

2021 Conference Feedback

From On Louis F. Fourie Soc. Automotive Historians) discussion of documenting various magazine database references

The Automobile Historians of Australia kindly included me in a digital seminar on a common theme of the Future of Automotive Collections & Archives in Australia. Although I had to break away in the early hours of the morning, it was an excellent seminar. Thank you Norm and your team.

On reflection, I came away with the thought that there may be duplication of efforts by members of the AHA, SAHB and SAH, along with NAAM (National Association of Automobile Museums). We need to create an international network to appreciate the challenges we each face in an increasingly digital world that offers immense research opportunities.

To start we need an international network or committee of people populated through nomination by each of our societies or associations. These representatives will share and learn from each other the challenges of archiving of automotive records in our respective spheres of influence.

The topics to be included would encompass:

- Digitizing of archives to ensure limited overlaps
- Share sources of currently digitized records with details of what is included and where it can be found
- Identify currently created indexes realizing that search engines will ultimately supersede such indexes
- Recognize that some of our members have significant private collections that need preserving and identification

For those of you not familiar with NAAM (National Association of Automobile Museums) the idea originated from Michael Ware of Beaulieu. SAH used to coordinate their biannual seminars with NAAM and that relationship needs to be rekindled.

To reinforce the international nature of this goal, one of the Australian presenters spoke about his creation of an index for the British magazine Motor. My experience of this magazine was that it had a large classified component and with little extra effort the articles and road tests could be scanned allowing search engines to replace an index.

Fortunately SAH Director Bob Schmitt has begun some of this work under the newly revived Pioneer Chapter and these efforts deserve maximum exposure.

There is no doubt that a coordinated effort in this regard will be immensely beneficial to our respective members. Take care everyone. Louis F. Fourie SAH

Follow-up email from Louis

Your seminar fired me up and it looks as if some of us on this side of the pond recognize the enthusiasm your group has and the benefits of keeping in touch.

Much appreciated and take care. Kind regards, Louis F. Fourie SAH

From other SAH members

Kudos to Louis for tuning in and great praise to the AHA for hosting this event. As Louis points out, this is a very fertile area for cooperation and seeking common ground for an effort that could certainly be of great value to automotive historians world-wide.

A coordinated effort to avoid as much duplication as possible seems to be the way to go with this idea.

I am certain that we should be able to develop some sort of working group and address this initiative.

Needless to add, I think that the seminar was a great idea. Not to mention that I miss seeing you and the other AHA members once again this year. H Donald Capps SAH President.

As Louis has pointed out, there are also our international colleagues who no doubt share our concerns and interests: AHG, AISA, CONAM and PHAF. Bob Barr SAH VP

Is it possible the seminar was recorded and could be viewed by those of us who weren't present.

This is an important step forward in tackling such an important issue. Jim Volgarino Cedar Falls, Iowa

On Individual collections

I loved your presentation yesterday, particularly as I have in the past written an article for the Cadillac club magazine encouraging people with multiple cars or collections to ensure they have made a will and also have left some explanation of their collections for their family.

But hearing your talk, I realized that we need to do more than just have a will with a note attached listing people who could help with dispersing my stuff.

Today I have started making a broad list of what's in my library (and the attic) shelf by shelf. The next step will be to identify the books, brochures, magazines, scrapbooks, manuals, parts books, parts manufacturer catalogues, etc, etc, and note an indication of which ones are valuable (to deal with "picking the eyes out of it", as you said).

I know of cases where people have told the widow that Joe promised me that, or I loaned this to Joe, etc. That is a really low act, but yes it happens.

Anyway congratulations on your presentation and on yesterday's conference. Peter Ratcliff