

# *The* **PROFESSIONAL** *CAR*



**WELLER BROTHERS**  
**THE EARLY YEARS**

**THE ONE CAR**  
**FUNERAL**



**NUMBER 140**

**2nd Quarter 2011**

# The Professional Car

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## ***From The Editor's Desk:***

With this issue we introduce a new page one format in *The Professional Car*. Instead of the usual free-standing paragraphs of what's on our cover, back cover, and centerstretch, your Editor will now *narratively* outline the contents of each issue including, as before, the story behind the cover photo. This is more in line with what other old-car hobby publications do to facilitate contact between the Editor and member readers. So hang on, here we go...

It's cherry-blossom time in Maryland! The car on our cover is a 1936 Henney Packard Model 762 manual three-way hearse on Packard's 120-BA commercial chassis owned by PCS co-founder George L. Hamlin of Clarksville, Maryland. We asked George how he came to own this classic beauty BPCS (before PCS). Here's his typically wry, measured response: "Purchased new by the Ritchie Brothers Funeral Home of Upper Marlboro, Maryland on 30 December 1935, this coach had a life of relative ease as a service car most of the time while its twin stablemate was the firm's first-line hearse. Ritchie Brothers last used it in 1953, then kept it in the garage until November 1966, undergoing regular washing and waxing right along with its newer replacements. Ritchie sold it to a young sort that year whose intent was to make it into a dune buggy – but when he went out into the next-day dawn with torches in hand he decided '*I can't do it.*' So it went into the Saturday classifieds and I got to it 30 minutes ahead of some 'mainstream' Packard owners who figured on stripping the front clip for their convertible and scrapping the rest. Two narrow escapes in as many days! It was specifically out of this experience that the idea took root in my head that these cars needed better treatment by the old-car hobby. My 1936 Henney has been to four PCS International Meets and two Packard Club national events." A happy ending if ever we've heard one. Good move, George!

The car on our back cover is one of the 31 "Family Funeral Coaches" iconic RV motor home builder *Airstream* built between 1981 and 1987. The nice photo was provided by Tom McPherson, who wrote the fascinating *One-Car Funeral* history feature you'll find elsewhere in this issue.

- Walt McCall