

THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

November-December 1982

ISSUE NUMBER 81

Editorial

Thanks must go to SAH Director Bill Lewis of California for his excellent article on the Sensaud de Lavaud automobile in this edition of the Journal. I do hope others in the membership will be inspired to send in their findings/articles etc.

I would like to thank all the editors from the other organizations who have continued to keep me on their complimentary mailing list for publications. I do welcome the magazines and newsletters I receive. It is so good to see the many important photographs, and information that has been found and made available, this is automotive history and that's what we are all about.

Walt Gosden

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Society was held at the Marriott Inn, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday evening, October 8, 1982. After a delicious buffet-style dinner, George Dammann, Master of Ceremonies, welcomed the group of 90-odd members and guests, advising that verbiage would be held to a minimum.

Those at the head table were: Fred Roe, George Ward, Walter E. Gosden, Charles Betts, Keith Marvin, George Dammann, David Lewis, V.J. Adduci, Kathleen Adduci, and Beverly Rae Kimes. President David Lewis was called upon to make the first-ever presentation of the James J. Bradley Memorial Award, in recognition of outstanding work relating to the preservation of auto literature. V.J. Adduci, President and Chief Executive of the

Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, graciously accepted this award presented to the MVMA Archives.

Next George Dammann introduced Matt Joseph, Chairman of the Cugnot Awards Committee, who presented Cugnot awards to the following:

Book award to Thomas Bonsall for *The Lincoln Motorcar: Sixty Years of Excellence*, published by Bookman Dan! Magazine award to Walter E. Gosden for "J. Frank deCausse: The Man of Mystery and His Motorcars," published by Automobile Quarterly.

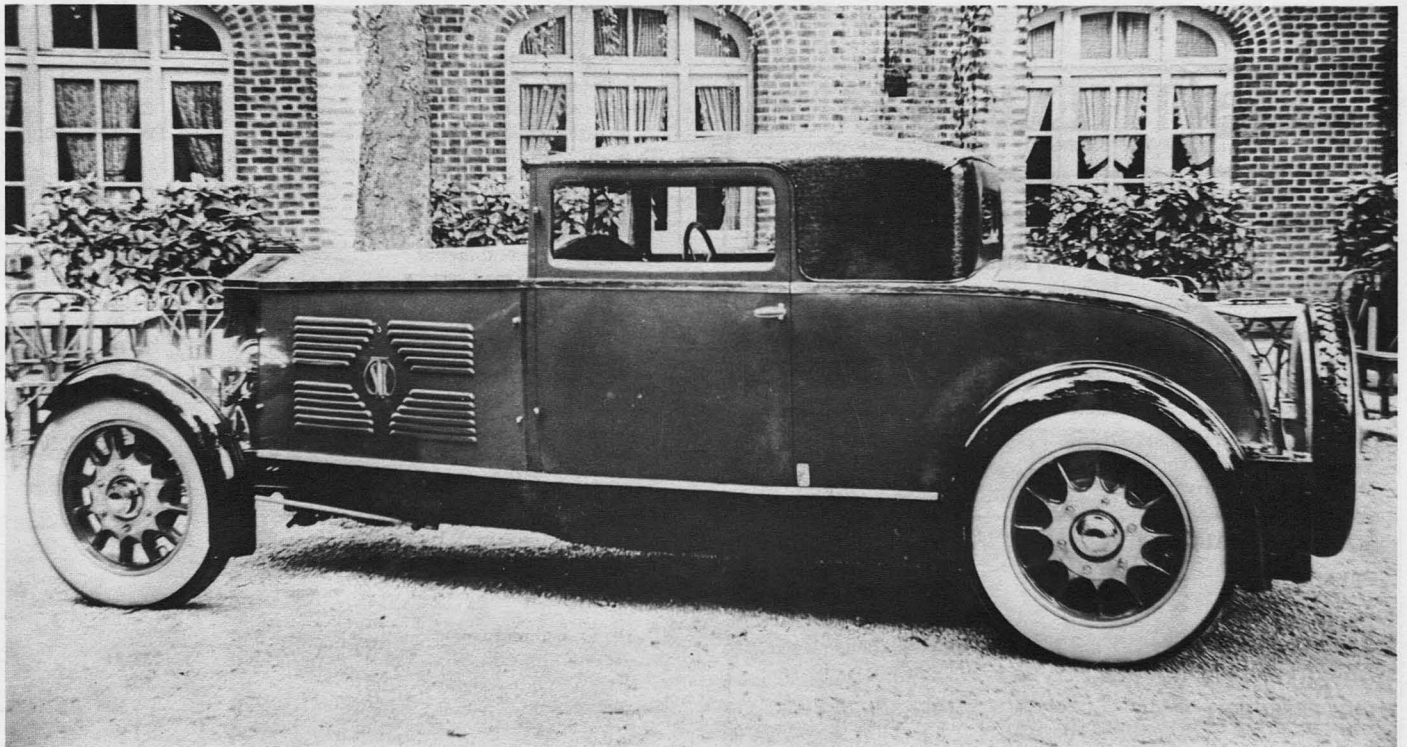
Honorable Mention Citations will go to Mark Dees, author of *The Miller Dynasty*, and to Griffith Borgeson, author of *Bugatti by Borgeson*, and to Max Gregory, author of *Holdens before the Holden*.

Secretary Charles Betts reported the results of the recent election of officers and directors, who will assume their duties January 1, 1983, as follows: President, David Lewis; Vice President, Keith Marvin; Secretary, Charles Betts; Treasure, George Ward; directors, Douglas Bakken, Jeffrey Godshall, and Walter McCall.

The meeting was then turned over to Past-President Howard Applegate for the auctioning of various books and other pieces of literature previously donated for this purpose. With the untiring help of Bob Lichty and George Ward, this feature, as always, was well enjoyed and rewarding to the Society treasury too.

The meeting was then adjourned for socializing.

Respectfully submitted
Charles Betts—Secretary



Sensaud de Lavaud coupe, chassis number two. See the article by William J. Lewis on this make in this issue. Photograph from the collection of Walter E. Gosden.

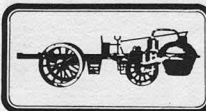


The 1st James J. Bradley Award for Distinguished Service went to the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, and President David Lewis (left in photo) is with MVMA President V.J. Adduci, and Jim Wren, MVMA Patent Dept. Manager and SAH member.

Wisconsin Chapter

The Wisconsin Chapter continues to be active and regularly issues its publication The Spark to its membership. New President is Wally Wray, with Vice President/Associate Director being Bob Lichty, Secretary is Tony Hossain, Treasurer - Phil Hall and Directors are Ray Scroggins, Matt Joseph, and Bill Cameron. Bill is also Editor of the Spark. In the latest issue of the Spark there are comments by the officers on editorial policy and activities of the membership. There are also featured a number of illustrations of Wisconsin built vehicles and related products.

SAH Gathering - Feb. 11th, at the Philadelphia Centre Hotel in Philadelphia, Pa. The AACA meeting is this weekend and on Friday the 11th, Hayden Shepley and Tom Stewart will host an informal gathering for SAH members in their rooms. It is a BYOB affair if you so desire, time will be 7:30 p.m. If you plan to attend be sure to ask at the hotel registration desk for Hayden Shepley's room number (not known as of this writing).



THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

Editor
Walter E Gosden.
Art Director
John M. Peckham

Editorial Office: SAH Journal,
197 Mayfair Ave., Floral Park,
Long Island, NY 11001

Publication Committee
Beverly Rae Kimes, Chairperson
George B P Ward, Jr

Walter E Gosden
David L Lewis
Frederick D Roe

The SAH Journal published
six times a year by The Society of
Automotive Historians Inc.

Copyright 1982
The Society of Automotive
Historians Inc.

SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS' OFFICERS 1982

PRESIDENT

David L. Lewis
2588 Hawthorn Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI. 48104

VICE PRESIDENT

Keith Marvin
P.O. Box 839
Troy, N.Y. 12181

SECRETARY

Charles L Betts Jr
2105 Stackhouse Dr
Yardley, PA 19067

TREASURER

George B P Ward, Jr
c/o Maryland National Bank
P O Box 987
Baltimore, MD 21203

SAH - Statement of Financial Position as of 9/31/82 (Unaudited)

Assets	
General Fund	
Checking account - Maryland National Bank	\$ 956.09
Savings account - Maryland National Bank	5,200.42
Deposit a/c 1982 banquet/hospitality tent	250.00
Deposit a/c postage	210.49
Price Prime Reserve Fund	240.01
	\$ 6,857.01
Awards Endowment Fund	
Price Prime Reserve Fund	675.65
Publications Endowment Fund	
Price Prime Reserve Fund	14,297.79
James J. Bradley Memorial Fund	
Price Prime Reserve Fund	2,770.17
Total Assets	\$24,600.62
Liabilities	
Liabilities (unpaid obligations) \$ -0-	
Estimated cost of annual meeting arrangements contracted for	2,100.00
Net Worth - Fund Equities	
General Fund	4,757.01
Awards Endowment Fund	675.65
Publications Endowment Fund	14,297.79
Bradley Memorial Fund	2,770.17
Total Liabilities and Net Worth	\$24,600.62

General Fund	
Income	
1982 Dues*	\$ 4,788.47
Sale of publications	30.00
Interest	220.60
Contributions	25.00
Advance sale of banquet tickets	960.00
	\$6,024.07
*Net after loss on foreign exchange - \$11.53	

Expense	
Printing	\$2,391.27
Typesetting and layout	2,368.00
Postage and mail service	1,973.00
Telephone	14.52
Xerox	80.91
Corporate expense	10.00
Office Supplies	56.60
Annual meeting expense	234.30
	7,128.70
Excess of expense over income	(\$1,104.63)

Awards Endowment Fund	
Income: Interest	\$ 62.95
Expense: None	-0-
Net Income	\$ 62.95

Publications Endowment Fund	
Income: Interest	\$1,331.81
Expense: None	-0-
Net Income	\$1,331.81

James J. Bradley Memorial Fund	
Income: Interest	\$ 278.39
Expense: Memorial	338.00
Excess of expense over income	(\$ 59.61)

The Classic American Auto Club of Great Britain recently held its 21st anniversary dinner. Through the efforts of this organization (the pioneer society in the preservation of U.S. built vehicles in the United Kingdom) numerous vehicles have been saved from the scrap pile and the history of the 'Yank' automobile and commercial vehicles has been continuously recorded in that club's publication the **Hood & Fender**. The members, officers and founder/chairman Harry C.G. Shell of Hertfordshire are to be commended on a task well done. The SAH was represented at the anniversary dinner by Director Michael Sedgwick. Representative from the HCCA and CCCA were also in attendance.

P-A Society 25th Anniversary

The Pierce-Arrow Society celebrates its 25th Anniversary in the latest issue (series 82-model 3) of *The Arrow*, the organizations excellent magazine. A very active organization, the PAS not only has events where members vehicles are taken on tours etc. but in addition has truly excellent publications that not only answer the questions to help members keep their fine machines on the road, but also offer tremendous historical information gleaned from factory publications, photographs, and the memories of former employees of the former Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company.

New Magazine Debuts

Wheels & Tracks, *The International Review of Military Vehicles*, is a new magazine that has just entered the market and will be published quarterly by Battle of Britain Prints International Ltd. The Editor - in-Chief is W.G. Ramsey, and Editor is Bart Vanderveen. I have the first issue here and it is a 53 page, color cover (black & white photos inside) 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 magazine. The text and photographs meet a very high standard, with both period and current information covered. The reproduction of the photographs is superb, type face is simple and clear, very well suited for a magazine devoted to military vehicles. Vehicles manufactured on both sides of the Atlantic are covered in the first edition. For those among the SAH membership who have an interest in the military vehicle (primarily of WW II vintage) this new magazine will be an excellent and welcome addition.

FYI by CB

W.E. Gosden

Dues renewal notices for 1983 were mailed separately on October 27, 1982; to all Active members (via first class mail to domestic and Canadian addresses and via air mail to foreign addresses). NOTE: ALL HONORARY AND LIFE MEMBERS ARE EXEMPT. Checks or money orders in the amount of \$20.00 U.S. currency, payable to the Society of Automotive Historians Inc., are to be sent to Charles Betts, Secretary, 2105 Stackhouse Drive, Yardley, PA 19067, U.S.A. Your prompt action will be gratefully appreciated.

In an effort to broaden the scope and usefulness of our 1983 Membership Directory, we'd welcome feedback on the following suggestions:

- 1) Cross-reference members' interests,
- 2) Printing pages back-to-back (to reduce weight),
- 3) Listing officers of each chapter,
- 4) Including a set of by-laws, and
- 5) Outlining duties of the directors.

Members of the Board of Directors are asked to hold Friday, February 11, 1983, for a meeting in the Skyline Room, Free Library of Philadelphia, Logan Square, Philadelphia, Pa. Formal notices will be issued later.

Two books written by SAH member John Gunnell have been released in recent months. *75 YEARS OF PONTIAC-OAKLAND* is a complete pictorial history of the related marques and one of the latest additions in the Crestline series of automotive books. *CHRYSLER 300 PHOTO FACTS*, by Classic Motorbooks, is the first in the company's new series of highly detailed studies on specific postwar American collector cars. It covers the 1955-1961 Letter Series Chrysler 300 models. Gunnell is a Books Editor with Krause publications, of Iola, Wis. and has been a member of SAH since 1975.

Letters

From: *William J. Lewis, 600 Kiama Street, Anaheim, California 92802*. Sorry that I couldn't get this (the Sensaud de Lavaud story) to you sooner but time has a way of not existing in the right places. Hope that it will serve your purposes and perhaps gain some feed-back.

I kept it short which is difficult for me since I have so much interconnecting material regarding those people and their automotive efforts.

Bucciali, Voisin, Sensaud de Lavaud, Delage, Ballot, Delehay, Leon-Laine and Lambert were all good-buddies. They were also looked upon as "the renegades of the French auto industry." I suppose that they were all emulating Bugatti, or trying to, since he represented the Kingship of anti-mass-production tin.

Voisin, Delage and Bugatti were "socially" singled out as the Royal Court, of that idiom, by the general French press. They were followship-reviews by being socially present (at interview time) and sharing the same viewpoint. Marc Berkigt and the fellow from Minerva in Belgium were also IN the click. I can't recall the name of the Minerva chap but he was a close friend of Voisin.

I am not sure that he remained Voisin's close friend after Belgian diamond wealth, totally ignorant of Automobile manufacture, took financial contgrol of Minvera/Imperia. You may have wondered why the late thirties Belgian Imperia car resembled a Voisin. He helped (his friend?) design and develop the Imperia of that time and it is said that he, Voisin, even built a number of the Imperia bodies in his own Factory.

I have never chased down the S. de L torque converter in any great length beyond the references listed at the end of the article. I'm sure that it was patented in the U.S. (Bucciali's efforts were) and there is probably a whole story of promotion here. Hopefully, some SAH members will add to that phase after seeing this "starter".

What do you know about Studebakers one-shot prototype displayed in New York in 1919 1/2 20 featuring the British Daimler fluid flywheel? I have seen references on it but no real technical fodder or pictures. Studebaker must have had some licensing arrangement with Daimler but the promotion didn't raise any interest in New York so Studebaker dropped the idea. I doubt that the prototype touring car ever reached private ownership but can't prove the point.

Also, if Studebaker had a U.S. licensing arrangement with Daimler, did they let it lapse or did they trade it off to Chrysler later on? Chrysler's prototype experiments first took place in England using the Daimler unit. It ws all quite hush-hush but didn't escape a line or two in the British Motor press.

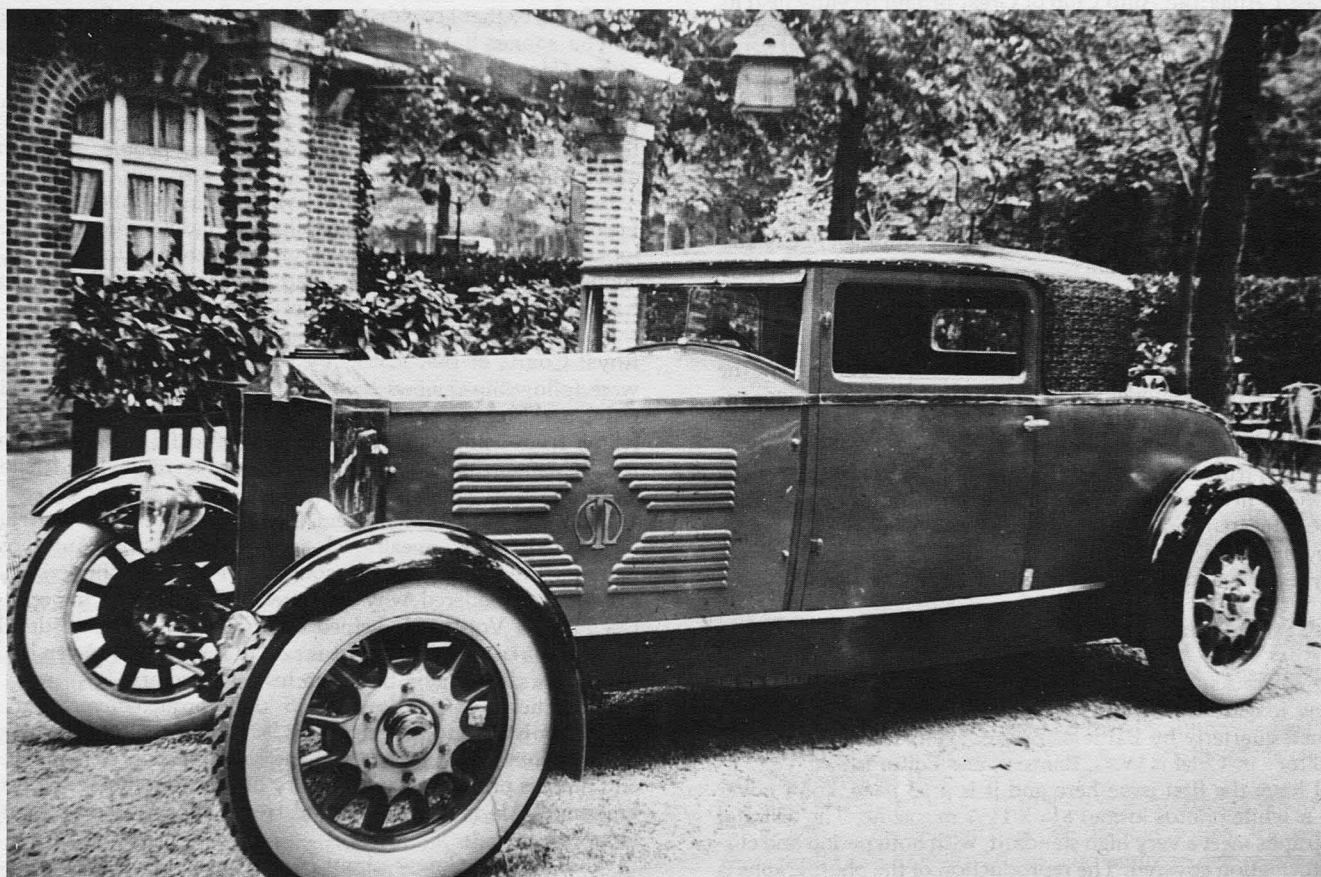
When Chrysler brought the project to the States, their promotional literature carried the footnote "Chrysler Fluid drive, Licensed to Daimler of England inventor of the system" or words to that effect.

I wonder if Studebaker's prior possession of a U.S. license caused a three sided arrangement since they had no intention of adopting the fluid coupling after it had falled flat. When Chrysler first put it on the market here in a limited number of their largest and most expensive limousines, the unit itself was Daimler built.

I rather suspect that those few cars were "sold" with strings attached as a field test and were returned to Chrysler who by then had tooled up their production. The whole episode is an interesting one.

There are several versions of the Sensaud de Lavaud converter. The earlier one had the axle line below the driveshaft line. This was reversed in later units, circa 1931/2 but I don't know who might have actually used that form in anything, prototype or otherwise.

Semi-automatics, automatics and torque converters of that period 1925 to 1935 are a whole ball game in themselves requiring tons of research in order to cover them fully. For example: What American car, indeed if any, tried the British Hobbs unit as used by Austin? Who provided the "number of stock cars" in which the Radcliffe hydraulic drag system was fitted in N.Y. circa 1921? What about the Philadelphia built copy of the German Lentz unit of 1923? What make car tested the Denver built Higgins Hydraulic trans.? Did the Weiss rollar system ever get into a prototype car? On and on it goes for there were hundreds of viable concepts being developed World wide.



Photograph from the collection of W.E. Gosden.

AUTOMOBILE(S)? SENSAUD DE LAVAUD

By William J. Lewis

There always seems to be that singular obscure brand of motor car, found when thumbing through old automotive publications, which leaves a lasting impression.

The very unusual, particularly in its own time, Sensaud de Lavaud project is such a car reeking with innovations well apart from its contemporaries. Like countless others of its ilk, this vehicle existed to prove a point beyond mere theory on paper or short changed testing.

Mons. D. Sensaud de Lavaud had devised a progressive speed change transmission system into a "tryable-test-form" by early 1923. Gabriel Voisin, who had just about perfected his own electrically controlled overdrive, tried the S de L device in a 1925 10 h.p. Voisin. So did Delehay, Citroen and others. Even Henry Ford took a close look at it as a possible up-date for the planetary system. Other American firms were also interested but didn't follow through.

Summary of experiments did prove that the system **did** work and provide flexibilities not available in "conventional" transmissions of the day. Production costs were another killing factor plus testing the device in low H.P. vehicles. The relatively efficient automatic transmission only became possible when engine RPM, and power output, increased to override its power absorption required to function. Plus, leaving enough power available to perform comparable to a well-manned gearbox.

Be that, as it may, D. Sensaud de Lavaud's invention is a subject unto itself spanning a decade or more. His car, on the other hand, was a short lived promotion exploring other ideas. The transmission would be a part of it but not its main reason for existing. The first semi-completed chassis of late 1926 included a bevy of new design concepts and technical innovations.

An aluminum/Silicon alloy, known as Alplex in France, was being promoted for a variety of new uses in that era. It was claimed to give greater strength to castings as well as reduce corrosion and

produce smoother surface. The use of cast aluminum, itself, had long been employed for body and cowl parts in the automotive industry. Pierce-Arrow, for one, from circa 1904 but there were many other firms who tried it.

What was New, in the mid twenties, was exploration into "total structural uses" involving complete chassis, cowl, body, suspension parts, wheels etc. Apparently few in the mass-production auto industry did more than examine the cast aluminum chassis picture before dropping the subject. That left it up to the individualists to do the exploring. Bugatti, Bucciali, Sensaud de Lavaud and others successfully used cast Alplex wheels with integral steel brake drum liners. Changing a flat tire could become a chore, particularly when the cars, touted self-adjusting brake system, didn't live up to its claims.

Sensaud de Lavaud, Bucciali, and other efforts-of-smaller-budget, championed ideas of cast Alplex chassis drawing attention to their "New Automobiles". Perhaps a few cycle and light car promotions might have actually had cast aluminum chassis parts. A lot of suggestion by the Motor press, of the early twenties, plus sales catalogue propaganda cannot be considered as FACT.

Let's take a closer look at Sensaud de Lavaud's first chassis and its contemporary counterpart, Bucciali. But first, the name of the vehicle was Sensaud de Lavaud, not just de Lavaud as sometimes titled by the non-French motoring press and elsewhere. The firms promotion catalogue, of late 1928 carried the full name. The monogram-styled emblem, on radiator and hub caps, was STL in a circle with the cross of the "T" encircling the other two letters. It stood for "Techniques Sensaud de Lavaud" and the translucent letters of the radiator badge were claimed to have been electrically back lighted.

The first chassis was a mock-up using a different radiator shape than the second which became the working coupe a year later. Both had Alplex cast wheels but there is photographic denial to the claim of "one piece cast Alplex chassis and cowl". Pictures of this chassis, from various angles and numerous sources, Show the following:

Chassis frame of the usual material with attached floor panels. Cowl/firewall assembly "assembled" from flat sections of aluminum plate. Bolts plus non-castable shapes stand out. The claim of having Electric-brake-system looks plausible (for promotional purpose) since there is no visible brake system on the chassis.

A three-quarter front view of this chassis is found in the book "100 of the Worlds finest cars" by Floyd Clymer 1960. A head-on front view plus clearly detailed view of the entire driving compartment is found in the French motor journal, La Vie Automobile of Dec. 12, 1929. A 3/4 right rear view can be seen in Vol. 2 Automobile du Fanatique 1966, page 82.

The latter illustration is most interesting. It shows the extreme rear cross-panel, supporting the spare wheel mounting, opened door-fashion exposing the petrol tank and battery. There are no vertical suspension pillars nor base-bosses on which to mount them. In fact, there isn't any visible form of rear suspension on any views of this particular chassis.

The right front drag-link, while attached to the wheel steering knuckle, extends rearward parallel to outside of the chassis siderail but hangs in mid air attached to nothing. Devoid of enginehood, front fenders or headlamps this chassis rests on Dunlop tires. It has a dead horizontal steering column protruding into the cockpit and the front compartment contains a large transmission hump fitted with a standard gear shift lever.

Clutch, brake and roller-type accelerator pedals are of the modern hanging type pivoted behind the top of the toe board beneath the instrument panel. The vertical fascia is framed in four sections, of unequal size, bound with narrow chromed strip.

It is interesting to note that type, number and location of dashboard instruments differ greatly between the "du Fanatique" illustration and the Dec. 1929 picture in La vie Automobile.

The second Sensaud de Lavaud chassis, featured in the Companys 1928 catalogue claims "two peddle control". Peddles are floor mounted and the gear shift lever is gone. Tall tubes for the rear rubber disc and piston suspension extend above the rear wheels. Other details include different instrument panel and cowl, angled steering column, addition of bonnet, front fenders and headlamps, altered radiator shape, Perrot-type brake rods to front wheels and Michelin wide-whitewall tires replacing the Dunlop Forts.

Handsome chromed hub covers, held in place by the wheel mounting studs, did not carry on from first to second chassis. This design idea was used later by Bucciali to up-date his ornately cast wheels.

The Sensaud de Lavaud car used a cast-cum-welded banjo housing at the front making it appear to be front wheel drive. This unit, however, pivoted around the center line of the chassis on rubber and brake-lining discs. Its hollow center served as a housing for the engines dynastart system hidden behind a central cover plate.

Meanwhile, out at the kingpins, nearly vertical two-sided pistons bounced between rubber discs housed in tall tubes. This added a sort of Lancia-type independent suspension to S de L's swinging front banjo.

A condition known as "shimmy" was a major steering geometry problem of the mid twenties. Rapidly expanding experiments with both front wheel drive and independent front suspension designs further complicated matters. Mons. Sensaud de Lavaud's answer was to dispense with the common tie-rod and locate the steering box up under the firewall instead of on the chassis frame.

A bevel pinnion, fitted to the end of his short steering column, engaged contra rotating large bevel gears. The gears were equipped with manually adjustable hydraulic mechanisms to damp reversability. Shafts extended to each side of the car connecting to extra long pitman arms dropping to the base of the firewall where they connected to bell-cranks pivoted on the chassis. Individual drag-links connected opposite ends of the bell-cranks to each front wheel eliminating the tierod. This configuration introduced a "crash-safety" feature which was only recently re-discovered and implemented via the much simpler crushable steering column of today.

Both Sensaud de Lavaud and Bucciali displayed chassis at 1927 and 1928 exhibits at the end of 1926 and 1927 for the up-coming model years. Both printed brochures describing many identical concepts in design. Each used Cast Alpex wheels, hinted electrical braking, installed the S. de L steering system (which Bucciali continued to use) ballyhood cast aluminum chassis, firewall etc. plus the rubber suspension.

Neither chassis was any more than a full sized inoperable model. Both contained identical Hotchkiss built, American Continental engines with Bucciali's turned around for front drive. Each proposed their own Alpex cylinder head designs but photographs don't show any apparent changes to either engine.

A French specification and price publication entitled Le Moteur et le Chauffeur Francais listed the two makes as follows. Published 1927 covering the 1928 model year, Bucciali 15 h.p. 6 cyl 72 x 100, chassis 80,000 Francs Sensaud de Lavaud 6 cyl. 70 x 100 mm "closed and open cars 150,600 francs each."

The 1928 edition announcing 1929 vehicles listed Bucciali the same but Sensaud de Lavaud as 17 h.p. 75 x 110 m.m. chassis only at 99,000 Francs. 1929's edition for the 1930 model year carried S de L with same details but upped the chassis price to 120,000 Francs.

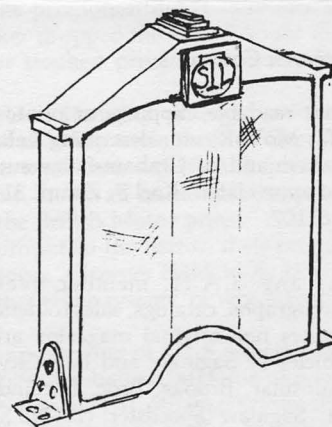
The second Sensaud de Lavaud chassis appears to have evolved into the single two-passenger feaux cabriolet frequently pictured in a single background scene. Whether or not the mock up chassis ever became a complete car remains a mystery. Bucciali's mock up recycled into another mock-up which survives as the grandious Double Huit (16 cylinder) full-scaled model now preserved in the Harrah Automobile Collection.

Bucciali continued to build front drive automobiles using only the S. de L steering gear system plus a crosswise, and interconnected, rubber disc and piston front shock absorber unit.

The two faces of Sensaud de Lavaud

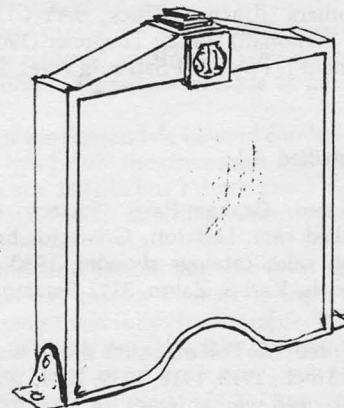
Mock-up Chassis #1

1. drooping front panel
2. overhanging shoulder a la Roamer.
3. Very slightly V core with flat front a la Sizaire-Berwick
4. three stack ornament
5. Narrow shell
6. square badge area on deep stand-off box for lighting?



Coupe Chassis #2

1. Straight across panel
2. No shoulder overhang
3. Flat core
4. two-stack ornament
5. wider shell
6. Taller than wide badge box with less projection. Back-light point questionable.



Sensaud de Lavaud turned his attention to promoting further refined concept of his torque converter transmission, a roller differential design and the steering gear system. The latter complexity killed it while both the depression and better ideas replaced the converter. Namely; Daimler's fluid flywheel, Wilson-Preselector, Cotal-preselector and Buccioli patented designs. The latter would not see actual use until after the second war.

I wonder, as I'm sure other historians do, how the Lavaud system might have effected automotive history had it been first tried attached to an engine of 100 to 150 h.p. instead of 20 to 35 h.p. It worked well despite being an extremely costly item to manufacture, even by 1928 standards.

Both, Paul Albert Buccioli and Gabriel Voisin expressed their opinions, in correspondence, to this writer two decades ago. They called it a "Complex power waster, but very smooth in operation" Neither had actually given the device a non-stacked-deck test, in my feeling. Voisin did present the late W.F. Bradley with two identical 10hp Voisin cars to road test. One with and the other without S. de L converter.

Mr. Bradley's glowing report may be studied in SAE Transactions vol. 20 part 2 of 1925, pages 196 to 201.

Additional source material-

Sensaud de Lavaud differential — *La Vie Automobile*
3/25/1928

Sensaud de Lavaud Transmission — *La Vie Automobile*
1/25/1928

Sensaud de Lavaud car — *La Vie Automobile* 12/10/1929

The transmission analyzed — *Automotive Industries* July 29,
1933

Steering & Suspension — *Automotive Industries* Nov. 5, 1927

Picture of Mon. S de L with car — *Automotive Industries*
Oct. 22, 1927

(Note: The author would appreciate correspondence from anyone having additional information about the Sensaud de Lavaud car or any of its design features, promoted or prototyped, under any other brand name. W.J. Lewis, 600 Kiama St. Anaheim, Calif. 92802)

Research Column

Want readable clippings or photostats of articles in *Autobody*, *ATJ*, *MoToR*, etc. describing LeBaron or other custom bodied Graham and/or Graham-Paige automobiles. All sources of such info appreciated. Karl S. Zahm, 3111 Burrmont Road, Rockford, IL 61107.

Has any S.A.H. member ever seen any advertisements, photographs, catalogs, sales folders, stationery, etc. (but not press releases nor original magazine articles) on the following built vehicles of Saginaw and Bay City, Mich.? SAGINAW: Ayres, Peninsular, Brooks, Broc, Borland-Grannis, Carnation, Columbia, Saginaw Speedster (1914), Saginaw 4 (1916), Saginaw 8 (1916), Saginaw Cyclecar (1914), Railsbach (1914), & Nelson Brothers "JUMBO" Truck, BAY CITY: Falcon (1905); Winonah (or Wenonah) (1912); Toepfner (1909-16), NATCO (1911-1916). Ronald J. Putz, 201 Salzburg Ave., Bay City, Mich. 48706-5317.

Classified Ad

Wanted: Graham-Paige "factory" photos of 1928-30 custom bodied cars. LeBaron, Griswold, Erdmann & Rossi, Locke, etc. Also sales catalogs showing 1930 837 and 137 series custom models. Karl S. Zahm, 3111 Burrmont Road, Rockford, IL 61107

Wanted: *MoToR* magazine show issues: 1900 to 1904 incl.; 1906 to 1913 incl.; 1915, 1918, 1919, 1921, 1923, 1929, 1932-33, 1940-1950. Also need regular issues for 1900 to 1912 incl. and other regular monthly issues except the following: Feb.-1916, Jan.-1917, Aug.-1919, Apr.-1920, Aug.-1922, Feb.-Apr.-May-June-Aug.-Sept.-Oct.-1923, Jan.-1924, Jan.-May 1928, Jan.-1933. Gilbert Bureau, 1525 Bernard West (7), Outremont, Montreal H2V 1W7 Quebec Canada.

Classified Ad

Back issues of both the *Journal and Newsletter*, as well as our society magazine the *Automotive History Review* are available (with the exception of issues two and eight of the *Review*) from Fred Roe, 837 Winter St., Holliston, Mass. 01746. Price for the *Review* is \$2.00 each ppd, and the *Journal/Newsletter* is 50 cents each.

Book Reviews

THE SPRITES AND MIDGETS: A COLLECTOR'S GUIDE, by Eric Dymock. 112 pp., 118 illustrations. Hardbound 9½" x 7½". ISBN 0 900549 53 X. Motor Racing Publication, Ltd. London. Available in the US from Motorbooks International, P.O. Box 2, Osceola, Wis., 54020 or order direct by calling 1-800-826-6600. \$18.95.

This volume on the "spridgets" will be a godsend to those who have succumbed or otherwise been seduced by the collective charm of the Austin-Healey Sprites and the MG Midgets which were produced in considerable numbers over a 21-year period.

Some 350,000 of these little cars poured from the factories during that magic period between 1958 and 1979 and it is because of this volume that the spridgets are still available, in reasonably good condition and at a reasonably fair price to those who want them and those aspiring to spridget wonsership are legion both here and abroad.

The cars were similar, it is true, and it was natural that they would be sort of banded together and with a word of their own which identified them immediately to the faithful and other followers.

The whole story is well put together by a knowledgeable and sympathetic author who embellishes his work by all necessary appendices—five of them.

Latest in THE COLLECTOR'S GUIDE SERIES, THE SPRITES AND MIDGETS should have an instand appeal to owners of these pretty cars as well as those who aspire to ownership plus the happy throng who enjo the cars actually or visually for their own sake.

Keith Marvin

Forty Years of Design with Fiat, by Dante Giacosa; translated from the Italian by Richard McKeon Sadleir. *Automobilia*, Milan. Hardcover, 8.5 x 10 inches, 310 pages, 316 black and white photos, over 120 drawings, six charts. Distributed in the USA by Motorbooks International, in England by Albion Scott. Editions in Italian and in French also are available.

Dante Giacosa was born in Rome on 3 January 1905. Richly endowed as a youth, he was attracted strongly by literature and the graphic arts, but his love for mechanical design and above all for the automobile led him to elect to study engineering at the Turin Polytechnic. With a degree from that fine school he began as a design engineer for SPA — than already a subsidiary of Fiat — in late 1928. Soon he was transferred to Fiat proper, where he began his steady climb through the ranks until 1946, when he was appointed director of that great firm's Engineering Division. The next 24 years were overflowing with important achievements, not merely in the design of chassis and engines for cars, but also in such other areas of design as coachwork, styling, military and agricultural vehicles, aero engines, hovercraft, and gas turbines.

For all of his personal brilliance, Giacosa had plenty of help, and one of the attractions of his book is the credit which he gives to his myriad associates and the wealth of human detail which he provides concerning them. Not only is the story of four decades of product evolution told here in fascinating detail, but also the whole family of *La Mamma Fiat* comes under more or less intimate scrutiny. For anyone interested in the history of the modern Italian automobile — and its far-flunt international links — this is an *essential* book. As we have learned to expect from *Automobilia*, it is beautifully produced. I would rate the translation 9.8 on a scale of 10, which is very good. The book is an invaluable reference work which, one more time, has its utility decimated through the lamentable lack of an index.

It is interesting that, as the title suggests, the author prefers to stress his role as designer — with the artistic connotations of that term — rather than that of engineer. And he certainly was one of the world's most capable and productive engineers during a solid quarter-century.

— Griffith Borgeson

PIERCE-ARROW, by Marc Ralston. 236 pp., Over 400 photos. hard covers. 11½" x 8¾". ISBN 0-498-02451-2. A.S. Barnes, P.O. Box 3051, LaJolla, Cal., 92038 \$25.00.

In PIERCE-ARROW, we have a valuable contribution to the overall history of fine motor cars. It has been long in coming and it occupies an important niche in the field of an automobile history far too long neglected.

Unfortunately, the book is a case of "Good news, bad news" and, reluctant as I am to probe into this Jekyll-and-Hyde relationship, it must be done. But to take the good news first — which prevails throughout, Dr. Ralston has done his homework exceedingly well and given us a definitive story of the magic which was Pierce-Arrow from the beginning to the end of production early in 1938.

The coverage is nicely-balanced, the text and illustrations telling the story as it should be told. The author traces the always fascinating and some times stormy times of America's prestige car in a unemotional, factual and matter-of-fact way which I think will brook no criticism from anyone. The car was — ith Locomobile, Stevens-Duryea and a handful of others, the sort of thing on which dreams were made. God alone knows how it outlasted most of its rivals for the luxury car market — but it did. Unlike Packard, Cadillac and Lincoln, however, the sachems at Buffalo didn't realize — until too late — that times had come to a point where pure luxury automobiles couldn't survive alone — and Pierce hadn't made provision for this eventuality. Its requiem is noted in these pages.

If the printing had been commesurate with the rest of this volume, all would have been fine, but it wasn't. The result is barely acceptable at the best and horrible at the worst. Soft paper, over-inked register and a general black quality with uneven pictures is the result. It is so sad that this is the case because if ever a book had a real chance, PIERCE-ARROW was that book. I hope that perhaps the publisher will note this shortcoming and swing into a second printing with better paper and, of course, satisfactory results. It is needed. Meanwhile, we have this as it is and it is up to the buyer as to its value. I'd like to see a cleaner printing, though.

Keith Marvin

ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM II CONTINENTAL, by Raymond Gentile. 272 pp., more than 200 photos plus original literature. Hard covers. 9-7/8" x 7-3/8". ISBN 0 901564 43 5. Dalton Watson Ltd., London. Available from Motorbooks International, P.O. Box 2, Osceola, Wisc., 54020. \$41.50.

This is the latest in a series of Rolls-Royce books published by Dalton Watson and which, as a set, give any enthusiast or automobile lover a rather pleasant illustrated picture of what Rolls-Royce was — and is — all about!

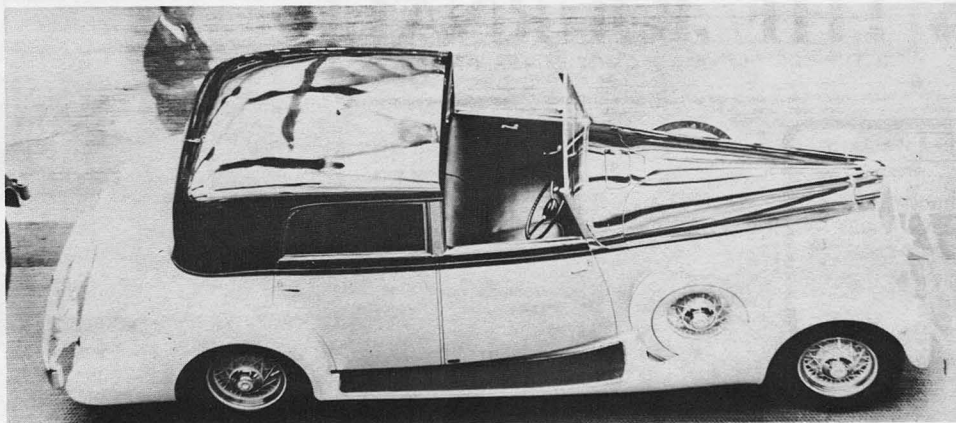
The Phantom II was introduced in 1929 and is, to a number of persons (this writer included), perhaps the finest mechanical achievement to date in the realm of motor car excellence. In the seven years of production, a scant 1750 were completed of which a goodly number are running to this day.

The Continental was a sub-version of the basic Phantom II, some 228 being constructed. They may be identified and separated from the basic Phantom II by such things as a reduced wheelbase, sporty lightweight coachwork and several mechanical niceties which made them much more suitable for fast driving on the improved Continental roads of the time, British highways being anachronistic and stodgy at the best. And if one can't term them as true sports cars, they might be truthfully identified as the top of the "sporting car" line.

Raymond Gentile is to be commended on this work. So is Dalton Watson for making it available. And I doubt very much whether any investor in this book will ever find a reason to be disappointed in his purchase.

Keith Marvin

Mystery Photographs: The photograph of the two similar race cars comes from the collection of John Conde; what race, where, what are the cars? Note the convicts doing road work on either side of the road. The photograph of the Packard Town car comes from the library of the editor. The coachwork is obviously European but who was the body builder? What year is the car? model?





Factory Photograph: This photograph was taken by the Derham Body Co. of Philadelphia and Rosemont, Pa. of their modifications to a new 1941 Packard 'Clipper' sedan. The modifications include a padded roof and canework added to the tops of the rear doors. Photograph from the collection of the editor.



THE JOURNAL

OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

If Undeliverable do not return

**Editorial Office:
197 Mayfair Avenue,
Floral Park, New York 11001
U.S.A.**

Nov.-Dec. 1982
Issue Number 81

**Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fairfield, Conn.
Permit No. 72**