



R Ö H R

Like the Maybachs, Hans Gustav Röhrl was constrained from returning to his usual work by the Versailles Treaty. And like the Maybachs, this former aero engine builder and World War I pilot chose the automobile field. After designing cars for Priamus of Cologne, Röhrl was able to secure financial backing to start his own company—Röhrl Automobilwerke AG near Darmstadt-Hessen. The first Röhrl created a sensation in 1928. A specification that

included a platform chassis, swing axles in the rear and parallelogram front suspension, plus Lockheed hydraulic brakes guaranteed that. But, alas, it did not guarantee commercial success.

By 1930 Gustav Röhrl had left to work for Adler and subsequently Daimler-Benz where he was responsible for engineering the Mercedes-Benz 500K into the 540K. Meanwhile, his former factory manager found fresh financial backing to carry on. The Type F was introduced in 1932. Ironically, the engineer responsible for modifying the Röhrl design was former Mercedes-Benz alumnus Ferdinand Porsche. The Type F engine was the

Röhrl's biggest ever—an ohv 3.3 liter straight eight generating 75 hp and offering 70 mph motoring. The striking coachwork on the car seen here is by Autenrieth of Darmstadt.

It was, understandably, the similarity in name which initially attracted the late Edgar E. Rohr to this car, which had been brought to this country by a U.S. Army officer after the war. There was no family connection. Through research, Ed was able to learn that this Type F had been specifically built for the 1933 Automobile Exposition in Berlin. Its "step-down" design and lack of running boards were remarkably progressive for the period. With the window open, the central door posts

fold down to provide an early example of what later would be called hardtop styling. Overall, the car presents a fascinating amalgam—Teutonic massiveness with a touch of teardrop streamlining more commonly associated with the French school of design.

Unfortunately, the Neue Röhre werke AG did not long survive this show car. By 1935 the factory was turned over to the manufacture of agricultural implements. In 1937 Hans Gustav Röhr died of a lung infection at the age of forty-two; at the time he was at work on a front-wheel-drive project for Mercedes (which died with him). Only a handful of Röhr automobiles are known to exist.



1933 Röhr Type F Special Sedan, Autenrieth
Owner: Mrs. Edgar E. Röhr, Röhr's Museum, Manassas, Virginia

