

The Fabulous Fifties

NEWSLETTER

September, 2019

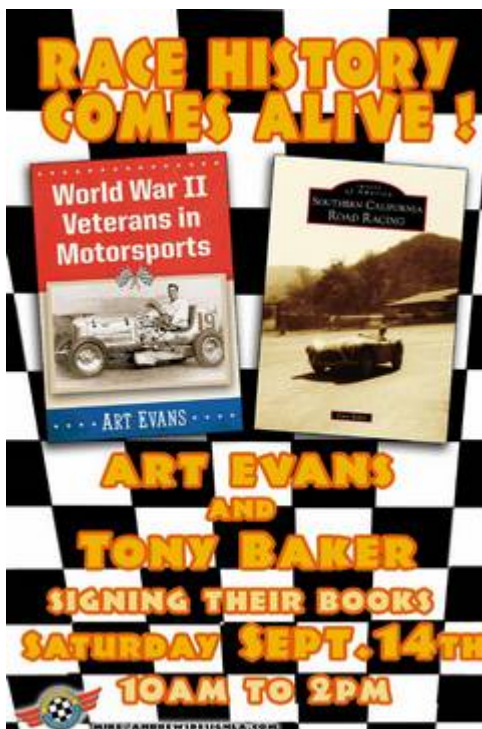


SEPTEMBER 14 BOOK SIGNING AT AUTOBOOKS

We're happy to announce that AutoBooks is sponsoring a book signing for Art Evans and Tony Baker on Saturday, September 14, 2019 - 10 AM to 2 PM. AutoBooks-AeroBooks is located at 2900 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank, CA 91505 (818) 845-0707. We hope you will be able to join us for this event.

In addition to Art's new book, *World War II Veterans in Motorsports*, there will be copies of his prior Carroll Shelby book, *Carroll Shelby, A Collection of My Favorite Racing Photos*, featuring memories and commentary by Carroll Shelby, available for purchase and autograph by Art.

Accompanying Tony Baker with his new book, *Southern California Road Racing*, will be one of our non-members, Bill Haislett, who assisted with photos for his book.



If unable to attend the book signing you can order the books at the AutoBooks website: Autobooks-Aerobooks.com

Art's book's give you an inside look at the lives of Carroll Shelby, Ken Miles, and Ed Hugus. These people were instrumental in the success of Shelby American, the GT40, and the victory at

Le Mans. They are the featured characters in the new major movie, a 20th Century Fox production, distributed by Disney, "Ford v Ferrari" that comes to the big screen on November 15.

Note from Allen Kuhn:

Hi Ginny & John!

I'm taking you up on your request to submit a note about the upcoming 20th Century Fox movie, "Ford v Ferrari", about their battles in the 60s. Fox contacted me last year after seeing my name on several sports car photographs. They ended up purchasing the rights to seven of my action shots of Ken Miles and Carroll Shelby driving. They will be in the two office locations that Shelby uses in the film. If this is news to anyone, Christian Bale plays Miles (not a bad choice) and are you ready for this, Matt Damon as Shelby (really). Fox put \$100 million into this, so it must have something good going for it, besides my photographs. It will be released in mid-November.

Historically yours,

Allen R. Kuhn

Vintage-Sportscar-Photos.com

RACING HISTORY SERIES EVENT

An upcoming event you won't want to miss is the Racing History Project, arranged by Dave Wolin, on Saturday, October 12 at the Valley Relics Museum in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. 7900 Balboa Blvd., Lake Balboa, CA 91406 (Van Nuys).

This exciting event will focus on two iconic former racetracks, Paramount Ranch, the Santa Monica Mountains location that hosted five sports car races and two stock car races in 1956 and 1957, and San Fernando Dragstrip, the iconic Glenoaks Blvd. track, where from 1955 to 1969 local and nationally known dragracers competed head to head.

The program begins at 10:30 AM with an hour and a half slide show, film and panel discussion about Paramount Ranch, presented by author Tony Baker (*Central Coast Motorsports, Hot Rodding in Ventura County* and his newly released book, *Southern California Road Racing*). After a lunch break to enjoy some of the gourmet food trucks in the parking lot, the 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM segment will feature San Fernando Dragstrip, with a slide show, film and panel discussion, emceed by broadcast journalist Steve Ford, best known on local radio as "The Car Guy".

Panelists will include Alice Hanks, John Dixon, Bill Watkins, Art Evans, Tim Considine, Ron Cummings, Allen Kuhn and others who participated or raced at these iconic locations, telling stories never heard before about their experiences. This is a rare opportunity to hear from those who were there. There are a limited number of tickets (\$25) available and must be purchased in advance. Note - NO tickets will be available the day of the event. To purchase tickets: **RacingHistoryProject.com**



After the event, there will be an autograph and personal "meet and greet" session as well as some noted photographers and authors on hand offering their wares and memorabilia for sale. Allen Kuhn, who has been such a wonderful contributor to the Fabulous Fifties, will have a display of his vintage pictures to view and purchase, at good prices. He will especially have some large format images taken at Paramount Ranch. He also has a few copies of Art Evans' book on Paramount Ranch that he will offer for sale.

THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - A REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

by John Dixon

The Valley was a semi-rural suburb with long straightaways connecting to less traveled mountain roads to the north and south. On the east you had Ed Winfield grinding cams in his Glendale warehouse and Frank Kurtis building his cars. On the west end you had Paramount Ranch and a fantastic network of mountain roads. Downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood Blvd. was a 25 cent Red Car ride away. You could cruise up to Bonelli Stadium Sunday afternoon and watch Billy Vukovich whip the "run what ya brung" V8-60 crowd, or pop over the hill down to Gilmore Stadium on Wednesday nights and watch Sam Hanks master his Offy.

We had a number of "sand lot" drag strips, two or three miles with no side roads. One was Canoga Avenue, three miles from Ventura Blvd. to Van Owen St. No side roads, high crowned, two-lanes with culverts and pepper trees on both sides. At over a hundred miles an hour, in a '29 Model A with mechanical brakes, you only noticed the center line. (Even in the 50s the Pomona road course had a row of trees on the back straight.)

The big time was Sepulveda Blvd. at midnight on Wednesdays. Sepulveda came to life when the police shut down Pic's Drive-In and Washington Place in Culver City. Sepulveda terminated at Highway 99 in Sylmar. It was three-lane concrete and it ran three miles south between the Van Norman Lakes Reservoirs that William Mulholland had built. A ticket for a mechanical violation with the notation "at hot rod races" could mean three days in the cooler.

When legal drag strips arrived, I was in the Far East. When I got back, sports cars had arrived, and we made our mischief on Topanga Canyon and Mulholland Drive.

Dave Wolin's Racing History Series Event on October 12 will have a special meaning for me having lived and loved in the Paramount hills.

Fabulous Fifties Proud Bird Luncheon June 29

Allen Markelson, from Florida, was planning to attend our lunch and then catch a flight to Phoenix to visit with Bob & Pat Bondurant. Ernie & Elaine Nagamatsu created a card (see below) for everyone at the luncheon to sign to send along with Allen. Unfortunately, due to snafus with the airlines, Allen didn't make it to our luncheon. In the meantime, the US Postal Service took care of the delivery. We hope Bob enjoyed the best wishes from the Fabulous Fifties luncheon group.



Ernie Nagamatsu & Art Evans (Photo by Carol McKnight)

As promised, we had some of our non-member authors speak about their latest books which have been featured in our previous newsletter: Tim Considine, John Morton, Sylvia Wilkinson and Danny McKeever. The open mike session was well received.

As with any era, the sun is setting on ours, but the Fabulous Fifties is attempting to enjoy the memories of the departing day. When people who were there get together, there is a glow of remembrances.

By the way, Art Evans has another new book coming out next year, following along the same theme - World War II Veterans - but this new book will feature 30 Hollywood Stars, such as Audie Murphy, Jimmy Stewart, Kirk Douglas, Clark Gable Tony Curtis, Efrem Zimbalist, Sterling Hayden, etc.



Alice Hanks & Ginny Dixon

(Photo by Carol McKnight)



Rod Bean & John Dixon

Photo by Carol McKnight)

Silent Auction Update by Steve Johnson

Thank you to all of the generous bidders who participated in the June luncheon's silent auction. As we've mentioned before, friendship, nostalgia and enthusiasm are the primary fuels of the Fabulous Fifties, but money is also required to make event arrangements and book venues in advance. Our non-organization is 100% reliant on donations, and donating memorabilia you no longer want (or need) is a great way to pass it on to others who will enjoy it while helping the Fabulous Fifties at the same time. Generous donors for our last gathering included Dusty Brandel, John and Ginny Dixon, Bill Haislett, Alice Hanks, Mellette (Pollack) Hawksley-Smith, Allen Kuhn, Bill Watkins, Judi Yedor, Dr. Bob Bartlett and Steve Johnson.

If you are cleaning out your closets or garage and come across items you would like to donate, please **Email Me** (srjohnson1@msn.com)

LETTERS

Hi All!

Wanted to thank all of you for putting on such a FUN luncheon gathering at the Proud Bird. I really enjoy that place. Delighted to see so many families coming there to watch every kind of airplane landing/taking off from everywhere in the world. Been doing that myself since I was a little boy. Also glad to see the 'concrete hardstands' being constructed for future outdoor aircraft displays. And the food & bar was very much to my liking...and always glad to visit with friends and complete conversations...especially with John Dixon. We compare "stories" about our military aviation adventures - seems we did many of the same things in the same places...at different times though!

Thank you all,

Charlie Budenz

Dear Ginny & Art, (Re: *WWII Veterans in Motorsports*)

When I interviewed Chuck Daigh, I didn't know he was at Bastogne during the Battle of the

Bulge. I did know Phil Remington was a flight engineer on a Liberator B-24 in the Pacific. Here's a Canadian war hero/race driver for you. Al Pease. Al was a Typhoon fighter bomber pilot during World War II. As he put it, "We bombed and strafed anything that moved in Northwest Europe. He also said, "out of the 30 in my training class, about half of them were shot down and in many cases I watched them go in." Brave young men, just kids most of them.

Cheers,

John Wright

Hello Fabulous Fifties friends:

As you may know already, I've been hard at work on an audiobook version of my 1950's motorsports novel *The Last Open Road* for the past three years and we finally finished & launched it at the big W.I.C. vintage meet at Road America last weekend. I signed & hawked copies alongside David Hobbs and Brian Redman (both of who, like a lot of other major motorsports celebrities, played parts in the narrative) and the response was pretty damn incredible.

What makes the audiobook unique is that I re-wrote the novel as a 1950s radio play, complete with different character voices, professional voice actors and production talent, sound effects, period music, authentic car sounds (MGTCs, Jag 120s and C-types, a 4.1 liter Ferrari and thanks to Frank Simeone of the Simeone Foundation Museum in Philadelphia, a genuine period-correct Cad Allard and one of the three legit Cunningham C4Rs on the planet) and Mystery Celebrity Guest Voices - like Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Redman, Skip Barber, Ray Evernham, Tommy Kendall, Bill Warner, John Morton, Patrick Long, Spencer Pumpelly, P. D. Cunningham, Mark Greene, Marino Franchitti, etc. - in many of the supporting roles.

It's pretty damn neat - really it is.

If you'd like to hear a few brief excerpts and decide for yourself, try:



I'd like to spread the word on the Left Coast. I have had a selling and signing at AutoBooks in Burbank on August 10 and was hawking and signing copies in the *Vintage Motorsport* magazine booth at the Monterey Historics.

You can go to my website to order: LastOpenRoad.com or [Email Me](#)

Spread the word,

Burt (B.S.) Levy

Hi Ginny & John!

I want to get the word out to all Bob Falcon's friends that "he just passed the checkered flag", as Bob always used to say of others who proceeded him. And now, so has Bob.

I talked to his daughter, Thia on July 26, only to learn that Bob actually passed away almost a year ago. And this only came after I had asked Earl Gandel to check on him when he went to Kodiak, Alaska. Earl went two weeks ago to spend time with his son and daughter-in-law, who live there. The retirement homes Earl went to (3 of them) trying to find Bob, told him that Bob passed away. So we were in touch with Bob's daughter, Thia. Her email follows explaining everything.

Pete Vanlaw

To: Pete VanLaw - Thanks for your kind words. Dad passed last August 10. He broke his hip a couple of days after his 90th birthday (June 26). He spent the rest of his time in the hospital in Anchorage. He made it through the first surgery, and we were trying to find a VA hospital in or near Bellingham near my daughter for him. Then he had a second surgery, from which he never recovered.

He was never alone. I was with him throughout, which is why I wanted him up here with me - so he wouldn't go out alone. At the end he was seeing and talking to his dad, so it was a seamless, gentle bridge. He was comfortable and happy.

My brother Evan, in Santa Rosa, may have some kind of memorial in California. I'm having a small something on August 3 - hot dogs and fireworks on Dad's favorite beach. I'll try to send pictures.

Thia Falcone, BSW,MA

Email Kodiak College

Sam Posey advises that there will be an exhibit featuring his latest canvas "Kansas" at the Ober Gallery, 6 North Main St., Kent, CT 06757 (860) 927-5030 from September 14 thru October 14. The opening reception will be on Saturday, September 14 from 5-7 PM.

Penny Forbes-Robinson Gupton (Robbie's daughter & Elliott's sister) who spent many years in Hawaii, along with her late husband, Miles, has relocated to Lakeland, Florida (via Sedona, Arizona) where she is continuing with her art and teaching art classes. She loves the people in her new location and is now near her daughter. Some of Penny's new oils can be viewed on her website:

PennyGupton.com

We've been informed of two of our non-members who have passed away:

Bob Engberg and Bob Johnson