



1934 PACKARD FLOWER CAR

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BIRTH OF THE FUNERAL FLOWER CAR

# THE PROFESSIONAL CAR

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**ON OUR COVER** – The main feature in this issue of *The Professional Car* traces the origins of the American funeral flower car. It would appear that the first single-purpose flower cars were used in Chicago in the early 1930s. By the middle of the decade, a number of flower car conversions of standard passenger cars were in use by livery services and funeral homes in the Chicago area. By the end of the decade most hearse manufacturers had added long, low coupe style flower cars to their product lines. The car on our cover is a flower car conversion of a 1934 Packard Model 1101 Roadster. Note the convertible coupe roof, open flower well and dummy convertible top boot at the rear of the car. Following the flower car into the cemetery is a Packard limousine hearse (of indeterminate manufacture) and a big Packard pallbearers' sedan. This is the *earliest* straight flower car photo we have come across in our years of research.

**INSIDE BACK COVER** – More than a few Ford Ranchero and Chevrolet El Camino pickups were used as low-budget funeral flower cars in the 1950s and '60s. While most of these were straight flower cars, the Miller-Picking Corp. of Johnstown, Pa. promoted this 1957 Ford Ranchero conversion as a multi-purpose flower, first-call and all-around general utility car.

**BACK COVER** – The Thomas Funeral Home in Terre Haute, Indiana was a loyal Henney customer. Lined up beside the funeral home sometime in the early 1940s are a 1938 Henney Packard Model 886 Flower Car; a 1939 Henney Packard Super Eight Formal-Model Hearse and a 1940 Packard sedan. Note the siren mounted on the right front bumper of the flower car. The '38 was replaced by a new Henney Packard flower car ten years later. The '48 was taken in on trade by Detroit Henney dealer Charles Mack and at least one owner later was purchased and restored by PCS member Dale Cole of Rochester, Michigan.