

SAH Journal

The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.
Issue 233
March–April 2008



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Inside

SAH News	1
Editorial Comment	2
President's Perspective	3
Obituary John Blatchley	5
"Modena Trackdays" by Myles Kornblatt	6
Book Reviews <i>Autó Enciklopédia</i> <i>The Lexington Automobile: A Complete History</i> <i>The Automobile Bodybuilders of Amesbury Massachusetts</i> <i>Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum Presents</i> <i>Duesenberg Racecars and Passenger Cars Photo Archive</i>	7
Letters	10
Billboard	11

An Awards Gala in Paris

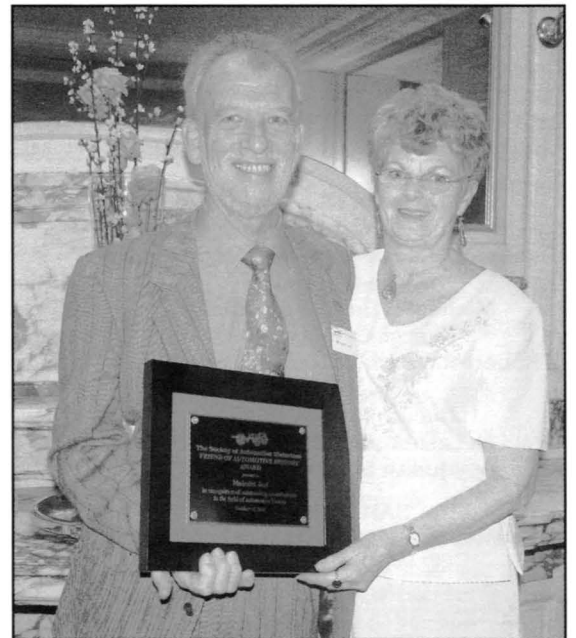
By Taylor Vinson

On February 7th, after a day of sparkling light that painters of Paris dream of, a near-record 51 members and guests of SAH gathered at the Automobile Club de France (ACF) for the 13th annual European meeting. Now 112 years old, the ACF is, more than any other organization, responsible for the popularization of the automobile in France, and is housed in a building on the Place de la Concorde that was decades old when Louis XVI was beheaded in the street below.

After a dinner of a "cassolete" of seafood, roast duck with pears and an apple charlotte, *Kit Foster* presided over the presentation of awards, beginning with the Richard and Grace Brigham Award, presented by *Arthur Jones* to the French commercial vehicle publication *Charge Utile* and accepted by its editor, Jean-François Colombet on behalf of the publication and its publisher, Histoire & Collections. *Frank Gump*, a member of the Cugnot Committee for books in a language other than English, presented the Cugnot to Horst Ihling for *BMW (Ost)*, *EMW*, *Wartburg*, *Autorenn-sport in der DDR* and *Schneider Text*, the publisher. Gump translated Ihling's remarks and it was touching indeed to hear that the author regarded the Cugnot as the height of his writing career.

Michael Lamm, for whom the dinner was a first, presented the two Awards of Distinction (English language) to Dr. Harry Niemann for *Bèla Barènyi: The Father of Passive Safety at Mercedes* and *Karl Maybach: His Engines and Automobiles*, both published by Mercedes-Benz Classique Library, whose awards were accepted by Etienne Veen. The high point of the evening was Foster's presentation of the Friend of Automotive History Award, SAH's highest honor and, as the French say, bien mérité, to England's *Malcolm Jeal*. As usual, old friends and new lingered afterwards until 11PM. We are ever indebted to *Laurent Friry* for making arrangements with the ACF.

The 33rd Rétromobile opened the following day, and the highlight of the morning, as always, was *Paul Berliet's* press
continued on page 4



2007 Friend of Automotive History Malcolm Jeal with his wife, Eunice. photo courtesy Marian Savage



Thomas S. Jakups, Editor

Springing Forward

respiratory infection that week but was ably assisted by *Kit Foster*, who filled in as dinner emcee, and *Claude Rouxel*, who ably served as tour guide. I also want to thank *Marian Savage* for her excellent photographs of the awards presentation.

As you read this, you may be on your way to Nashville for the 2008 Automotive History Conference, to be held April 2nd through the 5th. This will be my fifth conference and I consider myself very fortunate to have been able to attend them. The informative sessions, wonderful museums and exposure to different parts of the country can't be beat.

And this being spring, it's not too early to make summer plans. The World of the Model T Centennial Conference will be held July 17th through the 19th in and around Dearborn, Michigan. For complete information and a registration form, go to www.hfmvgv.org/events/

ModelT/pdf/WorldofModelTConf.pdf or call 800-835-5237.

Also celebrating 100 years in 2008 is General Motors, which is planning a series of events culminating on September 16th, which is 100 years to the day since William C. Durant started GM. The centennial is billed as GMnext with more emphasis placed on showcasing the future of the automaker than in celebrating its past.

For those more interested in history than marketing, the Buick Club of America will be celebrating 105 years of Buick and 100 years of GM at its national meet in Flint, Michigan, July 16th through the 20th. Scheduled are tours of the GM Heritage Center, where over 200 GM cars and memorabilia will be on display. For more information, go to www.buickclub.org/2008Flint/index.htm or call 888-230-2585.

Here's to spring!

—Tom Jakups

Welcome to the early spring issue of the *Journal*; boy, it feels so good to write that! It is also the annual European Dinner issue, and as *Taylor Vinson* stated in *Journal* 231, this year's affair was significant in that seven SAH awards were presented, two more than at Hershey. An excellent showing by our European members!

I want to thank Taylor for another thorough report on the dinner, *Rétromobile* and the side trips. He informed me that he was laid low by an upper

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SAH Journal

Thomas S. Jakups, Editor, Adv. Mgr.
37 Wyndwood Road
West Hartford, CT 06107 USA
860-233-5973 Fax 860-232-0468
journal@autohistory.org
tjakups@mac.com

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Copy Deadline for Journal 234
April 30th



Darwyn H. Lumley, President

Here are two quotations I recently noted. The first is said to be a Chinese proverb; the second is attributed to George Bernard Shaw.

“One who asks a question is a fool for five minutes, one who does not ask a question remains a fool forever.”

“New opinions often appear first as jokes and fancies, then as blasphemies and treason, then as questions open to discussion and finally as established truths.”

It seems to me that SAH members are involved in developing questions and then attempting to find answers, though, as we know, a fundamental problem is that of phrasing the right question. This came to mind when I read a newspaper article purporting to explain how imported cars have become so popular in the United States. The question posed was implicit, but unstated.

The answer was that imported cars, introduced into the U.S. by GI's returning from Europe, were responsible. I have seen this written elsewhere, but it does not ring true to me. I fail to comprehend how a small number of MG-TC's, introduced in 1946–48, led to Americans spurning domestic cars to begin driving Volkswagens. For many SAH members, the period in question is within our lifetimes. Before the GI story is accepted as established truth, how about some discussion of the issue?

Pondering the above issue led me to do a random survey of SAH

Posing a Question

members, which is not yet completed. My opinion is that the time period following WWII, for automotive history, is not explained very well. Some presentations of that period tend to emphasize what I believe to be a triumphal era for the U.S. auto business. The triumphal mood of the auto industry, in the late 1940s and into the mid 1960s, I think, was partially due to the well-known production success of the industry in bringing about the Allied victory in WWII. How was it, then, that the industry faltered? Or, what are the correct questions to ask about the increased acceptance of imported vehicles in relation to a seeming decline in the U.S. auto industry?

The survey I have been sending out asks three questions. The first one is what is yet undeveloped or most overlooked in automotive history? Your opinion is welcomed.

SAH member *Jim Cypher* believes that the “back office” activities of the auto companies are in need of study. He points out that while e-mail expands the historians' ability to conduct research it may also mean that written records are more ephemeral. In the recent past there were more written records such as letters and memos. Jim thinks this places a greater reliance on the collections of aging retirees and press releases.

Another response, from *Bill Clarke*, states that “series” names of autos is an undeveloped area. By that he means names such as Roadmaster, Bel Air, New Yorker, Saratoga and so forth. Bill did not notice anyone in SAH who stated an interest in this subject. I do believe I have read some

articles about this subject in the past. One, I believe, compared and contrasted an apparent American tendency to name series as opposed to the alphanumeric system of Europeans such as TR3, 300SL, XK120 and MK VI. Is the recent Cadillac series name practice of STS, CTS, etc. meaningful to their marketing strategy?

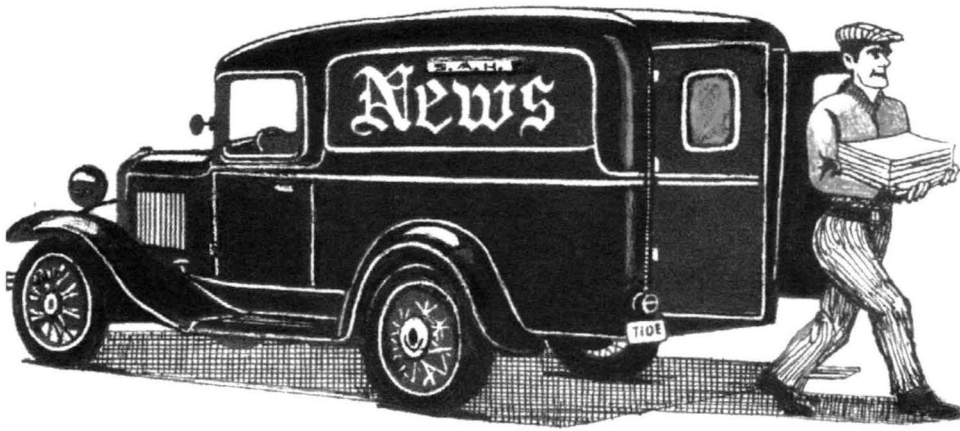
Bob Christiansen think that “the emergence of trucks as an adjunct to and offshoot of automobiles” is part of automotive history that is overlooked. In our SAH Membership Directory twenty-two members indicated an interest in trucks. No doubt there are some very good references on this subject. Perhaps our truck historians can enlighten us.

Richard Coleman, in another response, stated he would like to see more work on the “peripheral industries” that supported manufacturers, including engine builders. I did not find anyone who noted an interest in Continental Motors or Lycoming. But I did find Hall-Scott being noted as an interest of *Ric Dias*.

He, in fact, has done considerable work on the subject with a number of magazine articles as well as one book. The book is *Hall-Scott: The Story of a Great American Engine Maker*, published by SAE International. Our own *Automotive History Review*, number 43 (Spring, 2005), contains a brief history of Hall-Scott by Ric Dias.

For all SAH members, including those who are outside the U.S., your perspective on the question is solicited. What is overlooked and undeveloped in automotive history?

—*Darwyn Lumley*



News continued from page 1

conference at the stand of the Fondation de l'Automobile Marius Berliet, followed by a breakfast à la Lyonnaise. Berliet, now in his 90th year, presented the century-old 1908 Berliet Type C2, 22 hp, with “double-phaeton” bodywork, and discussed the illustrator René Vincent’s influence upon the marque’s sales literature of the period.

To those who have attended France’s “indoor Hershey” over the years, the changes are saddening. Recent owners have jacked up the fees so much that the *amicales* of the smaller marques can no longer afford a space for even one car, depriving us of the diversity presented by Voisin, Lorraine-Dietrich and Rolland Pilain, for example. Several years ago Renault—Renault!—decided not to participate because of the costs. This year E.T.A.I., the largest French publisher of automotive books, and Drivers, an enterprising smaller firm, pulled out, as did the largest dealer



Debuting this year, this special award for the Cugnot winners was donated by Paul Lashbrook. photo courtesy Marian Savage



Harry Niemann was presented with two Awards of Distinction for his books *Béla Barényi: Pioneer of Passive Safety Glass at Mercedes Benz* and *Karl Maybach: His Engines and Automobiles*. photo courtesy Marian Savage.

of automotive literature in Paris and two of her competitors. Word has it that Chaters will not return next year. Yet, even diminished, the show remains a marvel of old cars, parts, art and (expensive) models and dioramas.

The same weekend in Paris an exhibit of around 20 recent concept cars by European and Asian manufacturers was held in the Cour d'Honneur at the Invalides. Outstanding among them were the Mercedes-Benz F-700 with four-cylinder “Diesotto” engine presented at Frankfurt in September 2007 and the BMW CS unveiled in China earlier last year. Interesting concepts from Peugeot, Renault and Citroën abounded. To my knowledge, only one of the concepts



Non-English Cugnot Award winner Horst Ihling (l) with his publisher Hans-Jürgen Schneider. photo courtesy Marian Savage

has been seen in the U.S., the Saab 9-4X Biopower, introduced in Detroit in January. The exhibit was presented by Le Festival Automobile International, a 23-year-old group about which I could learn nothing.

On Saturday the 9th, a small group of us gathered at the Gare du Nord for the trip to the Chateau de Compiègne: *Arthur and Mary Jones, Mike Lamm, Frank Gump, Kit Foster, Claude Rouxel*, and myself. Thanks to Claude who mastered the vagaries of the automatic ticket machines that instruct only in French, we were able to make our train.

Once in Compiègne, pied-piper Claude led us over the Oise and through the streets to the Château and a most compatible restaurant on the adjacent square. After our repast, we visited the Musée National de la Voiture et du Tourisme, where Claude had arranged for an English-speaking guide. In the entry hall was a 1916 Sigma, the personal car of World War I ace Georges Guynemer. The first room we entered displayed eight pre-1900 cars, highlighted by the famous electric racer, “La Jamais Contente” in which Camille Jenatzy set a record of 105 km/h in 1899.

The main hall is closed to the public for safety reasons, but Claude arranged for our entry. Here we saw true marvels, chief of which to me was a towering 1882 Amadée Bollée steam-driven two-compartment diligence, a private conveyance. Also

impressive was the rail coach of Napoléon III and several of his carriages, earlier royal equipages such as the mid-18th century berline de voyage of the kings of Spain, a French presidential coach of 1895 and, my favorite, a large red-and-gilt carriage, the dwelling and surgery of an itinerant dentist.

En route back to Paris after this unforgettable day which we could not have done without him, Claude suggested some possible trips for next year. But that's another story. ■

Obituary **John Blatchley** **1913–2008**

John Polwhele Blatchley, Chief Styling Engineer of Rolls-Royce and Bentley motorcars from 1951 to 1969, died on Saturday, February 16th, at the age of 94.

It was at an early age that John Blatchley developed an association with the motor vehicle. Suffering from rheumatic fever as a child, he missed out on a conventional schooling and was educated at home by a private tutor. Often the young Blatchley's mind would wander from academic studies to concentrate on more romantic ideas surrounding motorcars. He derived much pleasure from sketching handsome carriages displaying elegant modes of coachwork, the renderings produced before he had reached his teen years revealing that John already possessed exceptional artistry and drawing skills as well as a talent for style and design. Happily those sketches have survived and are today housed in the safe custody of the Paulerspury HQ of the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts' Club.

On reaching the age of 18, it was expected of John that he attend Cambridge University, but by then the young man had rather different ideas as to his future life and career. Though he agreed to take the university entrance examination, he sat at a desk for some twenty minutes, during which time he did not write a word; putting away his pen, he left the

building. Rather than spending time at university, Blatchley enrolled in an eighteen-month-long motor body building course at Regent Street Polytechnic.

Thereafter, a friend who worked for J. Gurney-Nutting was instrumental in arranging for him an introduction to the coachbuilder, who offered him a job. As it happened, John Gurney Nutting was John Blatchley's godfather, a detail which John considered somewhat incidental inasmuch that he maintained it had little or no bearing on him joining the firm. John's skills, however, were soon recognized by Gurney-Nutting's Chief Stylist, A.F.McNeil, who invited him to prepare coachwork designs for some of the firm's most discerning clients. At the age of 24 John was promoted to take over from McNeil when he retired.

In the mid 1930s, prompted by the prospect of war, and not least that he realized that bespoke coachbuilding was in serious decline, Blatchley applied for a position with Rolls-Royce. Anticipating that he would join the company's Motor Division, he was bitterly disappointed to find himself assigned to the firm's Hucknall aero engine department. One of the many tasks undertaken by Blatchley during the Second World War was to design engine cowlings, his work in at least one instance involving the Merlin-engined Spitfire. This, and other matters relating to his wartime work, was a subject he was always reluctant to discuss.

During the war John Blatchley almost gave up his work with Rolls-Royce in favor of training to be the women's tailor for the John Lewis Partnership, the famous retailer. As a child, Blatchley learned how to sew and knit and worked out how to make himself a coat. The exercise was useful in wartime when he made himself a jacket out of his mother-in-law's tweed coat, the incident coming to the attention of John Lewis, who as well as being a Rolls-Royce owner,

was friendly with Blatchley's in-laws. Ultimately John decided not to join the John Lewis Partnership and instead stayed with Rolls-Royce.

With the cessation of hostilities John Blatchley lost no time in securing a move to Rolls-Royce's Motor Division, which during and immediately after the war was situated at Clan Foundry near Belper in Derbyshire. Working under the direction of Ivan Evernden, John was able to apply the finishing touches to Rolls-Royce's first post-war models which were to be constructed at Pym's Lane, Crewe, the works having been fabricated as part of the shadow factory scheme and where the Merlin and Griffon aero engines had been built. The Bentley Mk VI and Rolls-Royce Silver Wraith were the first cars to emerge from Pym's Lane, these being joined by the Silver Dawn at a later date. John's early days with the Motor Division were also spent on the design of the Bentley R-Type Continental, a matter which he was too modest to readily admit.

John Blatchley was appointed Rolls-Royce Chief Styling Engineer in 1951, succeeding Ivan Evernden upon his retirement. The initial model to appear under his stewardship was the R-Type Bentley, the Rolls-Royce version of the car maintaining the Silver Dawn appellation. The first cars fully displaying the Blatchley influence were the Silver Cloud and S-Series Bentley, both of which had been developed from a project known in-house as "Siam." These were cars that in every way reflected the Rolls-Royce and Bentley traditions, though Blatchley in later years admitted his first thought had been to produce models that were entirely radical. Showing his proposals to Rolls-Royce boss Lord Hives resulted in the abrupt abandonment of any such course. Blatchley's ideas were not forgotten and they were allowed to materialize a decade later with the Silver Shadow and T-Series, the first cars built at

continued on page 11

Modena Trackdays

By Myles Kornblatt

While planning a trip to the great automobile plants and museums in Germany last summer, I was lucky enough to come across a historic performance car showcase event at the Nurburgring. Modena Trackdays is an event that takes museum pieces and lets them perform what they were born to do—breathe fire. The event stretched over two unseasonably rainy and cold days in June and mainly focused on the best machines Ferrari has ever built (including street, track and formula models). But there were also other notable performance cars in attendance including a Shelby Cobra Daytona, lightweight Jaguar E-Type, Lola T70 as well as a variety of Porsches, Alfa Romeos and Maseratis.

Although the 12th Modena Trackdays was held in celebration of Ferrari's 60th anniversary as an independent automobile manufacturer, Ferrari's full history goes back almost 20 years further. Enzo Ferrari formed Scuderia Ferrari in 1929. He had raced with moderate success for about a decade and was now modifying Alfa Romeos for his race team. In 1938, Enzo became the head of Alfa Romeo's racing team, but split as Alfa Romeo became nationalized for World War II. After the war Ferrari needed to fund his racing projects, and in 1947 Ferrari began selling its first model, the 125. Since then Ferrari has built premium street automobiles for consumers, as well as pushed the

technological and speed envelopes for professional and amateur race drivers. Modena Trackdays was established to celebrate that entire history.

The event was open to owners and drivers of performance cars in four classes: Modern Street Cars (1976 and later), Historic Cars (1975 and earlier), Formula Cars and Supersport Cars. Each class had exclusive time on the track and everyone behaved—it was a showcase, not a race. To help close the event, former driving partners Brian Redman and Jackie Ickx were reunited for exclusive tracktime in their champion Ferrari 312 PB.

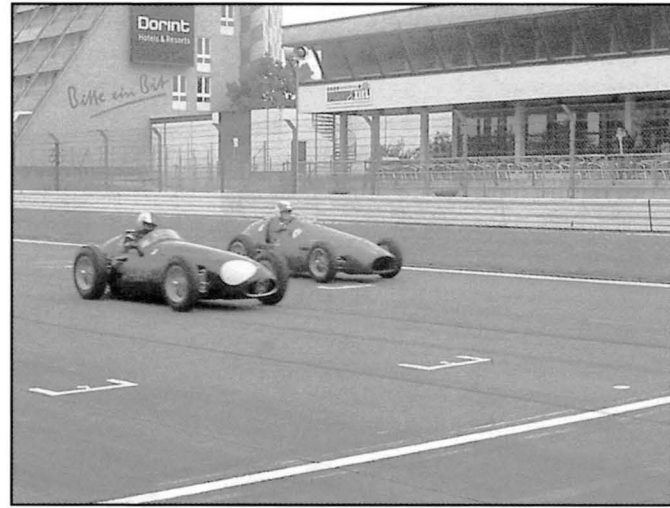
The current Grand Prix track at Nurburgring is not as famous or historic as the North Loop, but its abundance of

twists and turns through the German hills has made it one of world's top rated racing tracks. The biggest downside to the track is the lack of straight-aways for the cars to build more speed. This was evident when I asked the driver of a Ferrari 312 P what he thought of the track, and after much deliberation, he answered with a disappointing "It's too short."

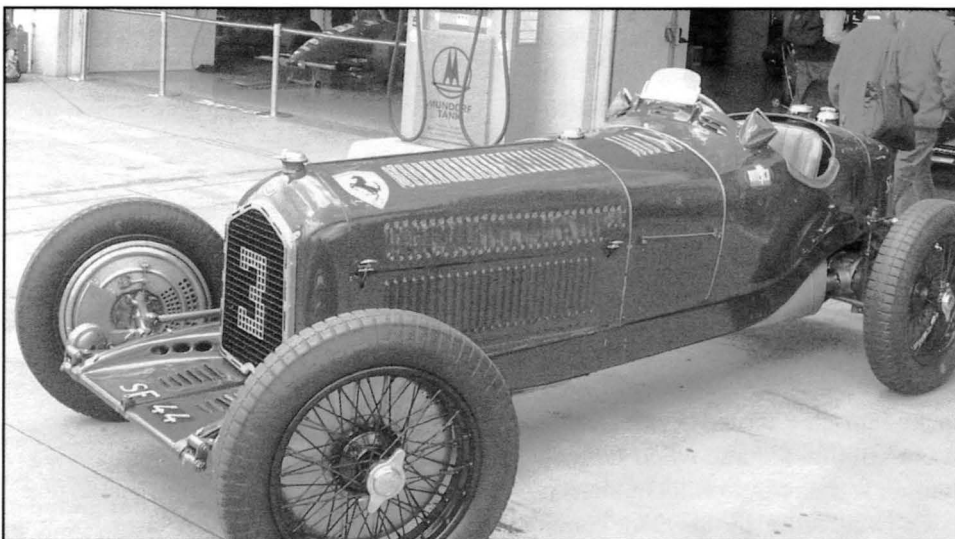
The event was so packed with Ferraris that I had to maneuver around a 356 GTC 4, a 250 GT and two Dinos before I even arrived at the entrance to the pit area. I had a press pass to Trackdays, but it did not grant me any special access because nothing was off limits to anyone. Everyone was allowed access to every pit bay—unlike anything I have ever seen in events in the United States. In fact, the only way for spectators to access the track observation areas was by walking through at least one bay.

At no time during Trackdays did I ever feel like I was in the presence of museum pieces and trailer queens. Instead, the smell of race gas, oil and rubber along with the low-pitched rumble of engines firing up to start a few track laps made it seem that any car in the pit bays was just resting between laps. In a small way, the full experience of the event made every spectator feel like he or she was part of a race team.

It's hard to pick a car to highlight



A Maserati 250F and a Ferrari 500 cross the finish line. photo courtesy Myles Kornblatt



Pre-WWII Alfa Romeo raced by the Scuderia Ferrari team. photo courtesy Myles Kornblatt

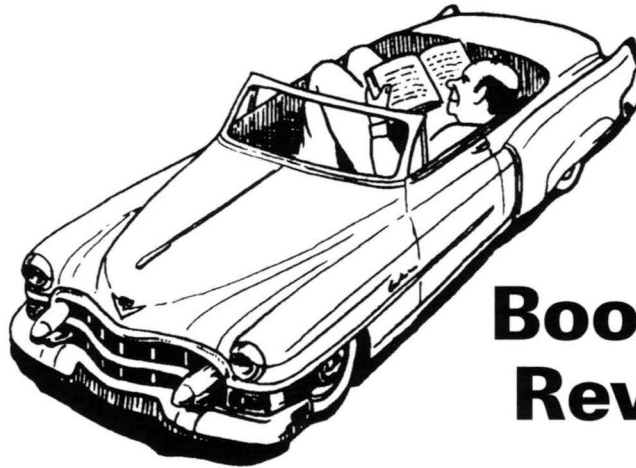
the event because Modena Trackdays satisfied every performance car fan's tastes. There was a pre-World War II Alfa Romeo originally raced by Enzo's Scuderia Ferrari. More modern race fans marveled at a few different Le Mans winning Porsche 917s, a Ferrari 250 GTO, a Ferrari F40 or a McLaren F1 GTR. There were even future classics on hand such as Ferrari's new F430s and 599.

For me, my favorite car was much less glamorous. It was the Zagato-bodied Alfa Romeo Giulia TZ1 from the early 1960s. The TZ1 is an icon that won at Sebring, LeMans and even at the North Loop.

Although the car has proven itself a successful racer, this example was by no means the top pedigree at the event. What made this car unique was that it looked like it had not been touched since its days as a competitive racer. Almost like a badge of pride, the Alfa had a tattered interior, faded paint, chips in its glasswork, dents in the aluminum body and the driver door was no longer fitting correctly. Anywhere else this would look like a used-up racer, but that is what made Modena Trackdays so special. After spending the day poring over perfectly maintained and restored examples of the best cars ever built, the Alfa was like a time capsule. Every chip and scratch screamed from this little machine, telling how it met the challenge of the best tracks and races in the world, and how it held its own against other brilliant racecars. Its history was not in the bodylines but in the scars. Although it may seem silly, being able to touch that kind of history almost made me feel like my own racing dream was not so far out of reach. ■



1963 Alfa Romeo Giulia TZ1
photo courtesy Myles Kornblatt



Book Reviews

Autó Enciklopédia by *Pal Négyesi*, 2007. ISBN 963 9581 29 1. Hardcover, 400 pages, text in Hungarian, approx. 800 black/white and color illustrations. Published by Nagykönyvkiadó, Nyiregyháza, 4400, Iskola u.6, Hungary. www.nagykonyvkiado.hu e-mail: npaul@hu.inter.net. approx. US \$39.99 plus \$19.99 p&p.

The author, *Pal Négyesi*, an automobile journalist and historian well known in Hungary, is a member of the Society of Automotive Historians. With this impressive and richly illustrated work he presents for the first time a comprehensive history of the automobile in his native language for which he is to be congratulated. He has made use of sources from all over the world. Manufacturers, museums, collections, magazine and book publishers and many friends have contributed information and illustrations.

There is a fairly brief glance at the pioneer years. There follows a first section, 1886 to 1914, of 50 pages, where the developments in the major production countries are presented marque by marque. Apart from black-and-white pictures of the period some surviving and restored cars are shown in color photographs. The next period, 1919 to 1939, fills over 100 pages and the portion of color pictures is more substantial. The more important manufacturers and their models are nicely covered, but some marques are missing. Examples: Chandler, Graham-Paige, Marmon, Nash, Studebaker,

Willys-Knight, Panhard & Levassor, Mathis, Ansaldo, NAG, Morgan, Talbot-London, Excelsior. Of special interest are the entries on auto production in the countries of the former Imperial Austro-Hungarian empire.

More than 200 pages are devoted to the cars manufactured from 1945 till the present times. Most of the more popular models made in the U.S.A., Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Eastern European countries, Sweden, Spain, Holland and even Australia are described and illustrated. A wealth of photographs, some factory hand-outs, many taken by professionals and amateurs, make it a joy to leaf through the chapter.

The handsome book, is nicely printed and produced. It will offer many hitherto unseen pictures and gives a good overall history of the automobile. Apart from isolated errors, the captions with the pictures give the proper identification as to make and model. To the majority of readers the Hungarian language will be a serious handicap and thus the specialist will probably not find much new information. The author has arranged the marques within the country chapters according to their importance. As there is, however, a very comprehensive index of makes, models, persons and even museums and sports events, it is easy to find the desired information or picture.

While the well-made book will certainly find many enthusiasts in Hungary, it may also appeal to the

reader interested in a new effort to present a general history of the motor-car with unusual glimpses of the production in Eastern European countries.

—*Ferdinand Hediger*

The Lexington Automobile: A Complete History, by *Richard A. Stanley*, 2007 ISBN: 978-0-7864-2542-6. Hardcover, 263 pages, 251 photos. McFarland & Co., Jefferson, NC, 800-253-2187, www.mcfarlandpub.com \$45

The Lexington Automobile: A Complete History offers a definitive look at the company's key people and automobiles and the era in which they were produced. The heritage is traced from Lexington's first production car in 1909 through insolvency in late 1926. Author *Richard A. Stanley's* extensive research produced a well-documented and interesting volume.

The author documents that Lexington was lured to Kentucky and later to Indiana by economic enticements. In December 1908, The Commercial Club of Lexington, Kentucky, paid for the factory site of the newly-incorporated Lexington Motor Car Company. The first production Lexington was rolled out in Kentucky in April 1909. Unfortunately, by summer 1909, the original facility lacked sufficient capacity for continuing operations. Later in 1909 a group of industrialists in Connersville, Indiana, encouraged a group of investors to purchase the Lexington Motor Car Company and relocate it to the McFarlan industrial park on the town's north side. The Connersville Commercial Club contracted for the construction of the new Lexington plant.

As an assembled car, Lexington went on to use a large number of Connersville sourced components, including Ansted engines, springs and axles, Central Manufacturing bodies, Connersville Wheel Works wheels, Rex Manufacturing Company convertible tops, Indiana Lamp Company lights and George R. Carter Leather

Company upholstery. Thus, Lexington benefited numerous companies throughout the community.

The firm's chief engineer, John C. Moore, designed what was probably the first dual exhaust manifold system for an American-built automobile in 1912. Moore's design minimized the back pressure caused by a restricted single exhaust pipe, which was common practice at-the-time. Tests at the Wheeler-Schebler Carburetor Company laboratory in Indianapolis showed a 22.8 percent gain in horsepower and a probable greater fuel economy with the dual exhaust system.

Ansted-powered Lexington racers enjoyed their most success with factory-prepared entries in the Pike's Peak Hill Climb. In 1920 Otto Loesche and Albert Cline finished first and second in two cars entered in the event for cars of less than 300 cubic-inch displacement and the free-for-all event. For their efforts Loesche won a gold cup and the Penrose Trophy and Cline took home a silver cup. The team did not compete in 1922 and was denied favorable results in claiming the Penrose Trophy in 1921 and 1923. But 1924 was a different story. Lexington drivers Otto Loesche, Clarence Lawton and Albert Cline swept the first three places in their engine size class plus the free-for-all. Loesche's results achieved permanent possession of the Penrose Trophy for Lexington. Today, the trophy is on display at the Fayette County Historical Museum in Connersville.

The Lexington Motor Car Company is a good example of an auto company formed with much optimism in the first decade of the twentieth century. The company achieved success in the teens with an annual production lead over all Indiana automobile manufacturers with the exception of Studebaker in 1918. Sales through the teens continued to rank Lexington among the higher producers across the nation. Lexington then suffered financial setbacks in the recession following World War I and finally succumbed in

the late twenties. Auburn Automobile Company used the facilities from 1929 through 1937 for production of Auburn and Cord automobiles.

Stanley does an outstanding job of placing the Lexington Motor Car Company in its proper historical surroundings. He provides insights about early auto production from the board room to the production line. The author's love for the subject adds dimensions to Lexington's history as well as the people involved in the story.

—*Dennis Horvath*

The Automobile Bodybuilders of Amesbury Massachusetts, by K.

Doubleday, Softbound, 108 pages, 13 black and white photos and illustrations. Published by Whittier Press, Amesbury, Massachusetts. Available from the Amesbury Public Library, 149 Main St., Amesbury, MA 01913. \$20.00 plus \$1.50 shipping.

Located in Essex County, part of the Boston metropolitan area, Amesbury, Massachusetts, was the center of automobile body building during the first years of the 20th century. Throughout that time there were 26 firms in Amesbury which produced automobile bodies, with a distinct leaning toward bodies for luxury cars. These coach making firms included names such as Biddle and Smart Co. (1869–1930), Amesbury Auto Body Co. (1922–1928) and Walker Carriage Co. (1885–1931). Among the marques served by these firms are familiar automobile name plates such as Rolls Royce, Franklin, Pierce-Arrow, Stanley Steamer, Cadillac, Jordan, Hudson, Studebaker as well as others.

The beginning, growth, ending, triumphs and trials of the auto body building companies in Amesbury is covered in this 108-page softcover volume. Included is a list of the 26 firms and their founders, a catalog of the various marques served by these companies and the principal people involved in each company. There is

also an extensive bibliography of particular interest to researchers. Missing, unfortunately in my view, is an index which would be most helpful for this type book.

This is not a book for the casual reader. It will appeal to automotive historians with a particular interest in auto body building, and, of course, to people with a specific interest in Amesbury, since the manufacturing of automobile bodies was so important in the growth of the Amesbury community.

The author's final chapter, "A Note on Early Production Methods," was of special interest to this reviewer. It details the importance of more modern production methods, the rapid development of precision machines, interchangeable parts, the moving assembly line, time/motion studies and the education of automobile body designers as the manufacture of automobile bodies became more sophisticated.

—Peter Winnewisser

Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum Presents Duesenberg Racecars and Passenger Cars Photo Archive, by Jon M. Bill, 2005, ISBN-158388145X/9781583881453 Softbound, 126 pages, 125 photographs. Iconografix, P.O. Box 446, Dept. BK, Hudson, WI 54016, 800-289-3504 \$29.95

Duesenberg Racecars and Passenger Cars Photo Archive, by Jon Bill, creates a great opportunity to review the racing history of Duesenberg leading up to the start of production of their Model A, Model X, Model J and Model SJ passenger cars, all through the wonderful photographs preserved by the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Hall of Fame Museum and others.

I have never ceased to marvel at the number and quality of photographs that were taken and which have survived of the Duesenberg automobiles over their relatively short life of 17 years.

Author Jon Bill, from his position as Director of Education and Archives at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum, has put together a brief history to place the photographs into context, but never fear, this is primarily a book of "eye candy" for the lover of Duesenberg race cars and automobiles.

For me this book was a trip down memory lane as I saw again many of the pictures of Model J Duesenbergs which had totally knocked me out when I began working with Gordon Buehrig in the early 1970s on the project which ultimately became our book, *Rolling Sculpture*. I marvelled then, and still do today, at the wonderful heritage which has been left for those who love, restore or study the history of Duesenberg through these photographs. The crisp sharpness of the photos, taken with large-format cameras and slow-speed film, never ceases to bring a smile.

It was also an opportunity for me to see some "old friends" in the form of the photographs of many of Gordon Buehrig's designs which he vividly described to me, along with stories of some of their owners—the Convertible Victoria 2262, the Beverly Berline Sedan 2429, the Gary Cooper Tourster 2425, the Weymann SJ Speedster 2450, the SJ Dual Cowl Phaeton 2511, the George Whittell Weymann SJ Speedster and the SJ Sedan "Twenty Grand."

HORSELESS CARRIAGE GAZETTE

As you might expect from a club publication, the *Horseless Carriage Gazette* is chock full of exciting four-color photographs showing brass-era automobiles in action. First-generation cars don't get out often but, when they do, it is a real privilege to be along for the ride.

History buffs will enjoy a feature or two in each *Horseless Carriage Gazette* about marques both popular and obscure. In addition, more than 240 black & white images from the pre-1916 era were used as illustrations in the six 2007 issues.

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For those who love Duesenbergs and, like me, have marvelled at the quality and number of photographs which have survived, Jon Bill's book gives the opportunity to add them to your personal collection.

—William S. Jackson

Book Reviewers Needed

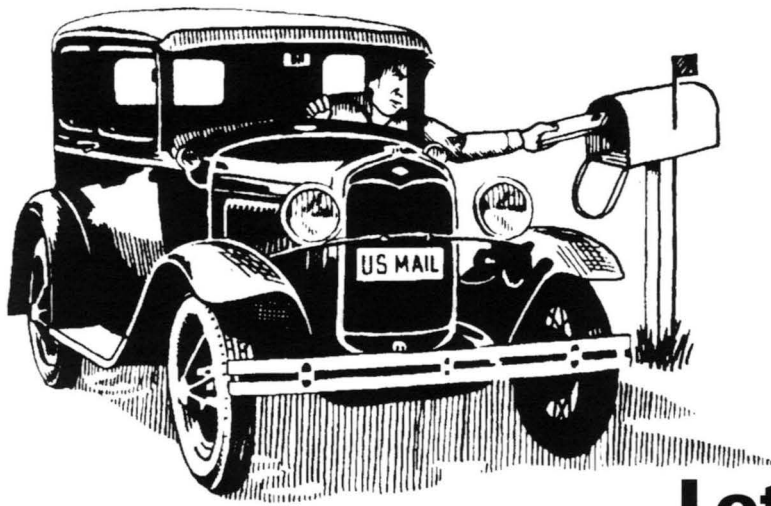
Reviewers are needed for the following books: *Iowa's Automobiles*, by Bill Jepsen, and *Porsche 928, 924, 944 and 968*, by Marc Cranswick. Also still available are *The Streamline Era Greyhound Terminal*, by Frank Wrenick, and *Driving from Japan, Japanese Cars in America*, by Wanda James. Reviews should be between 400 and 600 words.



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Letters

More Recollections of "Oy"

I was delighted to read in *Journal* 232 "An English Engineer Looks at the American Car," by Arthur Jones, which quotes observations by Maurice Olley dating to the period when he became Chief Engineer of Rolls-Royce of America, Inc. around 1921.

I joined Rolls-Royce in Derby in 1959 and, from my earliest days, took a direct interest in Rolls-Royce history. One of the greatest privileges of my life was the correspondence I enjoyed with Maurice—or "Oy," as he was always known in the Company. He wrote to me at great length about the America he knew when he first went over there in 1917, just as he did about his early life, his days with Henry Royce, and—after the end of RRAI—with Chevrolet, Vauxhall and so on. Of particular note was his role in getting the Merlin aero engine into production in the States—initially with Ford and then with Packard.

Maurice had a wonderful way with words, which could make events of half a century earlier feel very real. Also, like many great engineers, he could simplify complex issues to a level that "ordinary" mortals could understand. He worked from his prodigious memory when he wrote to me because he was getting to know his adopted country in retirement from a mobile home and

all his files and notebooks were meanwhile locked away back in Detroit with GM.

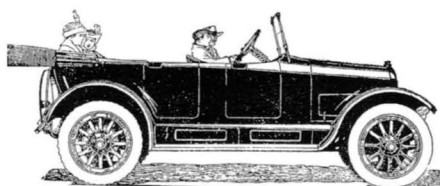
The process of digging ever deeper into history has led us since to have to move the odd memory around in time, but, without his having opened the door on a subject, we would have been in completely uncharted waters. He had a great warmth and sense of humor—the latter commented upon favorably by Lanchester. Enjoy his humor, and you would learn—and, I suppose, if you had none, end up none the wiser.

Michael Evans

Chairman Emeritus,
Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust

Some Down Under Feedback

In regard to "An English Engineer Looks at the American Car" (*Journal* 232), Maurice Olley's criticism of the British practice of advertising their cars with pygmies for passengers tends to lose its punch when the advertising methods of the U.S. makers were considered. Below is a sample of a 1918 promotion for Overland in Australia.



Although I am unable to be specific, I recall seeing an item which indicated that Shackleton's Antarctic Arrol-Johnston car (*Billboard, Journal* 232) is housed in a New Zealand museum. I tried trawling through journals which carry New Zealand news, but the search was unproductive. One should, however, be able to locate most New Zealand museums.

In response to the query about the Cooper race car's Australian land speed record (*Billboard, Journal* 232) the following might assist. On November 19, 1961, at Baker's Beach, Devonport, Tasmania, Austin Miller set a new Australian land speed record with a speed of 163.94 mph. This was the average of opposing runs over a kilometer course. This bettered the previous speed record of 157.5 mph., which had been set by Ted Gray in a Tornado Mk.2 at Coonabarabran, New South Wales, during September 1957.

—Max Gregory

Sloan and GM Revisited

I am a new member so am not aware whether the book *A Ghost's Memoir* has been discussed in the *Journal*. If not, here are my comments.

Based on the number of members who list Alfred Sloan as a source of interest in the membership roster, the book *A Ghost's Memoir*, by John MacDonald ISBN 0-262-13410-1 published 2002, may be of interest.

John MacDonald was the editor of Sloan's book *My Years with General Motors*. His book reveals the trials and tribulations of getting Sloan's book published, including the need to sue GM, which initially was successful in pressuring Sloan not to print the book. Enthusiasts of Sloan will gain insight into this very private and modest man, while recognizing how paranoid GM was of an anti-trust challenge following the government's success going after Du Pont and getting them to divest their holdings in GM. There was concern within GM that portions of Sloan's book

continued on page 11

News continued from page 5

Crewe using chassis-less construction techniques. The Silver Shadow and its Bentley counterpart, when introduced in the autumn of 1965, collected criticism from some quarters of the Rolls-Royce fraternity, owing to the firm's embracing modern motor building methods.

Nevertheless, the direction that Rolls-Royce had chosen proved to be the correct one, the cars being acclaimed for their innovation and bristling technology, not least of which was the adoption of hydraulic self-levelling licensed from Citroën. Customers buying the new models quickly appreciated that they lacked nothing in the way of luxury, attention to detail and craftsmanship the Rolls-Royce and Bentley names evoked.

John Blatchley was also responsible for the S-Type Bentley Continental models, the Rolls-Royce Phantoms and, indeed, everything that went on in the styling offices at Pym's Lane, including all the Park Ward coachbuilt derivatives and vehicles destined for royalty and heads of state.

The "Blatchley Years" at Crewe ended in 1969 when John elected to take early retirement. His legacy, however, lives on; to this day the cars that he produced are testament to a most highly skilled designer and visionary. Of the Silver Shadow and Bentley T, the fact that more than forty years following their debut these cars still appear modern in concept is tribute to Blatchley's perception of style.

When interviewed in 2003 as part of his 90th birthday celebrations, John Blatchley mused that he had never been a "car man," rather a "Rolls-Royce man." This is the Blatchley modesty of course: John was the very essence of a gracious, kind-hearted and generous gentleman who enjoyed a long and creative life as a designer of some of the world's finest motorcars.

—Malcolm Bobbitt

Letters continued from page 10

could be used to imply GM had intentions to monopolize the auto industry by targeting models to cover all price classes.

This book was published after MacDonal passed away in 1998. Whether this was intentional, so that GM could not go after him, is not revealed. All in all, it is an interesting read.

—Louis Fourie

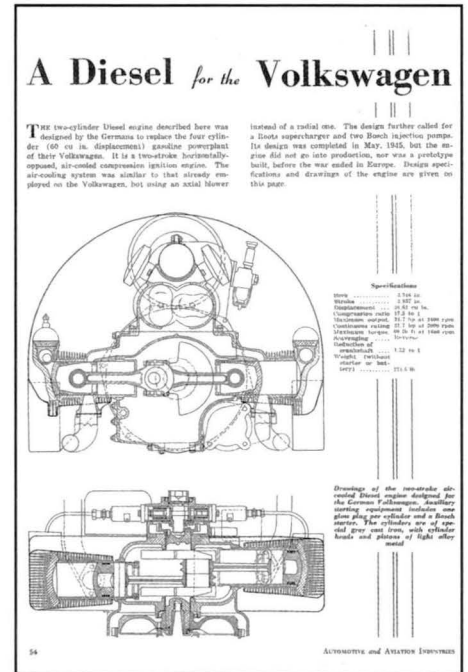
A PreWar VW Diesel

This set of design drawings and specifications was in Watt Moreland's collection which was given to me. Watt worked for Winton prior to moving to Riverside, California, where he and another person built the Magnolia Car. That car threw a rod through the block on its way to its maiden voyage.

Watt then moved to Los Angeles where he became involved in the Tourist and Durocar. He built a factory in Los Angeles then built the

largest truck factory west of the Mississippi River. It was in Burbank and opened mid-1920. Production ended in 1939.

—Bill West



The Streamline Era Greyhound Terminals

The Architecture of W.S. Arrasmith

FRANK E. WRENICK
with the editorial assistance of Elaine V. Wrenick
Foreword by Richard Longstrech

This volume explores the life and achievements of William Strudwick Arrasmith, one of architecture's defining artists during the short-lived era of streamline design. It examines Arrasmith's development as architect, focusing on his work for Greyhound during their streamline era from 1937 to 1948, and thereafter. A full chronology of Arrasmith's firms and commissions is also included.

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SPEED DEMON: Camille Jenatzy (1868–1913), Belgian son of a tire manufacturer, broke the 100 km/hr barrier in this electric racer, *La J'aimais Contente* ("The Never Satisfied") in 1899 near Paris. Society members were privileged to see it on display at Musée National de la Voiture et du Tourisme at the Château de Compiègne during the annual SAH gala in France.
photo courtesy Kit Foster