

The **PROFESSIONAL** *CAR*



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COVER PHOTOS – If the photos on the front and back covers of this issue don't look *quite* as sharp and clear as the cover art we've featured since making the big switch to all-color a few years ago, it's only because these photos reflect the state of color film technology more than half a century ago.

As related in his story in this issue, PCS member Jeremy Ledford came across this cache of rare photos by sheer chance. Someone was cleaning out the files at the former Bland Casket Co. (also an A.J. Miller and later Miller-Meteor dealer) in Lebanon, Tennessee when they came across some old pictures, including several 35mm color slides. Instead of just tossing them into the wastebasket as so often happens, this thoughtful individual remembered Jeremy, who avidly collects old professional car photos and sales literature. Jeremy assumed the photos were of 1970 or later vintage cars. But when he received the package, he was astonished to find that they were A.J. Miller factory photos taken in the 1950s. Not only that, they were *in color*. It got even better. Some of the photos were actually taken *inside* the A.J. Miller factory in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

Jeremy e-mailed some of these gems to some of his friends in the hobby. We were fortunate to be on his list. We nearly fell off our chair when we opened the file. It was like *Back To The Future*, a trip in a time capsule back to the '50s. We're indebted to Jeremy for sharing this amazing treasure trove with us. We're also grateful to former A.J. Miller sales executive Fred McPeck for sharing his related recollections of the good old days at Miller.

The photo of the 1954 Miller Cadillac landau on our cover was taken on Blair St. in Bellefontaine, then a new residential suburb at the north end of town. This stately funeral coach sports the angled "opera" window found on Miller landau hearses from 1949 through 1956. The 1954 Cadillac ambulance on the back cover is a standard low-top. Our truly stunning centerstretch shows a dozen new coaches in the final prep area of the plant. As Fred McPeck points out, it's odd that there are so few hearses in this photo – mostly combinations and straight ambulances. It was usually the other way around. Thanks for the memories.