

SQUIRE SS-100 CLUB

CLBCOM 13
JULY 1991

Bingo!! The "Letters" reprinted in the June issue of Hemmings got massive results. Had a call from Ed Spielman in Northridge, Calif. He's from Long Island, NY and was the creator of the Kung Fu TV show. He now resides in the Los Angeles area and writes TV and movie scripts. His current TV show is the Young Riders on ABC Saturday nights. He has had a Squire since 1977 and has made all kinds of improvements and modifications including a revision of the front suspension. He has joined the club and he threw so much information at me so fast I won't even try to get it all down here. Since he's a writer he has promised to detail his Squire experiences on paper for the rest of us. A very few highlights are the fact that he had talked to Ed Felbin in Philadelphia some years ago and Felbin mailed Ed the last of the old Squire literature he had, one of which is an "Owners Manual" of sorts, the kind that tells you what switch does what. Ed Spielman will reproduce it and I'll be sending each of you a copy with an upcoming letter. Felbin had a professional name of Frank Ford and was the host of a very popular radio show on WWBD-FM in Philadelphia years ago.

(It's all beginning to come together, Tim Sharon.) I have written to Felbin's last known address and am hoping for an answer. Ed also gave me some names of other Squire owners that we will try and run down but they, like Tim Sharon's leads, are pretty old. We'll try however. Have attached an updated roster to reflect Ed's membership and also include John Fulton's new (Temporary) address which leads me to the next subject.

John did not renew his contract with Airbus in Italy and has moved into a rented condo in Dallas until he decides on his next move. He is rebuilding his Imperial which he says "Did not fare well in a seven month storage situation". Then he will fly to Denver and retrieve his Squire from the fellow that has been rebuilding it while John was overseas. I'm hoping he can swing thru Phoenix (or I can meet him in Albuquerque) on his way home. Glad you're back John. We missed you.

Just talked to new member Bill Adams on the phone. I've been going on and on with him about "How To Fix Your Squire" and then he told me that not only is he a graduate body man but he's had his own body shop for the past twenty five years!! GEEEEEEZE, is that ever embarrassing. I've been telling Bart Starr how to throw a football! Sorry Bill. He did say his car, when purchased, was in pretty rough shape and he has had it in pieces for quite a while cause working on it after he gets home from his body shop is a little like a postman talking a walk on his day off. After looking at the pictures I sent in his new member kit he estimates that he has all the original pieces except the Squire emblem on the rear deck.

Keep after it Bill cause one of these days maybe we can all meet in some central location like St. Louis or Memphis (There dont seem to be any Squires North of the 40th. parallel?).

Since writing the first page I have made a trip to Los Angeles and spent the weekend with Ed Spielman where we spent an hour on the phone with Ed Felbin in Philadelphia. Mr Felbin is now a member of the club and he gave us most of the details of how the Squire was developed and promoted. Believe me, a fascinating story. Felbin is still the host of a very popular radio show (And still uses the stage name Frank Ford) and his wife is the Philadelphia District Attorney. Both Ed Spielman and I made notes like crazy as we talked and Spielman will get this all down on paper soon. Hard to believe we are almost at the end of the search after two years of typing and mailing letters.

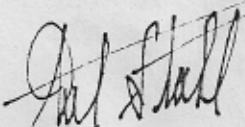
Meet Tony Seely of Heath (Dallas) Texas who saw one of our ads and thinks he may want to acquire a Squire? He's joined our little group and his data is on the attached roster. Contact him if you wish to sell your pride and joy.

The rumor has persisted that our Squires are somehow connected with the Squire that was produced in England in the 30s. Not so says Ed Felbin. Only similarity is the name. In a response to one of the letters I had sent to an English car magazine, a reader sent me the attached article copy from The Encyclopedia Of Classic Cars by Robson (An English publication I assume?) which explains the beginning and end of Squire Cars and the tragic death of Adrian Squire. I hope we have now squelched that rumor.

Wednesday, July 24th. -

When you track down a hot lead you keep picking up fresh information quicker, much like a snowball getting bigger and faster as it rolls downhill. Ed Spielman called this evening to say he had called Intermeccanica International, Inc. in Vancouver, B.C. and spent quite a bit of time talking to Paula Reisner who he described as "Having an amazing memory". She and her husband Frank actually made the Squire in Turin, Italy in the early 70s and she was able to fill in quite a few of the blank spots in our Squire history. Spielman is right in the middle of the TV season and as soon as time permits he will share all of this with the membership. (Should extend our apologies to Ed Felbin here. This is all history to you but exciting stuff for the rest of us).

One thing Ed Felbin did confirm when we talked to him was the fact that there were exactly fifty Squires made. We have now found ten of them so if any of you have any ideas about how to find the other forty, let's hear from you. More next month.



Squire cars, built from 1934 to 1936 (data for 1934 1½-litre)

Built by: Squire Car Manufacturing Co Ltd, Britain

Engine: Anzani manufactured. Four cylinders, in cast-iron block, with four-bearing alloy crankcase. Bore and stroke 69mm by 100mm. 1,496cc (2.72in x 3.94in, 91.3cu.in). Detachable light-alloy cylinder head. Two overhead valves per cylinder, opposed to each other at 90 degrees in hemispherical combustion chambers and operated by steel tappets from twin overhead camshafts. One horizontal constant-vacuum SU carburettor and Roots-type supercharger. Maximum power 110bhp (gross) at 5,000rpm.

Transmission: No separate clutch. Separate Wilson-type preselector gearbox, with clutch take-up by gear friction bands. Remote-control central gearchange. Open propeller shaft to spiral-bevel 'live' rear axle.

Chassis: Separate pressed-steel chassis frame, with channel-section side members, tubular and pressed cross-bracing and pressed cruciform. Forged front axle beam. Front and rear suspension by semi-elliptic leaf springs and lever-arm hydraulic dampers. Marles Weller steering. Four-wheel, hydraulically operated drum brakes. 18in centre-lock wire wheels. 5.00 x 18in tyres (short chassis); 5.25 x 18in tyres for long chassis.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8ft 6in or 10ft 3in (259cm or 312.5cm), tracks (front and rear) 4ft 6in (137cm). Overall length 13ft or 14ft 9in (396cm or 450cm). Unladen weight (chassis only) 1,680lb or 1,740lb (762kg or 789kg).

History: The Squire sports car, as a commercial proposition, was doomed right from the start. It was one man's dream of his ideal machine, to be sold in small numbers to the public. Nothing was to interfere with this dream, certainly not questions of costs and profits. The car itself was one of the most exciting-looking and best detailed of all the British post-vintage thoroughbreds. Its two most impressive features – 1934, when it was announced, were the sleek and lovely looks (this was at a time when many body designers were still reluctant to consider sweeping lines on a sports car) and its unique twin-camshaft supercharged engine.

Adrian Squire had cherished the ambition of building his own sports cars since he had been at school. An engineering apprenticeship was followed by spells of work with Bentley at Cricklewood and with MG at Abingdon, before the 21-year-old Squire moved in to a cottage on Emenham Hill, near Henley. There a small garage and filling station was established, and

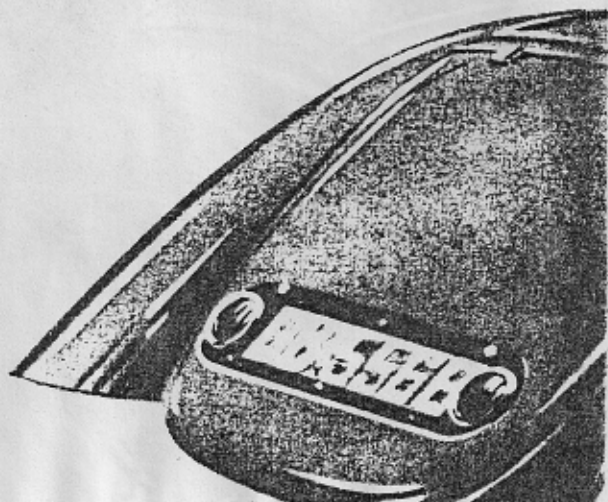
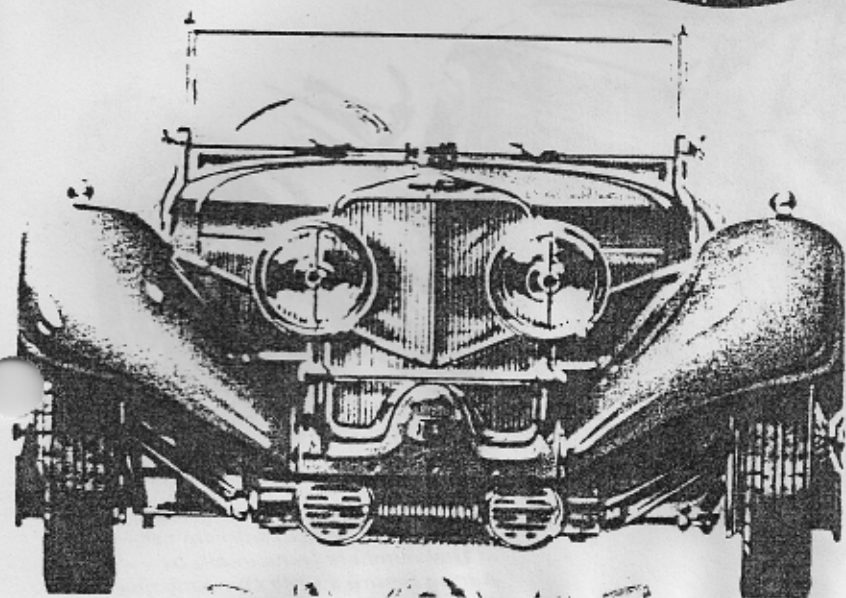
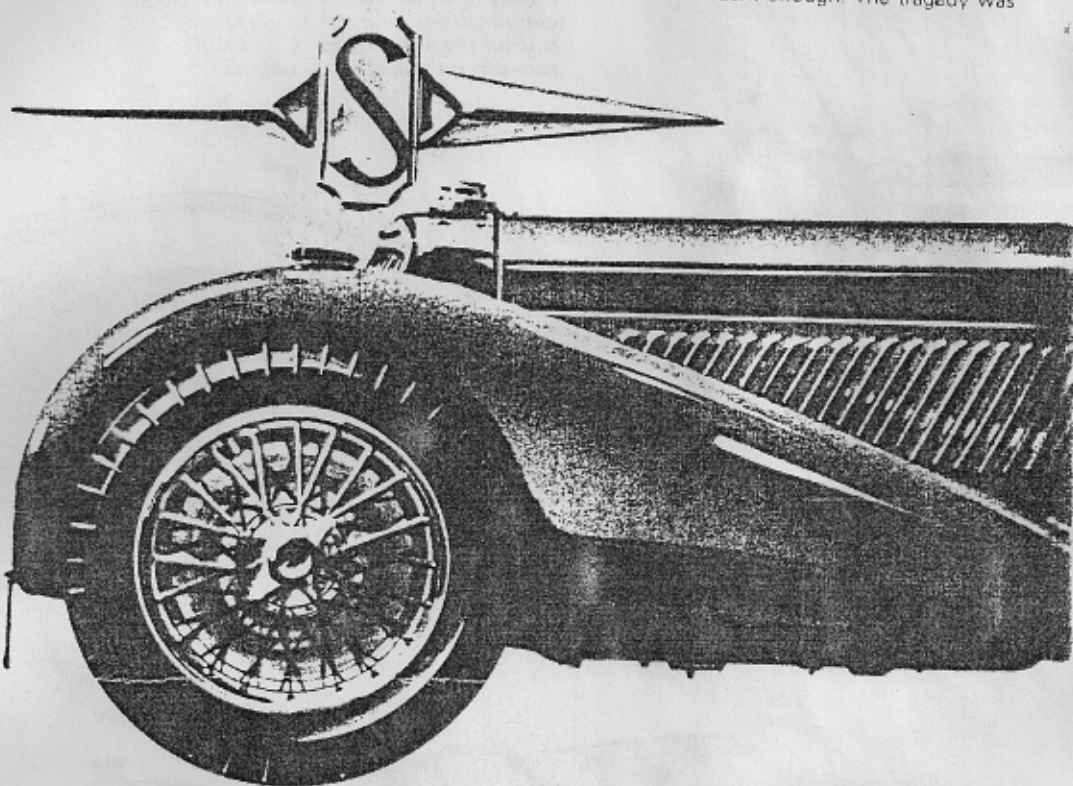
later he also acquired showrooms in Henley-on-Thames. Design on the Squire car began in 1933 and the manufacturing company was founded in January 1934 with capital of only £6,000.

Squire were too small to make much of their own cars, so they contracted to buy engines from British Anzani, gearboxes from ENV (of the preselector Wilson type) and axles from the same source. The engine was unique in Britain in that it was a supercharged twin-cam unit. Its origins were in a special car raced by Archie Frazer-Nash in 1927/28, but the supercharging was Squire's own idea. It was a very powerful unit, but not at all refined or quiet, as the camshaft drive was by a train of gears with considerable backlash, and valve clearances were always very high. The chassis itself was conventional enough, but rather more rigid than was usual, with a stout cruciform member behind the gearbox. Suspension was entirely 'British conventional', as Squire's own aspirations had not yet experienced the latest European independent suspensions. Such was the flexibility (and small scale) of Squire's operations, that they built the first three

cars with overslung rear frames and the remainder with underslung frames.

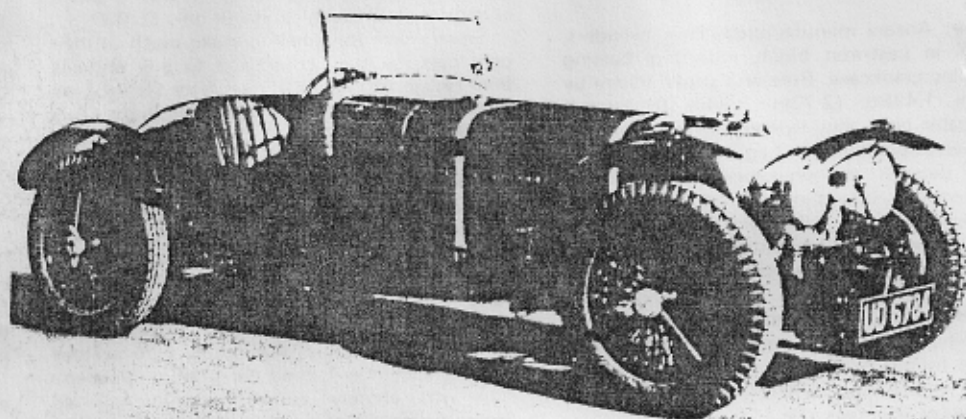
The most immediately striking aspect of the Squire, apart from its engine noise, was the styling. The general layout was conventional enough – there were only two seats and the usual 'build-up' weather protection – but the vee-profile radiator was swept back to make the nose distinctly rakish and both front and rear wings were well swept with delicately profiled skirts. The very first car, bodied by Vanden Plas, looked reminiscent of a Bugatti from some angles and of an Aston Martin from a few others, but was unmistakably a Squire. In the manner of the 1930s, a great proportion of the body was taken over by mechanical components, but on the first car there was even an enclosed tail for the spare wheel and big petrol tank.

There was no doubt that it was going to be an expensive car – at £1,220 complete with body it rivalled a 3½-litre Bentley – but, with a 100mph maximum speed, individual craftsmanship in the construction and the promise of exclusivity, Squire was confident enough. The tragedy was

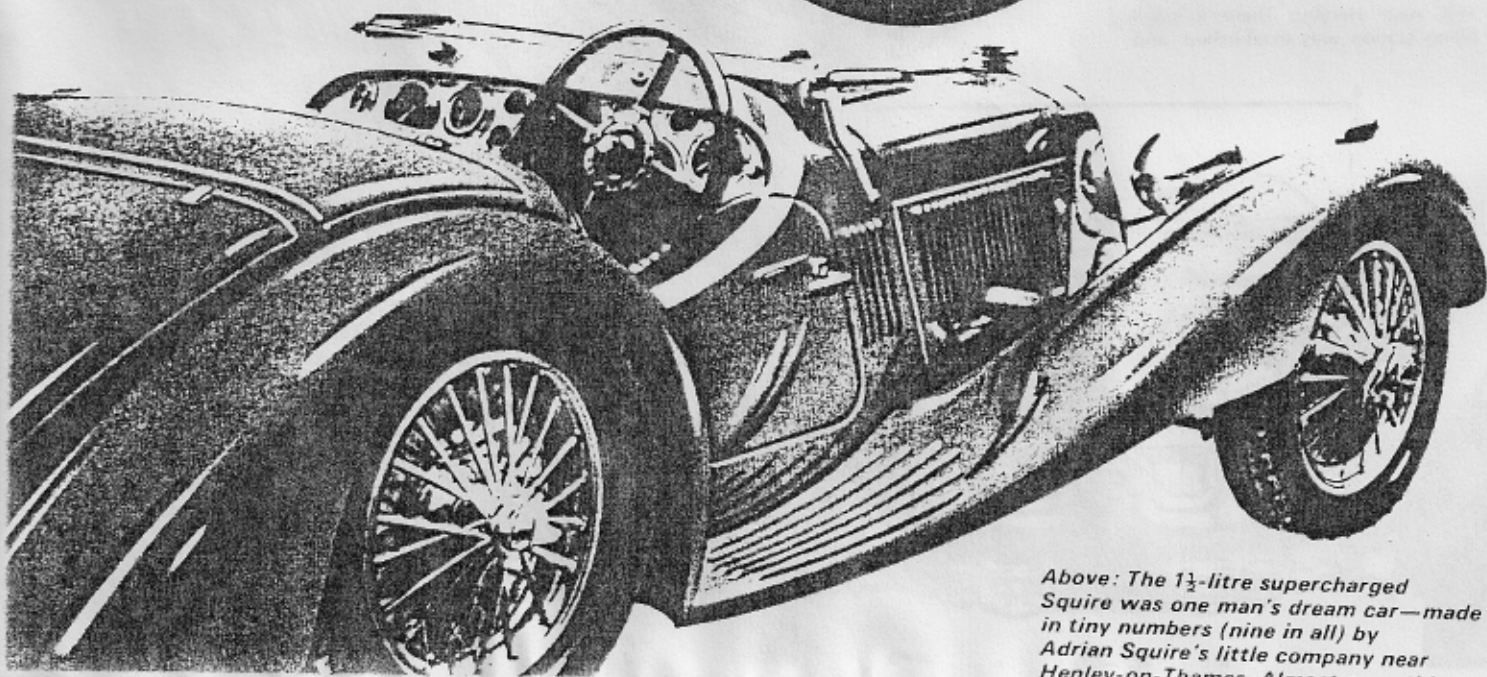
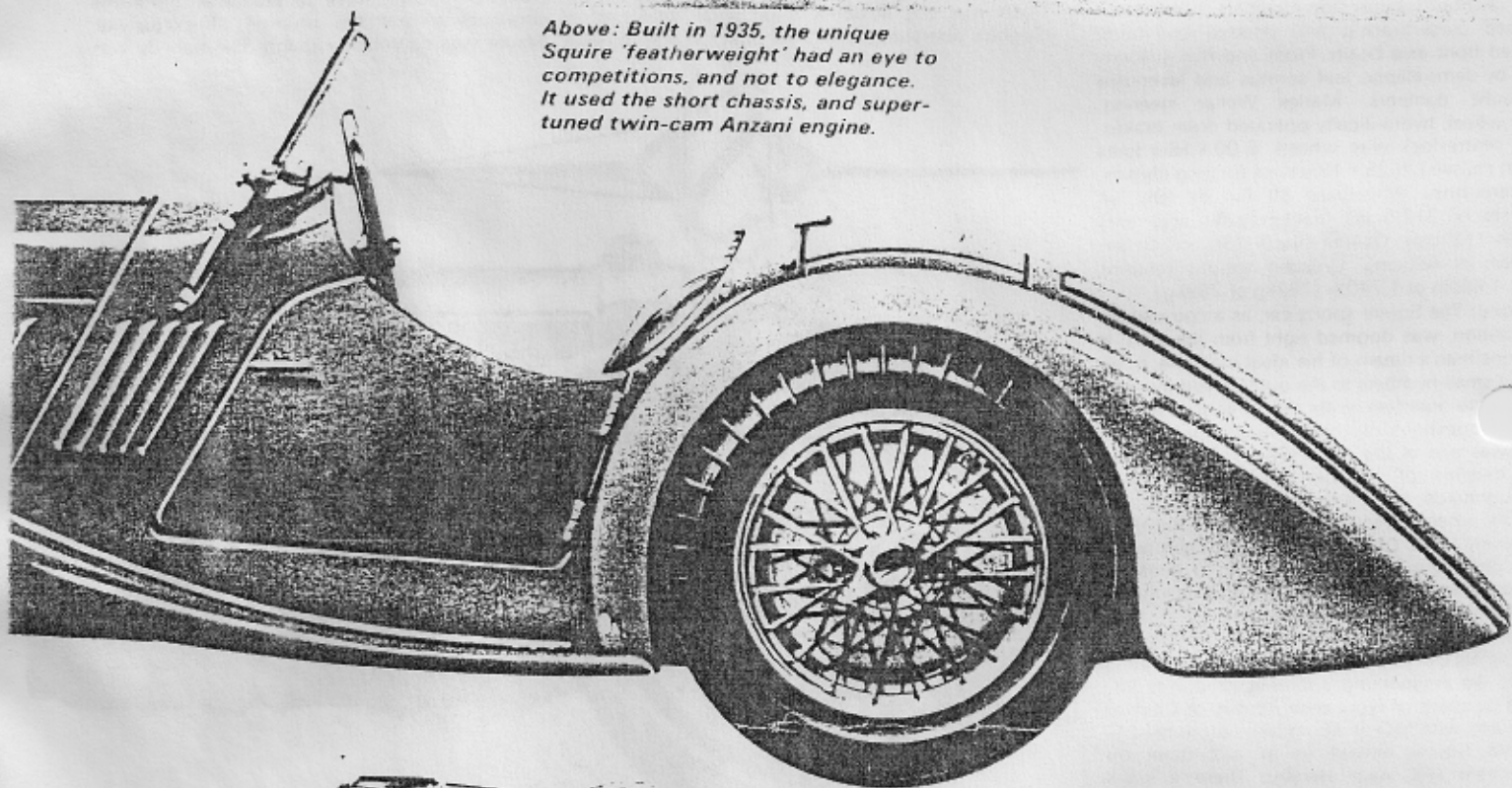


that although hundreds of enquiries were received after the car's first showing, they were not backed by firm orders. Within two years that part of Squire's activities had failed financially and it is a sad commentary that of only seven cars built, no less than four of them were first owned by Squire themselves, or by Squire directors.

Even though the asking price was slashed in 1935 to less than £1,000, there was no demand for this elegant but costly device. By then, unfortunately, SS had released the SS100 two-seater and had rendered most other people's prices obsolete. The company had to be wound up; all the spare parts were sold off and Squire himself moved to Staines where he rejoined W.O. Bentley at Lagonda. Then, during the war, Squire worked for the Bristol Aeroplane Company and was tragically killed in an air-raid. Val Zethrin, of Kent, bought up a lot of parts and managed to assemble two more Squires before the war, but total production of all Squires, including the single-seater which raced at Brooklands, was no more than nine. All but the single-seater survive to this day.



Above: Built in 1935, the unique Squire 'featherweight' had an eye to competitions, and not to elegance. It used the short chassis, and super-tuned twin-cam Anzani engine.



Above: The 1 1/2-litre supercharged Squire was one man's dream car—made in tiny numbers (nine in all) by Adrian Squire's little company near Henley-on-Thames. Almost everything