

**Society of Automotive Historians**  
**Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes**

**October 7 & 9, 2020**

Location: Virtual meeting via FreeConferenceCall.com

Note: Due to the Coronavirus pandemic this meeting was held virtually via the website FreeConferenceCall.com.

**Present:**

***Current Directors:*** Don Capps, President; Robert Barr, Vice President; Rubén Verdés, Treasurer; Robert Casey, Secretary; Bob Elton, Kevin Kirbitz, Carla Lesh, Chris Lezotte, John Marino, Casey Maxon, John Mohr, Dean Nelson, Steve Purdy, Bob Schmitt

***Guests and ex officio:*** Louis Fourie, Ed Garten, Andrew Beckman, John Heitmann

***Note: These minutes contain only the summaries of the committee and officers' reports. The full committee reports that have been submitted and the Treasurer's reports are filed with the minutes and are available upon written request to the Secretary of the Society.***

President Capps called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm, EDT.

Upon completion of the roll call, Secretary Casey declared that with 14 officers and directors in attendance a quorum was present.

- Upon motion made by J. Marino and seconded by C. Lezotte, minutes of the May 19, 2020 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Society of Automotive Historians were approved as written. [L  
SEP]
- **President's Report:** D. Capps reporting
  - President's Report is attached hereto.
  - With the Bylaws now revised and updated, we need to turn our attention to other issues such as the policies and procedures of the various committees and working groups, discuss the finding of a possible "bricks & mortar" home for the SAH, along with our roles in

conferences and the need for exploring funding/sponsorship opportunities.

- **Treasurer's Report:** R. Verdés reporting.
  - The Treasurer's Report is attached hereto and should be consulted for detailed information.
  
- **International Committee:** B. Barr reporting:
  - Report of the International Committee is attached hereto.
  - The suggestion was made that we send an electronic newsletter recounting SAH activities to international auto history organizations including AHA, AHG, AISA, PHAP, SAHB, and CONAM. President Capps sees this as important to making us an international organization.
  - L. Fourie volunteers to join the International Committee and says he will try to travel to international meetings as soon as Covid conditions allow.
  
- **Membership Report:** S. Purdy reporting:
  - Report of the Membership Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Marketing Committee has developed a strategy to promote the organization and attract new members. We now need a new batch of brochures, a social media strategy and, most of all, we need active SAH members to help and share prospects from their spheres of influence. We are coordinating our efforts with the social media team.
  - S. Purdy is ready to print 2500 new membership brochures and R. Verdés is ready to write the check to pay for them. B. Barr notes that the new brochures should have our up-to-date membership and dues structure. R. Verdés notes that we have one student member at the print rate and urges all to push digital memberships to keep printing costs down.
  - S. Purdy moved that we arrange for the printing of 2,500 brochures with distribution to be managed by the Membership and Marketing Committee. Approved.
  
- **Outreach & Marketing/Social Media/Web Presence Report:** J. Mohr reporting:

- Report of the Outreach & Marketing/Social Media/Web Presence Working Group is attached hereto.
  - The Working Group continues to develop plans to expand the SAH web presence. There has been an overhaul of the website with more changes planned. We will also continue to expand the SAH social media presence.
  - J. Mohr thanked L. Fourie and C. Maxon for their work on improving the website.
  - C. Maxon noted that he is working to make the website more social media friendly to help bring in social media savvy people. He has reserved an Instagram handle for SAH and wants to get a Twitter handle as well so we can send information out on multiple platforms. He also wants to launch a Facebook group and needs people on Facebook to moderate and participate.
  - R. Verdés suggests offering digital memberships for free for a trial period and then ask people to sign up for pay. He also suggests making membership classes and benefits more prominent.
  - More than one person noted that the SAH website is not optimized on search engines and we don't come up first when people search for us.
- **Academic Committee:** J. Mohr reporting:
    - Report of the Academic Committee is attached hereto.
    - The Committee does not have any updates on official business. The Committee will meet in the near future to decide how to proceed with its mission statement.
    - Committee member P. Yongue has suggested meeting electronically.
    - J. Heitmann noted that we need to update our entry on the AHA website.

President Capps recessed the meeting at 3:25 PM EDT. We will reconvene at 2:00 PM EDT on October 9, 2020.

President Capps reconvened the meeting at 2:00 PM EDT on October 9, 2020. All previous participants were in attendance except S. Purdy.

**Awards: Reports received from Awards Committees are attached hereto and are summarized below.**

- **Brigham Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting:
  - Report of the Brigham Award Committee is attached hereto.
  - No submissions for the 2020 Brigham Award were received.
  
- **Cugnot English Language Award:** Ed Garten reporting:
  - Report of the Cugnot English Language Committee is attached hereto.
  - This year the Committee had an extraordinarily strong field of nominees, but *Ballot* clearly stood out following review, discussion, and scoring among Committee members. The Committee saw *Ballot* as the typical Dalton Watson high quality book offering, beautifully and extensively illustrated, and well documented from a scholarly perspective. Importantly the work brings new attention to Earnest Ballot, his company, and his motorcars. It is a remarkable achievement. The Committee gives an Award of Distinction to *The Doble Steam Car* by Jim Crank in recognition of excellence in contributions to automotive history.
  
- **Cugnot for books in language other than English:** Arthur Jones reporting:
  - Report of Cugnot for books in language other than English is attached hereto.
  - The Cugnot Award for 2020 goes to Harry Niemann for his book *Paul Daimler, König des Kompressors* published by Motorbuch Verlag. Paul Daimler was the oldest son of Gottlieb Daimler and became Technical Director of the firm after the resignation of Maybach. He developed early supercharger systems as well as other advances, but left the firm for Horch in 1922. This is the first biography of this pioneer of technology and, as such, well meets our criteria for original research.
  - The Committee continues its search for new members who have the ability to read foreign languages, especially other than German, French, and Italian, and who have knowledge of the European automotive industry.
  
- **Benz Award:** Don Keefe reporting:
  - Report of the Benz Committee is attached hereto.

- A total of 11 articles were nominated for the 2019 Benz Award, coming from both commercial and club publications, as well as one from a scholarly journal. The 2020 Award goes to “The Rise and Demise of the Packard Speedsters,” by Ronald Sieber, published in the January/February, 2019 issue of *Antique Automobile*, Volume 83, Number 1.
- **Bradley Award:** Ed Garten reporting:
  - Report of the Bradley Award Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Mercedes-Benz Classic Archives & Collection received the Bradley Award in 1986 and, to date, only two other organizations have twice received the award. Since 1986, it was clear to the Committee that the Mercedes-Benz Archives has made substantial and extraordinary progress in the enhancement and extension of its collections.
- **Friend of Automotive History Award:** Andrew Beckman reporting:
  - Report of the Friend of Automotive History Award Committee is attached hereto.
  - By a majority vote of the SAH Board, the 2020 Friend of Automotive History Award has been bestowed upon Mr. Peter Mullin. Mr. Mullin was nominated by SAH member Ruben Verdés.
- **Scharchburg Student Paper Award:** John Mohr reporting.
  - Report of Scharchburg Committee is attached hereto.
  - The Committee chose the award recipients as follows:  
 Scharchburg Award Winner: Han-Yi Huang, for “Church Pews from Detroit: The Rise of the Drive-in church in the United States Between the 1940s to the 1950s.”  
 Award of Distinction (runner-up): Tyler Miller-Wells, for “The virtual Frontier: The Automotive Video Game and its Future in Automotive Heritage.”
- **Publications - SAH Journal:** Rubén Verdés reporting:
  - Report of the *SAH Journal* Committee is attached hereto.
  - Issues 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, and 304 have been printed and mailed since 9/30/19. Each issue has 16 pages. As of the date of this report issue 305 is well under way; it will be e-mailed (via Constant Contact) to all SAH members (both digital and active) as

usual. Each of these e-mails also contains other items of interest for members.

- L. Fourie noted that we need a new Publications Committee chair as Tom Jakups is stepping down.
- **Publications - Automotive History Review:** J. Heitmann reporting:
  - Report of the *AHR* Editor is attached hereto.
  - Volume 61 was published in early March 2020. The editor broadened the scope of the *AHR* to include possible submissions related to all aspects of motorized four and two wheel land transport, and in addition strongly encourages the use of reference citations to enable readers to reconstruct the work of the author to a limited degree.
  - J. Heitmann wants to get our articles linked to library databases like American history & Life. J. Mohr agreed and said he would help.
- **Publications - Website:** Tom Jakups and Louis Fourie reporting:
  - Report of the Website Committee is attached hereto.
  - L. Fourie hopes C. Maxon can offer advice on ways to get the SAH website to come up at the top of lists on search engines.
  - L. Fourie also has a file of media announcements for worldwide cars but does not have the publication rights and seeks advice from D. Nelson.
- **Chapters and Sections Report:** Bob Barr reporting:
  - Report of the Chapters and Sections Committee is attached hereto.
  - Chapter activity has been curtailed during the pandemic. The Committee will explore transitioning Chapters to an affiliate relationship with the SAH.
  - L. Fourie asked about liability insurance – affiliates will have none from SAH.
  - R. Verdés suggested that we mimic the American Historical Association's relations with their affiliates: keep them at arm's length to avoid the necessity of Board oversight.
- **SAH Annual Euromeeting Report:** Kit Foster reporting.
  - Report of the Euromeeting Committee is attached hereto.

- Subsequent to filing the report K. Foster consulted with European historians who traditionally attend the Euromeeeting and concluded that the uncertainty caused by the Covid pandemic warrants canceling the 2021 Euromeeeting.
- **Hershey Banquet Committee:** John Marino reporting:
  - Report of the Hershey Banquet Committee is attached hereto.
  - 2020 Board Meeting and Annual Meeting and Banquet were cancelled due to Covid 19. 2021 Fall Board of Directors Meeting and Annual Meeting and Banquet will be held on October 8 and 9, 2021 at the Hershey Country Club. Banquet price to members is to be determined. Evening program to include awards is to be determined.
- **Hershey Tent Committee:** L. Fourie reporting:
  - Report of the Hershey Tent Committee is attached hereto.
  - Nothing to report due to cancellation of AACA Fall Meet.
- **Bricks & Mortar Working Group:** Chris Lezotte reporting:
  - Report of Bricks & Mortar Working Group is attached hereto.
  - The Committee was established to secure a permanent home for the SAH to serve as a meeting space for the Board of Directors semi-annual meeting as well as to store and make available SAH materials and archives. The Committee currently has two objectives – to contact individuals at the institutions/museums under consideration for interest and availability; to determine the current state, quantity, and location of SAH archival material.
  - The Committee has several possible locations under consideration but due to Covid restrictions most are short staffed or closed so the Committee postponed contacting personnel at those locations until a more opportune time.
  - The Committee would requests information from any members about SAH institutional material that they may have that could be collected in a permanent home.
  - President Capps notes that he would like a permanent home to be in the Detroit area, because Detroit is the spiritual home of the American auto industry and because there are already a number of institutions that could be appropriate repositories.

- **New Business:**

- Awards: President Capps expressed his desire raise the profile of SAH awards but also noted that the award structure should be examined. Awards have been on “auto pilot” for some time and may need to expand, shrink, or change.
- President Capps also noted that we need to look hard at long term planning, i.e. five years or more. For instance, our partnership with the HVA has raised the profile of our conferences – how can we improve them still more? Where are we going, and where do we want to go? That includes fund raising – targeting people or organizations with money, perhaps seeking sponsorship for things like awards. J. Mohr cautions about corporate sponsorship coming with strings that could compromise our objectivity.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM EDT.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Casey, Secretary.