

THE CLASSIC CAR



Volume XLIX, Number 3, Fall 2021



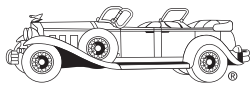
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JONATHAN SIERAKOWSKI

Editor

2517 Treen Street
Raleigh, NC 27614
(860) 690-9630

cars@jonathansierakowski.com

Published by the
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(847) 390-0443

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THE CLASSIC CAR

The Classic Car Club of America is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New York. The Club seeks to further the restoration and preservation of distinctive motor cars produced in the period from 1915 to 1948, to provide a channel of communication for those interested in such cars, and to bring together in good fellowship all who own or admire these fine examples of automotive craftsmanship. The sole requirement for membership is a demonstrable interest in Classic cars. Application for membership should be forwarded to Club Headquarters.

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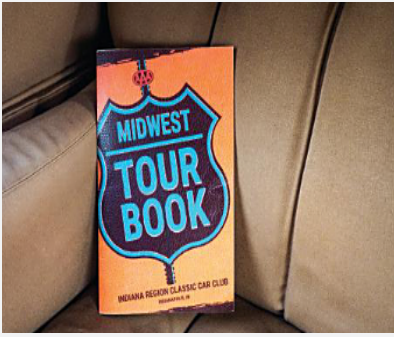
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Courtesy the Richard H. Driebaus Collection, Chicago.



THE CONTINENTAL
Lincoln's Glamorous Status Symbol. See page 4.



IN THIS ISSUE

Our Fall issue of *The Classic Car* opens with a contribution by Mike Hayward about Lincoln Continentals, followed by coverage of the Indiana Region's recent Classic Lincoln on Route 66 CARavan. Next is a piece about an Individual Custom Packard with long-term history in the CCCA, and we look closer with a deep look at two nearly identical Isotta Fraschinis with Fleetwood coachwork.

Pictured on the front cover complementing one of our articles is a 1927 Isotta Fraschini chassis 1175, ©Darin Schnabel, Courtesy of RM Sotheby's. Our back cover is a shot from the Indiana Region CARavan, courtesy Darrell Staggs.

CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA | WWW.CLASSICCARCLUB.ORG | INFO@CLASSICCARCLUB.ORG

ARIZONA (1989)

Steve Evans
2540 West Coyote Creek Drive
Anthem, AZ 85086
602-214-1527
sevans@fastvertical.com

CAROLINA (2012)

Andrew Straw
1730 29th Avenue Pl NE
Hickory, NC 28601
828-855-5887
akstraw@icloud.com

CHESAPEAKE BAY (1957)

Russ Bullock
4705 Butler Road
Glyndon, MD 21071
410-833-0472
krwb@verizon.net

COLONIAL (2004)

Gunther Hoyt
124 Kirk Ave, Apt B
Roanoke, VA 24011
540-230-4546 (C)
hghoyt@gmail.com

COLORADO (1954)

Dick Stokes
6 Glenview Drive
Littleton, CO 80123
303-378-9370
bdstokes5@msn.com

DELAWARE VALLEY (1954)

David Niescior
1046 Red Oak Drive
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
609-922-2508
davidn@gmail.com

FLORIDA (1977)

Chuck Mitchell
2708 Embassy Drive
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
914-474-0137
emitch7@aol.com

GREATER ILLINOIS (1953)

Russ Rodriguez
5 N 373 Fairway Lane
Itasca, IL 60143
630-775-0922 (H)
630-767-9000 (B)
russarod@gmail.com

INDIANA (1959)

Don Shuck
999 N. 350 E.
Logansport, IN 46947
317-374-8772
Don_shuck@ml.com

LONG ISLAND SOUND (2010)

Andrew W. Johnson
64 Saint Marks Place
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577
516-626-1685
Aajj88@optonline.net

METRO (1979)

Matthew Orendac
103 Teaberry Lane
Lumberton, NJ 08048
609-702-1293
morendac@hagerty.com

MICHIGAN (1956)

Greg Stachura
720 Candlewood Court
Canton, MI 48188
734-397-9361
gstachura@comcast.net

NEW ENGLAND (1954)

Jeff DeMarey
10 Chestnut Hill Road
Hampden, MA 01036
413-531-3991
jeff@demarey.net

NEW SOUTH (2002)

Bill Waller
3518 Paces Place NW
Atlanta, GA 30327
770-331-7028
wwallet@aol.com

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (1964)

Ed Holloway
PO Box 6
Walnut Creek, CA 94597
925-933-0405
Edholloway123@gmail.com

OHIO (1953)

Allan Truelson
3616 Erhart Road
Litchfield, OH 44253
216-299-0576
allantruelson@gmail.com

OIL BELT (1960)

Norman Kressmann
1511 Farview
Raymore, MO 64083
816-331-6707
nmkressmann@comcast.net

OREGON (1988)

William (Bill) Jabs
27525 SE Starr Road
Eagle Creek, OR 97022
503-630-3323 (H)
971-235-3804 (C)
wjabs@cascadeaccess.com

PACIFIC NORTHWEST (1964)

Frank Daly
1651 209th Place NE
Redmond, WA 98074
425-868-7448 (H)
425-210-1804 (c)
Fwd9@hotmail.com

RIO GRANDE (1981)

Larry Icerman
2999 Calle Cerrada
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-473-2102
licerman@aol.com

SAN DIEGO/PALM SPRING (1992)

Mike Adams
P.O. Box 1994
Temecula, CA 92593
951-595-0153
Mikesadams4@gmail.com

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (1953)

Paul Whitney
1719 Crooked Trail Place
Westlake, CA 91362
818-597-9664
whitbit@pacbell.net

SPIRIT OF ST LOUIS (1984)

John Lowell
20 South Covington Meadow
St. Louis, MO 63132
314-997-3144 (H)
314-724-1493 (C)
jlowell@lowellmfg.com

TEXAS (1973)

Al Kroemer
1206 Burnett Drive
Latana, TX 76226
214-213-0770
akroemer@canteyhanger.com

UPPER MIDWEST (1953)

Mark L. Desch
9985 Arcola Ct N.
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-439-9479
markd@sas-mn.com

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (1954)

Jon Leimkuehler
2452 Washington Road
Upper St. Clair, PA 15241
412-427-6196 (C)
jonleim@yahoo.com

WISCONSIN (1968)

John Boswell II
724 Michigan Ave
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
414-764-9391
Joboswell1@wi.rr.com

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THE CONTINENTAL:

Lincoln's Glamorous



The 1941 Lincoln Continental restyled by Derham
for industrial designer Raymond Loewy.

Courtesy the Richard H. Driebaus Collection, Chicago.

Status Symbol

By Michael Hayward

On February 4, 1922, Henry Ford acquired the Lincoln Motor Car Company from Henry Leland as a toy for his only child, Edsel. Edsel was totally different from his father; he was a patron of the arts and loved to design automobile bodies. As a teenager he began keeping a scrapbook of various designs, with a preference for big luxury cars, something his father was never interested in building. >





Since 1913, Edsel had been attracted to European car designs and it was this interest that shaped Lincoln's offerings to high-brow socialites in America. When Edsel was 16 years old, he built a speedster of his own design, later commissioning custom cars for his vacations in Florida.

It was Edsel who set up Ford's first design studio in 1931, headed by Eugene "Bob" Gregorie for Lincoln automobiles. Over the years, Edsel and Bob Gregorie became great friends. When the pressure became too much as the President of Ford, he would often go over to the styling department and talk about car design or anything that came into his mind per Mr. Gregorie. Edsel seemed to relax in this environment.

In September 1938, Edsel had returned from Europe. This was not unusual for him, for Ford had extensive business interests in Europe. Edsel was the President of Ford Motor Company so it was only natural he would travel extensively around Europe. Fresh from his trip, he became excited by all the exotic designs he had seen, and contacted Gregorie with something to talk about: an idea for a custom car built for him. He indicated the car had to be



strictly continental in design. The selection of a chassis was a minor consideration; the chassis chosen would be the Lincoln-Zephyr.

Bob Gregorie went ahead with a 1/10 scale in yellow crayon blueprint of the 1939 Lincoln-Zephyr. As Gregorie later said, "I was able to put on paper and into clay the designs he was visualizing in his head." The trunk would not easily accommodate a spare tire, so the spare was mounted on the outside of the trunk. Gregorie admitted, "It

certainly wasn't a styling twist." It was just a solution to solve the spare tire problem. Edsel also did not like excessive chrome; thus, Gregorie was told by Edsel to keep the chrome to a minimum.

A 1/10 scale model in clay was made, then finally a 1/10 scale drawing. From the final clay model, Martin Regitko of the Design Department worked up a full-size draft of the body, then the assignment was referred to Henry Creelius of Lincoln



PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

The original Lincoln-Zephyr Continental of 1940.

Courtesy the Benson Ford Research Center.

An example of the 1942 Continental with its distinctive new frontal styling, displayed at an event in 1961.

Courtesy Bob Hickman.

A 1946 Continental restored in the livery of that year's Indianapolis 500 Pacesetter.

Courtesy the author.

A 1941 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet in 1961.

Courtesy Bob Hickman.



Body Engineering who completed the car in February of 1939. Like most of Edsel's special cars, it was painted Eagle Gray with gray leather trim. Photographs were taken and filed under "Lincoln-Zephyr special for Mr. Ford."

The car was shipped to Florida on March 1st. Its owner drove the car around Hobe Sound, where the Ford Estate was located, and around Palm Beach. It drew lots of attention wherever it appeared. Legend has

it that 200 blank-check orders were given to have copies of the same body style.

That said, Edsel discovered in driving the car that the brakes were just horrendous and the body leaked like a sieve. Obviously, some refinements had to be made if the car was going to be produced. A call to Dearborn followed, Edsel directing Gregorie to prepare a second car with modifications as an engineering prototype. "His own car is very heavy, over 5000 pounds. A bucket

of lead," as Gregorie described it. The news of the request for a prototype was sent to the factory. The comments were not good; the factory superintendent said, "Oh God, not that again." Nonetheless this second prototype was built and was used in the summer of 1939 by the engineering staff for testing and refining all things mechanical.

Initially seen as a series custom, the model was scheduled into the regular production line by the time Edsel returned



The Continental further freshened for 1946, as seen in this restored example.

Courtesy the Richard H. Driehaus Collection, Chicago.

to Detroit. He decided to call the car the Continental. On October 2, 1939, at the Ford Rotunda in Dearborn, then at the New York and Los Angeles auto show a few weeks later, the new car was formally introduced as the Continental Cabriolet model of the Zephyr line, priced at \$2,840.

The car was built on the standard 125-inch wheelbase Zephyr chassis, but was seven inches longer and three inches lower than the Zephyr. Overall length was 210 inches and height was 62 inches. The body had a long hood, a short passenger compartment, and a rear deck treatment, and the “continental” tire mount. Distinctively different than any other car on the road, every part of the body was

perfectly proportioned; it was lithe and graceful, yet sporty. Every Continental was virtually handmade utilizing modified Lincoln Zephyr parts, many of which were revised during the production of the car. The hubcaps and horn button carried the legendary Lincoln-Zephyr during the maiden year run of the car in 1940.

Mechanically the Continental Cabriolet was similar to the Zephyr starting with the 292-cubic-inch, 12-cylinder engine, which developed 120 hp at 3600 RPM. Suspension was via semi-elliptical transverse leaf springs front and rear with steering by worm and roller; transmission was three-speed with synchromesh on second and top with steering-column-mounted gearshift.

The car had four-wheel drum brakes. In all it weighed 3615 pounds. Edsel wanted the car to have the dash and spirit of a European custom car. He was not concerned with the performance of the car, which was secondary to him; styling was most important. It was a car not meant for the race track but for the boulevard, not for the would-be racer but for the discriminating buyer.

At the request of Henry Ford, the first Continental was presented by Edsel to Mickey Rooney, star of the popular Andy Hardy movies, which Henry loved for Rooney’s representation of the clean-cut all-American kid.

Soon after Cabriolet production was rolling, plans were being made to produce >

“He was not concerned with the performance of the car, which was secondary to him; styling was most important. It was a car not meant for the race track but for the boulevard, not for the would-be racer but for the discriminating buyer.”

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1941 (model first produced in 1940). Manufactured by Ford Motor Co., Dearborn, Michigan.

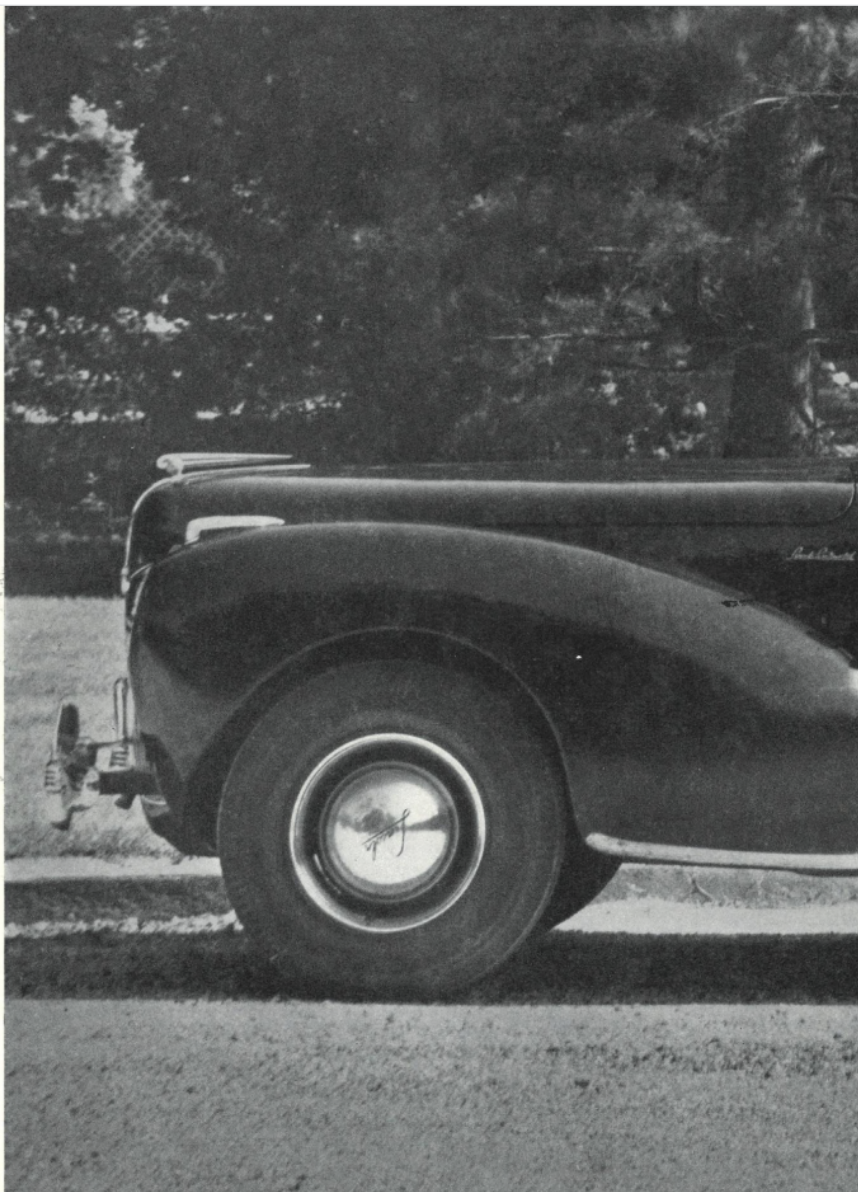
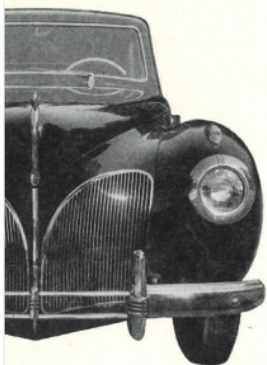
Overall length 17 feet 8 inches.

Like the Cord, the Lincoln Continental is, basically, a box to which fenders have been added. The Continental differs from the Cord, however, in that its front fenders, which are the only major addition to the body, are not shaped for maximum contrast. Instead, they are kept flat and tight to the sides, from which they seem to grow. Both the body and the fenders give way to each other as they meet. Just where a rounded sculptural treatment of the front fenders is unavoidable, the low, squared body itself changes shape, tapering into a prow-like grille of pronounced sculptural character. This flexibility in relating planes is due not to a specific detail alone, but to the varying nature of the parts themselves. The squareness of the luggage compartment, for example, is derived from its function, and the spare wheel without which it seems incomplete is its perfect sculptural complement.

While the fenders of the Cord are related to the body by rounded intersections common to every part of the car, the Continental has some sharp and obvious joints scored with a chromium line for extra emphasis. This detail is particularly evident at the rear of the passenger compartment, where a chromium stripe joins the base line of the side window to the higher level of the luggage compartment. Chromium is used to accent other important points: the rising base line of the front fender, the stabilizing vertical of the doorpost—scored with extra weight—and the headlights whose frames stretch to follow the contour of the fenders, rather than of the circular headlights.

Among so many variants the characteristic line, giving discipline and continuity to the whole design, is a very flat curve abruptly ended by a tight hook or curl—which leads immediately into the next long curve. This sequence of lines has an incisive, “drafting board” quality, a studied limitation of resources which, while it may account for the somewhat underscaled wheels, disciplines a design unusually free of any single, all-embracing concept.

The Lincoln Continental satisfies the requirements of connoisseurs while capturing the imagination of a public less preoccupied with the refinements of automobile design.



a Continental Coupe, which was a hardtop convertible. The Coupe model was ready for the market in late May of 1940. By the end of September, a total of 404 Continentals had been delivered: 350 Cabriolets and 54 Coupes. On September 20, 1940, the Continental came into its own. No longer was it to be considered part of the Lincoln-Zephyr line. The name Zephyr was dropped from its name, and on the spare tire hubcap and the side of the hood, “Lincoln Continental” was diecast in script.

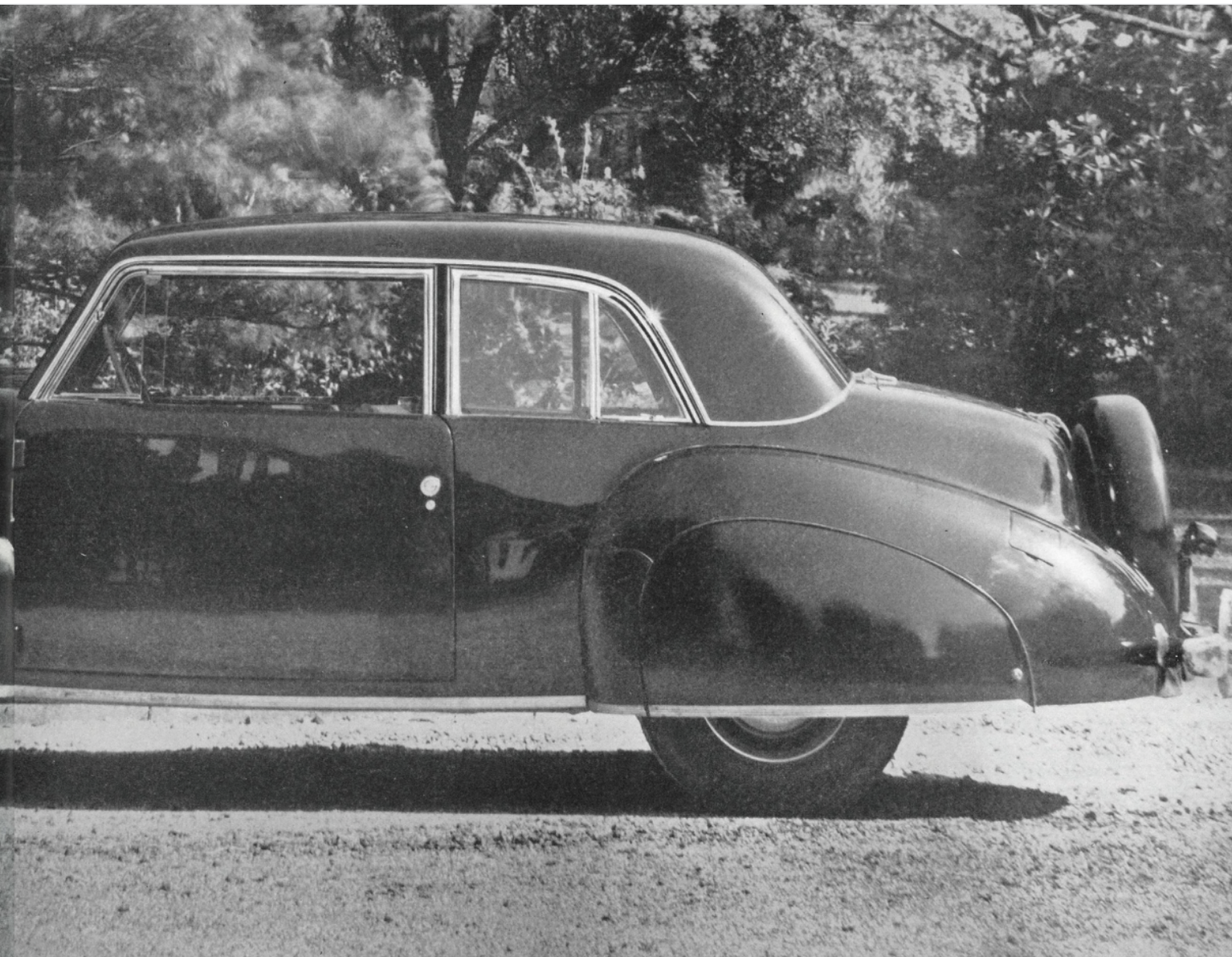
Some of the noticeable changes for 1941 Continentals were suspension improved by lengthening and widening the rear springs, the addition of rubber interleaf inserts, and more effective shock absorbers. The refinements for 1941 included push-button

door controls, an electrically-powered convertible top replacing the previous vacuum system, and a dashboard-located hood release, replacing the former rotating ornament on the hood. Continental production was held down to 100 units per month, with deliveries on a waiting list basis as the 1942 model year approached.

Among the people who owned the original 1940-41 models included Mickey Rooney, Randolph Scott, Rita Hayworth, Sally Rand, Babe Ruth and Frank Lloyd Wright. Architect Wright said the Continental was the most beautiful car ever designed, while author John Steinbeck noted that no other car “so satisfied my soul.”

For 1942, public taste in automobiles

seemed to be trending toward frontal massiveness. The new Lincoln Continental would follow the trend. Its fenders were flattened, widened, and lengthened; the hood was made more coffin-nosed; and the grill, which had been vertical in 1940-41 models, gave way to a horizontal design. The length was increased by 7.18 inches, the height decreased by one inch, and the weight increased by an average 165 pounds. Because of these changes the engine was bored out to 305 cubic inches. An improved manifold was also used. Horsepower was increased to 130 hp from the previous 120 hp. These improvements were short lived, as automobile production came to a halt in February of 1942 due to America’s entrance into World War II.



The Lincoln Continentals introduced in 1946, when production resumed, were updated with new trim and a distinguished new grill. These new postwar Continentals cost \$4,500, very expensive for the time. A new color was introduced, Pace Car Yellow, made available as the 1946 Lincoln Continental was the Pacemaker for the Indianapolis 500. In 1947 the Lincoln Continental had its best year, selling 1,569 cars.

Nineteen forty-eight would be the Continental's last year. The car was discontinued for a few reasons: the spiraling costs of production, the investment necessary to make the Continental competitive with the face of a redesigned Lincoln for 1949; and the Ford Motor

Company being restructured which led to the departure of Bob Gregorie. In reality, however, the future of the Lincoln Continental was sealed with the death of Edsel Ford on May 26, 1943, from stomach cancer. Without Edsel, the Continental was destined to be discontinued and the car would become just a happy memory. The postwar Continentals were the last cars produced and sold by a major U.S. manufacturer with a V-12 engine.

Each of the 5,324 Lincoln Continentals built between 1940-1948 would be a monument to good taste. In succeeding years, a 1941 Continental Coupe lent by Bimel Kehm would be one of the eight automobiles chosen "for the excellence as works of art" by the Museum of Modern Art

A 1941 Lincoln Continental Coupe was one of eight automobiles displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in 1951.

Courtesy Jonathan Sierakowski.

in 1951. That same year, *Time* magazine listed the Lincoln Continental as number six among the one hundred best designed commercial products of all time.

As one era ended, however, it ushered in another. Lee Iacocca went to work for Ford Motor Co. in 1948 following his graduation from Princeton. The reason he chose Ford was because the man who came to interview him drove up in a Lincoln Continental. He felt a company who built such a beautiful car was the company for him. ●

The Classic Lincoln on

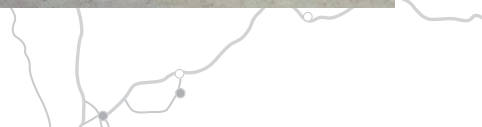


CARAVAN

--- BY STEVE TARR ---



Traveling on Route 66.

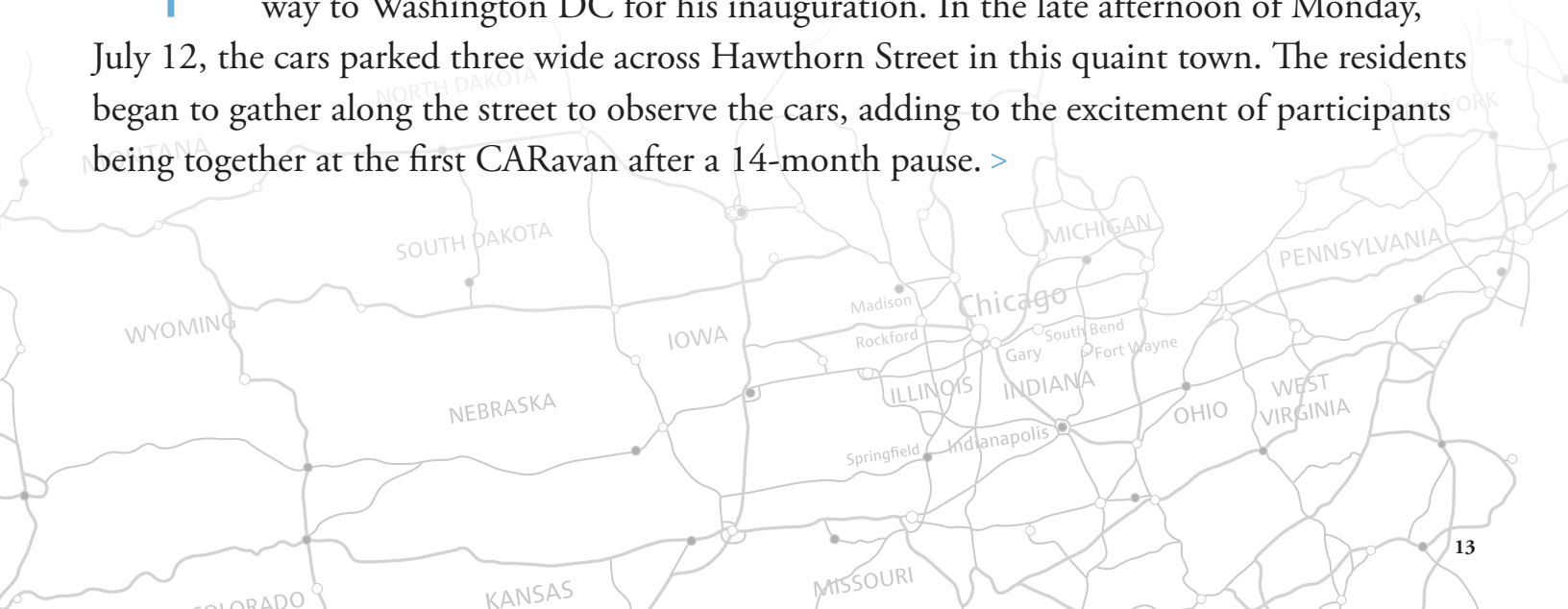




Steve and Robbi Ortman's 1932 Chrysler CH Imperial Sedan.

The Indiana Region merged two Midwest treasures, the 16th US President, Abraham Lincoln, and Route 66, into an historic and memorable CARavan with 68 participants from 13 states, driving 28 motor cars.

The tour traveled through two states for over 800 miles, beginning in Zionsville, Indiana, where Lincoln made a whistle stop speech in 1861 on his way to Washington DC for his inauguration. In the late afternoon of Monday, July 12, the cars parked three wide across Hawthorn Street in this quaint town. The residents began to gather along the street to observe the cars, adding to the excitement of participants being together at the first CARavan after a 14-month pause. >





PHOTOGRAPH BY TOME DOVE

Mark Olsen's 1924 Cole 890 Royal Master 7-Passenger Sedan.

Cars began leaving the hotel Tuesday morning at around 7:30 a.m. to volunteer Tom Robbins waving a green flag. It was a fun sendoff! The CARavan proceeded through a lush green countryside with acres and acres of soybeans and corn. One unexpected sight for many were giant windmills for miles, turning effortlessly in the sunshine. Our first stop was Hoopeston, IL, and the community came out to greet us including a local newspaper reporter.

We continued for just over another hour and stopped for lunch at Castle Gardens. This 60-acre property, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, includes a nature trail, nine-hole golf course, and two miles of miniature G16 train track, and is home to a round barn that houses a vintage carousel designed by internationally known carousel maker Allen Herschell. After touring the house, eating lunch, riding the carousel, and sharing a unique Route 66 cake for dessert, a group picture was taken in the garden.

It was then time to begin the 20-minute drive North on "The Mother Road," Route 66, to Pontiac, IL. The local Tourist Bureau in Pontiac was ready for us — handing out special Route 66 pins. We visited the Route 66 Museum, the Pontiac-Oakland Museum, and the Gilding Museum, and then proceeded to seek out the 23 outdoor murals that make up a great walking tour of the city.

At 8 a.m. sharp on Wednesday morning, we drove South on Route 66 to our coffee break stop, Atlanta, IL. The local tourist council had done radio spots and newspaper ads announcing that the CARavan was coming to town. CARavan members gave out hand fans with our logo and talked to residents along Arch Street, which was closed for us to park. It was a perfect set up for a picture taken in front of Paul



PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS

Aedan Moss driving his grandfather Jon Leimkuehler's 1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom I Derby Phaeton with brother Sammy Moss in the backseat.

Bunyan. An interesting historical fact is that townspeople in Atlanta were introduced to the automobile through a one-cylinder Oldsmobile brought there in 1902 by James C Shores. The crowd enjoyed seeing the different Classic cars. One person was overheard saying "our little town has not looked this pretty in over 40 years."

Soon it was time to press the starter button to fire up the engines for our continued drive South on Historic Route 66 to The Abraham >



PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS

CARavan participants at the Castle Gardens in Lexington, IL.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS

A portion of Steve and Susan Zumdahl's automobile collection.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS

Allen Strong sharing his collection.

THE CROWD ENJOYED SEEING THE DIFFERENT CLASSIC CARS. ONE PERSON WAS OVERHEARD SAYING "OUR LITTLE TOWN HAS NOT LOOKED THIS PRETTY IN OVER 40 YEARS."



Allerton Retreat and Conference Center.

Lincoln Library and Museum for lunch. A delightful regional favorite called a Horseshoe sandwich was on the menu. For those of you who have never had one—it is an open-faced sandwich consisting of thick-sliced Texas toast, hamburger or other choice of meat, piled high with French fries and topped with cheese sauce.

After lunch, a curator dressed in black-tie came to the podium and began a short presentation on how Lincoln's body was almost stolen from the tomb by three men in the autumn of 1876. He even had the actual lock that the perpetrators broke to enter the tomb. Check your history—it is a fascinating story! A planned open Wednesday evening gave everyone flexibility to choose one of the many eating places in the area.

It was a beautiful sunny morning when we arrived at Bill Kennedy's Greenwood Estate on Thursday, July 15. Bill cheerfully directed us to a portion of the lawn where we could take some aerial photos of the cars against the backdrop of his four-gabled bell tower garage and his beautiful English Tudor home. Bill's vintage motor car collection includes Classic Rolls-Royces that he has driven all over the world, interspersed with a 1909 Cadillac and a 1909 Oldsmobile (NC), just for starters.

After seeing Bill's amazing collection and touring his home, we were on the road again to downtown Monticello, IL. We arrived in time for lunch downtown. We then had a chance to visit the Monticello Train Museum, with over 100 pieces of railroad equipment, and to drive to see the Zumdahl Collection. Steve and Susan have some wonderful cars along with a special gun collection that includes a rifle owned by a famous Indian chief.

Soon it was time to check into the Allerton Park and Retreat Center. It was built as the private estate of artist and philanthropist Robert Henry Allerton in 1900. There were tours of the mansion that evening and dinner in the grand salon with special CCCA guests, >



Roseann Gernatt and grandson Colin Tupis dressed in his bow tie!

PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS



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Outside Greenwood Estate's bell tower and garage.

PHOTOS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:

Sonya and Bill Miller serving up some delicious ice cream treats at their collection.; Closing banquet at Andy and MaDonna Wolf's special collection at the Wolfsonian.; Nancy Strong inviting everyone to try on some hats!

Allen and Nancy Strong, Steve and Susan Zumdahl, and Bob and Sheila Joynt.

Early Friday morning, July 17, as the sun was rising and the mist clearing over the pond, a hot breakfast was served in the carriage house. The chief horticulturalist from the Allerton took us on a garden tour of the property before we headed to Allen and Nancy Strong's collection to check out the clothes that go with the cars, plus there is so much outstanding memorabilia and so many beautiful cars.

Leaving Urbana, IL, we drove to Covington, IN, just over the Indiana border for lunch at the famous Beef House Restaurant, and then on to Carmel, IN. Due to weather, our BBQ was an indoor picnic since the polo match was cancelled. We invited the head referee to provide an overview of the game and he even brought a polo mallet to provide more details about the sport. Unbeknown to the group, a pianist and movie projectionist came to screen the Buster Keaton's silent film, *The General*.

On Saturday, our final day of the tour, we headed north to Lafayette, IN, to see John Gamb's collection of Rolls Royces, Pierce-Arrows and Packards. There is even a McFarlan, Cord, and Duesenberg in the mix, along with fire trucks and much more. It was splendid of John to share his collection. From the Gamb's estate, it was a short drive to lunch at the Masonic Lodge in Frankfort, IN, and a five-minute walk over to Bill and Sonya Miller's Goodwin Collection. They have beautiful automobiles along with hearses, bicycles, baby carriages, license plates, and to top it all off, winning race cars. Sonya and her team were behind the soda shop counter taking orders and dishing up delicious varieties of sundaes, shakes, and cones, featuring locally made ice cream.

An afternoon drive found the group back in Indianapolis. Andy and MaDonna Wolf's collection at the Wolfsonian was a most fitting locale for the final dinner of the week. Their collection is housed in a building that inside features the facade of a diner, gas station, and general store that is so much fun to check out. There is also a train room, numerous kinds of automotive signs, Indy 500 photographs, and of course all kinds of wonderful cars. You can spend hours and still not see everything.

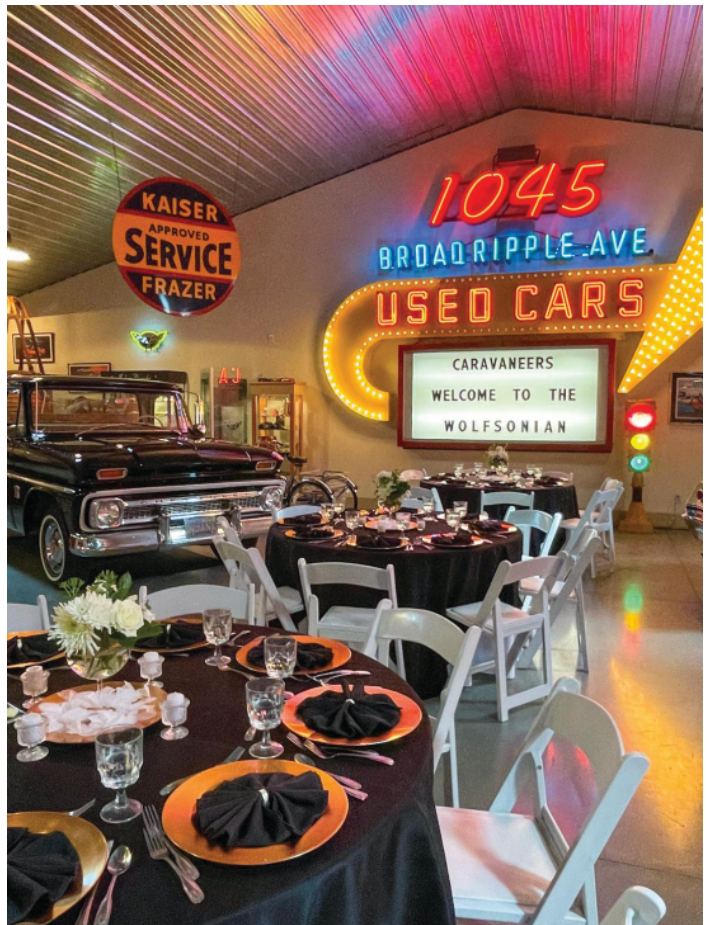
The evening banquet was a little dressier for everyone including bow ties for the men just for fun—giving us a chance to work on our bow-tying skills. As a tradition, the Crossett Award was presented to the Best Full Classic® completing its first CARavan under present ownership. It went to a deserving Tom and Roseanne Bayliff from Spencerville, OH for their 1941 Cadillac 60 Special Fleetwood. The Deutsch Award for Most Helpful CARavaner is selected by the CARavan Committee from ballots given to all participants; Dave Kane was our well-deserved winner.

Another highlight of the evening was honoring Carol and Larry Pumphrey for their continued service on the CCCA Education Foundation Board with a silent auction. Up for bid were AAA Tour Books from the '20s, '30s and '40s, plus bracelets from the 1933 World's Fair, Route 66 books, old road maps, and more. Raising over \$3,000 for the Education Foundation was a great way to end the week.

Thank you to everyone who made this event a success. It takes a lot of nice people doing a lot of nice things to make it all happen. ●



PHOTOGRAPH BY AL HOLZHAUSEN

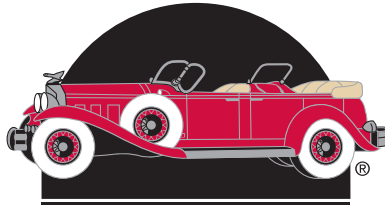


PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS



PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRELL STAGGS

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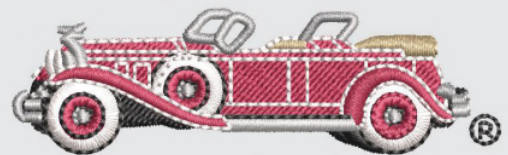
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OF AMERICA

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THE CHARTER MEMBER:
1932 PACKARD
INDIVIDUAL CUSTOM CONVERT



904 INDIVIDUAL VICTORIA BY DIETRICH

BY JONATHAN SIERAKOWSKI & CHRIS SUMMERS



COURTESY RM SOTHEBY'S

The glamorous vee-windshield Dietrich Individual Custom bodies offered by Packard twixt 1932 and 1934 were exactly that: limited-series coachwork delivered finished in the colors and trim chosen by individual buyers. Five styles were initially offered: the Stationary Coupe, Convertible Runabout, Convertible Victoria, Sport Phaeton, and Convertible Sedan, with a sixth, the Sport Sedan, introduced for 1933. The only eight-cylinder chassis to receive Individual Custom bodies were the earliest examples built, on the 904 Deluxe Eight platform. These cars were completed in early 1932, just prior to the introduction of the second-generation Twin Six; once the V-12 arrived, all future Individual Customs were constructed on that chassis. >

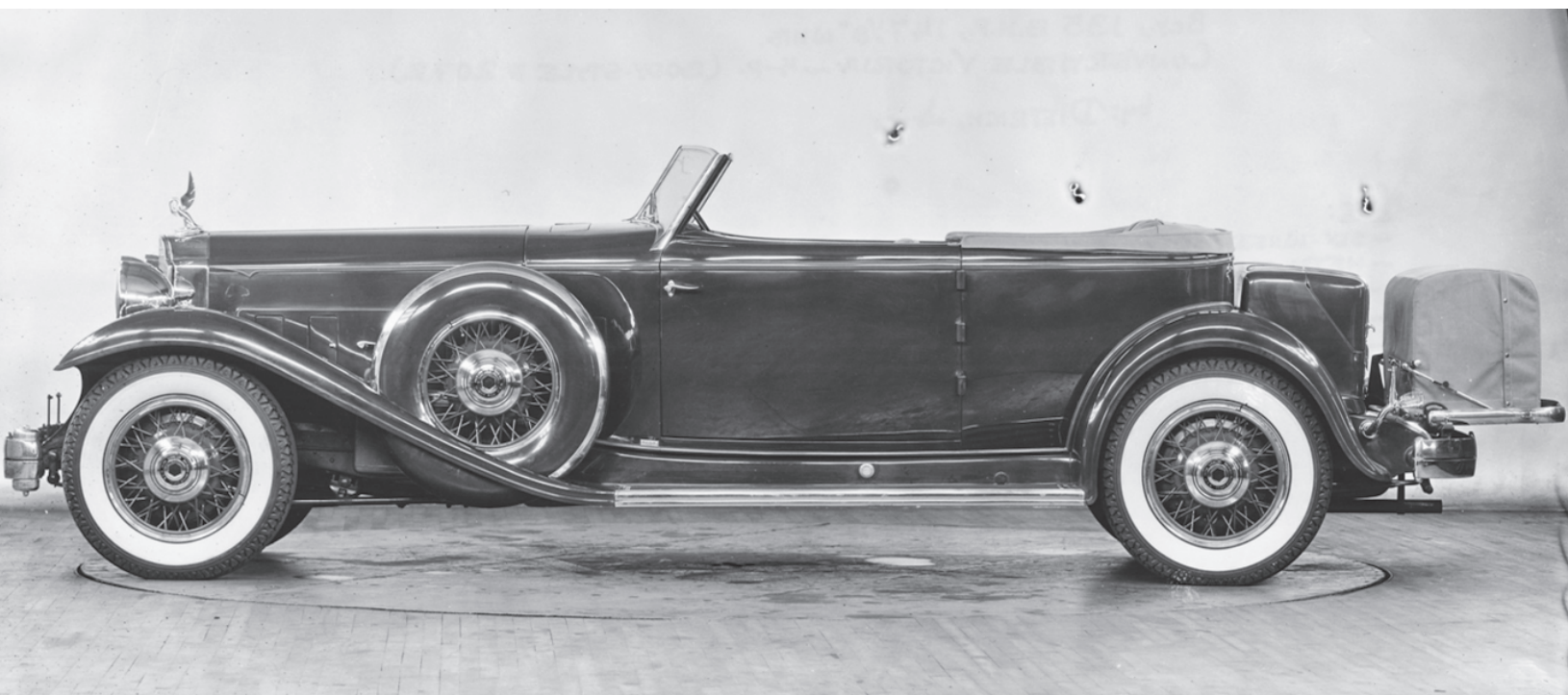
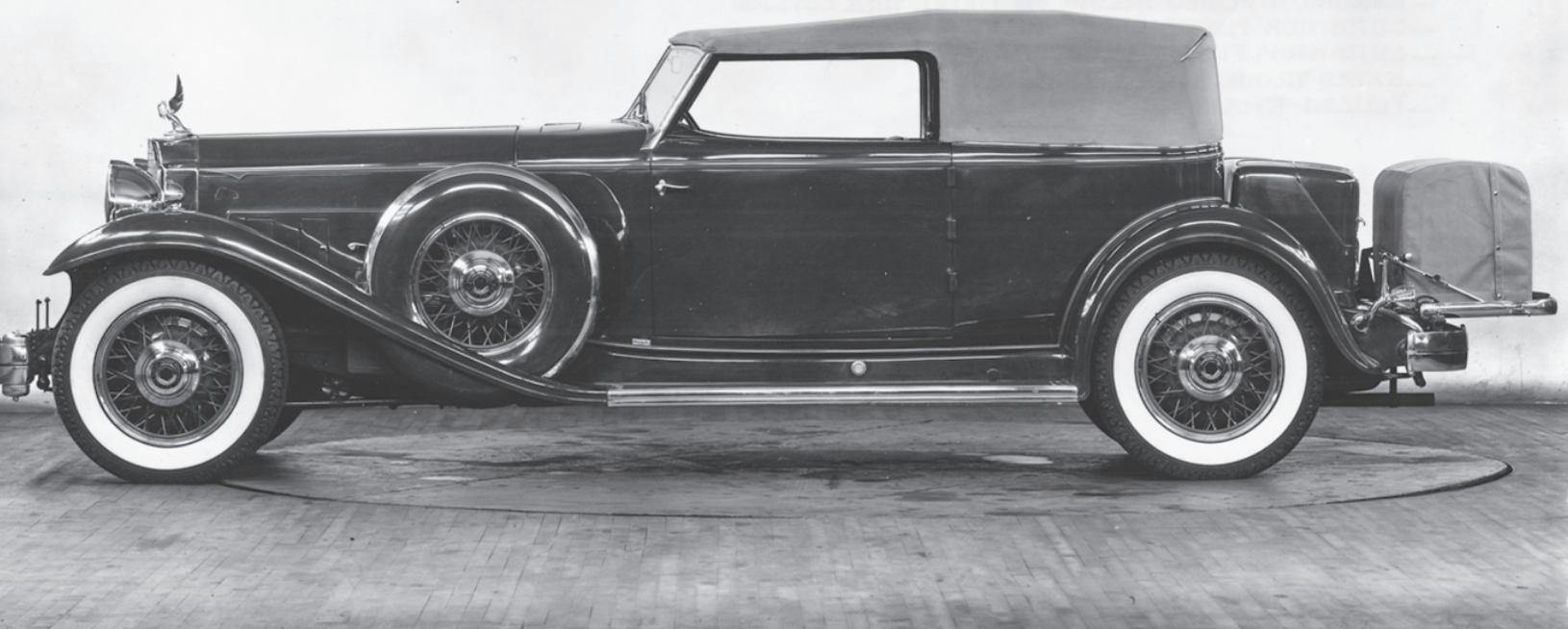


PHOTO TOP: The Individual Custom Convertible Victoria was a work of beauty, even with the top up.; PHOTO BOTTOM: The lowered top folded nearly flush with the rear deck, giving the Convertible Victoria the long, low appearance of an open tourer. *Photos courtesy Detroit Public Library.*

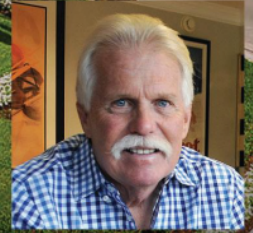
Ten Individual Custom 904 Deluxe Eights remain extant, four of which are the Convertible Victoria, with exceptional lines distinguished by a top that folds nearly flush with the rear deck when lowered. It was one of the sportiest, leanest and dashing four-passenger convertibles of the Classic Era – a design that is not soon forgotten by those who admire it. Unsurprisingly, one of those cars was among those around which the club for the world's greatest automobiles was founded.

Vehicle no. 904-85 was originally delivered by Park Avenue Packard of New York City on April 13, 1932. It evidently remained in the general vicinity with its earliest owners, as in 1950 it was titled to Russell Lewis of Washington, New Jersey. Mr. Lewis was a charter member of the Classic Car Club of America who also served as Vice President. In his ownership, this car was noted in several of our Club's earliest rosters. A longtime Packard enthusiast who owned several examples, he

wisely considered the Individual Custom Convertible Victoria his favorite, enjoying it in basically original condition aside from newer paint; photographs from his ownership show it intact save only for its spare tire covers.

In 1968 the car was sold by Mr. Lewis to Richard "Dick" Cantwell, also of New Jersey, for \$1,200. Mr. Cantwell, in turn, passed the Packard two years later to Graham Rowley of Goffstown, New Hampshire, who sold it >

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 February 25 – February 27, 2022
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COLLECTOR OF THE YEAR: Guy Lewis

ANNUAL AUTOMOTIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT RECIPIENTS
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MARQUE OF THE YEAR: Pre-War Chrysler and Imperial, Coach Built

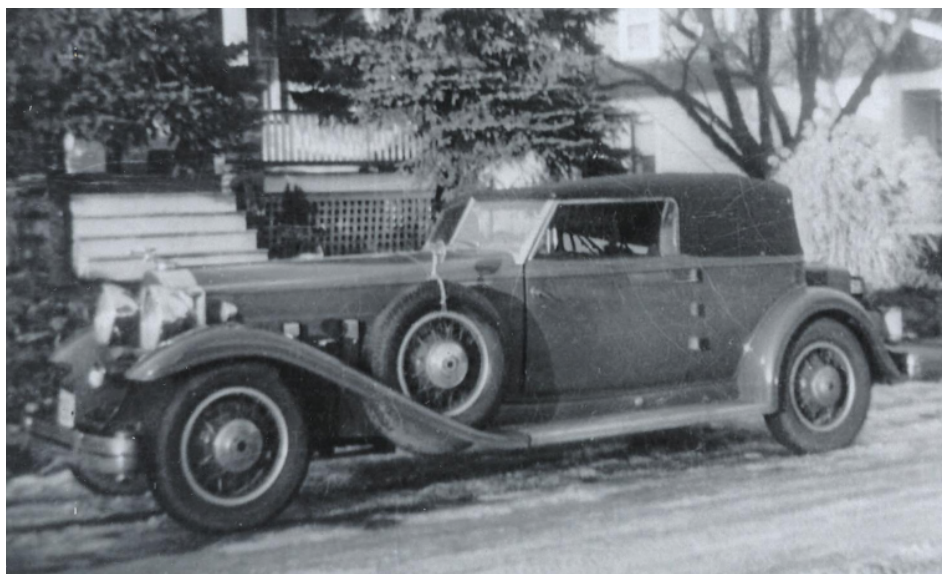
FEATURE OF THE YEAR:

- i. Post-War Chrysler & Imperials – 1946 – 1957 and 1958 – 1975
- ii. 100th Anniversary of the Springfield Rolls-Royce
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Casually parked on the street. *Courtesy Allen Lewis.*

in 1975 to longtime CCA member James Tharp of Palos Park, Illinois. Still in essentially the same well-preserved original condition as kept by Mr. Lewis, it was next acquired in 1980 by John Mozart, then in 1986 by Otis Chandler. Mr. Chandler sold the Packard in 1988 to Charles Wallace of Massachusetts, who passed it in 1990 to the Imperial Palace of Las Vegas.

Its restoration, begun in Mr. Chandler's hands, was completed under the new auspices by Scott Veazey, and the completed product delivered to Imperial Palace manager Richie Clyne at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway. To the surprise of no one who knows Richie, upon delivery he insisted upon test-driving the Packard, not on the street but on the steeply banked speedway track. By the end of the run, Mr. Veazey



COURTESY RM SOTHEBY'S

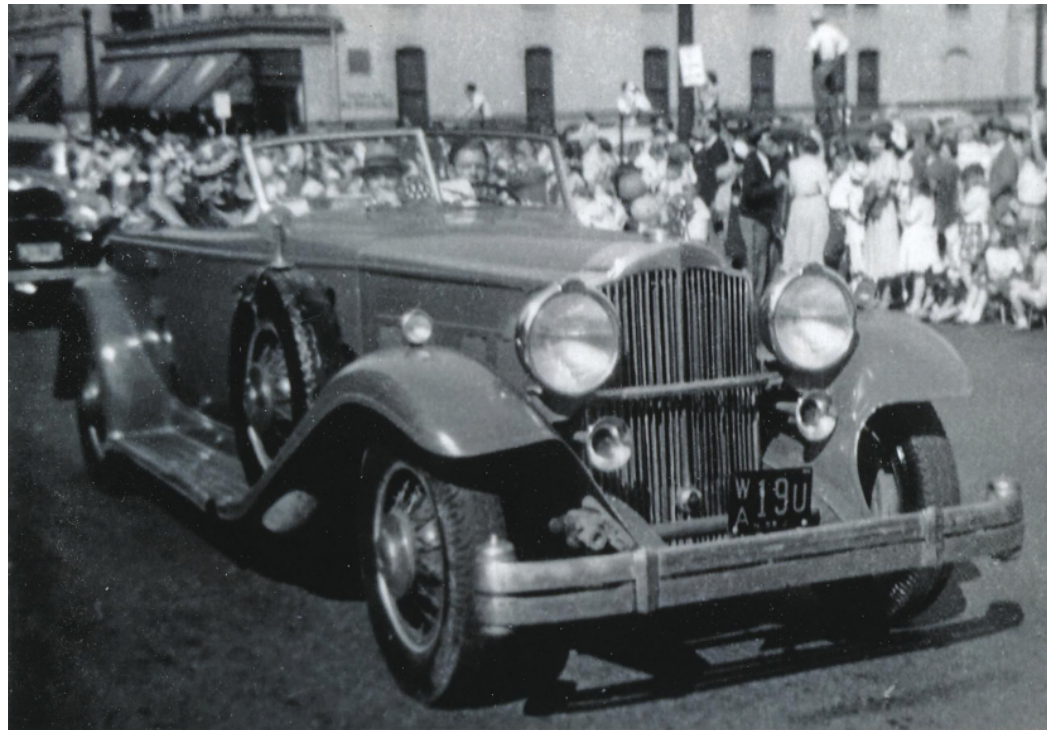


PHOTO TOP: Being paraded by the Lewis Family in 1951. *Courtesy Allen Lewis.*; PHOTO BOTTOM: As acquired in largely original condition by Jim Tharp in 1975. *Courtesy James Tharp.*

was scared to death, but the Packard's new caretaker was utterly thrilled. "I told you I would expect it to do the most it could do," he told the restorer.

A great Packard, as any owner will tell you, inspires wistful memories, and so it apparently was for Otis Chandler. As the Imperial Palace collection began to be dispersed in 1998, Mr. Chandler jumped at the opportunity to get the Convertible Victoria back. "Many thanks for selling me my 'ole' 904 Dietrich Victoria," he wrote Don Williams, who had helped to arrange the deal. "It means a great deal to me to get it back finally."

Reflecting upon his good fortune to reacquire the one that had got away Mr. Chandler bought it this time for keeps. As he built his second great collection of

Full Classics® in the Vintage Museum of Transportation & Wildlife, the Convertible Victoria formed the nucleus of one of the world's best, most complete collections of Dietrich-bodied Packards. Even at Mr. Chandler's passing in 2006, the car did not immediately leave his family. His second cousin, longtime confidant, and favored hunting partner, Franklin Otis Booth, Jr., acquired it at the estate auction.

Mr. Booth passed away in 2008, and the

Packard was acquired by longtime Dietrich Packard enthusiast, John Groendyke of Enid, Oklahoma. In his dozen years of ownership, Mr. Groendyke lavished the best of care upon the car, including a complete in-house fresh restoration to his high standards, which won several accolades on the show circuit in subsequent years. Russell Lewis, a founding father of the CCCA, would no doubt be proud of where his car has gone, and how far it has come! ●

NO TWO ALIKE!

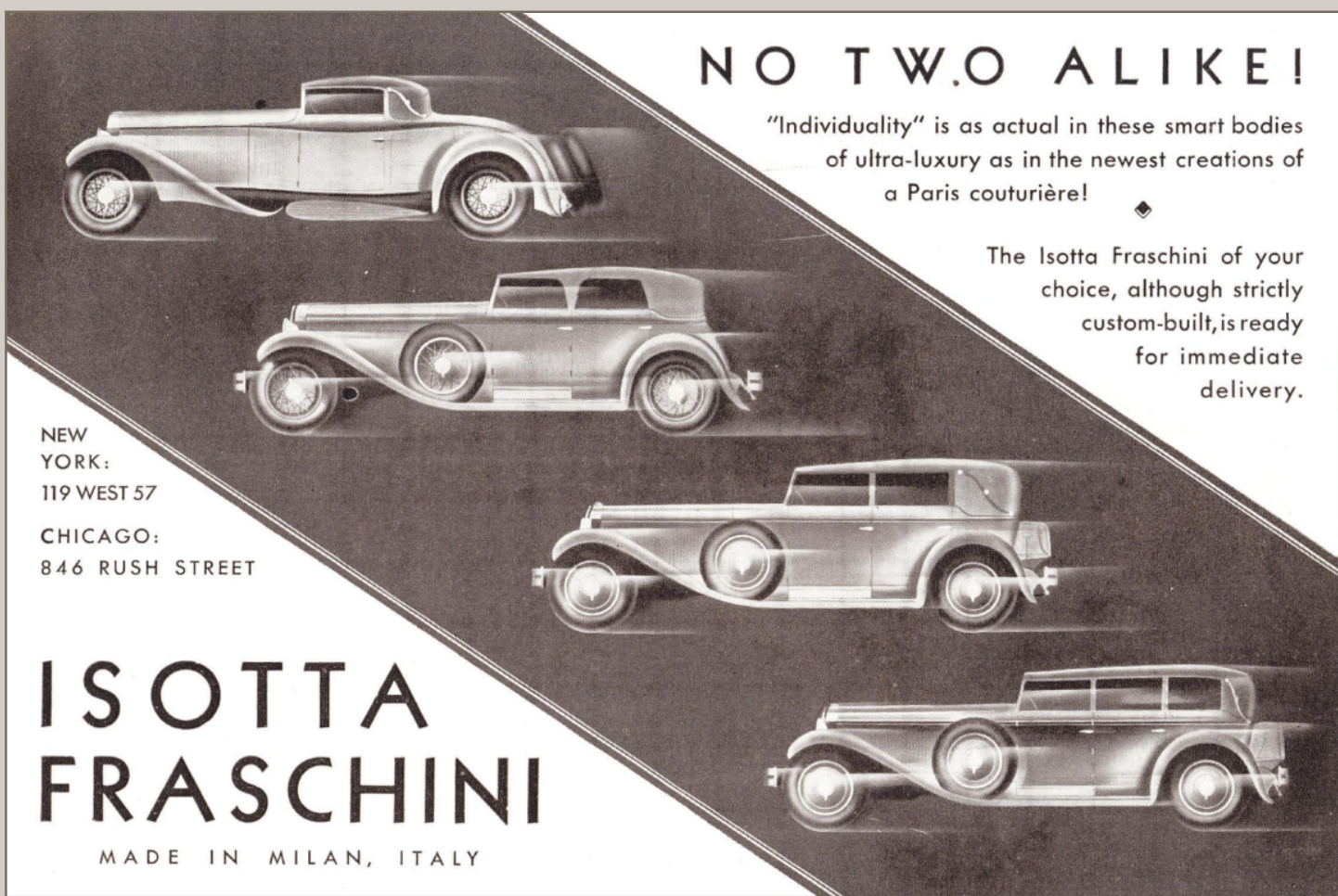
A TALE OF

BY JONATHAN
SIERAKOWSKI

PREFACE

A few years ago, I purchased an advertisement by the Chicago Isotta Fraschini dealer which declared “No Two Alike!” While the intention was to emphasize that these cars would be gladly tailored to suit customers wants, it can be said that most coachbuilt cars, even those constructed in small series and similar in appearance at a glance, are for the most part not truly identical. Their inherent hand-built nature, and the ability of customers to specify details, usually results in enough differentiation for modern historians to identify.

The story that follows was assembled from many fragments gathered over nearly a decade, with the help of enthusiasts and colleagues, and demonstrates an adherence by both Isotta Fraschini and Fleetwood to this concept of truth in advertising.



NO TWO ALIKE!

“Individuality” is as actual in these smart bodies of ultra-luxury as in the newest creations of a Paris couturière!

◆

The Isotta Fraschini of your choice, although strictly custom-built, is ready for immediate delivery.

NEW YORK:
119 WEST 57

CHICAGO:
846 RUSH STREET

**ISOTTA
FRASCHINI**

MADE IN MILAN, ITALY

COURTESY JONATHAN SIERAKOWSKI

TWO ISOTTAS



INTRODUCTION

When silent film heartthrob Rudolph Valentino passed suddenly on August 23, 1926, at the age of 31, he left behind millions of mourning women, a cinematic legacy and influence that would endure to the present day, and an unfinished Isotta Fraschini roadster that he never actually drove. That The Great Lover never had a chance to drive the automobile that was so perfectly suited to his rakish aura only added to its allure.

The roadster was completed at Fleetwood nonetheless. Hying the upcoming Auto Salon display of the deceased actor's automobile, the *New York Times* noted on November 7, 1926, "The most striking feature of the car is the fenders, suggestive of an airplane wing section. The front fenders sweep in harmony with the length of the demaskeen aluminum motor hood and cowl. The appearance created is somewhat that of a great snake skin, which is enhanced by the radiator emblem, a big silver cobra."

The New York Auto Salon ran from November 28 through December 4; at its conclusion, the car remained unsold. Thus, it resided in the front window of New York distributor Ugo d'Annunzio's Isotta Motors as something of a memorial to Valentino, its Periscope Gray and bare aluminum coachwork glistening in electric glow when it was not thronged by mourning fans.

For such an attention-getting automobile, only one partial photograph of the Isotta at the Salon was known to survive until recently. (see following page) Published in *Automobile Topics* magazine, it incidentally captures the car in the corner of the frame as part of an overview shot. More recently, I found a lone detail image which had not been identified as having to do with the Isotta, but which clearly depicts the rear fender detail and which was also taken at the Salon. It is numbered "6" indicating it is one of a series of photos, possibly intended for a feature in one of the period coachbuilding magazines. >

SALON TO SHOW CAR MADE FOR VALENTINO

AMONG the special exhibits announced for the Automobile Salon opening Nov. 28 in the Hotel Commodore is a super-sport roadster designed by the late Rudolph Valentino and intended for his personal use. It is mounted on a super-eight Isotta-Fraschini chassis, being the fourth car of that make purchased by Valentino. Captain Ugo V. D'Annunzio, son of the poet, who is President of Isotta Motors in this city, assisted Valentino in working out a distinctive design.

The most striking feature of the car is the fenders, suggestive of an airplane wing section. The front fenders sweep in harmony with the length of the damaskeen aluminum motor hood and cowl. The appearance created is somewhat that of a great snake skin, which is enhanced by the radiator emblem, a big silver cobra. The color scheme is in gray and the upholstery is red morocco. The body was built by Fleetwood.

Fifteen custom coachwork builders will have exhibits at the show.

The New York Times

Published: November 7, 1926
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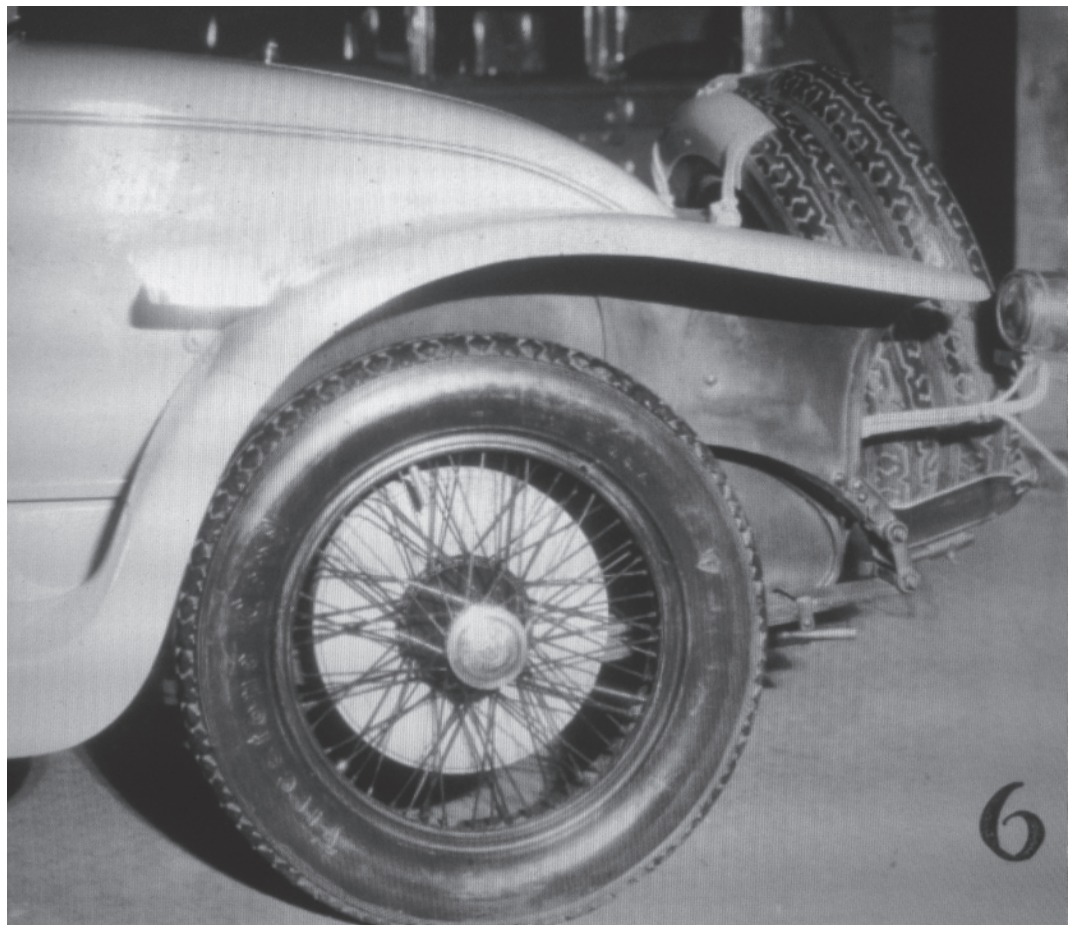
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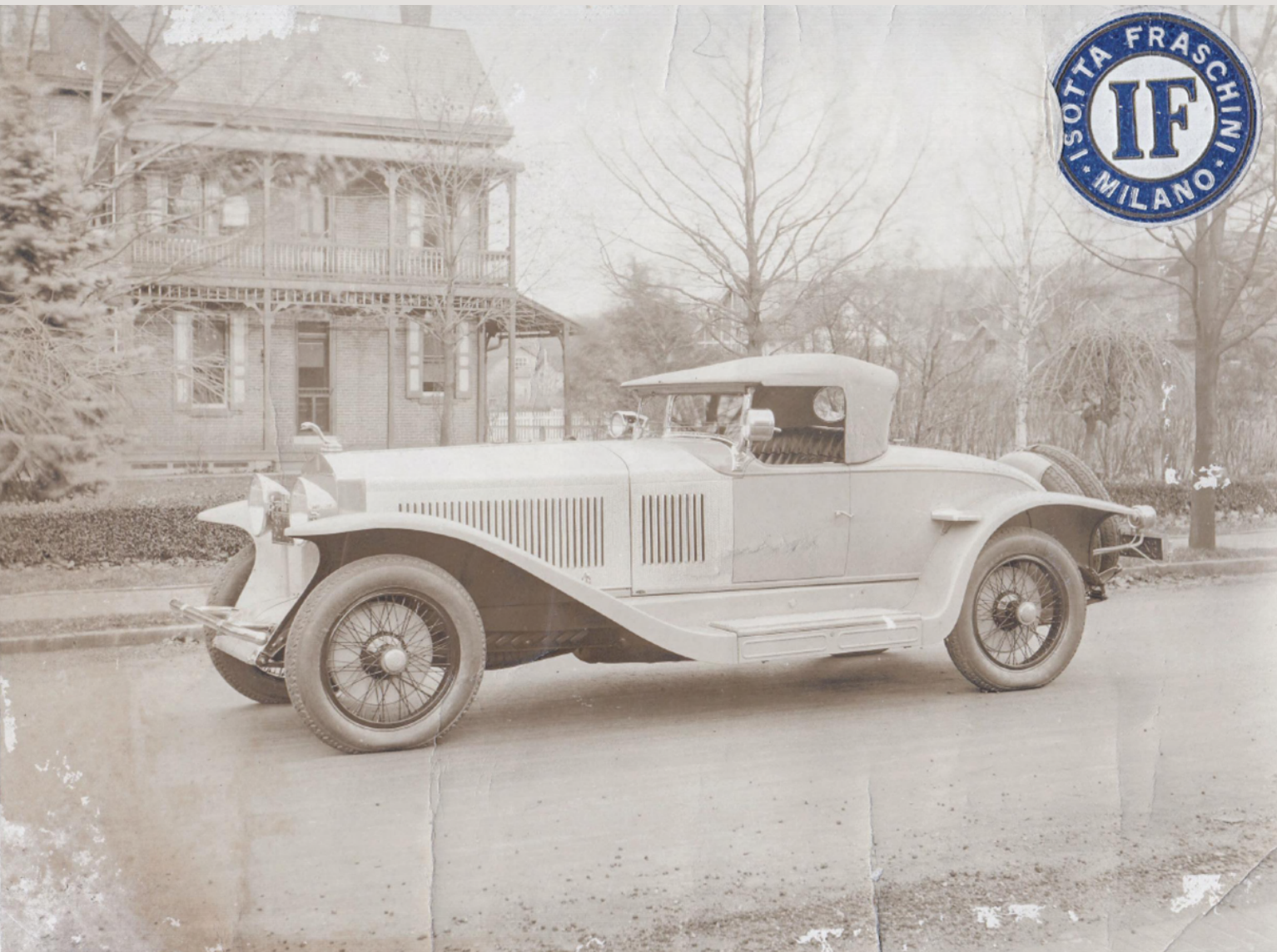
Description of the roadster published in the New York Times on November 7, 1926.



photo above: Overview of the 1926 New York Auto Salon at the Hotel Commodore. The Rudolph Valentino Roadster is partially visible on the lower left. *Automobile Topics* magazine, courtesy Jim Schild.; *photo at right:* A recently discovered view of fender detail of the Valentino Roadster at the New York Auto Salon.

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The Isotta commissioned by Rudolph Valentino was photographed upon completion on Walnut Street in Fleetwood, Pennsylvania. COURTESY MANNY DRAGONE

A third photograph (*above*) taken on Walnut Street in Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, exists, and was always assumed to be the completed Valentino car, which was then sent to the Salon.

The Valentino Isotta is next known to have passed into the hands of dancer and performer Peggy Hopkins Joyce, who began her career with the Ziegfeld Follies. Important to the understanding of the timing of ownership of both cars is an article from the *New York Times* from May 9, 1928, indicating that Peggy's Isotta had been seized due to lack of payment. It is further revealed in the article that a financial broker named John T. Locke was the benefactor who had purchased the car for Hopkins Joyce on December 15, 1926, just eleven days after the close of the New York Auto Salon. He had evidently worked

out an installment payment plan and fell behind, thus resulting in a suit being filed and the car temporarily seized in storage while its owner was traveling abroad. On May 10, Peggy made good on Locke's note and paid off the bill, thus securing clear title to the Isotta.

From there the car passed into history and into collector hands. The subject of which collector's hands is where this piece actually begins, for as Peggy motored in fur-draped luxury, there existed a second "Valentino" Isotta, built to virtually the same design. To anyone's knowledge, the two cars have never crossed paths, not even when new. One had known provenance for decades and enjoyed a great deal of notoriety over sixty years, while the other led a more obscure life with its history unknown, until more recent decades. >

“ ONE HAD KNOWN
PROVENANCE FOR DECADES
AND ENJOYED A GREAT DEAL
OF NOTORIETY OVER SIXTY
YEARS, WHILE THE OTHER
LED A MORE OBSCURE LIFE
WITH ITS HISTORY
UNKNOWN, UNTIL MORE
RECENT DECADES. ”

CHASSIS 1400

The most famous of the two roadsters was owned for decades by Joseph Gaeta of Port Washington, on the North Shore of Long Island. Gaeta was a car dealer who is known to have come into the ownership of chassis 1400 extremely early in its life, perhaps by the late 1920s or early 1930s, after ownership by Peggy Hopkins Joyce.

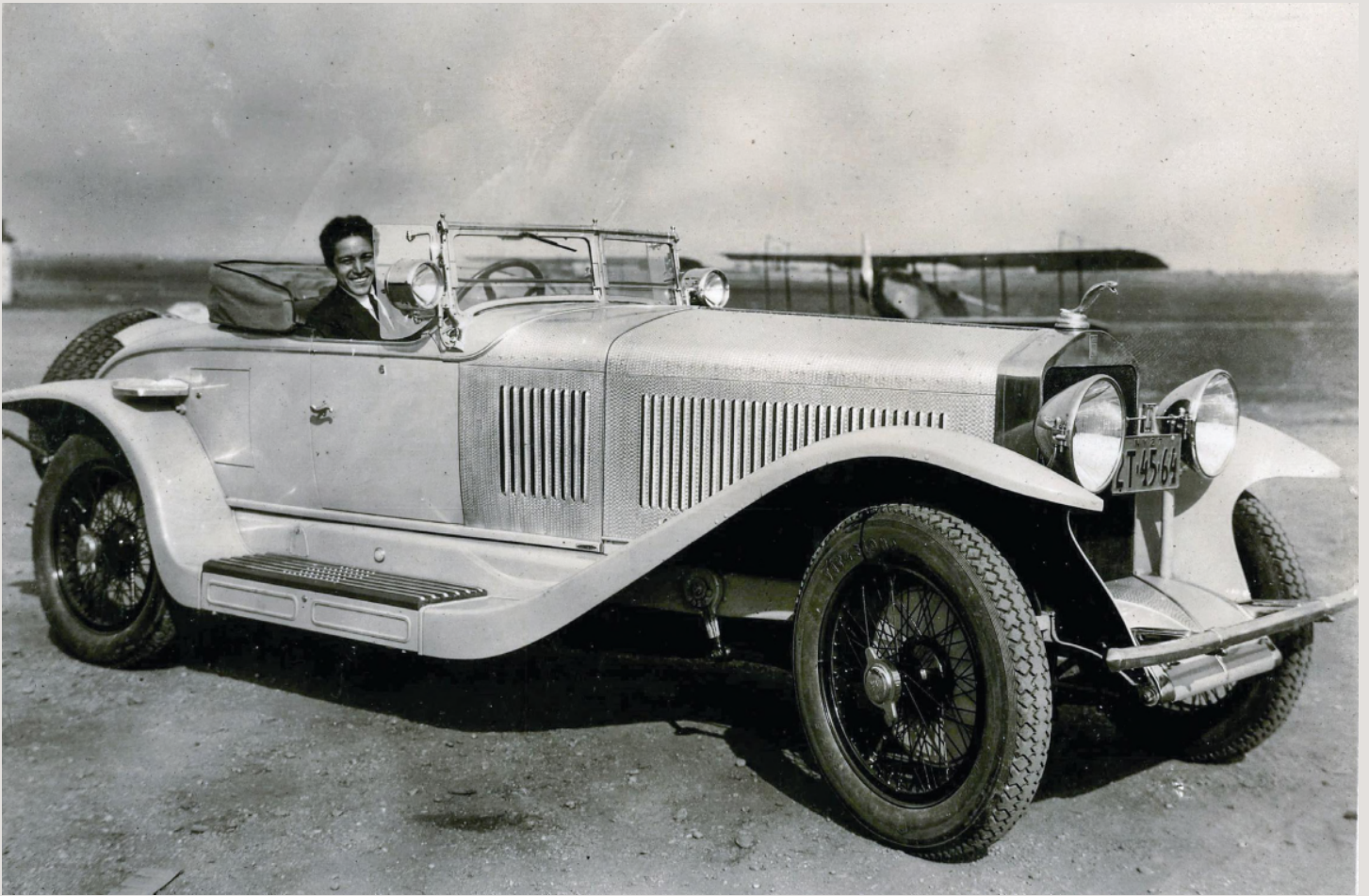
As far as the world had always been concerned, the Gaeta car was the Rudolph Valentino car. After being dormant in the late 1930s and war years, the car under Gaeta's ownership began to gain notoriety in the 1950s when interest in collecting classic cars was on the rise. Eventually he sold it in the late 1960s or early 1970s, and it subsequently made the rounds at a number of auctions, passing through the hands of several notable dealers, including M.H. "Tiny" Gould, and collector Rick Carroll, and being highly touted as the Rudolph Valentino car. At some point a golden ring and dagger, purported to belong to The Sheik himself, were marketed with the car. Restored in a plum-red color, it was exhibited in this form for many years. >





Chassis 1400 during the ownership
of Tom Barrett following a restoration.

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Joseph Gaeta poses proudly with the Isotta, likely prior to his trip to California. COURTESY COW HEAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, GAETA COLLECTION



Nearly swamped by a flash flood in Arizona on the return trip home in July of 1927. COURTESY COW HEAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY, GAETA COLLECTION

There was, however, one hitch with the Valentino story. In 1967, a book familiar to many collectors, *The Fun Of Old Cars* by Bob Stubenrauch, was published. Gaeta still owned this car at this point, and the following account was supplied by the owner himself:

In 1927, Mr. Gaeta had a foreign car agency in New York City and sold this Isotta Fraschini to a California Customer. At the customer's insistence, Mr. Gaeta delivered the machine in person after a demanding cross-country drive. After approving his purchase, and at \$18,500 1927 dollars it was quite a purchase, the new owner requested Mr. Gaeta to return the car to his New York residence. The return trip was even more eventful, the car breaking a steering knuckle in Kansas and almost being washed away by an Arizona flash flood. ... Despite the daily round of fixing flats and eating dust, Mr. Gaeta developed a deep affection for the virile Isotta. When his customer tired of it a year and 25,000 miles later, he bought it back.

Fortunately, a number of photographs documenting this trip survive, preserved by Gaeta's family until their recent donation to a local historical society. Details provided by Mr. Gaeta's granddaughter Kathy Nunn shed further light on this story, indicating that the customer with residences in California and New York was Nicholas Herkimer Putnam. Further, we know that Joseph Gaeta, dealer that he was, made a good-faith attempt to sell the car, as at least one advertisement appeared in the *Yale Daily News* on April 22, 1930. Naturally there were few buyers for a car such as this at the time; after Mr. Putnam's desire to sell resulted in an eventual drop to the right price, Gaeta purchased the car for himself.

Aside from Gaeta's narrative about the ownership, which all but rules it out as being the car originally commissioned by Valentino and first owned by Peggy Hopkins Joyce, and does not mention either of these names, there is the verbiage contained in his advertisement for chassis 1400: "Duplicate model sold to Rudolph Valentino."

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<p>Isotta Fraschini Hispano Suiza Rolls Royce Bugatti Mercedes Renault Minerva Lancia Fiat Alfa Romeo Bentley Sunbeam Etc.</p>		<p>Renault Convertible Coupe 1928 Six Cylinder \$1000.00</p> <p>Baby Renault Speedster Very Attractive \$550.00</p> <p>Bugatti Straight "8" Modified Grand Prix Model, Very Fast \$1000.00</p> <p>Mercedes 28-95 Four Passenger Touring Many Extras \$650.00</p>
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Isotta Fraschini

Sport Roadster, duplicate model sold to Rudolph Valentino. Smartest and most attractive roadster on the road.

Telephone Endicott 3985

FOREIGN MOTORS COMPANY

Liberty Warehouse Building
47 West 64th Street New York City

Gaeta's advertisement published in the *Yale Daily News* on April 22, 1930.

CHASSIS 1175

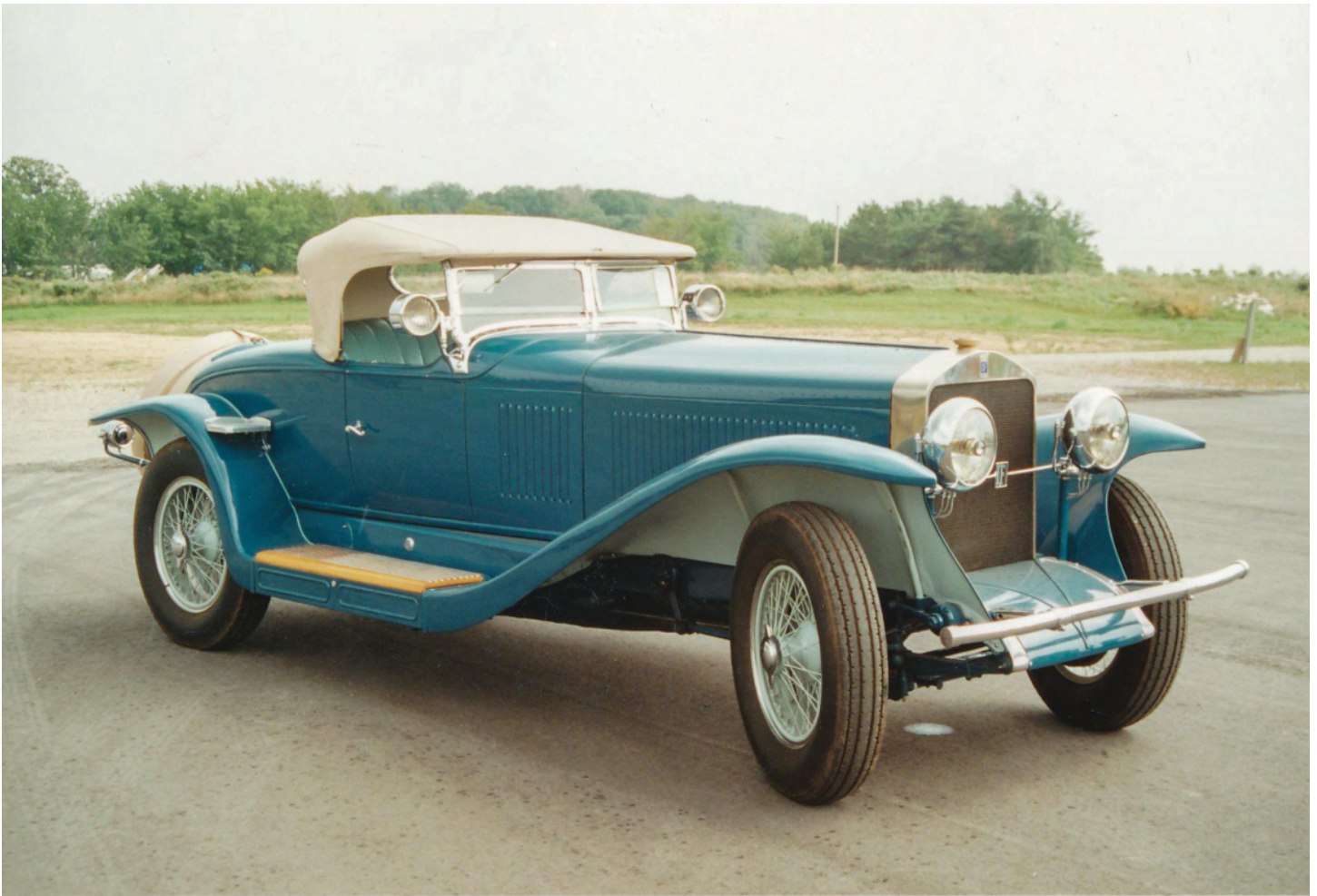
The other Isotta roadster is chassis 1175, a car which until relatively recently has had a more secluded history. For much of that time it is doubtful that more than a few people were even using the word "provenance" in conjunction with a collector car. In the decades that ensued however, understanding the provenance has become pivotal to the decisions made by collectors to buy, sell or restore, especially as the dollars involved have become more substantial.

Angelo Tito Anselmi's *Isotta Fraschini* was published in 1977, and contains a register including extant cars. At the time, chassis 1175 was listed as being in the ownership of Richard C. Paine, Jr. of Maine, a name who certainly requires no introduction. Interestingly, a newspaper article published in the *Yonkers Herald Statesman* in June of 1976 about sightseeing in New England mentions Paine's museum, as well as "Rudolph Valentino's electric blue 1925 (sic) Isota (sic) Fraschini."

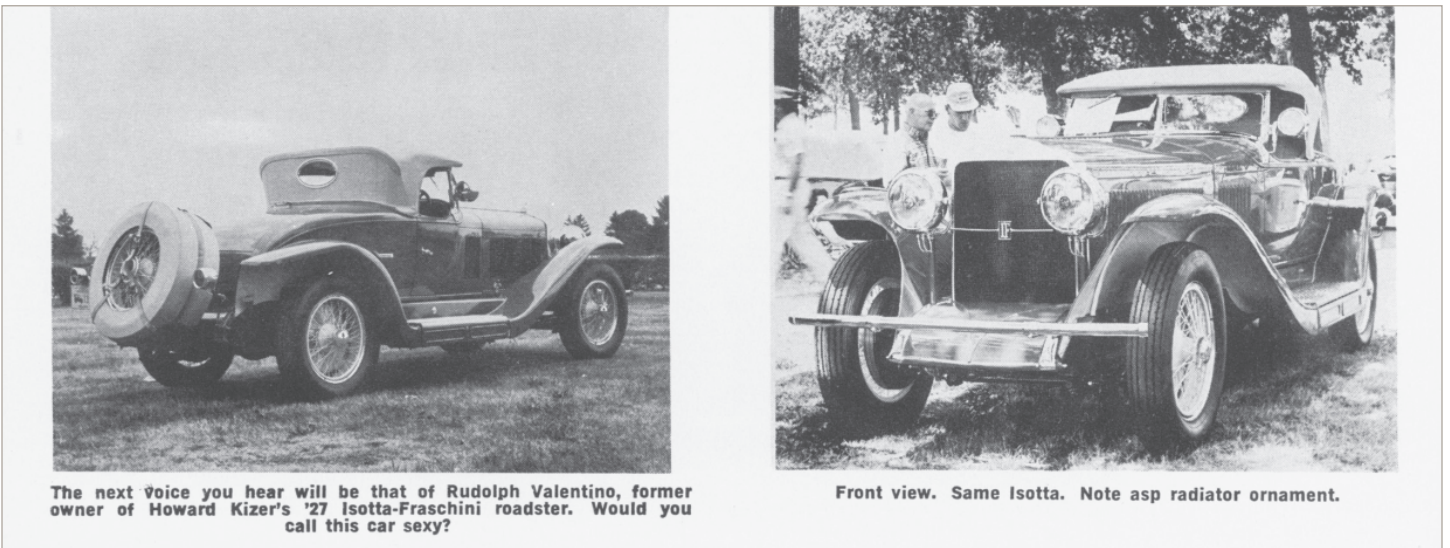
In 1987 the Isotta was purchased from Paine by Matt and Barbara Browning of Utah, in one of numerous transactions the couple made with the museum over the years. Both these ownerships of the car were relatively quiet, and in the two large collections, chassis no. 1175 slumbered with few if any people truly aware of its earlier history.

Chassis no. 1175 remained in the Brownings' stable until 2000 when it was sold to Joseph and Margie Cassini, who commissioned a two-year restoration which went on to receive numerous awards. At the time of the acquisition by the Cassinis, the emphasis on learning the provenance of a specific car was in its infancy. In the case of the Cassini's new acquisition, the body on inspection had original stampings in the wood and an original Fleetwood body number tag, indicating it was not some relatively modern creation. (*see photo on next page*)

One new piece of information came about by using the Classic Car Club of >



As acquired by the Cassinis in 2000.



The next voice you hear will be that of Rudolph Valentino, former owner of Howard Kizer's '27 Isotta-Fraschini roadster. Would you call this car sexy?

Front view. Same Isotta. Note asp radiator ornament.

Pictured in the Fall 1966 issue of *The Classic Car*.

America publications as a research tool. A delve into the index for *The Classic Car* indicated there was a photo of a 1927 Isotta Fraschini Roadster published in the Fall 1966 issue. This turned out to be what I had hoped for, adding a new reference

point. The article contained not one but two photos of 1175 in the ownership of Howard W. Kizer from Indianapolis, at a Midwestern Grand Classic held that year. The original glossy photos by Roland Stuckey turned up in Dr. Fred Simeone's

vast archive. As with the aforementioned article referencing Richard Paine's museum, the caption refers to Kizer's Isotta as being the car intended for Valentino. The next piece first came about by some documents provided by Lawrence Adamo, a longtime >



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Annual Dues for membership in the Classic Car Club of America are due by December 31 and provide membership for the next calendar year of January 1 through December 31. **You must be a National Member in good standing to join a CCCA Region. You may join multiple CCCA regions if you wish.**

CCCA Regional Membership Phone 847-390-0443

Region	Member	Associate			
<input type="checkbox"/> Arizona (AZR)	\$35.00	N/A	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> New South Region (NSR)	\$20.00 \$5.00 \$
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<input type="checkbox"/> Dixie (DIR)	\$10.00	N/A	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> Rio Grande (RGR)	\$15.00 N/A \$
<input type="checkbox"/> Florida (FLR)	\$35.00	N/A	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> San Diego/Palm Springs (SPR)	\$25.00 \$10.00 \$
<input type="checkbox"/> Greater Illinois Region (GIR)	\$30.00	\$5.00	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern California (SCR)	\$45.00 \$5.00 \$
<input type="checkbox"/> Indiana (INR)	\$80.00	\$5.00	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern California (SCD) Digital	\$30.00 \$5.00 \$
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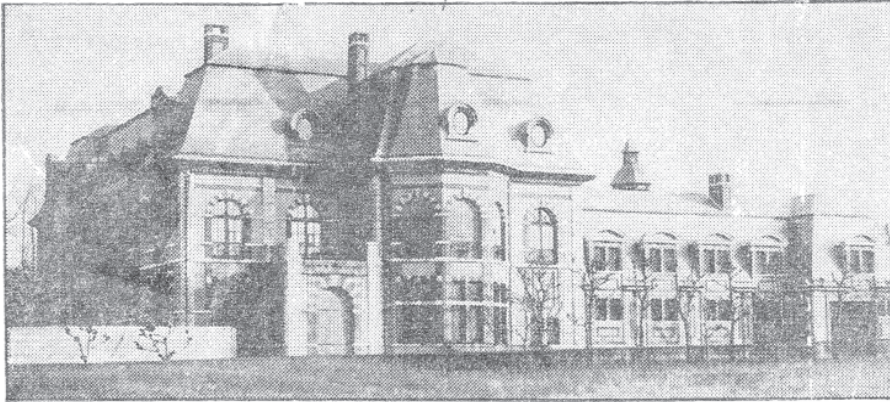
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WHERE OLD VEHICLES WILL RETIRE TO CLOVER



This is "Belcourt," Mansion and Carriage House Built By the Late O. H. P. Belmont Back in the 80's as His Newport Summer Home. Now It's Destined to Become a Museum for Old Horsesdrawn and Horseless Buggies and Extensive Libraries on the Subject.

Famous "Belcourt" to Become Museum for Ancient Vehicles

Perry Belmont Sells Newport Estate, Built in 80's for
O. H. P. Belmont to G. H. Waterman, Jr.,
Kirkland Gibson and Thomas McKean

"Belcourt," the handsome brick-and-stone structure along the lines of a French chateau which the late O. H. P. Belmont had built for himself back in the '80's, to be his Newport summer home and carriage house, is to become a museum for ancient vehicles.

Perry Belmont, brother of the original owner, announced yesterday that he had sold the huge residence to George H. Waterman, Jr., and Kirkland Gibson of East Greenwich and Thomas McKean of Ithan, Pa., who plan to make it a museum.

Mr. Gibson said last night that all three of the new owners have extensive collections of old automobiles, carriages, coaches, buggies, the accessories and costumes to go with them, and sizeable libraries on the subject.

They plan to pool these, install them in the stables and carriage houses, put the books in the library of the house, and operate the place as a non-commercial museum, he said.

50 to 75 Vehicles to be Shown

About 50 to 75 vehicles will be displayed and the library will run into thousands of volumes. Mr. Gibson said the Belcourt Library stacks would handle about 6000 to 7000 volumes as they are now.

Mr. Gibson and Mr. Waterman had 117 cars stored in an old cotton warehouse at Centreville last year, and others are scattered about the country in museums and such places, Mr. Gibson said.

The museum won't be opened to the public until next summer, in all probability, Mr. Gibson said, as there is plenty of work ahead. Not only must all the vehicles be moved there, and catalogued, but the cataloguing of the library is expected to entail considerable work.

Mr. Belmont said Mr. and Mrs. McKean would reside in Belcourt.

Famous for Years

The house, near the southern end of Bellevue avenue and extending through Lakeview avenue to Ledge road, has been for years one of the

several years ago and in recent years has not been occupied.

In its hey-day, however, it was the scene of many gala functions. Viscount Ichi, then Japanese Ambassador to the United States, was a guest there, and so was Gen. Henri Gouraud, the French World War hero.

Of brick, with red and white stone trim and iron grillework here and there, it was designed by the late Richard Hunt, Newport and New York architect. A huge structure, its stables are built around an open courtyard.

Mr. Belmont said last night he was pleased to dispose of the place for the purpose to which the new owners intend to put it. He said he believed that the future use of his former home would be most interesting for Newport.

The name Belcourt would be retained, he said, and no changes in the building itself are contemplated.

Lists Items in Collection

Mr. Gibson said the "vintage" of the most modern vehicles to be housed there probably would be 1910. In the collection which he and Mr. Waterman have at Centreville are such relics as a one-cylinder 1901 Oldsmobile, a 1901 Knox three-wheeler, an 1899 DeDion-Bouton, a 1900 Panhard, a one-cylinder 1900 Benz, a 1903 two-cylinder Winton which was the first motor car to cross the Continent, the Fiat in which Vincent Astor won the Savannah road race in 1909, a four-cylinder, 120-horse power Isotta, two Crane-Simplexes for which the Rockefellers paid \$17,000 each, President Taft's White steamer—the first car the Government ever bought for a President, the 1928 Isotta-Fraschini which Rudolph Valentino ordered but never lived to use (it fell into the hands of Peggy Hopkins Joyce eventually).

Among the carriages in the Gibson-Waterman collection are President McKean's coach and Daniel Webster's buggy.

Their collection is said to be exceeded in historical interest only by Henry Ford's and there are those

associate of the long-defunct Isotta Fraschini Owner's Association. Their documentation indicated that an owner of chassis 1175 prior to Paine was George H. Waterman, Jr. In fact, a marked-up draft of the register to be published in the back of Isotta Fraschini lists Waterman's name, until it was updated prior to publication. Waterman was, of course, an important name to associate with a car, as one of the pioneers of the hobby.

I reached out to Paul Willis, son of Isotta enthusiast Howe Willis, who remembered the blue Isotta during Waterman's ownership as he and his father had visited the car in Waterman's Rhode Island warehouse, some time in the mid-1950s; while not the same as a photo or document, this recollection was another data point. A call to Kirk Gibson III, whose father was George Waterman, Jr.'s collection partner, yielded a stunning result when he sent me an article published in the Providence Journal on July 16, 1940, announcing the purchase of the Belcourt Mansion in Newport by Waterman and Gibson as the intended new home of a car museum. Among the cars mentioned as being in the collection was "the 1928 [sic] Isotta-Fraschini which Rudolph Valentino ordered but never lived to use (it fell into the hands of Peggy Hopkins Joyce eventually)."

What an extraordinary development, to have not only added thirty-five years to the provenance of chassis 1175, bringing it back to the prewar era, but to see that the Valentino/Hopkins Joyce story followed the car throughout!

TELLING THE TWO APART

Logic would also suggest that the car with the lower chassis number was bodied first, but in this era when many Isottas were produced and sold in a relatively short period of time that was not a foolproof way of concluding anything, and would still be just an assumption. While tracking the history of Cassini's Isotta, chassis 1175, backward, Don McLellan at RM Auto Restoration, who were now >

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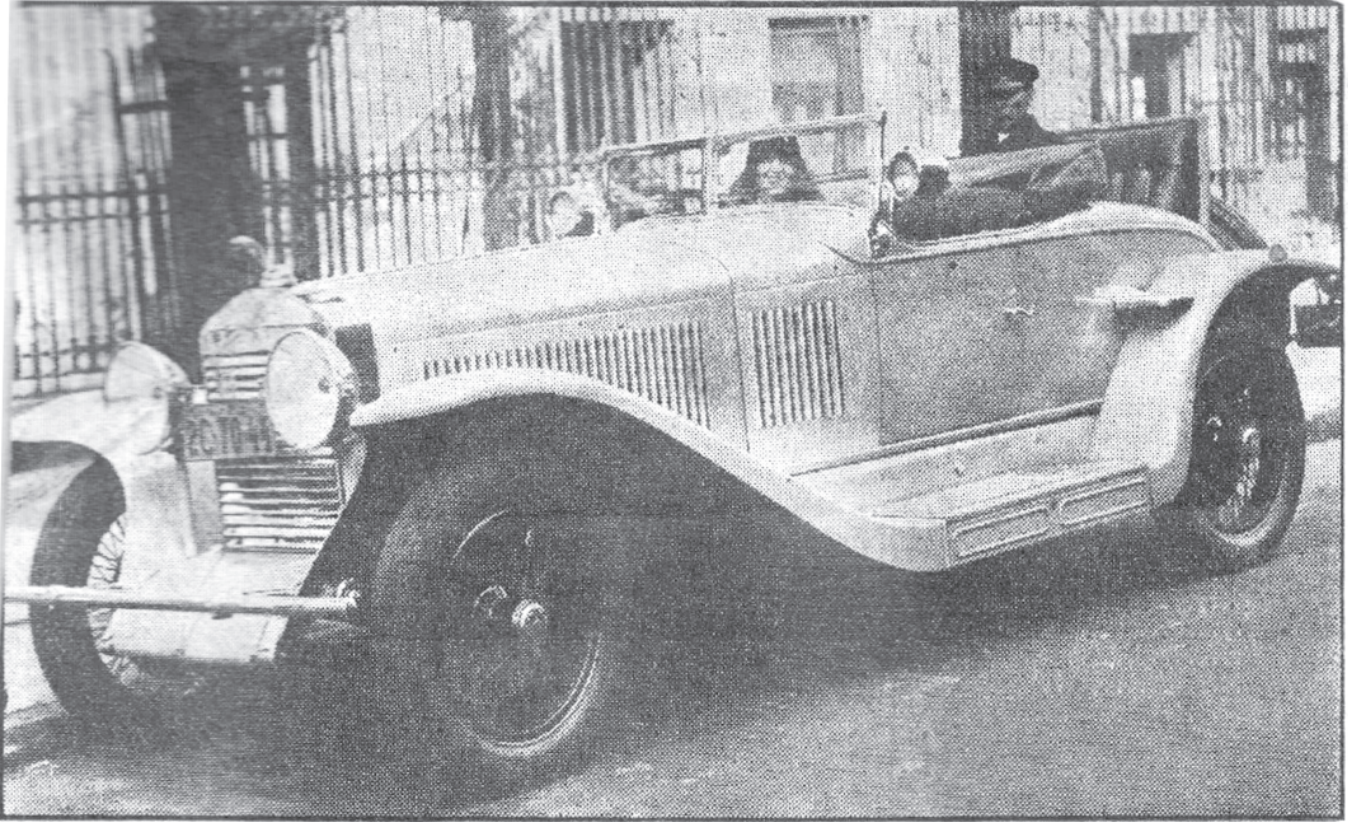
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PEGGY JOYCE'S LUCK FAILS. This car in which the much-wedded actress is seated was made by an Italian firm for the late Rudolph Valentino at a contract price of \$25,000. But the actor died before it was completed and it was sold to John T. Locke, New York broker recently indicted, who was reported to have given it to Miss Joyce. The sheriff attached it because the final \$4,000 payment hadn't been made, but yesterday the blonde charmer tendered the company a check for the amount due and now she has her car back.

Another article about the temporary seizure of the car in May of 1928, with a photo showing crucial details. COURTESY MANNY DRAGONE

in the midst of freshening the car for an appearance at Pebble Beach, sat down to compare historic photos and see what details might differentiate 1175 and 1400, and the following emerged:

First, 1175 has no golf bag door, while 1400 has a single golf bag door on the driver's side.

Second, the profile of the front fenders on 1175 was relatively flat, with the fender tips pointing ahead, while the front fenders on 1400 dip slightly down.

Third, the mounting position of the rumble seat step plates was slightly different; on 1175 the plates were mounted about three inches below the peak of the rear fender, while on 1400 the plates were mounted higher, almost at the peaks of the fenders.

Comparison of these details to 1175 and 1400 as they exist today allowed for a match on the second and third points, indicating that the car pictured in Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, was in fact 1175.

CONCLUSIONS

A new newspaper article discovered when perusing some of Manny Dragone's Isotta material yielded a new view of the car owned by Peggy Hopkins Joyce. Sure enough, the fenders and step plate matched 1175.

If it was possible that two cars were built around the same time, then was the car shown at the Auto Salon really also the car intended for Valentino, or

the duplicate? Refer back to the Salon photo showing the fender detail, and have a look at the position of the step plate!

Needless to say, the owners were extremely happy that the provenance, unearthed one piece at a time, turned out to be extraordinary, and both cars — no two, indeed, alike — remain exceptional examples each with unique and fully documented history. ●

Special thanks are owed to Lawrence Adamo, Dr. Fred Simeone, Al McEwan, Kirk Gibson III, Jim Schild, Paul Willis, Herbert von Fragstein, Manny Dragone, Peter Tacy, and Chris Summers for their contribution and collaboration over the years.

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