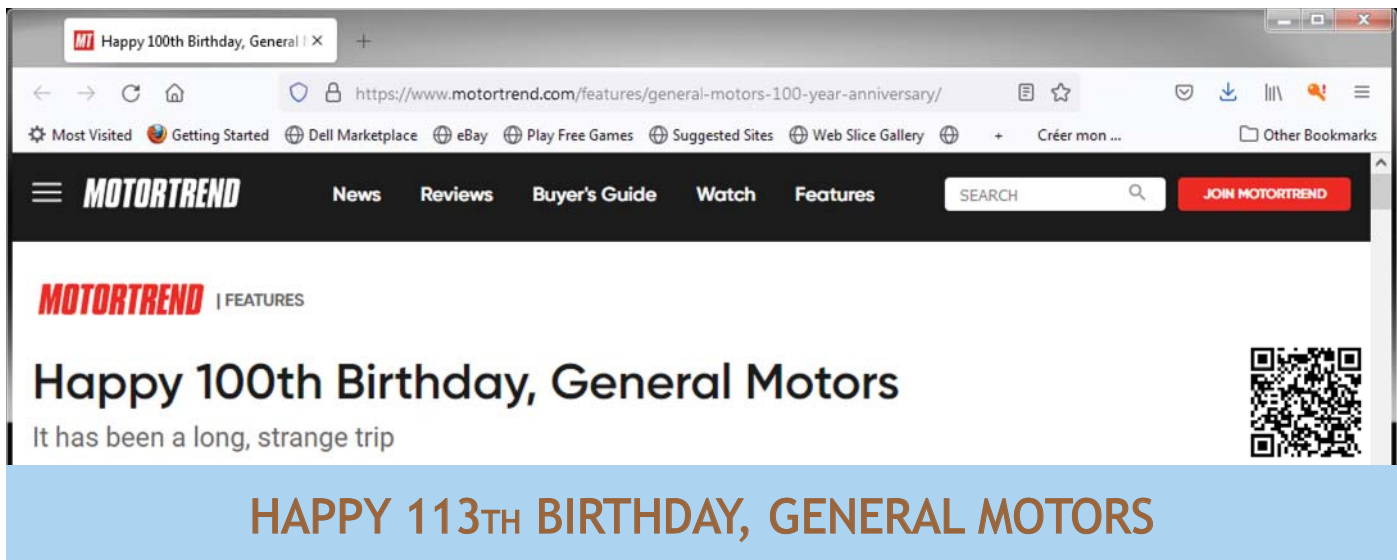
During the early 1900s, they engaged Barney Oldfield (1879–1946) to race their Green Dragon race cars. The engines in these racers were later used in production cars. Packard followed suit with its Grey Wolf racer which was driven by company engineers, including James Ward Packard. Packard's first six, in 1912, was given a severe test by Glen Fry, who escaped from an insane asylum in Massachusetts, where he was being held after killing noted architect Stanford White. He pushed that Packard to 80 miles per hour and made it to Connecticut and freedom. Later, Packard engaged Ralph DePalma (1883–1956) to drive its race cars. He pushed a racing version of the Packard Twin-Six to 150 miles per hour in 1919. Pierce-Arrow, during those early years, tended to focus more on quality and reliability. However, when it came time to prove Pierce-Arrow's V12, it engaged Ab Jenkins (1883–1956) who proved that engine beyond doubt at Bonneville Salt Flats in 1932 and 1933. In 1934, he put a special racing version of that engine through some hard tests.

It would be ironic but fate has its caprices. Packard was in its death throes after putting its modern, overhead valve V8 through its "teething problems" and getting its torsion bar suspension system refined and perfected and in no position to find someone to test them. That modern V8 and the torsion bar suspension would be the only such features any Three P car would have. By fate it would fall to a serial killer who was born without the ability to plan, and not known for his intellect, although he was a talented artist, to put that engine and suspension system to the tests that he managed to put them through. Unlike Glen Fry, Charles Starkweather (like Harvey Church) killed for the Packard he stole. This is an interesting but tragic footnote to Three P history as well as Packard history.

—*Jeff Caplan*



The Packard stolen in Nebraska appears to remain a subject that's revisited from time to time. This picture appeared in a forum string at packardinfo.com, showing the bullet hole in the car's rear window.



Last (but not least) in this issue's articles inspired by other articles—here we revisit an Internet article by Todd Lassa from *MotorTrend* magazine's website on September 15, 2008, celebrating General Motors' centenary (the next day). The most engaging aspect of the article is its year-by-year chronology of GM's history, from September 16, 1908 to date. Our perspective hits us hard starting right from a read of the first few sentences: "General Motors' centenary is September 16. By the time GM reaches its 102nd birthday, it will have survived a rough couple of years as it makes a big, relatively swift transformation from trucks back to cars. Look at everything that has happened to GM since its founding and you'll see that nothing of its current situation is particularly new. So to borrow a Polish toast, *stolat!* ... may you live 100 years." So now that we live in the future of the article's 2008 perspective, what other things "hit us hard"?

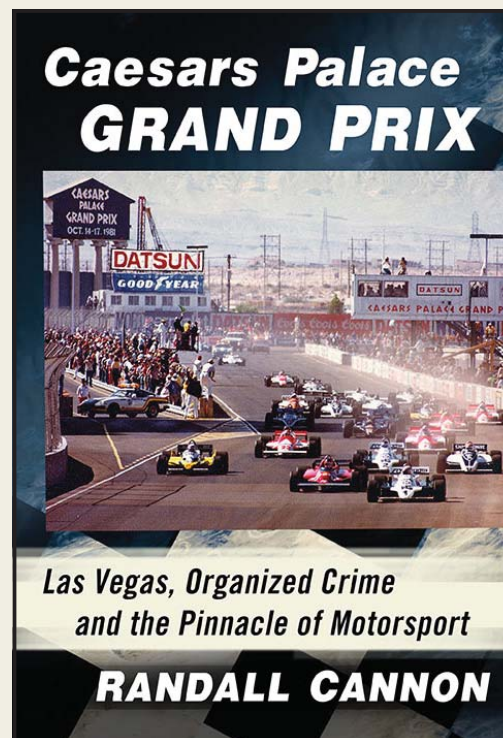
This article came during the time of what came to be known as the "global financial crisis" (GFC)—in fact, the generally accepted explosive event of the crisis came on the very day the *MotorTrend* article was published: the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers. As much as what was already noted in the article for the challenging times ahead, by the time that a semblance of stability returned, things for GM would be greatly changed.

It's a little odd to find we live in a time without new Oldsmobiles and Pontiacs. By 2008, though, Oldsmobile's demise was already known, as noted in the 2004 entry in the article: "An Alero is the last Oldsmobile off the line, 107 years after Ransom Eli Olds built his first car." Not long after

this article was written, on December 2nd GM announced its aim to have Pontiac follow Oldsmobile into oblivion, followed by Saturn and other marques. More tumult lay ahead with the resignation of CEO George Richard "Rick" Wagoner Jr. at the request of the White House as part of a deal for additional short-term financing, followed by short stints by Fritz Henderson then by Edward Whitacre, Jr., followed by Daniel Akerson, then in 2014 by Mary Teresa Barra (née Makela), who still serves as CEO today.

On the horizon is a "gm" (the logo now in lowercase) going electric. On the page dedicated to the change (see: gm.com/electric-vehicles.html) it announces that "GM is on its way to an all-electric future, with a commitment to 30 new global electric vehicles by 2025." Also, CEO Barra is quoted: "Climate change is real, and we want to be part of the solution by putting everyone in an electric vehicle." Only the future will tell if the change will be progress, or tumult.

—R. Verdés



During its four-year run of Formula One and CART IndyCar events, the Caesars Palace Grand Prix hosted the biggest names in motorsport—Mario Andretti, Bernie Ecclestone, Roger Penske, Chris Pook, Alan Jones, Nelson Piquet, Niki Lauda, Danny Sullivan, Bobby Rahal and Al Unser among them. Yet behind the scenes and even on the awards podium, organized crime figures appeared deeply involved. This book traces the intertwined threads through decades of accounts, extensive interviews, and the files of the FBI, richly developing the context in which the Caesars Palace Grand Prix appeared to unite crime and competition.



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Collision Course: Carlos Ghosn and the Culture Wars That Upended an Auto Empire

by Hans Greimel and William Sposato

Harvard Business Review Press (2021)

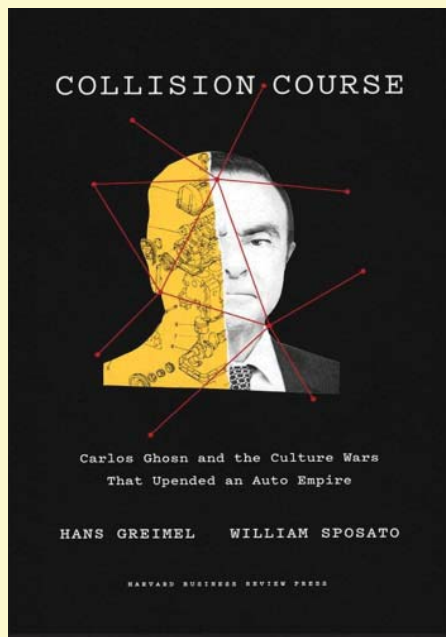
store.hbr.org/books/

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Both Hans Greimel of *Automotive News* and William Sposato with a Reuters and *Wall Street Journal* past are long term residents of Japan and have a deep understanding of the country's business culture. Their writing style is most engaging, prompting the reader to keep turning the pages to uncover the next fascinating nugget in this drama of how a highly respected automotive head literally got thrown in jail.

The first two chapters cover the arrest and eventual flight of Carlos Ghosn along with a review of what he accomplished for Nissan. At this point the reader may wonder what the remainder of the book might have to reveal. Fear not, because we learn in great

detail about the Japanese business culture, its employment practices, recent economic history, their judicial system and the many factors that impact a foreigner doing business in Japan.

Many conspiracy theories are evaluated involving Nissan executives and Japanese authorities. The Japanese feared an alliance that would morph into a merger, something that was under consideration. While the nation was indebted to Ghosn for the remarkable recovery Nissan had achieved, a situation existed where Renault exercised greater influence over Nissan. Yet the Japanese manufacturer had become far stronger and more profitable than Renault. In addition it was the Japanese view that before Ghosn retired, he had plans of cementing the alliance relationship even tighter, entrenching a grasp where the weaker sibling could dictate terms to the stronger family member. Ghosn had to be stopped by any means possible.

Those means ultimately focused on his compensation. Ghosn had been approached to head both General Motors and Ford, in the case of GM becoming part of the Renault Nissan alliance in 2006 at the urging of Kirk Kerkorian, GM's largest investor. Three years later he was approached again to run GM. Out of loyalty to Renault and Nissan, Ghosn declined all such offers but it was clear that he was viewed as the most sought after auto executive of the time. Yet his earnings failed to match the top executives in America largely because such generous remuneration was totally foreign in Japan and France. The head of Toyota only earned about 15% of Ghosn's figure. It was his attempts to defer and not expose these earnings that got him in the crosshairs of authorities.

You begin to understand Ghosn's early successes and why he was able to accomplish what other Japanese executives would be denied, simply because he was a foreigner and because of the strategy he used. As an example, he dismantled the cross ownership structure of suppliers, known as the keiretsu system, because of these cozy relationships. We also learn the benefits of collaborative management styles promoted by Harvard professor Ezra Vogel and how effective Ghosn was in this field. His goals such as Power 88 were aggressive especially as they originated from the depths of the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami.

Also examined are the roles played by the respective national governments. The Florange rulings increased the French gov-

ernment's control over Renault and in turn Nissan, but numerous other actions by the French authorities played a destructive role. Japan does not emerge unscathed either. Its judicial system is most intimidating and the authors reveal its many failings even though the prosecution charges, which are discussed in detail, reflect poorly on Ghosn.

Although a full chapter is devoted to the "Great Escape," some aspects of the preparations by the Taylor father-and-son team who orchestrated the daring heist are not disclosed because they were awaiting trial at the time of publication.

The dispassionate manner in which the authors look at all aspects of this case is immensely impressive. An alliance once hailed as the only success in comparison to other mergers has all its warts exposed. Besides the glamorous aspects of this story, there is much for the serious reader to learn about multiple aspects of doing business in Japan as well as in France. In years to come this book will be the definitive source on these events but for today's researcher, it is an ideal deep dive into understanding the Japanese automotive industry and a brilliant but flawed man who made immense contributions.

—Louis F. Fourie

Where Today Meets Tomorrow: Eero Saarinen and the General Motors Technical Center

by Susan Skarsgard

Princeton Architectural Press (2019)

pappress.com

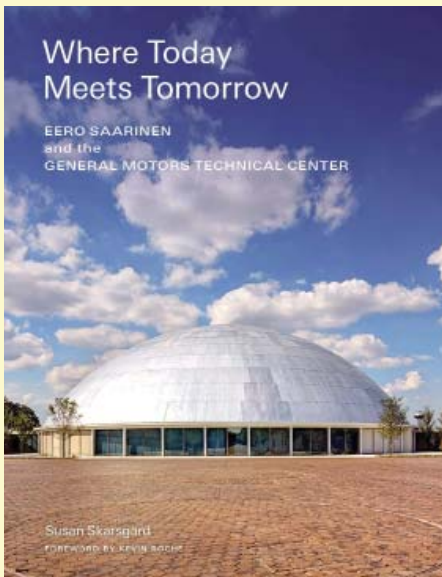
256 pages, 9½" x 12¼", hardcover, dustcover
198 b/w & 84 color photos, bibliography,
chapter end notes, appendix of historical
documents, photo credits and index

Price: \$60

ISBN-10: 1616897694

ISBN-13: 978-1616897697

It is agreeable to present a review of this book with our own *Journal* recently publishing the concluding installment of David O. Lyon's eight-part series "Art, Architecture and the Automobile," for the buildings presented in words and images in this book document from its conception the design, development, and construction of the entire 710-acre campus with its nearly 40 buildings that the American Institute of Architects designated *the* most outstanding architectural project of its era. That icon of mid-century modern design is the General Motors Technical Center, which is also on



the list of National Historic Landmarks and the National Register of Historic Places.

Where Today Meets Tomorrow is a most handsome book in part due to the good efforts of its publisher, Princeton University's Architectural Press. Photo and document reproduction are just excellent, as is page design. In addition, the hardbound book is fully indexed and also includes appendices, bibliography, chapter end notes—all the elements any historian could hope for to best support and enhance Susan Skarsgard's clear, well-written text.

One of Skarsgard's primary sources—among many—was an unpublished manuscript written by a GM designer named George Moon, who had been assigned to work on the Tech Center as it was being built. As I was turning the last few pages of *Where Today Meets Tomorrow*, I was offered the opportunity to read that manuscript. What a treat. Moon does something that would have been inappropriate in Skarsgard's book; he profiles from personal interviews many of the key people, which gave me added understanding. With Skarsgard's words fresh in my mind, it became possible to see where she had drawn from or relied on Moon's manuscript.

The Tech Center's official dedication ceremonies in May 1956 were perhaps the year's most coveted invitation with presentations and speeches including one from then U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower. Curiously though, as Skarsgard points out, no mention was made by any of the presenters of the designers of the Tech Center and who had also overseen and supervised its entire construction and in spite of their work being

landmark and truly innovative in so many ways. Happily, Susan Skarsgard does show and explain in detail many of those innovations.

To this day, GM's Tech Center is pointed to as a, if not the, most stellar example of mid-century modernism extant. Eliel Saarinen had been awarded the work. Upon his sudden passing, the son whom he had trained and who worked with his father in partnership took the reins. Eero Saarinen tapped into the design and engineering talents of his client, GM. That partnership resulted in the development of those previously mentioned innovative techniques and processes of construction and finishes that are still hallmarks and utilized today and still considered state of the art.

The entire book is nothing short of excellent, edifying and thoroughly enjoyable.

—Helen V Hutchings

Buick's "Flint Flyers" Skylark & GRAN SPORT History: From GM's '53 Motorama Skylark Dream Car to the '87 Turbocharged GNX

by *Kenneth W. Kayser*

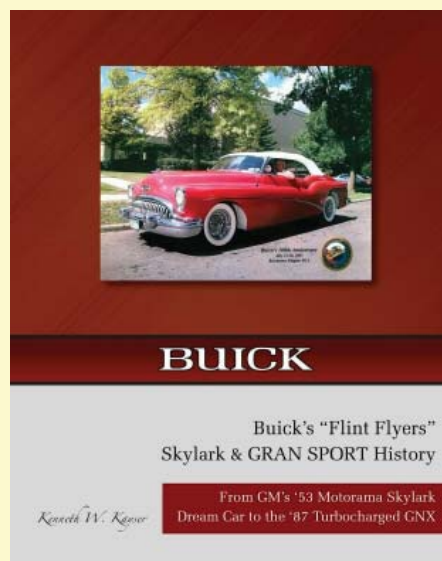
Tachometer Publishing (2021)

tachometerpublishing.com

656 pages, 8½" x 11" softcover

682 b/w & 369 color photos, detailed index
Price: \$99.95 (website currently has sale price of \$89.95)

ISBN: 978-0999869765



Buick's "Flint Flyers" Skylark & GRAN SPORT History: From GM's '53 Motorama Skylark Dream Car to the '87 Turbocharged GNX indicates what the book is about. What the title doesn't communicate is that this is not a rehash of anything previously

published because of the perspective from which it is related; the engineering and technical aspect.

Author Ken Kayser's education—engineering degree from GMI and master's in business from State University of New York at Buffalo—followed by a bit over 40 years doing engineering work at General Motors engine plants give him the skills and knowledge to write the history from this technical perspective. His motivation was provided by acquiring a very special 1966 "Flint Flyer" Gran Sport from the widow of the man who had originally special ordered it.

While he was at it Kayser opted to, quite literally, begin with Buick's beginnings, providing a behind-the-scenes view of the inner workings of GM's and Buick's engineering function, using quite literally, more than 1,000 documents and images that include engineering drawings, patents, dealer service information, charts, and more. Each is captioned as might be expected of a career engineer—as in very specifically and carefully.

Kayser's writing is straightforward and essentially presents things chronologically. The first five chapters recount the engineering challenges and achievements of Buick's first 50 years. With the sixth chapter the focus begins to narrow on "Buick's 1965-66 Gran Sport Genesis" followed by one still more focused on "Buick's 1966 Flint Flyer Engineering." Then three chapters tell about the very specific '66 Gran Sport serial number 44617H223531.

Part of the GS genesis chapter includes numerous pages from the "1966 Assembly Instruction Manual." This volume, rarely seen outside of those with a "need to know," is essentially a Standard Practices book created for the assembly plant personnel. In this case this manual was distributed to the four assembly plants building the 1966 Buick Special, Special Deluxe, Skylark and Sportwagon models: Flint, Baltimore, Kansas City, and Fremont.

The concluding pair of chapters present respectively Buick's last two super performers: the "Grand National Genesis" and the "GNX Genesis."

Kayser opted to self-publish in order to retain total control of his book's content. His choice of a print-on-demand rather than offset printer did result in some of the images and documents appearing a bit murky, but the caliber and incredible detail of the editorial content more than makes up for

that although there are a few misspellings, a wrong choice of homonym now and then, and an occasional incorrect “fact.”

Frosting on the cake, Ken Kayser respected his reader to the degree that he created a very thorough and comprehensive index, for this is a book—if the topic and technical detail is of interest or use to you—that you won’t just look at once before relegating it to a shelf. Rather, it is more apt to become a well-used reference for it is that good.

—Helen V Hutchings

Racing in Daytona Beach: Sunshine, Sand & Speed

by Robert Redd

The History Press (2021)

historypress.com

144 pages, 6"x 9" softcover,

47 b/w photos, appendices, bibliography, no index

Price: \$21.99

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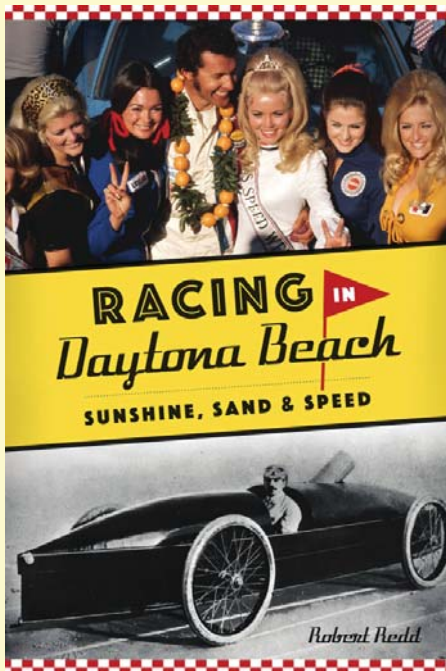


Photo history book publisher Arcadia established another imprint in 2004 called The History Press in order to publish more traditionally written histories that still cover the same wide variety of topics and places. As 2021 began, History Press released this book, a fourth title by Robert Redd: *Racing in Daytona Beach: Sunshine, Sand & Speed*.

Redd writes well for as he explains, “I am one of those very lucky people who has a great job in the field of history . . . with a [special] interest in the history of the

area I live in. I am what would most likely be called a ‘regional’ or ‘local’ historian. I write about the area I know; Florida. I don’t have a particular time period I specialize in but rather write about what interests me. If it’s interesting . . . I will pursue it.” So, no surprise, Redd resides and works in central Florida “south of the world’s most famous beach.”

While his *Racing in Daytona Beach* may be light on in-depth racing history, because of the eight appendices and thorough bibliography, a motorsports historian—especially one with a focus on NASCAR—will find this book of interest as will anyone wanting to read about the race associated sites to see today throughout the curiously named Volusia County.

Historians truly do not know the origins of the county’s name, though there are several theories posited. That said, Volusia absolutely is the county where Ormond

Fascinating aspects of automotive history..

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Beach, Daytona, and more are located and contains within its boundaries a great many interesting historic and current day racing oriented sites to visit. In the chapters of this nicely-done book that precede the area tour, Redd profiles some of the drivers and other personalities—both male and female—whose careers are associated with one racing activity or another in the county over time.

—Helen V Hutchings



Inspired by the Daytona review, we present this image. To show the entirety of this wonderfully colored version of the original 1911 photo, the car can’t be seen in detail. The source is a high-resolution image, which can be seen at: colorem.wordpress.com/2016/08/23/the-hotel-clarendon-aviator-glenn-curtiss-daytona-beach-florida-1911/ (or, click on the QR code on the photo). The site includes a great narrative on the photo, but did not identify the car.



*Impressions mean **so** much...*

Pictured here, out of an artist's imagination, is a fine American business office. Sumptuous and inviting as it is, however, there is nothing unusual about it—for hundreds of American business men occupy offices that are equally impressive. . . . They do not sit in offices like these out of any personal vanity, or because such fine surroundings are considered essential to their work. They simply know that the dignity of the businesses they represent cannot properly be upheld in an ordinary, routine office setting. . . . And, for identical

reasons, a goodly portion of America's business leaders are never seen riding in other than Cadillac cars. For they know full well that, of all those material possessions which bespeak a man's place in the general life of his community, none is more instantly recognized than his automobile.



Cadillac

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