Petersen Automotive Museum Partners with Motor Trend Group to Digitize One Million Images from the Petersen Publishing Archive

The Petersen Publishing Photo Archive Digitization Project - made possible by a grant from the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) - serves both automotive enthusiasts and scholars alike and is now publicly available through the museum’s website

LOS ANGELES (November 5, 2018) – The Petersen Automotive Museum has partnered with Motor Trend Group, formerly known as TEN: The Enthusiast Network, to digitize 1 million images from the Petersen Publishing Archive. Made possible with a grant from the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), the Petersen Publishing Photo Archive Digitization Project has culminated in a publicly available database that preserves Petersen Publishing’s contributions to automotive history and culture in an increasingly digital world. Following an initial announcement at the 2017 Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance, the project’s launch was just announced at the SEMA Show in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Consisting of more than 10 million images, the Petersen Publishing Archive is a collection of physical photographic negatives and transparencies that were originally shot for Petersen publications between the 1940’s and 1980’s. Source Interlink Media (SIM) conducted an initial digitization effort of 500,000 images, however, SEMA’s interest in the archive and subsequent generosity allowed the Petersen to hire three full-time staff members to accelerate the process.

Led by Petersen Archivist Laura Fisher, Petersen Director of Technology, Alex Rosales, and Motor Trend Group Archivist Thomas Voehringer, the project team consisted of passionate automotive historians and film preservationists who evaluated the significance of the collection as a whole. The labor-intensive project will set the standard by which other automotive institutions develop and share their own archives. Ultimately, the Petersen facilitated the fulfillment of founder Robert E. Petersen’s wish to share his legacy with the world in a way that is both meaningful and accessible.

“Our namesake Robert E. Petersen single-handedly built the world’s largest special-interest publishing empire,” said Executive Director of the Petersen Automotive Museum Terry L. Karges. “It is up to us as the gatekeepers of his empire to preserve the archive of Petersen Publishing materials by sharing it with the public digitally. This project has helped propel the Petersen to the forefront of automotive thought for future generations to come.”

For more information about the Petersen Publishing Photo Archive Digitization Project, visit archive.Petersen.org. To learn more about the Petersen Automotive Museum, please visit www.Petersen.org.

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The Petersen Automotive Museum Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charity. The Museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax) in Los Angeles, California, 90036. Admission prices are $16 for general admission adults, $14 for seniors, $11 for children ages 4 to 17. Active military with ID, personal care attendants and children under four are admitted free. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For general information, call 323-930-CARS or visit www.Petersen.org.