Fifth Annual Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium – 2019

PROGRAM

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 8
Location: Watkins Glen International Media Center

Morning Session

Panel No. 1 - Moderator: H. Donald Capps
9:30am to 11:30am

Jon Summers - The Greatness of Fangio: How a Poor Country Boy Living Thousands of Miles from Europe came to be the Yardstick by which Formula 1 Champions Measure Themselves

Jonathan Summers works as an automotive historian and freelance consultant. He is associated with Stanford University’s Revs Program and Gooding and Company, as well as serving as a Docent at the Blackhawk Museum and Pebbles Beach Concours d’Elegance. Mr. Summers is involved extensively in motor racing media and is currently collaborating on a book about the past, present and future of the automobile. His Symposium talk narrates the events and timelines of the great Juan Manuel Fangio’s career and examines the development of his character and the roots of his extraordinary – almost mythological - success as the quintessential Grand Prix driver. As Mr. Summers reveals, Fangio is the link between the birth of motorsports and its glamorous current day status - “Fangio came first and for that reason will always be the standard.”

Dr. Elsa Nystrom - The Hidden Life of Dorothy Levitt: Britain’s First Speed Queen

Elsa Nystrom is Professor Emeritus of History at Kennesaw State University. She is author of the book “Mad for Speed: The Racing Life of Joan Newton Cuneo” and blogs about her travels on GeorgiaRambler.com. Dorothy Levitt, the subject of Dr. Nystrom’s talk, has justly been recognized as the first British Speed Queen, and she had real success on the race track between 1903 and 1908. She also wrote an instruction book for women drivers that is still in print. Yet the biography that accompanies her racing accomplishments on many websites and books is almost a total fabrication. This presentation will first relate her very real exploits behind the wheel and then try to piece together who Dorothy Levitt really was.

Dr. Eldrid Harrington – The AAA and the Transition to USAC

Eldrid Herrington is a professor of English at the University of Cambridge, a senior fellow in medicine at Queen Mary, University of London, and a member of St Hugh's College, University of Oxford, in history. A professor for 25 years, she has taught at Boston University, University of Cambridge, Exeter University, University of the Arts London, and University College Dublin. She has been a national fellow in three countries as a U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities fellow, an Irish Research Council fellow, and a British Overseas Research scholar.
Dr. Herrington serves on national panels for the National Institute for Health Research and on the clinical surgery board for Barts Health NHS Trust. She received a BA from Princeton University, a Master's from Boston University, and an MPhil and PhD from the University of Cambridge. She publishes in a variety of disciplines and is currently writing a book on her grandfather, Arthur W. S. Herrington, founder of Marmon-Herrington. Dr. Herrington will examine why and how the United States Automobile Club (USAC) came into being in 1955.

Afternoon Sessions

Panel No. 2 – Moderator: Dr. Patricia Yongue
1:15pm – 2:45pm

Tom Adamich – SCCA SAC Racing Redux: the MacDill Air Force Base Races and the Oral Tradition

Tom Adamich recently joined the faculty at Monroe County Community College (Monroe, Michigan – a suburb of Detroit) as Professor – Technical Services/Reference Librarian and continues to also operate (since 1993) his Visiting Librarian Service. In his talk, “SCCA (Sports Car Club of America and SAC (Strategic Air Command) Racing Redux”, Mr. Adamich takes a look at the SAC races held at MacDill Air Force Base (Tampa, FL) in 1953 and 1954. The international flavor of the MacDill races (preceded by the 1952 Watkins Glen course crash) and its impact on racing history will be coupled with an exploration of the oral tradition and how first person, primary source research influences our understanding of motorsports history.

Dr. Elton G. “Skip” McGoun – Sports, Sports Cars, and Sporting Cars

Skip McGoun is a Professor of Finance at Bucknell University and a Visiting Professor at the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia and at the University of Donja Gorija in Montenegro. A distinguished scholar who has published extensively on the history of finance and culture, Dr. McGoun is Area Chair of the Vehicle Culture Section of the Popular Culture Association. In his presentation, Dr. McGoun considers the great difference between the sports car markets in the United States and Europe just prior to WWII and traces its origins to the dominance of the Ford Motor Company in the United States that inhibited a domestic equivalent of the highly competitive voiturette racing that was found in Europe

Francis G. Clax – Presenting Racing History: How Each Generation’s Needs Are Met

Francis Clax, a noted expert on early automotive history, describes himself as “a lifetime devotee of all things with a motor that go fast.” From an early age, he mastered automobiles and motorcycles, eventually competing successfully in the heavyweight road racing class in several racing series, including American and International superbike competitions. From the late 1980’s to 2005, Mr. Clax hosted the prime-time cable series “This is Motorcycling.” He is recognized as the world’s authority on and collector of motometer automobilia and related early 20th century automotive artifacts, and has authored a book on the subject of motometers which will be published later this year. A regular participant in the annual Symposium, Mr. Clax’s talk
this year explores the historical methodologies used to record, interpret and present racing history and how these means and their consequences create the historical record and address the evolving needs of each generation. As Mr. Clax explains, “Each means of documenting racing history serves its period function before falling out of vogue and general acceptance – discussing each may help us to prepare for the next to emerge.”

Panel No. 3 - H. Donald Capps, Moderator
3:00pm – 5:00pm

Dr. James Miller – Bottling Lightning: The Museumification of Motor Racing

James Miller is Professor of Communications in the School of Cognitive Science at Hampshire College. Dr. Miller is a member of the Five College Architectural Studies program and has been a visiting professor at the MIT Media Lab and a Fulbright researcher in Paris. He also belongs to the Porsche Club of America. Dr. Miller’s recent work concerns media and cars, for example, the long history of in-car media and their influence on the experience of automobility. His Symposium talk grows out of an interest in multi-media spectacles that celebrate the automobile’s past and predict its’ future. These include world’s fairs, concours d’elegance, auto shows and museums. Here, he considers the museum as destination, the displayed object as heritage, the challenge of static exhibits, the digital pressure for the boundary-less museum and the motivations of the museum visitor.

Van Walling – Oval Track Almanac: Documenting the History of Speedway Design and Construction

Van Walling is a professional engineer experienced in the planning and design of “conventional” transportation infrastructure; i.e. highways, airports, and railroads. His book Oval Track Almanac is the product of his parallel career – more than 40 years in which he has conducted oval track design research. Building on the senior design project he undertook at Lafayette College in 1977, Walling has dedicated much of his personal time to researching, studying, and documenting the history of speedway design and construction. His unmatched collection of data, stories, photos and illustrations related to historically and technically significant speedways has proven to be very popular with those interested in motorsports, history, geography, and/or engineering.

George Webster – The Transition to Digital Content: Implications for Motorsport Archivists and Historians

George Webster has been reporting on auto racing for several decades, writing for various publications including Autosport Canada, Performance Racing News (PRN) and National Speed Sport News. He is currently the editor of the racing news website, PRN Motorsport Magazine. He will discuss the implications for archivists and historians of the ephemeral nature of born-digital race data -- specifically the kind of information handed out in media press rooms (entry list, starting grid, lap chart, results, etc.) which is now generally available online as digital files. What needs to be done to ensure that these digital documents, which are an important part of the
raw material an auto-racing historian uses as source material, are collected and preserved so that they will continue to be available 10, 20, 50 years from now?

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 9
Location: Watkins Glen International Media Center

Morning Sessions

Panel No. 4 – Moderator: H. Donald Capps
9:15am to 10:00am

Dr. Mike Stocz – Yellowhammer Dirt: Analyzing Media Representations of Dirt Track Stock Car Racing Across Alabama from 2009-2019

Mike Stocz is an Assistant Professor of Sport & Recreation Management at the University of North Alabama. Dr. Stocz’s research interests include the continuing evolution of the world-wide web and how it affects racing, legal issues in sport, and sport communication. In “Yellowhammer Dirt,” Dr. Stocz will overview what sorts of articles are typically published by news affiliates near their respective dirt tracks, as well as recommendations for dirt tracks to further engage their respective audiences.

Buz McKim – Moonshine and Its Connection to the American Auto Industry

Buz McKim, the 2018 keynoter for the Michael Argetsinger Symposium and recently retired historian at the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte, N.C., is a distinguished figure in the motor sports world and a renowned raconteur. Mr. McKim served as director of archives for International Speedway Corporation and as coordinator of statistical services for NASCAR. He is the author of “The NASCAR Vault: An Official History Featuring Rare Collectibles from Motorsports Images and Archives.” His presentation explores the origins of modified stock car racing in the illegal distribution of untaxed adult beverages, or “moonshine”. He recounts the development of NASCAR in 1949 and its evolution in the 1950’s from a truly “stock” competition to a manufacturer supported testing ground for advances in the engineering and design of American automobiles. Mr. McKim’s talk describes the irony of how the automotive engineering modifications inspired by “wild country boys” led to all around improvements in automotive technology.

Panel No. 5 – Moderator: Patricia Yongue
10:30am – 11:30am

Joseph Freeman – Fateful Eight: The Story of the Duesenberg 8-cylinder, SOHC Cubic Inches Racing Cars and Engines

Joseph Freeman is an automotive historian, writer, publisher, vintage racer, and racing car collector, well known in the racing world for his expertise on automotive subjects and as owner of the award-winning publishing house Racemaker Press of Boston. His talk will explore the development, evolution and career of the revolutionary and now iconic Duesenberg 8-cylinder
engines and race cars that astonished the automotive world and energized motor racing with their exploits at Le Mans, Indianapolis and Bonneville in the 1920s.

**Dr. Mark D. Howell – Another Kind of Space Race: The Close Relationship between NASA and Motorsports**

Mark Howell is a Professor of Communications at Northwestern Michigan College. Prior to NMC, he was a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of American Thought and Language at Michigan State University. As a motorsports historian, Dr. Howell has published numerous articles and two books: *From Moonshine to Madison Avenue: A Cultural History of the NASCAR Winston Cup Series* (U of Wisconsin/Popular Press, 1997) and *Motorsports and American Culture: From Demolition Derbies to NASCAR* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), of which he was a co-editor. Since 2011, he has been a Senior Writer for Frontstretch.com, where his essays appear every Wednesday during the racing season. Dr. Howell also spent three years (2001-2003) as a part-time crew member with Brett Bodine Racing in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series, and has worked closely with NASCAR drivers Hut Stricklin, Kenny Wallace, and Todd Bodine. His paper for this year's Symposium, explores how astronauts embraced automobile racing on various levels, and how NASA technologies became part of professional motorsports competition. Howell, who was born and raised between Pocono Raceway and Watkins Glen International, now lives in Suttons Bay, Michigan.

**Afternoon Sessions**

**Jean S. Argetsinger Memorial Keynote Address**

1:00pm – 2:00pm

**Dr. John Heitmann – Writing Motor Sport History**

John Heitmann was awarded a Ph.D. in the History of Science from Johns Hopkins University in 1983. In 1984 he came to the University of Dayton, where he subsequently served as Chair of the History Department and Alumni Chair in Humanities. Dr. Heitmann currently is Professor Emeritus of History. He is author of four books, 15 peer-reviewed articles and more than 60 book reviews in scholarly journals. His *The Automobile and American Life* (McFarland, 2009) was awarded the Ray and Pat Browne Award by the Popular Culture Association and an American Library Association Choice top academic book for 2010. He followed up that monograph with *Stealing Cars: Technology and Society from the Model T to Gran Torino* (co-author Rebecca Morales) published by Johns Hopkins Press in 2014. Recent work includes the completion of a 2nd updated edition of *The Automobile and American Life*, published in the August of 2018. Dr. Heitmann is a past President of the Society of Automobile Historians. His recent scholarship explores the post-WWII emergence of sports car culture in the U.S. Dr. Heitmann’s garage is the home of a 1971 Porsche 911T; a 1982 Mercedes 380 SL; and a 1996 Volvo 850 Turbo wagon.
Panel No. 6 – Moderator: Dr. Patricia Yongue
2:15pm – 3:45pm

Timothy Robeers – **Televisual or Not? A Historical Look into the BBC’s Broadcasting of Motorsport since World War II**

Timothy Robeers is a Guest Professor of Communication Sciences at Antwerp University (Belgium) where he lectures on, as well as supervises Master theses in, sports-media communication. Additionally, Dr. Robeers advises motorsport organisations such as the FIM and race car drivers on matters of strategic media management and sustainability. Dr. Robeers’ presentation explores motorsports’ intricate and symbiotic relationship with media broadcasting, with particular regard to the sport’s emergence on BBC television as ‘televisual’ from the post-war period onwards. Utilizing archival and biographical media texts obtained from the BBC’s London Archives, Dr. Robeers finds that despite significant constraints, the competitive and dramatic nature of racing was early recognized and exploited by the broadcast industry as a popular and lucrative television subject. Likewise, his study suggests that the technical and logistical challenges of broadcasting had significant effect on the staging and culture of the sport itself.

**Katya “Kate” Sullivan – Small Stories and Big Idea: Using Narrative Discourse to Expand Motorsport History and Engagement**

Kate Sullivan (MSc Dist) is a well-being and performance psychologist at Scotland’s Heriot-Watt University. In addition to her academic career, she has worked in the classic car industry for more than a decade and personally holds several regional land-speed records. She explores the proliferation of so-called "hero stories" in motorsport history and introduces cross-disciplinary methods of enriching our understanding of automotive heritage. By expanding our perceptions of what “writing history” means and what “history” can include, Ms. Sullivan will offer a way to make motorsport history more accessible and engaging to the general public now and in the future.

**Elizabeth Tudor & Timothy Robeers – Worth a Tweet? Value Creation through Social Media Fan Engagement in Formula One**

Roundtable: Looking Forward: Writing about Motor Sports History and Culture
4:00pm – 5:15pm


Senior Panelist: Dr. Pat Yongue, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Houston, an expert on women in racing, and a member of the Society of Automotive Historians International Motor Sports History Section.
An open discussion about writing motor sports history featuring a panel of selected Symposium presenters and other motor sports historians, including those identified below:

Dr. Michael Stocz
Dr. Joseph Freeman
Dr. John Heitmann