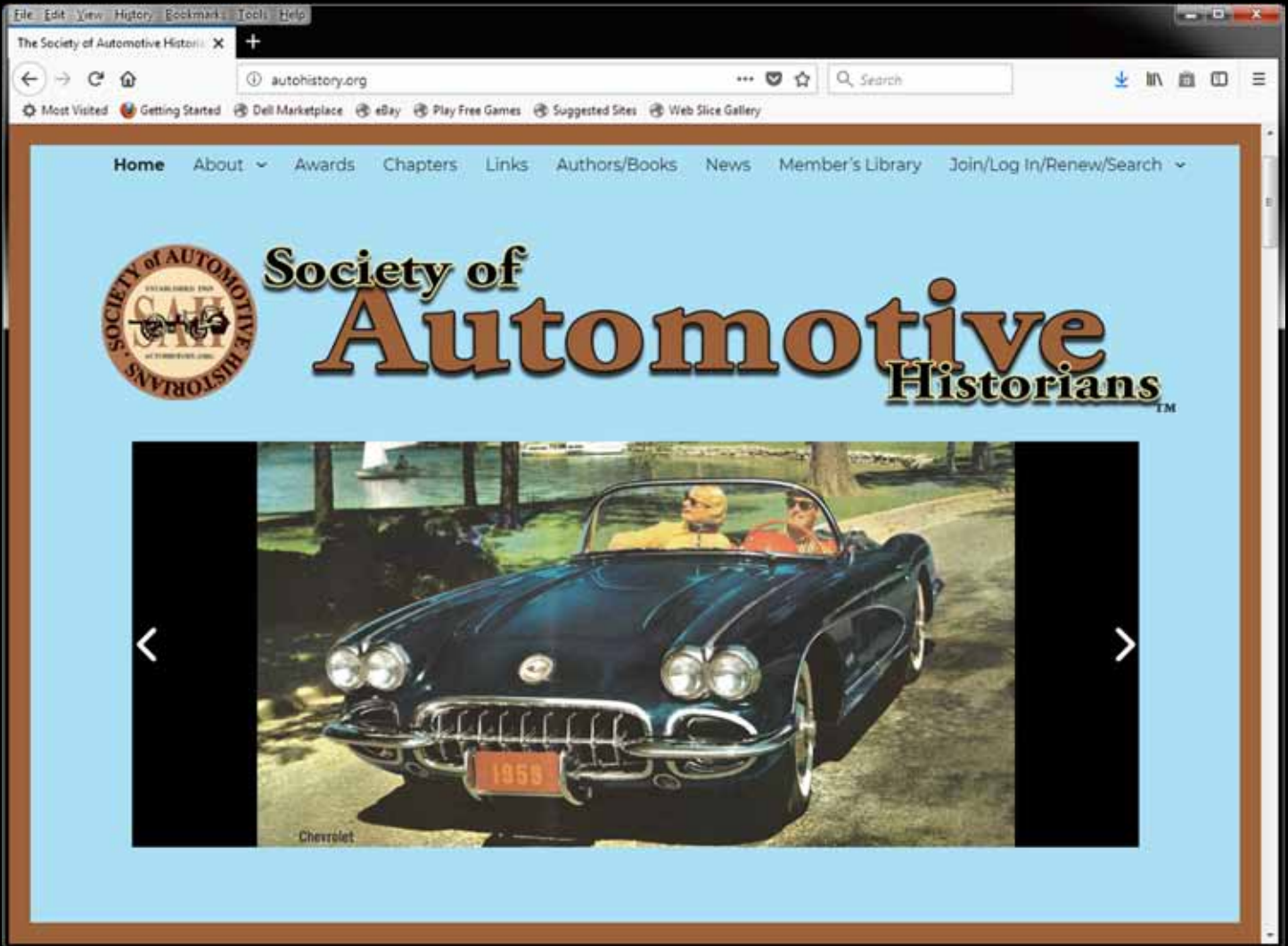


SAH Journal



ISSUE 286
MAY / JUNE 2017

\$5.00 US

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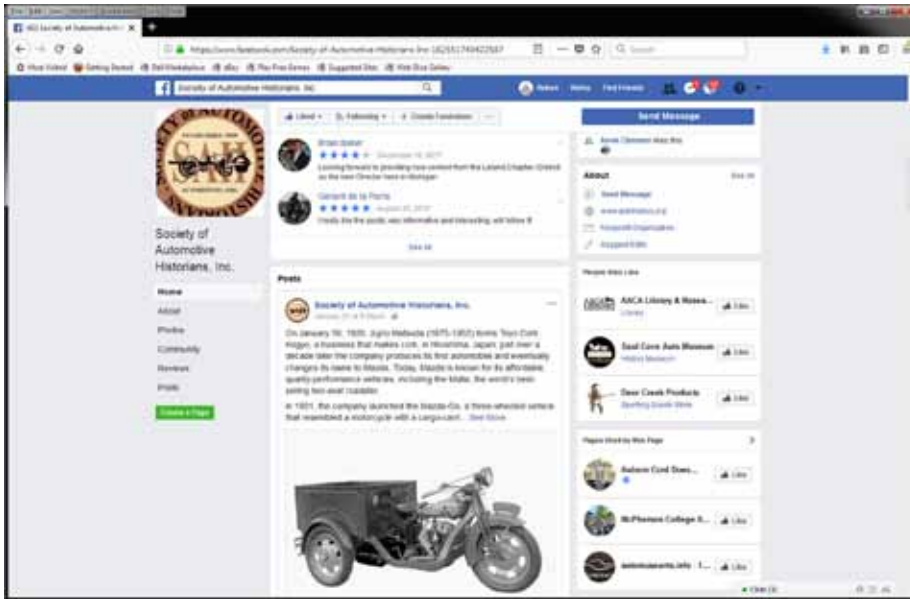
Billboard

SAH Annual Meeting of Members & Gala Awards Banquet:

The annual meeting and gala awards banquet will take place on Friday, October 6th, in the Traditions Dining Room at the Hershey Country Club in Hershey Pennsylvania (that's during the annual AACA "Hershey" Fall Meet). For details, see: autohistory.org. *Thank you!*

Wanted: Contributors! The *SAH Journal* invites contributors for articles and book reviews. With your help, we can continue to feature a steady and consistent stream of authoritative material advancing the record of automotive history. (A book reviewer that can read Japanese is currently needed.) Please contact the editor directly. *Thank you!*

Front cover: This is the homepage of the SAH's website: autohistory.org. Along with the SAH's Facebook page (seen below), they're both always available as a resource and points of engagement for SAH members and the public at large, and to promote automotive history. There are various areas open to members and non-members at autohistory.org; for example, the links page—with its nearly 600 entries under descriptive categories, it's a good place to start for research. The areas available to members (via user name and password access) contain "PDF" files of all the *SAH Journal* and *Automotive History Review* issues. All those files have been OCR'd (Optical Character Recognition), which makes them searchable; and how to do that is the subject of our feature article. The members' section also contains a member directory page where all members (current and past) may be searched. The Facebook page allows members and non-members to communicate in a way that is similar to a user forum, but since it's Facebook, it allows for functionality for commenting as well as sharing images and much more. We are lucky to have *Louis Fourie* managing the website, and *Carla Lesh* managing the Facebook page; please visit both. (And "like us" on Facebook!)



Submission Deadlines:

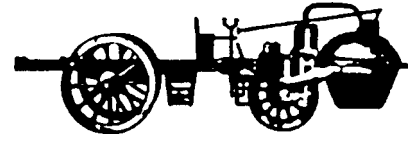
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|-----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Deadline: | 12/1 | 2/1 | 4/1 | 6/1 | 8/1 | 10/1 |
| Issue: | Jan/Feb | Mar/Apr | May/June | Jul/Aug | Sep/Oct | Nov/Dec |
| Mailed: | 1/31 | 3/31 | 5/31 | 7/31 | 9/30 | 11/30 |

Note: the SAH Journal is a bimonthly publication (printed 6 times a year) and there is a two-month horizon for submitted material before it is mailed (e.g., material submitted by February 1st appears in the Mar/Apr issue and is mailed on or before 3/31.) All letters, manuscripts, and advertisement submissions and inquiries go to the editor.

SAH Journal

ISSUE 286 • MAY/JUNE 2017

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



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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 \$50 per year (\$60 per year outside North America & Mexico); digital membership dues are \$20.

Dues and changes of address go to:

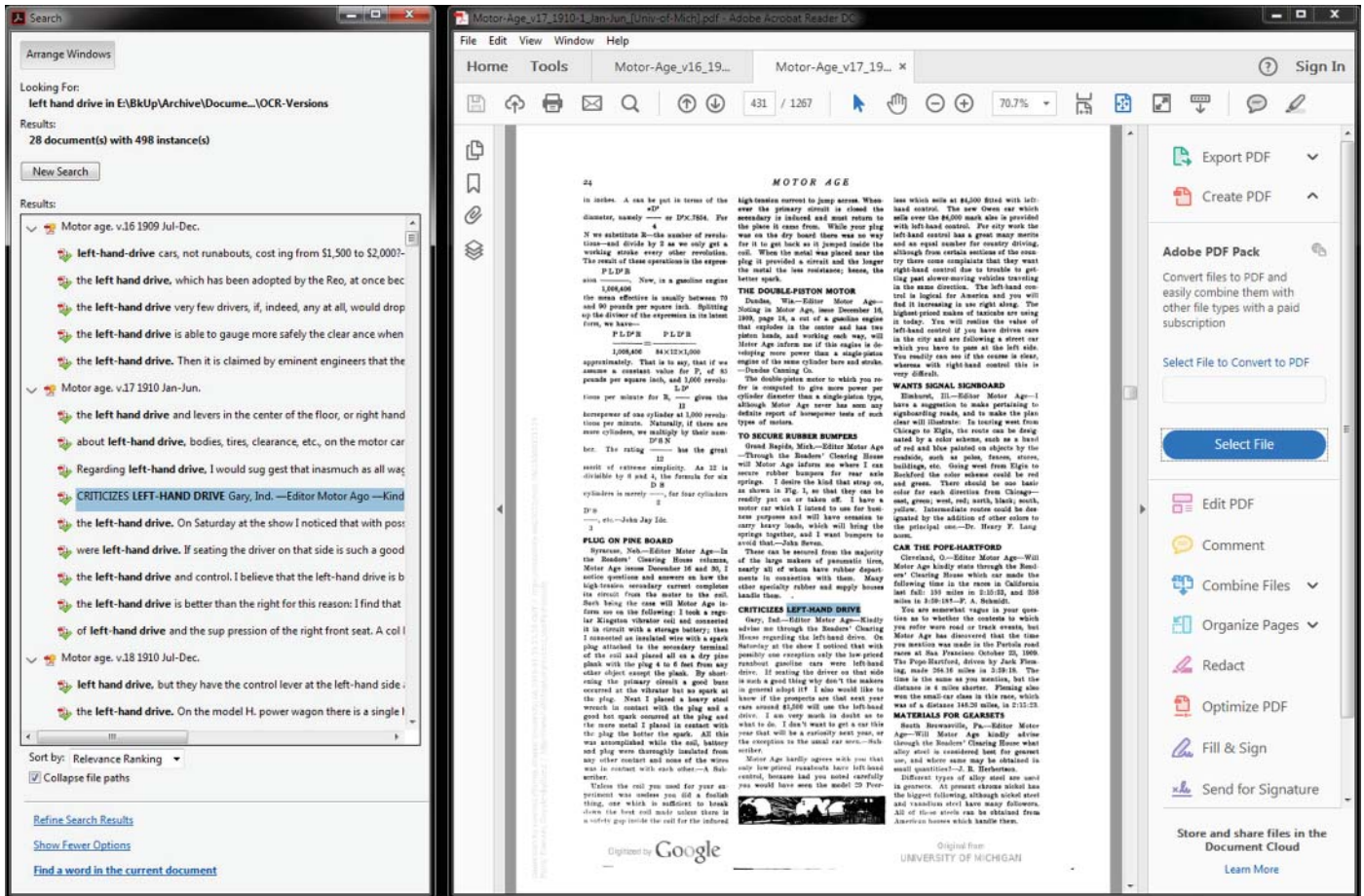
Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.
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A RESEARCH TOOL AND SKILL: SEARCHING PDF FILES ON YOUR COMPUTER

The next issue of the *SAH Journal* will feature a look back at some of the coverage appearing in *Motor Age* from 1909 to 1913 on the subject of left-hand drive and driving on the right side of the road. The research involved reviewing the content of a number of volumes containing thousands of pages in order to select less than a dozen samples. This would have taken a very long time if it was done via the usual methods. Fortunately, the material was available in searchable electronic files. The rest of this article will guide the reader through the steps to perform such searches, as an aid to the historian doing research. Readers' computer skills vary greatly, so only basic skills will be presumed.

Perhaps the most popular document file format for managing documents is the Portable Document File (PDF). The Adobe software company created the Acrobat program to create and manage PDF files. Such files could be created to capture files from other programs, such as from a word processing program, or it can capture images (scanned or from other graphic programs). Scanned documents are images, unless they

are OCR'd (Optical Character Recognition). Accordingly, an OCR'd PDF will still have the scanned images, but the text on those images can be "seen" by the computer as text, and can then be searched. In order for PDFs to have wide acceptance, Adobe produced a free version of Acrobat called Acrobat Reader, which allows anyone to view and search PDFs.

To start, download Acrobat Reader via get.adobe.com/reader/ (or check if you have it on your computer—most come with it out of the box). If you will be searching just one PDF, or dozens of PDFs, make sure you know where those are located on your computer. Acrobat can search for a single word, or an entire string of words, in one or through hundreds of PDF files.

Using the *Motor Age* example, one key phrase that was searched was simple: "left-hand drive." With Acrobat open, select menu option "Edit" and then select "Advanced Search" from the dropdown menu. A dialogue box will appear. Select if you want to search "In the current document"—which is any document you already have open—or in "All PDF Documents in"—which refers

to a directory of files you will identify by clicking on the box just under that selection. That dropdown box allows you to find and select the directory with all the PDF files you would want to search.

The next step is to input the word or phrase you want to search in the box labeled "What word or phrase would you like to search for?" Then there are four additional options—the first two should be considered. "Whole words only" helps if, for example, you want results for only "just" and not "justify"—and "Case-Sensitive" if that criterion helps. The aim is to have the program generate the most relevant results to your search. Next, click on the "Search" button.

Depending on the number of files you search, and the size of each of those files, the process may take seconds—or it can take a few minutes. As results are found, they start accumulating in the "Results" box. (The process may be stopped while in process by clicking on the "Stop" button, which may be desirable if far too many results are generated to be practical.) As the name of each file containing results appears, one may open the file by just clicking it.

Once clicked on, one or multiple lines appear. On this level, one will see the searched-for word or phrase in bold text, with words immediately before and after the word or phrase, so that the reader could see the context in which the searched-for word or phrase appears (see the left side of the image on the top of the previous page). Just click on any of those lines, and the program will open the document right to the page containing the word or phrase, with the word

or phrase highlighted so it can be found easily on the page (see right side of the image). With skill in choosing the right words, or string of words, one can find anything in a large pool of PDF documents.

With all *SAH Journal* and *Automotive History Review* issues available on the SAH website (autohistory.org), any member can search past issues for any number of items of interest. If one has to search through a pile of paper to find relevant data, one strategy

would be to scan the documents, OCR those pages (the full version of Acrobat is necessary for this, as Acrobat Reader will not perform the OCR process), then search the pages for the desired data. These steps, and this whole process, are presented here in its basic terms. There are various programs that produce PDF files, and that do the OCR process. But with these basic skills, the researcher can cover a lot of ground.

—R. Verdés

Book Review

Jim McGee, Crew Chief of Champions

by Gordon Kirby

Racemaker Press (2014)

racemaker.com/ 617-723-6533

288 pages, 11" x 11" hardcover

300+ images

Price: \$75

ISBN-10: 1935240102

ISBN-13: 978-1935240105

"While I respect the tradition and great history of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, it really upsets me when I hear people talk about how they get goose bumps when they pull into the Speedway. It makes me mad that any place could do that to people, that it could influence their thinking and their minds about how important it all was, that it was life or death."

Well, easy to say if you're one of the most successful crew chiefs and team managers in Indy car history with absolutely nothing to prove. But even though this quote was uttered by a long-retired McGee, he did act that way already in his early days. In fact the methodical calm he brought to the chaos that is pit lane cemented his reputation as much as did his technical and people skills.

This crew chief of champions is also a champion among crew chiefs, which is probably why this book was once intended to have the subtitle "Five Decades of Indy Car Wins." Ninety USAC and CART wins, nine championships, and four Indy 500 wins (with Andretti, Mears, Johncock, Fittipaldi)

between 1965 and 2005 are the stuff that deserves a proper book—and this is it. It is the third in a new series of American Racing History, and if it proves one thing it is that books like this need to be written while the people they're about are still around. McGee is 77 now (2014), still firing on all cylinders and able to draw deeply from the well that is his vast life experience.



Much of the book is in the form of long first-person passages by McGee, augmented with material from interviews with many of the top drivers and team owners of his time. Most of them worked with McGee but even those who didn't hold him in the highest regard. All but the first chapter which covers his childhood close with a commentary by one or several people that is specific to the respective chapter; Mario Andretti makes repeat appearances here.

Veteran author Gordon Kirby (10 books, also US editor for *Motor Sport* magazine in the UK) portrays his subject ably and sympathetically, but modern-day readers, certainly those dissatisfied with the current state of affairs in American racing, will find some of McGee's analyses or opinions (money, sponsorships, technical and regulatory parameters etc.), especially in the

Epilogue, so rooted in their day as to have no application any longer. But—that's not the purpose of the book anyway; it is a record of its time and as such it adds much nuance and detail to racing history. McGee is plenty candid without being impolite when it comes to calling a spade a spade, for instance driver Eddie Sachs' utter incompetence regarding technical matters or the babying required to keep Nigel Mansell's spirits up, something that ultimately put a strain on the Andretti relationship.

Photographically the book is very strong, thanks to the half-million images in the publisher's archive and McGee's own photos and many other sources. Appended are lists of the 90 wins, the 44 drivers who worked with McGee, and the teams he was involved with. It has a very nice index.

McGee got his professional start under the legendary Clint Brawner—quite a different personality—who long ago wrote his own autobiography, *Indy 500 Mechanic: The Inside Story of Big Time Auto Racing* (ISBN 978-0801960642). Read both these books to get a good look behind the curtains.

If you're ever in Boston on an August 10th, be sure to raise a glass to toast "Jim McGee Day" which was added to the local calendar in 1982 after its native son won the Indy and Michigan 500s with Johncock.

Kirby has signed up to co-author with Joe Freeman (the publisher) the next book in this series, *Second to One*, which portrays forty drivers who finished second in the Indy 500 but never won. A tentative future collaboration will be a definitive history of Carl Haas and Newman/Haas Racing.

—Charly Bauman

This review appears courtesy of speedreaders. info where it was first published in substantially similar form.