

BOOK REVIEW

DRIVING FORCE: AUTOMOBILES AND THE NEW AMERICAN CITY, 1900 - 1930

by Darryl Holter with Stephen Gee

Hardcover, 224 pages, 150+ illustrations
9" by 9", 2023, Angel City Press
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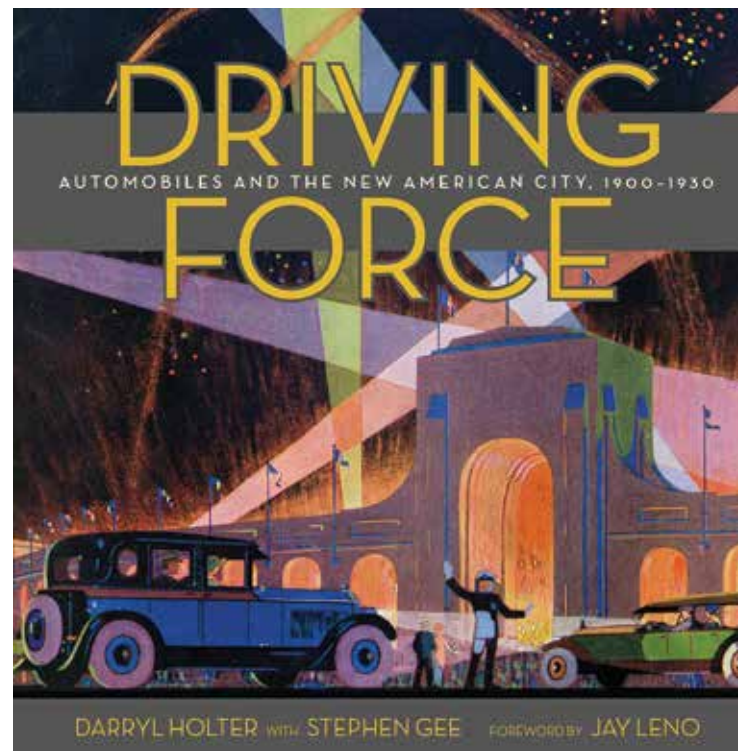
Published earlier this year and of interest to Southern California Region members is *Driving Force: Automobiles and the New American City, 1900 - 1930*. The book explores the pivotal role dealers played in the acceptance, availability and popularity of motor vehicles during the first third of the 20th century and how the automobile influenced the growth of Los Angeles.

A 1927 quote from Packard dealer Earle C. Anthony summarizes the automobile's impact on American society this way: "There is perhaps no other one thing which is such an integral part of the twentieth century mode of life as the automobile." And while most historians focus on a specific marque or automotive personality, it was the dealers who served as the key link between the automobile

manufacturers in the Midwest and the customer on the west coast, addressing numerous obstacles to ownership.

The cost of ownership was addressed through creative financing, provided by dealers long before banks were interested in these types of loans. Operational challenges were met by dealers who offered repair and maintenance services. Dealers generated interest in the automobile through marketing and promotional efforts such as annual car shows and were quick to recognize the importance of the female driver, making up 20% of all Los Angeles drivers by 1920. Dealers even had input on automobile design and styling, communicating the wants and needs of the customer back to the manufacturer.

Important area dealers including Earle C. Anthony and Don Lee are covered, names well known in automotive circles well beyond Los Angeles because of their influence on the automobile industry. Quotes and period articles are referenced, chronicling the rapid growth of automobile sales in the area with Southern California leading the nation in automobiles per capita by 1923. Historic photographs of buildings, landmarks and the cars themselves round out the story of early automotive life in Los Angeles. ●



MEMBER PASSING

PETER W. MULLIN

January 14, 1941 - September 18, 2023

Southern California region and CCCA member Peter W. Mullin passed away September 18 at his home in Big Sur. A California native, he attended the University of California at Santa Barbara where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and later founded Mullin Consulting, M Financial Group and Mullin Barens Sanford Financial. His business success allowed him to give back to the community through philanthropic contributions and by sharing his leadership expertise, serving on the boards of numerous arts and education institutions throughout California.

As automobile enthusiasts, we knew Peter for his passion for French automobiles produced during the first half of the 20th century. It was the physical beauty and mechanical refinement that Peter Mullin appreciated, assembling an unmatched collection of French automotive finery including the best from Delage, Delahaye, Hispano-Suiza, Renault, Talbot-Lago and Voisin. Mullin had a special fondness for Bugatti which spanned the varied contributions of all Bugatti family members—automobiles, furniture, sculpture and fine art. Three noteworthy Bugattis in the collection included the 1925 Type 22 Brescia "Lake Car", carefully preserved as when rescued from Lake Maggiore, the Type 57 Atlantic and the Type 64 chassis which served as the foundation for a body design competition for students of ArtCenter College of Design.

Peter was eager to share his automotive passion and opened his collection and home to the Southern California Region on numerous occasions, most memorably in 2007 when 350 CCCA members from across the country marveled at his collection as part of that year's annual meeting. In 2010, he opened the Mullin Automotive Museum where he displayed the best of his collection in a setting mimicking the 1930s Grand Palais salons in Paris. One year later at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Best of Show honors were awarded to his 1935 Voisin C-25 Aerodyne.

By displaying cars at events and museums around the world, Peter Mullin served as an ambassador for the Classic Car hobby, cultivating an awareness and appreciation for French automotive styling. He shared his knowledge and experience in numerous books about these cars and served on the boards of the Petersen Automotive Museum and ArtCenter College of Design, and was a past president of the American Bugatti Club.

He is survived by his wife Merle, who will continue the Mullin tradition of cultivating a passion for French automotive artistry. ●

FINDINGS UPDATE

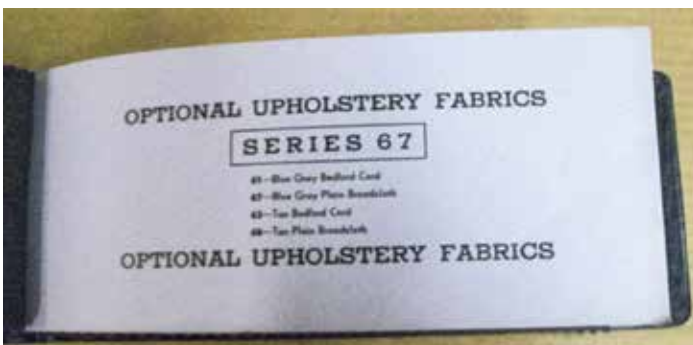
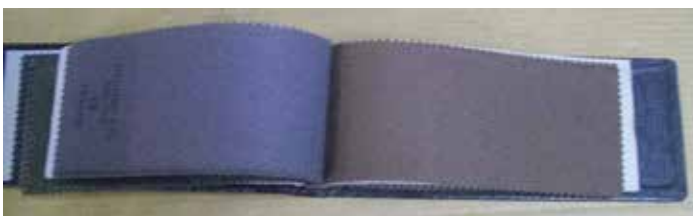
Cadillac Upholstery book



The 1941 edition

SoCal member Paul Imrisek responded to the "Another eBay Find" article (a Cadillac Fleetwood Fabrics dealer book) in our last issue with another interesting find. Paul shared these images which reveal a difference between the two books. While its cover also states "Fleetwood Fabrics," the inside pages include swatches and color choices for Cadillac's 67 Series, which were not included in the 1941 book.

I'm guessing Paul's discovery is for the 1942 model year since Cadillac only produced the 67 Series for the 1941 and 1942 model



What appears to be the 1942 edition

years. In Cadillac circles, there is ongoing discussion about whether or not the 67 Series was considered part of the Fleetwood range. In the Cadillac-LaSalle Club's 1991 Annual Edition (the entire publication dedicated to the popular 1941 Cadillac model year), Ron VanGelderren wrote an article entitled, "The Series Sixty-Seven: Fisher or Fleetwood?"

He points out that both the Cadillac 67 Series and the Buick Limited 90 Series shared the 139-wheelbase chassis, stating "Buick shared its body with Cadillac and not Cadillac with Buick."

The 90 Limited is a Fisher Body and while the 67 Series carries a firewall identification plate that states "Body by Fleetwood," its interior oval tag states "Body by Fisher."

VanGelderren explains, "The basic body, passenger compartment, doors, and trunk were built for Buick and Cadillac in the Fisher Body plant. In Cadillac's case, those basic components were then shipped to the "Fleetwood" body plant where hood, fenders, and exterior trim were affixed. The interior was also fabricated and installed in the Fleetwood facility. So, the final "assembly" took place in the Fleetwood plant. Thus, it stands to reason that Fleetwood firewall identification plates were taken from the Fleetwood bin and affixed to the car."

VanGelderren's argument makes sense but we now have a Cadillac marketing piece that categorizes the 67 Series as a Fleetwood offering. ●