

The Preservationist

The Member Newsletter of the Elkhart Lake Historic Race Circuits Preservation Society
Volume 21 Fall 2013

Can-Am Featured at Summer Dinner Social

The Preservation Society's Summer Dinner Social was held on July 17th at Victorian Village. Nearly one hundred members and guests enjoyed a delicious steak tenderloin dinner with all the trimmings. The theme for the program was the history of the Can-Am series both the original and the current Vintage series. On display during the cocktail hour was a completely documented original Nicky Vinigeroon Genie Mk-10b Can-Am race car built by Joe Hoffaker courtesy of HRC member Tom Stephani.



The Hoffaker built, Nicky Vinigeroon Genie Mk-10b Can-Am car on display at the Summer Dinner Social.

The car was originally built for Dan Blocker Racing with Nicky Chevrolet as the primary sponsor. It was driven by Joe Cannon in the 1965 and 1966 Can-Am seasons. After passing through the hands of several owners it was acquired by Tom in 2002 and is now campaigned in the Can-Am Vintage

Racing Series. (Tom is the son of one of the former owners of Nicky Chevrolet so in a sense the car has come full circle.)

The program for the event featured a discussion panel made up of current and former Can-Am series participants moderated by Dan Davis, Chairman of the current Historic Can-Am Association and Victory Lane Magazine.



Panel members L to R - Tom Simpson – Current vintage Can-Am driver, Bob McKee – Can-Am car constructor, Dan Davis – Moderator, George Drolsom – Original-era Can-Am driver and Ike Smith – Can-Am crew Chief.

The panel emphasized the creative nature of Can-Am car construction and how the absence of restrictive regulations resulted in design innovation not seen before or since. As one panelist said, “If you didn’t come up with something new at each race, you were behind design curve”. The program ended with the panel members engaging in a lively question and answer session with HRC members.

Bobby Rahal Headlines Fall Dinner Social

The Preservation Society's Fall Dinner Social was held September 5th in the main dining room at historic Siebkens Resort. The program for the event featured Bobby Rahal race driver and team owner winner of three championships and 24 races in the CART open-wheel series, including the 1986 Indianapolis 500. He also won the 2004 Indianapolis 500 as a team owner with Buddy Rice as the team driver. Rahal was inducted into both the International Motorsports Hall of Fame and the Motorsports Hall of Fame of America in 2004.

He was inducted into the SCCA Hall of Fame on March 2, 2013. Bobby's celebrity status helped establish record attendance for a Fall Dinner Social as over a hundred members and guests enjoyed the program. With relaxed style and quiet charm, Bobby entertained an enthralled audience for over fifty minute.

Introduced to sports car racing by his father Mike Rahal who raced from 1959 to 1973 including six times at Road America, Bobby recalled his early memories as a teenager attending those races admitting that at the time an interest in racing was only third on his list of favorite activities coming after baseball and girls. Referring to the days when attending the June Sprints was a rite

of passage for the local college youth; he remembered seeing things at the track that a kid his age probably should not have seen. In those days Elkhart Lake seemed like one gigantic party with beer cans piled a foot deep on the lawn at Schwartz's and wine

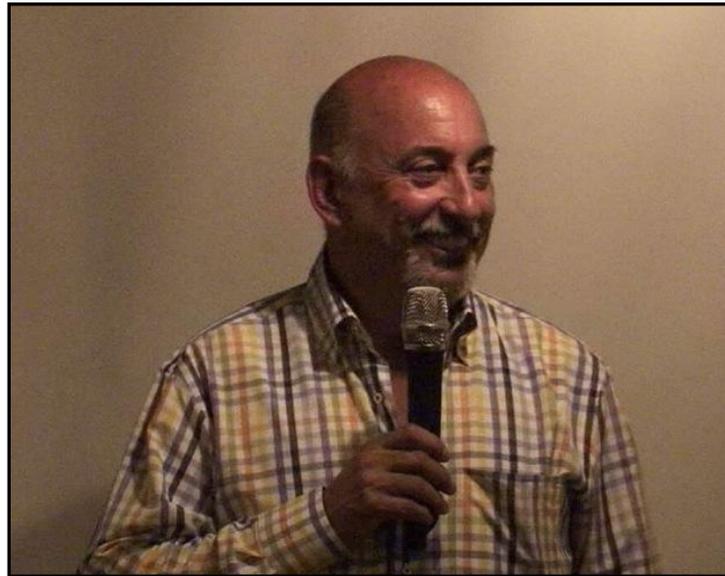
bottle bowling at Siebkens. Times have changed and it may never be the same again but it sure was fun to revisit.

Although he has raced on dozens of road courses in both the United States and in Europe there was no question that

Rahal holds a warm spot in his heart for Road America listing it as one of his favorite circuits.

To wrap up the program Rahal fielded questions primarily focused on the current state of automobile racing in America. As one might expect, his answers were both entertaining and insightful. Will the Indy cars ever return to Road America? The answer is... maybe, you need to ask George Bruggenthies. I guess we'll just have to wait and see.

Thus concluded the 2013 Dinner Social season with what nearly everyone agreed was one of the best programs in the history of the Society's Dinner Socials.



Bobby Rahal speaking at the Fall Dinner Social

Corwith “Corky” Hamill (1914 – 2013)

We regret to report the death of Corwith “Corky” Hamill, one of the last surviving racers of the open road racing era in Elkhart Lake. Corky served as the Race Chairman in 1950 and raced the family Allard in both 1950 and 1951. In the 1951 Novice Race he finished first in class and fifth overall. Hamill’s Hollow was named for Corky and wife Joan who also raced the Allard. They were together for 65 years before Joan passed away in 2001. Corky served as Treasurer of the Sports Car Club of America and authored “Piston Patter”, the newsletter of the Chicago Region for many years. A man of varied interests, Corky was successful as a family man, executive, author and



Corky Hamill

historian. He served as a board member of numerous charitable and civic organizations that benefitted from his dedication, wisdom and organizational abilities. He will long be remembered for his calm demeanor, good sense and dry wit. Corky possessed an encyclopedic memory that was of great assistance when HRC was compiling the history of the races in Elkhart Lake. HRC was fortunate enough to interview Corky in 2009 where he shared memories of his involvement in sports cars and open road racing. The interview was recorded on tape around which we hope to build a future Dinner Social Program.

The James Johnson Historical Collection

Jim Moersch, the grandson of James Johnson, has provided the opportunity for the Preservation Society to digitize the collected photographs and other materials from his Grandfather’s collection for inclusion in the Societies historical archives. James Johnson was the President of the Elkhart Lake Bank in the early 1950s and the community leader primarily responsible for bring the races to Elkhart Lake. The contribution nearly doubles the size of the Society’s collection of historical photographs. HRC is profoundly grateful to the Moersch family for this generous contribution. The following are just a few examples of the over eighty photographs in the collection.



The 1950 races were a low key family affair. Here Sylvia and Bayard Sheldon (center) pose in their green MG –TC with friends from Chicago.



John Fitch gets a little loose at what appears to be Kimberly's Korner in the 1951 Main Event.



The Healey Silverstone of Eddie Jones entered in the 1951 Main Event. Jones finished 3rd in class and 12th overall.



Frank Larson in the #33 Jaguar leads Larry Kulok in the #6 Fraser-Nash Le Mans Replica in the 1952 Sheldon Cup race.



Norman Carlson's MG on South Lake Street in front of the original Osthoff Hotel in the 1952 Kimberly Cup Race. The location is now part of the Osthoff Walkway

Alan and Ruth Sutton Donate 1951 Lap Charts

Following up on an article that appeared in Sports Car magazine the Preservation Society was contacted by Alan and Ruth Sutton of Barrington, IL. Alan was the Regional Executive for the Chicago Region back in 1978 and had served many years as the editor of Piston Patter and the unofficial historian for the Region. They offered to come to Elkhart Lake and donate the official lap charts for the 1951 open road races in Elkhart Lake that Alan had preserved. In September we met at Road

America to accept their generous offer and the Lap Charts are now safely installed in HRC's archival vault. We plan to have them on display at the Spring Diner Social. Alan also put us in touch with Fred Egloff of Kerrville, Texas who has donated a copy of the article covering the 1950 races in Elkhart Lake from the July-August 1950 issue of Sports Car. We have been trying to locate the article for years and are happy to add it to our archival materials. A big thank you to Alan, Ruth and Fred.