



1976 SUPERIOR CADILLAC FLOWER CAR

NUMBER 81 THIRD QUARTER 1996

MORE FLOWER CAR STUFF INSIDE

# THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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PCS INTERNATIONAL MEET As you have probably heard by now, the Professional Car Society's 1996 International Meet, which was hosted by the Northland Chapter in St. Paul, Minnesota in August was another resounding success. We will have complete coverage of the big Twin Cities meet -- in words and pictures -- in our next issue. Just for the record, we're including the local newspaper's report on the event in this issue.

ON OUR COVER - The coupe-style flower car was a standard product of the American funeral car industry for nearly 40 years. The Eureka Company introduced the first long-wheelbase flower car, on a LaSalle commercial chassis, in 1936. Superior Coach built the last full-sized Cadillac flower cars during the 1976 model year. When the all-new, downsized professional cars were introduced for 1977, there wasn't a flower car among them. Superior revived the style in 1981, and the Eureka Coach Company followed in 1982. Eureka introduced the industry's first front-wheel-drive flower cars for 1987. Today, only Eagle Coach builds a long-wheelbase, deck type Cadillac flower car. Seattle PCS member Parker Buck was fortunate enough to acquire one of the "last of the big ones." Parker's '76 is the cover subject for this issue. In a related story, overseas member Peter Griffiths tells us how he found a 1966 flower car and had it shipped to his funeral home in England.

INSIDE BACK COVER - Cadillac introduced an extensively restyled commercial chassis for 1971 -- a model year which was shortened by a long strike against General Motors in the last quarter of 1970. This new chassis was carried over to the 1972 model year with only minor changes to the grille and ornamentation. The Hess & Eisenhardt company, builder of S&S professional cars, ran this ad for its lowtop and hightop ambulances in Fire Engineering magazine, the leading fire service trade journal, in 1972. Note the absence of roof beacons on both of these units.

BACK COVER - Gregg Merksamer took this close-up photo of the gothic panels on Canadian member Lloyd Needham's 1941 Cadillac carved-panel hearse at our 1993 International Meet in Chatham, Ontario. Under all of that hand-carved wood was blue stained glass. Lloyd's one-of-a-kind sidelading hearse was built by John J. C. Little of Ingersoll, Ontario.