



The Criterion

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHEAST CHAPTER of the PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY
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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hopefully, everyone had an enjoyable summer full of great old car events. Since the last issue of The Criterion came out, we have had our car show in Lahaska, the International Meet in Burbank, and the summer picnic at the Vickery's.

I would like to thank Paul and Donna for hosting the picnic again this year at their home. Those who attended had an enjoyable afternoon, and the Liberty Corner First Aid Squad was nice enough to bring their 1972 Superior Hi-Top Ambulance which is still in service. Bad weather, unfortunately, meant that there was not a big turnout for the Lahaska show, but several members did show up with their cars.

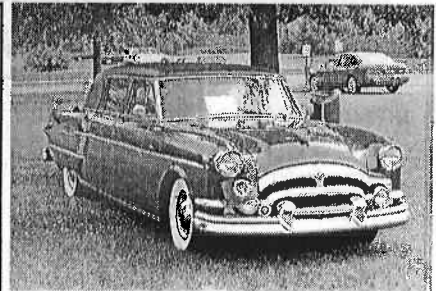
The 2007 International Meet in Burbank was attended by nine members of the Northeast Chapter. Lou Farah and the other members of the PCS Southern California Chapter made sure there was plenty to do and that everyone was treated like family.

We are now in the home stretch for the 2008 International Meet, which will take place in Mount Laurel, NJ August 5th-8th. The committee has already sent the registration form to The Professional Car for publication in the next issue; it is also posted on the National Web Site at www.professionalcar.org. There is a lot of work to still be done between now and next August, so I am asking for the help of the membership to make this meet a success. Everyone is welcome to attend the planning committee meetings we'll be holding every month to finalize the details. If you would like to help in any way, please let me know and I'll make sure you know when and where the meetings are being held.

One minor change we've made to the 2008 International Meet schedule is that the Duck Boat Tour of Philadelphia, due to a cost increase, is being replaced by a Trolley Bus Tour that will be making 29 different stops around the City. Unlike the Duck Boat, you will be able to get on and off as many times as you want during the day.

Unless you notify me by December 1st that you would still like to receive a traditional paper newsletter, this will be the last issue of The Criterion that will be automatically mailed out to all Chapter members. From here on, this publication will normally be e-mailed to our members and friends as a PDF file attachment. - Dan McCann

George Hamlin came to the PCS Lahaska 2007 with this Henney-built 1954 Packard limousine, which touted a trunk-mounted air conditioner and a formal roof treatment by Derham of Rosemont, PA. The flag under the right headlight is from the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.



PICNIC AT THE VICKERY'S

On Saturday, August 11th, 2007, Paul & Donna Vickery's evocative, Revolutionary War era homestead in Millington, NJ hosted the PCS Northeast Chapter's summer picnic for the fourth successful year in a row. Having lost a rabbit and two turtles since our last visit, the in-house zoo had gotten slightly smaller but still constituted one dog, four cats, five chickens, a bearded dragon lizard named Garfield and three Guinea Hens whose piercing screeches recalled the peacocks used to guard the Sultan's harem in the days of the Ottoman Empire.

Every deer in the vicinity, it also seemed, ventured from the surrounding woods to graze among the pro-cars brought by PCS members. Fresh from two trips to Connecticut where it was used for period filming in the Leonardo DiCaprio/Kate Winslet reunion movie Revolutionary Road, Bill Marcy's red-and-white 1956 Meteor ambulance invited immediate comparison to the Paul Vickery's all-white 1956 Miller, especially since both Cadillacs were completed in the last model year before these two Western Ohio coachbuilders formally joined forces as Miller-Meteor. Fred Miller and Elaine French showed off the Liberty Corner First Aid Squad's blue-and-white 1972 Superior Cadillac 54 ambulance, which originally accommodated four stretchers and appeared in fine fettle after a five-mile trip from HQ that took the odometer to 60,004 miles. While everyone else focused on the ambulance-filled photo albums spread across the hood, Richard Litton's red-and-white 1965 Superior Pontiac high-top got Your Editor thinking about the donor vehicle for the red



Previously-unseen ambulances at Paul & Donna Vickery's August 11th picnic included the Liberty Corner First Aid Squad's 1972 Superior "54" and Bill Marcy's 1956 Meteor Cadillac.

oval lenses on each side of the fiberglass roof cap. Bearing the code "ERST60B" on each end, it turns out these were sourced from the 1960 Edsel parts bin of all places, while the "GUIDE 10" taillights were Chevy Corvair components.

Among the unmodified cars at Millington, the 1970s dominated thanks to Fred & Tracy Goerlitz's 1976 Olds Delta 88, Your Editor's Pale Jade 1978 Ford LTD, and the 1976 Buick Riviera that Joe Buono has driven more than 141,000 miles since he bought it new. Aside from being the picnic's distance champion, Albany area denizen Dan Herrick staged the PCS debut of a front-wheel drive 1984 Chrysler LeBaron Executive Limousine he found in Maine through eBay. "Basically, I got it two weeks ago and picked it up yesterday from Connecticut," he reported of the deep blue 60,000-mile beauty, which had originally been operated by a funeral director before its second owner used it as a daily driver. "(PCS Website Operations Manager) Paul Steinberg drove me to Maine to get this from the middle of nowhere, after which I drove it back to his house and picked it up when I could get a ride."

Aside from such unusual interior appointments as an electric sliding partition, a buttoned velour headliner and separately-tuned AM/FM radios for the front and rear compartments, this car was extremely rare bird, being one of only 1,687 converted by American Sunroof Corporation (after prototyping two cars in 1983) near Chrysler's St. Louis assembly plant from 1984 to 1986. Of this total, 1,491 units were partition-equipped, 131-inch wheelbase seven-seat Limousines like Herrick's car, while just 196 were first-year-only, five-passenger Executive Sedans distinguished by a slimmer B-pillar and a slightly-shorter, 124-inch wheelbase. "When they first came out and I saw the folder, I said to myself this is a neat car and I'd like to have one," Herrick added. "Nixon had one in retirement - his Presidential seal went where I put my magnetic PCS logo."



Bill Marcy (left) learns about Dan Herrick's newly-acquired 1984 Chrysler LeBaron Executive limousine.

LAHASKA SATISFIES IN SPITE OF IFFY WEATHER

With torrential rain promised in the forecast, the PCS Northeast Chapter's Sixth Annual Charity Car Show attracted less than twenty vehicles to Peddler's Village in Lahaska, PA on June 3rd, 2007, but the report submitted to Your Editor by Jeff & Mary Hookway confirmed the caliber of entrants was still something to be proud of. With the show field open to all years, makes and types of vehicles in addition to professional cars, Bill Marotta's lovely yellow 1972 Ford LTD from Totowa, NJ was a shoo-in for top honors in the 1965-and-newer convertible class, while the highest-scoring muscle car was a 1967 Pontiac GTO hardtop owned by Ralph Iradi of Fairfield, NJ. Ray Koziol, from Martinsville, NJ, earned best four-door with a two-tone green Bentley S3 he had first admired, and been photographed with, as a 14-year-old at the 1964 New York International Automobile Show. In addition to being one of only 77 left-hookers built for U.S. consumption, it had been fitted with a number of unusual accessories by Harold Radford coachworks of London including a door-mounted beverage cabinet, a separate front passenger seat headrest and a built-in cigar cutter.

In addition to earning Best-In-Show, the 1966 Chevy Impala SS fastback brought from Fairfield, NJ by Nick Agresta was deemed the top two-door completed after 1964. A convertible-contoured metal roof earned equivalent kudos among 1964-and-earlier two-doors for Bedminster, PA resident Ralph Reichenbach's 1963 Buick LeSabre, while Best Truck went to Bob Massaro's 1965 Ford F-100



In addition to earning Best-In-Show, Nick Agresta's 1966 Chevy Impala SS from Fairfield, NJ was awarded Best 1965-up Two-Door.

Styleside pickup from Chalfont, PA. Philadelphia PCS and C-LC member Andy Toton's 1958 Cadillac Fleetwood Sixty Special four-door hardtop, whose comprehensively-documented history was summarized in the Autumn, 2006 issue of The Criterion, received Chairman's Choice from PCS Northeast Chapter President Dan McCann. Bill Smoot, another hobbyist from Chalfont, PA, received the Best Original Un-restored award for a 1955 Dodge Coronet Club Coupe attractively two-toned in Heather Rose and Sapphire White; it turned out that this ultra low mileage, lavishly-optioned car was originally shipped new to Hooper Plymouth-Dodge-Chrysler in Plainview, Texas, where the showroom owner placed it into storage for some thirty years instead of selling it.

Though no coachbuilder was recorded in the Hookways' correspondence, a 1996 Fleetwood raised-roof "double cut" limousine (*photo below*) brought from Watchung, NJ by Raritan River Region Cadillac-LaSalle Club member Joe Puleo proved an irresistible choice for the Best Professional Car. Jeff Beyer of New Tripoli, PA, whose 1955 Studebaker Ambulet has practically become an institution at PCS International Meets, showed us something delectably different (but still South Bend-built) in the form of a 1951 Champion taxi that deservedly won top honors in the special interest category. George Hamlin, meanwhile, came up from Maryland with a 1954 Packard limousine that was one of only 35 constructed by Henney (plus another 65 externally identical eight-passenger sedans) during the model's final year. Aside from a heavily-padded roof with blind quarter panels and an oval rear window that was added by Derham of Rosemont, PA, scoops on the rear fenders indicated that this extremely rare and supremely-dignified conveyance had a Frigidaire air conditioner with a trunk-mounted evaporator. Being a hot gas bypass system lacking the expansion valve employed on later systems, the compressor runs continuously unless the drive belts are removed for the winter.



CALIFORNIA THERE WE WENT!

Hosting the Professional Car Society's 2007 International Meet in Burbank, California from July 10th-14th, So-Cal Chapter President Louis Farah and his V.P. Kevin O'Connell could not have set the bar higher when it comes to the encore that our Northeast Chapter will be staging next August 5th-9th in Mount Laurel, N.J. As the current, Third Quarter issue of The Professional Car offers plenty of detail on the vehicles displayed at Johnny Carson Park on Saturday - Steve Lichtman also contributed a fine report on Friday's pilgrimage to sites connected with the NBC series Emergency! and the Bill Cosby/Raquel Welch ambulance comedy Mother, Jugs and Speed - Your Editor has opted to focus on the dozen-plus tours that respectively explored the region's automotive, firefighting and funeral cultures on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Though the non-stop rush hours (let alone the multiple plane changes required to reach LAX or Bob Hope Burbank airports from the East Coast) made this meet among the most exhausting in the 31-year history of the PCS, it was obvious by week's end that Lou and Kevin truly love L.A. and did a fine job finding inventive ways for us to connect with and appreciate their sprawling, 458-square-mile metropolis.

Tuesday, July 10th, 2007: "Automotive Day"

Having done a lot of film work in his capacity as a standby firefighter, PCS So-Cal V.P. Kevin O'Connell is an ideal tour guide to Los Angeles' omnipresent entertainment industry and its unique relations with car enthusiasts and emergency professionals. In addition to driving the fire truck in



The Nethercutt Collection's latest restoration was this front-wheel drive 1930 Ruxton sporting a Joseph Urban-designed color scheme with horizontal pink and purple stripes

the Seinfeld episode where Kramer (Michael Richards) tries to steer the tail end of a hook-and-ladder with humorously-disastrous consequences, he also cut a fat-suited Eddie Murphy out of a Dodge Viper in The Nutty Professor (fortunately, the roof was just a

mock-up). In his capacity as the owner and President of B&M Siren, he can also think of "a million reasons" why his egg-shaped Super Chief is superior to the much-vaunted Federal Q; the top three are that "it's half the weight and has half the current draw, and we wind our own brake coils right in the shop. The Q's only advantage is that it can coast for five minutes."

While the freeway from Burbank to Sylmar is five lanes wide in places, the PCS bus bogs down quite often as it heads to the meet's first tour at the Nethercutt Museum. At least, this affords time to scrutinize a structure that looks something like the Great Wall of China snaking over some hills to the north (it turns out to be the Los Angeles Aqueduct from the Owens Valley) and giant roadside cutouts depicting historic Lockheed aircraft like the Constellation and the SR-71 reconnaissance jet, which mark a shopping center built on the company's old factory site in Burbank. Kevin adds, of course, that the B&M Super Chief was tuned in Lockheed's wind tunnel.



A balcony-level view of the Grand Salon at the Nethercutt Museum, dominated by a Packard and Duesenberg of 1934 vintage

The car collecting passion of J.B. "Jack" Nethercutt - his wife Dorothy was similarly enthused about antique dolls - was financed by his inheritance of Merle Norman Cosmetics, which his mother started in her L.A. kitchen during the 1920s. Museum Archivist Laurie Thornhill, giving her welcome spiel in front of a 1913 Case Model 40 fire truck, jokes that we shouldn't "get any funny ideas" because the batteries in all the cars are charged and the keys are in the ignitions. Handling everything from oil changes to frame-off restorations, an in-house staff of fifteen full-time mechanics makes sure each auto is serviced and driven at least once a year. Beginning with a Merrimac-bodied 1930 duPont town car J.B. purchased on a whim from a corner gas station and spent nineteen months and \$65,000



Inside the Nethercutt's new museum building, Bill Wright and Fred Goerlitz admire an all-original 1911 Oldsmobile Limited limousine with 43-inch diameter wheels.

restoring, six Nethercutt vehicles have won Best-of-Show at the Pebble Beach Concours since 1958.

Situated beyond a full-sized replica of an 1886 Benz three-wheeler, the centerpiece of Nethercutt's original 1974 museum building is a second-level Grand Salon

evoking the lavish dealerships and hotel shows where classic cars were sold in the Roaring Twenties 1920s and early 30s. Its awe-inspiring appointments include Bohemian crystal chandeliers, three different kinds of marble from Italy, Vermont and Belgium, and huge portraits of J.B and Dorothy Nethercutt hanging above the player grand piano on the balcony. Having been replicated as a 1/24th scale Franklin Mint model, the most famous car on the floor is arguably the Rollston-bodied 1933 Duesenberg SJ Arlington Torpedo Sedan debuted at the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago; nicknamed "The Twenty Grand," it took two years for the car to find its first owner in the depths of the Depression!

The impressive musical instrument collection on the top floor of Nethercutt's 1974 building features a pair of massive, intricately-carved "Orchestrions" that were made in Leipzig, Germany during the 1920s as a substitute for live orchestras in cafes, beer halls and hotels. One of these calliope-like giants, built for a café in Brussels by the Hugo Popper Co., was ignominiously replaced by a jukebox even though it was equivalent to a 12-piece band! Even more incredibly, it turns out that the entire room was specially-built around a 5,000-pipe Wurlitzer organ completed for the Denver Auditorium in 1918. After this colossus, thirty percent larger than the organ at Radio City Music Hall, is hooked to a computer program playing "All I Ask Of You" from The Phantom of the Opera, PCS President Brady Smith notices that Jack Nethercutt, Jr., with his suit jacket slung casually over his shoulder, is one of the other people in the audience.

In 2000, the Nethercutt Collection expanded to a dramatic new glass-fronted building on the opposite side of Bledsoe Street, but there still isn't enough space to display every vehicle without periodic rotation. Just a few of the cars warranting attention on the day the PCS visited included an entirely-original 1911 Oldsmobile Limited limousine with 43-inch diameter wheels and a 706 cubic-inch T-head six-cylinder engine; a 1923 Voison C-5 Sporting Victoria that once belonged to silent movie idol Rudolph Valentino; and a 1937 Pierce-Arrow limousine towing a 1936 Travelodge trailer finished in matching deep blue paintwork.



Cinema Vehicle Services owner Ray Claridge brought out his personal 1959 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Sentinel for PCS members to admire.

The next stop on "Automotive Day" is Cinema Vehicle Services in North Hollywood, where company owner Ray Claridge parked his personal 1959 Miller-Meteor Cadillac Sentinel for PCS members to examine outside the main building. Though the 1959 M-Ms used in Ghostbusters I and II are also being restored on-site, long lines of Crown Victorias finished in L.A., Las Vegas, Boston, New York and Miami livery re-emphasize that cop car replicas remain the operation's bread-and-butter. One also couldn't help noticing that there were at least two examples of every civilian vehicle in inventory just-in-case, whether a film or TV production might need a tail-finned 1959 Rambler, an innocuous Geo Metro hatchback or identically-customized Chrysler 300s with 20-inch wheels and black-and-silver two-tone paint jobs. The assortment of vintage trucks runs the gamut from an early 1950s REO Gold Comet Civil Defense panel van to a mid-1960s Toyota pickup that was simply incapable of seating modern, plus-sized American motorists. Wistfully recalling that "the Milan wafers were my favorites," Kevin

