

Monday, March 27

Dave,

As usual, your programs are 100% professional and enjoyable. But this letter is not about programs or music. It's about the article you sent along with the discs, an article that brought back many pleasant, fascinating memories.

During the early 1970s, Ruth and I were publishing at a furious rate, up to 15 titles per year. While we did most of our own photography, we needed to purchase historic, rare, or special photos. To enhance my book, BONNEVILLE CARS, I wanted a few pictures to show unusual or historic aspects of the SPEED TRIALS.

I tried HOT ROD MAGAZINE. They were friendly enough but the photo editor told me that because of legal restraints, they couldn't sell photos. He suggested I try Dean Moon.

At that time, everyone involved with hot rods, custom cars, or any specialized such activity knew MOON products. The famous, highly chromed, convex Moon Disc hub caps were popular.

The MOONEYES logo was ubiquitous. For example, a few weeks after I bought our 1960s-something Corvaire truck, the one we used to carry karts, you and a friend got into the cab and put a MOONEYES decal on the driver side window.

So, as suggested I called Dean. He was friendly, spoke slowly, almost like an aphasic, and said he would look at my work to see if he could help.

So at the appointed time I went to Dean's place of business which was in a nearby industrial/oil field area called Santa Fe Springs. His operation covered about two large city blocks, entirely fenced and protected with huge amounts of barbed wire. Behind the fence was a dinosaur-bone-yard-automotive museum all in a jumble. Cars, motorcycles,

choppers, dune buggies, trucks, as well as body parts and engines.

On the property there was a large, very old commercial type structure, probably once occupied as an oil field maintenance operation. I went in and identified myself to a secretary and while she contacted Dean on the intercom, I looked around. The inside of the building was just like the outside only in miniature, automotive stuff wildly piled everywhere. Off to the side, as I found out later, was a shipping dock. Dean, it seems, was a world-wide distributor and manufacturer of automotive specialty equipment.

The secretary helped me find what I loosely call Dean's office. A room, maybe 15x15 feet, jammed full of trophies, posters, chromed auto parts, old calendars, banners, racing flags, and photos. As well as some deadly looking swords, knives, and scimitars hanging from the wall.

I saw no desk as such and Dean's "office chair" was a handsome, huge, classic 1930's barber's chair, complete with swivel and pneumatic raise-lower mechanism. The foot rest platform was the trade-mark, heavy steel platform into which was cast the words, "THEO. KOCHS CHICAGO. ILL."

We chatted while Dean looked at the books I had brought. He seemed to like them so I gave him a list of some photos I needed. He looked at the list, pumped his chair down and led me to what he called "my photo room."

Once in that room I was filled with dismay because it, like everything else around was stacked full of file cabinets, cardboard boxes, wooden crates, and shelves photo albums. Certainly no one could find anything specific here.

But I was wrong. There was an infallible filing system, namely Dean Moon. He looked at my request list, went to a box under a window, opened it, fingered a few photos, and withdrew exactly what I wanted. The same with pictures two and three, the whole operation not taking even five minutes. I was dumbfounded.

Dean's terms for using his photos, sign a "single use" release, credit him as Dean Moon, and include the Mooneyes logo. See last page of BONNEVILLE...

I had occasion to use Dean's resources several times during the ensuing years, each time the experience being the same. Then, when Dean's favorite nephew brought one of our Bowmar books home from school, Uncle Dean was ecstatic and promised to become a lifelong friend.

From my point of view, Dean was a spectacular genius in terms of mechanical acumen, promotion, and management. Perhaps the most unusual person I ever encountered during our automotive years.

For quite a while Dean had an strange way of keeping in touch with friends. At 12:00 midnight each December 30th, Dean called to wish us a happy new year, inquire about my work and family, and offer any technical-photo help I needed. He usually chatted on as if we were nearby neighbors who gossiped daily over the back fence.

Probably my last "Happy New Year Call" was at least 15 years ago, and until you sent me this article, I had not thought about Dean or that time in my life. Thank you. I was happy to see Dean still involved with work he loved. And, is it possible that you picked this article to send me because back in your youthful subconscious, there is a recollection of our association with Dean?

Well, this has been a doctoral thesis type recitation titled MY MEMORIES OF MOONEYES. Hope you enjoyed the nostalgia since it occurred during your time here.

love ed

Ruth and Ed Radlauer, authors of over seventy books for young people, are graduates of UCLA. They have worked as teachers, school administrators, reading specialists, and instructors in creative writing. Their works include books in the areas of science, language, social studies, and, more recently, high-interest reading materials. Their other Sports Action books published by Franklin Watts, Inc. are *Buggy-Go-Round*, *Scramble Cycle*, *On the Drag Strip*, *On the Sand*, *Horsing Around*, *Chopper Cycle*, *On the Water*, *Salt Cycle*, and *Motorcycle Mutt*.

Along with their three children, two horses, two motorcycles, a dog, and an ancient cat, the Radlauers live in La Habra, California.

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Dean Moon; frontis, pages 13 and 15

American Gas Association; page 17

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