

# SAAH Journal



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## Billboard

### 20th SAH European Dinner

*Consider yourself invited!*

Date: February 3, 2015

Place: Automobile Club de France, Place de la Concorde, Paris

This formal occasion with an awards presentation enables SAH members and

their guests to meet others from around the world and to dine in an historic location. The price for dinner, including wine and other beverages, will be just over €100 per person. Bookings must be made in advance by contacting *Laurent Friry*, 88 rue d'Estienne d'Orves, F-91370 Verrieres le Buisson, France. Tel: +33.9.51.63.01.20, email: laurent.friry@gmail.com. Payment in cash to Laurent on arrival at the ACF, or via PayPal to Laurent by selecting the "my family or friends" option on PayPal.

*continued on page 3*



Automobile Club de France

### Submission Deadlines:

Deadline:	12/1	2/1	4/1	6/1	8/1	10/1
Issue:	Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/Jun	Jul/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec
Mailed:	1/31	3/31	5/31	7/31	9/30	11/30

*Note: the SAH Journal is a bimonthly publication (printed 6 times a year) and there is a two-month horizon for submitted material before it is mailed (e.g., material submitted by February 1st appears in the Mar/Apr issue and is mailed on or before 3/31.) All letters, manuscripts, and advertisement submissions and inquiries go to the editor.*



Above, front and back cover: Various perspectives of the Duesenberg "Mormon Meteor"—the car created by Ab Jenkins and Augie Duesenberg to dominate land speed competition. The full story, like many good stories, is far more nuanced, and Ab's story is even more so. In 1935 Jenkins achieved two records: one-hour average at 153.97 mph and a 24-hour average of 135.57 mph, which would stand until 1961. Get the details by reading: *Ab & Marvin Jenkins: The Studebaker Connection and the Mormon Meteors* by *Gordon White*, ISBN 978-1583881735 (Iconografix 2006). Another distinction at the opposite pole of competition events: this car won Best of Show at the 2007 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, the 2011 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, and the 2014 The Elegance at Hershey, where your editor photographed it. In the previous *SAH Journal* we touched on Ab Jenkins' start with motorcycles in the first of three "episodes" on Bonneville by *Louise Ann Noeth*.

# SAH Journal

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THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS, INC.

An Affiliate of the American Historical Association



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## President's Perspective



Hershey is now in the rear view mirror! So much transpired in the two days I was there—the SAH Board Meeting, Book Signing, and the SAH Awards Dinner ultimately contributed to my exhaustion by the end of the event. It was a time during which new friends were made and old relationships were renewed and strengthened. Perhaps my major contribution to the whole thing was expediting the Board meeting so we got done by 9:30 PM! However, not everything was accomplished that should have been done, and so, thanks to *Louis Fourie*, a motion was proposed, seconded, and subsequently unanimously ratified that has great import for the future of the Society. I'll quote that motion below:

"A Motion is hereby proposed to create an International Committee for the purpose of providing a formal channel to receive and address any concerns held by members outside North America. Rather than have a set agenda, this Committee aims to be flexible to the needs and concerns that may arise. In addition to the appointment of regular members of the committee, provision should be made to appoint temporary members made up of current or past directors should they be travelling overseas and are able to meet groups of members in their home countries. This Committee is charged with either resolving any concerns or bringing their attention to the Board of SAH for the required attention. The Object of this International Committee is to ensure that SAH embraces its Role as The International Society of Automotive Historians."

This measure confirms the present leadership's commitment to following our mission as the only international organization with a specific calling to promote automobile history broadly defined. In staking a claim to be global, we are restructuring ourselves to be responsive to an international membership that has existed for a long

time. Of course, under the leadership of *Arthur Jones*, our Biennial Conferences have been truly international in composition. Recently our International Motorsports Section has been energized by *Don Capps*. And by forming a committee headed by Canadian *Louis Fourie*, that will include both the SAH President and the Chair of the SAHB Section, as well as other representatives, this group will further develop our mission. Of course, that means further engaging our membership beyond the U.S., and this committee has as its charge tackling that task. And why not, given the global nature of the auto industry?

Switching gears, once I got back to the University of Dayton from Hershey I had the daunting task of organizing a senior seminar on the automobile and film that is slated for spring term. This offering will be team taught with American Studies Professor *Todd Uhlman*, and is a daunting task given that the technologies of the automobile and film emerged at about the same time and were highly interrelated in terms of themes and production. What are your favorite car films and why? Here are a few titles and cars that I am thinking of having the students thinking about and writing on:

### Film

American Graffiti  
The Love Bug  
Back to the Future  
Ferris Bueller's Day Off  
Risky Business  
National Lampoon's Vacation  
Smokey and the Bandit  
The Blues Brothers  
Iron Man  
Le Mans  
Christine  
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang  
Rebel Without a Cause  
Ghostbusters  
Goldfinger  
Bullitt  
Mad Max  
The Fast and Furious

### Automobile

1932 Ford Roadster  
1962 Volkswagen  
1981 DeLorean  
1961 Ferrari 250 GT California  
1981 Porsche 928  
1983 Wagon Queen Truckster  
1977 Pontiac Trans Am  
1974 Dodge Monaco  
2008 Audi R8  
1970 Porsche 917K  
1958 Plymouth Fury  
Zborowski Race Car  
1949 Mercury Eight  
1959 Cadillac Ecto-1  
1963 Aston Martin DB 5  
1968 Ford Mustang GT  
1973 Ford XB Falcon GT 351  
1970 Dodge Charger

I could always use your insights! Send me an email at:

[Jheitmann1@udayton.edu](mailto:Jheitmann1@udayton.edu).

—John A. Heitmann

## Billboard *continued from page 2*

**The Tasca Ford Legacy: Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday:** This history of the Tasca Ford dealership is SAH member *Bob McClurg's* latest book. "Chevrolet had Yenko, Nicky, and Baldwin-Motion; Chrysler had Spaulding Dodge; and if you were into Ford performance, you had to go to Tasca Ford." Released June 2014, the 8.5" x 11" hardcover—ISBN: 978-1613251287—192 pages with 230 color and black-and-white photos. Price: \$39.95 plus \$6.95 shipping and handling. To order call CarTech at 1-800-551-4754 or by visiting [www.carttechbooks.com/tasca](http://www.carttechbooks.com/tasca).

**Grant for the Studebaker National Museum:** The Studebaker National Museum, located in South Bend, Indiana, and Mishawaka-Penn-Harris Public Libraries have received an In-

diana Memories grant in the amount of \$16,032 from the Indiana State Library. The award will be used to digitize motion picture footage held by the Studebaker National Museum Archives. For more information, visit their website at [www.studebakermuseum.org](http://www.studebakermuseum.org).

**NHRA Motorsports Museum:** To complement our series by *Louise Ann Noeth*, executive director and SAH member *Larry Fisher* invites members to visit The Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum in Pomona, California, and at their website at [www.NHRAMuseum.org](http://www.NHRAMuseum.org) to learn about the museum and its mission to celebrate the impact of motorsports on American culture.

**Your Billboard:** What are you working on or looking for? Do you need help? Don't suffer in silence! To place a Billboard announcement, contact the editor: [sahjournal@live.com](mailto:sahjournal@live.com).



Southern California Timing Association Chief Starter Bob Higbee (white cap and connected by the spiral cord to the timing tower) makes a last minute inspection of the motorcycle rider about to tease the timing lights on the Bonneville Salt Flats at the 1966 Speed Week. Note the new Mustang 4th back in line behind the Studebaker and the Mercury Monterey.

Courtesy Vista Group Research Library

## A CENTURY OF SPEED (OR THE SPEED CENTURIONS) EPISODE TWO

Hot rodders became “jet rodders” out of simple obsession. Just as they had abandoned the flathead for the overhead-valve engine, it is essential to understand that all the early jet powered cars were built by hot rodders looking for higher speeds, not outsiders trying to hijack the sport.

The early 1960s saw a thrilling shootout for the World Land Speed Record that would forever separate the piston motors from the ultimate speed fight.

Regardless of how much horsepower is produced, there comes a point where wind resistance equals tire adhesion and that’s when things start slipping, or breaking, or both.

Donald Campbell, the British speed heir apparent (son of Sir Malcolm Campbell) came to the salt in 1960 with all the bravado of a military operation, but ignored pleas for caution and crashed at approximately 350 mph making scrap metal out of his multi-million dollar car. Its construction allowed him to survive the crash.

Mickey Thompson, convinced he had the answer to the 400 mile-per-hour barrier, took Challenger onto the unusually hard, rough salt in September 1960 and his optimism sailed into reality as he tripped the USAC clocks at 406.60 mph: the first hot rodder to run in excess of 400 mph! Sadly, he was denied a record when he was unable to complete the required second record run, due to one of the four engines failing to engage when he shifted into second gear. Thompson told the assembled media it was a driveshaft failure, not wanting to blame his engine sponsor: Pontiac. The myth persisted until son Danny revealed the truth years later, after Thompson’s murder and Pontiac’s demise.

Dr. Nathan Ostich, the racers’ doctor, understood both points of view. He spent more than \$50,000 to build “The Flying Cadu-

ceus,” the first jet-powered car to blast across the salt. Powered by a J47 turbojet engine, the 28.5-foot long, brilliant red car was an imposing sight with its 48-inch tires and aluminum billet wheels. After an assortment of experimental teething problems, the good doctor finally clocked 331 miles per hour on the salt in 1962, but the front wheel came off in the process and the big car spun three times. Ostich survived, but gave up for the season.

Out of the wheel-driven crowd came a hot rodder Norman Craig Breedlove, who was a skinny kid with the hee-haw laughter



Courtesy Wilford Day



Mickey Thompson kneels as his crew poses behind the Challenger I, the blue streamliner powered by four Pontiac engines. Photo courtesy Judy Thompson-Creach.

The crew of Dr. Nathan Ostich’s “Flying Caduceus,” the first jet-powered race car on the Bonneville Salt Flats. Ostich was well-known and well-liked by the racing community as he delivered their babies, mended their broken limbs and generally kept them fit for competition.

of a mule. With his J47 jet car “Spirit of America,” Breedlove brought the World Land Speed Record back to the United States after 13 years, topping John Cobb’s 394 mph mark. Although he rarely praised those who helped him along his path, when Breedlove secured the services of Lockheed engineer Walt Sheehan it put him on course to earn five World Land Speed Record titles. Breedlove would battle with brothers Art and Walt Arfons for several years before ending up on top with a plus 600 mph record in 1965.

The FIA, who initially rebuffed the Californian, realized it had to accept this new powerplant when the feat made headlines the world over. Amending its International Sporting Code, the FIA established a category called “International Records for Special Vehicles” and later separated out thrust power from Otto cycle engines.

It is noteworthy that Lee Breedlove, Paula Murphy and Betty Skelton all drove jets on the salt. However, thanks to a fragile male ego and overbearing sponsor influence, none could achieve any meaningful numbers because the engine speed in their cars was

deliberately reduced to ensure the men stayed faster. All three women knew tuning adjustments were made to the cars they drove so that they would not come anywhere near the men’s speed. Lee Breedlove was very annoyed when the Goodyear PR guy specifically told Walt Sheehan to make sure she never got anywhere near her husband’s speed. Goodyear wanted to

hold the salt in order to keep Art Arfons and his Firestone-sponsored car from making further attempts. The only reason Mrs. Breedlove didn’t protest loudly is because she wanted to drive the car more than she wanted to beat Craig. Goodyear was paying the bills and, therefore, calling the shots. Paula was put in Walt Arfons’ drag-racing jet car, but Walt was not happy about it. But again, since sponsor STP was paying a lot of the record attempt bills Paula got her seat time—slower than what it could have been as the salt was wet and slushy at the time. Years after, Art Arfons readily admitted he was scared stiff that Betty would crash the jet and only let her drive if he could detune it so he could keep his sponsorship. In all three cases, the very qualified women were forced upon the men for publicity purposes, and yet all three women turned in stellar driving displays despite the restrictions. This was not a secret, but all three women understood that their chance to drive was directly linked to keeping the respective sponsor happy and the sponsors wanted men to hold the “real” records, not the women.

In retrospect, it had been quite a traffic jam on the salt throughout the ’50s. Friendly competition that started with mundane passenger cars had been reshaped into remarkable, high performance machines. The early modified cars had also been street-driven, but as speeds increased, purpose-built cars forged a new motorsports heritage. Salt racing encouraged and promoted family-style participation, yet the “family” was not necessarily defined by blood lines. As the extended families grew and matured, the relationships proved to be stronger than Velcro pulled sideways.

SCTA, staffed entirely by volunteers and the occasional paid clerical staff member, proved they could police their own while having a whale of a good time. However, for as good a job as had been done, nothing could stop the steady loss of participants to drag racing. Instead of unparalleled growth, SCTA spent the ’60s struggling to maintain the status quo.



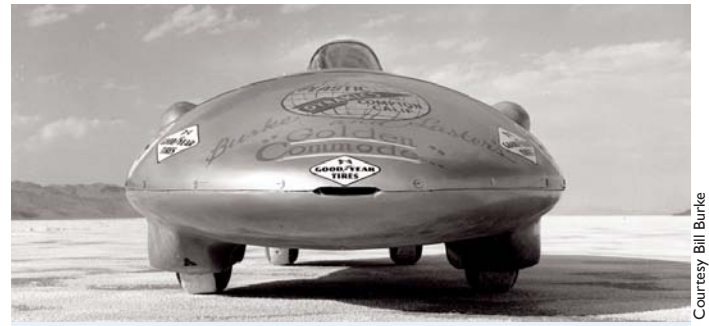
Wife Lee Breedlove, gets a familiarization talk from husband Craig, as she prepares to drive the J79 jet-powered Spirit of America. Photo courtesy Lee Frank.

The hot rodders that remained true to the salt were not motivated by cash or merchandise, but for the sheer satisfaction of doing something well and truly fast.

#### «1960»

Bursting with new vehicles, SCTA expanded to 57 competitive classes in 1960, and the entry fee had risen to \$28. The trend was toward small, diminutive streamliners and compact cars.

The slickest little flyer was Bill Burke’s fiberglass streamliner nicknamed “Pumpkin Seed” because of its shape. It delivered him into the 200 MPH Club with a 205 average from a dainty Ford Falcon engine, modified to 156 cid.



Courtesy Bill Burke

Bill Burke and Bob Laster 1960 entry “Pumpkin Seed” powered by a 156 cid Ford Falcon Inline 6 engine built by Vern Houle and Bobby Strahman with custom Houle .090-oversize valves hand machined from stainless steel stock and his own specialty pistons that produced a 10.6 compression ratio. Interestingly, the car produced 156 bhp on Dean Moon’s dyno running on gas at 5,200 rpm.

Another bit of tiny thunder was the elfish “Wee Eel II,” powered by a supercharged Morris engine. Driver Els Lohn nabbed a new record in Class G at 135 mph.

Tenacious Texan Karol Miller, using only one non-stock part, an Isky camshaft, jolted the observers when he qualified for a record run with mufflers still connected.

Firestone debuted a new “low-profile” tire that would run on 100 psi. Less bulky, the new rubber simplified streamlining challenges while at the same time it increased the critical contact patch needed for good traction.

#### «1961»

Among the 119 cars entries at the 13th annual Speed Week, 100 ran in a single class, and eight brought different size engines for two classes.

The salt was in sad condition, the result of not enough rainfall during the winter months to fuel the natural surface regeneration. Dirt from the surrounding mountains settled on the surface and not only made the salt brown, but caused fluctuating surface temperatures—cracking and lifting the salt. Accordingly, the eight-mile course, 2.5 miles shorter than the year before, lowered speeds, but nonetheless 20 new class records were recorded and the top speed was 313 miles per hour.

Pump gasoline was used by 83 entries and the remaining 36 mixed up brews containing nitro, methanol, benzene, alcohol and other speed secret chemicals.

The once popular Competition-Coupe and Modified Roadster class was in sharp decline.

The sports car classes exploded and the guy with the “biggest barking dog” was Knot Farrington driving a Chrysler-powered T-Bird who added 28 miles per hour to his speed from the year before using streamlining tricks.

«1962»

The salt was as perfect as any hot rodder could want in 1962 and the fast car crowd inked 32 new records, including one by a jet when 141 cars and 15 bikes starting pounding the ground on August 19th at the SCTA Nationals.

Landspeed Productions Research Library



Bert Munro bought his Indian in 1920 at age 21 and modified the bike for the next 45 years. In the 1960s his now streamlined bike set a 183 mph land speed record, which remains unsurpassed. The film *World's Fastest Indian* was based loosely on his life.

The motorcycle riders penned eight new records into the books, but the one by New Zealander Bert Munro, 62, on his stream-lined 1920 Indian—a bike he bought new—at 162 miles per hour, stole the show.

Munro only bought parts as a last resort. He made connecting rods from old rusty tractor axle and melted down old tractor pistons recasting the molten metal into pistons sizes he needed.

Ernie Bennett, Tim Rochlitzer, and Bob Joehneck brought a spiffy new “lakester,” designed with the driver enclosed at the rear, using a drop tank from an F-86D jet fighter. Over the years, this car would go on to put more racers into the 200 MPH Club than any other car on the salt.

«1963»

By 1963 it was clear that the salt was shrinking. Worried racers started vocalizing their concerns when a potash mining company dug a huge ditch at the west end of the salt flat, part of the mineral extraction process. The subsequent drainage from the salt beds forced the Utah State Highway Commission to collect 40 tons of salt from the edge of the beds and spread it over the south end of the nine-mile

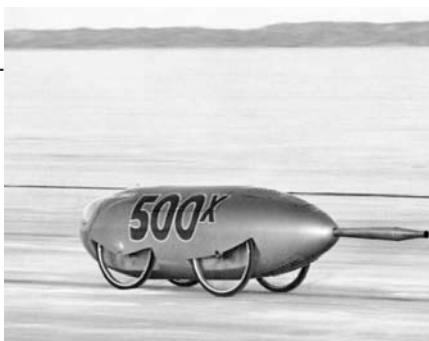
course in a desperate attempt to achieve smoothness.

Stepping up the pace, new timing lights placement proved ingenious and combined a “short” and “long” course on one piece of real estate for the 169 cars and 18 motorcycles that would complete 1,415 runs. Organizers had figured out how a single course could be used for single-mile runs (short course) and multiple-mile (long course) runs counteracting the shortage of suitable racing surface and adequate safety shut-down space.

Alan Richards built the smallest car to ever crunch the salt crystals. Aptly named, the 200-pound “Claustrophobia” mystified most as to how anyone could fit in it to drive the aluminum bug. With a 32-inch wheelbase balanced on an 18-inch track, the 2.8 cid Garelli engine maintained 20 miles per hour per cubic inch!

Another sight straight from the *Twilight Zone* was a Studebaker coupe that blew its right rear tire while running 200 miles per hour.

Road & Track / Dean Batchelor photo



“Claustrophobia” might have been the slowest car at the meet, but Alan Richard’s “egg” streamliner on bicycle wheels was made from a 100-gallon wing tank. The diminutive 32-inch wheelbase racer with an 18-inch track was powered by a 2.8 cubic-inch Garrelli motorcycle engine. With driver Warren Roll (130 lbs) the car weighed 330 lbs ready to go. Although it reached 70 mph, it could only maintain a 50 mph average in the timed mile.

Eyewitnesses reported watching the car do a complete flip, land on its wheels, and then spin a few times. The only damage to the car or driver was a little crinkled body work around where the tire blew! Gotta love those safety regs!

The Summers Brothers Wedge trotted off with top speed of the meet at 308 miles per hour. Tom Beatty’s tank was the oldest car at the meet making its 13th appearance.

Bill Scace from Chicago, Illinois terrorized the grand touring ranks with his supercharged Chevrolet Corvette snagging a 175 miles-per-hour record.

«1964»

The 136 cars and 31 motorcycles were only able to complete 527 timed runs at the 1964 annual Speed Week. First the timing equipment failed for the best part of opening day of this 16th annual, but the salt was so bumpy that the SCTA recruited every available passenger car and truck to run over the course to pack and smooth the surface.

The meet was on hold when wind blew a gale on Wednesday, tearing the timer’s stand to pieces. Friday started out great, but was slammed shut in the afternoon when 90-degree crosswinds preceded a downpour.

Without explanation, in the 1964 SCTA program, 200 MPH Club president Jim Lindsley announced that new members must not only be timed over 200 mph, two ways, but must now set a record.

It was hard-running Mickey Thompson’s last salt fling driving a Sears Allstate sponsored Corvette. Doctors advised him to give up high-speed driving for a while after he fainted during the event.

Courtesy Rochlitzer family



Tim Rochlitzer in his belly tank lakester warming up the engine as he prepares to make the car’s maiden voyage on the famed salt flats. Rochlitzer’s extremely well-built racer enjoyed a multi-decade run life as it passed through several hands setting class land speed records into the next century.

course in a desperate attempt to achieve smoothness.



Courtesy Paula Murphy

Celebrated race car driver Paula Murphy, left, and co-driver Barbara Neiland with their Studebaker Commander, which they drove in 1964 for the factory team led by Andy Granatelli. The team nailed more than 300 class records, a feat unrivaled to this day by any American car company.

At a private event in October, Studebaker arrived on the salt and left 10 days later with 349 endurance and high-speed records. Officiated by USAC and sanctioned by FIA, the majority of the

records were clocked by Californians Paula Murphy and Barbara Neiland who exceeded standing records of Mickey Thompson and Andy Granatelli.

### «1965»

A raging downpour two days before the 1965 Nationals delayed the start of the 17th annual Speed Week for four days until the water evaporated off the course. Some eyed Fred Andrews' Evinrude-powered streamliner "with envy." He later managed a 100 mile per hour run.

Those who stayed discovered that where salt thickness had once been measured in feet, it was now only a few inches in spots. The overall available area was shrinking as well and many believed the continual pumping away of the salt brine for potash-mining activities of Kaiser Chemicals, a division of Kaiser Aluminum, was to blame. Kaiser angrily disagreed, saying the loss was entirely due to variable weather and humidity. By late November, state officials quieted everything down by announcing a geological study would be done. Because the study was paid for by Kaiser, it put objectivity of the report into question.

Only 91 hours of racing took place once Chief Starter Bob Higbee let the first car go down the course. SCTA crammed in 589 qualifying runs, yet miraculously knocked out 10 records in between high-wind shutdowns. Of the 141 vehicles entered, 97 made at least one run.

The Herda-Knapp-Milodon Engineering streamliner, which established an International record of 311 miles per hour in 1964, was the fastest of the meet at 272 miles per hour. An absolute engineering marvel, the car could have easily passed aircraft-quality building standards.

The only flathead-powered car of the meet was Bob Westbrook's modified roadster that went to the top of his class with a 136 miles-per-hour run.



Courtesy John Veenstra

Built in a rickety abandoned fruit stand in Ontario, California, the Goldenrod streamliner is preparing to make racing history with owner/designer/driver Bob Summers behind the wheel. Brother and co-owner Bill Summers stands at the rear holding the canopy open while the team checks every detail of the four naturally aspirated Chrysler Hemi engines. The car claimed the World Wheel-Driven record at 409 mph in November 1965.

Running in the middle of the jet car battle, the remarkable achievement of brothers Bob and Bill Summers was practically ignored. With their ultra sleek, 32-foot "Goldenrod" streamliner, the brothers set a new wheel-driven record of 409.277 miles per hour on November 12th.

Brilliantly engineered and executed with four fuel-injected in-line Chrysler Hemi engines coupled together in back-to-back pairs, the car developed more than 2,400 horsepower.

The next day Bob removed the Chrysler engineered air scoops and fitted the car with his own version, designed with the help of fellow racer Bob Herda.

Goldenrod clocked 425.99 miles per hour, but Chrysler was miffed to be shown up by the hot rodders and demanded the immediate return of its engines. November 13th was the last time the car ever ran.

### «1966»

The salt surface was in terrific shape for the 18th annual Bonneville Nationals, better than it had been in years, giving traction to Kaiser's claim of weather-related changes. The 1966 event had 164 car entries and 24 bikes. Of the 62 new records, six brought new members to the 200 MPH Club.

The fastest car of the meet was the Redhead; the McGrath-Hammon team posted a 331 record with the 464 cid Chrysler, Potvin cam and 6-71 GMC blower. The obsolete flathead and inline engines got another chance for glory when Class X was added to 10 of the 13 categories. The antiques accounted for six records, including the fuel roadster that Mardon-Ohly-Bentley built in 1958.

Mario Andretti drove a fastback Mustang stuffed with an unblown Indy engine to run 175 miles per hour. "Tach-less" salt veteran Ak Miller told Andretti, "Just wind it up until you feel something float and then back off a little." "Poppy red" and "sanitary" describes Fred Holmes and Jerry Kugel's '32 gas roadster that set the Class E record at 165 mph. Relying on the grunt from a 1964 Ford 260 cid V8, the car was the envy of pit row.

Ted Gillette, Toole County's only ambulance driver for years, had served as stand-by medical transport since 1956. He wrote an editorial that summed up his long association with the racers: "I have experienced many horrible accidents on the highway, but under the rigid safety inspection and supervision of the Bonneville nationals, it is safer to travel 200 miles per hour on the salt, than 70 miles per hour on the public highways."

### «1967»

The 19th annual Speed Week event got underway on Sunday, August 20, 1967, with 155 cars and a whopping 57 motorcycles buzzing the clocks on generally good salt. When it ended, on Saturday, the record books had 32 new names extracted from 1,152 qualifying runs and five new members for the 200 MPH Club, now sponsored by Grant.

Since the beginning, Bell Auto Parts helped racers set records by opening a "race parts" store on the salt during Speed Week. Cool water could always be found in Bell's "Palm Tree Oasis."

Top speed was achieved again by the Herda, Knapp and Milodon streamliner at 326 miles per hour. After the SCTA event, the



Vista Group Research Library/Autolite press photo

Few people know that Mario Andretti caught "salt fever" in the mid 1960s when he drove a fastback Mustang for sponsor Autolite. Thrilled more with the parachute than the speed, the Indy 500 winner pulled the parachute on every run no matter how fast or slow he was going, making more work for his crew as the low-speed runs saw the "laundry" drag along the ground and collect salt crystals that needed to be washed out before the next run.

car would set a new international Class B record of 357 miles per hour. Ed Iskenderian personally spun wrenches on his son Ronnie and Jerry Spotts' '62 Corvette. The "cam father" was impressed by the boy's ability to boost the existing record by 30 mph on their first trip to the salt.

A bureaucratic bungle occurred when Utah state officials blindly sold 640 acres on the Bonneville Salt Flats basin that included a portion of the speedway. The new owners filed a court injunction and the racers were barred from crossing part of the speedway. The state eventually repurchased the land at a cost to Utah taxpayers of \$14,400 for desert property they had sold for \$1,600.

«1968»

Rain finally caught up with the racers after 20 years. The original dates were rained out and Bonneville II was rescheduled for October 21–25 through the Herculean efforts of SCTA's all volunteer staff. Of the original 140, only 57 returned to set 19 new records.

The crown prince of salty delights, Bill Burke, one of three men (along with Ak Miller and Jim Lindsley) who raced at Bonneville since the 1949 beginning, reflected on the past two decades saying, "This event belongs to each one of us who participates in any way . . . each year I look to Bonneville with greater desire, deeper respect and more admiration, and I hope each of you does the same."

«1969»

BSA, Triumph and Kawasaki muddied the amateur waters in 1969 by offering bonus money for anyone who snagged a record with their brand. The extra bikes clogged up the staging lanes to the point that racers thought it was a bike meet to which cars had been invited.

Entries were so numerous at the 21st annual Speed Week that wait times in line were longer and translated into fewer runs overall. The salt was in excellent shape, so most didn't mind the wait to assail the thin black nine-mile line.

Whether you brought a bulky Hudson Hornet or the fastest car of the meet, you were made to feel welcome. Bystanders marveled and asked, "How did LeVan Prothero's production Camaro manage to run more than 200 miles per hour?"

A decade of radical transformation brought great changes in engines, techniques, body styles and of course, an explosion of new faces.

«1970»

[The Blue Flame Rocket Car]

Rolling into town for the 22nd Annual Speed Week racers found a new paved two-lane road that extended out onto the salt ending just short of the SCTA registration trailer. SCTA formed Bonneville National, Inc. (BNI) to focus specifically on producing the annual Speed Week. Administration of the salt was transferred to the Utah State Department of Parks and Recreation through a Special Land Use Permit from the BLM. The new overseers were enthusiastic supporters of BNI, which would seem rather unusual for bureaucrats.

Of the 300 entries, 170 were motorcycles, lured again by the promise of cash for records by the various manufacturers. On the high side, the week ended with 27 new record holders. On the low side, three chilling crashes resulted in one man making the ultimate sacrifice for his sport. Noel Black, driving the twin-engine B&N Automotive streamliner "Motion I" had run 352 mph on Monday, but on his Tuesday morning return run while clocking 380 miles per hour, the car wiggled, slid, lifted into the air and disintegrated. Black did not survive the night.



Courtesy John Sprenger

Noel Black and Bert Peterson built "Motion I"—nicknamed the "Rhinoceros" due to its odd-placed forward engine—to challenge the Goldenrod record. After demonstrating excellent potential, the car crashed at 380 mph killing driver Black in a spectacular crash.

Fred "put your foot in it" Larsen and Don Cummins's snappy little streamliner choked down a 265-cid V8 Chevy block to a 120 inch V4 that easily obliterated the existing Class E streamliner record of 128 mph by recording a 227 miles-per-hour record—115 miles per hour over the old record!

Ak Miller led a merry band of Chaffey College kids to a Class D/Production record of 173 miles per hour driving the fully accredited class project Mustang.

Don Vesco became the talk of the salt after exploding a rear tire at 250 miles per hour in his twin Yamaha streamliner and came back two weeks later all patched up and nailed the world land motorcycle speed record running 251.924 mph.

America was in world news again on October 23, 1970 when former test astronaut Gary Gabelich became the "World's Fastest Man" driving the rocket-powered "Blue Flame" to a 622.407 mph record in the flying mile. The feat was bigger news overseas because Gabelich was the first to exceed the 1,000 kilometer-per-hour barrier at 1,001.639 KPH.



Landspeed Productions Research Library/  
Bob Higbee Photo

When it came to coaxing horsepower out of small block Chevrolets, no one was better at it than Fred Larsen and Don Cummins. The pair set numerous national and world records over the years that pushed the car to speed in excess of 300 mph. Larsen, a retired Navy chief petty officer, and Cummins, another retired Navy man, from Southern California, joined forces with Lynn Yakel to apply aerodynamic aircraft design to a race car. In 1967 the team obliterated the 248-mph international Class D record held by Rudolph Caracciola driving a supercharged Mercedes Grand Prix car in 1939. They managed to set eight FIA records with a top speed of 275 mph. The car later went on to become the world's fastest 3-liter car establishing a flying-mile FIA record of 310 mph.

The Americans wouldn't come to know it for another dozen years, but in 1982 the world record would shift overseas for more than three decades, unthinkable at the time. . .

Next issue: *The second generation shows up on the starting line.*  
—Louise Ann Noeth



# Book Reviews

## The First American Grand Prix: The Savannah Auto Races, 1908–1911

by Tanya A. Bailey

McFarland & Company (May 2014)

McFarlandpub.com/ 800-253-2187

228 pages, 7" x 10" softcover

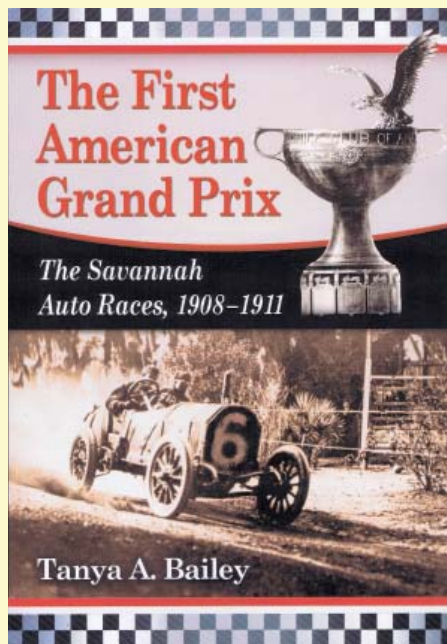
105 photos, 4 maps, appendix, notes,  
bibliography, index

Price: \$39.95

ISBN-e: 978-1476615226

ISBN-10: 0786476974

ISBN-13: 978-0786476978



In 1908, 1910, and 1911, Savannah, Georgia, served as the host city for the running of the first three races for the Grand Prize for the Gold Cup of the Automobile Club of America (A.C.A.). In 1911, the city was also the host for the William K. Vanderbilt, Jr. Cup race, the first time that the two events were held together and the inaugural running of the Cup outside Long Island, New York, where it had been held since 1904. In *The First American Grand Prix: The Savannah Auto Races, 1908–1911*, Tanya Bailey, the owner and curator of the Great Savannah Races Museum, provides a

detailed look at these four events along with their supporting events.

For each of these events, Bailey provides a detailed listing of the drivers participating in any of the events being held during the race meeting. These brief biographies are full of the sort of detail that comes from considerable research, the sort of digging and dogged determination that tends to be reflected in the pages of the book. The effort put forth on the part of the city of Savannah for the 1908 and subsequent race meetings is well-researched and adds much to our knowledge of this too often overlooked aspect of automobile racing during this era.

*The First American Grand Prix: The Savannah Auto Races, 1908–1911*, is profusely illustrated, there being more than 100 photographs, almost all being well produced and, more importantly, well-placed in the text. This profusion of images makes the relative scarcity of maps all the more puzzling. That there are so few maps of the courses used for the Grand Prize races—only that for the 1908 event is provided (p. 126)—is odd given that the course used for the 1913 and 1914 motorcycle races is shown (p. 202), along with maps for earlier horse racing and bicycle racing tracks (pp. 8-9). Having maps of the March 1908 course and that used during 1910 and 1911 would have been useful to many readers.

Although Bailey provides an excellent narrative of what Savannah did to prepare for the A.C.A. Grand Prize races, her discussion regarding the larger issue of the problems between the Automobile Club of America and the American Automobile Association leaves something to be desired, unfortunately. However, it is a fault she seems to share with many others when it comes to the relationship that existed between the A.C.A. and the A.A.A. during this period. It is important to realize that the A.C.A. was not only one of the original member clubs of the A.A.A. when it was formed in Chicago in 1902—the club providing many of the leaders and committee members of the A.A.A. in the following years—but also that the A.C.A. played an important role in the creation of the A.A.A. in the months leading to its formation in March 1902. Nor was the A.C.A. formed in 1899 “to act as the official representative of the United States at international racing events,” something which came about much later. That Bailey so badly misconstrues much of the controversy between the A.C.A. and the A.A.A. in 1908 is surprising, puzzling,

and unfortunate given the apparent level of her research effort, marring what would otherwise be an excellent book.

Along with the earlier work of the late Dr. Julian K. Quattlebaum, M.D., *The Great Savannah Races of 1908–1910–1911* (first published in 1957 by the R.L. Bryan Company of Columbia, South Carolina, and then reissued in 1983 and 2011 with a new introduction as *The Great Savannah Races* by Brown Thrasher Press, an imprint of the University of Georgia Press), Bailey’s *The First American Grand Prix: The Savannah Auto Races, 1908–1911*, belongs on the bookshelf of anyone interested in automobile racing in the early years of the Twentieth Century.

—H. Donald Capps

## MotorBinder: Classic photographs from the golden age of motor racing

by Roy Spencer

MotorBinder (2014)

motorbinder.com

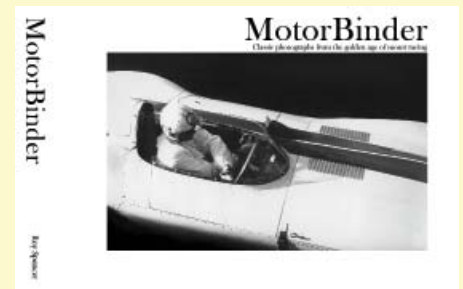
321 pages, 10.75" x 8.25" softcover

180 b/w, 30 color photos

Price \$69

ISBN-10: 0615970591

ISBN-13: 978-0615970592



This publisher’s image includes the book’s spine, which is where the author’s name appears. —Ed.

With no danger of being accused of exaggeration, the lives of multiple generations of Spencer men have been defined by the automobile since the time they were referred to as “those new-fangled machines.”

The first automotively-oriented Spencer was LeRoy. He worked as a test engineer for the Moline Automobile Company. Moline’s cars were referred to as Dreadnoughts for they truly lived up to the company slogan, “The car of unflinching service” and prevailed regularly on reliability runs and contests of the era. LeRoy moved from Moline, Illinois to San Francisco and into the executive ranks when he accepted the manager’s position of

Earl C. Anthony's Packard distributorship. In turn that brought him to the attention of Packard Motor Company which subsequently hired him. Upon retiring from Packard as executive vice-president, he returned to San Francisco and acquired, with his son Bev, an in-town Buick dealership they named Spencer Buick.

Without doubt Bev had inherited the car gene but where the dealership was work (and the bread-and-butter), what really lit his fires were sports cars and road racing. Bev sired, with his wife Josephine, his own pit crew too; five lads and two lasses. More later regarding eldest son Richard. Son Roy is the author of this historically-significant and beautifully-produced book with the unusual title *MotorBinder*.

It is the photos that motivated the book and the preponderance of them, as the credits clearly show, were shot by the late Gordon Martin. Martin (whom your reviewer knew, but certainly not as well as the Spencer clan) was *The San Francisco Chronicle's* respected and esteemed auto writer as was clearly indicated with these words in *The Chronicle* about Martin following his 2001 death: "Gordon Martin wrote with the same grace, speed and precision of the cars he admired."

Where the auto was concerned, Martin was equal parts enthusiast and professional. Between attending road races, camera in hand, and reporting on the affairs of the automotive business, his and Bev Spencer's paths crossed repeatedly. The friendship that formed grew to include the entire family as demonstrated by the fact that eldest son Richard Spencer oversaw Martin's care as ill-health set in during the decade after Martin retired. And it was Richard whom Gordon Martin named executor of his estate which led to the discovery in the basement of Martin's home of the photos, negatives and proof sheets—all carefully labeled, organized, and stored in binders, hence the origin of the *MotorBinders* title for this book that features Gordon Martin's photos.

Spencer Buick was an active downtown-San Francisco dealership for only twenty-odd years but it is those very years that now are referred to as the golden age for sports car road racing. Bev Spencer was an avid enthusiast as well as a team owner. He also was a stickler for presentation. Team Spencer, as we would call it these days, was one of the very first to sport matching, always clean equipage and uniformed personnel.

Spencer's racing machines weren't average either. A few he acquired from Briggs Cunningham. Phil Hill was among Spencer's friends and he even inveigled Hill to sort out one of his race cars—you'll have to discover which one and why for yourself. The photos and extended captions give the reader a front row vantage point at Sebring, Santa Barbara, Riverside, Laguna Seca, Hillsborough and other famed venues during the 1950s and '60s.

Be you a motorsport enthusiast or a bit more "devoted" (as in those of you who are part of this organization's reviving international motorsports section), this is a book you will go back to frequently both for the images (each carefully scanned and cleaned before being printed large, one to a page on archival paper) and the extended captions telling the story behind each. The high-quality binding ensures that you will be able to look again and again too.

An interesting aside it would be remiss not to mention here was unearthed by our editor *Rubén Verdés*. Author and publisher Roy Spencer engaged the social media site Kickstarter to help fund the book's publication. According to Kickstarter, 285 responded with \$17,083 to the "invite" to contribute as backers. In return each was promised, depending upon "level" of support, a "thank you" ranging from mini- or inkjet-prints, a copy of the book, 1950s pit passes, or sets consisting of various multiple items from the foregoing, something for book-authoring SAH members to consider for future projects, eh?

—Helen V Hutchings

#### Cunningham:

#### **The Passion, The Cars, The Legacy**

by *Richard Harman*

Dalton Watson Fine Books (Aug. 2013)

daltonwatson.com

844 pages, 8.75" x 12" hardcover

867 b/w, 676 color photos, index, bibliography, 14 appendices, 2 vols each w/ dust jackets in both slip- and carrying cases Price \$350

ISBN-10: 1854432605

ISBN-13: 978-1854432605

*This book won the 2014 Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award, English Language. —Ed.*

**I**ts 15-pound weight grabs your attention from the outset. Then you open the heavy-board printed carrying case only to discover another printed board box, the custom slip

case. You slide each dust jacketed book from the case, then carefully set the dust jackets aside and see that each hardbound volume is foil embossed. You pick up the first volume and begin looking and reading what author Richard Harman and publisher Dalton Watson Fine Books have created to tell of American sportsman Briggs Swift Cunningham.

As you will discover, the table of contents goes a long way toward indicating Harman's approach. The opening chapter describes Cunningham's life 1907–2003, under year-by-year subheads. The second chapter describes car-by-car by serial number subheads, the approximately 50 produced bearing his name, followed by three chapters enumerating vehicles owned by Cunningham, both racing and road cars. A brief four-page chapter deals with the modern-day Larry Black recreation of a Cunningham-inspired car, and the final chapter profiles just shy of 70 of those who drove regularly for Team Cunningham over the years. Volume two concludes with appendices containing race histories as well as reproductions of Cunningham car registers, correspondence and shipping documents.

Those early documents enabled Harman to begin each individual car's provenance, but then he obviously expended much additional effort to follow the trail and research each car, owner-by-owner, in order to arrive at its most recent whereabouts and ownership. In his introduction he explained how his interest had been spawned by the gift in his youth of a Dinky toy CR-5, how he'd then followed Cunningham's Le Mans attempts and then how, decades later, a visit to the Collier Collection in Florida inspired him to write this book.

Yet, even with its comprehensiveness, number of words and images—and despite Harman writing that "*All the people who remember Briggs Cunningham that I have met, talked to and corresponded with, do not have one bad word to relate about the man.*"—your reviewer senses a missing element.



Jay Leno interviews author Harman on "Jay's Book Club" on YouTube.

Perhaps it is because Harman never personally knew his subject or perhaps it's simply because of what's often referred to as "British reserve." Whatever the cause, personal anecdotes conveying the nature, humanity and graciousness of Briggs Cunningham, the director of his Costa Mesa museum John Burgess, and others are "in absentia."

To gain more understanding and perspective, there is a 1993-published book by the late Dean Batchelor and Al Bochroch, titled *Cunningham: The Life and Cars of Briggs Swift Cunningham*. Although out of print, it is worth the effort to seek it out from SAH-member old-car-book dealers such as Logan Gray (see *SAH Journal* No. 268, "Book: Lost and Found"), Frank Barrett, Tom Warth, and others. As brief example, the authors recounted Cunningham's first wife, Lucie Cunningham Warren, telling them that, "Briggs was a guy with complete concentration. It didn't matter what it was. When he took up golf, he practiced morning, noon, and

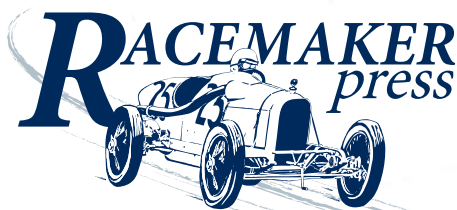
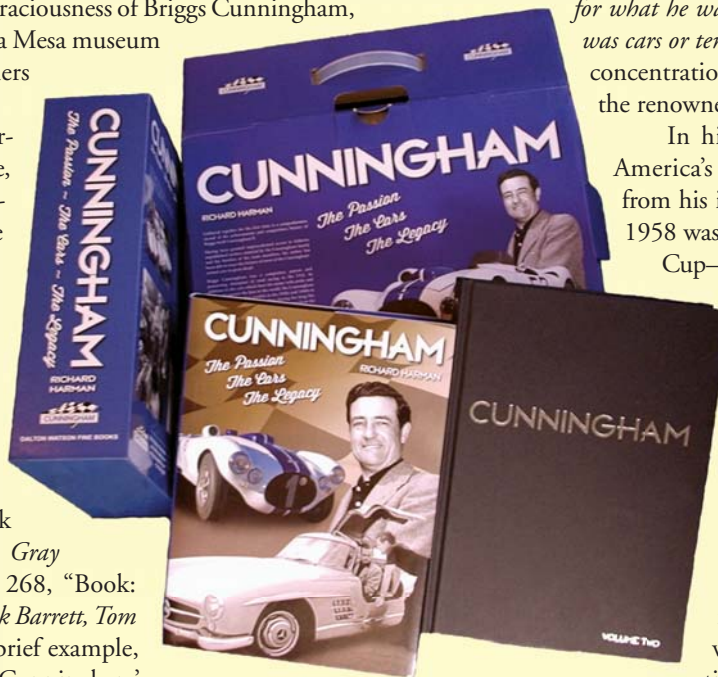
night until he got down to a four-handicap and won the club championship. It was the same with tennis, and he wound up playing a beautiful game... He was able to shut absolutely everything out of his mind except for what he wanted to concentrate on. It didn't matter if it was cars or tennis or sailing." That sailing dedication and concentration led to Briggs competing in and winning the renowned America's Cup in 1958.

In his commentary regarding Cunningham's America's Cup activities, Harman does include—from his interview with Denise McCluggage who in 1958 was a journalist assigned to cover the America's Cup—this insight into Cunningham's sportsmanship: After defeating the competition by significant margins in the first two of four races, "Briggs told her that he had asked the organizers of the [America's Cup] contest if it was possible for the two crews to swap boats for the remaining two races."

The reality is the major contribution to the body of knowledge of this new book *Cunningham: The Passion, The Cars, The Legacy* is the recorded provenance, resulting from the author's research, of each individual vehicle. So, while your reviewer has mentioned a prior (now out of print) book—the

key words here are "contribute to and expand the body of knowledge" for, after all, isn't that an SAH collective and individual goal?

—Helen V Hutchings



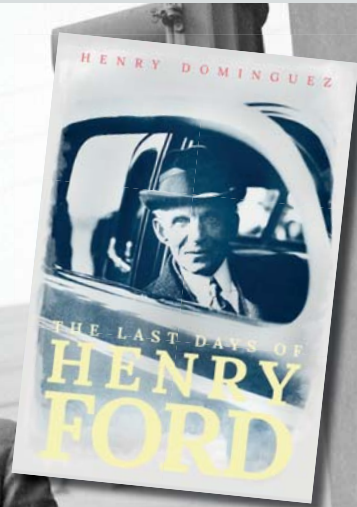
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# THE LAST DAYS OF HENRY FORD



## Shenanigans:

### Lifting the Hood on General Motors

by Arnold O'Byrne

Londubh Books, Dublin, Ireland (May 2014)

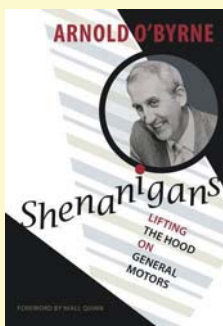
www.londubh.ie

216 pages, 6.1" x 8.9" softcover

Price: €14.99

ISBN-10: 1907535403

ISBN-13: 978-1907535406



*Shenanigans: Lifting the Hood on General Motors* is the autobiography of Arnold O'Byrne, who headed the internal audit of Vauxhall and all GM component operations in the British Isles and the Republic of Ireland. This was followed by fifteen years as Managing Director of Opel Ireland until he concluded his career as President of GMAC Commercial Mortgage Bank of Europe and Chairman of the servicing operation.

Internal audit was far more than a dry financial review. A sample of some of his encounters provides insight to an auditor's role. Uncovering supplier kickbacks involved following trails, some of which got awfully close to the top of GM's European operations. O'Byrne knew enough about the product to recognize a vehicle that had extras not consistent with a certain model, only to discover the vehicle was consigned to a senior employee, priced without any of the extras and also missing a build card. Not even GM dealers were immune to his searches that identified the exporting of cars to fictitious owners. Gathering evidence even involved intercepting and pulling over a car hauler to check serial numbers and making house calls on the supposed owners. Unfortunately, someone who might have known what was going on was shot the day before an agreed interview with O'Byrne. He found out how Vauxhall was fudging their internal quality control evaluations and uncovered a drug smuggling operation using GM components, shipped from Spain to the UK.

The mandate for taking over as Managing Director of Opel Ireland was to make it profitable or shut it down. He credits a long-

term sponsorship of the Football Association of Ireland which helped Opel gain market leadership in 1996. The Republic of Ireland had ceased selling Vauxhalls after 1982, concentrating on Opel. Northern Ireland was effectively part of GM's UK distribution and sold Vauxhalls.

As a patriotic Irishman, O'Byrne championed GM investment in Ireland to help reduce high unemployment. He attempted to invite Roger Smith, GM Chairman and CEO through formal channels, but when that failed to elicit a response, he resorted to a personal contact, who made it happen. He had Roger all to himself with no other GM executives present. Arnold even served as chauffeur and fishing companion. In due course, GM's subsidiary Electronic Data Systems (EDS) opened an Irish office providing employment for IT personnel.

What the reader will remember about this book is the fearless nature of O'Byrne, born out of basic integrity. He also would not tolerate bullying, no matter whether the source was senior or not. There is little doubt that he ruffled feathers in his auditing role, but it appears that he developed a sense of immunity. Rather than the typical

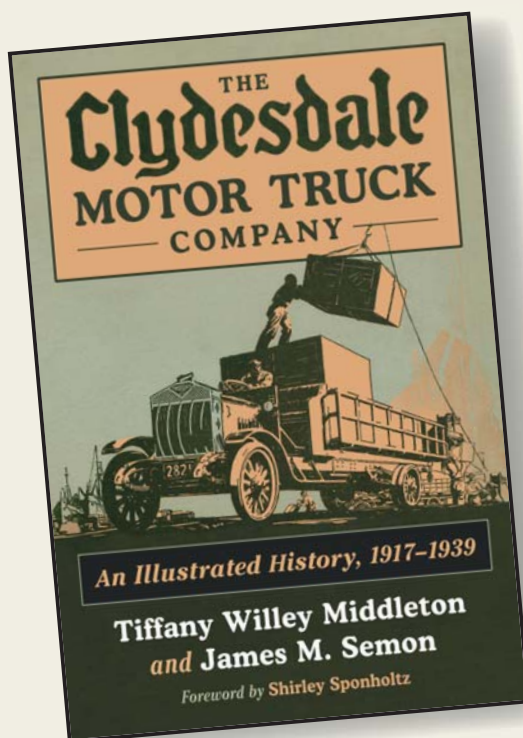
GM rotation among posts, his long term as MD of Ireland was either acknowledgement that only he could handle the tricky political situation or an exile.

Unfortunately some readers will assume that the author embellishes the truth and portrays himself as a savior. However, a fellow GM Managing Director, now also retired, shared the following comment with this reviewer about O'Byrne:

Arnold is a very special guy and the way he depicts himself in his book is pretty much what you get. A hard worker, totally honest, loyal despite all frustrations, in love with soccer, deeply religious, great sense of humour and all that with the heart of a (benevolent) auditor. In his book he vents the frustrations he had to suffer when with GM. He was not the only one, but his book is a good read.

This book is *not* a wholesale critique of GM; instead it is an unvarnished reflection of certain events and people within GM. An automotive researcher may not find historical facts, but instead will gain an understanding of the challenges to keep employees honest and honorable. It is different but well worth reading.

—Louis F. Fourie



The Clydesdale Motor Truck Company existed in Clyde, Ohio, from 1917 until 1939. Its trucks became famous during World War I, and the company introduced an early form of cruise control in its patented "Driver Under the Hood" engine governor. This history also covers Clydesdale's pioneering use of diesel engines. The company's story provides a window into early truck manufacturing and the international trucking landscape, just as the modern industry we recognize today was beginning to emerge.

296 pages \$39.95 softcover (7 x 10)

250 photos, notes, bibliography, index

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**Every Cloud has a Silver Lining:  
The Definitive history of the Rolls-Royce  
Silver Cloud and Bentley S Series including  
Coachbuilt and Continental versions**

by *Davide Bassoli*

Nubes Argentea (2014)

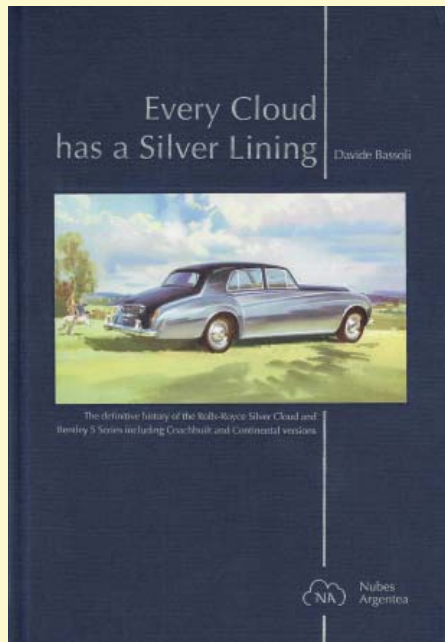
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448 pages, 8.75" x 12.75" hardcover, slipcased  
279 b/w, 344 color photos, 70 drawings, 47  
tables, photo index, 13 appendices

Clothbound price: £150 or \$250 or €180

Leather-bound price: £300 or \$500 or €360

ISBN: 978-8890957109



*This book won the 2014 Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot  
Award, English Language – Award of Distinction.  
—Ed.*

**R**olls-Royce: “The best car in the world.” Author Michael Frostick once commented that the amazing thing isn’t that the assertion was made, but that the world believed it. After all, witness how often the superlative of anything is referred to as the “Rolls-Royce” of that thing; a practice that keeps Rolls-Royce plc’s trademark attorneys endlessly writing “cease and desist” notices to those that actually make that statement in their ads.

So if Rolls-Royce could be thought of as the maker of the best car in the world, which model is the best Rolls-Royce? That question could spark an endless debate, but arguably the most iconic, ubiquitously recognizable Rolls-Royce is the Silver Cloud, produced in three series from 1955 to 1965. There are no shortages of books covering the Silver Cloud and its Bentley peer, the S Series.

But if a book could be a song, then *Every Cloud has a Silver Lining* would be an opera.

Now let’s step back for some perspective. Author *Davide Bassoli* became interested in the Silver Cloud about 20 years ago, and since then he has amassed a great deal of automobilia, became owner of six cars of this type, and is well known in enthusiasts circles as an authority. He heads the Silver Cloud & S Type Register as well as the Section in Italy for the Rolls-Royce Enthusiasts’ Club (RREC). As a native Italian, English is not his mother tongue, yet he has written many articles in numerous publications in both languages, and coauthored the book *Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud I & Bentley S 1 – 50 Years* with *Bernard King* in 2005.

*Every Cloud has a Silver Lining* was self-published and it is Bassoli’s first book as sole author. This has been his labor of love for the last twelve years—and his stated purpose was to produce “a complete reference work for the Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud and Bentley S Series models, with an analysis from historical, technical, stylistic and socio-cultural points of view.” His approach was to treat each of the three series in its own section in the book, with each section covering everything from the design genesis to the detailed listing of coachbuilt variants.

The level of detail at times is simply impressive; for example, there’s a two-page table on page 63 that lists all the British dealers’ first car received, the chassis number, and the color scheme. The *tour de force* in each of these sections has to be the detailed review of each coachbuilt car made, broken down by coachbuilder, starting with a brief history of the firm, and each design produced thereafter listed by design number, with production stats and a picture of an actual car. It must be understood that this model was conceived to carry a standard body, which carried the aforementioned iconic design. However, it was possible to order a chassis from the company and have it bodied by any one of the remaining coachbuilders still in business after WWII. These coachbuilt variants are among the most desirable postwar cars, and this book walks you through the entirety of that history in a detailed and comprehensive way.

Bassoli tapped into his vast collection to find the pictures of these coachbuilt variants, but he also reached out to the community of enthusiasts, and—amazingly—all but one has an illustrating photograph. He graciously acknowledges the support he received, as

well as the one chassis that was not pictured: LBAL14, a 1963 Bentley S 3 Park Ward. Production numbers for some designs were very low, and in quite a few cases only one example was produced, which made finding pictures challenging.

As impressive as the coachbuilt “in the flesh” pictures are, the staggering amount of period pictures will not disappoint either. The text is informed by research taken to the level of reviewing source documentation and interviews with insiders, like Martin Bourne, who, incidentally, designed the four headlight configuration that distinguishes the Silver Cloud III from the earlier two series.

Beyond the three sections, the book has thirteen appendices that cover a wide range of topics, including sales literature, prices, colors offered (complete with high quality color swatches), modifications (since updates were by chassis number, not “model year”), technical specifications, and coachbuilder design illustrations of cars that were never built. There is also an index of photographs sorted by series then by model.

In your hands this book communicates its production quality—from the fidelity of the photographs and the color swatches, to the thick high-quality paper with a ribbon bookmark and a slip case. The printing was limited to 1,000 clothbound (your reviewer’s copy numbered 97 of 1,000) and 30 leather-bound editions. This twelve-year production finished in high-quality printing and materials is not cheap, so this may be a good opportunity to quote F. Henry Royce who said: “the quality remains long after the price has been forgotten.”

If you are an enthusiast of this era of Rolls-Royce and Bentley, especially if you’re and an owner of a Silver Cloud—*possibly with some Grey Poupon in the glove box*—or a Bentley S, then this is your book. However, I would find it hard to believe that any automobile enthusiast wouldn’t enjoy this book—its content and format are not only engaging, but they can also serve as a template to emulate for producing an in-depth marque-specific book. If you’re a member of the RROC or RREC, your club store may still have some copies, or you could order directly from the publisher, Nubes Argentea (Latin for “Silver Cloud”), at their website listed at the top of the review. From the ardent enthusiast to the enthusiast of a fine automotive tome—this book is highly recommended.

—*R. Verdés*



SAH Board, left: Paul Lashbrook, John Marino, Andy Beckman, Tom Jakups, Bob Ebert, Don Capps, Louis Fourie, Patrick Bisson, Ed Garten and John Heitmann

## THE ANNUAL SAH AWARDS

The 46th Annual Meeting of Members & Gala Awards Banquet took place on Friday, October 10th at the Hershey Country Club's Traditions Dining Room during the AACA Eastern Division National Fall Meet (October 8-11), otherwise known as "Hershey" to enthusiasts. The highlight of the evening was the awards presentation. Here are the awards, descriptions and the 2014 recipients, along with the selection committee chairs' presentation comments:

### Richard P. Sarchburg Student Paper Award

*From Peace Officer to Law Enforcement Officer: The Patrol Car and the Professionalization of the Police* by Sara A. Seo, Princeton University.

and

*Reorienting Main Street: The International Meridian Highway Association's 1921 Trip to Mexico* by Amanda N. Johnson, Utah State University.

The Student Paper Award recognizes the best paper by a thesis-level student at an educational institution. The award is accompanied by a cash prize and publication of the paper by the Society. The award was first presented in 2001. It was renamed in 2008 in memory of SAH director, officer and professor Richard P. Sharchburg.

This year we had a very healthy six submissions. After considerable deliberation and discussion, it was decided that we would have two award winners for 2014. They were:

Amanda Johnson, University of Utah. *Reorienting Main Street: The International Meridian Highway Association's 1921 Trip to Mexico*. This paper was a pleasure to read. The author has done a very good research job, and her writing is excellent. I do like her twist on Frederick Jackson Turner's *Frontier Thesis*—the 1920's fascination with the east-west transcontinental routing of highways that swamped out interest in north-south routes (although the Dixie Highway somewhat belies that argument). Her discussion placing the story in the context of Mexican History was also quite good, with kudos to Johnson for her use of primary and secondary sources.

Sarah Seo, Princeton University. *From Peace Officer to Law Enforcement Officer: The Patrol Car and the Professionalization of the Police*.

and again demonstrates the linking power of the automobile in American culture.

—John Heitmann

### James J. Bradley Distinguished Service Award

The Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

*Award presented to a deserving library or archive, or to an individual within such an organization, for the preservation of historic materials relating to motor vehicles of the world.*

*It is named in memory of James J. Bradley, noted curator of the National Automotive History Collection at the Detroit Public Library. The Bradley Award was first presented in 1982.*



Left: Leonard Coombs and Ed Garten

Receiving the award on behalf of the Bentley Historical Library was Leonard A. Coombs, Archivist Emeritus and the Johanna Meijer Magoon Principal Archivist (Retired). In his brief remarks Mr. Coombs encouraged SAH members to make use of the extensive transportation and automotive history resources in the Bentley's collections.

The library was established in 1935 by the Regents of the University of Michigan. Its mission is to serve as the official archives of the university and to document the history of the state of Michigan as well as the activities of its people, organizations and voluntary associations.

Notable within its collections are extensive materials related to automobile industry executives, management personnel, as well as several motor companies' administrative records. Other sections include archival resources related to consumers and marketing focused on the buying and selling of the automobile with trade catalogs and personal papers of Michigan auto dealers;

This paper is simply outstanding. Well written with plenty of archival material from the Vollmer Papers. Where I think this paper is superior is in its significance. What we learn here is how the automobile resulted in new definitions of *individual liberties* and *search and seizure* based on suspicion. It led to police powers that were unprecedented in American history,

collections that pertain to auto industry research and analysis activities and the development of new technologies; resources related to automobile travel including manuscript documentation of early cross-country travel; and other historically relevant collections such as the papers of politicians who worked to pass vehicle emissions and safety standards, journalists, as well as architects and city planners who designed automobile factories and parking structures. Additionally, the rich automotive history collections include extensive published primary sources: Books, serials, and audio recordings that date from the first few decades of the industry. Visual materials contain photo collections and motion picture films that document aspects of the industry including gas stations, auto accidents, and early automobile design models.

—Edward D. Garten

### Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award

#### English Language:

*Cunningham: The Passion, the Cars, the Legacy* by Richard Harman, published by Dalton Watson Fine Books.

ISBN: 978-1854432605

#### Awards of Distinction:

*Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining:*

*The Definitive history of the Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud and Bentley S Series including Coachbuilt and Continental versions*

by Davide Bassoli, published by Nubes Argentea. ISBN: 978-8890957109

and

*Arsenal of Democracy:*

*The American Automobile Industry in World War II* by Charles K. Hyde, published by Wayne State University Press.

ISBN: 978-0814339510

First-rate historical studies are difficult to produce, demanding thorough and original research, clear argument and compelling prose. *Richard Harman's* study of Cunningham accomplishes these goals in a lavishly-produced work published by Dalton Watson, including many rare and useful photographs.

*Davide Bassoli's* exhaustive study of the Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud is clearly an intense labor of love produced in a wonderful format to rival that of its subject.

*Charles K. Hyde's* study of the auto industry in the USA during World War II deals with what some might regard as a well-known topic, but presents its thorough research in a revisionist manner which challenges the usual well-worn clichés.

—J. Douglas Leighton

### Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award

#### Language other than English:

*Farman: De l'aviation à l'automobile*

by Laurent Friry, Claude Rouxel and Sébastien Faurès Fustel de Coulanges, published by E.T.A.I.

ISBN: 978-2726897478

### Award of Distinction:

#### Aerodynamické Automobily:

Československá osobní a sportovní vozidla s aerodynamickými karoseriemi by Marián Šuman-Hreblay, published by Computer Press (Autosalon series). ISBN: 978-8026401667

This year we recognize a new volume in the handsome series published by ETAI recording the classic French automobiles of the interwar period. *Farman: De l'aviation à l'automobile* is a cooperative effort by Claude Rouxel, the principal author, with the participation of Laurent Friry contributing his special knowledge of coachbuilding and Sébastien Faurès Fustel de Coulanges covering motorsports and the well-known exploits of the Farman brothers in the world of the air. It is the first treatment of the marque in a single dedicated work. The Farman was the attempt by an aircraft manufacturer in the post Great War period to translate its new technical proficiency to the automobile. Unlike its more successful competitors, Hispano Suiza and Bentley, it was obliged to give up the effort after an output of barely 400 cars in a dozen years. The book includes the history of the founders in bicycle racing, airplanes and airplane engine production and automotive sales, and their attempted return to air engine design in the run up to the Second World War. A fine presentation of a facet of French automotive history in its heroic times, always a fascinating subject.

The Award of Distinction is presented to Marián Šuman-Hreblay for *Aerodynamické Automobily: Československá osobní a sportovní vozidla s aerodynamickými karoseriemi* published by CPress in Brno. This impressive title graces a slender volume setting out the work of Czech automotive designers who were inspired by Paul Jaray to follow the path of aerodynamics during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Tatra was just one of the firms that benefitted from their work. A selection of prototype photos serves to make real the development process of these innovative cars and the book includes brief biographies of the designers. The committee was fortunate to have the assistance of a Czech speaker for its review but plentiful illustrations make this a worthwhile addition to the library of those among us who are not linguistically inclined.

—Arthur Jones

*The Cugnot Award is presented for the book published during the previous calendar year which represents the most outstanding writing and original research in automotive history. The award is named for Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot, a French Army officer who is generally acknowledged to have built the first self-propelled vehicle. His steam-powered fardier, built in 1769, was designed to be an artillery tractor; its likeness appears on the Society's emblem. The Cugnot Award was first presented in 1972, and the award for books written in a language other than English was first presented in the year 2000. The Award of Distinction in each category recognizes works of exceptional merit.*

### Carl Benz Award

#### A Star Is Reborn:

*Restoring the 1955 LaSalle II Roadster* by Terry V. Boyce, published in *Collectible Automobile*.

ISSN: 0742-812X

*The Benz Award recognizes the periodical article or series published during the previous calendar year which exhibits the most original research and outstanding writing in automotive history. The award is named for Carl Benz, who built the first vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine. Benz's three-wheeled vehicle was built in 1885 in Mannheim, Germany. The Benz Award was first presented in 1982. From 1972 until 1981, awards for periodical articles were made as part of the Cugnot Award.*



Terry Boyce (left) and Dennis David

This year, we had a total of ten submissions which were accepted for the 2014 Benz Award; one was held over for the 2015 award due to its publication date.

The 2014 Benz Award goes to the story of a one-off show car that survived the most devastating of fates, being scrapped in a Detroit wrecking yard and spending 35 years in pieces, only to be recovered and undergo a quarter century-long restoration. Today, nearly sixty years after its debut at the GM Motorama, the 1955 La Salle II roadster is a vehicle that still captivates enthusiasts worldwide. Its story was told with the researching expertise of a seasoned professional and illustrated with original GM drawings and photography, as well as photos of the restoration back to its original splendor.

The winner of the 2014 Benz Award is *A Star Is Reborn: Restoring the 1955 LaSalle II Roadster* by Terry V. Boyce, which was published in the June, 2013 issue of *Collectible Automobile*.

Special thanks to committee members Paul Lashbrook, Stanton Lyman, Keith Mathiowetz, Bill Warner and especially to Dennis David, who agreed to fill in for me this year and deliver the award.

—Donald Keefe

### Friend of Automotive History Award

#### Jay Leno

*A person who has exhibited outstanding service in, and made outstanding contributions to, the field of automotive history may be named a Friend of Automotive History. This award is not limited to members of the Society. It was first presented in 1983.*

The 2014 Friend of Automotive History Award winner is a bit of a celebrity—some of you may recognize him from his starring role as Detective Tony Costas in the 1989 film *Collision Course*, but more likely you know him from his Emmy Award winning turn as host of NBC's *The Tonight Show*.

Jay Leno's contributions to automotive history are many, but few are more visible in their love of automobiles and the history behind them. He embraces the automobile as living history by using and driving his collection. *Tonight Show* staffers never knew what would be parked in Mr. Leno's parking spot from day to day—it could be a three-wheel Morgan or a Duesenberg Model J.

Mr. Leno could not receive the award in person—he is overseas in Afghanistan entertaining our troops as part of a USO tour. The Southern California branch of the SAH is working on arranging a ceremony to present Mr. Leno with the award when he returns. President Heitmann has met Mr. Leno personally and I'd like to invite him to add some additional remarks.

—Andrew Beckman

I would add that Jay's website contains numerous videos of historically significant vehicles that are discussed with real acumen and historical context. Further, Jay has a monthly column in *Popular Mechanics* that deals with auto history to a broad audience. And Jay supports young people going into automobile restoration with a scholarship at McPherson College in Kansas. Finally, his humility, intimate knowledge about auto history, and willingness to spread the word about the technological significance of the automobiles in his collection is noteworthy to say the least.

—John Heitmann

### E.P. Ingersoll Award

Not awarded for 2014.

*The Ingersoll Award recognizes excellence in presentation of automotive history in other than print media. E.P. Ingersoll was editor and proprietor of The Horseless Age, the first motoring magazine in the United States, and was instrumental in organizing the first vehicle trade organization. The Ingersoll Award was first presented in 1992.*

### Richard and Grace Brigham Award

Not awarded for 2014.

*The Brigham Award is presented to the periodical which exhibits the best overall treatment of automotive history over all issues published during the previous calendar year. A publication may receive the Brigham Award only once in a five-year period. Mrs. Brigham and her late husband, both founding members of the Society, started the Society's newsletter, now SAH Journal, and magazine, Automotive History Review. The Brigham Award was first presented in 1990.*

