

Vol. 28, No. 2

Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Feb 2021



• ***A New Opportunity for SIRAACA***



Vintage Advertising

We couldn't find a vintage ad that captures the spirit of Groundhog Day. We could have gone with a Lincoln in honor of Abe's birthday this month, but instead we see Valentine's Day in this ad. The pink and red color scheme, the delivery man and the florist contribute that vibe.

Ford Couriers, or sedan deliveries, continued a long line of car-based commercial offerings from Ford. After skipping such models from 1948-1951, the new two-door Ranch Wagon served up a platform for the Courier in '52. Six and eight cylinder powerplants were available. This one is a six, as it has no "V" badge on the fender.

A club for 1954 Fords reports that just 6,404 such Couriers were built that year.

In This Issue

Keep coloring to pass the time.

A high-end car magazine

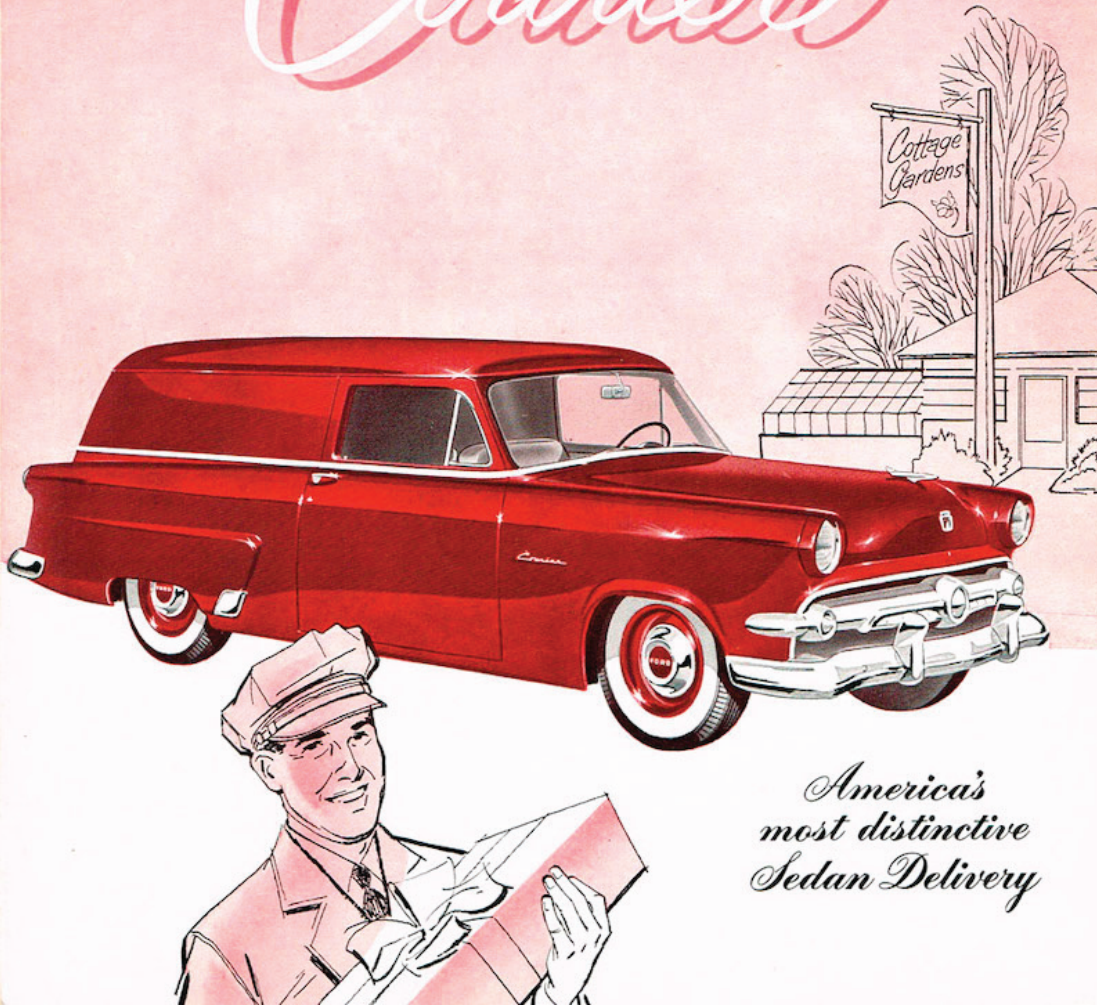
What's selling at auction?

A look into the SIRAACA Archive.

The SIRAACA Time Machine visits another Ford dealer.

THE '54 FORD

Courier



*America's
most distinctive
Sedan Delivery*

Did you know? 1954 Fords came in 13 colors, and from those there were 14 two-tone combos available. Six of them used Sandstone White.

Trivia Question: One man is credited with founding both Cadillac and Lincoln. Who is he?

Answer: Henry Leland. In 1902 he was brought in to the failing Henry Ford Company and convinced them to reorganize as Cadillac. He started the Lincoln Motor Co. in 1917 to build Liberty aircraft engines, and retooled it as an automaker in 1920.

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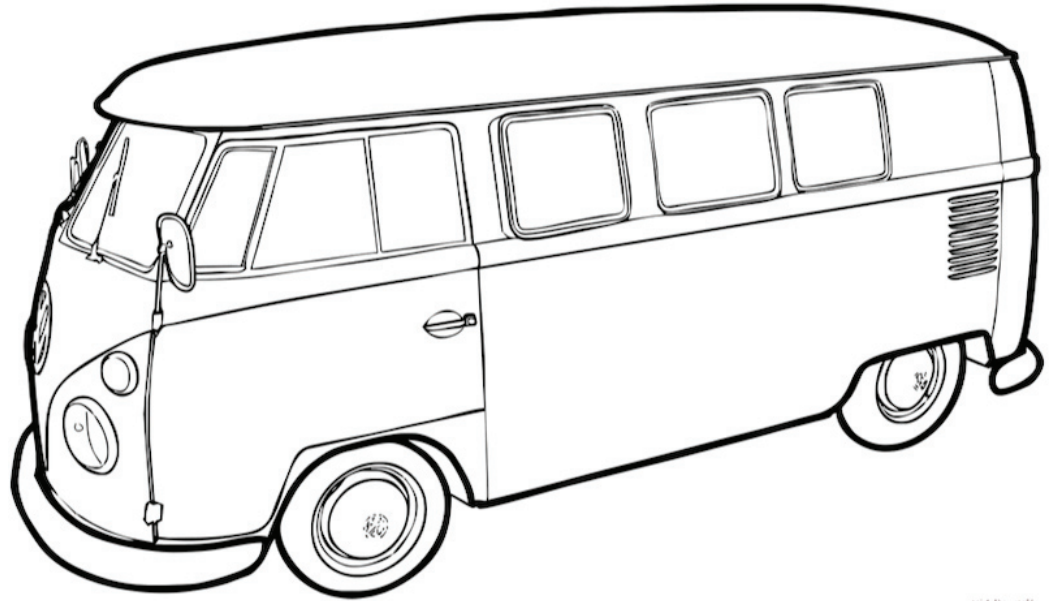
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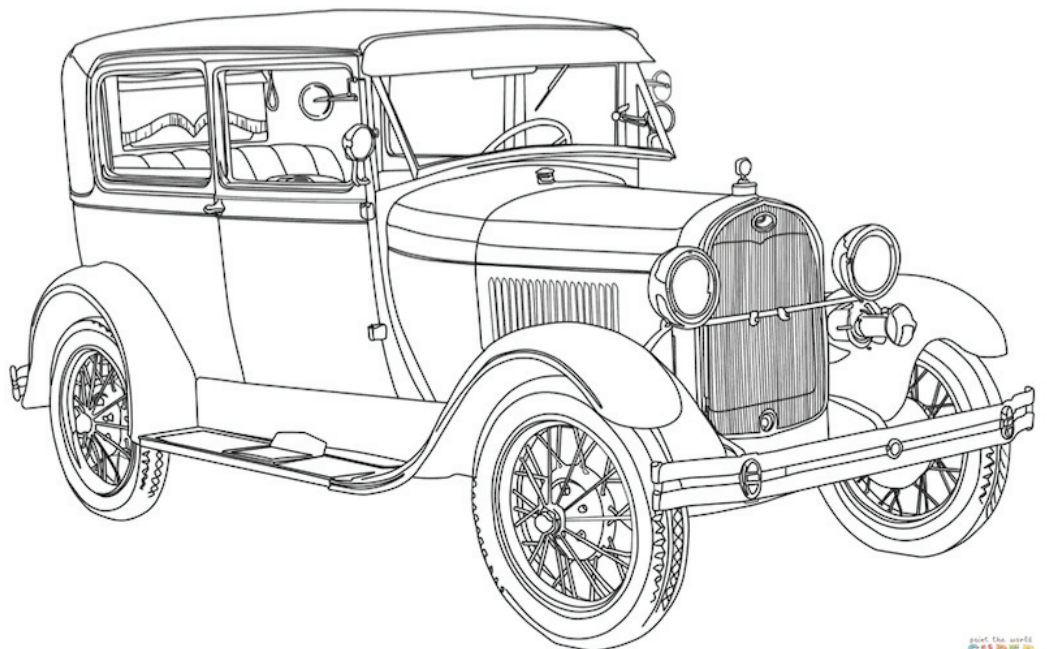
Passing the Minutes

February, 2021

1. With no meetings held since October, we are passing on reporting the minutes, instead giving you another way of passing the minutes. Here are two more cars for you to color as you whittle away time waiting for our next meeting (hopefully in February). These are courtesy of Super Coloring.



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Jersey Shore Show Opportunity for SIRAACA

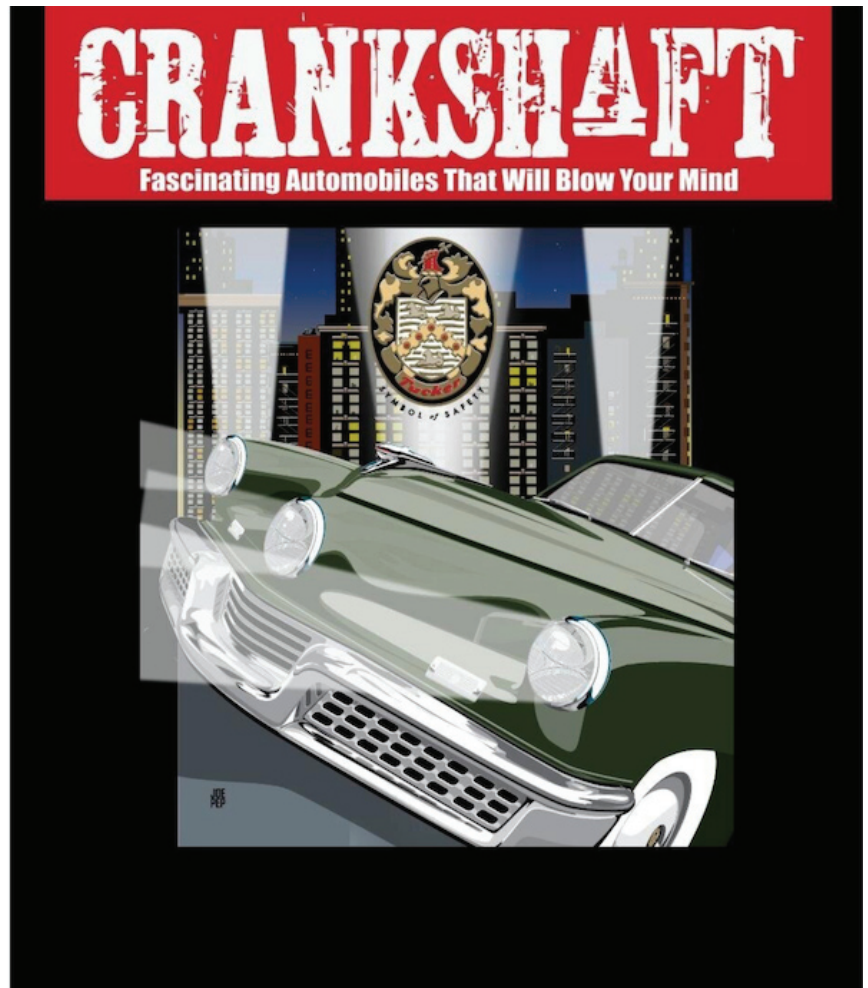
Pro Sho Sound is collaborating with an Alzheimer's charity in New Jersey to help them put on a fund-raising car show in Point Pleasant on Saturday, May 1. Our club has the opportunity to be paid to provide judging and a structure for giving out awards. The show planners have secured the municipal parking lot on Ocean and Arnold Avenues, directly across from Jenkinson's pavilion, which could hold around 200 show vehicles. We've suggested a "Favorite 50" approach without points judging, and would need six or eight members to help out that day. It's expected to run from 8:00 to 1:00, so the commitment is limited. We can't bring the raffle car as it conflicts with their fund-raising effort, but the fee we'd earn is more than what we might expect to sell, and is guaranteed. The opportunity to promote our fall show, as well as hand out raffle car flyers for mail-in orders, is another benefit to us. Perhaps this establishes a business model for future events where we provide services in return for a fee.

NYS Bill Reintroduced

Legislation has been reintroduced in New York State that would require a biennial safety inspection for antique, classic and collector vehicles. Current law requires that these vehicles must be inspected every year. The bill (known as A. 4202) is awaiting consideration in the State Assembly Transportation Committee. We will send a letter of support for this legislation from the club. It is interesting to note that among the other bills introduced, one suggests that New York could change the law to allow a single, rear mounted license plate for all passenger vehicles in return for an additional fee. In some cases, this represents no change to the collector cars that use year-of-manufacturer plates from points in time when NY only required a rear plate (such as 1964), but it might still appeal to others that find a front plate distracting from the overall design of the car. The SEMA Action Network allows you to lobby in favor of these bills. Visit semasan.com for more information.

Crankshaft is Here

Many of you are regular readers of the family of publications from Hemmings, and if so are likely familiar with former editor Richard Lentinello. Richard recently parted ways with Hemmings and runs Lentinello Publishing. He is "dedicated to the production of limited-edition, high-quality automotive books on the history, design, engineering, restoration and culture that render classic & collector cars so desirable." Beyond his first two books, *Cadillac Style* and *Corvair Style*, he now offers up his new collector-car magazine *Crankshaft*. It's targeting hardcore automotive enthusiasts (*aren't all enthusiasts hardcore?* - ed.) who appreciate all types of fascinating automobiles. *Crankshaft* is a softcover book of 144 pages that comes out quarterly. It features "creatively designed layouts and interesting stories on all types of automobiles." He hopes it will "inform, entertain and captivate you like few car magazines have done before." You can only get it online, and a single issue costs \$12.95. One year/4 issues is \$56.95. Go to lentinello.com to order.



The debut issue features Tucker #1044, restored in 2018 by the Tucker experts at Ida Automotive in New Jersey.

From the President

Hardly any snow at all fell upon us last winter. This February alone has seen more than 20 inches cover our borough. The weather has twice postponed our attempts at resuming our monthly meetings. I am eager to have us get together again, but recognize the problems with travel in snowy weather, not to mention limited parking options where streets have yet to be fully cleared. Let's hope that Staten Island Chuck's prediction for an early spring comes true.

In the meantime, I'm trying to figure a path forward for our Spring Show, tentatively scheduled for April 25. It's difficult to know what the state guidelines will be two months from now, so I'm thinking we have to plan as if the show was being held today. What does that mean? Limited spectators? Socially distant parking? No food? Masks and hand sanitizer for everyone? I can't even get a read on what would be required if the show was being held this month as a baseline. I fear that all this uncertainty becomes paralyzing for us all.

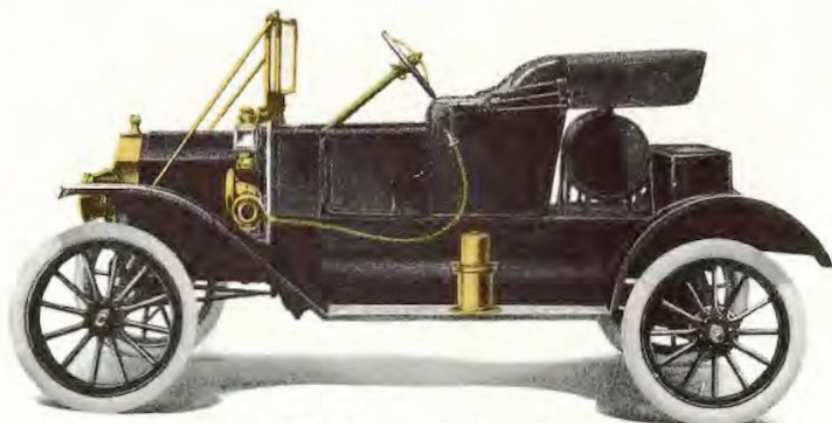
I was happy to hear that several members kept up their socializing over weekly breakfasts at least until the weather made outdoor dining untenable. I also learned that several members had come down with Covid, with various degrees of effect, and I hope all of you are feeling okay. A good number of our members are eligible for the vaccine, and I hope you all are able to get that scheduled. It's another step on a return to normal. Until then, stay safe (and warm!) - Paul Jr.

- NEXT MEETING - TBD

Our February meeting has been postponed twice because of bad weather. Stay tuned for another shot at getting together this month at Pro Sho Sound's warehouse at 4401 Arthur Kill Road. Food will be served.

Auction Happenings

Auction houses big and small have kept on selling throughout the pandemic, and the results surprise in both directions. Some cars fetch big bucks, while others trade hands for a song. Over at RM Sotheby's recent sale in Arizona, an all-original 22,000 mile 1970 Chevy Nova SS went for \$56,000. That sounds like big money, even though everything about this car, with its 350 V-8 and four-speed, looked fabulously preserved as new. A 1959 Eldorado Biarritz convertible, one of just 99 built with bucket seats, sold for \$218,400. Yet a 1957 Thunderbird, equally iconic, sold for \$44,800. On the flip side, local California house Turner Auctions facilitated the online sale of four early vehicles from the estate of an AACA member. One of them was a 1921 Model T Center Door Sedan, restored back in the 1950's. There were just two bids, and the winner paid only \$2,750 for the car. They also sold a 1912 Model T Torpedo (below), a model only available for two years, for \$14,000. Mecum seems to have a good feel for the pulse of the overall hobby, with sales reflecting all levels of buying interest in a wide range of cars normally seen at local shows. Their recent 10-day auction in Kissimmee sold over 2000 cars for \$122.8 million. Of course, they also feature the rare cars that get people excited. This time, they included three Chevy El Moroccos: the last remaining '56 convertible, and a '57 hardtop and convertible, each 1 of 10 known. The '57 ragtop sold for \$220,000; the hardtop for \$165,000.



Ford Model T Torpedo Runabout
2-Passenger—4-Cylinder—20 Horsepower Car. Price \$590 includes top, automatic
brass windshield, speedometer, two 6-inch gas lamps, generator,
three oil lamps, horn and tools—f. o. b. Detroit
No Ford Cars sold unequipped

From the SIRAACA Archive

Here is a look back to February 2008, when a handful of SIRAACA members were given an exclusive tour of Packard collector Ralph Marano's showroom in Garwood, NJ. It's easy to find, with "Approved Packard Service" signs outside the building, and gilded lettering on the windows calling out other classics like Auburn, Stutz and Duesenberg.

Inside is just a small portion of Ralph's collection. Up front were Packard Darrins and LeBaron-bodied beauties. Mixed in were antiques from the same eras, and plenty of artwork celebrating these classic cars hung on the walls.

Out back, more cars were tucked away, including a spectacular 1932 Auburn boattail speedster and an ultra-rare 1952 Packard Pan America show car. Packard accessories and other automobilia decorated the walls here, too.

You may know Ralph from his appearances on Chasing Classic Cars. Others might know him from the show field at Hershey.

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.



TOP: This vintage Packard dealer accessory shelf contains original Packard touch-up paints, NOS Packard parts, a replacement clock, and dealer accessories such as a hand spotlight, chrome exhaust tips and a gasoline door guard. BOTTOM: Parked alongside a wall with hand drawn images from Packard's past is the 1952 Pan American concept car. This was built for Packard by Henney, who was known for making custom bodies for Packard hearses and ambulances. The projected sales price of \$18,000, were it to go into production, squashed any hope of building them. A Cadillac Series 75 Fleetwood cost \$5643. (photos by Paul Jr.)





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The SIRAACA Time Machine

We're flashing back to 1940 for a look at the Ford dealership of Palma Motors located at 1355 Castleton Avenue. Joseph Palma befriended Henry Ford while heading the Secret Service in Michigan, and opened Palma Motors when he retired in 1929. He was also borough president of Staten Island from 1934 through 1945. We then shoot forward to late 1948, where we spot a brand new '49 Lincoln up on a lift for some service (or more likely a photo op). One last stop on the way back has us pausing in 1952 to check out a local billboard pointing to Palma for "A-1" used cars and a 1 year, 10,000 mile guarantee.



Above: a new Lincoln sits outside the Palma dealership in 1940. Below left, a Palma mechanic services a 1949 Lincoln Cosmopolitan. Below right, a billboard from 1952 advertises Palma's used car division, known as Park Auto. (photos courtesy of NYC and Staten Island Historical Society)



The dealership remained open through 1958. Around that same time, we've seen references to New Dorp Ford at 135 New Dorp Lane, where Coastal Plumbing is today. As for Palma's dealership building, today it is still easily recognizable by its distinct shape. The building is home to Richmond County Ambulance.

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