

Vol. 29, No. 1

# Ragtops & Rumbleseats

Jan 2022



• **Remembering Doc Corpus**

## Vintage Advertising

A snowy scene from this 1904 Peerless limousine advertisement welcomes us to January. Peerless was established in 1900, sandwiched between Packard in 1899 and Pierce in 1901. The three "P's" all had a reputation for building high-quality autos.

Peerless originated as a manufacturer of clothes wringers before turning its manufacturing abilities to bicycles. Soon thereafter, they went "horseless", building single cylinder buggies. 1904 models included limousines and touring cars on three different wheelbases. Engines provided between 22-35 horsepower.


Like other luxury auto makers, Peerless could not survive the Great Depression. They built a single V16 prototype in 1931, the final Peerless. In 1933 they revamped their factory to brew Carling Black Label beer for the Brewing Corp. of Canada.

## In This Issue

Memories of Doc Corpus

25th anniversary of the Verrazano Bridge in the SIRAACA Archive

The SIRAACA Time Machine spots the "world's fastest stock Rambler"



SILENCE COMFORT

Peerless

All That The Name Implies Catalogue N will be sent on request

THE PEERLESS MOTOR CAR CO.

2443 EAST 93 RD ST., CLEVELAND, O. MEMBER ALAM

*Trivia Question: Like Peerless, Pierce also had humble beginnings before turning to bicycles and automobiles. What were they best known for from 1865-1900?*

*Answer: Under a company named Heinz, Pierce and Munschauer, they were best known for delicate guilded birdcages.*

**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 -**

**Rocco Pompa**

**WEBMASTER** - siraaca@yahoo.com

**Frank Nathanson**

**www.siraaca.aaca.com**

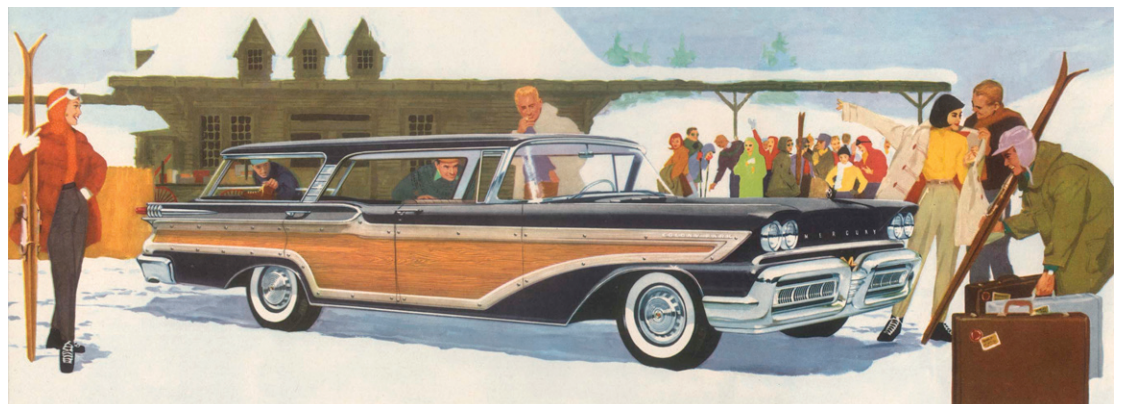


# Minutes of the 552nd Meeting

## November 2, 2021

1. The 552nd meeting of The Staten Island Region AACA was called to order at 7:30 on November 2 at Pro Sho Sound. After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and offering a moment of silence, the minutes of the 551st meeting were accepted as read.
2. Members recapped and provided feedback on our judging efforts at the giant car show in Linden. It was very disorganized and not an easy day to manage, and Kevin Keenan let the organizers know what needs to change in order for us to continue helping them. All of these factors will also come into play if we decide to help the organizers of Hot Rods & Harleys, who visited us before the meeting to inquire about our help.
3. Many members made their way to Hershey for one or more days, spending time walking the car corral, shopping the flea market, or attending the show on Saturday. The size of the event was noticeably smaller than what's normal, but we are not in normal times.
4. The New Dorp Lane Show was held and seemed to run fairly smoothly despite the uncertainty leading up to the event. Several members were on hand displaying their cars, and all cars on hand received a participation award.
5. Our Holiday Party is scheduled for Sunday, December 12, from 2-6 at The RoadHouse. It's open to all members who participated in and helped at our events this year, along with their spouses. Please remember that we donate toys that day to the Richard Gardner Memorial Toy Drive, so we ask all to bring a new, unwrapped toy to the party.
6. Phil Boffa gave an updated treasury report, showing all in order.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45. The 50/50 collected \$35. Bruce Campbell won \$18. Paul Arena was the winner of the \$25 Thanksgiving Gift Card.

Respectfully submitted (reprint),  
Tony DiAngelo, Secretary



## Remembering Doc Corpus

Our club recently lost one of our great friends with the passing of Salvador "Doc" Corpus. Since the 1980's, Doc played a big part in everything we did as a club and beyond as his friendship extended beyond the hobby. Tony DiAngelo recalls first meeting Doc at a local show put on by a high-performance club in the early 1980's, and was the one who introduced him to our club. His talent as a craftsman was immediately apparent, with hands of gold developed professionally as a surgeon. He often helped other members with interior projects, and applied his skills to other club items, handcrafting signs and banners still in use today. He was a fixture of every club event on the calendar.



Doc embraced the national aspect of the hobby, winning many high level AACA awards with his 1958 Impala and 1986 Camaro Z28. His cars were displayed and honored at numerous concours events as well. Yet he always took time to enjoy the local scene, and his 1966 Thunderbird convertible was always on hand for countless years at parades, county fairs and cruise nights. After selling his Impala, he soon filled the void with a 1957 T-Bird. Even though he was sidelined for the last couple of years, he leaves behind a legacy of both physical items and memories for so many of us, ensuring he'll never be forgotten.



*Doc was a force of organization anytime he manned the raffle tent. All he needed was french fries to power his day. At left, Doc is flanked by Paul Arena Sr. and Tony DiAngelo at Liberty State Park in the mid-1980's. Above, Doc's T-Bird features one of his handmade club signs. He also customized his club jacket, turning it into a short-sleeved windbreaker. (Top photo by Frank Nathanson. Photo left courtesy of Tony DiAngelo. Bottom photo by Paul Jr.)*

## From the President

Like so many of us, I have plenty of unforgettable memories of my time spent with Doc Corpus over 40 or so years of his involvement with our club. In 1986, Doc was part of a group of us who went to Spring Carlisle as I hunted for my first car. Once it was decided that I was coming home with my 1967 Cutlass, Doc was chosen to ride shotgun with 18-year-old me for the return trip. The extra car also meant we had another trunk to haul home a Thunderbird pedal car he bought at the swap meet for his youngest son Benji. When it was time for me to get serious with the Cutlass and win on the national level, Doc volunteered to recover my front seats, stitch up a pair of new sun visors and replace my headliner. In terms of laughs, all of our annual stays in Hershey were loaded with them. Recurring jokes about veal scallopine not having scallops took the edge off of the anxiety faced while waiting to see if we won an award. In terms of his surgical precision, it was applied to everything he did, including the serving of six foot hero pieces on a bus hurtling down the Parkway towards Atlantic City each February. My life is richer having known him. - Paul Jr.

## - NEXT MEETING - January 4

Our January meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 4 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.

## Doc's Golden Hands

Tales abound regarding Doc's craftsmanship, which was not limited to our hobby. Doc also built model power boats from scratch and raced them, sometimes using photographs of the real thing as his only reference. When Doc bought an enclosed trailer, he immediately made some modifications to improve its design specifically as it related to his personal use. He built a custom bed cover for his Subaru Baja when no such cover was offered in the marketplace. He sewed club banners and made individual ones as presents for some of his close friends.



Above, some of Doc's scratch-built model racing boats. Doc always pointed out a suitable body of water for racing these whenever out with the club. Right, a handmade banner gifted to Paul & Annette Arena. (photos by Paul Jr)



## Reminder to Renew Your Dues

Except for any AACA Lifetime Members, all members who pay annual dues to the AACA on the national level are reminded once again to renew with headquarters before December 31. Options include mailing your renewal form (included with the last issue of the national magazine) along with a check, or doing so via credit card online at [www.aaca.org](http://www.aaca.org). Recall that national membership is a requirement for your local membership, which can be renewed at our meetings beginning in January.



---

## From the SIRAACA Archive

In October of 1989, in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Verrazano Bridge, a handful of period cars were on hand to parade city officials across the span. Here's a press photo of Paul Arena Jr. driving his father's 1965 Starfire. Just ahead of him was a 1959 Cadillac convertible, which was the first car ever to cross the span in 1964. It carried the same seven Staten Island men who made that initial trip after sleeping for days at the toll plaza to ensure their place in history.

Note the handmade car club banner on the car. We are fairly certain this too is the handiwork of Doc Corpus. Our use of the Verrazzano in our club identity fit perfectly with this event. Does anyone still have one of these banners?

Behind the parade of cars were high school marching bands, park rangers and community groups. Following them was a public bridge walk featuring thousands of Brooklyn and Staten Island residents, who took two hours to complete the 4 1/2 mile round trip.

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.



*The head of the TBTA and his wife brave the chill of an October ride across the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge in Paul Arena's 1965 Starfire convertible. (Photo courtesy of Paul Arena)*

---

## Next Gen Concours Appearance

When the Greenwich Concours curated a special collection of '80s and '90s cars in conjunction with RADwood, Ben Corpus made sure his 1986 Camaro Z28 was in the mix. His dad bought the car new when Ben was born, and as an immaculate, low-mileage original car it went on to become a national award winner. By appearing at Greenwich, Ben follows his dad's footsteps, as Doc's 1958 Impala was also featured on display at this prestigious show many years ago. Next up for the Z28 is its selection for a special display of 3rd Generation Camaros at the 2022 GM Nationals at Carlisle to celebrate its 40th anniversary.



*(Photo by Ben Corpus)*



# J.C. TAYLOR

INSURANCE

JCTAYLOR.COM

1-888-ANTIQUE



## The SIRAACA Time Machine

A look at 340 Bay Street through the years shows a clear auto history. In 1940, it was a Mobilgas Super Service center, just before becoming a dealership. Up until 1960, it was Kieran & Wickert, a Nash dealer, before turning into Richmond Rambler (*is that big Cadillac there to race a little Nash Rambler? -ed.*).



(pics courtesy of NYC Dept. of Records and S.I. Historical Society.)



As the 1960's rolled on and muscle cars began sprouting up across dealerships, AMC looked to improve its image with the speed crowd. As you can see in the service department photo from 1964, below left, Ramblers were still frumpy. So in 1967, when the 343 engine option debuted, some folks noticed. That included Jesse Schneider, the hi-performance manager at Richmond Rambler, who campaigned a hot Rogue on the dragstrip, known as "Beep-Beep", a knock on the old song. With over 30 class wins, it became the "World's Fastest Stock Rambler". According to a Hemmings article from 2010, the car ended up junked. The address today houses a NYC Department of Probation, ending its automotive ties.



43 Hillel Place  
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Tel 718.859.3137  
Fax 718.421.4761

sales@farbetterprinting.com  
www.printingservicebrooklyn.com

Joseph Portagallo

M - Th 8 AM - 6:30 PM  
Fri 8 AM - 5 PM  
Sat 10 AM - 3 PM

WANTED:  
DONATED VEHICLES.  
Any make, model,  
year and condition.  
Tax deductible.  
Call 917-626-0233