

# SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
Issue 243 Electronic Edition January-February 2010



www.autohistory.org

## Inside

Letters 3

Obituaries 5

*Adrian Ryan*

*Frederick D. Roe*

*William B. Close*

*Grace R. Brigham*

Book Reviews 8

*Maxwell Motor and the Making of the Chrysler Corporation*

*The Eight-Cylinder DuPont*

*Ford in the Service of America*

Editorial 10

## Date Reminders

**March 24 - 27, 2010**

SAH Spring Board Meeting and Eighth Automotive History Conference  
Tupelo, MS

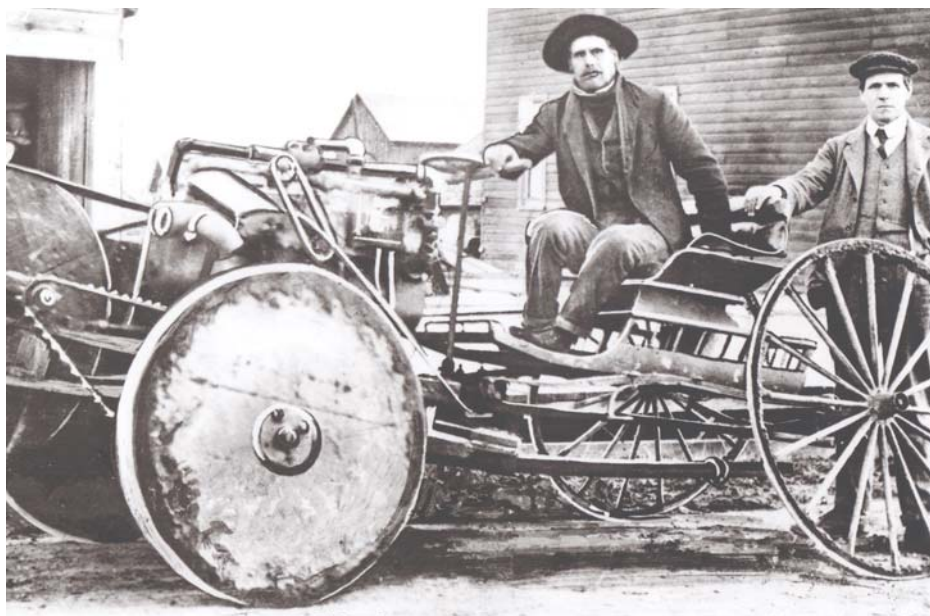
## Railway Inspection Car Photos

These images are two of a series sent by SAH President *Susan Davis*. It is hard to imagine modern railroads using luxury marques for the purpose today.

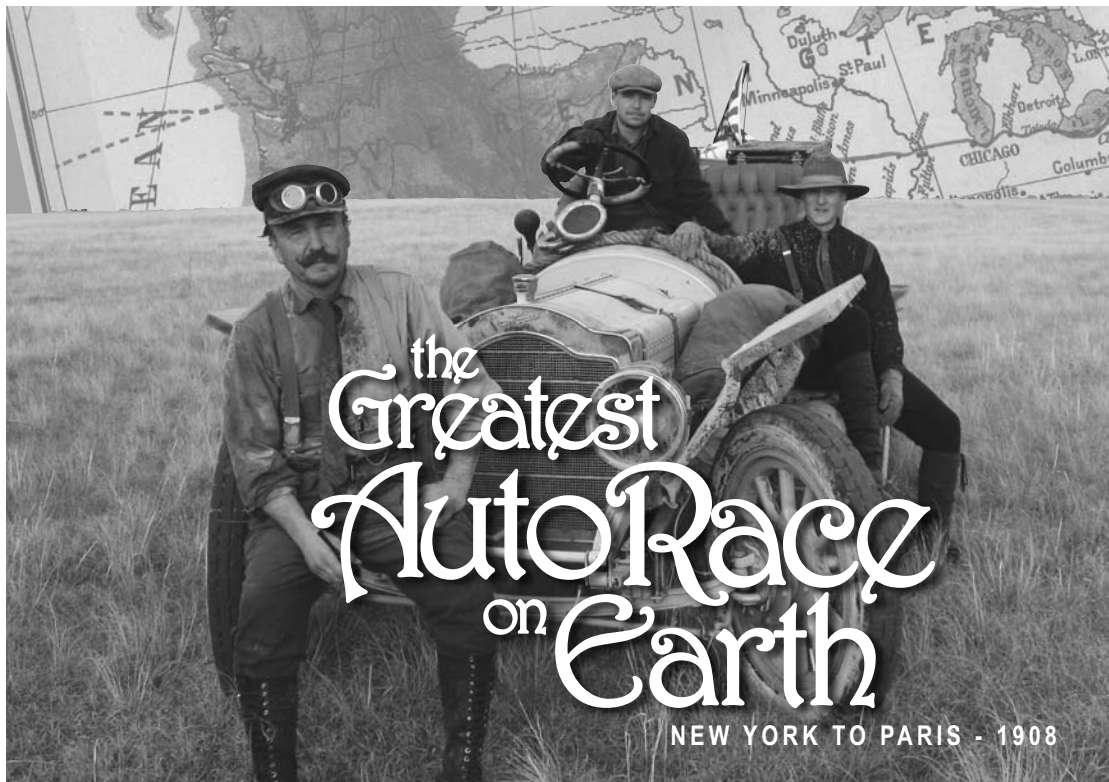


## Mystery Image

*Albert Mroz* sent in this image to place before the members, with virtually no information available. The caption reads "Rose's Auto, Rose City, Mich." with no date and no photographer's name visible. Rose City is located south of the Huron National Forest boundary and west of Rifle River State Recreation Area at the crossroads of County Road 22 and M33 in Ogemaw County. What is known about the town is that it was founded in 1875 by Allen S. Rose, and the original name was Churchill. When the railroad arrived in 1892, the name changed to "Rose City" but incorporation did not occur until 1905. This would place the date of the photo at 1892 or later. As for the image, it is heavily retouched by hand, a relatively common practice for the time. If the image shows an authentic motorized vehicle, the construction appears artisanal at best, or an optimistic jumble of parts at worst. Commentary is invited.



ROSE'S AUTO, ROSE CITY, MICH.



**E**ight years in the making, **The Greatest Auto Race on Earth** is now available on DVD, telling the story of the 1908 New York to Paris auto race.

Through never before seen photos and exact running replicas of the Thomas Flyer, German Protos, and Züst, the story of these brave men and their machines is told as they travelled 22,000 miles in 169 days.

With stunning cinematography and cutting edge computer graphics, we look at the hardships and accomplishments of such heroes as George Schuster, Lt. Hans Koeppen, and the popular Italian, Antonio Scarfoglio. Mastered to HD, this 95 minute program has already garnered numerous awards.

Use PayPal and order online at [www.thegreatestautorace.com](http://www.thegreatestautorace.com) or send your name and address with a cheque or Money Order for \$35.44 (\$29.99 + \$5.45 S/H) to **The 1908 Great Auto Race Film Company Ltd.**, #202, 10816A-82 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. T6E 2B3

# SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
Issue 243 Jan - Feb 2010



## Officers

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Susan S. Davis</b>      | <b>President</b>      |
| <b>J. Douglas Leighton</b> | <b>Vice President</b> |
| <b>Robert R. Ebert</b>     | <b>Secretary</b>      |
| <b>Patrick D. Bisson</b>   | <b>Treasurer</b>      |

## Board of Directors

Through October 2010

**Paul N. Lashbrook Stanton A. Lyman**

**Judith E. Endelman**

Through October 2011

**John A. Marino John Heitmann**

**David M. Woodhouse**

**Darwyn H. Lumley, ex-officio**

Through October 2012

**Steve Wilson Leslie Kendall**

**Thomas S. Jakups**

## SAH Journal

**Allan G. Y. Meyer, Editor, Adv. Mgr.**

P.O. Box 1948

Vashon, WA 98070-1948 USA

206-304-3872

[journal@autohistory.org](mailto:journal@autohistory.org)

[editor.a.meyer@gmail.com](mailto:editor.a.meyer@gmail.com)

## Publications Committee

**Thomas S. Jakups, Chair**

**Christopher C. Foster**

**D. David Duricy**

**Donald J. Keefe**

**Steve Wilson**

**Allan Meyer**

## Past Editors

**Richard B. Brigham**

Issues 1-29 Sept. 1969-(undated) 1973

**C. Marshall Naul**

30-50 July 1973-Dec. 1976

**John Peckham**

51-59 Feb. 1977-July 1978

**Walter Gosden**

60-87 Nov. 1978-Dec. 1983

**Richard B. Brigham**

88-117 Jan./Feb. 1983-Nov./Dec. 1988

**Christopher C. Foster**

118-157 Jan./Feb. 1989-July/Aug. 1995

**Samuel V. Fiorani**

158-194 Sept./Oct. 1995-Sept./Oct. 2001

**Thomas S. Jakups**

195-236 Nov./Dec. 2001-Sept./Oct. 2008

## SAH Journal (ISSN 1057-1973)

is published six times a year by the Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

Subscription is by membership in the Society.

Membership dues are \$40 per year.

Send dues, membership inquiries and changes of address to

**Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.**

**178 Crescent Road**

**Fairport, NY 14450 USA**

©2010

**The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.**

Find the Society of Automotive Historians on the web at [www.autohistory.org](http://www.autohistory.org).

**Copy Deadline for Journal 244  
March 1, 2010**

# Letters

**From: Dr. Paulo Cesar Sandler**  
São Paulo, Brazil

Until now, I was the only Brazilian member of SAH. I am not aware if you know anything from my books about our history, because they were published in Portuguese—a language most people do not know! I have many contacts with people from America and Europe. I must tell you that my own profession is outside my deep interest, love and dedication to automotive history. (If you are interested, my books on medicine are on the Internet—some of them were published in England and France.)

One of my books is about the DKW *DKW - A grande historia da pequena maravilha*, Ed. Alaude, São Paulo, 2006. This translates to your more understandable language as *DKW - The great history of the small wonder*, a pun with one of the names given to this car, Das Kleine Wunder. DKW was the first Brazilian-made motor car. Fully illustrated with rare photos and text still unobtainable in any other place, it is highly acclaimed by the local book market, as well as by Audi AG officials. The book had the attention of Mr. *Karl Ludvigsen*, who came across it in a manner unknown to me, I do not know him, and he sent me a letter commenting on it, with congratulations. After all, DKW is an

almost unknown make in many places. Talking about Audi AG, I exchanged a lot of information with them because they had scarce data about the Brazilian attempt to make DKWs by a local now defunct Brazilian enterprise, Vemag. Production began in 1956 and lasted until 1967; the car was highly regarded here.

Anyway, I have other books, on Simca, published in 2005, and the Chevrolet Opala, a local version of the Opel launched in 1966, designed in Detroit by C. Mackichan and I. Ribicki, when GM still was GM.

Perhaps you are acquainted with some papers of mine, published by *Collectible Automobile*, on Brazilian cars which originated in America. As you perhaps know, Brazil never had an indigenous auto industry, but foreigners began to erect some factories here, and created the local market. For a time some factories, such as Willys and VW, had local styling departments and even engineering branches, which developed alcohol-fueled vehicles, now commonplace.

I must assure you that when I finally found a publisher, I gave a strong push to this kind of publication here, on auto history, which is beginning to catch on. A few more authors are appearing.

I will launch more books soon: one about Dr. Porsche, which contains original research still unknown. This may sound incredible, considering the subject, about the origins of Prof. Porsche's initial consulting office,

obtained through interviews of heirs and relatives. In this case, the sons of Baron Von Oertzen and Baron Vayder-Malberg, and relatives of Adolf Rosenberger, aka Alan Roberts. Even Mr Ludvigsen's book does not have this information—neither did Porsche AG. I also exchanged info with them, anyway.


The other books deal with VW. The next one is on Karmann-Ghia and its Brazilian factory, again, with original research. I am at your disposal.

**From: Michael Lamm**  
Stockton, CA

To make a long story short - my wife, JoAnne, and I moved to Los Angeles in late 1960, and she, being from Boston, had never learned to drive. You know what that means in L.A., so she decided to learn.

We owned, at that time, a 1955 DeSoto that I'd inherited from my mother. Large cars frightened Jo, especially the prospect of having to parallel-park the DeSoto during her DMV driving test, so she began looking around for a driving school that used smaller cars.


To her delight, she found one that used DAFs, and when she heard that DAFs also had automatic transmissions, she signed up immediately, because she had no intention of learning to drive a stick. Thanks to the DAF, she had her license within a few weeks, and she's been partial to small cars ever since.



**Join the Buick Club of America**  
and 9000 other members worldwide who love old Buicks.

72 BCA chapters - one may be near you!

With BCA membership, you'll receive our outstanding monthly magazine, *The Buick Bugle* - 48 pages, 36 in full color, free monthly classified ads for members  
Pete Phillips, Editor (S.A.H. member)

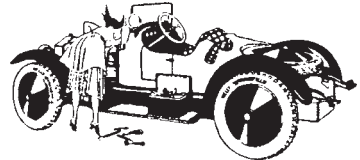


\$40/year national dues, foreign higher  
www.buickclub.org  
(614) 472-3939 for information  
Buick Club of America  
PO Box 360775  
Columbus, OH 43236-0775

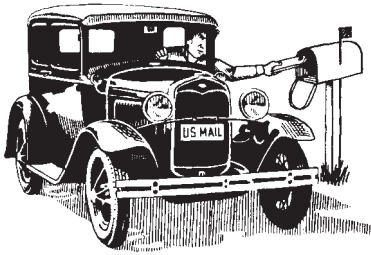
**WANTED:**  
**AUTOMOBILE LITERATURE 1900-1975**

**I buy sales brochures, repair & owner's manuals, books, showroom items, artwork, models & toys, posters or any items pertaining to automobiles, trucks or motorcycles...  
I travel to purchase collections.**

**Walter Miller**  
6710 Brooklawn Pkwy.  
Syracuse, NY 13211 USA  
315-432-8282 fax 315-432-8256  
e-mail: [info@autolit.com](mailto:info@autolit.com)



## Letters



**Via Doug Stokes**  
Duarte, CA

(From Bruce Hand) This man Mr. Meyer bought that first DAF from a guy by the name of Jerry Hill, who collected a bunch of small cars. I sold the car to Jerry many years before and in fact drove that same car from Manhattan Beach to Beverly Hills (Precision Volkswagen) to work every day for over a year and a half. During my days at Precision as a mechanic, *Bob Estes* asked me if I would please service a few of these DAFs because he felt a certain obligation to the customers, having sold them the cars. This was from 1967 thru 1971. During this time I purchased the DAF. Now I know that the DAF frame and engine in the museum was my car.

As a side note, one night Bob and I were having dinner and he told me he'd bought \$200,000 worth of parts from the DAF factory and when these little cars wouldn't sell, he had a meeting with the DAF representatives and convinced them that the cars weren't suitable for the US market. The factory boys agreed and bought all the parts back !!! And that my friend is 'The rest of the story.' What a small world.

P.S. The Toyopet went to Japan and was retored and put in the Toyota museum.

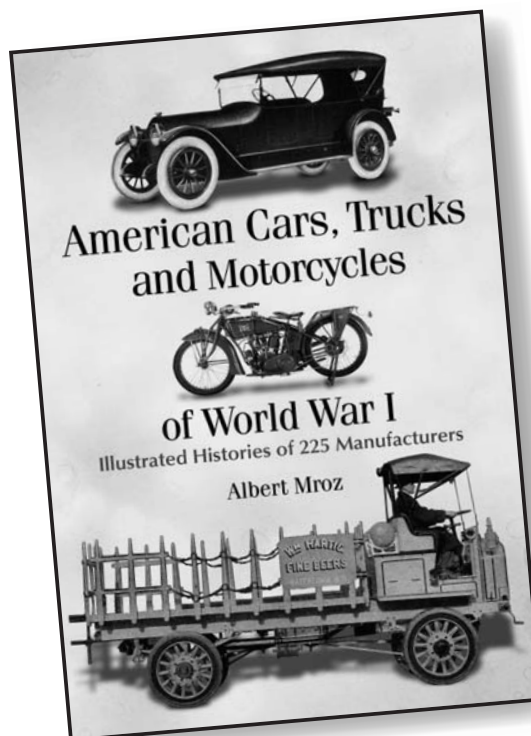
**From: Norman Painting**  
Birmingham, UK

This photograph may be of interest to you. In the First World War Wolseley Motors Ltd., at their Adderley Park Works in Birmingham, made many ambulances, and aircraft, paid for by donations from individuals,

organizations and towns and cities in Britain, America, Canada and India.

This picture of an ambulance built for the "Friends in Boston" was based on a Wolseley M7 24/30hp motor car chassis powered by a six-cylinder engine with a bore of 90mm diameter and stroke of 130mm.

Based on a 137-inch wheelbase chassis, it featured Wolseley's patented compensated cantilever rear suspension designed by Alfred Remington, Wolseley's Chief Engineer. These ambulances saw active service in France and Belgium, operating so close to the front lines that many were targeted by enemy guns.



At the time of American involvement in World War I, motor vehicle manufacturing in the United States was widespread and diverse, and the market was expanding rapidly. The histories of 225 companies that manufactured cars, trucks and motorcycles for the civilian market during the wartime period are summarized in this book, with illustrations and specifications of at least one representative 1917 or 1918 model accompanying each entry.

428 pages \$45 softcover (7 x 10)  
246 photos, bibliography, index  
ISBN 978-0-7864-3967-6 2010



**McFarland**

Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640 • Orders 800-253-2187 • FAX 336-246-4403 • [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com)

## Obituaries

### Adrian Ryan (1942-2009)

The Australian motor industry bade farewell one of its genuine all-rounders when hundreds of mourners turned out for the funeral of *Adrian Edward Ryan* in Melbourne on. Mr. Ryan, 77, who died October 17 after a short battle with cancer, had a career spanning more than four decades in the industry, most notably with Ford Australia, the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) and Repco. Mr. Ryan added his public relations pizzazz and writing skills to numerous motoring events, from major Ford car launches to the 1979 Repco Around Australia Rally and the Melbourne International Motor Show. His enthusiasm for motor racing was probably only exceeded by his love for all things Ford, starting with his beloved restored red Ford Mustang convertible and 1965 Falcon Squire 'woodie' wagon—one of fewer than 100 ever made. When he wasn't working at his various day jobs in the motor industry, he was immersed in numerous other motoring activities, including writing for *Racing Car News* and many other publications in Australia and overseas, broadcasting weekly motoring programs on Radio Bay FM (Geelong) and 3SR (Shepparton) and getting involved at various car club and historic car events.

For many years, Mr. Ryan was the voice of motorsport at Victorian race circuits, providing knowledgeable trackside commentary for race fans at Sandown, Calder, Phillip Island and Winton, as well as Bathurst. He even lent his talents behind the microphone to TV broadcasters at various networks over the years.

In the 1950s, he ventured on to the other side of the safety fence to race, forming a race team, Ecurie Shepparton, with racing driver Bryan Thomson, who went on to become one of the stars of Australian motor sport from the 1960s to the 1980s. At

Bathurst in the 1960s, a Ford Cortina driven by Mr. Ryan crashed over the old wooden fence on top of Mount Panorama – an event that helped to convince him that he might be better suited to the commentary box.

His work career included a couple of stints at the VACC, first as advertising and PR director from 1973 to 1978 – a job that included editing the *VACC Journal* – and more recently as a consultant publicist for the Melbourne International Motor Show through his Park Road Media agency, from 1996 to 2004. He also spent 14 years with Ford Public Affairs, where he helped to launch important new models such as the EA Falcon.

In later years, Mr. Ryan's encyclopedic knowledge of the motor industry and Ford in particular was put to good use in running the Ford Australia Archive—reputed to be the best such library of company records and images in the Australian motor industry. Ford Australia communications manager Sinead McAlary said Mr. Ryan would be missed by all who knew him at Ford. "Apart from running our archives and being a huge help to the current PR team in almost any way we could ever ask of him—including doing his most recent TV interview for us only three weeks before he died—Adrian was a lovely man to work with and we'll miss him dearly," she said.

Among the 500-plus mourners at his funeral at St Dominic's Church in East Camberwell were many former work colleagues, rivals and members of the media, along with family and friends, including many former motor racing and historic car colleagues. Among former Ford representatives were retired directors Ian Vaughan and Mike Jarvis. Eulogies were given by his son Richard, older brother Barry and racing colleague and friend Bryan Thomson. Mr. Ryan is survived by his wife of 52 years, Claudine, children Andrea, Richard, Stephen and Michelle, and 10 grandchildren.

—Ron Hammerton

### Frederick D. Roe (1921-2009)

Long-time SAH member, former officer and Friend of Automotive History *Frederick Dix Roe* passed away on November 12, 2009 in Holliston, Massachusetts. He had been in declining health since suffering a stroke earlier in the year.

Born February 5, 1921, he grew up in Greensboro, Maryland, a small town on the eastern shore. An automobile enthusiast from earliest memory, he went to New England as an adolescent to attend boarding school, and told stories of taking the train to New York for the auto show and returning with his typewriter case full of literature.

At Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire he found a number of kindred spirits, and automotive interest groups formed in the dormitories. Later, at Massachusetts Institute of Technology he found similar kinship with classmates and nearby Harvard students. Among them were founders of both the Veteran Motor Car Club of America and the Sports Car Club of America, and Fred was an early member of both. His tales of car hunting and collecting in pre- and early postwar Massachusetts became the stuff of legend, and his occasional lectures were very popular. In 1939 he bought a Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost from the Boston Rolls dealer for \$125, though he had to write home for the money. The car served as his primary transportation for several years. Other interesting cars passing through his hands included a Crane, a 1908 Renault, a Zedel and Amelia Earhart's Kissel Gold Bug.

It is for Duesenberg, however, that he is best known. He wrote in the introduction to his seminal 1982 book *Duesenberg: The Pursuit of Perfection*: "I am clearly a Duesenberg enthusiast and can remember every one I ever saw

## William B. Close (1930-2009)

in my boyhood in the thirties, so my interest goes way back, but in this book I have tried to view the subject with some objectivity and realism." Indeed he did, for the book, a sequel to the early work of J.L. Elbert, is recognized today as the authoritative source, remaining head and shoulders above subsequent coffee table tomes. Interestingly, Fred never owned a Duesenberg. Once I noticed "Duesenberg" next to his name in an early directory of the SCCA. "Oh," he said. "I was overseas during the war and had sold my cars. You had to own a recognized sports car to belong, so they 'assigned' me a derelict Model A Duesenberg that sat under a tree on a friend's farm."

An Army veteran of World War II in Europe, where he received the Purple Heart, he worked as parts manager at a Hudson dealership after leaving the service. He subsequently began publishing a car magazine, *Modern Motor Car*. It survived through five issues before it became apparent that he could not compete with a man named Petersen who had launched several successful titles on the West Coast.

He joined SAH in March 1971, becoming member number 127. He served the Society as secretary and treasurer at various times, and more recently as a director and chair of the nominations committee. He edited *Automotive History Review* from 1980 to 1984, issues 12 through 16. He received the Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award for the Duesenberg book in 1983, and was recognized in 1993 as a Friend of Automotive History, the Society's highest honor. A longtime member of the Classic Car Club of America, he edited the New England Region's magazine for many years. He was a founding member of the Rolls-Royce Owners

Club and was a director of the Larz Anderson Auto Museum in nearby Brookline, where he also served on the collections committee.

I met Fred early in my tenure as editor of *SAH Journal* and *Automotive History Review*. As I recall, it began through correspondence, but after we met in person at Hershey we became fast friends. We lived not far apart, so every few months we would meet for lunch to share our recent adventures, new books and literature. For urgent questions he was just a phone call away, and his encyclopedic memory for cars was a resource called upon by many. He had lived through the formative years of the principal clubs, in particular VMCCA and CCCA, and remembered who had owned which cars (not just Duesenbergs), what they'd done to them, and what was correct and what was not. It was fun to accompany him to car auctions, where the high rollers would all sidle up to him and usher him to a front-row seat, the better to get his advice when bidding became hot and heavy.

Automobiles were not his only interest. He had a keen appreciation for aviation, industrial history and technology. He also studied local and regional history and architecture, and maintained an avid appreciation for jazz. The latter was so important that he would pass up old car events when his favorite trio was playing locally.

Predeceased by his wife Barbara, Fred is survived by two sons, Frederick W. and Donald W. Roe, their spouses, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He is also survived by a sister, Genevieve Flickinger. A quiet and modest man, he generously shared his knowledge and experience. We are all the better for having him as our mentor, our teacher and our friend. —*Kit Foster*

*William Bell Close* died March 10, 2009 at his home in Signal Mountain, Tennessee, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Bill was born July 3, 1930, the son of Louise Bell and Clarence Barton Close of Jackson, Tennessee. During his teen years, Bill's family moved to Signal Mountain. He graduated from The Baylor School for Boys in Chattanooga in 1948. In 1950, he married his high school sweetheart, Sarah Jane Mathes. He received a business degree from Vanderbilt University in 1952, and was later a member of the Army reserve.

He owned The Close Company, a residential and commercial builder and developer with projects in Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga and Atlanta. Bill was active in both the Chattanooga and Signal Mountain communities. He was Elder Emeritus of First Christian Church, the founder

SAH members are invited to join  
**the Classic Car Club of America  
(CCCA)**

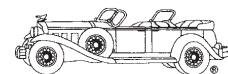
founded in 1952 to promote the  
preservation and restoration of  
distinctive motorcars built between  
1925 and 1948.

The club publishes its *Bulletin* eight  
times a year and the quarterly *Classic  
Car* magazine.

The club maintains a museum and  
research library on the grounds of  
the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory  
Corners, Michigan.

For membership details contact the club  
at either of the addresses below.

CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



1645 Des Plaines River Road, Suite 7  
Des Plaines, IL 60018-2206  
(847) 390-0443  
[www.ClassicCarClub.org](http://www.ClassicCarClub.org)

## Grace R. Brigham (1909-2009)

of the local Habitat for Humanity, a co-founding member of the Signal Mountain Lions Club, a member of the Signal Mountain Historical Committee, the Chattanooga Home Builders Association and a board member of the National Home Builders Association. In 1995, Bill was the first inductee into the Homebuilders Hall of Fame.

Bill enjoyed hunting, fishing and boating, in addition to collecting and restoring antique automobiles. He developed his love of antiques while researching Sarah's grandfather, Walter L. Marr, Buick's chief engineer from 1903 to 1915. Bill was fortunate to own the only existing 1903 Marr Auto Car. He joined SAH in October 2001, becoming member number 2591.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, sons Paul Mathes Close and William Barton Close, daughters Elizabeth Bell Meerdink and Sarah Marr Crowell Brown, nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. He is also survived by a brother, Louis Barton Close. Interment was at Duck Pond Cemetery in Chattanooga Memorial Park, followed by a memorial service at First Christian Church. Contributions in his memory may be made to Chattanooga Habitat for Humanity, 1201 East Main Street, Chattanooga, TN 37408, or First Christian Church, 650 McCallie Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37403. —Kit Foster

*Grace Reid Brigham*, SAH founder member, Friend of Automotive History and widow of co-founder and long-time editor Richard Brigham, died in Columbus, Ohio, on December 3, 2009, just ten days short of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The daughter of James and Julia Obetz Reid, Grace was born December 13, 1909, in Mobile, Alabama. She attended Barton Business College in Mobile, and lived in Toledo, Ohio, and Fankton, Indiana. After moving to Marietta, Georgia, she and her husband operated the Brigham Press, a printing and publishing company. When Dick Brigham and Marshall Naul conceived the idea of a formal organization uniting the many independent practitioners of automotive history, she took on much of the unglamorous behind-the-scenes work. She was instrumental in the creation of the first newsletter, now *SAH Journal*, for the Society in September 1969, before the first meeting was held that October. In 1974, she and Dick started our magazine, *Automotive History Review*, and it was she who suggested the title. The Brighams were jointly recognized as pioneers in publishing automotive history when the Richard and Grace Brigham Award was created in their honor in 1990. The

Brigham Award recognizes excellence in periodical publication in our field over all issues in a given year. They were also jointly honored as Friends of Automotive History in 1985.


Grace had the patience and concentration for work of intense detail. She compiled many indices, including early ones for the newsletter and for *AHR*. Her lasting work is the *Serial Number Book for U.S. Cars 1900-1975*, published by Motorbooks in 1979. A modest-looking paperback on rough paper, it contains a wealth of information vital to the acquisition, restoration and purchase of old cars, and used copies of the out-of-print volume have become quite pricy. She also wrote several chapters of a history of the Society, which were published in *Review* issues 29, 31, 33 and 37.

Grace was a founder and member of East Unitarian Church in Atlanta, Georgia, and a past member of Toledo Church. In addition to her husband, who died in 1995, she was predeceased by her son Harry David Brigham, daughter Jeanette B. Gruesen and sister Mary Gressley. She is survived by a son-in-law, Henry A. Gruesen, two daughters-in-law, Judy Fitch and Blue Brigham, and seven grandchildren: Stephen Brigham, Amy Krontz, Laura Bice, Kristen Frye, and John, Henry and Mitchell Gruesen. She also leaves 14 great-grandchildren. A memorial service is planned in the spring. She will be interred beside her husband in Forest Cemetery in Toledo.

After Dick's passing, Grace moved to Columbus, Ohio, to be near family. Failing eyesight had kept her from corresponding with old friends in recent years, but she remained active and independent, moving to assisted living only in the past year. Grace was, in many ways, the mother of SAH, and the Society owes much of its early success to her dedication and perseverance. —Kit Foster

**RICHARD P. SCHARCHBURG ARCHIVES**

PRESERVING AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE

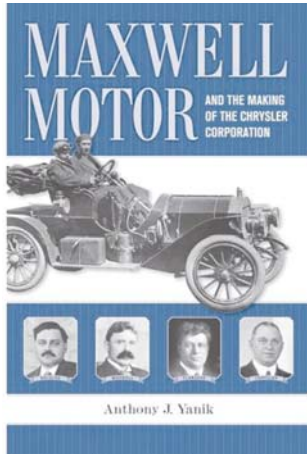


ENTRUST YOUR COLLECTIONS TO AN INSTITUTION THAT WILL PROTECT THEM FOR YEARS TO COME AND SHARE THEM WITH HISTORIANS AND RESEARCHERS ALWAYS. COLLECTIONS PRESERVED AS THEY WERE FORMULATED!  
NO COLLECTION TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL.  
ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

**CONTACT US TODAY**

DAVID C. WHITE, ARCHIVIST  
RICHARD P. SCHARCHBURG ARCHIVES KETTERING UNIVERSITY | 700 W. THIRD AVE. FLINT, MI 48504  
810.762.9661 | DWHITE@KETTERING.EDU

# Book Reviews

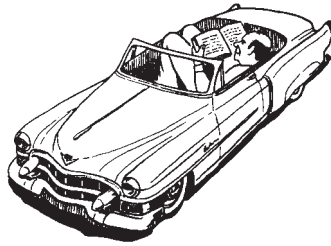


## **Maxwell Motor and the Making of the Chrysler Corporation**

by *Anthony J. Yanik*. 189 pages, 23 black-and-white photographs. ISBN 978-0-8143-3423-2. Wayne State University Press, Detroit 2009. \$35.00

So much as been written about the early history of Ford Motor Company and General Motors, we might be excused from assuming these two were alone responsible for the development and popularization of the American low-price car. It is good to be reminded that there were other talents that arose at the beginning of the century to cut new paths that would be followed by the rest of the industry.

*Maxwell Motor and the Making of the Chrysler Corporation* tells the story of Benjamin Briscoe and Jonathan Maxwell, a pair of Detroiters without formal higher education whose ambition led them to the fledgling automobile trade. They met through their association with Olds Motor Works, that incubator of so many future rivals. Briscoe was a successful sheet metal fabricator and parts supplier to various car manufacturers; Maxwell received his training in the shop of Charles Brady King, builder of Detroit's first car, and later designed the Northern runabout. Over its twenty-year history, Maxwell typically placed in the second tier of producers and annual sales never exceeded 75,000. Most of its plants were located in the east far from Detroit parts suppliers. A virtue was made of this by the stated policy of internal manufacture of components



but growth might have been stronger with access to the broader industry.

Maxwell history is neatly divided in half by its disastrous involvement in the United States Motor Company combination assembled by Briscoe whose business methods closely modeled those of his friend, Billy Durant. The holding company collapsed within two years and Maxwell was the sole unit to survive and be reorganized. Maxwell and Briscoe resigned to be replaced by Walter Flanders, the brilliant manufacturing executive and alumnus of Ford and E-M-F. During his five-year contract Flanders quickly nursed the company back to health while correcting its inefficiencies. Eastern plants were sold off to centralize manufacture in the mid-west and models reduced to a single low-price line. Although Flanders left Maxwell in good condition, the company was soon overcome by the postwar recession of 1920. Once again it found itself, like General Motors and Willys-Overland, in the arms of its creditors. This time, Walter Chrysler was the knight errant and the outcome of the story is well known.

Author Yanik has given us a thoroughly researched work with good balance between business history, product development and motorsports which Maxwell exploited to good advantage during its early years. It is enriched with detail from company records now located in the Chrysler Archives. Fortunately Yanik did his research years ago since those archives are no longer open to historians. The chapter on Flanders makes the book in some ways a sequel to Yanik's *The E-M-F Story*, the definitive work on that company but now out of print. Readers are advised to avoid disappointment this time. Those who wish to have a good understanding of the development of the American automobile industry need to own this book. —*Arthur Jones*

**The Eight Cylinder duPont**, by *Stan Smith*. 120 pages, 108 sepia-toned photographs and illustrations, with two color endpiece insertions of reproduction duPont literature. ISBN 978-0-615-25419-7. Hardbound, 8-1/4 x 10" (landscape). Published by the author and available from him at Smithandson Acres, 111 Linden Hall Road, Boalsburg, PA 16827 USA. \$100.00 including tax, packing and shipping in USA. Inquire regarding overseas orders.

SAH member Stan Smith has made it his life's work to learn as much as he could about the duPont automobile, the luxury car built from 1919 to 1932 in Wilmington, Delaware. It is our good fortune that he has compiled the fruits of his labors into a book on the greatest of these, the eight-cylinder Models G and H, the automaker's final flourish from 1929 to 1932.

It begins with an introduction to the models, describing their development and production history. A more-or-less chronological explanation, by body style, follows, describing the 200-plus cars built, and the book concludes with eight brief biographies of the principal participants in the enterprise. An appendix lists, by chassis number, each of the cars, its description, shipping date and destination, first owner and additional details.

The illustrations are mostly period photographs, from when the cars were new. They have been lightly sepia-toned for effect, but retain clarity and contrast of the originals such that the minute detail craved by historians has not been compromised. The overall production quality is excellent, and today's short-run publication technology has allowed a modest print run within the author's means, with further printings feasible when demand requires them. Although expensive when considered on a cost-per-page basis, this technique has the potential to make much more history available to enthusiasts of limited-production marques. Stan is to be commended for blazing a trail in this regard; his book is an exemplar of how it can be done. —*Kit Foster*



**Ford in the Service of America:  
Mass Production for the Military  
During the World Wars**

by Timothy J. O'Callaghan, 206 pages, 70 photos, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 978-0-7864-4485-4. McFarland & Co., Inc., 2009. \$35 softcover (7 x 10). [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com), 800-253-2187

World War II now lies approximately two-thirds of a century in the past. It must be incomprehensible to those not alive then, that there was a time when virtually all the resources of our domestic life were directed towards a single goal, victory over clearly identified enemies.

Preparedness for the eventual conflict began slowly in 1940. There was fear even before Pearl Harbor of a German air attack from hidden bases in countries south of the United States and from enemy planes operating from aircraft carriers off the coastlines of the US. Even though Henry Ford was anti-war (after all, there were Ford plants and facilities in England, and Germany and seven other European countries under Hitler's control), he became fully engaged in rearming for the national defense. The story of the Ford Motor Company's contributions to the war effort in 1940-45 is the principal theme of *Ford in the Service of America: Mass Production for the Military during the World Wars*, by Timothy J. O'Callaghan (while Ford participated fully in defense production for World War I, the limited duration of US participation, 19 months, meant that the company's manufacture of Liberty engines, Eagle Boats and tanks was just ramping up by the time of the Armistice).

O'Callaghan's story is factual and straight-forward: what the products were, and how they were developed,

refined and manufactured, and their number and cost. What could have been a stultifying array of facts takes on a life of its own and cumulatively becomes "the story." To the extent there is a hero, it must be Charles E. Sorensen, whom Henry Ford designated as the chief of war production (and who became another casualty of Harry Bennett in 1944). Let's take the B-24 Liberator bomber and its Willow Run assembly plant as the best examples of Ford at war. Consolidated Aircraft Corporation developed the B-24, but it was not thoroughly tested nor production-engineered when Ford undertook its mass production. To convert Consolidated's hand-assembly to an assembly line, Ford sent 200 engineers and production men to the factory in San Diego for four months to make an up-to-date set of plans. Thirty thousand drawings were re-made for the first Ford-built B-24. From then on, O'Callaghan records "only another 10,000 drawings were required to cover changes for the next 490 bombers built to the introduction of the B-24H model, and only 20,000 more drawings were required to the end of production." Then, there were the drawings required to break down production tasks to their simplest in order to develop each worker's individual assignment. The reader has a mental picture of sleepless nights as these changes must have been priorities. Surely, the engineers and production men should be regarded as silent heroes on the home front, sacrificing time for the war effort.

Overall, each B-24 contained a total of 465,472 parts and rivets. Workers to assemble them had to be found, hired, housed, and trained. At the peak, 43,369 were employed at the Willow Run assembly plant, 39 per cent of them women. Willow Run was built on


land largely owned by Henry Ford for soybean farming. The plant enclosed a floor space of almost 4¾ million square feet, and was equipped with an assembly line over a mile long.

Ford's second best-known wartime product was the ubiquitous jeep. But did you know that there was an amphibious version called the "Seep?" Gliders, tanks, and squad tents were some of the other materiel produced. And, as the author notes, Ford wasn't the largest producer for the war effort. One wonders whether the "arsenal of democracy" would be up to a similar task today.

Flawed with anti-Semitism and, in many ways, a narrow mind, Henry Ford was nonetheless a believer in diversity. By 1914, it was company policy to find jobs for the blind, deaf, and amputees, both civilian and veterans, and by World War II, nearly half the blacks working in the Detroit auto industry were employed by Ford.

The genesis of the book is noteworthy. In the early days of WWII, Henry Ford asked Charles LaCroix, the assistant director of Greenfield Village, to write Ford's history of the war, but Henry died before the work was published. LaCroix's eight volumes summarizing the contents of 42 archival boxes have been available to researchers but this is the first work dedicated specifically to this area of Ford history. These archives were the primary research tool for O'Callaghan, now 79, who served in Ford in management for 40 years. His personal recollections of the war are bound to be poignant as he dedicates the book to the memory of his brother, killed on Okinawa when O'Callaghan was 15. He has written two books about Ford's aviation ventures, as well as other aspects of Ford history in periodicals.

This is a commendable book. When I received it for review, my first thoughts were that it was of little personal interest and that I should pass it on. But the more I browsed through it, the more interesting and significant it seemed, and I soon was immersed from cover to cover. It has its share of typos, some unforgivable (e.g., "Lindburgh") but not enough to question the accuracy of what O'Callaghan reports. —Taylor Vinson



**books4cars.com**  
**Automotive Books & Manuals**  
4850 37th Ave S Seattle Wa 98118  
Tel: 206.721.3077 Free: 888.380.9277  
[www.books4cars.com](http://www.books4cars.com)

# Editorial

## The Brink

Generally I do not like to comment on “current events” until after the fact. In the year 2009, however, there was so much turmoil in global events, commentary is unavoidable. At the time of this writing on the last day of December, three established brands, Pontiac, SAAB and Saturn are slated to be phased out. Opel/Vauxhall was to be sold, but in November GM announced it would retain the brands and restructure GM Europe operations. Two mass-market brands are to come under ownership by enterprises located in the People’s Republic of China. According to a Ford Motor Company press release dated December 23, 2009, Volvo Car Corporation is in the process of being acquired by Zhejiang Geely Holding Group Company Limited, or “Geely.” HUMMER was in the process of being acquired by Sichuan Tengzhong Heavy Industrial Machinery Co., Ltd, or “Tengzhong” as of June 2, 2009.

These changes were already anticipated earlier in 2009, based on statements from GM, Chrysler and Ford regarding restructuring plans. At the Vancouver, BC, International Auto Show in the first week of April, for example, GM had displays featuring all the current brands, including Pontiac, Saturn, and HUMMER. SAAB was present at the show, as was Volvo. Chrysler displays emphasized trucks and proposed future electric vehicles. By November, 2009, at the Seattle Auto Show, there were no displays for Pontiac, Saturn or SAAB. The show itself was noticeably smaller than the previous year, with one entire hall closed for the 2009 show.

The Los Angeles Auto Show began in the first week of December, 2009. SAAB was present with an example of the 2010 9-5 on display. Fritz Henderson, CEO and president of GM was scheduled to give the keynote address the morning of December 2. Henderson resigned his position on



Above: 2010 SAAB 9-5. Below: circa 1955 SAAB 92. Images from the Editor's collection.



December 1 and Bob Lutz took his place at the podium the next day. Lutz emphasized that he would only address future products, and that he would be doing his “Mr. Teflon” routine providing non-answers to questions about the boardroom events of the previous day. Eight automotive brands were missing from Los Angeles: Infiniti and Nissan, Ferrari, Maserati, Lamborghini, Pontiac, Saturn and HUMMER. Chrysler had a lot of open space around the edges of its display, and virtually no all-new or updated models on show.

SAAB had been for sale for most of 2009. During the summer Koenigsegg was in negotiations with GM to purchase SAAB. This arrangement would put SAAB back in Swedish hands, to the relief of many car enthusiasts. By the time of the Los Angeles Auto Show, the SAAB personnel on the stand looked visibly worried. GM had announced that Koenigsegg Group AB had terminated their purchase agreement eight days earlier, on November 24. The Dutch manufacturer Spyker Cars announced a bid for SAAB on December 3 during its auto show press conference. December 14, GM announced that Beijing Automotive Industry Holdings Co. Ltd (BAIC) had closed a deal to acquire technology

from the SAAB 9-3, current 9-5 and powertrains which would be incorporated into BAIC vehicles. The statement did not specify if the “current” 9-5 was the 2009 model or the recently shown 2010 version. December 18, regarding the bid from Spyker Cars, GM announced, “during the due diligence, certain issues arose that both parties believe could not be resolved. As a result, GM will start an orderly wind-down of Saab operations.” Nick Reilly, President of GM Europe carefully stated that an “orderly wind-down” is not a bankruptcy or forced liquidation. So it is an unforced liquidation, then. These gyrations remind me of the three-way tug-of-war between Volkswagen, Rolls-Royce plc and BMW regarding Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and Bentley.

I had wanted the Saturn division to succeed from the first time it was announced in January, 1985. If General Motors could actually create a whole new brand from scratch, building the cars in a new greenfield factory, I believed there might be hope for the United States auto industry. Technical details of the cars in 1990 were of interest, such as a large compound-curved rear glass or use of unstressed plastic exterior panels similar to the Enduraflex™ material on Pontiac’s Fiero. Saturn’s policy of fixed pricing appeared to be a relief from the need to haggle with

## HORSELESS CARRIAGE GAZETTE

As you might expect from a club publication, the *Horseless Carriage Gazette* is chock full of exciting four-color photographs showing brass-era automobiles in action. First-generation cars don’t get out often but, when they do, it is a real privilege to be along for the ride.

History buffs will enjoy a feature or two in each *Horseless Carriage Gazette* about marques both popular and obscure. In addition, more than 240 black & white images from the pre-1916 era were used as illustrations in the six 2007 issues.

Membership is \$45 (\$55 outside of the USA).

There is no better place to connect with nearly 5,000 enthusiasts who appreciate pioneer vehicles than in the Horseless Carriage Club. We’ll be honored if you decide to join.

**Horseless Carriage Club**  
PO Box 62, Bakersfield CA 93302  
888/832-2374 or office@hcca.org



Left: 1991 Saturn S-series showing non-structural body panels. Above: 1985 Saturn prototype. Editor's collection.

the dealer, as negotiation tends to be culturally awkward in the U.S. When GM created the EV-1 program, it was logical that the vehicles be handled through the Saturn distribution channel. Inevitably, the notion of what makes a Saturn distinctive became diluted over time. The L-series cars featured steel exterior body panels for a start, and by the 2009 model year, Saturn appeared to be Opel's distribution channel in the U.S. The Saturn Vue Hybrid up to the 2007 model seemed to be a return to Saturn features, or were they gimmicks? The Vue Hybrid had the plastic exterior body panels, CVT transmission, and hybrid powertrain. It should have been a perfect Saturn, but its appearance was boxy and undistinguished. In June, 2009 GM announced that Penske Automotive Group had entered talks to acquire Saturn. By the end of September, Penske had pulled out of the talks. As with the Saturn brand, it seemed like a good idea on paper.

I do gnash my teeth at the summary closure of Pontiac. The hints were there at the beginning of 2009, and by the end of April, there was no



Above: 1926 Pontiac Model 6-27. Center and right: proposed Pontiac Solstice Coupe. From the Editor's collection.

doubt. The website's home page in December boasts "Final Closeout" 0% for 72 months plus \$1500 cash back on all Pontiac models or \$6500 cash back on all models. A 1965 Pontiac Catalina sedan was the first U.S.-made car I owned. I remember fondly the effortless highway performance and towing capability, the slightly cracked transparent steering wheel rim and the red Chief Pontiac high-beam indicator. I was less fond of the fuel consumption and the single-circuit conventional 5-lug drum brakes.

Oldsmobile and Plymouth both had protracted phase-outs at the beginning of the decade. Daewoo's presence in the U.S. was folded into GM's import stable, to the chagrin of Daewoo dealers. Naturally, these small Daewoos now make up the entry-level Pontiac and Chevrolet models.

Amidst all these overly earnest and gloomy statements, several bright spots do appear. Ford Motor Company was quick to point out to all and sundry that they took no federal bailout funds. Alternate fuels, electric propulsion, and fuel cell vehicles are making ever-stronger appearances. This variety is reminiscent of the turn of the last century. Tesla, Nissan and Mitsubishi have been strong boosters of plug-in electric power. Fisker showed their Karma plug-in hybrid that was conceived from the outset as a luxury vehicle. Korean brands Kia and Hyundai have improved markedly over the past ten years, both



in design and consumer perceptions. The Hyundai Equus displayed at the Seattle Auto Show was the size of a Mercedes. Allard, a revived marque, showed a new bespoke car with independent rear suspension, inboard disc brakes and a vintage appearance.

On a final note, one particular news item could have brightened my whole day. On September 7, 2009, the Independent State of Samoa, formerly "Western Samoa" officially changed from right-hand to left-hand traffic. According to the Associated Press, the first hours of the traffic change went smoothly with a high police presence and a three-day ban on alcohol sales. Samoa would be the first nation to change traffic direction since the 1970s and the first in this century. Of particular note is that the total land area of main islands Upolu and Savai'i plus several outlying islands is only 1133 square miles. There was no mention of how many miles of road are on the islands. The motivation for changing traffic direction was that the expense of importing cars from New Zealand and Australia is much lower than importing vehicles from the United States. Buses now have entry doors on the traffic side, but resolution of that issue remains to be seen. My personal experience of the South Pacific islands is that cars in general do not last long in the salt air, ultraviolet light exposure and unrelenting moisture. Unfortunately, three weeks later on September 29 a magnitude 8.0 MMS earthquake south of the islands caused a tsunami which struck the shore with 20- to 30-foot waves.

In all, nearly everyone I know would rather forget 2009. In terms of automotive history, who is going to remember if we don't? —A. Meyer





The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1948  
Vashon, WA 98070-1948

First Class  
Presort  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #1  
Whittier, CA

## ***The Brink.*** See page 10.



**1965 Pontiac Catalina.** At the end of 2009, every appearance is that the Pontiac, SAAB and Saturn brands will close. Pontiac is being summarily ended by GM. Illustration by Art Fitzpatrick and Van Kaufman from the Editor's collection.