

The **PROFESSIONAL CAR**



**THE 1980-1992
RWD CADILLACS**

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COVER PHOTO – We've been waiting for a chance to publish this gorgeous photo for a long time. Our principal feature in this issue – the little-changed 1980-1992 Cadillac funeral cars – was our window of opportunity to do so. As President of the Eureka Coach Co. in Toronto, Tom McPherson insisted on having every unique Eureka coach or limousine professionally photographed. Tom always made sure that I got copies of all of them -- for which I remain grateful to this day.

CENTERSTRETCH – This stunning two-tone red 1988 Eureka Cadillac Concours Brougham d'Elegance landaulet "hearse of a different color" is also the subject of our centerstretch on pages 22-23.

BACK COVER – Tom also provided us with the photo that graces our back cover – a striking emerald green 1982 Eureka Cadillac Concours Classic flower car custom-built for the Griffin Funeral Home in Chicago.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE – Following the government-mandated downsizing of the U.S. auto industry's products beginning in 1977, the 1980s was a decade of continuing tumultuous change for the small, highly specialized professional-car industry. Miller-Meteor went out of business at the end of the 1979 model year. In 1980, Sheller-Globe shut down its Superior Coach division. And in 1981 Hess and Eisenhardt sold its S&S professional-car division to the born-again Superior Coach Co. As the decade wore on, an astonishing number of new companies popped up, including Eureka, Collins, Eagle, B&B, Demers, Marquis, C&C, Solar, etc. In yet another milestone change, Cadillac ceased production of its long-wheelbase commercial chassis at the end of the 1984 model year. From that point on, all of the industry's players built their hearses basically the same way, by cutting a new coupe or sedan in two, extending its wheelbase, and adding a fiberglass top and upper body structure, or purchasing a new de-contented base vehicle from Cadillac. The 1980s also saw the transition from rear-wheel drive to all-new, slightly smaller FWD platforms. What didn't change much in the 1980s was Cadillac's commercial-vehicle styling. Annual model changes were minimal, to say the least. Even today, it's hard to tell a 1980 Superior from a '92 – which is the point of our lead feature in this issue.

COMING UP – The main story in our next issue was supposed to be a Tom McPherson photo feature on the postwar 1946-47-48 Cadillac funeral cars and ambulances. Due to Tom's debilitating illness, however, the story never got written. Instead, in its place, we will do an appropriate retrospective on Tom's remarkable life -- the upstart hearse company he created, his continuing involvement in the industry, and especially, his huge contribution to professional-car-industry history in the authoritative books he wrote, and his many journalistic contributions to this publication. He deserves no less.

– Walt McCall, Editor