

Vol. 24, No. 11

# Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Nov 2017



• **More from Hershey**





## Vintage Advertising

In 1977, Lincoln-Mercury decided to introduce their smaller, 110-inch wheelbase Versailles by showing that it can be parked inside the old Windows on the World Restaurant atop the former World Trade Center. We have nothing more to say about that.

The Versailles was Lincoln's response to Cadillac's Seville. Both were their company's smallest yet most expensive car. It shared many body panels with the Mercury Monarch and Ford Granada.

It was notable for several features. It was the first Lincoln with exposed headlights since 1969 and the first North American vehicle sold with clear coat paint.

Lincoln produced the Versailles from 1977 through 1980. Total production was 50,156, with only 4,784 made in the final year.



Introducing the  
Lincoln Versailles.

View from Windows on the World  
New York City

Engineering made it happen. Now a car with a 110-inch wheelbase, with a superb luxury car ride.

Now there is a new luxury car similar in size to the finest European luxury cars, with the smooth, quiet, distinctly luxurious ride of an American luxury car. It is the new Lincoln Versailles and, like the bridging of a river, the construction of a tower, its ride is a true engineering achievement.

Lincoln Versailles is engineered for smoothness; its major components are balanced to critical tolerances.



An investment in engineering.

Lincoln Versailles is engineered for quietness and insulated to reduce external noise.

Lincoln Versailles is engineered for luxury and fully equipped with standard features as significant as four-wheel disc brakes and as luxurious as a unique 'Clearcoat' paint finish.

Test-drive Lincoln Versailles. You will quickly understand its uniqueness, and the many benefits of its engineering, in the Lincoln Continental tradition.

**LINCOLN VERSAILLES**

LINCOLN-MERCURY DIVISION



## In This Issue

Is "bargain" a relative term?

A vintage Hollywood ride the SIRAACA Garage.

Who remembers Century Motors in Brooklyn?

*Trivia Question: What famous designer was responsible for the "sweetheart dip" at the top of the Kaiser Manhattan's windshield?*

*Answer: Howard "Dutch" Darrin.*

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# Minutes of the 509th Meeting

## October 3, 2017

1. The 509th meeting of the Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:30 pm by President Paul Jr. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance and offered a moment of silence before the minutes of the 508th meeting were accepted as read.
  2. The raffle car took in \$1,940 over two days at the Delicious Orchards Apple Fest. The club is having two plaques of appreciation made for the owners and organizers.
  3. The club gathered five cars for display at the Hilton for SIUH's Charity Ball, a Havana Nights theme. They included a 1948 Dodge, a 1954 Eldorado, a 1955 Chevy, a 1957 Chevy and a 1953 Buick. Organizers were over the moon as arriving guests took photos with them.
  4. The raffle car was won by Steve Schioppo. Steve organizes the Holy Family Car Show and now has a car of his own.
  5. Paul Arena recapped the raffle car efforts. We made a profit of \$7,509. The top seller was Mike Gorgia, who set a new record with \$965.
  6. Phil Boffa and Paul Jr, reviewed the fall show results. This was one of our better performing shows, with a net profit of over \$20,400.
  7. Feedback shows that attendees want dash plaques, not calendars. We will also make larger signs at the entry gate noting that cars newer than 15 years old are not judged (apparently flyers and posters are not enough). We are also removing the free entry for pre-war stock vehicles.
  8. Awards for the top three sellers of trophy donations and sponsors will be presented at the Holiday Party, which will be Sunday, December 10 at The RoadHouse.
  9. Phil Boffa gave a treasury report, with all in order.
- . The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm. The 50/50 collected \$35.00, with Frank Provenzano winning \$18.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony DiAngelo, Secretary





## A (Relative) Bargain at Hershey?

The AACA Fall Meet at Hershey has so many features to it that make it a must-see event. There are the acres and acres of flea market vendors, the long, winding road of the car corral, and the car show itself. Beyond that, there is the fabulous RM Sotheby's auction, which previews all of the cars for sale at the Hershey Lodge. Among the cars to be auctioned were a pair of Duesenbergs and a Pierce-Arrow Silver Arrow, all out of the same collection.

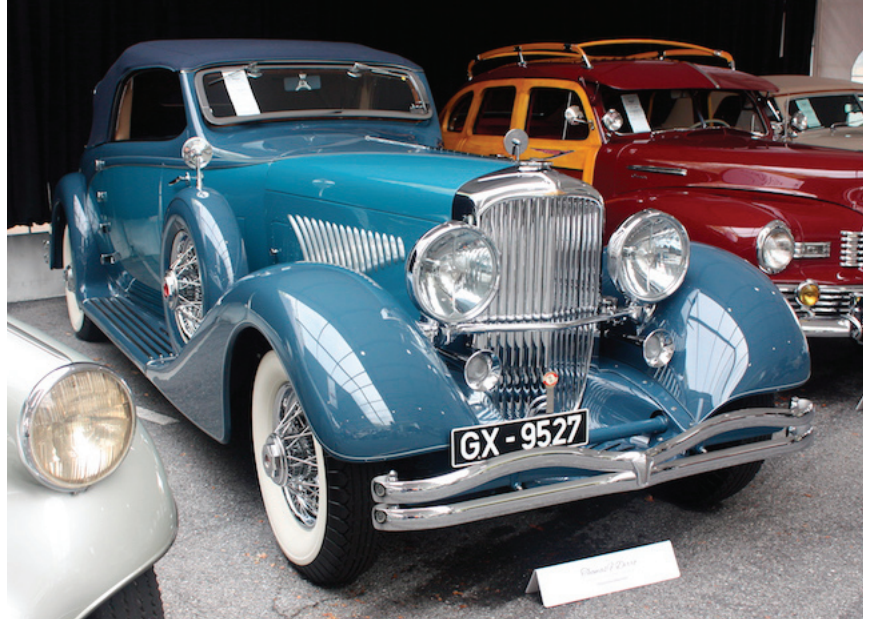
The 1935 Duesenberg Model J Cabriolet (top photo) was bodied by d'leteren, a Belgian coachbuilding firm. It is one of the few European-bodied Duesenbergs, spending its pre-war years in the Netherlands.

The 1933 Pierce-Arrow Silver Arrow (center photo) was the first of five built to "give you in 1933 the car of 1940". It's a streamlined, curvaceous antidote to the boxy designs that dominated the auto up until then. It's one of three still to exist.

The 1932 Duesenberg Model J Town Car (bottom photo) is over the top in opulence. The upholstery is hand-embroidered silk brocade. The rear compartment features inlaid birdseye maple cabinetry, and the brass hardware is plated in 24k gold.

As expected, the Pierce-Arrow topped the auction results with a price of \$2,310,000. The 1935 Duesenberg fetched \$1,485,000. But the 1932 Town Car hammered at "only" \$594,000. Granted, it's a restoration from the 1980's, but it's incredibly well-preserved and we were surprised that it sold at this price. A relative bargain for a Duesenberg.

There were other bargains to be had at the auction. A 1928 Whippet Coupe sold for \$8,800. A 1931 Model A coupe sold for \$13,750. A 1955 Thunderbird sold for \$35,200. The coolest bargain might have been a 1950 Ferguson farm tractor, which changed hands for only \$4,950. Heck, there were pedal cars auctioned off here for that money. The bright orange tractor would be the star of any cruise nite or car show.





## From the President

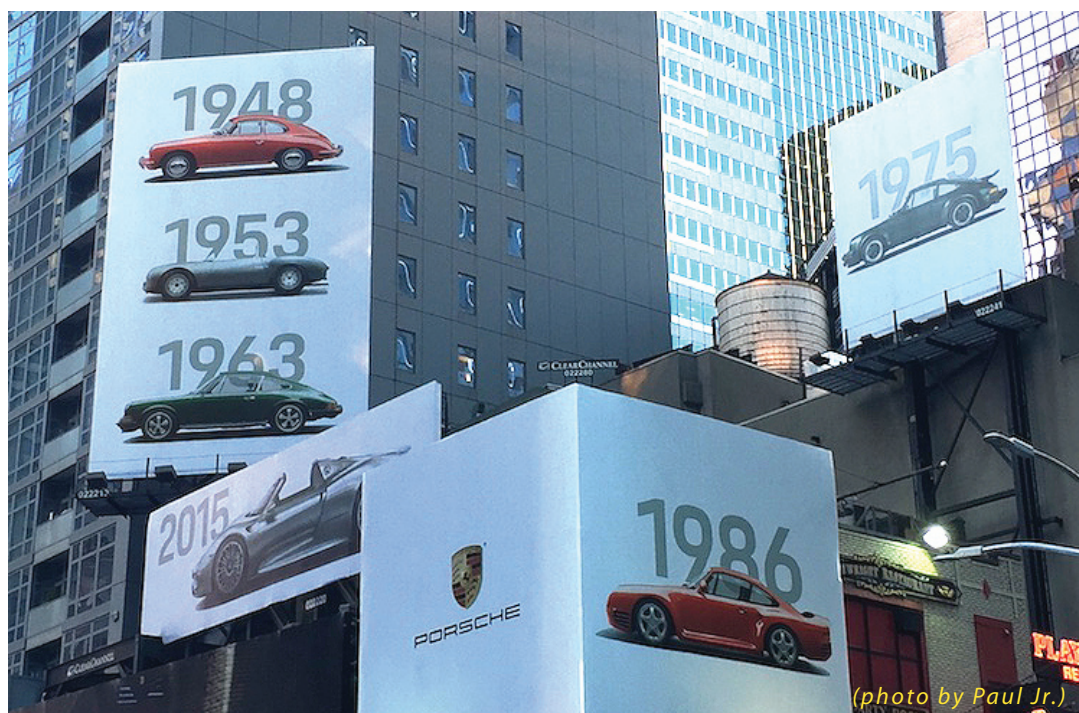
Another tale from my time at Hershey this year. My father and I were ready for lunch and some time off of our feet, so we decided to pop into The Giant Center, which is Hershey's venue for the Hershey Bears, a minor league hockey team. The center is smack dab in the middle of all the action, with flea market fields all around it, and one end of the car corral starting in back of it. They open up their concessions inside, offering yet more food options than the vendors outside. A bonus when the temperatures are summer-like is that it's nice and cool inside. We spotted a table for four that was open, and approached it at the same time as two young gentlemen, and we agreed to share. They were first year students at Pennsylvania College of Technology, the only school with a college-level vintage vehicle restoration degree on the East Coast. While they were only beginning with the basic painting and non-structural repair skills common to all cars, they will go on to learn woodworking, sheet metal forming, upholstery installation, classic paint techniques, custom machining and more. They work on cars built between 1900 and 1975. It was fun speaking with them and learning how much they care for the hobby and where they aspire to be in a few more years. My father told them tales of his life as an auto mechanic, where he worked on these cars when new. It was a bright light on the dark future many paint for our hobby. Perhaps we'll be fine after all. Penn College is trying to make sure of that. - Paul Jr.

## - NEXT MEETING - November 7

Our November meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 7 at 7:00 PM at The Staff House at Sea View Hospital and Home, located at 460 Brielle Avenue. As usual, each member is asked to contribute \$3.00 for coffee and donuts.

## Antique Porsches Over Times Square

Times Square, home to a sensory overload of sights and sounds, is currently hosting a campaign for Porsche featuring billboards showing off iconic cars from 1948 through today. There's the first 326, the first 550 Spyder from 1953, the first 911 from 1963, plus a 1975 911 with a whale tail, a 959 from the 1980's and a 2015 911 Spyder.



(photo by Paul Jr.)

## Holiday Party Set for December 10

The club's annual Holiday Party is booked for Sunday, December 10, from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM at The RoadHouse, 1400 Clove Road. This year, we will have the room upstairs, which will accommodate us in greater comfort. As usual, we ask that our members bring a new, unwrapped toy to be part of our donation to the Richard Gardner Jr, Memorial Toy Drive. Along with various local appearances with Santa, they will be visiting children in Richmond University Medical Center and Staten Island University Hospital on Christmas Eve.



## Inside the SIRAACA Garage

This car brings some ghosts of Tinseltown along for the ride into the SIRAACA Garage. It's a 1925 Lancia Lambda roadster, and it was purchased new by Hollywood actress Gloria Swanson before eventually landing in Don Bosco's hands.

Like all Lancia's of the day, this roadster was ahead of its time with independent suspension, compact V-4 engine and monocoque design, where the chassis is integral with the body, and carries most of the load. The driveshaft tunnel formed a light-weight backbone for the car. Passengers straddled each side of the tunnel instead of perching above it, giving the car a low center of gravity and a more sporting stance.

The roadster is one of five built in 1925 from a design by Mario Casaro and his namesake carrozzeria. Note how the fenders flow front-to-back and back-to-front symmetrically.

Don has the 1925 Certificate of Ownership from California that certifies that Swanson purchased this car on January 27, 1925. She also owned a larger Lancia, famously known for its leopard skin upholstery.

The SIRAACA Garage is home to all of our members' cars, past and present. Has your car been featured yet? Make sure you get the details to Paul Jr. if you want to share your car with us all.



*Oh, the tales this car could tell if only it could talk. By 1925, Gloria Swanson was Hollywood's top actress as well as the silver screen's first major fashion star. It's said she spent \$10,000 per year on lingerie and another \$6,000 on perfume. Imagine the wild jaunts courtesy of this sporty roadster, racing alongside friend Rudolf Valentino en route to The Brown Derby. (photos by Paul Jr.)*







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## Century Motors of Brooklyn's Past

This dealer decal for Century Motors in Brooklyn was spotted on a car at our fall show (top photo). Since we've covered a few other local dealers of days gone by, we're digging up some info on this one as well. According to a 1950's-era postcard we found on eBay (bottom photo), Century Motors was located at 535 4th Avenue, on the corner of 15th Street, and touted as "one of Brooklyn's oldest dealers." It was selling and servicing Chrysler, Plymouth and Imperial, and adding Valiant in time for this decal. Apparently, Dodge had their own thing elsewhere. The building still stands today, reaching from 15th to 14th Streets, and looks like an out-of-business Strauss Auto Service Center according to Google Street View. Who has more history to share about this dealership? As one of Brooklyn's oldest, there must be some more details of its beginning as well as its demise.

P.S. We found a page from a 1954 Brooklyn Eagle newspaper featuring a host of ads for new car dealers. We have plenty more to explore in future issues.



  
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