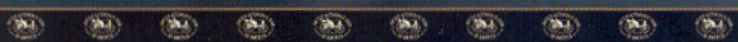
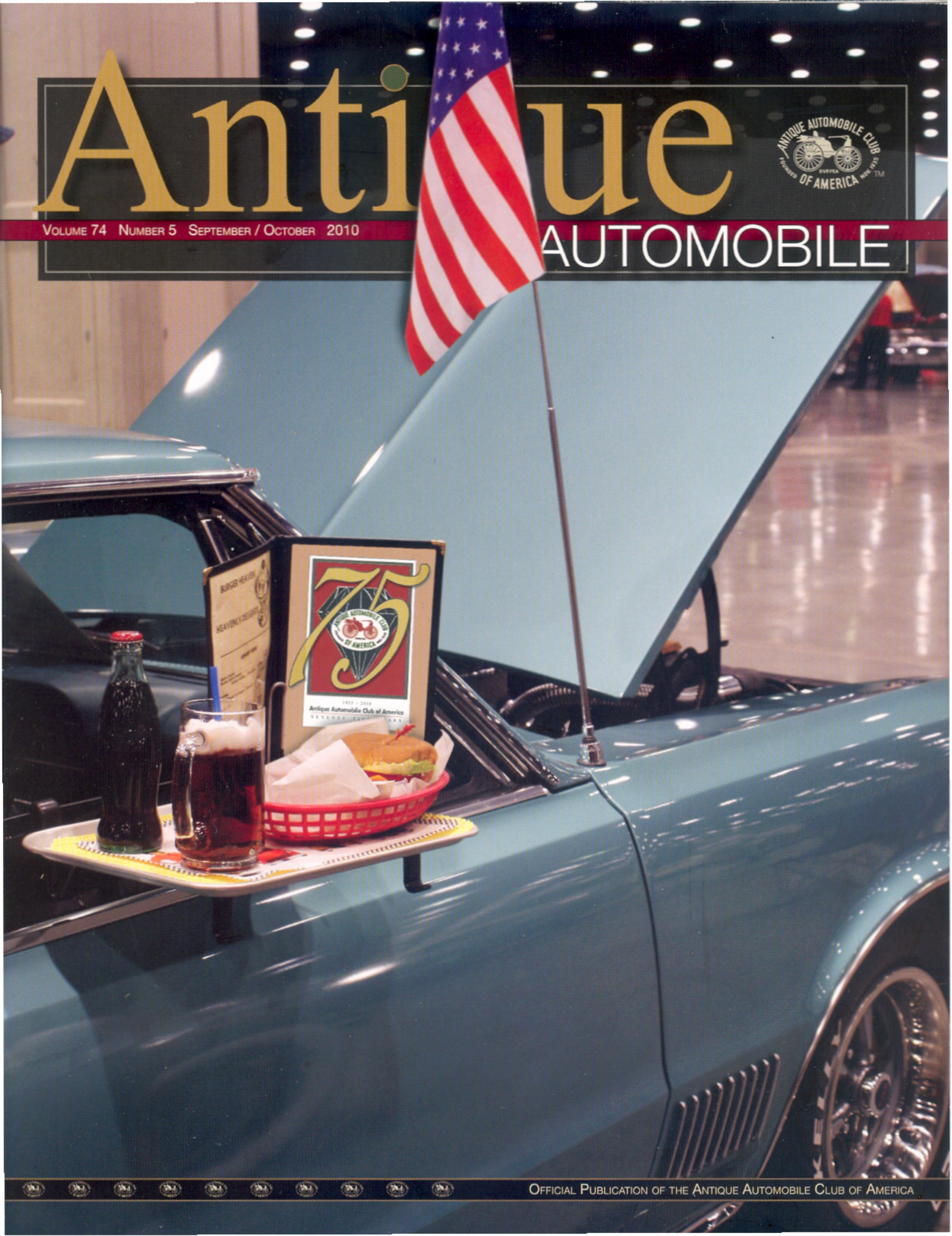


# Antique

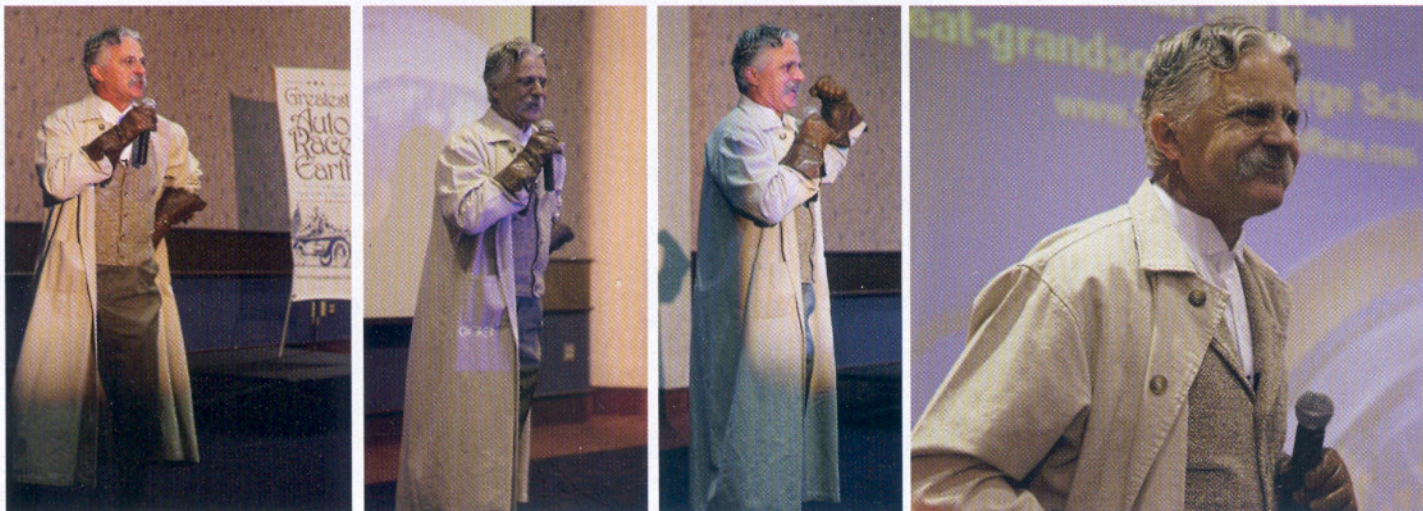


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# AUTOMOBILE



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Theodore Roosevelt, concerned that there was no American entry in the 1908 New York to Paris race, personally asked Erwin Ross Thomas to enter one of his cars so as not to embarrass the United States. Corky Coker, excellently playing the part of Roosevelt, introduced Jeff Mahl (facing page), who played the part of his great-grandfather, George Schuster. Bully!

More than 1,100 guests crowded into an adjacent room where the highly anticipated evening's program was held, "Bandits, Guns and Automobiles," presented by Jeff Mahl. Jeff's great-grandfather, George Schuster, was selected to not only represent the Thomas Motor Company, but all of America as well, in the most formidable sporting event of all time, the 1908 New York to Paris race driving a four-cylinder Thomas Flyer fresh off of the assembly line. He not only participated in the grueling 169-day race, he actually won it!

Many thought it was the most interesting presentation they had

ever seen, bar none, and had guests glued to their seats even though it was getting late into the evening. Jeff had original photographs and firsthand information passed down to him from his great-grandfather. Jeff told the story in first person, getting into character with a vintage coat and being introduced by Teddy Roosevelt (played by Corky Coker), who originally asked Erwin Ross Thomas to enter a car in the race since there no American entries. The program was further enhanced as Jeff sat in the seat of a similar Thomas Flyer provided by Coker Tire for our event.

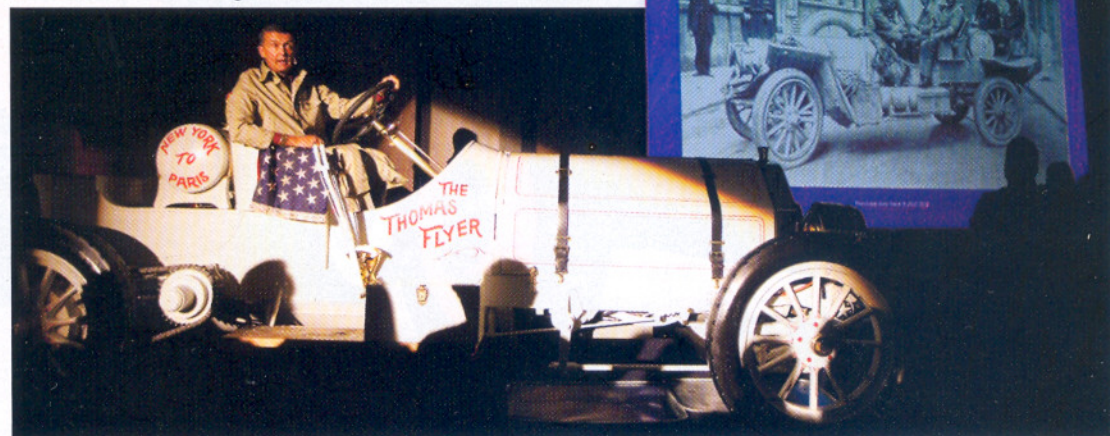


With original photos from the race showing on screen, Mahl's riveting stories passed down to him from his great-grandfather were told to a standing-room only crowd that filled more than 1,000 seats, none of which emptied even as the presentation went late into the evening.



Photo opportunities for one of our up-and-coming younger generation members was possible following the program. Chase Clanton, 10-year-old son of Jerry and Phyllis Clanton, Shelbyville, Tennessee, is shown holding the flag with Jeff Mahl. The flag was given to Jeff by his great-grandfather, George Schuster, when Jeff was about Chase's age. On the right, Chase sits on the front bumper of the Thomas Flyer with Corky Coker, owner of the Thomas.

Marilyn Kaye Hunkins photos



## The Greatest Auto Race

The presentation, "Bandits, Guns and Automobiles," featured Jeff Mahl, the spitting image of George Schuster, discussing in first person "great-gramp's adventures in the 1908 New York to Paris race.

