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NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 6

The Society of Automotive Historians

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PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

CONSTITUTION

The proposed Constitution for the Society accompanies this issue of the Newsletter. It is hoped that each member will examine this in detail. In its present form it represents a considerable amount of thought by Guy Seeley, with a few outside suggestions.

While the Society has functioned for several months on a very informal basis, it is felt that there is a need for an agreed-upon modus operandi, with a stated purpose for our existence.

Any concrete suggestions for modification should be submitted to the Secretary for a final revision. It is to be hoped that suggestions may be received early in April so that a final draft can be issued for ratification by the membership as soon as practicable.

THE PHILADELPHIA MEETING

A rather select group met at the Bellevue-Stratford, Philadelphia, on February 21. There was considerable competition from various AACA seminars, which were held at the same time.

There was some discussion of the Constitution, but it was not possible to cover it in detail. The old question of "what is a make?" was again part of the talk, plus questions concerning where information may be located.

While no action was taken on any business, it is readily apparent that there is much work which can be undertaken by the Society. The largest task which might be accomplished would be the compilation of automobile marques, U.S. made for a start. How we can attack this formidable task will be discussed in the next issue of the Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORIES

A directory listing the names and addresses of the members of the Society of Automotive Historians has been published and mailed to all members. Space is provided on the last two pages for additions. Names of new members, not listed in this directory will be published in each issue of the Newsletter. Additions for this month are:

Millard W. Newman
2701 16th Street
Tampa, Florida 33605

Richard B. Gordon
1715 Clover Street
Rochester, N. Y. 14618

Donald E. McHenry
469 Tremaine Ave.
Kenmore, N. Y. 14217

Arthur G. Rippey
Veteran Car Museum
2030 S. Cherokee St.
Denver, Colo. 80223

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu
Palace House, Beaulieu
Brockenhurst, Hants.
England

The January issue of the Newsletter was mailed on January 29, at Marietta, Georgia. In the hope of saving our treasury a few dollars, it was sent by third-class mail. The result? Six days later a copy sent to Decatur, Georgia (about 30 miles), had not yet been delivered. A copy mailed to Newark, Delaware, arrived on February 20. At least one copy sent to Troy, New York, never got there at all.

Therefore this issue, and all subsequent issues, will be sent by first-class mail, and will be plainly marked as such.

If your January issue did not reach you, a post card to Box 6465, Marietta, Georgia 30060, will get you another - by first-class mail.

AN EARLY DEBATE ON WHAT IS AN AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURER, OFFERED AS A BASIS FOR SETTING STANDARDS FOR INCLUSION OR EXCLUSION IN LISTS OF MAKERS.

By Charles W. Bishop

A translation of comments appearing in *La France Automobile*, 1899-1900. Baron de Zuylen de Nyvelt de Haar, president of the Auto Club of France:

France, which had hardly a dozen makers 8 or 9 years ago (1890) now counts 600 having constructed 3250 automobiles, on top of which 10 or 12 thousand motorcycles. If we compare this with the results in other countries, we find that England has 110 manufacturers, Germany 80, USA 60, Belgium 55, Switzerland 25, and the rest of Europe about 30 in all. To resume, 3250 cars and 10,000 motorcycles in France, 300 cars in the rest of the world, half of those in Belgium. An agreeable comparison when one remembers our Society of Encouragement had a great part in this result.

Paul Meyan, a founder of the Auto Club of France and editor of *La France Automobile*, argued that there were only 30 real manufacturers in France, to which the Baron had this to say:

The objection has been raised that in Germany notably more than 2000 vehicles have been delivered by the two oldest constructors. However, according to figures supplied by these very firms....in the most important cities there are no more than 3 or 4 cars....Germany has seen almost its entire production taken by the French market to the point where certain foreign buyers were obliged - to get a car made in their own country - to apply to the French agents (i.e. Benz). So far as the French auto makers are concerned, I grant you that of the 600 of which I spoke, only a small part of them are in full swing, but I did not include in that figure the inventors or the builders-on-paper more or less stricken with acute motor mania, of which the number is legion, but only those builders, big or little, who have a mechanical shop, employ a certain number of workmen, and have produced at least their first functioning automobile.

The Baron de Zuylen's definition seems to be completely fair as a standard to determine who should be considered an auto maker (at least up to 1900) A case in point would be Oldsmobile, whose early production was something like this: 1897 - 1; 1898 - 0; 1899 - 0; 1900 - 0; 1901 - 425; 1902 - 2500; 1903 - 3299; 1904 - 5000, etc. (Plus one steam car, sold in 1887).

While the size of the early French production may surprise some people, it does not differ much from figures given in *Automobile Trade Journal* and other American papers. Because of a subsequent decline in importance to the American market, these figures have been consistently underplayed.

The subsequent giantism of American production raises a problem that is diametrically opposed: if normal mass production standards are applied, it would appear that there have been no post-war US cars except Kaiser, Fraser, and Henry J, a prospect which would discourage this writer at least from troubling to catalog them.

I favor inclusion of any car exhibited at any automobile show, where there exists a written record of the same date of its being on exhibition. Otherwise the record will lose those prototype cars which are often of great importance in the long run.

Among Our Authors

In the January issue of the Newsletter it was suggested that those of us who have written for publication, professionally or otherwise, let the rest of us know of your efforts. As a result, the mail has been heavy. The lists printed below have not been selected in any particular order - just taken from the pile one at a time until the available space was used up. If your list is not among them, it will be in the next issue. (Writin'est bunch of people I ever saw!)

HENRY H. BLOMME, CONNERSVILLE, INDIANA - BOOKS: Indiana's Little Detroit (1964); (Co-Author) What Was the McFarlan? (1967). TELEVISION PROGRAM: Indiana Autos, Then and Now (WFBM-TV, Indianapolis, 1969). ARTICLES IN: The DeSoto Retailer(1950, 1956); Magic Circle (Perfect Circle Co., U.S., December, 1961, Canadian, Spring, 1962); Bear Line-Up (August-September, 1961); Ford Times (May, 1961); Auto Enthusiasts Bulletin (March, 1965); Connersville News-Examiner (monthly articles 1965 through 1969); Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Newsletter (articles from time to time since 1962). ARTICLES IN ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE: Little Detroit (March-April, 1969); Cord-Connersville - Where the Action Was (May-June, 1969); Lexington - The Mighty Minute Man (November-December, 1969).

WILLIAM S. JACKSON, HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA - EDITOR: Antique Automobile; Aston Martin Owners Club Newsletter; A.C. Owners Club Newsletter. CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Competition Press & Autoweek. VINTAGE CAR EDITOR: World Car Guide. BOOKLET: The Lincoln Continental ((Profile Series, England, 1966). BOOK: The BMW Story (Chilton Book Co., to be published fall, 1970). ARTICLES AND PHOTOS IN: Antique Automobile, Arkansas Art Center Bulletin, Automobile Quarterly, Autoweek, The Restorer (Model A Ford), Road & Track, Veteran & Vintage, Town & Gown, World Car Guide.

JOHN A. CONDE, DETROIT, MICHIGAN - BOOKS: Nash Family Albums (1951 through 1956); Rambler Family Albums (1958 through 1963); American Motors Family Album, 1969. Also articles on various aspects of auto history published in Ward's Quarterly and its successor, Ward's Auto World.

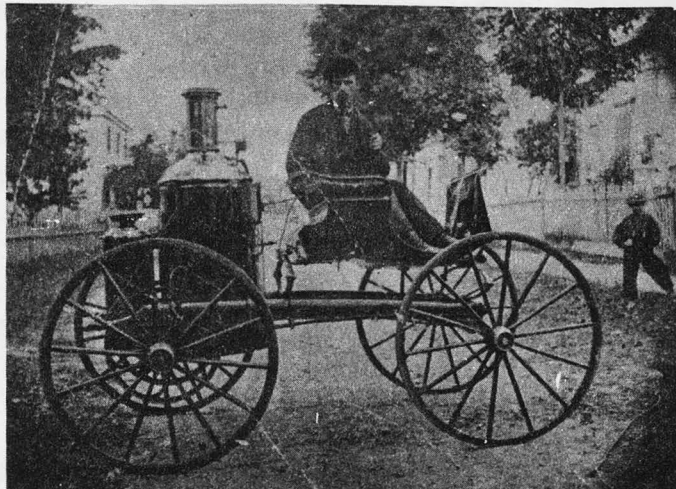
JOHN B. RAE, CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA - BOOKS: American Automobile Manufacturers: The First Forty Years (Chilton Co., 1959); The American Automobile (University of Chicago Press, 1965) ARTICLES: The Engineer - Entrepreneur in the American Automobile Industry (Explorations in Entrepreneurial History, vol. 8, October, 1955). The Electric Vehicle Company (Business History Review, vol. 29, December, 1955). Names Along the Highway (Claremont Quarterly, vol. 7, Winter, 1960). Not Just to Sell (The Trend in Engineering, vol. 12, January, 1960). Horseless Carriage Culture ((Journal of Engineering Education, vol. 52, April, 1962). Transportation Technology and the Problems of the City (Traffic Quarterly, vol. 22, no. 3, July, 1968, pp 299-314). "The Rationalization of Production" and "The Internal Combustion Engine on Wheels", (Chapters 4 and 10 in vol. 2, Kranzberg and Pursell, Technology in Western Civilization, Oxford University Press, 1967).

CHARLES L. BETTS, JR., YARDLEY, PENNSYLVANIA - BOOKS: Auto Racing Winners, 1895-1947 (Privately published, 1948) American Vintage Cars (Sports Car Press, 1963). BOOKLETS: The Auburn Straight Eight (Profile Publications, June, 1966). Duesenberg Model A (Profile Publications, March, 1967). ARTICLES IN AUTOMOBILE QUARTERLY: Packards at Speed (September, 1962); And Still Champion (July, 1963); In Pursuit of the Ultimate Speed (September, 1964). ARTICLES IN ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE: Never So Far So Fast (December, 1952); Automobile Racing Bibliography (March, 1954); Indianapolis Stock Car Story - Part I (December, 1954); Indianapolis Stock Car Story - Part II (April, 1955); Transcontinental Records (July, 1957); A Brief History of Model T Racing (December, 1959); A Paige From the Past (November, 1960) Maxwell Racing History (February, 1961); Rochester Duesenberg (June, 1962); The Fabulous Supers (December, 1962); The Philadelphia Motor Speedway (June, 1964); The Marmon Transcontinental Record (June, 1966).

Some facts concerning the ROPER STEAM VEHICLES

- By G. Marshall Naul

In the June 13, 1925 issue of the Berkshire Evening Eagle (Pittsfield, Mass.) there appears an item with a photograph of a steam car purportedly from the 1860's. The photo, it was reported, was taken by E. H. Lincoln, sometime photographer of Pittsfield. In 1953 contact was made with L. L. Lincoln, also of Pittsfield, a descendant, who furnished a somewhat crumpled print taken from a similar negative at some unknown but early date. A copy of that photograph is shown here.



ROPER STEAM CARRIAGE, 1863

In the February 16, 1965 issue of the same newspaper was a column restating the story of the early steamer. This quotes a report on the Berkshire Agricultural Fair contained in the Valley Gleaner of Lee, Mass., dated October 13, 1863:

.... W. W. Austin, of Boston told us the engine is nearly one horsepower. It will travel, on a good track, a mile in two minutes, and about 15 miles an hour on good publick roads at an expense of about half-a-cent a mile.... (water was taken on about once an hour)....two or three pailsfull each time, and fuel not so often. An upright shaft and crank in front of the seat is connected to the front axle and guides the carriage in a manner similar to other wagons.

Unfortunately this item gives no more details concerning this vehicle. It does, however, establish that a Mr. Austin did have such a vehicle in Pittsfield at that date.

The photo reproduced here and the cut in the 1925 newspaper are the same. This vehicle is not similar to the Roper Steamer now in the Ford Museum, but does have characteristics similar to a steam machine described in Scientific American for March 14, 1863:

AN IMPROVED STEAM CARRIAGE -

H. Roper of Roxbury, Mass. has invented and completed a steam carriage which, according to reports, subserves the ends for which it was made. A recent trial of this innovation upon the 'old style' was very successful; it passed through Boston, and meeting a car on the horse-railroad, turned off the track and went around the car with as much ease as if drawn by a horse. On a smooth road or on the rail, with sixty pounds of steam (the usual amount), the carriage can be run at the rate of twenty miles per hour. The weight of the carriage is 650 pounds.

In the November 28, 1863 issue of the same journal:

An ingenious mechanic, Mr. S. H. Roper of Roxbury, Mass., has invented and put in operation a new steam wagon or buggy for commonroads. It is thus described:- An ordinary four-wheel carriage has a boiler of about 16 inches in diameter in the rear with a lever regulating the steam and speed extending over the seat in front. Beneath the boiler is a furnace and in the rear of the boiler is a small water tank. The steam gauge is on a level with the driver and he can at a glance ascertain the amount of steam pressure. The whole machine is of two horse-power. Two persons take their seats in the carriage and off it starts, the driver guiding the front wheels by means of a crank, and with the other hand he can regulate the speed of the engine or stop the carriage in less time than a pair of horses can be brought to a halt. Coal sufficient for one day's running can be carried beneath the seat of the carriage, and although

the speed attained is that of the fastest horse, the expense of running the carriage is estimated at one cent per mile while in operation, with the additional virtue of not costing anything in the way of feed and stabling when not in use. Lately, when the carriage was exhibited, the engine carried but 15 or 20 pounds of steam and yet it taxed the power of the horses present to keep pace with its speed. The carriage and engine do not weigh more than 700 pounds. No difficulty was experienced in turning sharp corners or in backing.

Sylvester H. Roper and William W. Austin both resided in Lowell, Mass. at this period, and the local newspaper, Lowell Daily News, did report trials of this steam carriage in the issues for August 8, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19 and October 27, 1863. These give only rough descriptions of a steam-propelled vehicle "operated by Mr. Austin" who gave demonstrations at "the Trotting Park" in Lowell. The October 27 issue credits "Mr. S. H. Roper of Roxbury" as the inventor.

Thus it may be seen that contemporary accounts credit Roper rather than Austin for the inventing and building of this steamer. Austin seems to have been only an "operator" and in no way given credit for construction. This would seem to refute the contention of T. W. Reed, who wrote an article dealing with the Ford-owned Steamer. This article, "I Once Owned It", was printed in The Bulb Horn, Sept.-Oct. 1963. In this, Mr. Reed states that he obtained certain anecdotes and information concerning the Ford-owned steamer from Miss Austin, daughter of William W., who, in 1930, was living in Lowell. Miss Austin claimed the steamer was left in a rear shed after her father died. His death occurred but a few years after 1863, according to this account. However, evidence furnished by the Winthrop (Mass.) Public Library shows that Austin lived in Winthrop from about 1885 until his death in 1909.

The evidence to date indicates that Sylvester H. Roper was the actual builder of both of these steamers, but that Austin did operate the pictured one at various functions, at least in 1863.

Based upon physical appearance, it seems probable that the Ford-owned steamer was a later version. In general the vehicle in the accompanying photo, while more satisfying by exposing the mechanical details, is considerably less sophisticated than the Ford-owned steamer whose entire mechanism is neatly packaged beneath the seat and out of sight. It would be rather surprising for the Ford-owned machine to have been the earlier.

The vehicle shown here is not extant, and probably ended up on some scrap pile many years ago.

A bit of interesting information was unearthed while examining the files of the Pittsfield Sun for 1863. In the October 15, 1863 issue is a listing of prizes awarded at the Berkshire Agricultural Fair for "agricultural improvements". Among these is listed:

Two miniature steam engines for stationary and locomotive power, to J. W. Carhart of Pittsfield, \$2.00.

The name Carhart sounded familiar, and in The History of Pittsfield, 1800-1872 by J. E. A. Smith is given the name of J. Wesley Carhart as "Preacher on the Pittsfield Circuit, 1862-1864". Other references proved this to be the same Carhart who, in 1872, built a steam vehicle at Racine, Wisconsin. This vehicle is shown on page 2 of Clymer's Early American Automobiles. A part-by-part comparison of this picture and the photo with this article shows a marked similarity. It seems quite probable that Carhart must have seen Roper's steamer at the Berkshire Agricultural Fair. Carhart was certainly interested in steam power, having built the above model engines, and it is unlikely that he would have shown no interest in a self-propelled steamer. Without an undue amount of imagination it can be supposed that Roper's vehicle was the inspiration for Carhart's later steamer.

There are still many unanswered questions, such as: Who is the very intent man seated in the car in the photo? What was the connection between Roper and Austin? Further investigation may yield some answers.

THE ALSO-RANS

This list submitted by Frank T. Snyder, Jr., Hackensack, N. J.

| MAKE | MANUFACTURER and LOCATION | YEARS | REF. |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Bacon | | 1905 | B.F.G. list |
| Baines | 1 registered in Michigan | | Auto. Ind. 3/16/16 and 9/16/16 |
| Banner | | 1915 | |
| Barby | | 1910 | |
| Barrett & Perret | | 1895 | SatEvePost |
| Barthel | Oliver Edward Barthel | 1900-01 | |
| Bartlett | | 1921 | |
| Barver | | 1925 | SatEvePost |
| Basson's Star | | 1956 | A.E.I. |
| Bauroth | E. & W.F.Bauroth | 1899 | Doyle |
| Baymont | | 1955 | A.E.I. |
| Beach Car | | 1947 | A.E.I. |
| Beacon Flyer | | 1908 | Doyle |
| Bearcat | | 1956 | A.E.I. |
| Bee | | | |
| Bellmay | | 1904 | |
| Belvidere | | 1902 | |
| Bemmel & Barnham | | 1898 | SatEvePost |
| Bendix-Ames | | 1911 | SatEvePost |
| Berg (Electric) | To be shown at N.Y. Electrical Expo. | 1920 | Auto. Ind. 8/26/20 |
| Bewis | | 1915 | Doyle |
| Bewman | | 1912 | |
| Bifisi | | | |
| Binford | | 1905 | Bulb Horn Pg. 33,10/54 |
| Bingham | | 1916 | |
| Birdsall (in used car list, A.T.J., Pg. 299, 10/13) | | 1909 | |
| Birnel | | 1911 | SatEvePost |
| Blackmore | | | |
| Blackstone | | 1916 | |
| Blanche | | 1906 | |
| B.L.M.C. | (Probably B.L.M.) | 1907-09 | |
| Block Bros. | | 1905 | SatEvePost |
| Boggs | | 1903 | SatEvePost |
| Bortz | | 1904 | |
| Brazil | Brazil Motors Corp., Brazil, Ind. | 1916-17? | |
| Breman | | 1908 | SatEvePost |
| Brenner | | | |
| Briggs | | 1912 | SatEvePost |
| Brock | Indianapolis, Ind. | 1920 | Doyle |
| Broganette | | 1947-51 | A.E.I. |
| Brown | | 1909 | |
| Brown | | 1922 | |
| Brown-Burttt | | 1904 | SatEvePost |
| Bruce | Don Bruce | 1956 | |
| Bruss | | 1907 | SatEvePost |
| B.S.A. | | 1936 | |
| Buck | | 1925 | SatEvePost |
| Buckaroo | Cleveland, Ohio | 1957 | |
| Buddie | | 1925 | |
| Buffington | | 1900 | SatEvePost |
| Buffman | | 1900 | SatEvePost |

From John W. Wholihan, M.D., Jackson, Michigan:

About 14 years ago I acquired from the Cameron Peck Collection an early vehicle known through paper publicity as a 1902 Jamieson. It was found in the old dairy barn of the Jamieson Dairy at Warren, Pennsylvania. Other than the story that 8 were manufactured, and that the one I own is the only one remaining, I can find no information.

I can only describe this as a tiller-steered vehicle, typical of the period. For years I have shown it to many, and have tried to find some historical background, and even visited Warren, Pennsylvania, to no avail.

Strangely, in the F. A. O. Schwarz catalog of Christmas, 1968, there was pictured a group of miniature automobiles and to my surprise there is an exact replica of the Jamieson, marked 1902. I wrote to the president of the manufacturing company who replied that "the drawings were from Omnicra Locomotion magazine, and in the neighborhood of the factory there lived an elderly man who had drawings of the car".

Recently I located an old mechanic, who now has the motor under restoration. It was nearly complete, and I will describe it. It has two horizontal cylinders, 4" bore and 4!" stroke, with a third center piston which operates from what I might describe as a cantilever rod (on a bearing) passing down to an eccentric, flywheel-gear cam. It is water cooled. There are 4 pipe threaded drip oilers, two of which are 3/8" and the other two 1/4". The muffler is vertical, and was made by the Loomis Company, somewhere in Massachusetts.

The planetary transmission has an "Upton Mfg. Co." plate, and I have the drawings pertaining to the patents in detail from the Library of Congress and the Patent Office.

Your Society of Automotive Historians excited my interest when I saw it mentioned in Cars & Parts, and I would like to keep up my correspondence with you regarding my research, and, in turn, if you have any information it will be very much appreciated.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Wholihan is not, at this writing, a member of our organization. This letter was addressed to Guy Seeley, who passed it on to me. Guy has sent this gentleman an application form and a Newsletter.

From Ken W. Purdy, Wilton, Connecticut:

The 1970 edition of The World Almanac, page 363, credits Kettering with the invention of the electric starter, in 1911.

I've never noticed this item before, although I presume the Almanac has carried it for years. I thought of sending a note to the editor, but it occurred to me that the correction would carry more weight if it came from the Society of Automotive Historians.

Kettering did, of course, make the starter cheap and widely available, but I think I'm correct in believing that he never did formally claim its invention, which goes back to at least 1896.

Classified Ads

FOR SALE

This classified ad column is open to all members of the Society of Automotive Historians, at no charge, for buying, selling or trading items of interest to automotive historians, such as catalogs, books, magazines, automobile ads, photographs, etc. No ads for cars, parts or restoration services will be accepted.

Send your classified advertising to:
Society of Automotive Historians,
Publications Office,
P. O. Box 6465,
Marietta, Georgia 30060

WANTED

Wanted to buy or trade: Automobile Trade Journal, March, 1910; March, 1913; January, 1920; September, 1921. FRANK T. SNYDER, JR., BOX 551, HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY 07602.

Wanted to buy or trade: Chilton's Automobile Directory, Automobile Trade Directory, any issues 1911 or earlier. Also any issues for 1914, 1915, 1919, 1921, 1922 and 1930 or later. R. B. BRIGHAM, 136 PARK LANE, MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060

Wanted to buy: Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal, March, 1906. G. M. NAUL, 5 QUEEN ANN DRIVE, CHRISTINE MANOR, NEWARK, DELAWARE 19711

Clippings, ads, cut-outs from magazines going back to the start of the automobile. I am through with all this mess and will sell the over 100,000 clips for \$1000.00 which is 1¢ each and a bargain. Trunk full, and it could be shipped by truck, freight collect.

Also have a great many copies of most of the well known auto magazines and HCCA Gazette - Automobile - Motor - Motor Age - Bulb Horn - AOT Old Timers, and many from Europe - some clips. Will sell cheap or trade for other European magazines in any language which have illustrated advertisements.

HARRY PULFER, BOX 8526, La CRESCENTA, CALIF. 91214.

Reprints of MoToR magazine's 1909 automobile manufacturers list, compiled by Chas. E. Duryea. Lists more than 600 auto makers in business from 1895 into 1909, shows years of manufacture, transfers of ownership, changes of name, etc. \$1.00 postpaid. Order from SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, PUBLICATIONS OFFICE, P. O. BOX 6465, MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060.

Reprint (exact duplicate) of program for automobile race held at Columbus, Ohio on July 4, 1903, in which Barney Oldfield participated. Several interesting old automobile ads. 8 pages, including front cover. \$1.00 postpaid. SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, PUBLICATIONS OFFICE, P. O. BOX 6465, MARIETTA, GEORGIA 30060

TRADE

Have numerous auto catalogs 1934 to date, to trade for pre-1920 auto magazines. Send list of wants, and potential trades. G. M. NAUL, 5 QUEEN ANN DRIVE, CHRISTINE MANOR, NEWARK, DELAWARE 19711



BIRTHDAY PARTY - This picture was taken at Hershey, Pennsylvania, at the entrance to the Hershey Museum, on Saturday, October 11, 1969, just a few minutes after The Society of Automotive Historians had been organized as a going concern. Shown in this picture, left to right, are William S. Jackson, Henry Austin Clark, Jr., John M. Peckham, Bruce Mohs (a non-member), Herman L. Smith, G. Marshall Naul, Charles W. Bishop, Guy P. Seeley, Jr., Grace R. Brigham, Richard B. Brigham and Glenn Baechler.