

Vol. 31, No. 11

# Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Nov 2024



• Remembering Fred and Ed

## Vintage Advertising

In honor of Veterans Day, we feature two pages from the 1942 Mercury brochure. Printed in late 1941, the theme throughout is our military.

Mercury was launched by Ford in 1939, and nearly 66,000 were sold that first year. For 1942, the flathead 239-cid V-8 was offered with 100hp as standard. The US halted production of new cars in February 1942, so it's no surprise how few were built and how even fewer exist.

'42 models differ from '41's in a few ways, most notably with the disappearance of external running boards and the change over from bullet shaped parking lights that sat atop the front fenders to rectangular ones mounted above the grille.

## In This Issue

Farewell to Ed Vomero and Fred Howe.

SIRAACA display for rehab and long term care patients

The SIRAACA Archive shares a contribution from our very first editor

The SIRAACA Time Machine visits Oakland (the auto dealer, not the city)



**TOWN-SEDAN . . .** Bundle your whole family into the big, luxurious Town-Sedan—and see how warmly they'll praise this new Mercury masterpiece! There's plenty of head room, leg room and elbow room for six persons to ride all day in comfort. The husky, 100-horsepower engine gives you a world of smooth, surging "drive"—sweeps you out in front and keeps you there. Mercury's favorable balance of travel power to weight assures outstanding operating economy. Strong, rigid body construction gives a quieter ride—extra safety! It's a grand car for town or touring!



**SEDAN-COUPÉ . . .** A popular favorite with business and professional people . . . or as a compact personal car . . . the Mercury Sedan-Coupe for 1942 combines brilliant new riding ease with its host of convenience features. The all-steel body is designed by Mercury engineers and built to exacting specifications in one of the world's most modern body plants, where highest standards in quality of materials and craftsmanship are maintained. Top and body panels, internal structure and floor are welded into a single unit of tremendous strength and rigidity.



Did you know? To compete with GM's Hydramatic and Chrysler's Fluid Drive, the 1942 Merc offered a Liqumatic semi-auto trans.

*Trivia Question: In 1954, Ford produced a two-door pillarless hardtop with a transparent front roof section. What was that model called on the Ford and its Mercury cousin?*

*Answer: Ford's was the Crestline Skyliner. The Mercury was the Monterey Sun Valley. Canadian versions were the Meteor Rideau Skyliner and Monarch Lucerne Sun Valley.*

**EDITOR -**

**Paul Arena, Jr.**

parena2@verizon.net

**PRESIDENT -**

**Paul Arena, Jr.**

parena2@verizon.net

**VICE PRESIDENT -**

**Artie Guarnieri**

artie.guarnieri@verizon.net

**SECRETARY -**

**Tony DiAngelo** - badbird70@aol

**TREASURER -**

**Phil Boffa** - phil.boffa@gmail.com

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY -  
(currently unfilled)**

who@where.com

**SERGEANT-AT-ARMS -**

**Bob Ferone** - rferone@gmail.com

**WEBMASTER** - siraaca@yahoo.com

**Frank Nathanson**

**www.siraaca.aaca.com**



# Minutes of the 581st Meeting

## October 15, 2024

1. The 581st meeting of the Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:10 pm on October 15 at The Square on Annadale. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and offering a moment of silence, the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read.
2. The majority of the meeting focused on a recap of our car show and the raffle car. Show related expenses topped \$30,000 this year when factoring in the three charitable donations. This year's raffle car also had the highest total expense, but with our second best ever sales total, we turned our second best ever raffle profit. Thanks to all who helped all year long towards another successful show and raffle.
3. All agreed that the Staten Island Advance's coverage of the show was great and well-deserved. Perhaps this kicks off another run of favorable exposure via our local newspaper.
4. Members discussed areas of improvement, and brainstormed ideas to address the new property entrances that offer attendees a way to skirt our admission.
5. Exit signs can help with egress and we should consider ways to prevent speeding on the way out, perhaps with a slalom of cones. It was also noted that we need more bulldog clips to hold garbage bags in place.
6. Members recapped the Clove Lakes display, where we received a donation of \$60 as a thank you. We also discussed the New Dorp Lane show, where some members pitched in to help.
7. Tales from this year's AACA meet in Hershey were shared as well, including some funny hotel hijinks.
8. The upcoming Trunk or Treat event with Lifetsyles is scheduled for October 26. Check in with Artie Guarnieri for details.
9. The Holiday Party returns to La Strada on December 15.
10. Phil gave a treasury report with details on the show's balance sheet, with all in order.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40. The 50/50 collected \$52. Matt Safford won \$26.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary

## Final Milestones for Two Members

Ed Vomero and Fred Howe, two members of our club who were with us for many years until falling ill, have unfortunately passed away, on October 2 and October 9, respectively. Ed was 89, Fred was 75. Ed was a member for at least 18 years, owning a variety of cars including a 1930 Ford Model A Coupe and three 1923 Star Touring cars, one of which was an AACA National Award and Concours winner. Ed was on the Richmond Town board and was instrumental in our relationship with them before their leadership changed. Fred's membership with us dates way back to the 1980's, where he was part of a regular crew of Hershey attendees with his 1957 Chevy Bel Air. Fred owned countless cars during his lifetime, and his AACA National Award winning 1978 Chevrolet Caprice is now in the caring hands of Kevin Keenan. The club will make a donation to Renewal (a kidney transplant guidance organization) in Fred's memory, and a firefighter-related charity in Ed's name.



Top: Ed Vomero alongside his 1923 Star. Bottom: Fred Howe (top right) at Hershey, most likely in 1986. Top row, left to right, is Paul Jr., Nick Mazzarella, Paul Sr. and Fred. Bottom, left to right, is Kevin Keenan, Dan Daly, John Mazzarella and Phil Boffa.

## Club Display at Clove Lake

More than two dozen cars were put on display at Clove Lakes nursing home for a couple of hours on September 21 for the benefit of its residents and staff. Club members and additional guests rolled in around 9:30 and set up in time for the 10:00 am start. Residents were brought down to see the cars, enjoy coffee and donuts and listen to nostalgic music courtesy of a kitschy husband and wife duo.



Members relax on the shady side of Mike Campanelli's 1994 Jeep during the Clove Lake display (photo by Mike DiPilato)



Above: 1934 Plymouth. Below: 1966 Mustang. Each won a Best in Show.

## Don't Forget to Renew!

A reminder to all to renew your national AACA membership by sending in your dues before December 31. Instructions on how to do so are found in the November / December AACA magazine or on AACA.org.

## From the President

Barring a miraculous draw of all of my numbers on a Mega Millions or Powerball ticket, I'm not close enough to smell my retirement yet. That doesn't mean I don't think about it from time to time, even if it's about ten years away at this rate. There are a good number of you that are already retired, and I hope that our hobby gives you an outlet to enjoy your free time, even if that free time is already consumed by the needs of your family and day to day stuff. I recall someone once saying that "youth is wasted on the young", but I know that those of us who stay young in mind and spirit can enjoy ourselves for many years. To that end, if anyone is looking to enjoy that free time with their old car, but you want some help or just someone to share that time with, contact your fellow members.

For those of you joining us for our Holiday Party on December 15, remember to RSVP to Tony DiAngelo or me so that we have an accurate count for seating and food. Don't forget to consider donating a new unwrapped toy that day as well. See you there. - Paul Jr.



## - NEXT MEETING -

We are skipping a couple of monthly meetings at The Square on Annadale, and will gather to wrap up the year on Sunday, December 15 at our holiday dinner at La Strada Restaurant on New Dorp Lane, from 2:00 to 6:00. Remember to bring a new, unwrapped toy to add to our donation to the Richard Gardner Memorial Toy Drive

## Grand National Winner Auction

Esteemed auction house RM Sotheby's, known for conducting the annual auto auction during the AACA National Fall Meet in Hershey each October, recently ran a special online sale of a singular collection. The cars within, all owned by AACA members Ron and Sarah Jury, featured 14 that were AACA Grand National winners, including two nominees for the AACA Zenith Award for best restoration of the year. The top seller was a 1959 Chevrolet Impala convertible at \$198,000. It was a 348 Tri-Power car finished in Roman Red with red interior. Next up was a 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Z28, also red, selling for \$143,000. Rounding out the top three was a Rio Red 1958 Chevrolet Impala convertible, also a 348 Tri-Power car, at \$132,000. It was nominated for a Zenith in 2023. The least expensive Grand National winner to sell was a 1960 Jaguar Mark IX Saloon, for \$30,800. If an AACA badge wasn't what you were looking for, you could have snapped up a 1941 Chevrolet Special DeLuxe Coupe for \$13,200 or a 1954 Packard Cavalier four-door sedan for only \$7,425. Full results can be found at [rmsothebys.com](http://rmsothebys.com).

The advertisement features a yellow background with the text "IT'S TIME FOR NOVEMBER" at the top. Below this is the phrase "Thanksgiving Service" in a large, red, cursive font. The central illustration shows a red Oldsmobile car with its hood open, and a mechanic in a white uniform and cap working on the engine. To the right of the car is a list of services: "TUNE ENGINE", "LUBRICATE CHASSIS", "ADJUST BRAKES", "CHECK COOLING SYSTEM", and "WASH AND POLISH". The Oldsmobile logo is in the top right corner. Below the car, text reads: "Our Scientific Oldsmobile 'Thanksgiving Service' is recommended now to protect your transportation... assure winter-long safety, comfort, and operating economy... and keep you rolling till Spring rolls around!". In the bottom right, another mechanic is shown pointing. At the bottom, a yellow banner contains the text: "SAFE TRAVELS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT THE STATEN ISLAND REGION AACA".

## From the SIRAACA Archive

Former member Jim Spadafora, who joined our club in its founding year, recently sent us a number of old photographs taken at our 3rd Annual Car Show at Wagner College, held on October 14, 1979. Jim lives in Berwick, PA these days, and once won our raffle car (a 1953 Chevrolet).

Located on the football field with sweeping views of the Narrows from the top of the bleachers, the first photo looks towards the pre-war side of the show field. Plenty of 1920's and 1930's cars were common sights at shows back then.

The second photo looks towards the bleachers at a section of early post-war cars, including this 1949 Buick fastback sedan.

Considering the cars were kept within the boundaries of the playing field, which is about 160 feet wide, each row of cars probably held 15 or 16 cars. With allowances for driving lanes, we may have had 11 or 12 rows. 200 cars would have filled the show field, less than half of what we draw these days.

The SIRAACA Archive is a treasure trove of old photos, articles and artifacts that represent our club's history dating back to our founding in 1974. These are not centrally collected, but in the hands of the many members past and present. If you have something from the past that you'd like to share here, let us know.



*This was our first show held at Wagner following two years at St. Dorothy's Academy. At the far right near the field's entrance, Joe Martin's 1911 Hupmobile Model 20 Touring car greeted attendees. We think the light colored car at the left of the photo is Tony Spataro's Delahaye, circa 1948. Note the ragtime band bottom right. (photos courtesy of Jim Spadafora.)*



*1949 marked the debut of Buick's VentiPorts. Those on early '49's are actually vents, but they soon became closed off ornaments. The Super featured three per side, while the Roadmaster had four.*



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# The SIRAACA Time Machine

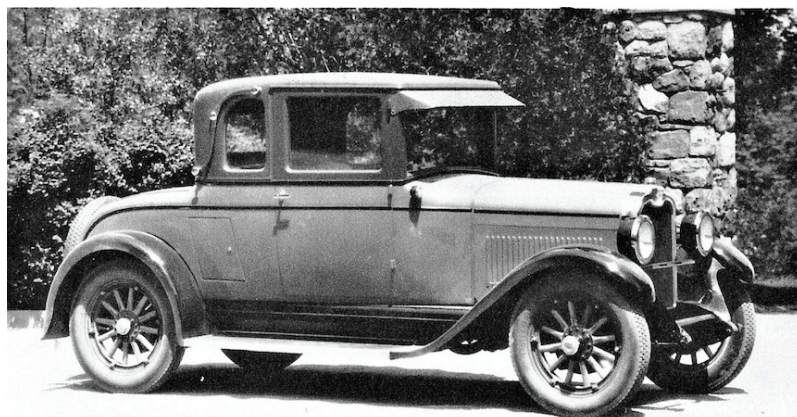
Here's quite a specific dial in for the Time Machine - April 23, 1929. We're on Arthur Kill Road west of the NW corner of Fisher Avenue, in front of an Oakland and Pontiac dealership. We spent a while trying to tie this business to what dealers we know were operating at the time, and in the 1933 Polk Business Directory, we see that this was an outpost of the Drinnan Garage's Pontiac at 1335 Castleton Avenue. We visited that site a few times already, most recently in June 2023. Even though we'd love a view inside the front windows, the reason we don't might be more interesting. While we haven't identified the make of this "bus", a closer look shows that it's actually a rolling grocery store. The beltline of the bus reads "South Shore Motor Grocery", and you can see what appears to be canned goods stocked inside. We're still hoping to discover more about this business, and encourage any leads you might be able to share.

(photo courtesy of the NYPL)



If you're curious about the open touring car with the unique top, we can tell you that's referred to as a "California top". It's typically an aftermarket hard top that mimicked the eventually popular closed sedan body style. At right is a factory promo photo of a 1927 Oakland, one type of car that this dealership would have sold to a Staten Islander. The wheels

and rear fender line seem to match those on that touring car.



OAKLAND SIX LANDAU-COUPÉ (Body by Fisher)  
\$1125 f. o. b. Pontiac, Mich.

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ON-DEMAND PRINT CENTER

43 Hillel Place  
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Tel 718.859.3137  
Fax 718.421.4761

sales@farbetterprinting.com  
www.printingservicebrooklyn.com

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