

Fast Ladies

Female Racing Drivers 1888 to 1970

by Jean FranCois Bouzanque

Veloce [in US: MBI, www.motorbooks.com], 2009. 176 p. Hardcover: ISBN 978-1 84584 225 3. \$59.96/£29.99

This is the English translation of a book first published in French (ETAI, 2007). Everyone knows of the Bentley *Boys* but there were scores of Bentley *Girls* too, and female drivers on every other marque known to *man*. This has been a wildly neglected subject in the literature and even this book scratches only the surface by focusing only on European drivers (with two American exceptions) and on only 49 of them in detail. From point-to-point races to record events

and rallies to Grand Prix races, women were involved from the very beginning of the sport. The many, many photos, especially of the earliest days, illustrate something the text only glosses over: the sheer size of the machinery vs. the diminutive size of the drivers. People—men and women—were generally of slighter build then and if it was a feat for an athletic man to wrestle a large heavy car on skinny tires that don't like to track straight into submission, imagine how difficult it was for a woman to muster that kind of physical strength.

Told in chronological order, subdivided into decades, the book advances its story by relating the drivers' biographies (some quite unsatisfyingly short), making reference as needed to the larger societal issues and the restrictive conditions of a male-dominated sport.

Since the whole purpose of the book is to introduce a little know subject to the reader it is not helpful that the photo captions do not consistently identify people in a like manner, say left to right.



In quite few cases there is no way to match names to faces unless you already know who's who. The lack of an index is a severe shortcoming but at least there is an alphabetical listing of select drivers and some of the events they drove in.

Another book on the subject is planned and hopefully it will go even further than this worthwhile effort. **BD**

The Big Spenders

by Lucius Beebe

Axios Press [www.axiospress.com], 2009. 510 p. Softcover: ISBN 978-1604190069. \$15

In the next issue we will cover the Pebble Beach concours in depth. In its early days, one name that was inseparable from the event was that of bon vivant, concours judge since 1954, and RROC member Lucius Morris Beebe (b. 1902). So much was he seen as emblematic of all that Pebble Beach was about then that upon his death in 1966 a trophy was established in his name (first awarded to Robert Davies' 1934 P II). In 1959 he summed up the concours as "an event whose social implications are second only to those of the San Francisco Opera." The



erstwhile newspaper editor and author traveled in his own railroad car, lived large in every way, and cherished his reputation for making bombastic and pithy pronouncements. This subtitle of this book, his last and thought by many his best, says it all: "The Epic Story of the Rich Rich, the Grandees of America and the Magnificoes, and How They Spent Their Fortunes." In it he paints a colorful picture of vast excesses and eccentricities that would nowadays be either impossible to pull off or at least be derided as unacceptably insensitive and politically incorrect. Money was made and spent differently in those days, as was the mindset of what Beebe calls the *rich rich*. A Big Spender himself, Beebe looks upon these foibles with fond amusement rather than scorn—no social critique this—and presents the subjects of his treatise as worthy representatives "of the lost art of being rich." Such

sentiments, especially when clothed in often long-winded and puffed up prose require a reader's willing suspension of criticism and impatience. For better or worse, the things he writes about—no matter in how exaggerated a fashion—*did* happen and they *are* entertaining. Naturally, Rolls-Royces play a recurring role. **BD**

While Beebe ("Mr. New York") was living the high life—in 1939 he found himself on the cover of *Life* magazine—the world around him was rebuilding itself after the ravages of the Great Depression. At first glance, the title of the next book could be a headline from today's newspapers:

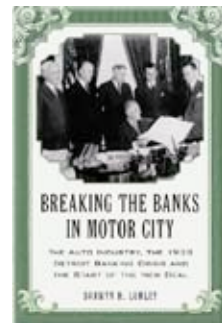
Breaking the Banks in Motor City

The Auto Industry, the 1933 Detroit Banking Crisis and the Start of the New Deal

by Darwyn H. Lumley

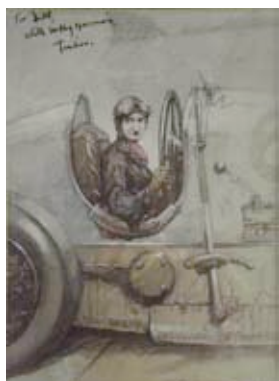
McFarland [www.mcfarlandpub.com, 800.253.2187], 2009. 202 p. Softcover: ISBN 978-0786444175.

\$35



Lumley, an SAH member and past president, tells the relatively unknown story of how failed decision making by automobile industry leaders (in their dual role as officers of the banking group)

contributed to a banking crisis that culminated in the Fed temporarily closing all Michigan and then all US banks in 1933. Those events are connected to today's headlines inasmuch as the 1933 crises ushered in changes in the ways government involved itself in the running of the economy. This complicated story is admirably well condensed into a relatively short treatise. All but 2 of the only 11 photos (b/w) show some of the various people involved. Chapter notes, bibliography, index. **BD**



A drawing by F. Gordon Crosby of his friend Elsie "Bill" Wisdom (1904-1972).



Among Beebe's several RRs was this 1961 SC III in "Creamy Caramel and Harlands Maroon," bought new by him and the last one he owned. At the Oct. 2009 Barrett-Jackson auction in Las Vegas the 28,000-mile car fetched \$53K.

New and Noteworthy

Rolls-Royce Piston Aero Engines: A Designer Remembers by A.A. Rubbra (Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust, 2008. PO Box 31, Moor Lane, Derby DE24 8BJ, England. 163 p., 127 illos. Softcover. ISBN 978 1 872922 00 3. £8 or £12.50 for non-members) At last a reprint of this 1990 personal account of the author's work in the Derby Engine Design Office in the inter-war years. A most inspiring Introduction by a junior colleague shows just big a figure Rbr—"Technical Director – All Divisions"—cut. Many interesting illustrations.

Axial Compressor Development at RR Derby 1946–1962 by A. McKenzie (Rolls-Royce Heritage Trust, 2009. PO Box 31, Moor Lane, Derby DE24 8BJ, England. 137 p., 65+ illos. Softcover. ISBN 978 1 872922 42 3. £15 or £20 for non-members) From the Avon to the Spey this rather technical book [first published 2001] summarizes this difficult concept with many references to aero- and thermodynamics. Overize; lots of graphs and charts.



Three To Go Mario! by Andy Evans (Racemaker Press [www.racemaker.com], 2009. 29 p. Hardcover. ISBN 10 0 9766683 7 8. \$25) Children's Book. Next year will see the first US team in Formula 1 in decades. Prepare your kids—and yourself—for this history-making event by reliving the race that allowed the first American driver to win a Grand Prix on home soil, Mario Andretti. The author/illustrator (who already then suffered from Cerebral Palsy) attended that 1977 race in Long Beach. Beautifully typeset, illustrated, and bound.

50 Years of Bentley's V8 Engine

A SIR HENRY ROYCE

MEMORIAL FOUNDATION LECTURE

Dr. Ulrich Eichhorn, Member of the Board for Engineering at Bentley Motors, presented on January 22nd a lecture on the above topic at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMEcheE) in Westminster. The full presentation is now available at www.imeche.org/playback.

With contributions from several senior figures involved with the engine's evolution over the last 50 years, the talk describes how a well thought out concept and its careful execution have carried the design through to 2009 while other contemporaries have long since fallen by the wayside. The talk details how this iconic design continues to power a 4th generation of luxury motorcars half a century later, having gained power and torque increases of over 150% through a combination of displacement increases, fuel injection, turbocharging and intercooling while at the same time remaining compliant with the latest European and US emissions standards. Modern-day variants of this V8 power the company's powerful 530 bhp Bentley Brooklands coupe, the Arnage, and the Azure convertible models in 2009.

Since joining Bentley Motors in 2003, as engineering director Eichhorn has overseen the development of the potential of the Bentley V8 including the introduction of the engine in its most potent



Bentley Motors

Dr. Ulrich Eichhorn

form in the 6¾L Bentley Brooklands coupe that generates 1050 Nm/774 lb ft of torque at 3250 rpm and is capable of offering a top speed of 184 mph and a 0–60mph sprint time of just 5 seconds. He has also worked on the launch of the Continental GT, design and development of Flying Spur; and the concept, design and development of Continental GTC, Azure, Brooklands and Continental Speed models.

Originating from Obensburg, Germany, Eichhorn began his career at Ford in 1993 where he worked his way from Development Engineer to Manager of Vehicle and Chassis Engineering.

In 2000 he moved to Volkswagen AG where as Executive Director Research his main project was alternative powertrains and fuels, including "SunFuel," the W12 Sportscar and the 24-hour world record.



Bentley Motors

The Brooklands V8.