

Vol. 28, No. 3

Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Mar 2021



• Will There Be a Spring Dust-Off?



Vintage Advertising

“Au printemps” is French for “in spring”, and it was nearly the spring of 1927 when Cadillac debuted its companion car, the La Salle. From March 5-12, the Cadillac Spring Salon held in cities throughout America presented “a second car which is as great as Cadillac...”

Designed by Harley Earl, the LaSalle emerged as a trend setter of style. They were smaller than a Cadillac, but still equipped with a Caddy V-8, making them quite sporty.

A total of 26,804 units were produced continuously through 1927 and 1928, with bodies by both Fisher and Fleetwood. A LaSalle roadster paced the Indy 500 that year as well, doing so two other times in its 14 year existence.

In This Issue

Uncertainty around the Spring Dust-Off.

Spotting cars as a sign of spring.

The latest addition to the SIR-AACA Garage.

The SIRAACA Time Machine jumps to 1927 and 1940.



You may possess a LaSalle on the liberal term-payment plan of the General Motors Acceptance Corporation — the appraisal value of your used car acceptable as cash
CADILLAC MOTOR CAR COMPANY
DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN OSHAWA, CANADA



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Did you know? The LaSalle is named after 17th-century French explorer Rene-Robert Cavalier, who held the title “sieur de La Salle”, roughly meaning “Lord of the manor”.

Trivia Question: What GM Motorama show car is featured on the Harley J. Earl Trophy, which is presented to the winner of the Daytona 500?

Answer: The Firebird XP-21, now known simply as Firebird I. It was developed in 1953, as the first gas turbine-powered car tested in the U.S. It's basically a jet on wheels.

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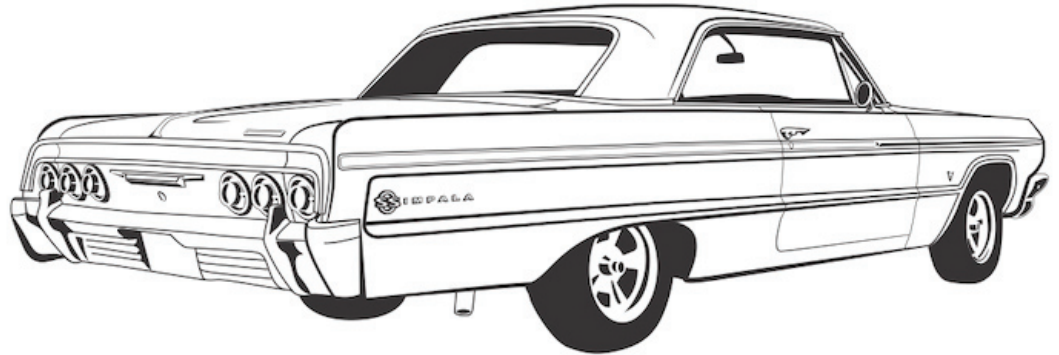


Passing the Minutes

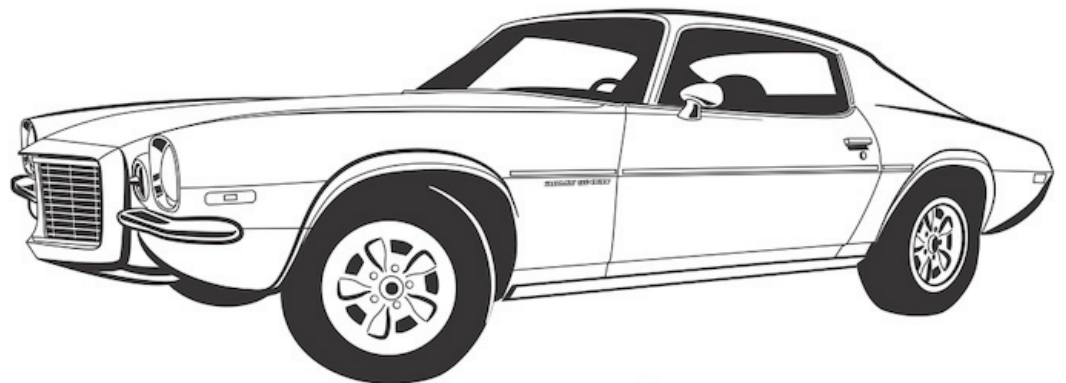
March, 2021

1. This is hopefully our final newsletter that does not report meeting minutes from the previous month. Since we did not meet in February, here is one last opportunity to pass the minutes with some calming coloring exercise. Go stock or go wild, the choice is yours. Once again, these are courtesy of Classic Industries Parts & Accessories.

1964
I M P A L A



1972
Camaro RALLY SPORT



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Planning the Dust-Off in the Face of Uncertainty

Our original target date of April 25 was coming up to quickly for us to know what rules would be imposed upon our event. Caps on attendance, temperature checks, mask mandates and more were either too restrictive or simply unknown. As such, we agreed to push out and consider a new date of May 16, with a rain date of May 23. That would give us some additional time to see what might transpire as the regulations shift in line with the rollout of the vaccine. Nevertheless, we have to plan against the current regulations. As best we can tell, public outdoor gatherings are limited to 500 people so long as all attendees provide a negative Covid test. All of this is unmanageable from our point of view. We will consider later dates as well, perhaps in conjunction with Collector Car Ap-

AACA Eastern Spring Nationals, Saratoga NY

The Saratoga Region AACA is going ahead with plans to hold the Spring National Meet, with the show scheduled for June 19, and events leading up to show beginning on Wednesday, June 16. Those events are expected to include a Lake George Lunch Cruise, a tour of Cooperstown, an open house at the Saratoga Auto Museum and a visit to a private car collection. We recently contacted their Meet Chairman to ask them what protocols they are following, in the hope we'd gain some insight towards our own shows. He noted that like everyone else, they do not have a crystal ball, and are moving forward until they are told they cannot. They are leveraging the Museum's expertise with the state government to help them. One key difference to note is that AACA National Meets do not charge spectator admissions, and all of their show cars are pre-registered. Our show relies heavily on the spectator gate for success. Members interested in registering a car to show at the Spring Meet must do so no later than May 22. The Host Hotel is the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs.

Spring is for Car Spotting

Some folks say the spotting of a robin heralds the arrival of spring. We might instead say spring arrives with we spot antique cars being awakened from their winter slumber. Here are a couple of recent spots to support that idea. Both were seen at Brimar Upholstery in Travis, getting some work done in time for the upcoming season. One is a 1959 Rambler Ambassador, which we immediately recognized as one of Victor Coiro's many cars. The other looks like a 1966 Pontiac Catalina convertible, one we haven't seen around here before.



TOP: Ambassador sales for 1959 reached 23,769 units. Almost half were Custom four-doors. BOTTON: This Candlelite Cream Catalina with black Morrokide (a.k.a. Naugahyde) interior is one of 14,837 convertibles built in 1966.



(photos by Paul Jr.)

From the President

On behalf of us all, I'm pleased to welcome new member Bob Johnson to the club. Bob joined us at the last meeting, but is certainly no stranger to many of us. Dating back to our shows at CSI's Willowbrook campus, Bob was often seen the day before each show as part of the campus crew that readied the space for our show. In addition, Bob's a familiar face at events like Back to the Beach and the Bini events, as a key member of the ProSho team, both on stage and behind the scenes. We are extremely happy to have him aboard.

Informal gatherings like cruise nights, when not particularly sponsored by any one organization, seem to be the way to go for now. We'd expect Sunday mornings at the beach to get underway as soon as the warmer weather makes its return to Staten Island, with nighttime cruises to follow soon after. Perhaps we can informally support a return to Applebees in Bricktown (near Target/Home Depot)? - Paul Jr.

From the Editor

Apologies for the delay in finishing the March newsletter, especially since we already met this month. It's difficult to fill all of the pages with so little new stuff to report on. I appreciate those who throw an idea or a picture my way from time to time, and encourage others to do so as well. Remember, the SIRAACA Garage is the home to all of our cars, past and present. Perhaps your first car is in there? - Paul Jr.

- NEXT MEETING - March 2

Our March meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 2 at 6:30 PM, to be held at Pro Sho Sound's warehouse at 4401 Arthur Kill Road. Thank you to Frank Provenzano and son Frank Jr. for providing the space. Food will be served.

Gone Like a Jet

Some of you may be familiar with Chrysler's experimental Turbine Car. Fifty-five were built in 1963 as part of a nationwide program to test them while generating massive publicity. Fifty cars were distributed to public applicants for three months of free evaluation, over a course of two years. All were then returned, studied and ordered destroyed. One executive stepped in to save nine of them for museums, and all nine exist today. Only two are privately owned - one by Jay Leno, and another, until recently, by a collector named Frank Kleptz. The Kleptz Collection, including the Turbine Car, just came to market courtesy of Hyman Ltd., and like a jet, it was gone before you knew it. The selling price and the buyer remain unknown for now. Will it suddenly appear in the SIRAACA Garage?



(photo courtesy Hyman Ltd.)

The car remained with Chrysler for some time, before going to the Harrah Collection. Domino's Pizza founder Tom Monaghan bought it when that collection was sold off, and Kleptz bought it in the late 1980's at the AACA Hershey meet, along with some spare engines. He was ultimately responsible for getting it to run again, and it remains an original, unrestored, running car today. Hyman is still selling off the rest of this collection, which includes a unique 1937 Imperial Air-flow limousine custom-built for radio personality Major Bowes. Other offerings include several other 1930's Imperials, a 1915 Winton, a 1933 Pierce Arrow Twelve, and a 1941 Graham Hollywood.

Inside the SIRAACA Garage

This month gives us a sneak peak at one of the most recent additions to the SIRAACA Garage. Some of you might recall seeing this car at our Spring Dust-Off in 2011. It's the 1931 Packard Standard Eight Roadster then owned by Robert Johnson. His son Bob now cares for the car, and has just joined our club.

A full write up about this car will follow in an upcoming issue, and it promises to be a very interesting story that delves into the shared history of Robert and this car.

In the meantime, we can tell you that the Eight Series Junior Packards were powered by 319 cubic inch straight-eights, good for an even 100 horses. Model 833's were available in 11 different factory bodies, including sedan, touring, phaeton, towncar and limo.

Advertising for Packard at the time highlighted the notion that paying a little more and keeping a little longer allowed for luxurious transportation at no added cost. It also noted that only three out of every 100 Packard owners chose to leave the brand after once owning one.

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.



TOP: Packard's "Goddess of Speed" radiator emblem was sometimes referred to as "the donut chaser". (photos by Paul Jr.)

BOTTOM: Bob's Packard sports standard steel disk wheels. Both wood and wire wheels were furnished as optional special equipment.

In both photos, notice Don Bosco's 1931 Packard in the background. Two for one! (photos by Paul Jr.)





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The SIRAACA Time Machine

We begin by going back further than before, to March 9, 1927, at the intersection of Richmond Terrace and Heberton Avenue. The sign above the brick building's entrance says "Einzig Bros.", with another sign showing that they deal in Willys-Knights and Overlands. Some of the windows advertise other makes, like Jewett and Paige. Leaping forward to 1940, we see this was once home to Wm. S. Archer, a well-known auto parts dealer. Today it's Gary's Gold Star Auto and the New Country Garage.



(photos courtesy of NYC Dept. of Records)

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