



NEWSLETTER

The Society of Automotive Historians INC.

Issue No. 64

August 1979

PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPHS

What are the reasons for belonging to SAH? The most important is the association with others seriously interested in the history of a significant facet of human history, that of the automobile. That association creates the opportunity to help others and to be helped in turn. Everyone knows something someone else doesn't. By the same token there are others who can help you.

How can this interchange of information and ideas be furthered? Let others know what you know and what you want to know.

Walt Gosden by creating the Research Column in the NEWSLETTER has provided a means for exchanging information. We have all had the experience of looking up a new word in the dictionary and then finding it again almost immediately. The same thing happens when you help with other people's automotive history interests. About fifteen years ago a friend who is also now a member asked if I could find something about the Cornelian for him. I'd never heard of the car before but it fascinated me and I'm still finding information about that interesting make to which I would have been oblivious unless I'd been alerted to it.

The Society is also working on other methods of helping stimulate the exchange of information. If you don't have the information the next best thing is to know where you can find it. The Index and Bibliography Committees have been established to provide guides to where information may be obtained. Both of these committees are in the formative stages. Help will be welcomed either in the form of volunteers to work on these committees or by the submission of compilations of sources.

Another committee which has great potential as an information source is the Oral History Committee. It is also in the organizational stage. It is hoped that in time a collection of taped interviews can be gathered of the recollections of persons with first hand knowledge of some aspect of automotive history.

We move along one step at a time. When you help another member with information you are adding to the total available and accessible material. It is also highly likely that you will in the end find you have added markedly to your own stock of knowledge.

W.F. Robinson Jr.

CHAPTER NEWS

The Pioneer Chapter had an excellent meeting at chapter president Nat Dawes home in May, and the next meeting is planned for August 25th in Bennington, Vermont, with Dave Brownell and Terry Ehrich acting as hosts. The fall meeting will take place on Long Island in November at Walt Gosden's home.

NEW CHAPTER FORMED - The Henry M. Leland Chapter of the SAH, was formed at an organizational meeting on April 10th, at which 14 SAH members were present, a subsequent meeting was held on May 8th, and the SAH Board was petitioned for approval which was granted on June 24th. The officers of the new chapter are as follows:

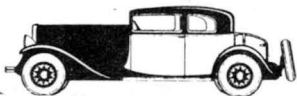
George P. Hanley - Director
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James K. Wagner - Secretary/Treasurer
1 Waynewood Court
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Pacific -Northwest Chapter - The evening of June 30th, saw an informal gathering of members at the home of Mike Larsen in Vancouver, Washington. The Portland Swap meet had provided an occasion for a number of members to be in the area. In addition to host Mike Larsen, also present were PNW members: Bruce Ledingham, Theodore Barber, Richard Larrowe, Robert Merrill and Walter F. Robinson Jr. In addition William Cannon from southern California was also able to join the group. David Hochhalter came as a non member and left leaving a complete membership application. There was a general discussion of recent SAH developments and an expression of consensus on the desirability of cooperation in the exchange of information.

Editor's Notes



Seek and ye shall find! My request in the last issue for some photos for our mystery photo section brought the response from a few members. They are most interesting, but all of automobiles; I am not complaining BUT does anyone have any photos of buses, trucks and other commercial vehicles they can't identify and would care to send in? It would add variety. Let's get some contributions from you truck historians in the membership!

The last issue received many favorable comments, just about everyone liked the larger issue. This may happen occasionally, but not to often, I still have sore fingers from typing that issue up!

Another milestone in automotive history is being celebrated this month (and will be all of next year), the Ford Motor Companies Thunderbird made its debut exactly 25 years ago this month. Happy Birthday T - Bird! Word is Ford will really be celebrating the event, so one may expect to see numerous vintage Thunderbirds in their future promotional work. Their press kit to celebrate the event is excellent, with a history of the car over the years as well as photographs.

Hope all of you have a good summer.

Does anyone have copies of the programs which were issued for the beach racing meets at Ormond and Daytona from 1902 on? Reeve Swezey would like to locate as many of these as possible to complete the files at The Birthplace of Speed Museum. Any member who can help with originals or copies should write Mr. Swezey at the Museum, 160 East Granada Blvd., Ormond Beach FL 32074. He is the curator and sec./treas. of our SAH chapter there as well.



**The Society of
Automotive
Historians**

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HONORARY MEMBER

The Board of Directors of the Society of Automotive Historians has approved the elevation of WALLACE S. HUFFMAN of Kokomo, Indiana to the status of Honorary Member. This was done in recognition of his rescue of the Elwood Haynes papers from destruction and his sustained interest in the history of the automotive industry in the State of Indiana.

OBITUARY

Edward E. Watson Jr.

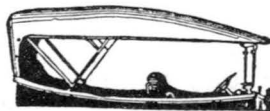
Baltimore, Maryland, lost a long time antique car enthusiast May 25th with the death of Edward E. Watson, Jr. at the age of 62. Ed died at his home following a year long battle with cancer. In addition to being an early member (No. 76) of the SAH, Ed had been affiliated with various antique car organizations. He had been a member of the Chesapeake Region AACA for many years and had served as its president in 1963. He was a charter member of the Maryland Chapter of the Model T Ford Club International and had served as its first chairman in 1960. More recently he was active in the Metropolitan club. His favorite antique car was his 1916 Jackson, which he had until shortly before his death.

(Ed. Note: Above information was supplied by member Willard J. Prentice)

M.H. McCallum

"Monnie" McCallum of Pacifica, California passed away in early July of a heart attack. He was active in the early fifties in the HCCA, taking his Stutz Bearcat, EMF touring or Franklin sedan on many of their tours. Although in later years he no longer owned any early automobiles his interest had turned to automotive history, and he had built a library of magazines and catalogs. He and your editor had become friends, and I for one will miss the correspondence from this fine gentleman.

(Submitted by W. Gosden)



LETTERS

From Keith Marvin, P.O. Box 839, Troy, N.Y. 12181
I was very much interested on your ad depicting Locomobiles for 1930 which, as far as I'm concerned, throws an altogether new light on the story. What I know about the last Locomobiles is this. For a number of years the car had been sold in a number of various models which weren't bad cars as far as I know, but if one were imbued with the mystique of the "48" or even "90" as I was, most of them looked like tin cans. Even the "Junior Eight" which looked like a cross between a Flint and a very trim Chrysler failed to excite me, even at the time in the mid-1930's when there were quite a few of them to be seen still running.

The last (or most up to date pictures) I ever saw or had included the 1929 roadster owned by Bancroft, the actor, and the 1929 "48" town car which was listing at \$16,000 or so. Both these pictures were lent to me by the late R.L. Porter of New York City and on the train carrying them back to him, the mail car burned up and everything on it was destroyed. A shame and almost unbelievable, but more than that, maddening. Those prints had come from the Loco head office in Bridgeport originally. I'm glad I'd reproduced them in the AUTOMOBILIST at the time.

In any case, operations at Bridgeport ceased in March, 1929 which would have been too early for them to have announced a 1930 line. I am subscribing to your use-up-the-bodies-on-hand-for-a-1930 line-which-doesn't-really-exist theory.

Enclosed is a stock certificate, a note of explanation: This Empire Motor Truck Corp. is a poser. I have no idea what it might have been other than to very strongly suspect it was strictly a stock promotion deal. Here's the story:

For a number of years I was on the track of the GEM Motor Truck Co., a small truck which was (to have been) built in nearby Watervliet, N.Y. This was about 1922. I knew little about Gem other than it was (again, to have been) built in the factory of the old Richenecker Carriage Works on Watervliet's 17th Street.

It was a small truck and the basic idea was to have a large factory and get into serious production. As far as I know between one to three trucks were made-- prototypes all. I have never seen a photo of one although about six years ago, one showed up at a nearby antique shop, labeled the "Liberty" truck. By the time I got to the shop, the picture had been sold, God knows to whom.

But back to the issue at hand: I obtained two stock certificates for Gem, one preferred and one common. I still have them. They were signed by Albert L. Johnson and Al Lloyd, president and secretary respectively. Lloyd was a well-known Troy photographer, dead many years and all efforts to track this end came to nought. Johnson was something else again. I started to trace this guy thru city directories and it was a merry chase, I can tell you. He lived here and there and finally he died. Almost end of chase.

But not quite. His widow survived him and she was the mother of a friend of mine. Checked through and learned to my dismay and despair that I'd missed the boat by a matter of weeks. The blue prints etc. of the Gem had been consigned to the furnace a few short weeks previously.

So, thought I, that is that re: Gem and the late Mr. Johnson....but not quite.

Seems his widow died a couple of months ago and the other night I visited the daughter and her husband. While going thru the effects, the stock certificate for the Empire Motor Truck Corp. turned up and this is the copy you see now. I have no idea who L.R. Robinson, the secretary, may have been, but here we have Johnson all over again--some seven years before he signed certificates for the Gem Truck.

I wrote John Montville about this in May to see if he could shed any light on the thing, but to date, no answer.

Funny thing about this too. There is no address as to the headquarters of the corporation at all. I'd guess this was strictly a stock promotion and little else. Pending the finding of an Empire truck, I'll keep that opinion. Any one among the membership in the SAH have anything further to offer?



From Ralph S. Stevens, Jr. Box 263, Newcastle, ME.: David Shaw correctly identifies the OSCA illustrated in issue # 62; his other remarks invite comment however.

The remaining Maserati Bros. (Ernesto, Ettore, Bindo) remained with the business which still carries their name until Nov. 1947 when they returned to the Trident City and established, on the 1st December, O.S.C.A. They had been increasingly insecure financially and disheartened after the death of Alfieri in 1933, and sold the business to Commendatore Adolfo Orsi in 1937, entering into a 10 year contract with the Orsis as engineers and consultants. During this period they were active in design and development of among others, the 4CL cars and in 1941, Ernesto laid down the first of what was to become the A6 range of race and sports cars.

When the contract expired the Maseratis had not been approached to discuss a renewal. Orsi was forgetful and the brothers too proud to ask. So they picked up their tools never to return, and one wonders what the fortunes of Officine Alfieri Maserati might have been otherwise.

Unfortunately their money problems were never out of sight (the contract with Fiat drained OSCA of talent and time) and Fratelli Maserati sold a controlling interest to the Counts Agusta in 1963. Thereafter it was all downhill, despite Agusta's grandiose plans, and little was done, only maintenance of customers cars, no new race cars; only a few prototypes of which the 1600PR2 was the last.

In Jan. 1967 Domenico Agusta gave up, sent his man Gerardo Bonelli to Bologna who promptly threw the Maseratis out and locked the doors after moving everything out to Gallarte. That was the end.

From Michael Sedgwick, Flat 1, June Cottage, June La., Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 2EL, England: On this GMC-Chevrolet business, I begin to wonder if there are now any genuine commercial models peculiar to either make. Have not yet laid hands on 1979 truck literature of either firm, but in the mid '70's the Chevyvan was the Vandura, the Blazer the Jimmy, and the El Camino probably the Sprint, though there might be some performance options not available on the GMC version. I'm just not sure.

Whether anything wears BOTH logos out of doors is another question and one I'm not qualified to answer, for though there were some heavy GMC's of the sort Chevrolet calls the Bruin or Bison on the Bedford stand at the '78 Birmingham Motor Show they haven't yet put in an appearance on our roads.

One oddball was, however, to be seen in the 1936-39 period in the shape of the Oldsmobile truck. This was peculiar to Britain and the Low Countries, I think, and came in various forms from 1 ton to 6 tons. The motors were L-head sixes said to be common to contemporary 'F' series Oldsmobile passenger cars, and was sold through the Oldsmobile car importers. Amusingly, 'real' GMC's were also available, through the Chevrolet in 1½ ton form didn't reappear over here until early in 1939, when assembly of CKD units began at the ill-starred West Bay plant in the Southampton Docks area. These were the first new Chevrolet commercials marketed in Britain since early 1932.

If anyone queries the 'Bedford-Chevrolet', this was the 1930-31 edition of the 1½ ton Chevrolet, very largely British made, but with Chevrolet mechanics down the splash lubricated motor, single rear wheels and a proper bowtie, albeit with the words BRITISH MADE underneath. One such chassis survives in the Mahys' Museum at Houthalen, Belgium. Hope this won't confuse the issue still further.

Research Column

Thomas H. Shriver, 102 Metropolitan Court House, Nashville, Tenn. 37201: Want any information on the Marathon automobile, the Herff-Brooks Corp., and any people connected with the company.

Frank Barrett, 2275 Leyden St., Denver, Colorado 80207: GIBcker-Porsche photographs and information wanted for use in a history of these early Porsche racing cars. Imported by Max Hoffman, raced by him and others at Bridgehampton (1953), Vero Beach, and throughout the Midwest. Some were tuned by Imported Motor Cars in Hoopston, Ill. Actor Tom Shipman was reportedly killed in one in a racing accident; this car is reportedly in California. Also need information on Porsche Gmünd coupes imported to the U.S. plus Fageol's twin engine 4 wheel drive Porsches.

Fred Rosenmiller, 37 West Market St., York, Pa. 17401: Any information on the following York County, Penna. manufactured vehicles: Bauman car, Mayflower truck, Hamilton Motor Car Co., Atlas truck, and Meisenhelter car.

Major Fred W. Crismon, P.O. Drawer S, Fort Knox, Ky. 40121: I am assembling a photo archive of powered vehicles used by the U.S. military from 1900 to the present. Especially interested in good photos (can use snapshots) of commercial (civilian) cars and trucks with "USA", "USN", "USAF", markings from the periods 1900-1917, 1930-1940, and 1946-1960. I have photo facilities and can return prints quickly.

Book Reviews

Avanti by Thomas Bonsall, 127 pages, 12 x 11½, publisher: Bookman Dan, P.O. Box 13492, Baltimore, MD. 21203; \$18.95. Here is a full account to December 1978 of the original Avanti by Studebaker and its successor, the Avanti II. The evolution of this quite attractive contemporary automobile is told in the first ten pages. The main part of this book is the reproduction of all available factory sales literature from 1962 through 1977. These excellent black and white reproductions are given with notes by the author where pertinent. The appendix covers ten pages and gives year-by-year production, running changes in the models, a complete listing of factory sales literature etc.

Tom Bonsall is the well known literature dealer and collector. This book is an excellent example of a work somewhat out of the ordinary, and shows just what can be done with a possibly unique collection of material devoted to one specific make. It is unfortunate that like literature on makes as interesting, of years past, has been so elusive as complete accounts of many of the more ephemeral makes could have been put together just from the sales literature. We hope that Tom will consider other makes for similar treatment.

G.M. Naul

Triumph Cars: The complete 75-year History by Richard Langworth and Graham Robson. Motor Racing Publications Ltd., London, 1979. Distributed by Motorbooks International, 729 Prospect Ave., Osceola, Wisconsin. 54020. 312 pp. hardbound. 7½ x 10. price \$25.95 until 9/30/79; \$29.95 thereafter. Of all the volumes I have read, reviewed and in very rare instances condemned over the last 30 years, I must admit in all sincerity that TRIUMPH CARS is without doubt one of the most worthwhile and interesting volumes I have seen. The entire history of one make of car is painstakingly traced from its conception, through its birth pangs, its ups and downs through adulthood and near-death. Purists there are I am sure, who would prefer the term 'death' for in 1939, Triumph went out of business per se, and for these purists, I would change my terminology to "death", and refer to the renaissance of the Triumph name in 1946 as "resurrection", hoping the connotation isn't taken as sacrilege. For it isn't meant to be so taken. The fact is that the original Triumph reemerged under the banner of Standard of Coventry and for some years was built under Standard's aegis until the combine which had become Standard-Triumph was itself swallowed by British Leyland.

The book is lavishly provided with pictures of all models and the one thing which impressed me is that collectively the cars appear so, so British. By this I mean that there was a tremendous difference between British design and that being favored on the continent at the same time or, for that matter, the bulbous, powderpuff design which was beginning to affect the appearance of more and more American automobiles.

I must speak personally about this but I always felt there was a cleanness- a perfection of line peculiar to the British motor cars of the 1920's and even more obvious in the 1930's -- the wire wheels, the sweep of the fenders and a bit later on, in the mid thirties by such makes as Daimler and Rolls-Royce, the razor-edge streamlining. I think it is an important point that this type of streamlining generally came out best in larger cars. In the smaller car field, Triumph was one of the few cars (M.G. was another), to use the same idea successfully!

The progression of models is discussed in detail in the pages of this book and illustrated too. Of course, when we say "Triumph" these days, most of those discussing the make think of the "TR3" and its successors and there is heavy coverage on these cars and all of the many models which appeared after World War II.

What I like about the book is that no stone has been left unturned by the authors who, I hasten to add, are experts in their field. I don't have to emphasize this. After you check the book out you'll find it obvious.

I heartily recommend TRIUMPH CARS to any and all comers. It is a masterpiece of automotive history and well worth the asking price.

Keith Marvin

American Trucking-A Seventy-Five Year Odyssey, by Robert M. Roll; 214 pages, 9½ x 12½, hardbound. Price \$24.95. Published by Motorbooks International P.O. Box 2, Osceola, WI. 54020. The author in both text and photographs does an excellent job of giving the reader the feel of what it was like being a trucker, most emphasis being placed on the pre WWII years. The section on the car carriers was of special interest and enjoyment to this reviewer, but the

duotone photographs in many instances leaves much to be desired. They come off blurred and out of focus, which is a shame because the size and quality of the book is excellent. One other minor irritation is the style of the type used to title each chapter, its just to frilly and flowery for a book on trucking! These trucks were rough and tough machines, just as the men were that drove them; to me the type, layout should emphasize this, it doesn't, this type face would work better on a book on custom coach work.

W.E. Gosden

Austin Healey 3000 1959-1967/ Porsche Cars 1968-1972/ Triumph TR4 & TR5 1961- 1969/ Jaguar Cars 1964- 1968 Brooklands Books, Surrey, England; U.S. distributors: Classic Motorbooks, P.O. Box 2, Osceola, WI. 54020. The four new books in soft cover by Brooklands Books are in the same format as before, the contents are the drive reports, new model coverage etc. of the specific automobiles mentioned by contemporary magazines when the automobiles were new. They are good accounts of the automobiles, and all articles are now under one cover. If you like the specific make in question these books are invaluable.

The Motor Car 1946-1956, by Michael Sedgwick, B.T. Batsford, Ltd., 4 Fitzhardinge St., London W1H 0AH. England. 264 pp., hardbound. 6½ x 9½. £15.00. Back in 1970, Michael Sedgwick wrote a book entitled CARS OF THE 1930's, published by Batsford. It was an extraordinarily good book and in it Sedgwick touched all bases, not only the more prosaic cars on the market during the decade, but the obscure as well. It was a forgone conclusion that there would have to be a sequel in The Motor Car 1946-1956, he has maintained his high standard set nine years ago.

He takes the rebirth of the motor car country by country. It is sad for some of us who well recall that ten year span and who, in our own way, had all the hopes and aspirations for the success of this or that marque only to see them go down in dross-- in this country especially the Tucker, Kaiser, Frazer, Allstate etc. -- they tried. They failed. Michsel Sedgwick has aptly written their collective requiem.

The 1946-1956 period was one of sheer majic for some of us, this writer included. To miss the Automobile Show in New York each year was akin to missing ones wedding. We went, we looked, we marvelled. How, we thought, could there be such a proliferation of the truly beautiful, sporting and exquisitely engineered from so many countries under one roof all at once? We were thrilled by it all.

The time wasn't unlike the immediate post-World War I era when so very many different concerns tried and failed. It was, like then, a time of experimentation - not experimentation as far as the mettle of the make went, but experimentation as to whether the company could get off the ground. Sometimes it did. More often it didn't.

Sedgwick is an authority on this sort of survey and as such this volume ought to be acquired by anyone truly interested in the overall history of the motor car.

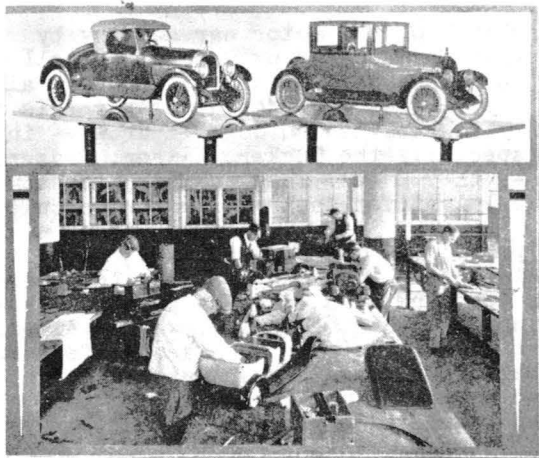
I recommend it without reservation.

Keith Marvin

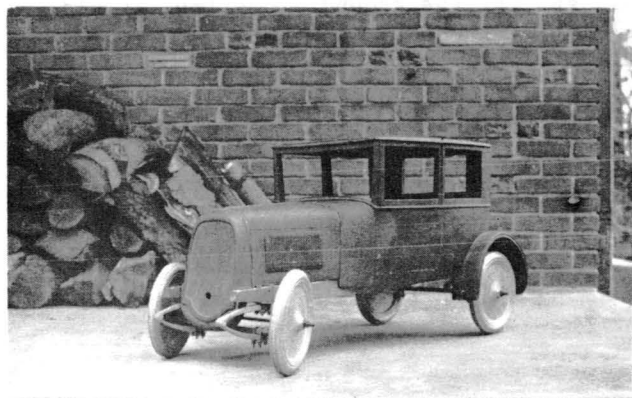
MANUFACTURER PROTOTYPE AND SCALE MODELS

Today the automobile manufacturers issue yearly promotional models and have fairly regularly since the late 1940's, but what of the scale models made in the pre war years? In Charles Betts fine book AMERICAN VINTAGE CARS he had the print pictured of an assembly line at the Marmon Co. as reported in Motor Age for Jan. 6, 1921. It showed workmen creating out of wood scale models of the Marmons of the era. These models were well detailed and apparently went on to be displayed at various car showrooms or perhaps at the parent companies headquarters. From the print it seems four models were made, a roadster, victoria coupe, sedan, and touring car.

A few years ago I acquired on permanent loan, a wooden mock up of a Franklin that was a prototype of an economy car the Franklin company called the model Z. Although a few of the actual model Z cars were produced it never reached production because at the time funds could not be raised to build additional facilities to get this new car a complete production area of its own. The scale model you see here was made in the pattern dept. at the Franklin factory on Geddes St. in Syracuse. When the project fell through the engineer for the project, Mr. Murphy, took the model home with him. There it stayed until after his death in the early 1960's when it was obtained from his attic by some Franklin enthusiasts who lived in the Syracuse area. The body, fenders, hood, and shell are made of laminated wood; and its all held together by glue. The wheels and springs are cast from aluminum, the same aluminum used in the engine blocks of the production Franklins. The most interesting thing is that the front wheels



The Marmon scale models above, and the Franklin prototype mock up below.



actually steer! There is a tie rod (which is adjustable), kingpins etc. Of course the chassis is laminated ash in the best of Franklin tradition. Overall length is 38½" width 17" height 19" with a wheelbase of 29". It is quite heavy too.

Does anyone know of what happened to the Marmon models, or of any other manufacturer making similar mock ups? They are all a part of the history of the manufacturers, let's hear from you on the subject, and send photos if you know of any survivors so we can run them in the Newsletter.

Walt Gosden

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Merle H. Mishne (667) Wayne Lawrence (668)
5505 Cloverleaf Pky P.O. Box 482
Cleveland, Ohio 44125 Sidney, OH. 45367

Badges-Indianapolis 500 from 1959 through 1975:
all on cardboard mounts as issued. (17 pieces
\$275.00). Albert R. Bochroch, P.O. Box 90,
Solebury, Penna. 18963 (215-297 5081)

WANTED: Trying to fill in areas in my library,
need Cadillac owners manuals for one cylinder
model D (1905), Model H (1906-1908), Model L
(1906) and V-16 1934 (452-D) (452-4) & V-16
1936 (36-91). Also need many issues of the
1929-33 ACCESSORY FACTS, will buy complete runs or
can use copies of specific issues. Phil Dumka
P.O. Box 84, Carlisle, Mass. 01741

WANTED: Information on the location of any surviv-
ing Kline-Kars produced in York County, Penna. by
the BCK Company between 1909 and 1912. I would be
most interested in purchasing a car or at least
learning of its location and owner for inclusion
in our local Automotive Historical records. If you
have any information on such a car produced in this
area please call COLLECT (717) 845-1974 and ask for
Fred Rosenmiller or write to me at 37 West Market
St., York, Pa. 17401

HUBCAPS: I have a large selection of screw-on
type hubcaps for sale or trade. Want early hub-
caps for my collection. Bruce Ledingham, 2270
S.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6P 6C2 CANADA

Bill Digney, 159 Grove St., Bridgeport, CT. 06605
has sent in the following article on the history of
the Locomobile company that he found in a book
titled the HISTORY OF BRIDGEPORT & VICINITY, edited
by George C. Waldo, Jr. in 1917. The publishers of
the volume were S.J. Clarke Pub. Co. of New York &
Chicago. We thought you may enjoy it.

THE HISTORY OF THE LOCOMOBILE COMPANY OF AMERICA

In May, 1899, The Locomobile Company of America was incor-
porated under the laws of the State of West Virginia. The leading
spirit in the foundation of the company was Mr. Ami Lorenzo Bar-
ber, who was undoubtedly the most prominent individual in the
development of street pavement in this country and at the very head
of the asphalt street industry and associated for many years with the
Barber Company. As a result of his long experience with transpor-
tation Mr. Barber was an early user and believer in the future of the
automobile. He had the first electric car delivered in New York City.
He went abroad when automobiles first began to be used in Europe
and tried them out over there and came back more convinced than
ever of the great future of the "horseless carriage" as it was called
at that time.

Mr. John Walker at that time editor of the Cosmopolitan Mag-
azine and a gentleman of a very active mind, and as a result of his
editorship being in touch with all sorts of things, discovered a light
automobile designed and built by the Stanley Brothers of Newton,
Mass., manufacturers of photographic dry plates. This car gave
a great deal of promise and Mr. Walker was so favorably impressed
with it that he immediately took it up with his neighbor, Mr. A. L.
Barber, and a trip was made to Milton, Mass., and a company was
started to manufacture this early car. The name of the first Com-
pany was "The Automobile Company of America," but it was found
that another institution of the same name was founded a few weeks
before, so the name was changed to "Locomobile". The idea of the
word "Locomobile" originated with Mr. Barber.

Associated with Mr. Barber was his son-in-law Samuel Todd
Davis, Jr., later president of the Locomobile Company up to his death
September 1st, 1915. Mr. Davis was the actual head and directing
force back of the company since its foundation. He was in every
way an unusual man, athletic, cultured, an engineer, business execu-
tive and "true in all walks of life."

Classified Ads

FOR SALE: The following MG material is all mint
condition - Series Y Owners handbook for 1½ litre
series Y, Instruction manual for MG Midget P and
PB series, Instruction manual for TA and TB series,
Service parts list MG midget TC series. \$150 each
or all four for \$500....PROGRAMS:all are fine to
good condition.(1) 1st race at Atlantic City
board track, May 1, 1921 Inaugural International
Motor Classic, Speedway,N.J. -\$250 (2)Floyd Bennett
Field AAA sanctioned sports car races, Aug. 1953
\$50 (3)Andrews Air Base, early SAC race - \$50 (4)
Anglo-American Vintage Car Rally, England, Sept 54
\$50 ...All four \$350..CAR BADGES - following car
badges are not the tourist variety. They were
acquired when I covered overseas racing. All are new,
many have hardware.(all 23 pieces \$350.00)
Touring Club of Amsterdam:K.D.A.K. Sportsafdeling-
Holland:ADAC Racing Club of Stuttgart:A.C.Deutschl-
and: RAC of SPA: Touring Club Van Belgie: Touring
Club Belgique: Touring Club de Belgique:A.C.Normandy-
Rouen:A.C.de l'Quest Le Mans: A.C.de Champagne-Reims:
A.C.Ile de France-Paris:A.C.d'Auvergne-Clermont-
Ferand:A.C.de France:T.C.of France:BARC:RAC-plastic:
RAC-metal:A.C.Italy-Fia:A.C.Luxembourg:T.C.of Swi-
tzerland: SAR Rennes Sports Schweiz: Monza Autodromo.

This early car was propelled by steam and was very ingenious. It far surpassed the best performances of the early gasoline automobile. The manner in which it would start, climb hills, and the ease in which it could be guided, and its noiseless operation made a sensation all over the country, and the little dry plate works was besieged with visitors trying to buy or get agencies, not only from all over the United States but from all over the world. The car made a sensation in France.

In the first year 1899 and part of 1900, that is the first twelve months, the company turned out over one thousand vehicles. The success of this pioneer car so stimulated the manufacture of gasoline cars, that in a few months, in an inconceivably short time, the gasoline automobile began to take a turn for the better, consequently the Locomobile Company had not been in business more than a year and a half, when it was considered probable that the future of the gasoline car was better than that of the steam vehicle. Consequently Mr. Andrew Lawrence Riker was retained by The Locomobile Company, secretly, to develop a gasoline car for them. The plans were begun in New York City, late in 1901 and as soon as the car had been laid out on paper it was built experimentally and also without the knowledge of the automobile trade, in a private machine shop in Chicopee Falls, Mass., and the first car was running on the road early in the spring of 1902.

Mr. Andrew Lawrence Riker was at that time a pioneer in automobile development. He was one of the very first men to build a practical and successful automobile. He took up the electric car and developed it to a very high state of perfection. Commercial delivery wagons owned and operated by such concerns as Altman in New York, Gorham & Company and others, were still running up to the time of writing this, after a successful operation of about eighteen years.

The first gasoline Locomobile led others in the design of the automobile chassis. It was the first American gasoline car to combine the following elements and which are considered the fundamental essentials of the up-to-date chassis:

The first Locomobile had an all steel chassis frame; sliding gear transmission; vertical cylinder motor located at the front of the frame under a bonnet; it had a gear driven electric generator; it had wheel steering; it had high tension ignition; it had double chain drive, but this was later replaced by shaft drive.

The purpose of the Locomobile Company at this time was clearly defined, and was to abandon the policy of a large production of a light and comparatively cheap machine. The company decided that its future policy would be to build a limited number of exceedingly fine cars, as fine as could be made; to develop the American automobile to as high a pitch of perfection as it was being developed abroad. Another feature of the purpose was to keep in close touch with owners and to make the Locomobile Company a high class proposition all the way through.

As a result of this purpose various policies were put in action and the various plans carried out. All the materials of the Locomobile car has been specially chosen and subjected to chemical tests and physical tests in order that the standard will be kept right up to the highest degree. The car has always been built first and the price fixed afterwards. As a result the name "Locomobile" has come to mean excellent material and workmanship, in short a chassis that has no superior in America for durability and thoroughness of construction. All of the nuts and all ends of bolts and screws used on the Locomobile have been hardened ever since the first car was made. This is an example of the attention to detail.

The Locomobile Company operates under a policy of limited production not more than four cars a day. The idea being that by concentrating on a few cars they can be made finer than if the production was very large. It is thus possible to give intimate attention to each car and each owner.

In 1911 the company took up the matter of the production of commercial vehicles. The idea was not to engage in the manufacture of these cars in a large way at first, but to build a few trucks and sell them and study their performances and the performance of other trucks, in short to engage in the commercial vehicle business in a gradual way at the outset. This has proven to be a wise step, because those who went into the motor truck business early did not make

any money. In fact it has been common talk in the automobile trade that up to the time of the outbreak of war in 1914, there was little or no money made in the automobile truck industry in America.

At the outbreak of the war the Locomobile secured an order of one thousand four-ton worm drive trucks from the British War

Office. Largely the result of a test made in England of the Locomobile trucks running on some of the Old Roman roads, up very steep grades, but instead of doing as the other competing trucks did, run with one load less than their rated capacity, the Locomobile Truck operated with one ton overload. It did more than was expected of it and so won the attention of the British War Office and this large order was placed. At this time the Locomobile Company had decided to change the name of the truck from "Locomobile" to "Riker", it being considered that the Locomobile Car had become associated with an exceedingly aristocratic vehicle. It was not regarded desirable to have the same name on two articles so widely different, one intended for luxurious travel and the other intended to haul goods efficiently and economically year after year.

Consequently the truck was named after its designer, Andrew Lawrence Riker, and who was well known having been the first president of the Society of Automobile Engineers. Mr. Riker is also a member of the Naval Advisory Board.

The commercial business for Riker Trucks has grown very rapidly in the last few years, and many large institutions use this truck. Like the Locomobile car it is composed of the best materials known to the Engineering profession and is made in the thorough conscientious manner.

The Locomobile works are beautifully situated on a point of land adjoining Seaside Park, Bridgeport, Connecticut. This point was at one time an old Indian camping ground. Evidently the point was sandy and charmingly located for clamming, fishing and bathing, and the Indians used to congregate there, as is proven by the large number of arrow heads found when extending the Locomobile building for a new foundation.

After the Locomobile Company had been founded at Newton it was almost immediately necessary to expand, so various factories were hired, one at Westboro, Mass., one at Worcester, Mass., and one at Bridgeport. Finally after difficulties arising from this system the entire outfit was moved to Bridgeport, Conn., and was installed in the old Liberty Bicycle Plant. The construction of the factory at Seaside Park was then begun and rapidly completed and since then numerous additions have been made till the Locomobile works now stands an imposing monument to the thoroughness and accuracy of New England methods.

It is the purpose of the Locomobile Company of America to beautify the situation as much as possible, and progress has already

been made in this direction and will be concentrated in future years so that the Locomobile works will be a credit to Bridgeport, and an agreeable feature of the shore front.

The policy of the company will be to continue to build a limited number of the very finest pleasure cars that can be made and also a comparatively limited number of motor trucks of medium capacity.

The officials of the Locomobile Company are:

Raymond K. Albright, president.
Andrew L. Riker, vice president.
James T. Roche, vice president.
Frank R. Hickman, secretary and treasurer.

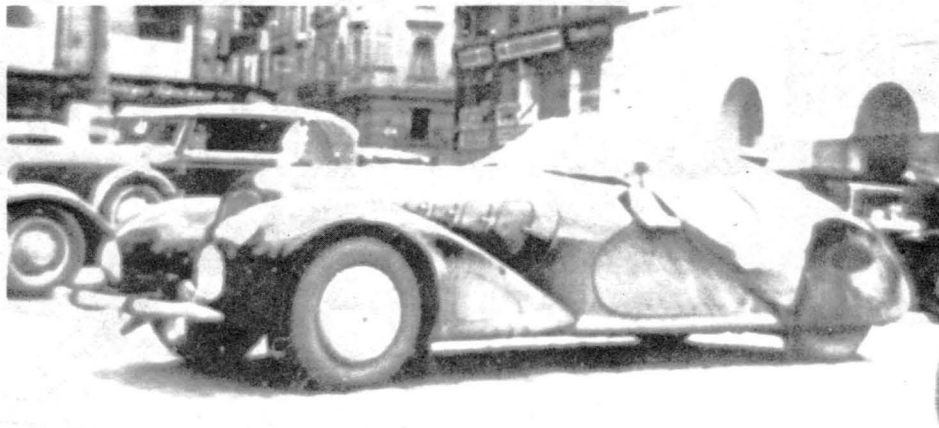
FACTORY PHOTOGRAPH SECTION

To honor the Thunderbird on it's 25th Anniversary, we are running this early publicity photograph lent by member James Petrik of Madeira, Ohio. Appropriately the photgraph, so Jim tells us was taken in August of 1954. The car features the Fairlane type side trim, which never went on the production cars. The second photograph came to us courtesy of the Ford Motor Company and shows the 1980



Mystery of the Month

Although the photo isn't very clear I wanted to run it anyway. Fred Roe sent it in and said it was taken by a friend of his in Germany or Austria in 1938. There was no identification on the car at all. Anyone have any idea of the make of car or who did the coachwork?



*The Society of
Automotive
Historians*

WALTER E. GOSDEN

197 MAYFAIR AVENUE, FLORAL PARK, N.Y. 11001