

**335 West Lutge Avenue  
Burbank, California 91506-3321  
May 23, 2025**

Burbank Historical Society  
115 Lomita Street  
Burbank, CA 91506

Subject: Burbank's Automotive Personalities

Dear Curators,

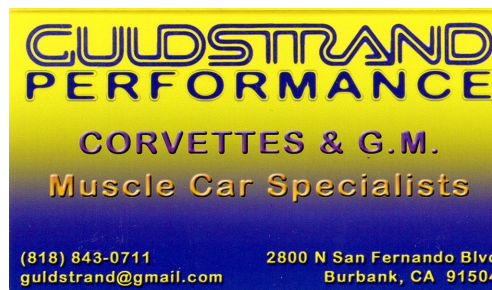
My wife and I are members of the Society and automotive enthusiasts. There is an informal group of former racers, photographers and collectors that meets monthly at the Coral Café: "Burbank Underground Breakfast and Automotive Historical Society" (BUBAAHS) <http://www.carlibrary.org/BUBAAHS/>

At a recent BUBAAHS breakfast, we discussed Joel Thorne, a wealthy playboy, an Indy racer and racecar owner who crashed his airplane after taking off from the Burbank airport on October 17, 1955. There is a brief bio of Thorne on Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joel\\_Thorne](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joel_Thorne)

There is a longer biography and his racing history in Automobile Quarterly, Volume 31, No 3. which is included with this letter.

Long ago, Fred Chaparro, the owner of the Automotive Book Stop (on Magnolia Ave, now closed) told me that Thorne's race support shop (Thorne Engineering Company) was in Burbank at the intersection of San Fernando Road and Buena Vista St.

Years later, this location was Dick Guldstrand's ("Mr. Corvette") shop, Guldstrand Performance, before Dick relocated his business to 912 Chestnut St. Burbank. An early business card from Dick has the address 2800 N. San Fernando Road in Burbank. I visited Dick's shop here.



Although now there is a business at that address, the location of the original address was covered by support columns when Interstate 5 was reconstructed a few years ago.

Dick Guldstrand was also a world-famous racer who came often to BUBAAHS until his passing in 2015. He raced and sold modified Corvettes (<https://www.guldstrand.com/>) at both of his Burbank shop locations. He was inducted into the Corvette Hall of Fame in 1999:

<https://www.corvettemuseum.org/dick-guldstrand/>

Also attached is a DVD interview of Dick Guldstrand done by Bill Pollack, another deceased racer who won the Pebble Beach road race in 1951 and became an organizer of the Cal Club. The Cal Club later merged with the SCCA which still manages nation-wide sport car racing.

I hope you will find this a useful addition to the museum's collection.

Sincerely,

Bob Schmitt

[rgschmitt@gmail.com](mailto:rgschmitt@gmail.com)