

SAH Journal



The Society of Automotive Historians, Inc.

Issue 252 Electronic September - October 2011



Automotive History Education in a Box, Page 10.

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Cover Vehicle: 1917 Autoped scooter at the Petersen Automotive Museum.

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Issue 252 September - October 2011

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November 20, 2011**

SAH Annual Awards

Benz Award, Chair: Don Keefe, donaldjkeefe@aol.com

The Carl Benz Award is presented each year for the best article published in the previous calendar year. SAH Awards of Distinction are awarded for exemplary articles not receiving the Benz Award.

2011 Terry V. Boyce, "1951 Buick XP-300: Mr. Chayne Builds His Dream Car," in *Collectible Automobile*
2010 John L. Baeke, M.D., "The Lebarons: Heir Apparent to the Throne," in *The Reunion*
2009 Jim Chase, "Packard and Winton: The Transcontinental Rivalry," in *The Packard Cormorant*

Bradley Award, Chair: Judith Endelman, endelman@thehenryford.org

The James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award is presented to deserving archives and libraries for exemplary efforts in preserving motor vehicle resource materials.

2011 Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, Coventry, UK
2010 Automotive Research Library of the Horseless Carriage Foundation, La Mesa, California, USA
2009 Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, Michigan, USA

Brigham Award, Chair: Jack Juratovic, 712 Novak Lane, Big Rapids MI 49307

The Brigham Award is presented for magazines published in the previous calendar year.

2011 *The Packard Cormorant*, published by Packard Automobile Classics, Stuart Blond, Editor.
2010 *Antique Automobile*, published by Antique Automobile Club of America. Editor-in-chief/design director West Peterson
2009 *Collectible Automobile*, published by Publications International, Ltd. John Biel, editor-in-chief

Cugnot Award, English, Chair: Doug Leighton, jleight@huron.uwo.ca

The Nicholas-Joseph Cugnot Award is presented each year for the best book published in the previous calendar year. SAH Awards of Distinction are awarded for exemplary books not receiving the Cugnot Award.

2011 Joel E. Finn, *Caribbean Capers: The Cuban Grand Prix Road Races of 1957, 1958, and 1960*
2010 Charles K. Hyde, *Storied Independent Automakers: Nash, Hudson and American Motors*
2009 Karl Ludvigsen, *Ferdinand Porsche, Genesis of Genius: Road, Racing and Aviation Innovation, 1900-1933*

Cugnot Award, Non-English, Chair: Bill Kreiner, bill.kreiner@gmail.com

The Nicholas-Joseph Cugnot Award, Non-English, is presented each year for the best book published in a language other than English the previous calendar year. SAH Awards of Distinction are awarded for exemplary books not receiving the Cugnot Award.

2011 Claude Rouxel and Laurent Friry, *Gotha de l'Automobile Française*
2010 Sébastien Faurès Fustel de Coulanges, *Fiat en Grand Prix, 1920-1930*
Hans-Jürgen Schneider and Halwart Schrader, *Legende: BMW 02*
2009 Manuel Lage, *1,000,000: Un Millón de Camiones y Buses Españoles*

Friend of Automotive History, Chair: Darwyn Lumley, DLumley942@aol.com

Recognition to an individual who has made a particular personal contribution to automotive history.

2011 Kit Foster
2010 Miles C. Collier
2009 C. Marshall Naul

Ingersoll Award, Chair: Thomas Jakups, tjakups@mac.com

The E. P. Ingersoll Award is given for the best presentation of automotive history in other than print media.

2011 Racemaker Press, O'Keefe Winners Database, published online.
2010 Mark Theobald, Coachbuilt.com
2009 Michael Hamm, producer, director/writer; Kerrie Long, producer "The Greatest Auto Race on Earth"

Scharchburg Award, Chair: John Heitmann, John.Heitmann@notes.udayton.edu

Presented to an undergraduate or graduate level student for the best research paper in the field of automotive history.

2011 Andrew Jennings Mabon, "The Automobile, the Interstate, and Suburbanites"
2009 Ted R. Mitchell, "Sit-Down Women: Gender and the 1936-7 General Motors Strike in Flint, Michigan"
2008 Peter S. Cajka, "Consumers, Cadillacs, and Civil Rights: The Social and Cultural Impact of the Automobile in *Ebony*, 1945-1965"

A complete history of award winners may be found at: www.autohistory.org/awards.html

President's Message

This has been a busy year for SAH, dominated by work on website and membership. The transfer of membership management from *Don Keefe* to the new company, Cornerstone Registration, Ltd., has been completed. Website work awaits the interface of membership to the site, assuring database security.

The award committees completed their work around September 1, as necessary for the final work. In addition to providing information for ordering plaques, the President is responsible for notifying the winners. Secretary *Bob Ebert* created a form for the committee chairs to provide all necessary contact information and details with the announcement of the award to the President, allowing me to provide information for the plaques and the notifications. In previous years, collecting those details took time, so this new form improved and speeded up the process exponentially.

After months of awards committee work, my responsibility is otherwise simple. After providing information for plaques, I write letters and make calls. Surely one of the pleasures of this job is telling people they have won an award from SAH! Without exception, people are thrilled. Thanks to the earlier-than-previous notification, we are hoping for a good turnout of our honorees at the Annual Awards Banquet this year.

For the first time in my memory the Banquet included a program this year. Jeff Mahl presented an adapted (shortened) version of his highly-praised *Bandits, Guns and Automobiles, the New York to Paris Race 1908*. Jeff's great grandfather George N. Schuster was driver and chief mechanic of the winning American Thomas Flyer. The 1908 race was an international event, matching the automotive technology of the world superpowers, Germany, France, Italy and the United States.

With a vivid recall, "Great Gramp," who lived to the age of 99, passed the legacy on to Jeff. It was a rare opportunity to learn the history of this epic event directly from the man who lived it. Schuster's personal diary, letters, hundreds of original photographs, artifacts, as well as books and recordings, inform and enrich the presentation. Jeff's passion for history and knowledge of technology combine to create a memorable presentation, highly acclaimed by the many who have already seen this program.

Both to assure a meaningful awards presentation and to provide time for Jeff, all award presenters and recipients limited prepared remarks. This promised to be a very special Annual Awards Banquet as I handed over the leadership to *Doug Leighton*.

Looking back over the last two-plus years (a bit early because of my predecessor *Darwyn Lumley's* unexpected health situation) provides quite a review. The new executive committee consisted of *Pat Bisson*, taking over from years of *Kit Foster's* estimable management, *Bob Ebert* as secretary, with the intent to stay in that position rather than moving through the chairs to President, and *Doug Leighton* as Vice President. *Doug* has been a solid and dependable force as VP awaiting his President's term.

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.

Membership is \$45 (\$55 outside of the USA).

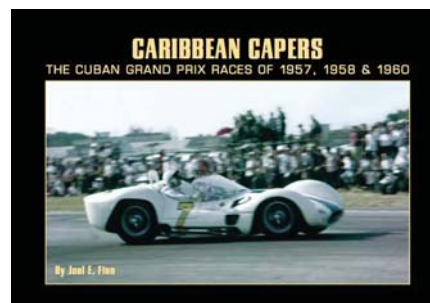
There is no better place to connect with nearly 5,000 enthusiasts who appreciate pioneer vehicles than in the *Horseless Carriage Club*. We'll be honored if you decide to join.

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(888) 832-2374 or www.hcca.org

Since my expertise is more arts administration than cars—except Stanleys—I have concentrated my energies on infrastructure, to help things run more smoothly. *Bob's* and *Pat's* support in creating and perfecting reporting forms have streamlined not only my recent award notification responsibilities but board meetings and chapter relations.

It has been a pleasure to lead this charge, especially because of the great people on the team. I look forward to turning this over to *Doug* and assuming my Immediate Past President responsibilities. In that role, I will do what needs to be done, with pleasure.

Thank you all for what you do raising the bar for automotive history. I'm proud to have played a role, however small.
—*Susan Davis*



***Caribbean Capers:* The Cuban Grand Prix Races of 1957, 1958 & 1960.**

by noted automotive historian Joel E. Finn. **Just released:** A first-hand account of the dramatic story of Cuba's major sports car races, with all the international political intrigue and competitive action that characterized Havana, the "sin city" of the fifties. Rare official records, over 500 historic images of the cars, drivers and events, many never-before published. 366 pages, large-scale hard-bound.
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Obituary

Old Cars Weekly reports that 2001 Friend of Automotive History recipient *John Martin Smith* died October 5th. John and his wife Barbara were killed in a car accident near mile marker 70 on I-69 in Indiana. John Smith was driving a 2007 Lincoln Town Car when he lost control of the automobile and crossed the median. A semi-tractor struck the Lincoln.

John Smith was a well-known local historian and auto enthusiast. He was a founder of the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum as well as the National Automotive and Truck Museum of the United States. Smith received the Society of Automotive Historians 2001 Friend of Automotive History Award.

Visitation was held October 9th at Feller and Clark Funeral Home in Auburn, Indiana. A funeral service followed October 10th at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum. Mourners were encouraged to drive their vintage cars. —via *Leroy Cole*

Mystery Car

This issue's mystery car comes from member *George Albright*. The finned, custom-bodied fiberglass car was hand-built in New Hampshire between approximately 1961 to 1963. When the builder of the car was stationed out of state in 1964, the Green Acres All Star Dairy approached him to lease the vehicle for two years to promote their Batman-themed dairy products. All Star Dairies produced a number of promotional items such as chocolate milk, orange, lemon, and fruit drinks as well as ice cream. It is unclear exactly how "Batman & Robin" became affiliated with a regional dairy, but it would hardly be the first time such cross-promotion has happened.

The car itself is ostensibly based on Buick running gear although the V-8 engine rocker covers read Oldsmobile, with a Pontiac windshield, now missing. The doors are meant to slide into pockets in the leading edges of the rear fenders. It is not obvious how the rear tires are meant to be changed. At 83 inches wide and 210 inches long, this car is narrower and shorter than the Lincoln Futura-based Batmobile modified for television by George Barris and company in 1966.



BATMOBILE VISITS KEENE

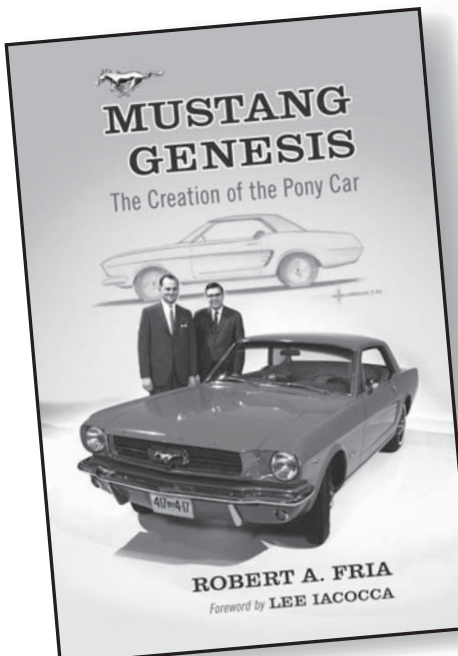
Above: photo caption reads, "Have you seen Batman's Batmobile in town? The famous car made its appearance in Keene in connection with Green Acres all star Batman & Robin Ice Cream. Green Acres all star has been designated the official headquarters of 'Batman & Robin' Ice Cream for the three states."



Above: 1955 Ford Custom Ranch Wagon, Batman Dairy promotional vehicle.


Below: All Star Batman Orange Drink carton.





This is the story of how a clandestine group of Ford marketers, designers, stylists and executives created one of the most successful car designs of the twentieth century. Based on extensive research and interviews with Mustang team members, including Iacocca, management and factory employees, this history traces the Mustang through every stage of development from initial concept to the start of production, correcting some popular misconceptions in the process.

208 pages \$45 hardcover (7 × 10)
137 photos (17 in color),
bibliography, index
ISBN 978-0-7864-5840-0 2010



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Promobiles

Any business owner knows that their enterprise will not thrive if no one knows about it. What better way to draw attention to a business than by riding on the coattails of a better-known entity, especially if it involves the media, motion pictures or TV?



Above: George Barris' Lincoln Futura-based Batmobile for the 1966 "Batman" television series. This car's history is just as Byzantine as the background of Albright's earlier Batmobile. The Lincoln Futura was hand-built by Ghia for a debut in Chicago in 1955. The Futura later appeared in the 1959 film "It Started With A Kiss," with Debbie Reynolds and Glenn Ford, where the car features prominently in the story. George Barris acquired the car which rested in storage until he was approached to come up with a car for "Batman" in a matter of weeks. This highly detailed scale model by John Betts is on display in the Petersen Automotive Museum.



Above: The 1967 "Speed Racer" television show was based on a Japanese anime series "Mach Gō Gō Gō." The story originated in a manga from the early 1960s by Tatsuo Yoshida. The Japanese word "gō," or "five" creates a three-way play on words; the character Speed Racer's name is Gō Mifune, the numeral 5 appears on the car, and phonetically represents the verb "go" in English.



Above: A life-sized Mach 5 was built in 1999. This mid-engine prototype later toured the USA with the Child Safety Network. The cars used in the 2008 live-action movie with Emile Hirsch and Matthew Fox were digitally animated. This car is owned by the Petersen Automotive Museum.



Above: Simple promo models, one a Corgi Juniors Leyland Terrier in the infamous yellow Ryder livery. Tin friction drive toy incidentally promotes Shell and Martini.



Above: Valvoline oil box with Disney-Pixar "Cars" movie promotion. Inside the box was a Hot Wheels model of Scott Riggs' #10 NASCAR Dodge with Valvoline-Cars livery. "Cars" anthropomorphic character designs have the eyes in the windshield. It is claimed that the "Cars" series is director John Lasseter's personal favorite.



Above: Chevron Cars character Brent Blizzard, one of some 74 variations of the models dating back to 1996. Chevron Cars, promoting Techron gasoline, appeared in a series of quasi-claymation style animated commercials by Aardman Animations. Ad agency Young & Rubicam developed the campaign. Character design has eyes in the headlamps, a subject of satire by "Cars" director John Lasseter. The talking Chevron Cars characters have been spoofed on other contemporary television productions.



Above: Transformers toy line started in 1984 marketed by Hasbro, based on designs from Japanese firm Takara. The characters were used in television animation, comic books from Marvel and IDW, video games and movies. The live-action movie characters are shown above as toys, coming full circle. The Camaro and Mustang models share a package which has authorized merchandise logos on the reverse side from General Motors, Ford, and Saleen.



Above: One of dozens of Volkswagen sedans used as the character Herbie in the 1968 Disney film "The Love Bug." Between 1968 and 2005, there followed three movies, "Herbie Rides Again," "Herbie Goes to Monte Carlo," "Herbie Goes Bananas," a television series, a television movie, and a new theatrical release, "Herbie Fully Loaded," with Lindsay Lohan. Interestingly, the Herbie character does not use dialogue; emotions are communicated through sound effects and sight gags. Throughout the 1970s new VW sedans in the Herbie livery appeared at car shows and events with other Disney characters. Shown at the Petersen Automotive Museum.



Above: The Topper car, on a 1936 Buick Roadmaster chassis was created by Bohman & Schwartz for the 1937 film "Topper" with Cary Grant and Constance Bennett. After the car's film career ended, Gilmore Oil purchased the car to promote Red Lion Gasoline. When General Petroleum purchased Gilmore, the car was used in Mobilgas Economy Runs. The car was extensively remodelled in 1948, with a ponderous upright front styling. By 1954 the car body was installed on a Chrysler Imperial chassis with the sides and rear fenders remodelled. By the 1970s, the car was promoting the Movie World museum. Today the car is in the Petersen Automotive Museum.



Above: Moxie horsemobiles are among the wackiest and most endearing promotional cars other than the Oscar Mayer Wienermobiles. In the early decades of motoring, cars and trucks were built in the shape of barrels, bottles, Zippo lighters, shoes, and any other shape limited only by the necessity of being driveable. This LaSalle features a horse figure incorporating the steering wheel, pedals and controls. The cars were also built on Rolls-Royce chassis. Shown at Clark's Trading Post in Lincoln, New Hampshire. Photo credit: Jayron32.

Book Reviews



Stuart Codling, *Real Racers: Formula 1 in the 1950s and 1960s: A Driver's Perspective*

MBI Publishing, 2011. Hardback 207 pages, including illustrations and index. \$40 US. Motorbooks International, March 2011.

ISBN 13: 9780760338919

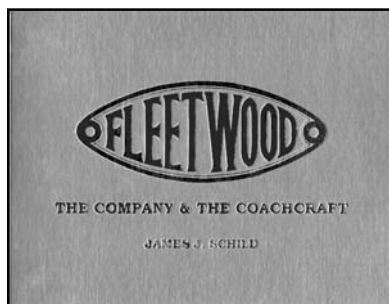
ISBN 10: 0760338914

For novelist and sports enthusiast Ernest Hemingway, one of the distinguishing characteristics of his code hero bullfighter, a man who lives life “all the way up,” is his ability to give

“real emotion” because he has “the real thing: the sequence of motion and fact which [makes] that emotion and which would be valid” in any time. The “true” bullfighter does not fake closeness to the bull, to life threatening danger. In turn, because spectators complete the dynamic of motion and fact begetting emotion and because most spectators—the crowds—tend to savor violence under any conditions, only the aficionado apprehends that emotion. Only the aficionado is keenly aware of the bullfighter’s “grace under pressure,” or courage, the “holding of his purity of line through the maximum of exposure.” The real bullfighter has “the old thing,” Hemingway asserts, not the new “technic [sic] that simulate[s] the appearance of danger . . . to give a fake emotional feeling.”

Insofar as violence and death are inescapable, the ritualizing and perfecting of the encounters with both assaults on life are for Hemingway not only necessary to human (read masculine) glory but also sacred.

Sir Stirling Moss’s epigraph to *Real Racers* outlines Hemingway’s distinction. Moss, one of Stuart Codling’s interviewees, separates the “few real racers in the world” from “mere racing drivers” who might simulate the appearance of danger. His declaration introduces a subtext of Codling’s account of the last twenty years of Grand Prix racing “BCE” (Before the Contemporary Era), a subtext that, however unintentionally, resonates with Hemingway’s criteria. Via this subtext and his book’s title Codling encourages the ongoing debate about today’s seemingly coddled F1 driver, who to some viewers appears to have lost the real racer’s edge because of the money, the promise of Hollywood style celebrity, and, ironically, greater safety. He seems as well to be little more than part of the racing machine run by powerful big business sponsors, rather than part of a dynamic duo challenging the track and other duos. He is not interested, according to this view, in taking risks and demonstrating courage, or “the old thing.”



FLEETWOOD-THE COMPANY & THE COACHCRAFT

The long-awaited, enlarged and revised edition of the celebrated book by SAH member Jim Schild is now available. This new edition features improved print and production quality, 464 pages and more than 1,100 B&W illustrations (many never before published). Fleetwood bodies appeared on a number of important chassis from 1909 to 1996 and were recognized as the finest in design and craftsmanship around the world. The book is available in two versions. Both are horizontal format, 11” x 8-1/2”, with hardcover. The standard edition is \$75.00 and a leather-bound autographed and numbered (100 copies only) deluxe edition is \$125.00. Add \$5.00 Media Mail or \$12.00 Priority Mail postage for either (U.S. only). Contact the publisher at jschild@htc.net for foreign order information or any questions.

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SAH members are invited to join the Classic Car Club of America (CCCA)

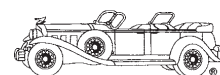
founded in 1952 to promote the preservation and restoration of distinctive motorcars built between 1925 and 1948.

The club publishes its *Bulletin* eight times a year and the quarterly *Classic Car* magazine.

The club maintains a museum and research library on the grounds of the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan.

For membership details contact the club

CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA



at either of the addresses below.
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Des Plaines, IL 60018-2206
(847) 390-0443
www.ClassicCarClub.org

In minimizing the risk of injury and fatality that plagued open wheel racing from its inception, not merely because drivers want to live but because they want to live in mansions, has GP racing forfeited a necessary and, yes, attractive dimension? With respect to danger, Moss says later in *Real Racers*, "I would not have wanted to drive a racing car unless there was some sort of danger involved. For me, risk was a very necessary ingredient."

In his foreword to *Real Racers*, the much younger and less storied Formula 1 racer David Coulthard tweaks the Hemingway maxim and Moss's perspective a bit by suggesting that today's "serious racing drivers" still welcome great risk, but the opportunities to indulge that pleasure have been curtailed, largely because of much improved safety technologies. Sir Frank Williams, another of Codling's interviewees and owner of an F1 team, does not disparage the "softness" of contemporary racing. Confined to a wheelchair due to spinal cord injuries sustained in a non-racing auto accident, Williams says that "I never yearn for the good old days. . . . The cars were unsafe; if you had a big accident you would do yourself a mischief." On the other hand, Charles Leersen, author of the recent history of "the birth" of the Indy 500, *Blood and Smoke* (Simon & Schuster, 2011), suggests that, despite advanced safety technologies, the

big money might spur today's talented big league drivers to take those big risks of old. And so the threads of the debate entangle us.

Hemingway, by the way, does not make it easy (or even possible) to resolve the debate. In addition to differentiating the real from the fake athlete, he draws an ambiguously fine line between courage and foolhardiness, a distinction to which many seasoned motorsports writers and television commentators still often allude.

Subtext aside, Codling divides the text into nine chapters, each of which identifies a segment or feature of a race, so that he telescopes twenty years also into a single event. He begins with "The Players," then moves to "The Arrival," "Practice," "The Start," "Racecraft," "Finesse," "Velocity," "Concentration," "Crashes and Other Complications," and "The Finish." The structure recalls Robert Daley's in the controversial book also about 1950s and 1960s Grand Prix racing, *The Cruel Sport* (Bonanza Books, 1963), which broke the tacit rule among aficionado motorsports historians, especially the British, not to dwell on the violence, injuries, and fatalities endemic to racing BCE.


Within the chapters, Codling interweaves his own narrative of F1 history with narratives by the living (interviews with Moss, Williams, Sir Jack Brabham, Sir Jackie Stewart, and John Surtees) and the dead (reprinted commentary of Graham Hill and Bruce McLaren). The rest of the racers profiled, the majority of them, like McLaren, racing fatalities at a very young age, represent a more international "Gallery."

As usual in a coffee table book, the photographs dominate and are usually meant to. *Real Racers*, however, offers more than just another grouping of attractive images. The visual narrative, composed of stunning reprints—a mix of black/white and color images—from The Klemantaski Collection housed in Connecticut, empowers what is already a multi-dimensional narrative. Many of the images are the work of famed motor racing aficionado and photographer Louis Klemantaski (1912-2001), who specialized in shooting his photos from a position very close to the track and in the instant before he sensed a particular action would occur, so that his camera actually caught that action. Other outstanding Collection images include those by Peter Coltrin, Nigel Snowdon, Ami Guichard, Robert Daley, et al.

Probably not coincidentally, Codling reproduces examples of Daley's photography that seem to bypass Daley's written and visual coverage of the inevitable, horrific violence of Grand Prix racing. Daley records, for example, the pleas of twenty year old Ricardo Rodriguez, as he lay dying from injuries sustained in a crash during practice. It is a violence that spirals its way to spectators and family, as one compelling image of a driver's pregnant wife suggests.

Codling, much like Williams, who refers to the "mischief" that might result from a racing accident, prefers to euphemize serious injuries and fatalities in his chapter "Crashes and Other Complications." Is he trying to rewrite Daley or to offer a compromise?


—Patricia Lee Yongue



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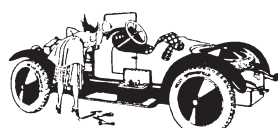


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Book Reviews

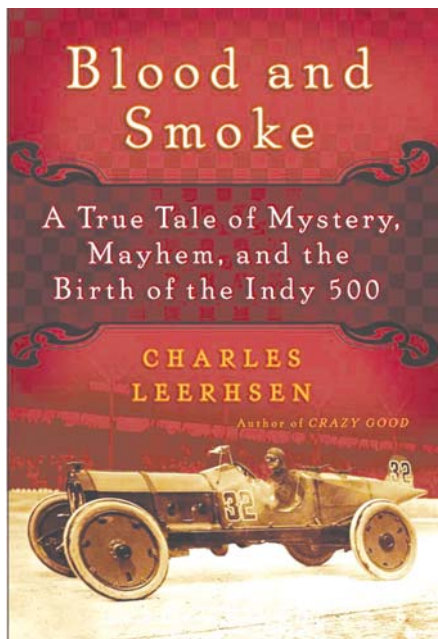
Two books, one subject, different approaches. The parallels will be obvious to anyone who reads both but so too will how one book complements the other.

The respective authors have markedly different writing styles as much by virtue of their different backgrounds as by the motivation each had to write their respective book. The publishers did their “bit” too as each performs its role, including the editing process, quite differently. In the end, it is precisely all of the differences that cause us to remember why careful researchers and historians must read and consult as many references and sources as can possibly be discovered prior to embarking on writing, much less publishing.

The publishers chose to release these books in order to capitalize on the Indianapolis Speedway’s centennial observance of the first 500. Both books make mention, one to a greater degree than the other, of just how fraught with difficulties that first 500 was, and the controversy regarding which car/driver combination actually crossed the finish line first. For those with early issues of *Automobile Quarterly* in your library, I encourage you to read the firsthand account written by one of those drivers published in the Spring 1969 Volume VII, Number 4.

Blood and Smoke is undeniably the more entertainingly written. But that’s as it should be inasmuch as writing is Charles Leershen’s profession. His career credits include executive editor at *Sports Illustrated* and contributor to such as *Esquire*, *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*. Nor is this his first book.

Allison is however Sigur Whitaker’s first book and thus not surprisingly less creatively written. But she’s obviously well educated. She organized her research and thoughts and communicated them clearly in a factual workmanlike manner. Ms. Whitaker’s inspiration stemmed from stories heard since her childhood about family member James Allison. As she writes in the preface, it was recall-



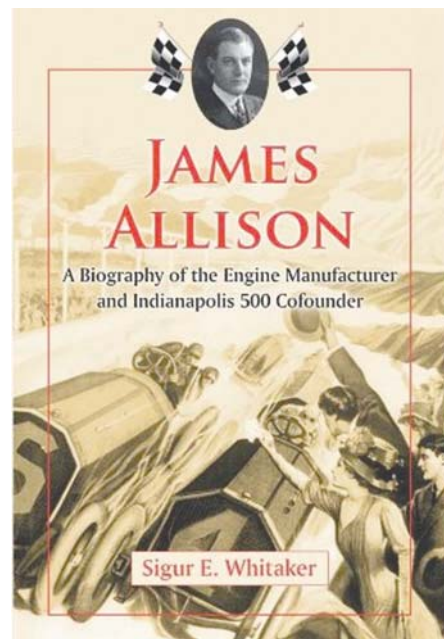
Blood and Smoke: A True Tale of Mystery, Mayhem, and the Birth of the Indy 500

By Charles Leershen
285 pages, 9.5” x 6.25” hardbound,
14 b/w photos, Appendix, Notes on
sources, and Index. \$26
Simon & Schuster, 2011
www.SimonSays.com
ISBN: 978-1-4391-4904-1

ing those stories that made her wish to learn more about her well-known great uncle.

Whitaker and Leershen each spent time, and no small effort as the respective bibliographies make clear, researching their subject before writing. What is interesting to note from this armchair appraisal is although each book tells a similar story, they shared very little in the way of source materials. There were some exceptions worth noting, all books; Bill Nolan’s Barney Oldfield biography, Al Bloemker’s *500 Miles to Go*, as well as Donald Davidson and Rick Shaffer’s *Official History of the Indianapolis 500*, and two books about Carl Fisher, one by Mark Foster, the other by Fisher’s wife, Jane.

On all points of history both accounts agree. Given, as noted, their different source materials, that might not have been the case. But there are numerous instances where one book explains or describes something more comprehensively than the other. Case in point, Leershen tells us of the existence of what today we call



James Allison: A Biography of the Engine Manufacturer and Indianapolis 500 Cofounder

By Sigur E. Whitaker
232 pages, 9” x 6” softbound, 19 b/w
photos, chapter notes and Index. \$35
McFarland, 2011, 800-253-2187
www.McFarlandpub.com
ISBN: 978-0-7864-6165-3

a “man cave” in the basement of Allison’s estate, which adjoined that of his Speedway co-founders Carl Fisher and Frank Wheeler. Leershen tells us only that the “most beloved feature [of the house] was its dark, leather-lined rathskeller, into which [the Speedway co-founders] descended frequently for spouseless, but not necessarily stag, evenings.” But it is from Whitaker that we learn details; that the basement contained neither coal room nor furnace but, “extended (and filled the footprint of) the entire length and width of the house [and] was a place to relax and entertain” outfitted with a 70-foot by 22-foot indoor swimming pool, a billiard parlor, a separate card room, a photo lab, a fruit room, a drinking room, and more.

It is fair to speculate whether either book would ever have been written if there had been no Carl Fisher. And that’s in spite of the fact that all four Speedway co-founders individually were accomplished men. But Fisher was without a doubt the instigator, the ringleader, the man with the ideas.

On his own James Allison, as Sigur Whitaker makes clear, would have been a quietly successful businessman. He had established his engineering business but it wouldn't be until decades later after his death that it would become part of General Motors. It was his friendship with the human dynamo Carl Fisher, along with Wheeler and Newby, all of whom met when they were teenaged youths destined to remain friends and associates their entire lives, that led to the adventures and accomplishments that have filled books.

It was Fisher, discovering a struggling business and persuading James Allison to join him, that led to the two creating a company, Prest-O-Lite, that revolutionized automotive headlights in those early, pre-electric-light days. Not incidentally, it was Prest-O-Lite that made both Fisher and Allison genuinely rich, netting for themselves \$17 million when they sold it a few years later to Union Carbide. During this time Arthur Newby was head of his own company making National automobiles and Wheeler had his company too, making carburetors.

Fisher's next inspiration was that race-track that today we call the Speedway. He inspired and persuaded his buddies to join with him as co-founders, investors and fellow developers with Fisher as the president, Newby as the first vice-president, Wheeler as second vice-president, and Allison as secretary/treasurer. Then, a bit later it was Fisher again who upon falling under the thrall of south Florida hatched the idea to establish and develop Miami Beach out of mangrove swampland.

Each book tells its tale such that the general reader can be content with either one. But the reader who seeks to truly understand, or the historian seeking the greater comprehension gained from different perspectives, needs both.
—Helen V. Hutchings

Media Review

Cars of the Revolution (Devrim Arabalari)

Director Tolga Örnek, Written by Tolga Örnek, Murat Disli
Production company, Ekip Film
2008, 115 minutes, color, DVD Region 2, Turkish, Subtitles in English, German or French. \$18 via Amazon.com
Cast: Taner Birsal, Ali Düşenkalkar, Halit Ergenç, Sait Genay, Altan Gördüm, Seçil Mutlu, Ugur Polat, Serhat Tutumluer, Onur Ünsal, Selçuk Yöntem, Charles Carroll.

The first consideration with this film is that it is in the Turkish language with English subtitles. Also note that it is DVD Region 2. Getting past the subtitle factor, the viewer will find a production on a higher level than independent cinema, but not a big Hollywood feature like *Tucker*. This is a dramatization rather than a strict historical documentary.

In 1961, General Cemal Gürsel, Turkey's leader after a military coup, determined that Turkey should be able to build its own automobiles. As usual with such undertakings, there is the constant issue of meeting a budget, and in this case, meeting a deadline. The assembled Turkish State Railway engineering team has 130 days to build demonstration vehicles nearly from scratch. Some of the engineers do not even know how to drive, much less own their own cars. The vehicles are to be shown before the General, the top brass, the press, and the public on Republic Day. The biggest battle is convincing everyone involved that the project is possible, much less doing the actual work. It is also essential that the General not be embarrassed.

The film is not entirely about a group of people waiting for the axe to fall.



There are whimsical scenes such as when the engineers disassemble their unsuspecting colleague's 1956 Ford Fairlane to use as a model for their work.


Anyone who has restored a car, or rebuilt an entire engine will empathize with the team's anxiety when they first try to start their fresh-built engine. Later, with the team scrambling to complete preliminary assembly of the cars, the camera follows a running prototype as it passes behind some buildings, only to emerge being pushed by the passenger. Again, a scenario that any old car enthusiast has experienced.

Ultimately we know what happens; the cars are completed barely on time, they are driven in front of the press and the people, a tiny snafu results in the General being embarrassed in front of the press, and the project is finished. The tagline is that in Turkey, no success goes unpunished.

This film covers an area of automotive history so obscure that many outside the region would not even think to research it. The prop car bodies used for filming look rather rougher than the actual remaining hand-built Devrim prototype, and there are some creative liberties when it comes to engineering jargon for the general audience. Nevertheless, it was worth \$18 and nearly two hours.
—A. Meyer

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Editorial

The power of a comprehensive museum exhibit is amply demonstrated by “Scooters: Size Doesn’t Always Matter” at the Petersen Automotive Museum, Los Angeles, California, through May 28, 2012. I have no problem admitting that two-wheeled motor vehicles are outside my area of study. This exhibit presents dozens of examples of motor scooters over some 95 years. The fact that this exhibit is so thorough is testament to the work put in by curator *Leslie Kendall* and the museum staff.

The basic human urge to independently travel faster and farther than our feet can carry us is universal. Domesticated animals sufficed for millenia, but these beasts of burden have their own limitations. The next

step, in theory, would be the most basic form of powered locomotion, novelties like motorized roller skates, or the Hop Rod powered pogo stick. More pragmatically, a power-assisted bicycle or Moped is closer to the goal.

Motorized scooters, defined as a vehicle with small wheels, small motor, a step-through frame and footrests for the rider represent the first step in powered independent transport all over the globe. Small size is key, as the motorscooter can thread through crowded streets and some models fold into packages so small they can be carried upstairs into an apartment. No word on clearing today’s security measures carrying a package containing several ounces of gasoline. This is an eminently worthy exhibit.

—A. Meyer



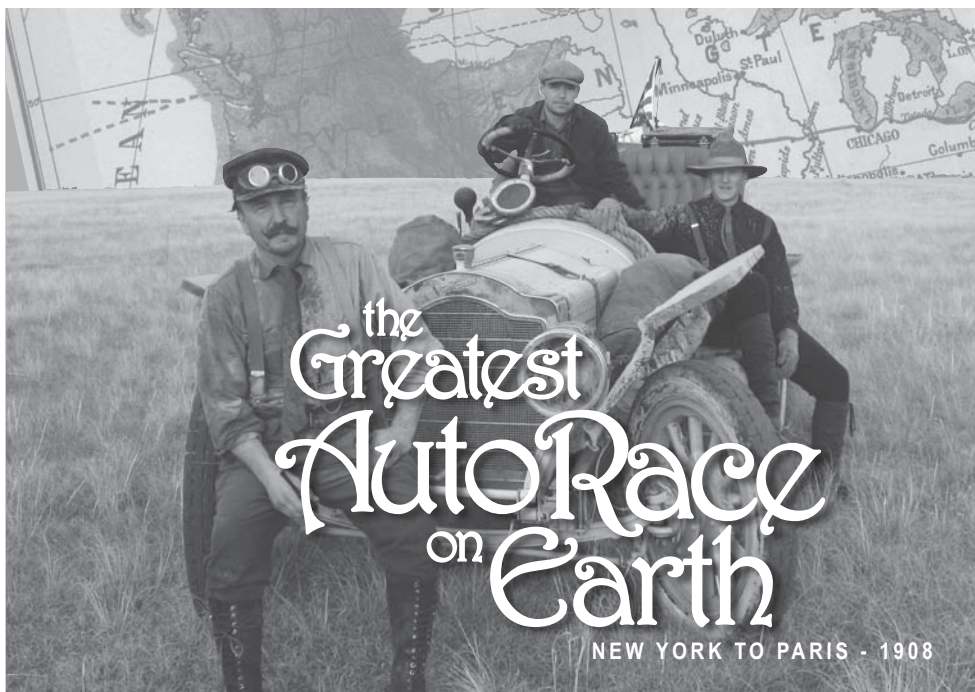
Above, Below: Autoped scooters built from 1915-1921 in New York. The 155cc front-drive stand-up scooter was controlled by pushing forward or back on the steering column. Idea resembles an in-line Segway, 95 years ago.



Below: 1917 Kenilworth by Booth Brothers in the UK. One cylinder, 4-stroke engine. Kerosene headlamp, bicycle brakes, sprung seat.



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Eight years in the making, **The Greatest Auto Race on Earth** is now available on DVD, telling the story of the 1908 New York to Paris auto race.

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Use PayPal and order online at www.thegreatestautorace.com or send your name and address with a cheque or Money Order for \$35.44 (\$29.99 + \$5.45 S/H) to **The 1908 Great Auto Race Film Company Ltd.**, #202, 10816A-82 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta. Canada. T6E 2B3



Above: 1920 Briggs & Stratton uses Smith Motor Wheel as integral component. 25 mph, 100 mpg. Sprung seat.



Above: 1939 Moto-Kar Deluxe. 2 hp. Available with cargo body, or pontoons and a propeller for water use.



Above: 1944 Cushman Airborne Model 53, M3A4 trailer. Meant to be dropped by parachute with troops. Turf tires, no suspension. Automatic clutch, 40 mph, 100 mile range.



Above: 1947 Mohs King O' The Road. Built by Bruce Baldwin Mohs at age 14. 16hp Onan engine, 60 mph. 13 foot length.



Above: 1947 Powell Challenger C-47. One-cylinder 4-stroke 400cc engine. Los Angeles-based Powell built its own engines, carburetors, ignition and generators.



Above: 1946, 1948 Salsbury Model 85 scooters. 6hp, 4-stroke engine, 45 mph, 65 mpg. Built in Pomona, California, automatic shifting, pedals for brake and accelerator. Sole surviving Deluxe model features a front fairing.



Above: Harley-Davidson Topper H, horizontal single-cylinder engine with CVT belt transmission.



Above: 1957 Cushman Mailster, intended to increase the volume of mail delivered by carriers. Top heavy and underpowered.



Above: 1960 Fuji Go-Devil folding scooter. 53cc 2-stroke engine, 23 mph. 60 pound weight.



Above: 1962 Fuji Rabbit, automated Superflow transmission, rear air suspension. 200cc 2-stroke engine, 11 hp, 60 mph. \$495.



Above: Vespa rickshaw, centrally-mounted engine, independent rear suspension using twin chain cases as trailing arms, one for each wheel.



Above: 1966 Vespa Super Sprint 90, lightweight chassis, 90cc engine. Narrow bodywork, centrally mounted spare reduce wind resistance. Tool compartment above spare.



Above: Vespa 400, built in France by Piaggio's subsidiary. Two-cylinder, 2-stroke engine, fan-cooled with a hand-cranked mixer for gasoline and two-stroke oil. Battery in a sliding tray behind the front fascia panel.



Above: 1984 Honda City and Motocompo. The Motocompo was a 50cc scooter designed to fit in the luggage area of the Honda City. Not imported to the US.



Above: 1984 Zoe Zipper built by Mitsuoka Motors, 50cc Honda engine. Marketed in open and closed versions, single door on the left. 400 pound weight. \$3785 in 1984.



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by James O'Keefe

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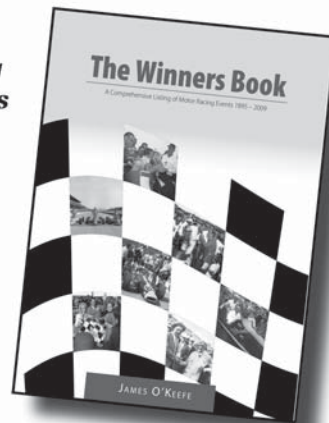
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