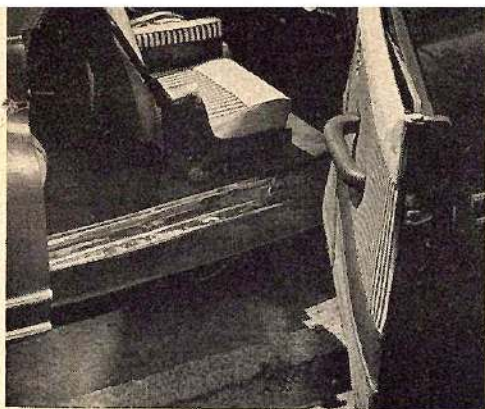
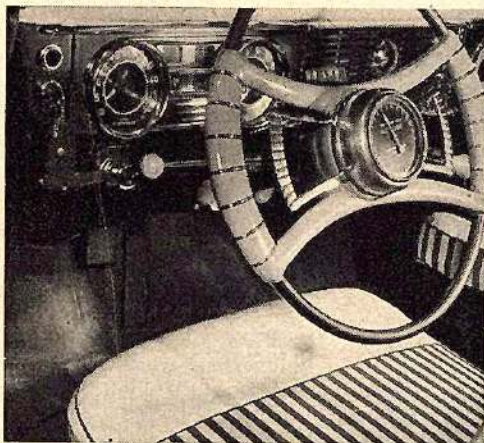




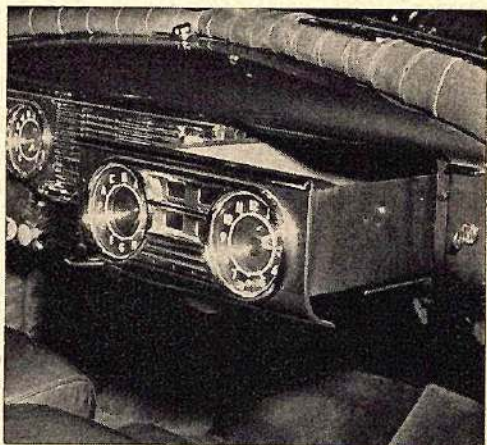
Long, sloping doors are push-button operated and extremely heavy. Hydraulic windows are remote-controlled. Other refinements include air brakes, reclining front seat, and center armrest.



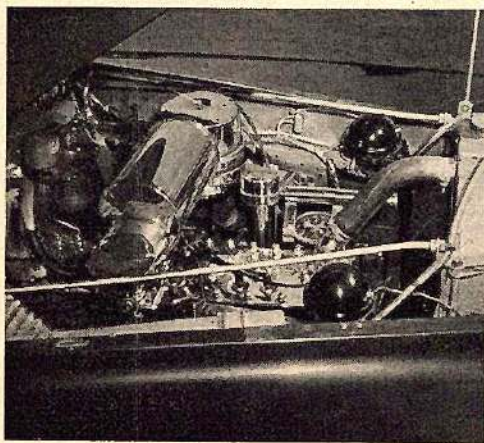
Transparent sun roof over front seat has been retained throughout all versions for experiments in filtering sunlight with different-colored plastics. Rear part of the car's top is solid steel.



Special equipment includes extra-loud highway horn (white knob), tachometer, barometer, altimeter (on steering-wheel hub), light that glows red when oil pressure drops or water overheats.



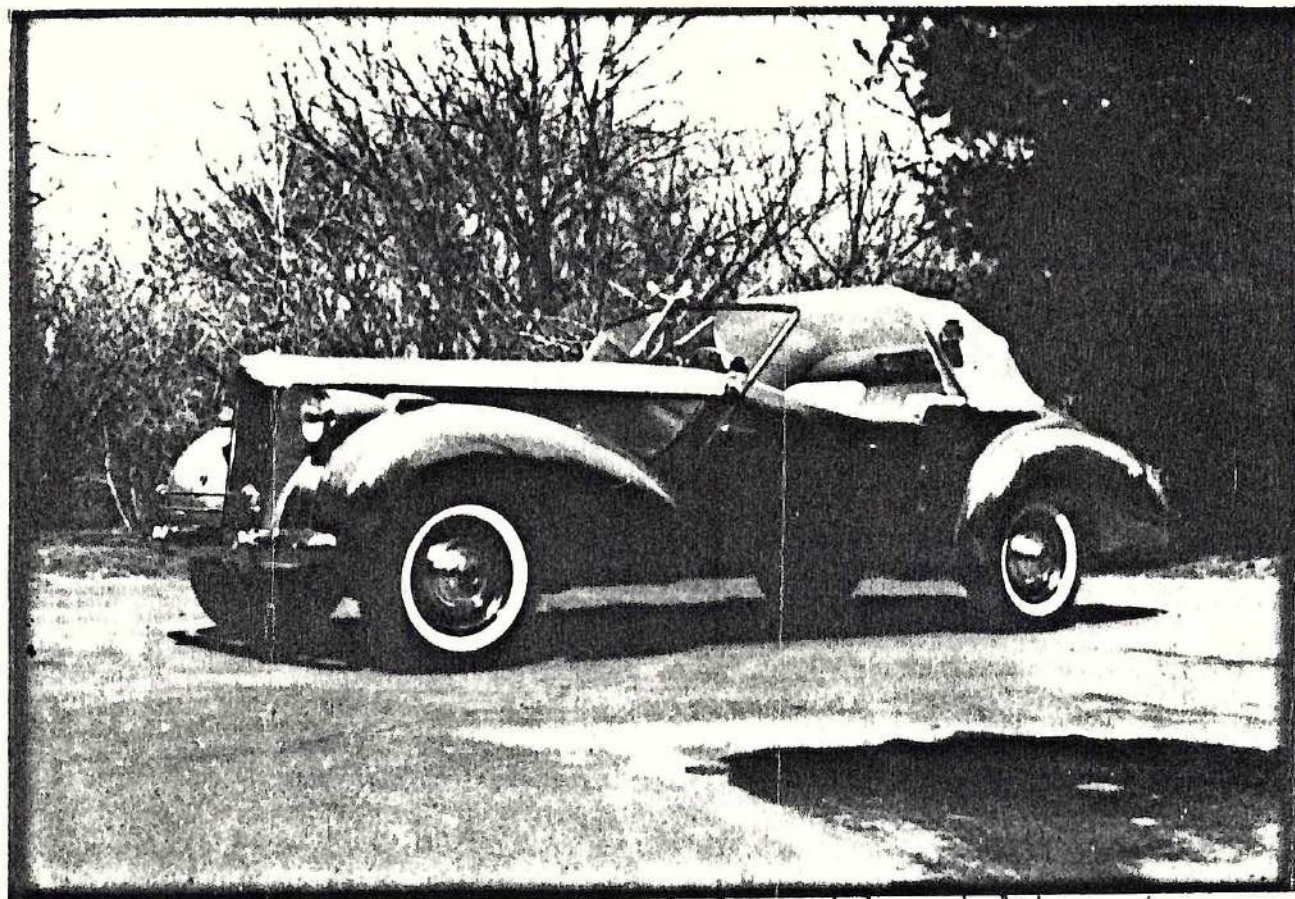
Large, roomy drawer was substituted for conventional glove compartment. Cowl shoulder is covered with pale-yellow plastic. Dash controls include transmission lockout and engine blower.



Snazzy, chromed engine is standard Packard eight. Car weighs 5,800 lb., averages 15 miles per gallon, is now equipped with Packard's new Ultramatic Drive® (PS, June '49, p. 139).

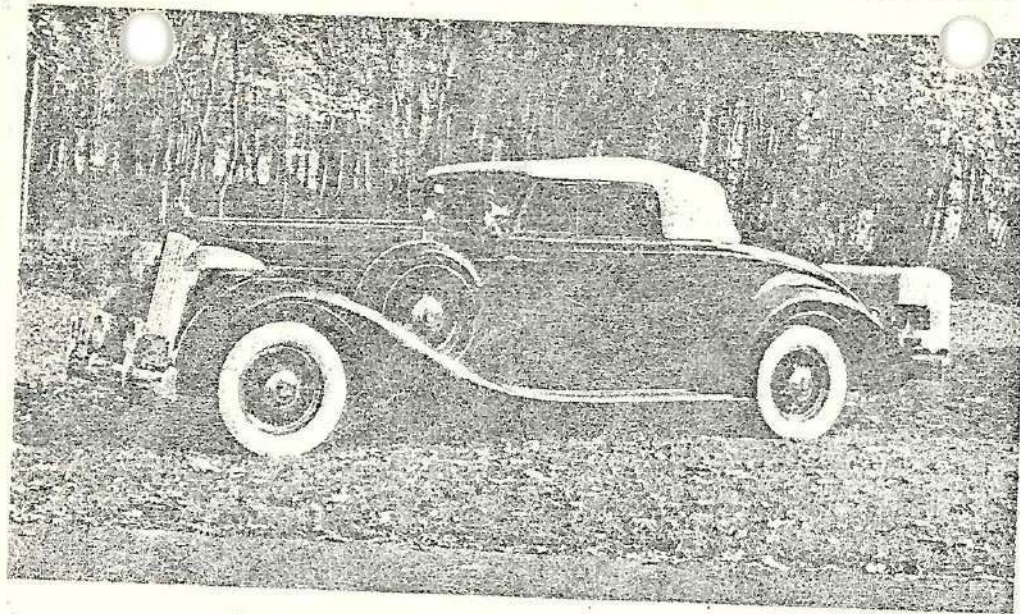


Trunk lid raises hydraulically; so does radio aerial to its right. Inside are fire extinguisher and compressed-air cylinder for filling flat tires. The eight-stack exhaust pipe is just for looks.



To L. C. Astell with deep appreciation for
his patience and understanding during
the renovation of this car.

Eugene G. Boss M.D.



1936 Packard Convertible Coupe (Golf Bag Door)



1940 Custom Body Packard Victoria

Antique Car Buff's Exertions Repaid by First-Place Awards

You wash it — hours are consumed in scrubbing wire wheels. You polish it. You tune it up. You even clean the motor — free it completely of oil and dirt — so it looks like new. That's how you prepare an antique car for a meet, according to W. L. Axtell, associate director of personnel.

Then you drive the car to the site and start all over again. Clean off any dust acquired on the trip and repolish to make sure the car looks its best before the judging begins.

AND MR. AXTELL knows. He owns three prize-winning Packards, although one is for sale because "we just don't have the storage space."

The dark blue 1936 Packard convertible coupe has a rumble seat — and golf bag doors on both sides. Self-lubricating, it even contains a separate oil tank, unheard-of in today's models. Mr. Axtell says he saw an advertisement for the car in an Illinois newspaper, answered the ad, purchased it and had it shipped East by truck. During

stored to 'mint condition' and to first-prize status at a recent meet.

The 1940 custom-body Packard Victoria is brilliant red. Recently purchased from a local doctor, it has been run 18,000 miles since restoration and is in 'excellent condition.' Mr. Axtell said the doctor was so devoted to the car he made plans to drive it all his life. And to insure its longevity, he had acquired all kinds of extra parts — new transmission, new fenders, grilles, lights, even an extra motor — which required two pickup trucks to transport it to the Axtell home in Somers, Conn.

The 1954 silver-gray convertible Packard coupe was also formerly owned by a doctor. It had been driven only 12,000 miles when the doctor died. And then it was in storage for 16 years before Mr. Axtell acquired it, but "it looks and performs just like it did the day it came off the showroom floor."

Explaining his interest in automobiles, Mr. Axtell said he grew up in the environment. "My father was associated with the former Packard Motor Company for 37



1954 Packard Convertible Coupe

and is just as fussy about their appearance when showing them as I am. In fact," he added, "we both usually drive cars to each meet."

ACTIVE in car buff associations, Mr. Axtell is a member of the Classic Car Club of America, Connecticut Valley Region of the Veteran Motor Club.

"We meet all kinds of people — from mechanics, who know all there is to know about motors, to buffs, who just like the looks of old cars and enjoy driving them — and all share our interest," Mr. Axtell said. "There is, of course, a car museum in Sturbridge, but anyone who really likes old

ANTIQUE and CLASSIC CAR MEET

7. Gasoline cars more than 4
1. 4 wheel brakes through 1935.
3. Gasoline cars — 1933-1942.
2. Gasoline cars — Classic
- early production 1925-1932.
10. Gasoline cars — Classic
- early Custom 1925-1932.
11. Gasoline cars — Classic



- te production 1932-1942 & Linc.
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2. Gasoline cars — Classic
- le custom 1932-1942.
3. Gasoline cars — Model A
- rd 1928-1929.
4. Gasoline cars — Model A
- rd 1931.
5. Special Interest Cars.
6. Foreign Cars.
7. Commercial vehicles prior
- 1943.
8. Avanti — Reserved for any
- class that would participate
- I choose to be judged
- arately (Lincoln Cont.,
- wrolets, Hudson Terraplane,
-)
9. T-Birds.
1. Post War.
2. Lincoln Continentals.
- Any class with less than three
- icipating cars will be com-
- ed with another class.)

Wagen
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nnes.

Class I — 1906 Buick-Run-A-Bout, Stewart Sage, Greenfield, Mass., 85.
Class II — 1914 Ford, William E. Florence, Reading, Mass., 92.5.

Class III — 1. 1923 Ford, Robert Morris, Scotia, N.Y., 94.5; 2. 1926 Ford, Walter Terrell, Goffstown, N.H., 92; 3. 1924 Ford, Mark Moroukian, Latham, N.Y. 90.

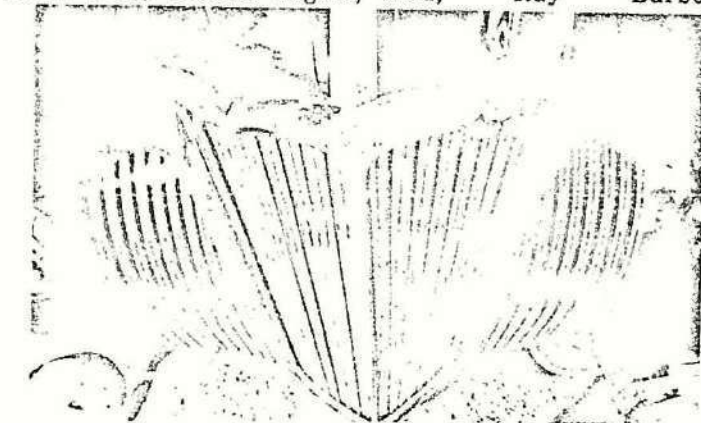
Class V — 1. 1922 Hupmobile Tour, W. Schiff, Hurley, N.Y., 97; 2. 1926 Franklin Roadster, E. Midura, Chicopee Falls, Mass., 95½; 3. 1924 Jewett Tour, C. Thomas, Bovina Center, N.Y., 95.

Class VI — 1. 1924 Buick Roadster, C. Pergl, Binghamton, N.Y., 99½; 2. 1932 Plymouth Coupe, Robert Wildox, Barre, Vt., 90; 3. 1932 Plymouth Convertible, Irv. Stephenson, Williamstown, Vt., 76½.

Class VII — 1. 1924 Buick, C. Pergl, Binghamton, N.H., 99; 2. 1925 Flint, Forrest Downing, Canaan, Conn., 97½; 3. 1929 Nash, Charles McCarthy, Warrington, Pa., 95.

Class VIII — 1. 1941 Packard Sedan, Dennis Mazzone, Meriden, Conn., 96½; 2. 141 Olds 4 Sedan, Bob Hellstrom, East Hampton, Conn., 95½; 3. 1938 Buick C Sedan, Doug Kelley, St. Albans, Vt., 93½.

Class IX — 1. 1931 Cad. Roadster, Daniel Johnson, Jaffrey, N.H., 93½; 2. 1927 Cad. Sedan, Ray Newell, Northampton, Mass., 93; 3. 1926 Pack. Tour, Thomas Vagnini,



Pittsfield, Mass., 80.

Class X — 1. 1929 Packard Roadster, Shelly Vincent, Mendon, Mass., 95½; 2. 1928 Marmon Roadster, Willard Goyette, Bennington, Vt. 79½.

Class XI — 1. 1941 Packard Limo, Al McGarra, Newtown, Conn., 92; 2. 1936 Packard Roadster, Bruce Dillman, Fairfield, Conn., 91½; 3. 1938 Packard Sedan, Albert Mirick, Holden, Mass., 90½.

Class XII — 1. 1940 Packard

Conv. W. Axtell, Somers, Conn., 88; 2. 1934 Duesenberg, Morgan Potter, Worcester, Mass., 84; 3. 1942 Packard Conv., Jack Behn, Trumbull, Conn., 78½.

Class XIII — 1. 1929 Ford Roadster, E. W. Tanis, W. Hurley, N.Y., 98; 2. 1928 Ford, R. Griffith, Woburn, Mass., 97½; 3. 1929 Ford Wagon, Robert Rodriguez, Whately, Mass., 95.

Class XIV — 1. 1931 Victoria Coupe, Tom Moore, Wilbraham, Mass., 96; 2. 1930 Coupe, Jean Jette, Beloeil, Quebec, 94; 3. 1930 Roadster, John Hickey, Menands, N.Y., 89½.

Class XV — 1. 1948 M.G. Roadster, Doug. Redmond, Clarence, N.Y., 96.5; 2. 1956 Mercedes Coupe, David DuBeul, So. Burlington, Vt., 94; 3. 1940 Packard Wagon, Nils Skog, Fairfield, Conn., 93.

Class XVI — 1. 1926 R.R. Roadster, Herb Hedstrom, E. Thetford, Vt., 95½; 2. 1928 R.R. Towncar, Charles W. Nash, Cazenovia, N.Y., 94; 3. 1961 4Dr. Jaguar M.K. IX Sedan Solon, C.E. Hartwell, Jr., Cazenovia, N.Y., 91½.

Class XVII — 1. 1964 Avanti 2 Dr., Robert Tomkins, Methuen, Mass., 95; 2. 1963 Avanti 2 Dr., Wm. Waterhouse, Uxbridge, Mass., 91; 3. 1966 Avanti 2 Dr., Robert Condon, N. Bennington, Vt., 80½.

Class XIX — 1. 1957 H.T. T-Bird, William Mankauskas, Palmer, Mass., 95; 2. 1956 H.T. T-Bird, Ray Barbeau,



Photos by Stanley Rubin

* That was in 1972 (Sept) prior to new top, carpets and 7,000 on engine compartment and body last winter.

Poughkeepsie, N.Y., 88; 3. 1955 H.T. T-Bird, Harry Tavel, (No address), 87.

Class XX — 1. 1955 Packard 2 Dr., Edward Yeager, Shelton, Conn., 97; 2. 1964 Studebaker, Lew Sweedler, Brooklyn, N.Y., 95; 3. 1950 Packard 4 Dr., R. Coll, Manchester, N.H., 95; 4. 1950 Cadillac, G. Vanderburgh, Latham, N.Y., 94½.

Class XXI — 1. 1956 Lincoln Cont., R. Sitka, Bristol, Conn., 92½; 2. 1946 Lincoln Cont., L. Barrows, Boston, Mass., 89; 3. Lincoln Cont., G. W. Lockhart, Boscawen, N.H., 88.

Best of show — 1924 Buick Roadster, Charles Pergl, Binghamton, N.Y., 99½.

Best unrestored — 1941 Packard Clipper, Dennis Mazzone & Richard Reale (co-owners), Meriden, Conn.

OIL MA IN BENI

Take a good look at the might not be there.

From the film in the press c newspapers depend on produc from oil.

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Montpelier, Vermont 05602

She's old but... this "patient" is still frisky

By JEANNETTE FASZEWSKI

It's a gorgeous machine! Long, low slung and bright red, it would immediately catch the eye of anyone within a mile radius! The seats are creamy white and a black convertible top sets off the picture.

How much did it cost, we asked the proud owner?

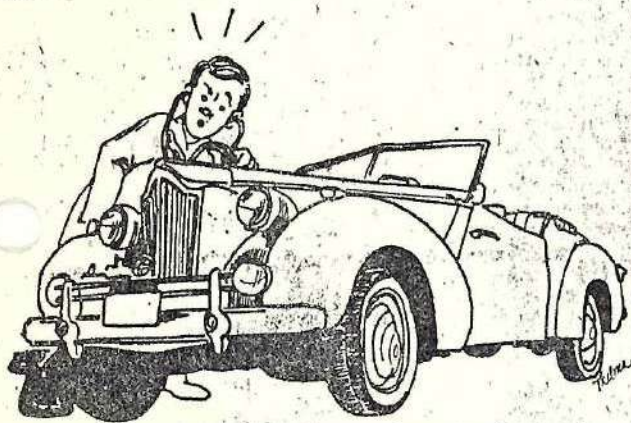
"I can't exactly remember," he replied.

At our look of disbelief, he added, "But it was more than my wife thinks it cost."

Dr. Eugene Boss of Springfield is a man in love with his car, just one particular year, make and model — a 1940 Darrin Packard. Its long, slender bonnet, reminiscent of a Rolls Royce and its body hand-built by car designer Howard Darrin, the Packard is poetry on wheels.

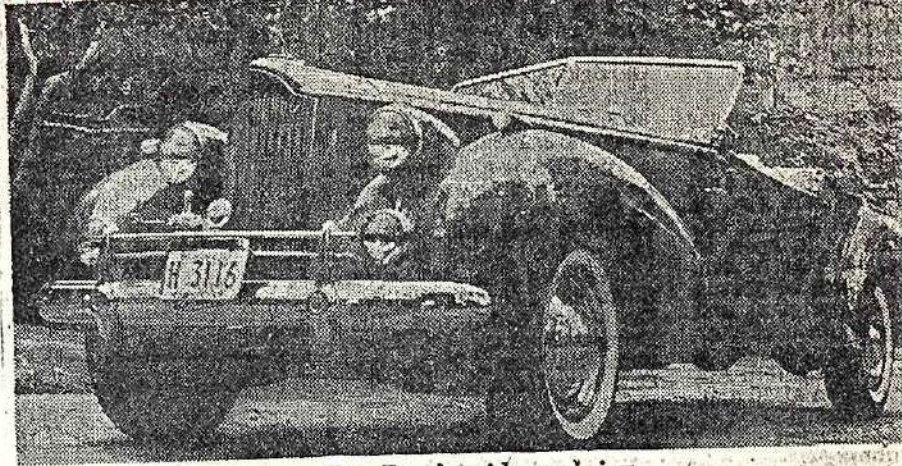
"I first saw a model in Florida," the doctor explained, "and I remember

Continued on Page 10

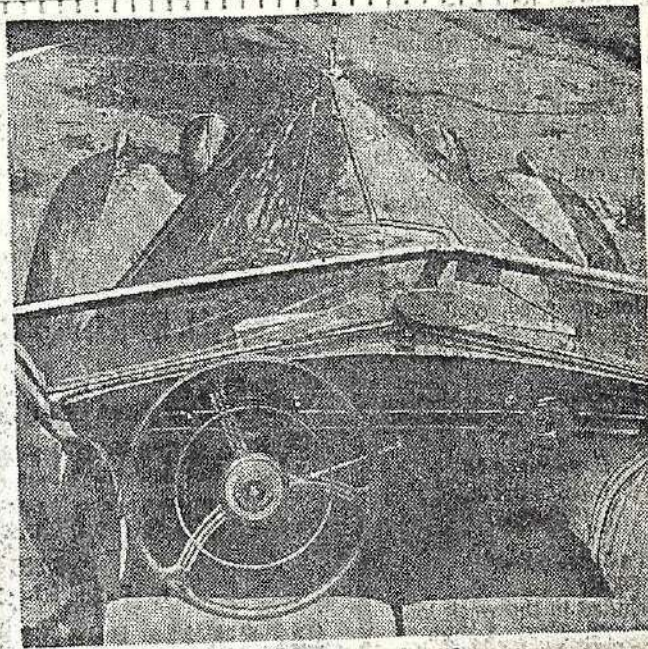


Gets the best care in town!

Drawing by Thelma Hoffman



Dr. Boss' pride and joy



A view from the driver's seat

This patient is still frisky

Continued from Page 1

seeing one in Springfield and chasing it down Carew St. until I lost it. I always loved the car. I got this one in 1953 from a retired army colonel and had it freighted up from Florida."

The doctor mentioned that it was the biggest chassis Packard made and the only model Darrin built himself. It was the first model without a running board and with the lift on the steering column.

"It was a beautiful sports car. Clark Gable and Errol Flynn each had one. Gable had to give his up though. He'd stop for a light and the girls could just climb in. He got mobbed."

There were only 35 of the cars made and the doctor admitted that he was very lucky to find one. After it arrived in Springfield, he had it completely reconditioned by the Packard people here in town. The hand-made doors, built with wood he had to have rebuilt using new wood.

"It has an over-drive," he explained, "and four speeds. I've never yet had to get any parts replaced; just had the carburetor adjusted once."

We asked Dr. Boss how many miles he got to a gallon. What was the top speed? We have memories of shaking, chugging old cars laboring up hills.

In reply the doctor started up the motor and let us listen to the hum of the engine. What hum? A selee-

"I can cruise all day at 70 or 75 mph. I take it out on I-91 and go anywhere I want. As you can see it's a very quiet car. I guess I can average about 20 miles to a gallon. I never actually figured it out exactly, but it sure doesn't use much gas."

Dr. Boss mentioned that he intends leaving the car to the Ford-Dearborn Museum. No one else in his family will touch the car. "I remember asking my son to drive it over to the hospital to get me and he replied in the negative. He told me if anything happened to the car, this country wouldn't be big enough for him to hide in!" The doctor laughed. "Actually, it is a Classic Car and it's won all sorts of medals and prizes."

QUALIFICATIONS

He explained that to be an antique car, the vehicle must be over 25 years old when he bought the Packard it didn't qualify except as a Classic Car. He has been told that its value increases \$1,000 each year but seemed inclined to disbelieve this statistic. The car has won the title "Most Magnificent Sports Car in America" which seems to bear out the doctor's opinion that it's a lovely machine.

"I was always very fond of Packards. I thought they made excellent cars and this was the most beautiful car that ever came out in my day. I also like convertibles."

Although the car was in fairly good shape when it arrived — the purchase had been made sight unseen — the doctor was worried about the possible need for new parts in the coming years and had it completely overhauled and reconditioned. A garage in Springfield did the chassis and repainted it, but other work

SPECIALIS

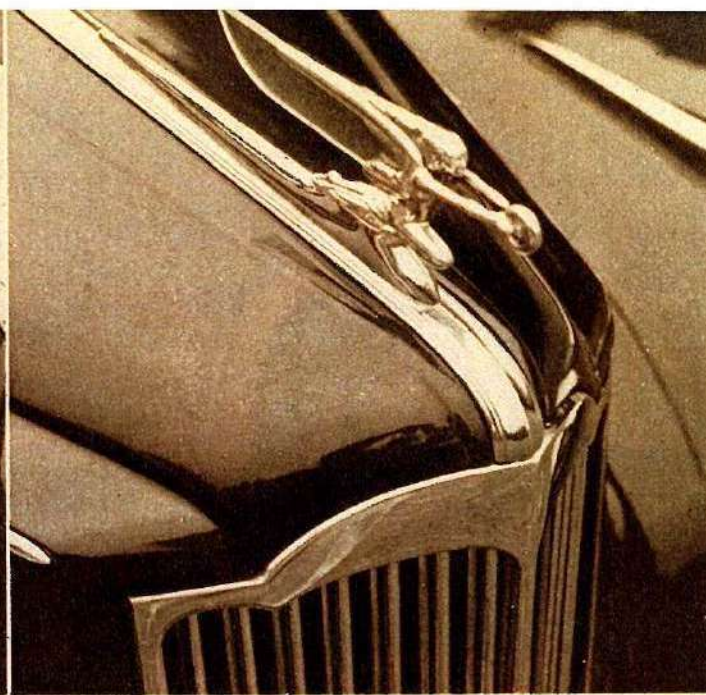
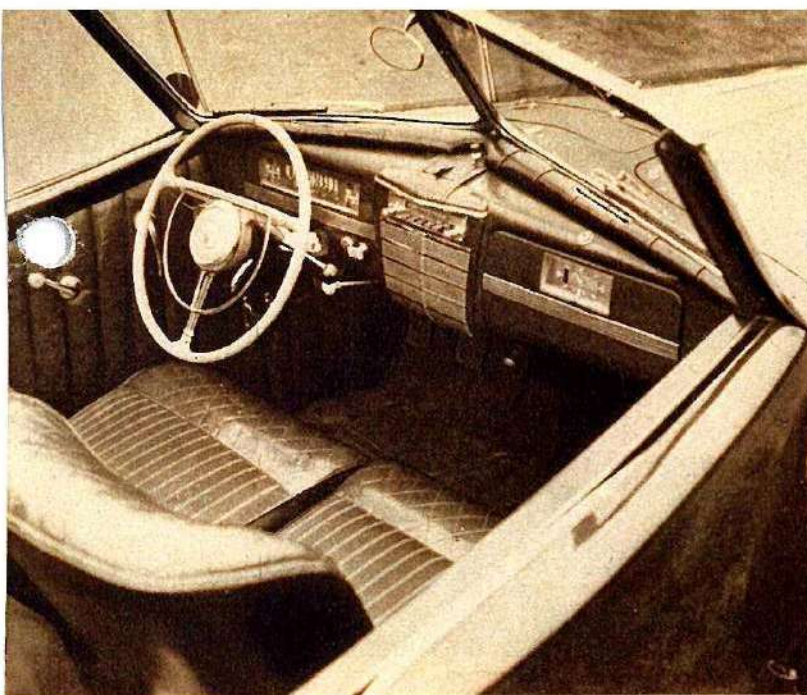
"Do you know place in Ohio where get tires for a 1930s? There are metha upholsterers, also nothing but antique had to have the done in Vermont also made the ne the car up there."

The doctor c that the "youngstion" didn't know car was. "They a Rolls, but once a bike asked me a straight 8 or a so I guess he k thing. They do that the Pack doors open from."

All this talk of got us confused. tor explained th time there was a er car or double. The Darrin is a with a cruising or 70 mph.

Were you alwa ed in classic or a we asked.

"No," came tr ply. "I was 1 ested in any of wanted ar



Interior of the Connerville model is not as impressive as the original.

Distinctive Packard radiator, complete with original mascot.

ed to alter them. Sometimes, if chassis were unavailable, they worked on business coupes, which was the body style that was reworked to make the exotic Darrin convertible.

When a car arrived, a crew of two men descended upon it with an evil glint in their eyes. One of them removed the headlining, seats and instrument panel, while the other, after carefully scribing marks around the top, deliberately decapitated the brand new vehicle. The hood, radiator, cowl and fenders were then removed, leaving the turtledeck all by its lonesome. The body flooring was unaltered in any way.

During the course of "Darrinizing," the car's silhouette was made more svelte by lowering the suspension. Lowering the seats brought the position of the passenger's legs out nearly straight and the radiator and cowl were lowered by sectioning about four inches. New doors were fashioned as well as a cowl of cast aluminum topped by a gracefully shaped cast bronze V windshield.

The Darrin Packard was so different and exciting that it sold to many movie people, consequently assuring that the cars would be given a lot of publicity. Clark Gable had the first of the new series, which leaked more than a spaniel puppy. Gable was very nice about it and offered to let Darrin buy it back, rather than make any fuss. Dutch promptly re-sold the car at a figure much higher than Gable paid for it originally. Such is the magic of the Gable name! Chester Morris had another of the early Hollywood built Darrins. His car didn't leak, but it had a fault equally annoying. In order to lower the front independent suspension, Darrin simply cut a section of the coil spring off with an acetylene torch. This sufficiently lowered the front end, but so weakened it that running over the slightest bump caused the suspension to bottom. Chester too, was complacent enough considering that his car spent about 3 days a week at Darrin's (you should forgive the expression) factory, while an employee armed with a board of several hundred different shock absorber jets, tried to fit a pair that would correct the fault. Of course, he never found the right combination with that approach and it wasn't until all new coils with correct rates were fabricated that the front end was held up where it belonged.

But regardless of the difficulties that were

experienced, the Darrin Packard was one of the really lush cars of the era. It didn't take the Packard factory long to realize that it would make a distinctive and badly needed custom line, particularly since the Lincoln Continental made its appearance at this time. As Mr. Darrin is one of the world's best persuaders, Packard soon agreed to add the "Darrin" to their line of cars, to be built at the Connerville factory. But, like most automobile companies, they first looked to see where they could save money in fabrication. They cheapened the Darrin version car from top to bottom, and built them on the big heavy unwieldy "super" chassis. They didn't lower the hood enough, and refused to use aluminum castings for the cowl and sides, and didn't retain the low overall height. Altogether, the car looked almost stock with the exception of the typical Darrin notched door, and the more slanted V type windshield.

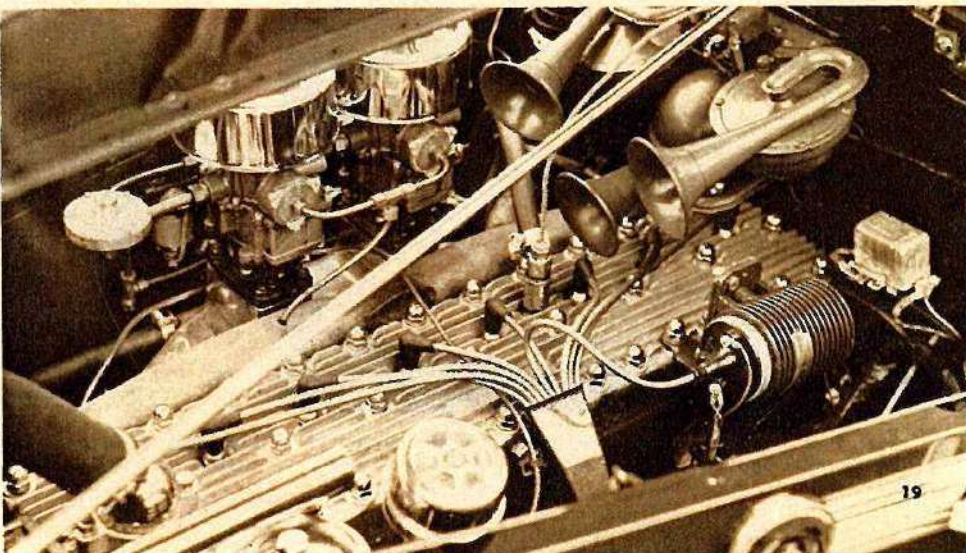
People didn't buy them with the great gusto that Packard had anticipated, as they might have, if Packard had reproduced the original Darrin.

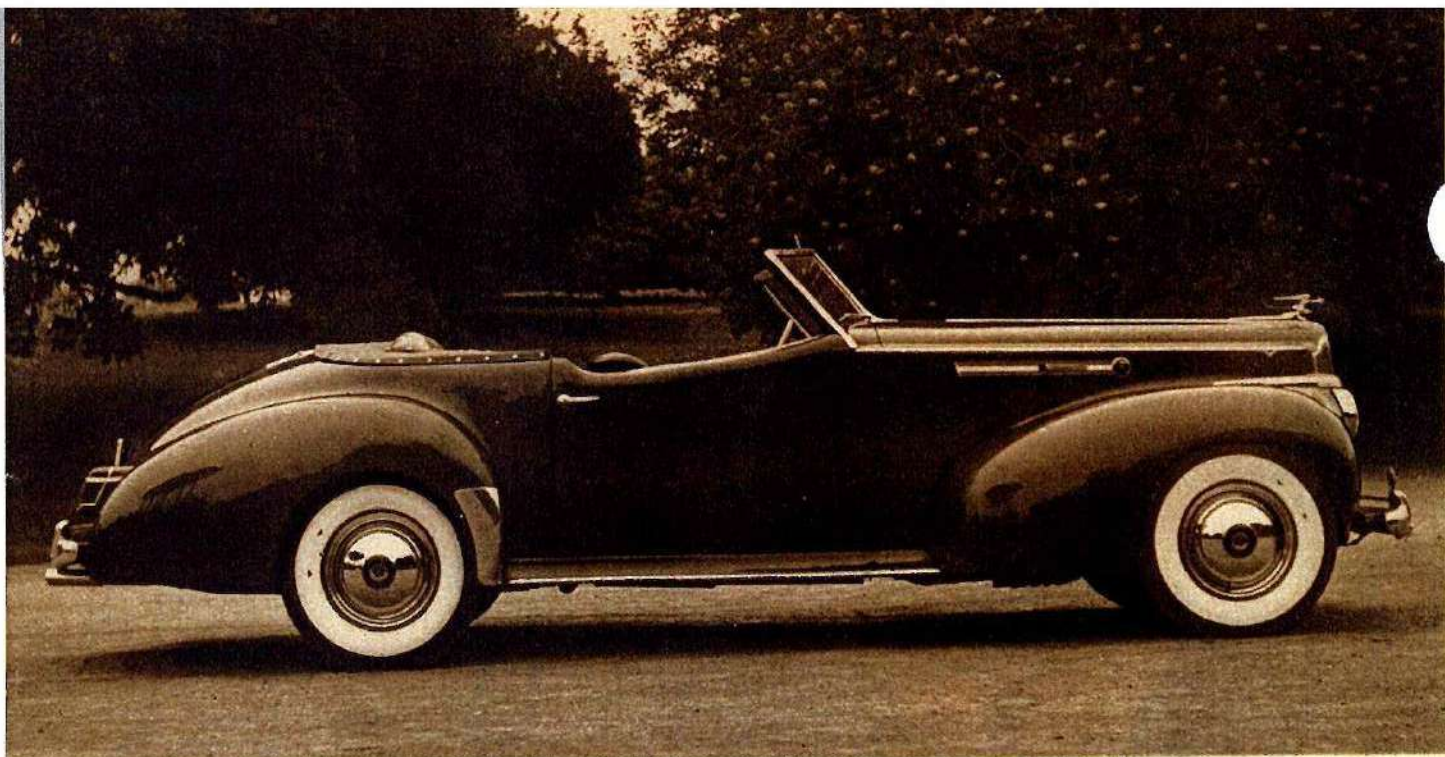
The car illustrated, belongs to Mr. Glen Sheppard of Piedmont, Calif., who is an enthusiastic automobile collector. Mr. Sheppard owns or has owned many of the desirable cars of the world. He is extremely

proud of this car and has it completely restored. It is one of the last of the Connerville cars which was first sold in October of 1942. It features an all welded frame as delivered from the factory instead of the customary riveted construction. The car, for all its graceful appearance, weighs a hefty 4760 pounds. One thing in favor of the Connerville model when considering restoration, is the fact that the door posts were fabricated from metal instead of ash, as is standard practice with custom body builders. Giving Mr. Sheppard invaluable assistance in his project, was Ray DuBois of the San Francisco branch of Earle C. Anthony Company, who supplied him with the necessary hard to obtain parts. Mr. Sheppard purchased a brand new crankshaft, had it ground down enough to enable him to have it chrome plated back to specifications before precision regrinding. An entire bin of valve springs were meticulously weighed before 16 exact mates were found. The transmission as well as the differential had each part replaced and a completely new overdrive was fitted.

In case you are intrigued to the extent that you want to restore a Darrin Packard yourself, it might be interesting to note that this particular car represents an expenditure of \$6000.—B.J.

Close to 200 bhp is developed by virtue of Edmunds head and manifold plus H&C $\frac{3}{4}$ camshaft.





Packard Motor Company responded to the Lincoln Continental threat, with this Darrin "Super" convertible

PACKARD DARRIN

Photographs by Chesebrough

by BHI Jenks



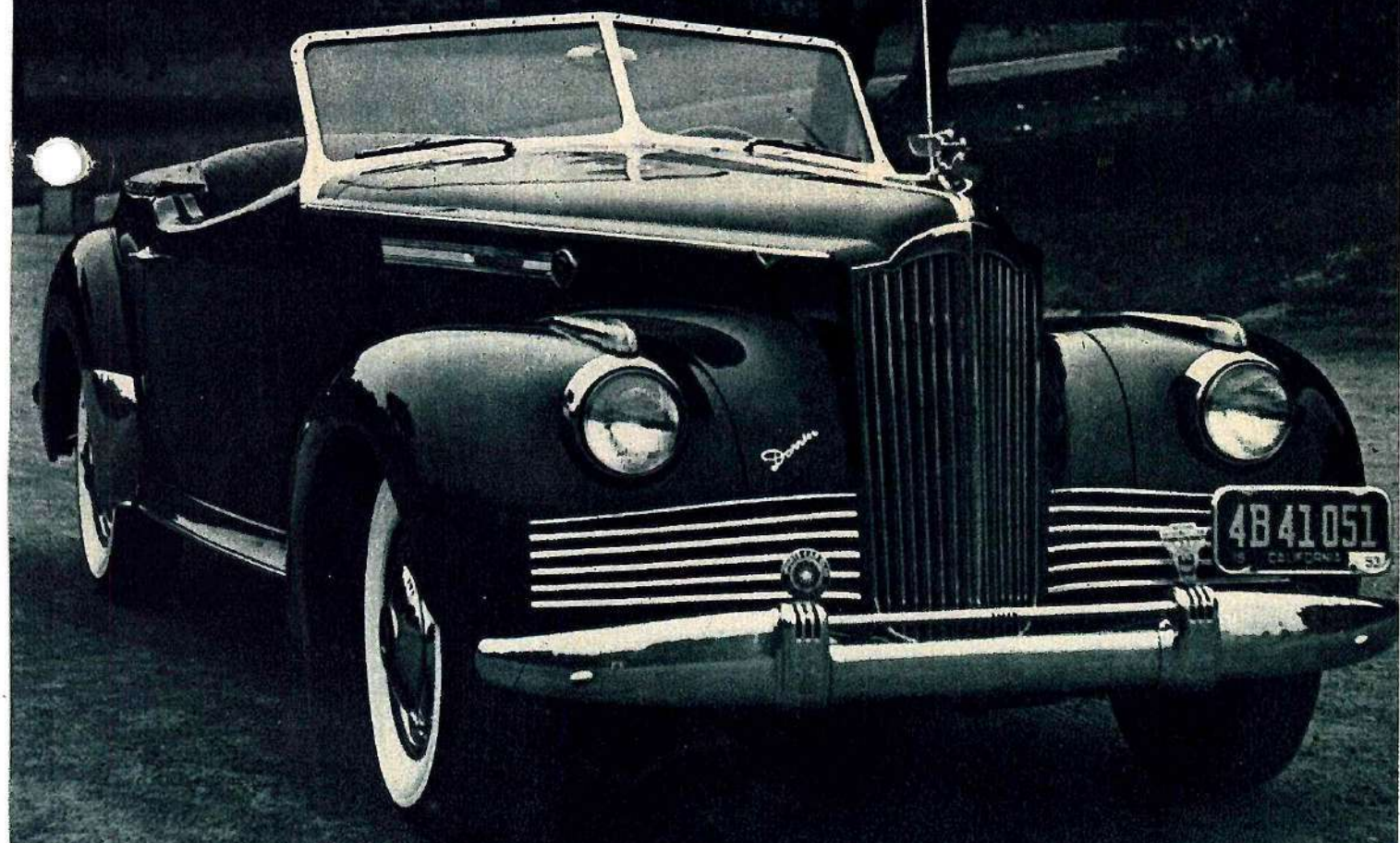
Back in 1937, the egocentric citizens of Hollywood were intrigued by the appearance of an unusual automobile. This particular car was driven by a famous Motion Picture personality, so it is possible that the ogling couldn't be attributed solely to the car. The car was definitely a Packard. But, what a Packard! The hood was at least a yard longer than the hood of any other Packard, and it was so low in comparison with other cars that it seemed to flow along the ground. It was a glistening black two seater, equipped with snowy white Vogue tires. When this car cruised down the street, even the blasé automotive-wise citizens looked and were impressed.

Those who asked the origin of the car, were told that the answer was out on the Sunset strip in a converted meat market. Painted above the entrance in a flowing script, was the name DARRIN. Later reports have insisted that it said "Darrin of Paris," but these you can discount as the imaginings of a press agent.

Because of the nature of this Packard, a considerable number of people were attracted to the market to look at the cars displayed there. This encouraged Dutch Darrin to design a new, more practical Packard that would seat five adults. This model, Darrin visualized as being built in limited production, by his small eight man crew.

The modus operandi was simple: Darrin simply bought five chassis at a time from the local Packard distributor and proceed-

Salon



CHESEBROUGH

A DIALOGUE ON DESIGN

by Richard Steiner

Dutch Darrin and I met about seven years ago at a Packard meet in Glendale when I took him home. He later visited my home and office; we became friends; and he gave me council on the restoration of my four door Darrin convertible sedan. He was pleased to help any time he could, and to give advise on all that he could remember. His memory was a little foggy in a few areas, but very sharp in most.

He gave me drawings (which I still have) of a 1941 four door that he designed, but which was never put into production. If you take a look at what he did with the Darrins, Dutch was really interested in making them pretty. He liked long hoods and exciting lines. He tried to get away from the high stodgy cars by making them sleek and streamlined. He was years ahead of his field.

The first Darrin, from what I can see of the records, was a 1937 which was a prototype. He later went on to make just a few '38s and '39s. The only car that was made for the catalogue and was in the sales brochure for the Packard Company was in 1940, when they came out with a two door Victoria and a four door convertible sedan. The two door Victoria listed for \$4300 and the four door for \$6300. At that time the cheapest Packard you could buy was \$888 (a stripped 110).

Dutch related to me that he thought about forty-five of the two door cars were built in 1940 and a maximum of fourteen or fifteen of the four door convertibles were made. There were seventeen of the four door 139" wheel base chassis that were delivered by Packard to be converted into custom cars. We know that at least one was a Rollson (that now lives in Long Beach), and at least two of them were hard tops. That leaves a maximum of fourteen.

An attitude that Dutch revealed to me was that he was very reluctant to change a car just for the sake of change or to sell cars. He said, "Don't change something unless you can make it better--so it either looks prettier or is more functional." Some of the unique design ideas that he employed on the Darrins included doors that did not dip down, no running boards, and lowering the cars considerably. Another interesting feature about the cars was that the top was not power operated, nor did the top fold in the manner of other tops when they fold up into the boot. On the Darrins, the middle bow was the bow that was detached and sometimes put in the trunk. The two knobs that held the

Some features that were not available on the Darrins were sidemounts, luggage racks and running boards. Since there were no running boards, flaps had to be put behind the front tires. Otherwise, the wheels threw dirt and rocks up against the rear fenders and chipped them. There were chrome pieces on the fronts of the rear fenders to protect them. Taking off the running boards also meant that they had to reshape the fenders to accomodate this lack.

Mechanically, the car was basically standard with the exception of the gear shift assembly and the changes made in the springs. Dutch wasn't terribly impressed with giant engines that made cars go real fast. Looks were more important to him than horse power.

During our talks, Dutch mentioned some of his history. He did not build a four door Darrin to my knowledge in 1937, '38, '39, '41, or '42. The only four door Darrins that I know about were built in 1940. In the '46 - '47 series (which were the same body style), there were one or two convertible sedans made, but they were custom cars, and I've only seen photographs of them. They were built extra long with sort of bustles on them. He did build a two door Darrin convertible in 1946 or '47 for Errol Flynn. I believe the 1940 rates pretty much as a transition year. Darrin designed the '41 through '47 Clipper, and he stated that Packard never paid him for that series. He said that practically every prototype of every car he had done was different from the cars actually made by the company. He always wanted the cars lower and longer, and the company always tended to make them higher and shorter.

Throughout the years Dutch was frequently at odds with some car manufacturer. He related one incident to me. When the 1940 four door Darrin was on the way to the proving grounds to be viewed by a number of dealers, it was side-swiped. The driver called Dutch and told him what had happened. Dutch told him to drive the car to the proving grounds early in the morning and park next to a wall so close that the door couldn't be opened and to then lock the car, take the keys and leave. So the driver left the car and made himself lost. When the Packard dealers arrived, some of them wanted the car despite the fact that it was a limited edition. Even though they could not test drive the car, it was so pretty the dealers insisted they had to have it. Packard actually did not want to have this produced because the limited numbers would make it so expensive. They didn't even want to list it in the catalogue, but because of dealer demand they figured they had to make several of them. Packard was mad at Dutch for making that sort of grand-stand play, but no one could deny that the car was beautiful.

Dutch worked with Hibbard (Hibbard and Darrin) in Paris, France designing

DIALOGUE ON DESIGN -- continued

cars for royalty. He told me that he thought he was partly responsible or perhaps even totally responsible for the concept of the Concours D' Elegance. Designing the exciting expensive cars that were brought out specifically to be sold to people of wealth and royalty was a sort of social event. Custom cars were very much in vogue, and Dutch was in the center of that situation through the late '20s and early '30s.

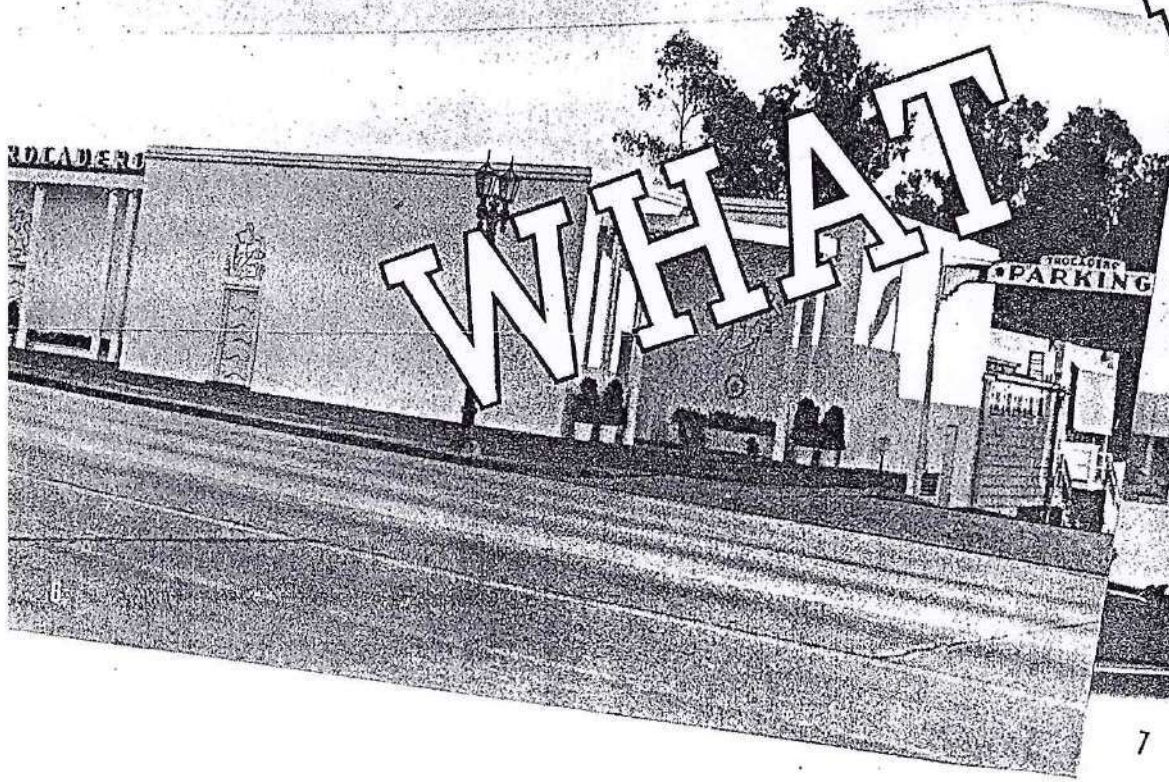
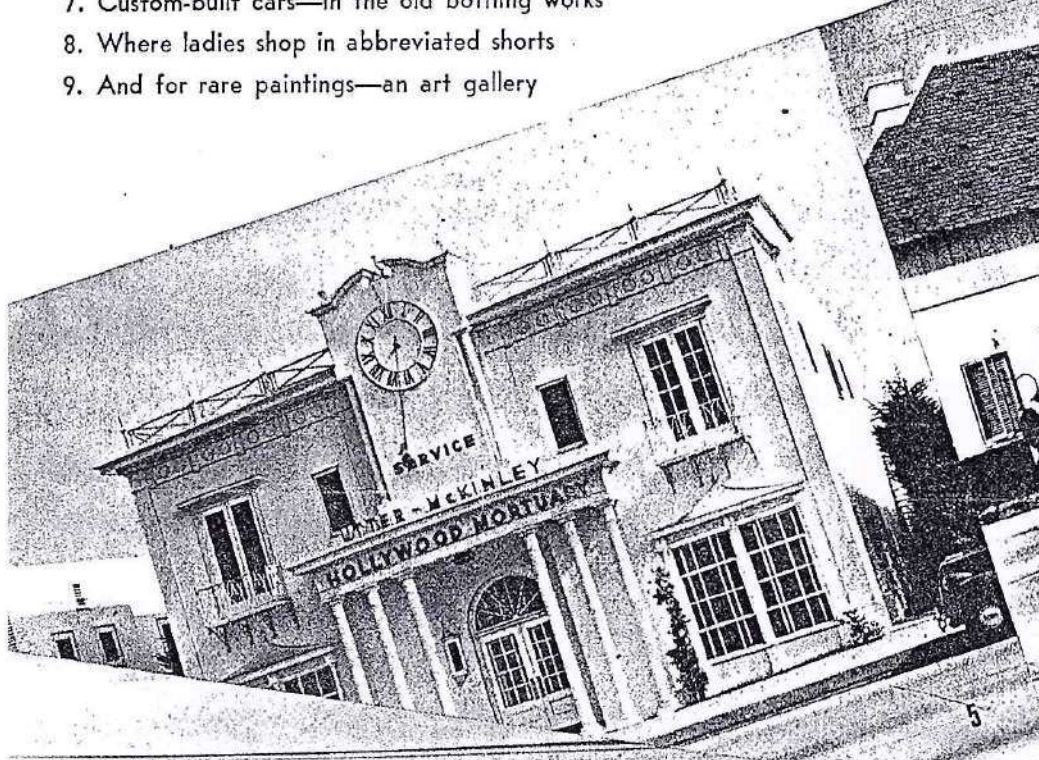
In the late '30s Dutch moved to Southern California where he designed cars for the movie people such as Dick Powell, Ralph Meeker and Clark Gable. Gable had a car that Darrin spent hours and hours working on with Rudy Stossel. He spent so much time with the car that Gable said if he had to pay Dutch by the hour, the cost would be enormous.

Dutch later went on to design in the early '50s a Kaiser-Darrin which came out in 1954. He was very excited about the Kaiser-Darrin because it was a sports-car with a radical change. He designed it with sliding doors rather than conventional doors. When he held the opening in Hollywood, he had a starlet with him to help show the car. That starlet was Marilyn Monroe. Dutch also related to me that Howard Hughes was invited to one of the coming out parties for this car, and Hughes showed up and even got his picture taken, though he was very shy of pictures.

Dutch continued to design cars---some ones and twos of different things. In the late '70s he undertook the reconstruction of a damaged Rolls-Royce. He restored it and changed it by making some sleek modifications to the headlights and body trim. Dutch had a sort of rejuvenation when he realized that the cars he had designed over the years were being brought back. It was vitalizing for him to think that the work he had done forty years ago was being maintained and revered. I think the high-light of his design--of all the convertible sedans--was the 1940 four door. I happened to be fortunate enough to find one in 1967 and am in the final stages of its complete restoration. I look forward to driving it and showing it and letting people share the experience of seeing it.

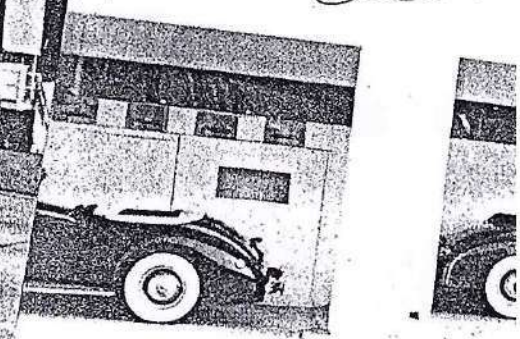
Dutch and I had a good time together. He was always talkative and in good spirits, and he was a delight to be with. He gave me some good ideas, and he gave me credit for a lot more knowledge about these cars than I think I have. I have read most of the articles that have been written on Darrins, and Dutch discussed many of his concepts with me. The story of his life is remarkable. He dealt with movie stars and royalty. He had an airline around 1920, and he flew in the 1936 Olympics. He designed some of the most beautiful cars ever driven. We mourn his passing, but he has the good fortune to live on in the design and the beauty of the cars he built.

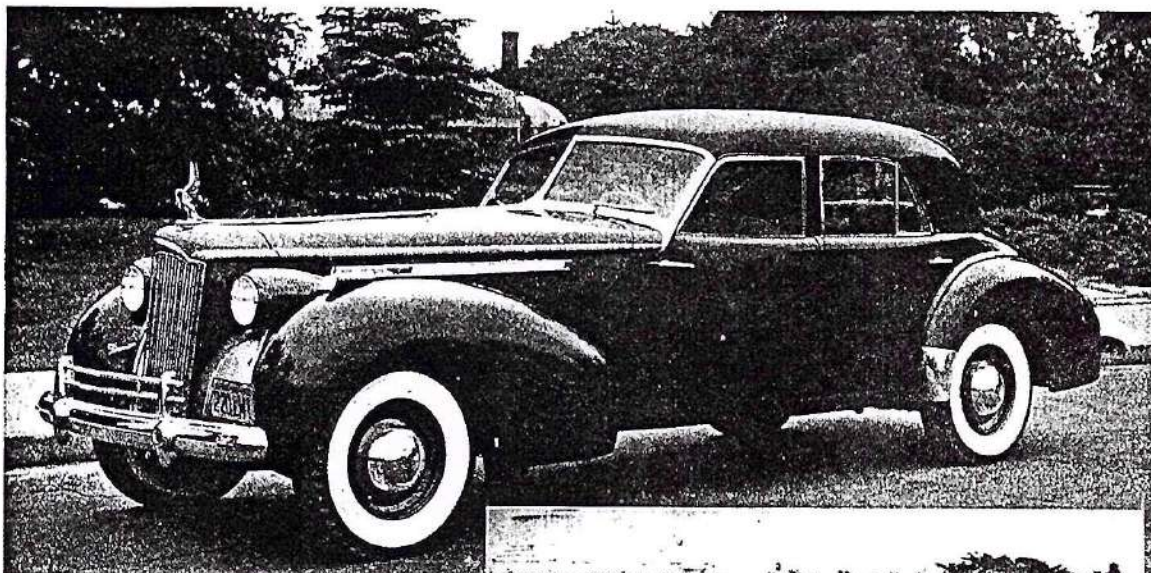
1. Once known as just plain "The Neck"
2. Where touring Kansans gape at stars' pictures
3. Night-club proprietors prefer to eat here
4. Flower shop run by mother of famous Selznick boys
5. Darned good funerals at a reasonable price
6. A speak-easy has a face lift—the swish Troc
7. Custom-built cars—in the old bottling works
8. Where ladies shop in abbreviated shorts
9. And for rare paintings—an art gallery



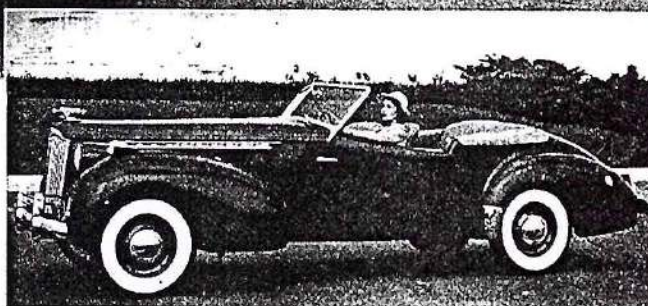
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De





Smart Sport Sedan and a racy four-passenger convertible are two custom bodies by Darrin on the 138-inch 180 chassis



Packard

New 160 hp Eight... Improved Overdrive*... Restyled Hoods—

PACKARDS FOR 1940 are more attractively styled with narrower radiator shells, are faster, livelier, better riding, more economical and more durable, yet prices are even lower (\$5 to \$150) than they were following the drastic price cuts made some months ago. The new prices are the result of a complete rearrangement of production methods and machinery.

There are four chassis models: The 110, a new name for the Six; the 120; the 160 and 180, two brand-new eights with identical 160 hp engines. The 160, also called the Super Eight, takes the place of the 1939 chassis of the same name, while the 180 is known as the Custom Super Eight and succeeds the previous Twelve.

The wheelbase of the 110 remains at 122 inches. The three eights are built in wheelbases of 127 inches, while the 160 and 180 are also supplied with wheelbases of 138 and 148 inches, the latter for seven-passenger cars only. In addition, the 120 and 160 are available with a 160-inch wheelbase for bus, ambulance and hearse bodies.

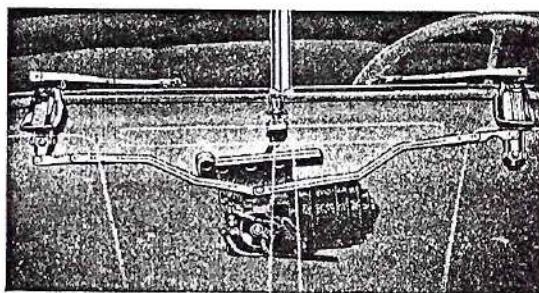
Compared with a year ago, prices of 110 and 120 models are down about \$100; the 160 sells for \$300 to \$400 less than the previous Super Eight, while the 180 begins at \$2228 instead of \$4140 for the Twelve it replaces. Price ranges of the 110, 120 and 160 are respectively \$867 to \$1087, \$1038 to \$1550, and \$1524 to \$1775.

The big eight-cylinder engine is a wholly new design. It has a bore and stroke of $3\frac{1}{2}$ by 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches, a piston displacement of 356 cubic inches and develops 160 horse power at 3500 rpm. The previous Super Eight engine had a smaller bore and a longer stroke, being $3\frac{3}{16}$ by 5 inches, a piston displacement of 320 cubic inches and delivered 132 hp at 3200 rpm.

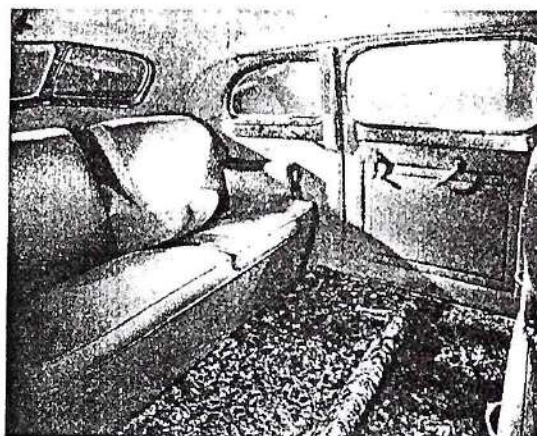
The new engine closely follows the features of design employed so successfully in the 120. It has, therefore, a cast iron crankcase integral with the cylinder block instead of a separate aluminum case. However, it has a nine-bearing crankshaft, whereas the 120 has five. The crankshaft is fully counter-weighted. Main bearings are $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter.

The cylinder block is made of chrome nickel alloy iron and a cast iron cylinder head is used. Standard compression ratio is 6.45 to 1 with 6.85 optional. Breathing capacity in this engine as well as in the 120 has been improved by the addition of an overhanging boss in the cylinder head which extends down close to the open intake valve, thus providing a more streamlined flow of mixture into the cylinder. A dual downdraft carburetor with a $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (Continued on page 234)

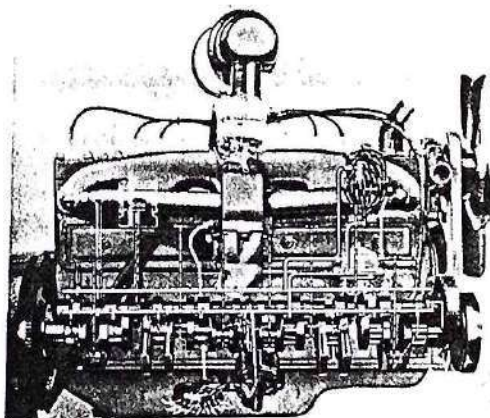
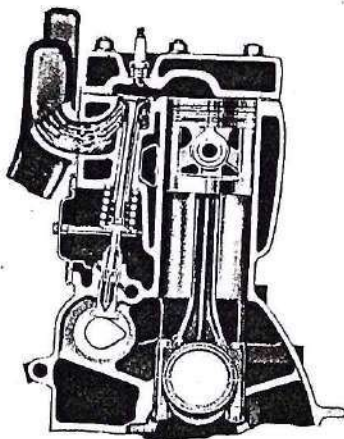
* For Overdrive Description See Page 238.



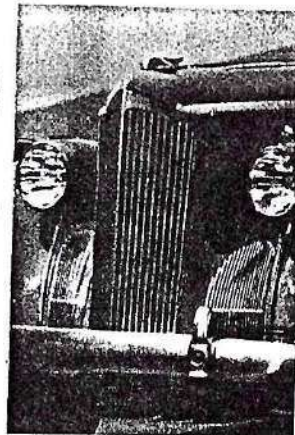
New electric windshield wiper built by Stewart Warner



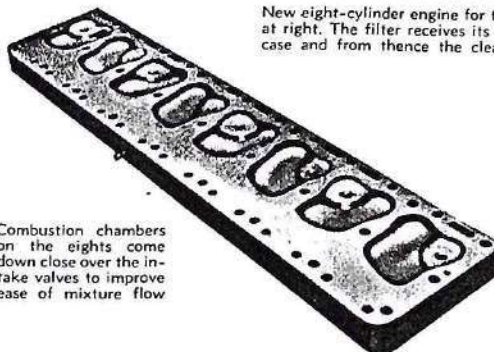
Seven-passenger sedan on 180 chassis



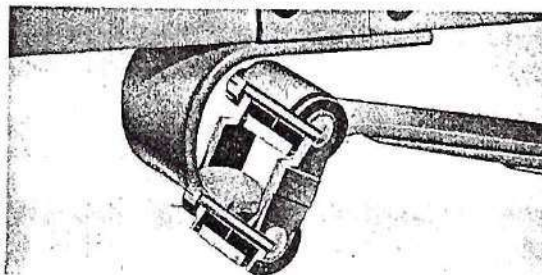
New eight-cylinder engine for the 160 and 180 showing lubricating system at right. The filter receives its oil from the main supply line in the crankcase and from thence the cleansed lubricant flows to the valve tappets



Packard hoods are narrower. The 120 is shown



Combustion chambers on the eights come down close over the intake valves to improve ease of mixture flow



Rubber bushed tension shackles are used at the rear of the rear springs

(Continued from page 232)

throat is used. All Packards now have Stromberg carburetors.

The new eight has Wilcox Rich automatically adjusted valve lifters fed by clean oil sent direct from the oil filter, which in turn receives some of the oil fed to the main oil lead in the crankcase. The oil pump is supplied by a floating oil intake which rests on the surface of the oil in the sump.

Generator capacity has been stepped up to a maximum of 35 amperes on all models and both current and voltage regulation is employed. Sealed Beam headlamps are used.

Some weight reduction has permitted the use of lower rear axle gear ratios to give slower running engines with resultant improvement in smoothness, durability and fuel economy without impairment of activity. In fact, the 160 is said to be faster and livelier than the previous Twelve. Minimum gear ratios without overdrive, for the 110, 120 and 160-180, are respectively 4.3, 4.09 and 3.92 and corresponding engine revolutions per mile are 3148, 2961 and 2732.

Weights have been reduced by careful attention to many details. For example, body panels formerly varied in thickness from .033 to .044 inches. Now this dimension is held to .035 inches plus or minus .001, which represents a weight saving of as much as 20 per cent as far as this particular detail is concerned.

The construction of the overdrive has been simplified by the elimination of the centrifugal pawls, which have heretofore been a feature of all overdrives for shifting from direct to overdrive. In the Packard design, overdrive is obtained by a solenoid operated plunger which locks the sun gear stationary, and the shift back to direct is accomplished by withdrawing the plunger. Advantages, in addition to greater mechanical simplicity, include smoother operation and the ability to set the overdrive accurately for a 22 mph engagement and a 19 mph return to direct, which means that most city driving may be done in overdrive. Furthermore, if desired, the device may be locked out of action when in overdrive without waiting to return to direct.

When in overdrive, if the driver wishes to return to direct to obtain extra acceleration or hill-climbing ability, he may do so by pressing down firmly on the accelerator pedal for a moment. The car remains in direct as long as the throttle is not completely closed. Whenever the car is in direct above overdrive cut-in speed a red light on the instrument panel apprises the driver of the fact.

Better riding quality has been secured by various refinements. In 1939 the rear springs had a rubber button at the ends of the second leaf and antimony-lead buttons in the leaves below. For 1940, the second and third leaves have rubber buttons, while the lower leaves have buttons of Silenite, a curious material developed several years ago by John Warren Watson for his friction shock absorbers.

Its novel feature is that its static (starting) friction is very low, being only slightly in excess of its dynamic (moving) friction, whereas in most materials static friction is much greater. There is not space to explain why these changes improve the ride except to say that the new buttons provide adequate spring friction without interfering with a soft and smooth boulevard ride.

The "fifth" shock absorber, attached to the frame end of the rear cross link stabilizer which runs to the rear axle, has been eliminated on the 110 because it was found that diagonally mounted direct acting shock absorbers gave the same result. The adoption of tension shackles at the back ends of the rear springs also helps to reduce lateral instability. These shackles are also found on all 127-inch wheelbase cars. On the 110, 120 and the 127-inch 160, the torsional stabilizer has been moved from the rear to the front because the increased piston displacement of the rear shock absorbers aid materially in subduing rolling of rear end of chassis on turns.

Harris rubber bushings are used at the rear ends of the front radius rods instead of ball-shaped rubber bushings. The latter, however, are continued on the longer wheelbase cars. Harris bushings have also been adopted for both ends of the lower control arm as well as for the outer end of the upper control arm.

On 127-inch wheelbase cars, high-ribbed brake drums with labyrinth seals are employed, while the toe of the lining on the primary shoe has been shortened to improve the smoothness of brake application.

Because of weight reductions, tire sections have been reduced $\frac{1}{4}$ inch on the 110 and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch on the 129. The new tire sizes are 6.25 by 6.00 and 6.50 by 16.

In addition to the conventional dash heater, an undersent heater which takes its air from inside the car is offered. With the latter, a separate defroster unit is supplied. An electric windshield wiper by Stewart-Warner is used on the 110 and 120. The translucent pointer of the speedometer glows green up to 30 mph, shows amber from 30 to 50, and glows red above 50. The brilliancy of illumination of the other instruments is regulated by a rheostat.

Sponge rubber pads laid over Marshall springs add comfort to the cushions on the 160 and 180. On the latter, a layer of down is placed on top of the pad. Convertible coupes have power-operated tops. Two vacuum pistons concealed in body sides raise top when a valve handle located above the windshield divider bar is turned. It is lowered by springs when a lock button is pressed.

Two smart and racy-looking five-passenger custom bodies designed and built by Howard Darrin are available on the 138-inch model 180, a convertible sedan, and a sport sedan with unusually slim windshield pillars. Darrin bodies are built in Connersville, Ind.



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By Cameron R. Argetsinger

There have been a number of Packard models through the years that have qualified as true sports cars and answered the demands of connoisseurs of motoring for high performance, roadability, and distinctive appearance. Outstanding among them was the Darrin-bodied 1940 Super Eight "One Eighty", one of which I owned for six and a half years and drove 150,000 miles. Bodies built by Howard Darrin are well known and have adorned many fine chassis throughout the world. He built thirty for Packard in 1940.

The Packard-Darrin I was fortunate enough to own was a 1940 Super Eight (Model 1806) convertible victoria. She was low slung and rakish, had individual bucket seats, a solid bronze windshield frame, cast aluminum cowl and side panels, cutaway doors, a top that folded completely out of sight, and was upholstered in beautiful brown chrome leather, including a crash roll above the instrument panel. The hood was half the length of the car; the color scheme red with a tan top.

The chassis was the 127" wheelbase Super Eight, with 356 cubic inch engine developing 160 B.H.P. My "Doctor of Motors", Carl A. Sims, and I installed a Packard high compression head (which raised the B.H.P. to 165), and mounted a Mallory coil directly over the distributor. At first we burned up spark plugs in 900 miles. We experimented and found a cold burning plug, then installed oversized jets in the Stromberg carburetor. These jets were .050 inches, and we later drilled them out to .052 with a wire gauge #55 drill. These large jets solved our spark plug problem, increased performance, and helped gas mileage. I once drove route 17 from New York City to Binghamton, New York (200 Miles), in three hours and ten minutes, and averaged 14.6 miles per gallon. We increased the gasoline capacity to 40 gallons by installing an auxiliary tank in the trunk compartment. The muffler was a straight through Powell, and the exhaust was unusually sharp and clear. The car never burned oil and while I owned her always used No. 10.

The front end was Packard "Safe-T-Flex", but the heavy cowl at first caused it to shake on high speed turns. We bolted to the cowl two steel braces which crossed over the engine diagonally and fastened to the opposite corners of the radiator cradle, and then bolted two vertical support bars from the radiator cradle to the frame. With these changes the car held the road beautifully, and on a sharp "S" curve we used for testing would corner at over 70 M.P.H. without crossing the center line of the road. The low center of gravity and the weight of the car (4121 lbs. shipping weight, or 4465 lbs. ready for the road) enabled her to negotiate turns at extremely high speeds, and on the straightaway eliminated any tremor or wandering. The steering wheel dropped right in the driver's lap and contributed greatly to the ease of handling. The transmission was three speed, and the rear end ratio was 3.92 to 1. A shift from third to second gear at 95 M.P.H. was possible, and was accomplished on numerous occasions. We finally standardized on Richland Super Deluxe tires (7.00 x 16), and the Darrin wore 15 complete sets during her career with me.

She was a very high performing car, and would accelerate from a dead stop, through the gears, as follows:

0 to 60 M.P.H. - 11 seconds.	0 to 95 M.P.H. - 43 seconds.
0 to 70 M.P.H. - 15 seconds.	0 to 100 M.P.H. - 50 seconds.
0 to 80 M.P.H. - 22 seconds.	

The top speed was not exceptionally high, but we clocked her on a measured mile at 108 M.P.H., and the speedometer read over 110 M.P.H. many times. We pulled the speedometer for checking every 60 to 90 days, and it always stayed within 3% of accuracy. With the Darrin I once covered the entire 160 miles of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in one hour and 40 minutes. A few other distances and clocked times may be of interest:

26 miles from Ithaca, New York, to Montour Falls, New York, in 17 minutes.
Average speed: 91.8 M.P.H.

38 miles from Sayre, Pa., to Montour Falls, N.Y., in 24 minutes. Average speed: 95 M.P.H.

19 miles from Elmira, N.Y., to Watkins Glen, N.Y., in 12 minutes. Average speed: 95 M.P.H.

I make no claim that the Darrin was the fastest car on the road by any means, but I can say truthfully that while I owned her nothing ever passed us. She was the finest car I ever owned and I regret exceedingly that I sold her. Someday I'd like to buy her again.

MORE ABOUT PACKARD-DARRIN

By P. S. deBeaumont

In as much as I was a member of Packard's engineering department at the time of the car referred to in Mr. Argetsinger's article in SPORTS CAR for Sept.-Oct. 1947, I feel obliged to pass on to the members the following information.

Since I was not one of the company's "brass hats" I do not know precisely how Packard and Darrin made their deal to build the Packard-Darrins. My impression, however, was that Darrin was not solicited by Packard, but built one of the cars, drove it to Detroit and finally sold the Packard management on the idea.

Somehow along the line Packard made a great mistake in making no provision in the agreement whereby Darrin's work would be technically inspected by a Packard engineer. The deal seems to have been that Packard would supply Darrin with chassis and certain body parts, Darrin would build the cars in his shop, and Packard dealers would sell the cars in the principal cities. The selling by Packard dealers clearly made the cars Packard's responsibility - hence my astonishment later when I found no technical control had been exercised by the always careful and conservative Packard Motor Car Co.

Other than having casually seen Darrin's first sample car in the experimental garage some months earlier, my first contact with the Packard-Darrins occurred when Mr. Clyde R. Paton, then Packard's Chief Engineer, gave me a letter to read. This was a highly irritated complaint from a central New York owner of a Packard-Darrin who had unceremoniously shipped the car to the Packard plant, and demanded that the car's shortcomings be rectified. To make a long story short, I was assigned the job not only of supervising the diagnosis and correction of this car's ailments, but to develop a kit whereby Packard dealers all over could campaign all the other Packard-Darrins.

The owner's complaints were that the body was "falling apart," that it shook terribly, and that the doors opened at speed, etc., etc.

I first road-tested the car on some rough back streets in Detroit, and while I could agree somewhat with the owner, I felt she had exaggerated, which impression was heightened by the car's general appearance suggesting that it had not been too well treated. However, just to be certain, I drove the car to Packard's wonderful proving ground at Utica, Michigan (lads, you should cast your eyes on that banked cement speedway - yum, yum!). There, on a very wavy and tortuous typical New England black top back road, I tried the car at speeds up to 85 M.P.H. or so. At this point the fun began. The cowl danced all over, and the lamps, front fenders, and radiator developed respectively, the shimmy, fandango, and black bottom. The forward-opening doors, which I had tied shut, opened as the owner had claimed. During a fast turn the inside rear wheel scraped the wheelhouse. The din from rattles was terrific. I had a job on my hands.

Having taken the car to the Packard Branch on Jefferson Ave. in Detroit, and having secured the services of the foreman of the body shop, I set about to see where the troubles were. We found:

1. Darrin had removed and discarded the heavy Packard radiator core cradle of channel steel and had substituted a measly piece of steel strap, about an inch wide by about 3/16" thick, thus lowering the radiator shell.

2. The front fender support brackets, normally tied to the cradle, had to carry the fenders unbraced.
3. Short flat pieces of steel had been welded to the outer bottom edge of the body and to the frame side rails.
4. The cast aluminum cowl was not symmetrical, being something like 3/4 of an inch too wide on one side. The sides were also of uneven height.
5. In lowering the rear end of the body, the wheel house arc, as viewed from front or rear, had been lowered enough to interfere with the tire on a turn.
6. The doors had been cut down by the cutting torch and hammer method, and while externally beautiful, were a mess inside and would have been a problem to repair.

The shop foreman summarized our feelings by saying he could have done it better out of two old oil drums and a pair of tin snips.

In general, our cure for most of these problems was:

1. Reinforce the silly little radiator core cradle, it not being possible to make room for the genuine article.
2. Brace the front fender brackets by running a steel rod from each side of the radiator cradle through the brackets and thence to the frame.
3. Anchor and brace the cowl by placing, on each side of the car, a heavy piece of steel angle bolted to the inner surface of the frame side rail and to the front of the dash or firewall, and extending nearly up to the bonnet.
4. Cutting away the little welded pieces connecting the body to the sides of the frame and using proper body bolts, brackets, etc.
5. Dinging in the wheelhouses to clear the tires on turns.

This Detroit factory branch made this conversion on several local Packard-Darrins, and the foreman later told me that the bodies could not be lifted from the chassis without proper support since the bodies would buckle, and that this was due to the cutting away of the bottom framing of the body to achieve lowness.

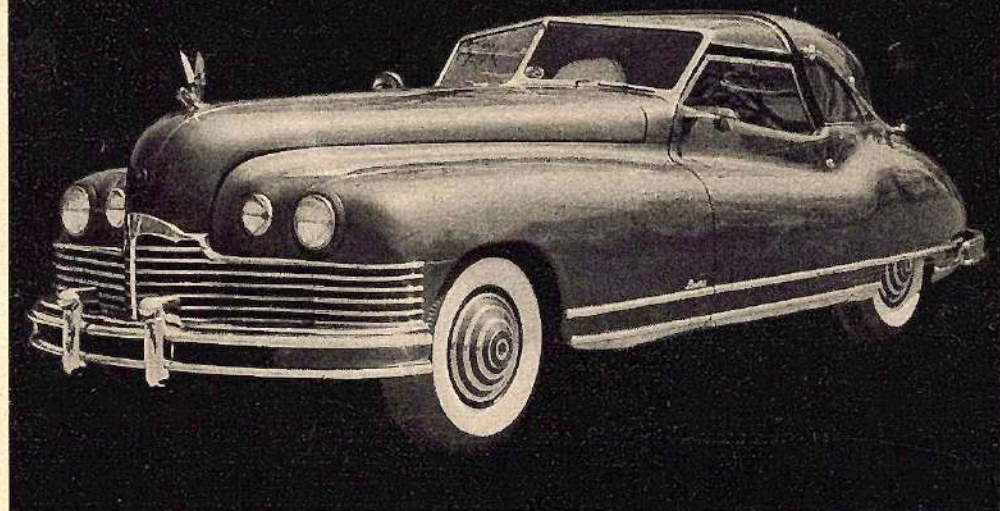
These Packard-Darrin bodies were, by the way, mostly made up of standard Packard body elements such as radiator shell, fenders, doors, rear quarters, trunk, etc., and re-worked by Darrin. The cowls and windshields were the principal items made by Darrin.

As to performance, there is no doubt that these cars were hot, but the impression should not be given that the Packard-Darrins were any hotter than the regular Packard Super 8 160 or 180 of the same weight and size, since Darrin made no changes to the chassis or power plant that we discovered.

In this connection it might interest the readers to know that, when the first 356 cubic inch Packard Super 8 was brought out, it was the highest performing truly stock production car in the world so far as we at Packard could determine from extensive and careful testing.

The information in this article has been presented solely to inform members contemplating the purchase of one of these Packard-Darrins of what must be done to achieve satisfactory results should one be found minus the reinforcements mentioned. These are easy and fairly cheap to apply, and for all I know, kits and instructions may still be obtainable from Packard Service at the factory in Detroit. Once this work is done, these cars should give very satisfactory service as Mr. Argetsinger's enthusiastic article indicates. I had a very small hand in the design of the engine, which I consider to be at least as rugged as any, and the chassis is very good.

How to Spend \$200,000 on One Automobile



Money spent up to now on this designer's dream would purchase 100 medium-priced cars.

Restyled and re-equipped countless times, Packard's "dog" car is a changing parade of automotive progress.

By Devon Francis

PS photos by W. W. Morris

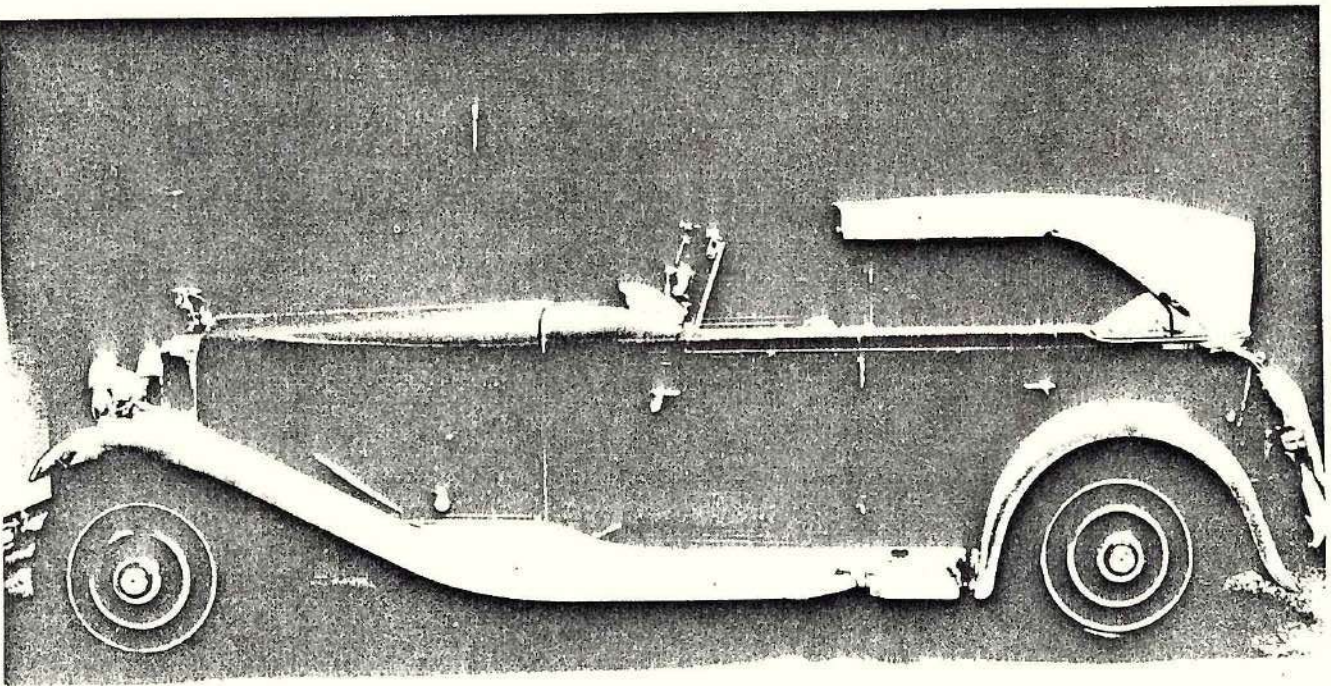
PICTURED on this and the following two pages is the most expensive car in the United States. Up to now it has cost around \$200,000. The man who drives it is Edward Macauley, chief stylist of the Packard Motor Car Co. He has been offered \$50,000 for it.

When Packard thinks up something new in equipment or styling to put on its automobiles, it first tries it out on a "dog"—and the "dog" is Macauley's machine.

The car has been restyled, rebuilt, and re-equipped so many times that Macauley, son of Alvan Macauley, former president and board chairman at Packard, has to refresh his memory from photographs to recall what it looked like years ago. That's what makes it so expensive.

The grillwork that the company has put on its production cars for the last two years was first tried out on the Macauley car in 1940. The bumper on the 1948 Packard was first used by Macauley. He has tested scores of other items, including liner springs, that were adopted for production.

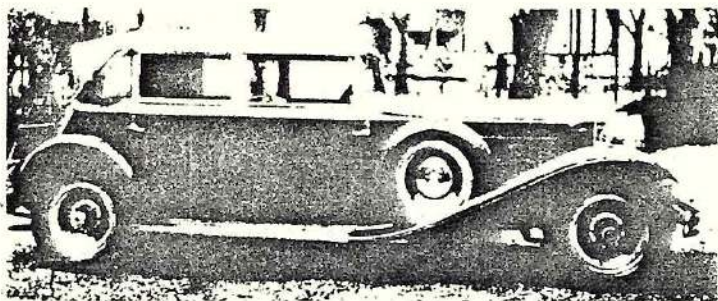
At one time, the dog car actually contained a 500-lb. refrigerating unit, to cool its occupants on hot summer days. ➡



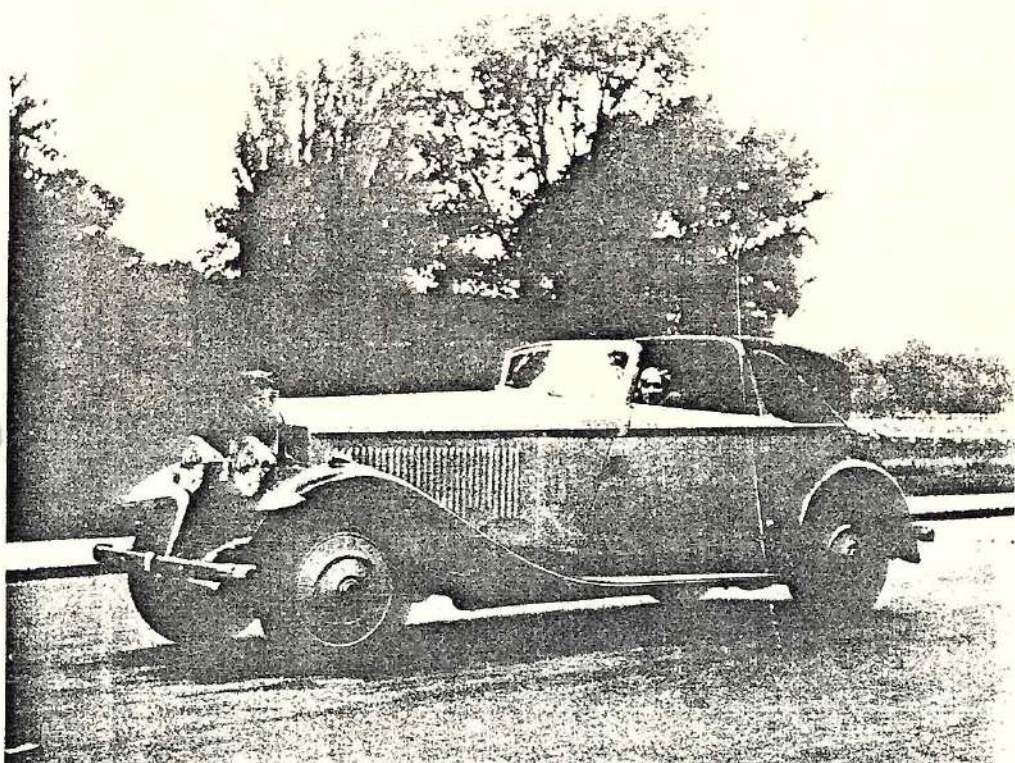
Hispano-Suiza full coil-bushing touring car, 1932, as shown at the Salon de l'Automobile de Paris. Rear seat visibility was increased by our removable flap. The steering wheel was under the cooling to give aircraft visibility. An aircraft type crash pad, patented by us, over the instrument panel added to the safety of the front seat passengers. The molding is metal and the front fender flows to the center pillar.

Hispano-Suiza travel coupe with our aircraft cooling and steering. The top is convertible. The discs are different from our earlier ones. These are recessed. The large ventilators on the top of the hood were a Fernandez & Darin feature. These were practical and often requested by our clients. ▶

This Hispano-Suiza travel coupe was one of many cars purchased from us by Martin de Alzaga Urzua. The top is fully convertible. The forward area canvas could be rolled back. ▶



1928-29 PACKARD CLOSE-COUPLED 4 DOOR CONVERTIBLE WITH STRAIGHT CTR.
PILLER. NOTE SLANTED REAR DECK TO BACK BUMPER FOR GRACE.
BUILT FOR FRENCH PACKARD AGENTS.



1932 HISPANO-SUIZA WITH CONVERTIBLE TOP. THE METAL MOLDING IS OF SILVER AND GOLD AND THERE ARE BRIGHT METAL TIPS
ON THE FRONT FENDER. THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST CARS BUILT WITH SKIRTED FENDERS AND METAL BELT MOLDINGS.

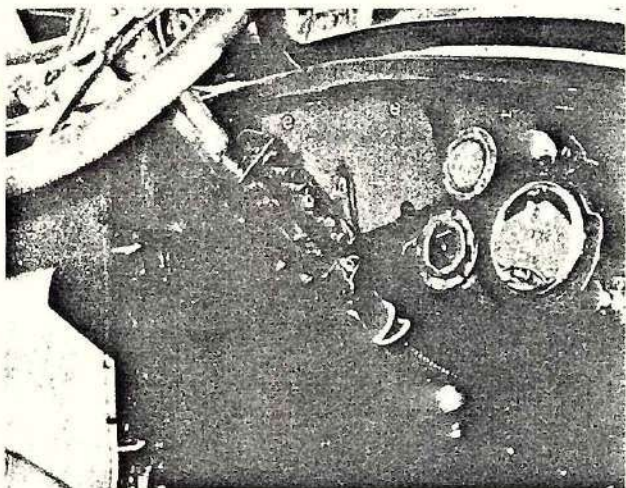


FIGURE "I"

FIGURE "I" - LEFT: 1916 - WILLYS OVERLAND 1ST AND ONLY ELECTRIC MOTOR START GEAR SHIFT.

FIGURE "J" - 1934 PACKARD BY FERNANDEZ AND DARRIN. (NOTE DUAL BODY PLATE BELOW WINDSHIELD ON COWL.)

FIGURE "K" BOTTOM: H-D PACKARD 1928 BUILT IN EUROPE FOR ROYAL FAMILY.

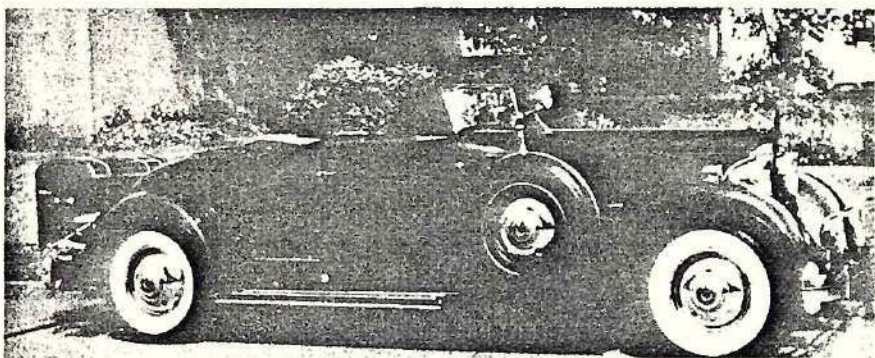


FIGURE "J"

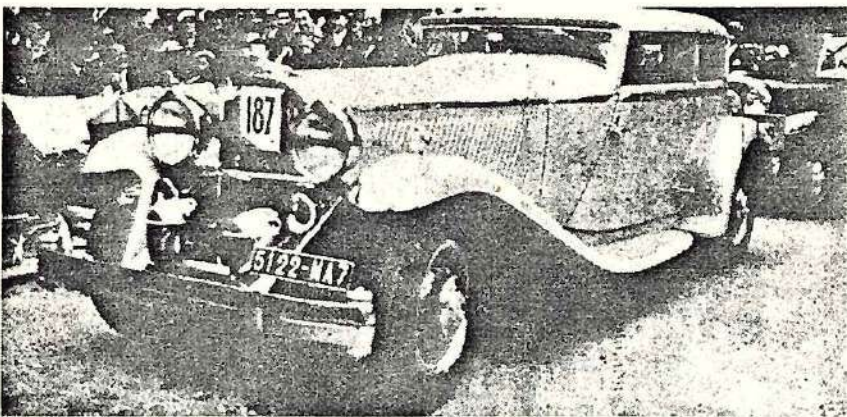
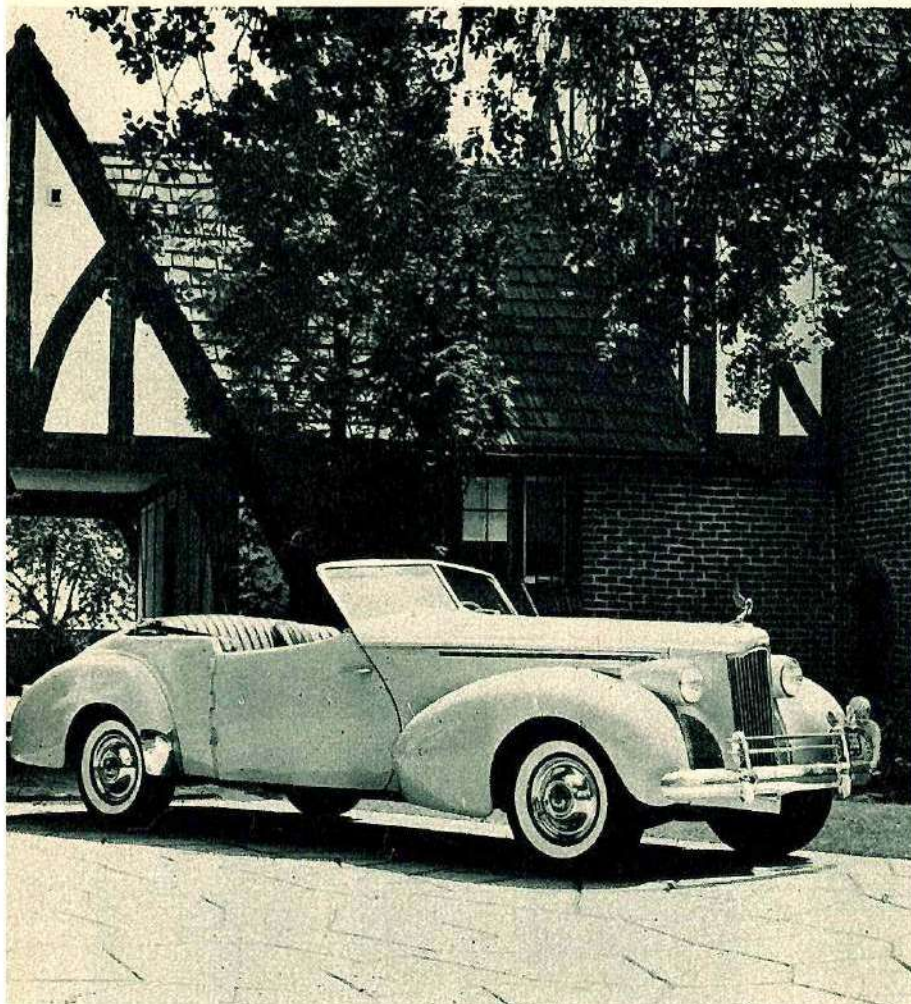


FIGURE "K"



The "REAL" PACKARD DARRIN

photographs by James M. Sitz



The original Darrin-built Packard convertible was much lower than later models.

WHEN WE ran photos of a 1942 Packard Darrin (R. & T., Sept., 1953) many members of the Packard cult sent letters of protest—it seems only the cars actually built by Howard "Dutch" Darrin in California were considered as being really worth while.

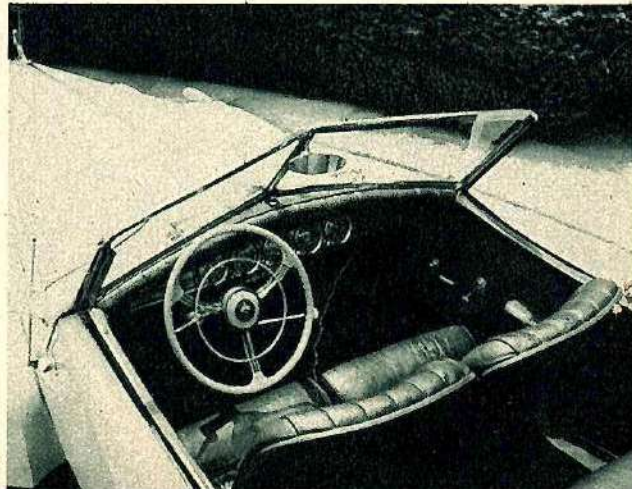
Pictured here is a 1940 eight cylinder Packard Darrin, one of seven cars built in a small shop on Sunset Boulevard late in 1939. The following year Darrin built 30 similar cars, but later models were built by Packard.

Although these 37 cars are acknowledged and acclaimed as being "better looking", their detail construction left something to be desired. Complaints poured in and the factory had to supply special kits to alleviate the front end shake, doors flying open, rattles, etc. The kit provided proper bracing between the radiator cradle and fender brackets, and also substituted heavier body mounts for the original "bent-tin" affairs. However, the body had no proper sills, and would literally collapse if any attempt was made to lift it off the chassis as a unit. It is not hard to understand why Packard took over the job of building subsequent bodies themselves, though they were actually built in Connersville, Indiana.

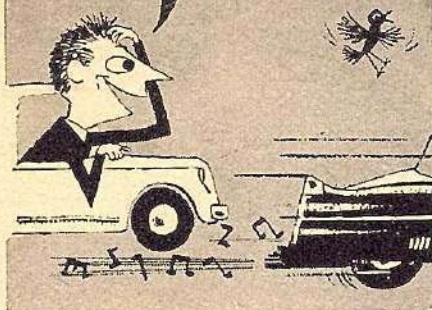
This particular car belongs to Mr. Frank H. Waterhouse, Jr., of Pasadena, California. It was found, in 1951, in Tennessee and though in daily use, it was in a very neglected condition. The car is now beautifully restored to original, with one exception, it has a V-12 dash board and instruments. The owner reports that he gets 14 mpg on trips and that the speedometer will indicate 100 mph if desired.

Bodies that obviously took much of their style from LeMans cars of 1930.

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Another Motor Trend **EXTRA**

Forty-six

le Roi des Carrossiers

(Continued from page thirty-three)

had never sold more than a car or two a year in Paris, Darrin unfolded the plan in detail. They would sell chiefly to Americans planning an extended stay in Europe.



Darrin served as an air observer with the 71st Escadrille during the first world war

They could drive the car while sightseeing, then ship it home, taking advantage of the duty exemption on used property. The car would arrive in the United States at a total cost much lower than the New York price.

The Belgians were impressed with the idea but finally rejected it on the grounds that it would ruin their New York agent. Darrin then promised that the price would be set high enough so that no customer could get his car home for less than \$11,000—a reasonable saving for a used vehicle. After the Belgians extracted an additional promise that all cars would remain in Europe for six months, they demanded \$20,000 as a guarantee that the price level would be maintained.

Neither of the partners had anything approaching that sum of money, but they had nerve and inspiration. Rushing back to Paris, they were just in time to rent space in the Paris auto show. By burning gallons of midnight oil, they sketched a number of special bodies for the Minerva chassis and hired an artist to complete full color drawings. They were, of course, unable to display a car, but with great aplomb they hung their pictures under a bold sign reading, "Minerve de Paris, Minerve de France."

When the crowds poured into the Grand Palais opening day, Darrin began circulating from stand to stand. Whenever he located opulent-looking Americans gazing at the lush limousines displayed by Hispano, or perhaps Rolls-Royce, he would strike up a conversation that leaned heavily to-

ward the beauty and virtues of the Minerva. In case anyone ever doubted his generous statements, well, there were pictures to prove it.

After the show they were able to return to the Minerva factory with orders for 20 special bodies and \$40,000 cash, representing a \$2,000 deposit on each car. According to the terms of the agreement, the customers were to pay half the price of the car upon delivery of the chassis and the balance on completion of the vehicle.

After this convincing demonstration of the art of lifting oneself up by one's bootstraps, the resistance of the heads of the Minerva firm collapsed completely. Perhaps they considered the hazards of having these two young men as competitors. They even withdrew their demand for the \$20,000 bond.

In case this transaction does not seem incredible enough as it stands, there is one more point that can be mentioned. Darrin sold those Minerva town cars for \$8,000 or \$9,000 each. The entire chassis, complete with the engine and all the running gear, cost him \$600 at the factory.

The firm of Hibbard and Darrin was soon solvent. Darrin was free to work out the wealth of revolutionary ideas that flashed into his consciousness in an inexhaustible array. One of the first automobiles he designed in Europe featured sliding doors. In 1926 he designed two Rolls-Royce convertible sedans (see page 35, top right photos) that set the trend in styling for the next 10 years. They were the first cars that Darrin knows of with rounded sides. Fifty units of each model were purchased by Rolls-Royce of America—the first large-scale production order the firm had received. General Motors adopted the impressive hood, sides, and fender lines of these cars for its production Cadillac and LaSalle, and paid Hibbard and Darrin a \$25,000 yearly retainer plus \$1,000 per month for the privilege. Even the Hibbard and Darrin molding—which always ran straight down the sides of the hood and then curved across at the bottom of the windshield—was retained in the GM cars.

Only two years after concluding those first arrangements with Minerva, Hibbard and Darrin were known as the foremost designers in Europe. They were receiving twice the number of orders that they could handle and eager customers had to wait a year or longer before they could expect delivery. The firm opened showrooms just off the Champs Elysees and finally boosted its production until it turned out magnificent, incredibly expensive limousines at the rate of 150 per year.

When Hibbard and Darrin dissolved their partnership in 1928, Darrin had de-

(Continued on page fifty)

Motor Trend

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(Continued from page forty-six)

veloped his abilities and reputation to such a point that it did not break his stride. He formed a new partnership with a French banker and named the firm Fernandez and Darrin. He was retained as a consulting engineer by most of the great European manufacturers as well as Stutz, General Motors, Dodge, and Studebaker. When he designed for the Barker Coachworks of London, they put his nameplate beside their own ancient crest—an honor nearly equivalent to an introduction at court.

Darrin had become a name with magic in it. His cars stopped crowds all over the world. And bold, new ideas still poured off his drawing boards—such as the drop-head coupe which he developed and introduced. In his search for a way to lengthen the hoods of his more "sporty" models, he invented under-the-cowl steering (see page 34, top left photo). Besides increasing the racy appearance of his sports models, the design improved overall visibility to such an extent that Darrin was awarded the *Brevet D'Invention*.

By the early Thirties Darrin had passed the experimental stage in the development of his art, and had become confident, controlled, and even subdued in his techniques of design. As he puts it, "When we first started in Paris, nobody knew anything about designing cars. We used to clutter them up with molding and ornaments because we didn't know any better. But I tried to avoid ornamentation as I learned more, and to build the car so that its lines alone were enough."

The latest cars he designed in Europe show amazing flexibility in concept. Some of his cars achieve their effect through a feeling of massive power (see the Panhard photo on page 34, lower left) while others attain beauty through graceful, flowing curves (see center lower photo, page 34).

At the peak of his successes in Europe the devaluation of the dollar and the ominous international situation in 1937 caused Darrin to pack up and return to America. His arrival in California has already been described. After an overwhelming success in selling all of Europe on the idea of an American coachbuilder, it was not too difficult to sell Americans a world famous Parisien designer.

Once Darrin settled down in Hollywood, he completely discontinued the use of molding and designed his cars with clear, sweeping lines that were almost totally unencumbered with ornaments. One of his most beautiful cars, the Rolls-Royce designed for the Countess Di Frasso, is absolutely devoid of anything that might be called decoration. More than any other single car, it demonstrates that Darrin had reached that point of artistic maturity where he could forget tricky technique and think in terms of pure form.

Strangely enough, this car was one of the last "one off" cars that Darrin constructed. The shop on the Sunset Strip had started well. Rudy Stoessel and Burt Chalmers (who are now partners in Coachcraft Ltd. of Hollywood) were in charge of construction and sales and the shop was well organized. Darrin was turning out incomparable cars; but from the standpoint of the classic car fan, things went to pot when the first Packard Darrin was delivered to Clark Gable.

The car was too good, and so many orders were received that Darrin had no time to think of anything else. About 15 were constructed on the Sunset Strip, and then Packard took over production. From that time until the war started, Darrin was immersed in the details of designing production cars for Packard.

The war stopped everything, of course, and Darrin went out of business as a designer. Since he had served as an air observer with the 71st Escadrille during the first world war, and had spent some time in 1919 as a manager of a scheduled airline, Darrin was chosen for the post of field commander in an army contract flight school. Actually, it was a good job, but Darrin was never satisfied with it. He had wanted to fly himself, but both the Canadian and United States air force had rejected him for being beyond the age limit.

Almost immediately after the war, Darrin was placed under contract by Kaiser and stepped into a bitter feud with the salaried designers on the plant payroll. Although he was doing handsomely from a financial standpoint (he received 75 cents for each Frazer, and 50 cents for each Kaiser that came off the assembly line) his ideas were either ignored or distorted beyond recognition. However, through the benevolent intervention of Kaiser himself, he saw his ideas brought to fruition in the 1951 model. It was put into production with Darrin's plans almost unchanged, and before the paint was dry on the first model off the assembly line, the car won the Grand Prix D'Honneur at the Cannes auto show.

Although Darrin's contract with Kaiser forbids him to do any free-lance designing, he is far from inactive. He is at present furiously engaged in the preparation of five new Fiberglas sports cars for delivery to the Kaiser factory. If everything goes well, these cars should be in factory production within a year and will be sold at around \$2,800.

Like almost everything Darrin does, the new sports car is radically original. The top folds completely out of sight under the rear deck. Cleverly designed sliding doors remove the worry about curb height, so the car is extremely low—only 34 inches. It is constructed on a Henry J chassis, and with the light Fiberglas body to improve the power-weight ratio, the car may fill a long-felt need in this country.

Let us hope that Kaiser adds a respectable powerplant and pays some careful attention to the suspension system.

It is obvious that the King of the Coachbuilders is still willing to fight for his crown, even against such formidable antagonists as Ghia and Farina.

Darrin is a healthy, athletic-looking man who shows little sign of his 35 and some odd years, and he drives himself with a furious energy that wears even his younger assistants to the ground when they try to match it.

It is an interesting situation. Nash has Pinan Farina, and Kaiser has Darrin. Both companies have demonstrated that they are willing to chance something new.

We can be sure that something will pop somewhere.

—Jim Earp

Spotlight on Detroit

(Continued from page ten)

in the center of the steering wheel bearing the owner's name, and new chrome body trim. The car also has been lowered about two inches.

Now that stock passenger cars are being powered with engines developing well over 200 bhp, and capable of attaining speeds up to 117 mph, the problem of controlling these vehicles is of utmost importance.

Braking, or the ability to stop such high-powered cars quickly, efficiently, and safely under all conditions, is therefore receiving top priority in the auto industry these days.

Among the alternatives being considered is the disc brake; and, a firm in St. Joseph, Michigan has announced a unit which it claims will meet the requirements of modern automobiles. The company is Auto Specialties and the device is called the Ausco Lambert disc brake.

Modern American cars use drum-type brakes, a principle over 50 years old. The recent addition of power boosters has not increased the capacity of the brake itself to perform its job. Such devices only make it easier for the driver to actuate the brakes. Actually, according to Auto Specialties, power boosters increase the problems of modern drum brakes because they step up line pressures and develop even higher heat than previously. These factors combine to distort drums, wear lining, and create fade.

In addition, the company points out several other developments in car design combining to make present drum-type brakes relatively inefficient. These include automatic transmissions which virtually eliminate the engine as a braking force, heavier cars, and smaller wheels limiting drum brakes to 11 or 12 inches in diameter.

The double disc brake principle appears to be the most practical method for safer control of modern cars. A recent dynamometer test of the Ausco Lambert unit showed that it provided greater capacity in a given size, a nine-inch disc brake being equal to a 12-inch drum type.

(Continued on next page)

February 1953

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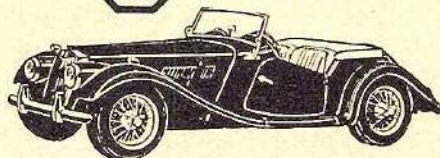
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Letters . . . (Cont.)

There was a real difference in those days between a low priced car and a luxury car. Not so today. The line of demarcation is very small and is getting more so all the time.

This article brings to mind a much more serious thought than just the loss of the independents. Does anybody realize what will happen when the big three get all the business and Detroit really dictates what we will drive? Let's take a look at today's cars as put out by the big three. They all run on four wheels which are suspended in exactly the same manner with one possible exception. These wheels are all driven by open Hotch-kiss type drive shafts, with one exception, and these shafts are driven by ohv V-8 engines. And that's it! To be sure you can have a choice of whether you want a torque converter or hydramatic style of automatic transmission, but that's about where the choices end except in whether you want tea-room pink or daffodil yellow upholstery.

The truth actually is that Mr. Citizen will go down town and find which dealer will give him the best all around deal; the kind of car he gets won't make any difference because they're all the same anyway . . . The next thing that will happen is the discontinuing of the sixes which these lower priced makes still produce and then we'll be in a real fix. We'll have to take an ohv V-8 and like it or else go to a foreign make, unless the independents can weather the storm.

Wellsville, N.Y.

F. M. Leiper

Apace with Ace

We have just received the January edition of R & T with your two excellent pictures, and hasten to advise you the ACECA must be pronounced 'A-SEEKA', and perhaps you will advise your readers in due course. This was a model title of ours in 1929, and we considered it most apt for this hard top version of the ACE, always provided you know how to pronounce it, and are willing to make play of the English language.

You will be pleased to hear that both models are being received with great enthusiasm. The ACE is now to be seen in several States, and the ACECA will follow in March or April next.

Surrey, England, R. G. Henderson, Sales Mgr.

The Mailman Cometh

Is Mr. Barlow kidding or do the postmen out west get the same salaries as the movie stars. If this is so then I can see them riding about delivering mail in Mercedes-Benz automobiles. Neither "hail or rain or fire or snow" would keep me from quitting my job as a teacher and becoming a postman in that case. I am quite sure Mr. Barlow meant a R.H.D. Morris Minor in his January Column and not the German Marque.

New York, N.Y.

A. M. Lewis, Jr.

Mr. Barlow had in mind a Mercedes 180 Diesel, (price: \$3600) for the postmen, not the 300S (price: \$12,500). Ed.

Porsche at Silverstone

In the January issue you state that the Porsche 550 won every race it was entered in during the '54 season. I had the pleasure of seeing Chapman and Gammon in the MG-powered Lotuses beat Herrman in the

works 550 at Silverstone on July 17. The occasion was the sports-car curtain-raiser to the British Grand Prix in which the Mercedes suffered their first defeat.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Michael Scriven

Bernard Cahier's article, *Racing in Review* was a wonderful summary of the 1954 Grand Prix Season. But it goes to show that a Frenchman should never drink English beer, as Bernard was doing with our group at Silverstone when the Porsches were defeated there by the MG-engined Lotuses.

The Lotuses of Chapman and Gammon took first and second; Herrman was third in a Porsche, and Coombs was fourth in a Lotus. In the 1100 cc class, my good friend and Competition Manager for Porsche, Baron von Hanstein, finished first.

A point to be noted is, while these races were held under the International Sporting Code of the F. I. A., the supplementary regulations issued by the British Racing Drivers Club allowed the Lotus to run without spare wheel, lights and doors, and allowed the use of the lighter cycle-fendered (except for Chapman's streamlined winner) body which gave them an added advantage on the short circuit as was evidenced by the fact that the envelope bodied Mercedes-Benz Formula One cars were defeated by the sleek, open-wheeled Ferraris.

Los Angeles, Calif.

D. Mahon

The error was the Editor's, not Mr. Cahier's. The sentence should have read, "[At the Mille Miglia] Porsche successfully introduced for the first time in a big race their Type 550 with the 4-ohc engine, which won every major race entered for the rest of the season. . ." Porsche met Lotus again at the Nurburgring and soundly beat the British cars. Ed.

Packard-Darrin

The car pictured in your last issue and described as the "real" Packard-Darrin is not one of the cars built in California. It is in fact one of the Connersville-built cars; the later "higher" cars were built by Sayers & Scoville in Cincinnati. Although different factories were used, all the Darrin cars were built by me.



The enclosed picture shows one of the original cars built by me on the Packard 120 chassis. Only the first two were prone to over-flexibility of the chassis.

Hollywood, Calif.

Howard Darrin

COMING EVENTS

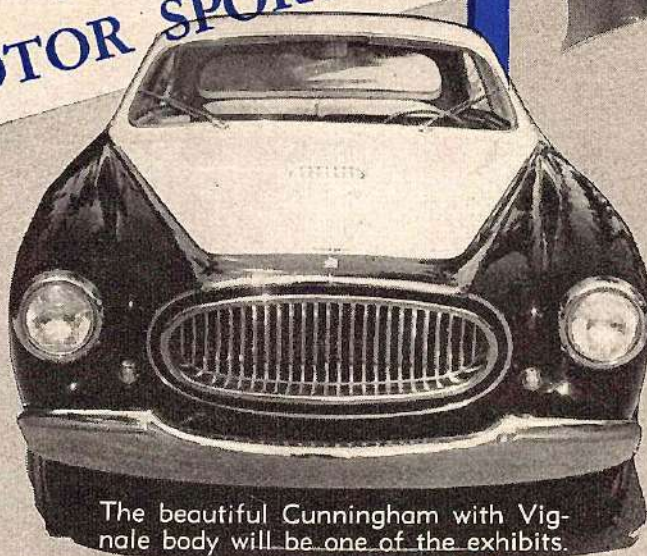
- Feb. 20/27 Nascar Speed Week, Daytona, Fla.
- Feb. 23/27 Autorama Show, Hartford, Conn.
- Mar. 10/20 Swiss Show, Geneva
- Mar. 20 Sebring 12 hr., Sebring, Fla.
- Apr. 20 Turin Show, Italy (to May 1st)
- Apr. 24 Pebble Beach Races, Calif.
- Apr. 30 Mille Miglia, Italy
- May 30 Indianapolis G.P., U.S.A.
- June 5 Belgian G.P., Belgium
- June 11/12 Le Mans 24 hr., France
- June 19 Dutch G.P., Holland
- July 3 Rheims 12 hr., France
- July 16 British G.P., Aintree (Liverpool)
- July 31 German G.P., Nurburgring

April 4 to 12, Grand Central Palace, New York City

PICTURES

TELL
THE
STORY

... of Herb Shriner's
International
MOTOR SPORTS SHOW



The beautiful Cunningham with Vignale body will be one of the exhibits.



A plastic-bodied sport car soon to be produced, the DKF-161 to be featured.



The new Arnolt car with MG chassis. A convertible will also be shown.



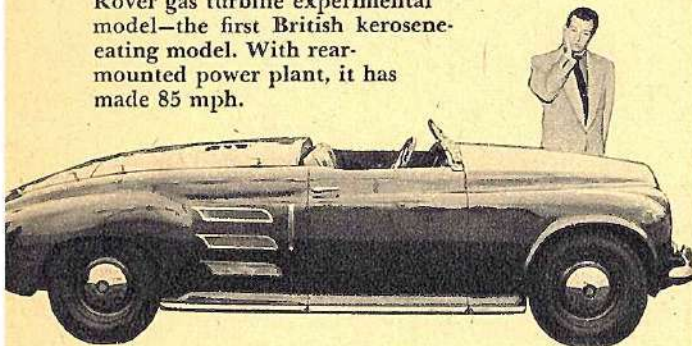
Treat it gently, Herb. This 1953 Mille Miglia model of the Frazer-Nash is one of only three in the U.S.A. You can have it, though, for about \$8,200.



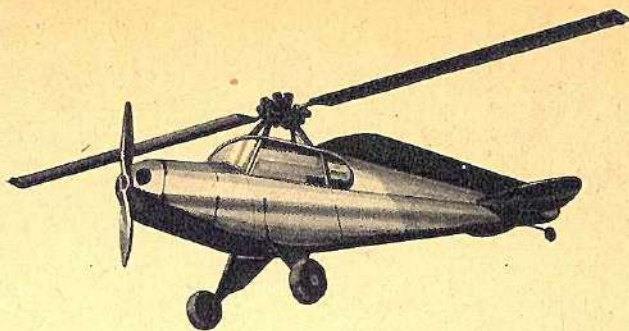
This German Porsche sports car features an air-cooled 70-hp engine mounted in the rear. Hoffman Motors in New York is selling it at \$4,584.



This one's really a wow car. It's the Rover gas turbine experimental model—the first British kerosene-eating model. With rear-mounted power plant, it has made 85 mph.

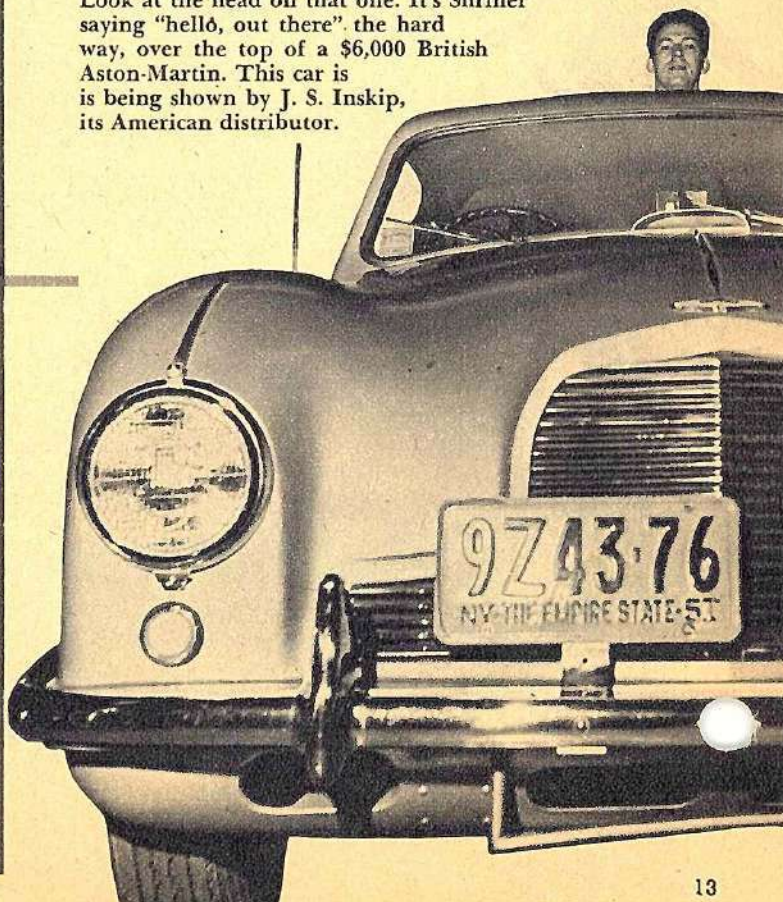


Herb lets the sunbeams in through the top of this new Sunbeam Talbot, displayed in the Rootes Motors exhibit at the Motor Sports Show. This British convertible sells for around \$2,900 in New York.

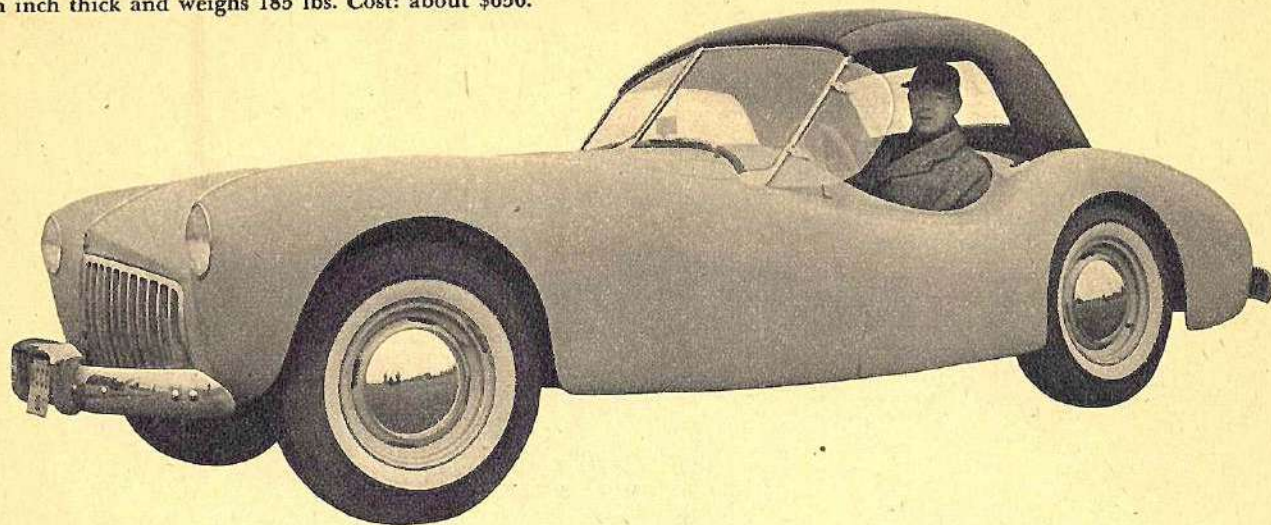


Man ahoy. Yep, Herb's not seeing things. It's the first model of the one-man helicopter, above. Also at the show is the first Converta-Craft, top, a little number that flies as either a conventional small plane or as a helicopter.

Look at the head on that one. It's Shriner saying "helló, out there" the hard way, over the top of a \$6,000 British Aston-Martin. This car is being shown by J. S. Inskip, its American distributor.



This low-slung job, below, features a body of Vibrin polyester plastic and fiber-glass. Put out by the Glasspar Co. of Costa Mesa, Calif., the one-piece molded body is about two-tenths of an inch thick and weighs 185 lbs. Cost: about \$650.

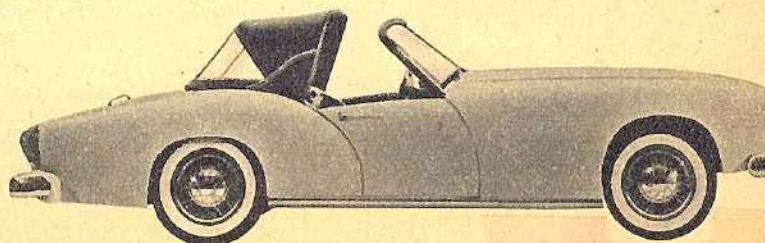


Three steps in "backyard" production of plastic body show, far left, underside of mold with steel tubing reinforcement visible. Extreme lightness is demonstrated by the ability of three men to hold body suspended over chassis, center. After many interim steps of filing, cutting out, sanding and painting, body is ready for final polishing, left. Designed by Roy Kinch of Alhambra, Calif., body is made to fit MG, Simca, Fiat and any other 94 or 96-inch chassis.

An Italian entry in the fiber-glass field, this car, below, was recently exhibited at the International Fair in Milan. It has a plastic body by Montecatini.



The Kaiser-Darrin, below, is first attempt by a major auto company to market a plastic car. Price tag has been set at under \$3,000.



THE DARRIN PACKARDS

By ROBERT F. MEHL, JR.

OF all Packards built, perhaps the most beautiful were the sport models with body by Darrin. It should be pointed out that Howard "Dutch" Darrin built only the 1939 and 1940 Packard Darrins at his Connersville, Indiana plant. Packard built the 1941 and 1942 models.

Darrin had experimented with his designs initially in a small shop on Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California, using the 1938 and 1939 chassis.

Darrin had of course enjoyed considerable success and fame in the field of automobile design in Paris. He had not done any appreciable amount of work employing American chassis. With the Packard Convertible Victoria of 1939 he linked his name and fame with Packard and both benefited.

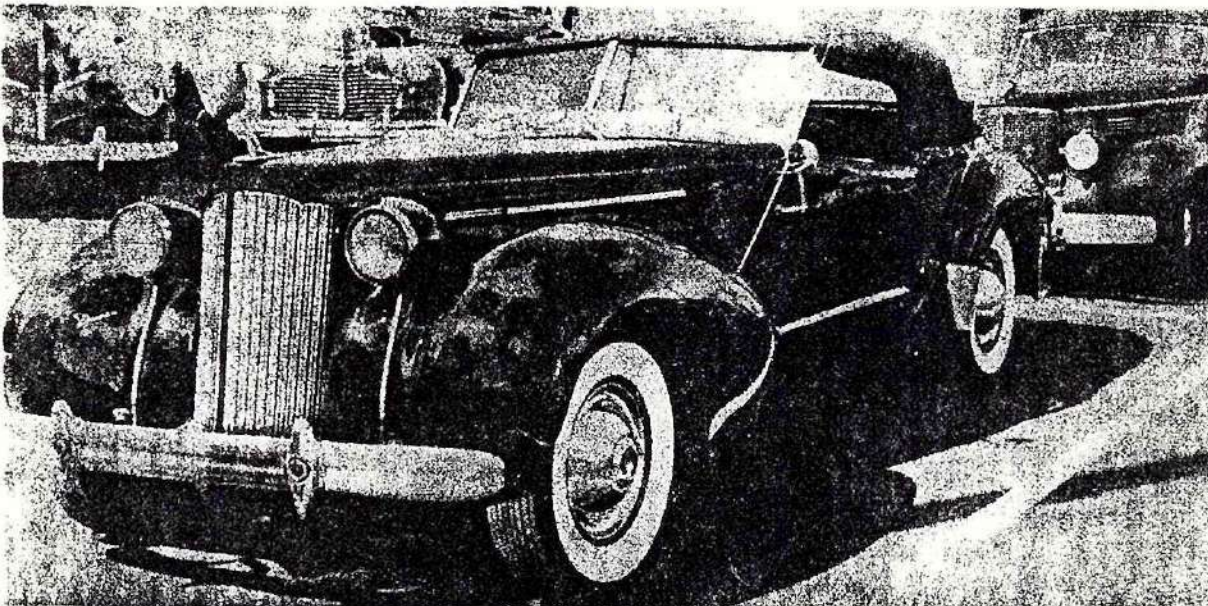
The styling of the first Darrin Packard borrowed from the LeMans cars of 1930. An obvious sports car look harkened back to the earlier Packard Speedsters, too. Bodies had nothing interchangeable with standard Packards except some trim, and can be considered truly custom-built. The look of the car was unmistakably Packard, details were Packard, but the silhouette was low and racy with a certain continental air.

While a joy to contemplate visually, the Darrin-built Packards left something to be desired by those oriented toward structure and engineering. The details of construction of the bodies were far from satisfactory, much less superior. Wood framing, for example, was used in such structures as the doors. The body had no proper sills, and was not really a unit that added any rigidity to the car. Doors flew open as the two parts of the body separated, and noticeable rattles and creaks developed. A kit had to be supplied later that provided proper bracing between the radiator cradle and fender brackets to alleviate front end shakes.

Heavy body mounts were substituted to help stiffen the car. Cast aluminum was used for the fire wall and dash unit, and proved prone to breakage rather too readily. It is no wonder that Packard took over the building of these bodies. One may wonder why they did not do so sooner.

The first Darrin Convertible Victoria was a sharp departure from the conservative Packard 120 convertible of 1939. Darrin used the 120 chassis, a straight eight of 120 hp at 3600 rpm. bore $3\frac{1}{4}$ ", stroke $4\frac{1}{4}$ ", and a piston displacement of 282.0.

(Continued on Page 22)



1939 Darrin Packard Victoria

The Darrin Packards

(Continued from Page 21)

Standard axle ratio was 6.41, but 6.85 was offered as optional, as was an overdrive unit.

There was, then, nothing outstanding in this 1939 model in respect to mechanical features. It is a fair question as to why the 120 chassis was used when certainly the super eight would have been more fitting for such a car. The wheelbase of both the 120 and the super eight were 127", but the super eight engine developed 130 hp at 3200 rpm. Perhaps Packard was a little wary of this radical departure in design and preferred to await public reaction before further developing it, as they later did.

An educated guess puts the total number of 1939 Convertible Victorias produced at seven, although this may be too high. At least three are known to exist today in the hands of collectors and possibly one or two more. While a very handsome car, its body deficiencies cause many collectors to pass it up. Front opening doors cause others to stay away from this sleek car.

By 1940 Packard expanded the line of Darrin-designed cars to include the Convertible Victoria, the Convertible Sedan, and the Sport Sedan. The most popular model was the Victoria which closely resembled the 1939 version. Two different models of the Convertible Victoria were available this year, one on the 120 chassis, as was the 1939 model, and a new one on the Custom Super Eight 180 chassis. The 120 Victoria listed at \$3800.00, and weighed 3826 lbs., while the 180 Victoria went for \$4570 and weighed 4121 lbs. Both were on a wheelbase of 127".

The Senior Packard sales brochure suggested that the Victoria was a car to make heads turn and hearts pound. This car had so little in common with most motor cars, the blurb continued, that it looked entirely out of place on a show room floor. Its element was at the smartest of gatherings the world of sport could offer—or cruising silkily down the highway like a pursuit ship scudding across the sky. No other car but a Packard could match its inspired beauty of appearance, outside and in. This car, concluded the flossy prose of the brochure, set a mark for others to shoot at for years to come.

Much of what the poet said is true, for we do turn to look at this long-hooded beauty, and certainly in its day, it was seen only at plush outings.

As in 1939 the body silhouette was considerably lower than standard Packards for 1940, and no body components were shared. Many of the same construction faults plagued these Darrins too. Yet, aesthetically, they were tops. Interiors were rich, rolled leather, including door panels. While dash panels were essentially stock, a rolled leather edge gave a wholly different appearance to the dash board.

The top was either folded and covered by a top boot, or entirely removed and left at home, a somewhat doubtful advantage in most climates. Either with top up or down, the car presented a most alluring, sporty appearance. Some thirty of these beauties were produced in 1940. Best estimates would indicate about 18-20 remain extant today.

A far rarer car, and the ultimate in any line, the Convertible Sedan, was described as displaying the most daring lines and dashing beauty ever bestowed upon a Packard. This car restored motoring to the sport realm and was Packard's answer to those who clamored for a car so modish, so sporting, and so thrillingly different that driving it was the most exciting of outdoor pleasures. This car was for those who saw no reason to keep their love of adventure a secret. Not in years, continued the imaginative prose of the sales pitch, had a car been built that so completely captured lively imagination.

The Convertible Sedan came on the 180 chassis and the long 138" wheelbase making it a car of considerable dimensions weighing 4050 lbs. Interiors, like the Victoria, were rolled leather and included a similar padded dash. The brochure illustration pictures the car in a bright orange, a color not likely to have appealed to any one able to meet its \$6300. price tag.

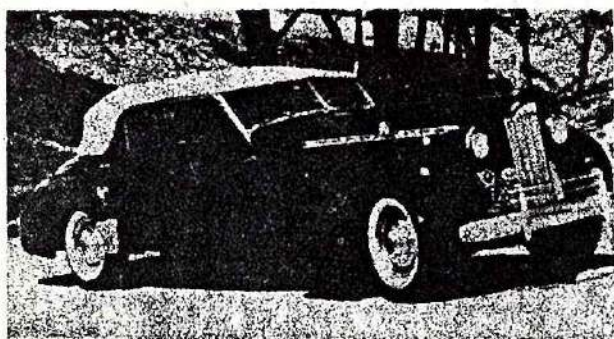
The convertible top of this car was unlike any other convertible sedan before or since. The outer skin of the top snapped off, leaving the bows and pads. The front and two rear bows and the pads folded down into the top well, pretty well filling the trunk which of course contained the spare. The center top bow and the center posts came out separately. The large center top bow had to be worked into the trunk sort of diagonally, and when this was accomplished there was little room for anything else, making this car somewhat less than desirable for trips with top down. Nor was this a convertible to close in a hurry in a sudden downpour.

Six of these fabulous convertible sedans were built in 1940, and four are accounted for today. Two

(Continued on Page 23)

The Darrin Packards

(Continued from Page 22)



1940 Darrin Packard Convertible Sedan

of these are beautifully restored prize-winning cars, one is in the process of being restored, and the fourth is; sadly, so far deteriorated as to be only a parts car. The remaining two of the initial production are as yet not accounted for. It is interesting to note that such notables as Major Bowes and the Welch (grape juice) family bought these cars new.

The third Darrin model for 1940 was the Custom Sport Sedan, which may be considered as a hardtop version of the Convertible Sedan. This car, said the sales brochure in its grand prose, was the peak of custom-built sophistication. Smartness and distinguished individuality were accentuated without the sacrifice of roominess and comfort. Riviera smartness of wheels promised to make this car appeal to the world's most adventurous motorists and no one could fail to be excited by the thrilling way in which this super speed-streamed car lived up to its looks. Thus spoke the ecstatic salesman in his brochure.

Interiors of the Sport Sedan were beautifully pleated and the dash, also pleated in leather, resembled the open cars. Attention to detail was excellent. If one were to find fault, it would not be with the aesthetic qualities of the design, but with the execution of the design. The actual car was not as handsome as the brochure illustration made it out, but the chief point of criticism was in the vast amount of lead used in the body work, which was somewhat crude in places, and must have been a good part of its 4215 lbs. This model, on a 138" wheelbase, sold for \$6100.00. Front doors were still front-opening as were those on both other 1940 models.

There is no record of how many of these Sport Sedans were made. Three are in existence today to my knowledge, one in California, one in Mexico, and one in Schenectady, owned by David Lee.

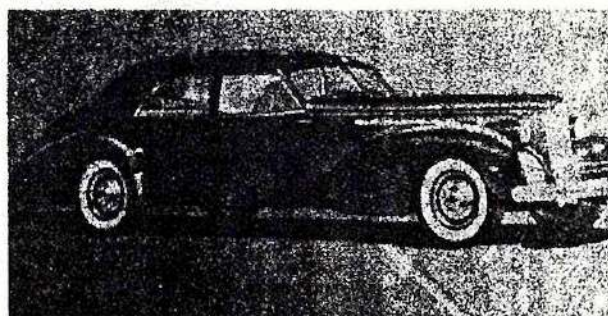
A special, one of a kind, 1940 Darrin Town Coupe was made for Donald Weeks and later owned by Jack Oakie. This appears to be a Victoria with a DeVille metal top over the rear seat. It was, of course, not listed as a production model nor illustrated in sales literature.

In mechanical detail the 1940 Darrins, with the exception of the few 120 Victorias which were the same as in 1939, were all on the Custom Super Eight 180 chassis. These Packards were designated as the 18th series, model 1806 and 1807, and boasted Packard's sensational newly developed 160 hp straight eight.

This new super eight engine was used on both the 160 and 180 Senior Packards for 1940, and was developed by Packard engineers to replace the V-12. At the Packard proving grounds, this new engine out-performed the V-12, and at a lower fuel consumption too. Bore was $3\frac{1}{2}$ ", stroke $4\frac{5}{8}$ ", displacement 356.0, developing 160 hp at 3600 rpm. Axle ratios of 6.45 (standard) and 6.85 (optional) were available as was overdrive.

1940 was Packard's second biggest sales year in history—1937 was top year. Of the 98,000 cars sold, 1300 were the Custom Super Eight model. As we have seen, it was Packard's widest offering of sports-type cars, the Packard Darrins. One is reminded of the Packard Speedsters and a parallel can be seen clearly. However this second excursion into sports cars was not quite as exciting to most enthusiasts. The Speedsters of the 30's were perfection; the Darrins suffered from poor body work.

In my humble opinion, the 1941 Packard, the 19th series, was the most handsome of that marque since the onrush of streamlining, and hence the 1941 Darrin Convertible Victoria the pinnacle. Packard took over the making of the bodies in 1941, and immediate improvements were noticeable, such as the



1940 Darrin Packard Custom Sport Sedan

(Continued on Page 24)

The Darrin Packards

(Continued from Page 23)

rear-opening doors and more rigid bodies. Two body styles were offered, the ever-popular Convertible Victoria and the four-door Sport Sedan.

The Convertible Victoria, model 1906, Super Eight Custom One-Eighty, was the glamour car of 1941, and easily the year's most alluring creation. The sales pitch further glowingly suggested that this car would not look out of place on a race course, but that its sumptuousness was really surprising. This car could match your moods, tweeds or tails, and with the top up you could ride in swank luxury, defying any weather. With top down you headed into the wind, snug in the lee of the smartly raked windshield and extra wide side windows.

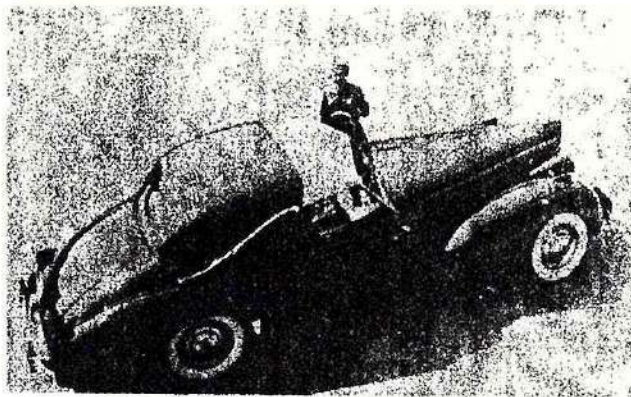
As in its two previous years, the Victoria was on the 127" wheelbase. Rocker panels improved the design of this car, and optional rear wheel shields further added to the vision of long length and clean, sleek design. Interiors were similar to the 1940 Victoria, including plush pleated leather and bucket seats. The dash board, no longer padded, was stock 1941 Super Eight. The price had risen to \$4595.00 for a 4040 lb. car.

The second Darrin for 1941 was a four door Sport Sedan, model 1907, on a 136" wheelbase weighing 4490 lbs. This was the same car as in 1940 with the exception of the improved rear-opening front doors. One other difference was that an entirely stock dash board was used. Gone was the plush padded dash of genuine leather matching the upholstery.

This model, so ran the legend accompanying the illustration in the Senior Packard brochure, presented the most stylish and lustrous appearance the boulevard would see in 1941. The car was wider than it was high, three times as long, a super sport car looking just as thrillingly different going away as it did coming toward you. "Arm chair adventure", an exciting pleasure in complete comfort, was yours as well as delightful color harmonies in cloth and leather inside, chrome and lacquer outside.

\$4795.00 was the asking price for this stylish sedan. As in other Packards for 1941, air conditioning was first offered as an expensive option. The unit was factory installed for some \$300.00 and took up a goodly share of the trunk space.

Packard production dropped from its peak of the previous year, presumably due to war production, to 73,000 units. Of this number 930 Super Eight



1940 Darrin Packard Town Coupe

Custom One-Eighty cars were made. Packard, as far as is known, kept no records of production by individual body styles. At any rate no such records have yet been unearthed. It is presumed that if they ever existed, they were lost or destroyed when Packard moved out of Detroit to its final ignominy in South Bend.

Therefore we have no records of how many 1941 Darrins were made, or any other model, for that matter. A hopeful guess places the number of Victorias at someplace between five and ten. Three are definitely accounted for.

Parenthetically, the 1941 Victoria is the only Darrin Packard that I ever saw on the road in its own time, as a new car.

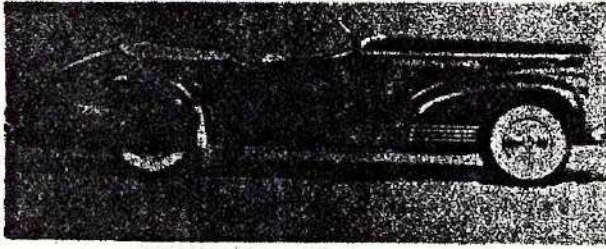
I have verified that at least one Sport Sedan was made, but if there were others I could not say how many. At best the number must have been small, and none exists today as far as is known.

Mechanically the 1941 Darrins continued with the specifications of 1940, using the Custom Super Eight 180 chassis and the 160 hp super eight engine, one of the first, in 1940, to incorporate hydraulic valve lifters. Engine compartments of all 180 series cars were dressed up with chrome components and cap nuts. This helped distinguish them from the 160 series, which was the same engine and chassis-wise, but not the top luxury line. It was not too difficult to top 100 mph in any 1941 Packard Super Eight, and especially the Convertible Victoria with the optional ratio of 6.85 (6.45 was standard as in 1940). Excellent acceleration also characterized this engine, and it is easy to see why it out performed the V-12, thus replacing it in the Senior Packard line in 1940.

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The Darrin Packards

(Continued from Page 24)



1941 Darrin Packard Custom Convertible Victoria

Late in the 1941 model year Packard introduced the Clipper series of streamlined sedans on which the company was to stake its post-war fortunes. The 1942 Packard line began production of the 20th series on August 25, 1941 under a limited production order by the United States government and ended on February 9, 1942 by government decree. In the Senior series Packard offered only one Darrin, the Convertible Victoria, model 2006, on the 127" wheelbase. The price had risen again to \$4783.00 for a 3290 lb. car. Goodies such as the cormorant hood ornament, listed at \$12.00 and direction signals at \$9.75.

The car was identical to the 1941 version except for horizontal side grills and large saucer-like hup caps. Upholstery was now a combination of leather and cloth, undoubtedly a result of war-time shortages of expensive leather.

This was THE convertible of all convertibles and the most inviting car on which the top was ever lowered, suggested the sales brochure. It is certainly true, side-stepping the flowery prose of the sales brochure, that the Darrin Convertible Victoria was a convertible the likes of which no other make remotely approached. It is safe to say that it was every one's dream car in the years 1939-42, and its price definitely kept it in the dream category for all but a select few.

The engine was again the exceptionally fine super eight of the 1940-41 Packards. Horsepower was upped to 165 by increasing the compression ratio; otherwise engine specifications remained the same. This made the Senior Packards the most powerful cars on the American market.

Packard production in 1942, due to curtailment by the government was only 34,000 units in five months. Of this number, 672 were Custom Super Eight 180 series cars. This does not tell us much about production of the Darrin Convertible Victoria,

but this information simply does not exist. There are three known 1942 Darrin Packards extant today, and one can only guess how many were made totally. It may have been three, or possibly more.

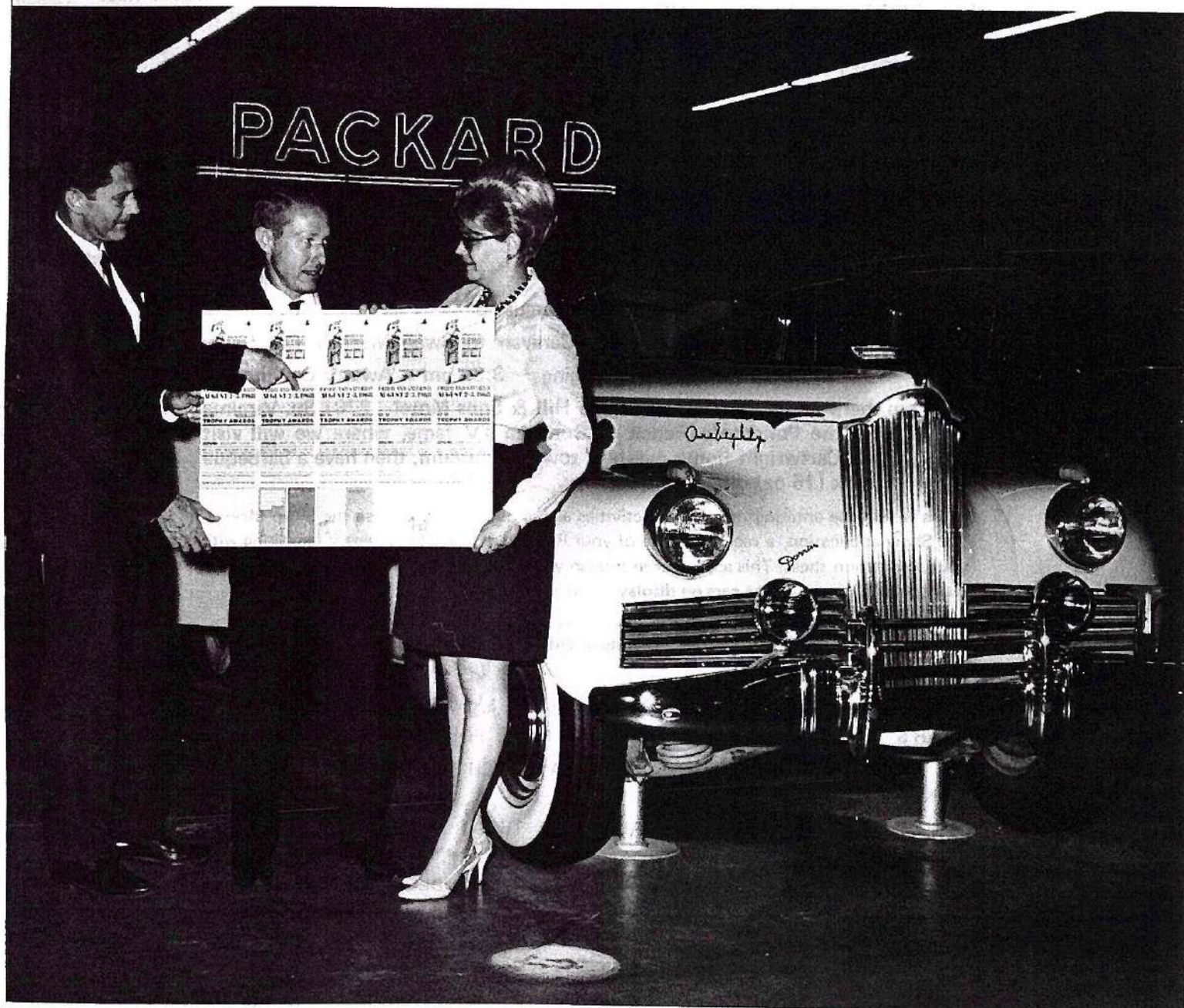
1942 saw the last Darrin designed Packard, and indeed the last custom-bodies Packard by any of the great builders. In the post-war years, only Derham remained in business. One of the Derham creations hinted at what a post-war Darrin Convertible Victoria might have been. It was a stylish two door convertible on a Clipper chassis and resembled remarkably the Darrin concept, cut-down doors and all.

And what of "Dutch" Darrin? Only two ventures were to gain any notoriety. The new 1946 Kaiser and Frazer cars were Darrin designed, but were certainly a far cry from the graceful, handsome Packards. The Kaiser-Darrin 161 sports car based on the Henry J chassis and chiefly remembered for its sliding doors, drew some interest in 1953-54 but never sold in any quantity. It did nothing to divert the inevitable demise of the company, nor did it even faintly suggest what the Darrin Packards had been. The other Darrin venture was a convertible Darrin car produced in California. This, too, ended disastrously.

Neither of these ventures was successful and neither in any way enhanced the Darrin name. Darrin today still does design work for several automobile companies, but his day in the sun is past. His greatest glory and memorial remain the Packards of 1939-42 and it is for these that he will be remembered in automotive history by most of us.

In weighing the values of the Darrin Packards, to be realistic, we must admit that they were not equal in quality of engineering or craftsmanship to production Packards. It is for their incomparable styling and performance that we will remember and cherish them. If we should ask the man who owned one, that is what he would fondly recall.

An estimated 35-40 of these cars remain in the hands of collectors today and they are highly valued. Prices of restored models today are very nearly equal to original prices. Ownership is jealously maintained and cars do not change hands frequently. Perhaps a few more Darrin Packards are still hidden about the country or the world. Let us hope so. The Packard Darrin Convertible Victoria, 1941 of course, is one Packard I must own some day, shortcomings and all.



Tabby Malone, Secretary-Treasurer, and Howard Hull (left), Director of Silver Circle Packards, a region of Packard Automobile Classics, get all the details of the Fourth Annual Reno Swap Meet and Car Show, August 2-3, from Ray Jesch, manager of Harrah's Automobile Collection which is sponsoring the event. Mrs. Malone and Hull expect more than 30 members of the Silver Circle and Northern California Regions of PAC to compete for the \$2,500 in sterling silver awards. The car show will be held Saturday, August 3. Deadline for entering is July 26.

Photo Courtesy Harrah's Automobile Collection

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Packard sign you see in the background was donated by George Hamlin, Mid-Atlantic's former Director and now Director of this year's tour to Washington, D.C.

PACKARD SUCCESS STORY

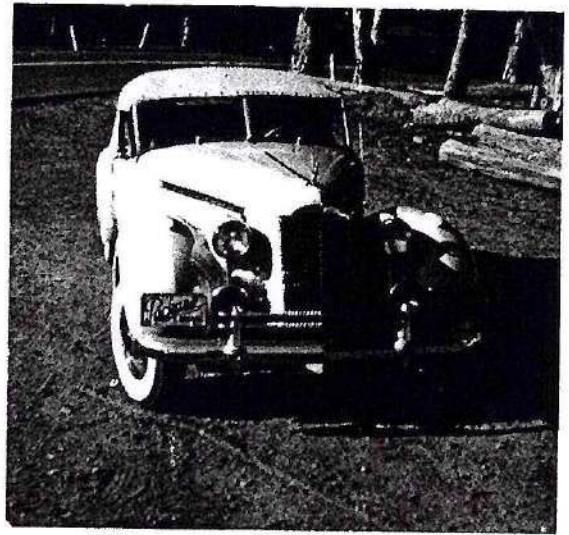
by B. WAYNE PARSONS

This Packard Success Story began years ago when Don Figone was in his father's Packard waiting for his mother to complete her shopping. As a car pulled up and stopped beside him, he immediately noticed how long and low it seemed to be when compared to his father's 1940 Packard. Don got out for further investigation and for the first time looked over a 1940 Packard Darrin. It was this experience that created a strong desire to own such an automobile some day.

After a succession of approximately eleven Packards, Don finally had the opportunity to purchase a Darrin from the east coast. This was sight unseen except for two photographs, but it took only a few letters and conversations to complete the purchase agreement. Then the search for the most reasonable means to have the car transported to the west coast began. It turned out that auto-transport was the best means and a firm with a reputation for driving new trucks cross-country was selected.

Then, after waiting a period of approximately two months with no word, Don was notified that the car would arrive on Good Friday. A few days later, he phoned the shipping office for confirmation of the arrival, only to be informed that the car had fallen apart on the trip. Though Don had heard the earlier Darrins were not the best built automobiles ever made, this seemed ridiculous. However, upon delivery, he learned that all that had happened was that the original duck top had blown off during a rain storm, and in addition, the truck driver had had the presence of mind to throw a tarpaulin over the car to protect the interior from water damage. With a sigh of relief and feeling quite proud and excited, Don started the engine and drove away while his wife followed in another car. It seems that the car then just stopped running — in the middle lane of the San Francisco Bay Bridge approach and in the midst of Good Friday afternoon traffic. All that had happened was the car ran out of gas, as in the excitement of taking possession, Don had forgotten to check the gas gauge. (Though the excitement of finally taking possession of the Packard of our dreams has caused many of us to commit far more noticeable mistakes, this incident does permit the injection of a safety thought here that might serve us all well in the future, and that is the statement that "The most dangerous speed on a freeway or highway is Zero MPH" — think about it.)

Upon getting the car home, Don modestly said it was torn apart in the usual manner. However, the thoroughness with which it was torn apart and carefully re-assembled to perfection would seem to indicate the unusual to those of us who have never gone through a complete restoration.



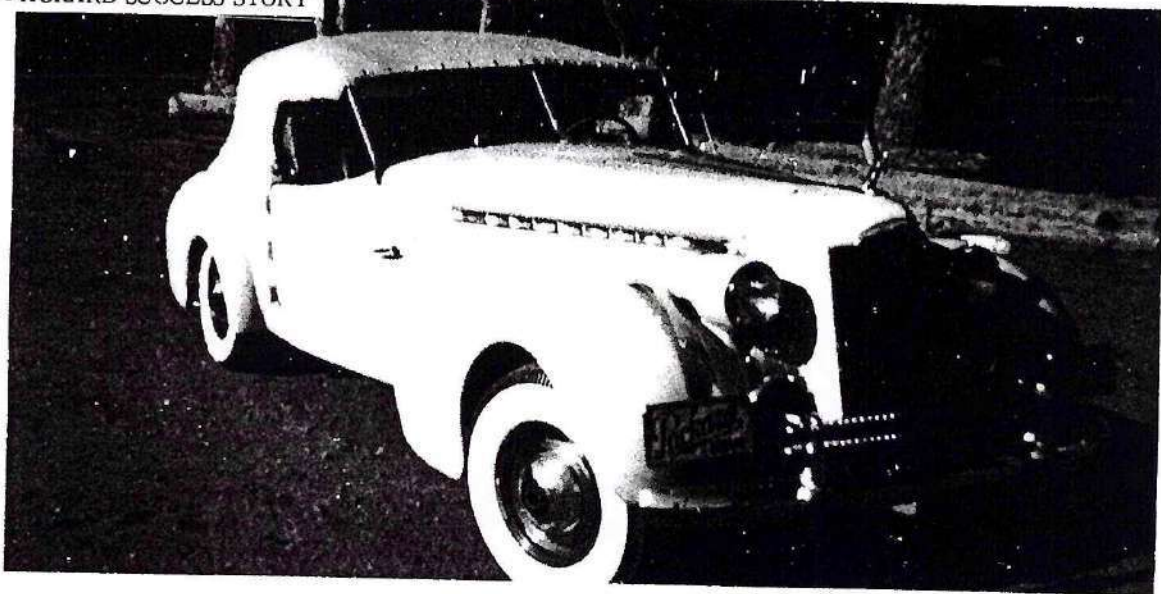
COST FOUR YEARS' EFFORT TO RESTORE — WORTH IT!

The entire engine was rebuilt and new parts were used whenever the old parts indicated replacement would be advisable. The fly-wheel was re-surfaced and a new clutch installed. New brakes were installed and this included turning the brake drums. New shock-absorbers and a new water pump were installed and the generator was rebuilt. The entire under-carriage of the car was scraped down to the bare metal. This revealed a few holes which were repaired with fiberglass. Then the entire under-carriage was repainted.

One of the rear-end spider gears had a chipped tooth and since it was for some reason a "120 rear-end" it was replaced with the correct "160 rear-end." Then the body was strengthened in appropriate places with additional bracing in order to achieve greater rigidity and durability of the body. It is understood that this sort of operation is desirable on cars assembled by Darrin but that those assembled by Packard do not require this treatment.

All dashboard gauges were repaired and re-conditioned, including the clock. New tires were purchased and mounted. At the end of this mechanical and functional restoration, it was discovered that the car would not go into over-drive. So the governor unit at the rear end of the transmission was replaced with a new one — when this did not work, another new one was installed. Then the entire circuit was rewired. After all of these operations were completed, it was discovered that the only thing wrong with the over-drive was that the pull-cable was not adjusted correctly. This incident may seem a little humorous now, but during the de-bugging process it was probably the furthest thing from humor.

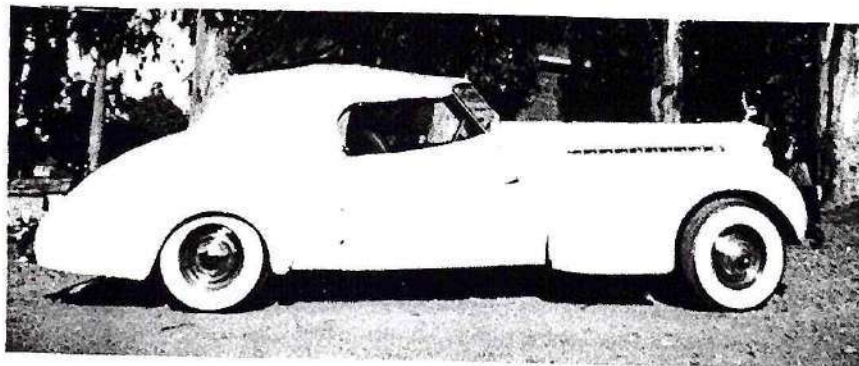
PACKARD SUCCESS STORY



The final restoration steps involved appearance restoration and they proved to be the most time-consuming and aggravating. The entire car was repainted and it was in a paint shop for a long period of time. The interior of the car was in good condition, but required a great deal of cleaning with saddle soap. It turned out that every piece of chrome on the car had to be replaced or re-plated. Probably the most disturbing experience with the restoration occurred when it came time to have the cast windshield frame re-chromed. It didn't turn out to Don's satisfaction, so the plating shop had to re-chrome it. Unfortunately, however, it seems that in stripping the chrome, the casting fell off hooks and into the bottom of the alkaline strip tank where it remained forgotten long enough to be completely destroyed. This occurred in February of 1961 and it was October of the same year before Don received a replacement. This replacement, incidentally, became available only by Don's taking a trip to Los Angeles to remove a complete unit from a friend's car so it could be used as a pattern. This series of events cost the plating company about \$1200.00.

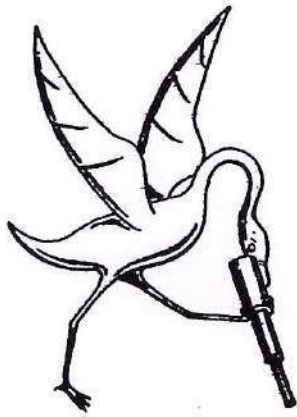
As for the car itself, Don believes there were approximately 50 Darrins made during 1940, 39 Victorias, 6 convertible Sedans and 5 Sport Sedans. It is powered by a 356 cubic inch 160 HP engine, weighs 3,884 pounds, has the 4:36-1 rear-end plus over-drive. "Therefore, you performance minded people can readily see that this car can really move when necessary." Though the 0-60 rating would probably compare favorably with most of the modern cars, we understand that Don has not yet driven his Darrin hard enough to find out just what the best rating would be — guess we can't blame him for that after four years of such hard and meticulous work.

(Ed Note: We regret that "Before" pictures were not available, but from the complete restoration described above one can easily imagine what these pictures might have portrayed.)



WHAT A BEAUTY!

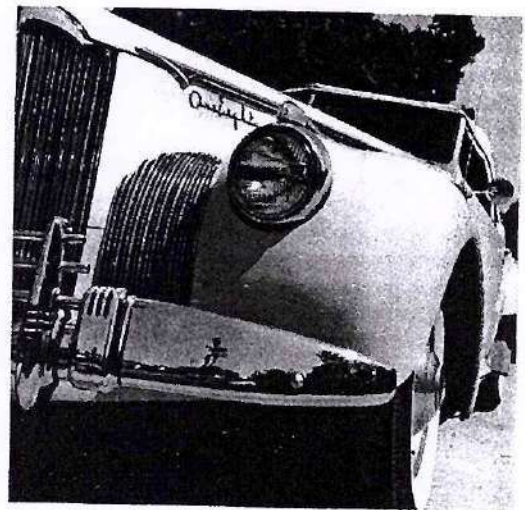
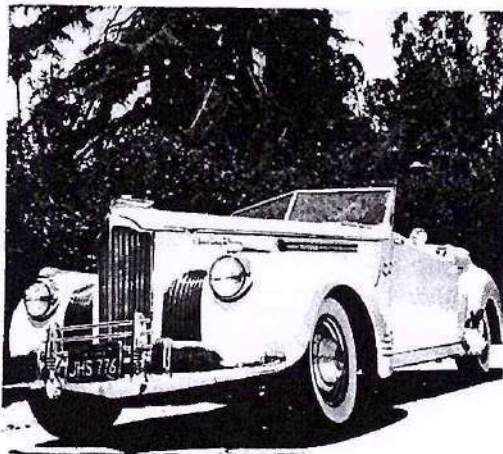
FOUR YEARS LATER



a BIRD'S-EYE view into the past

By MAURICE WILSON

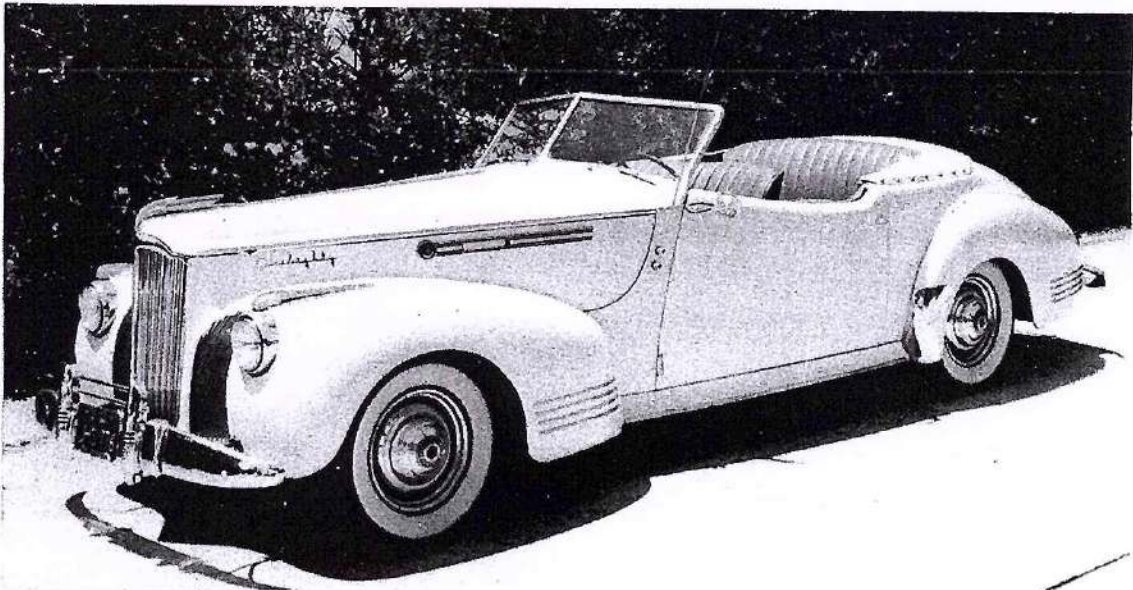
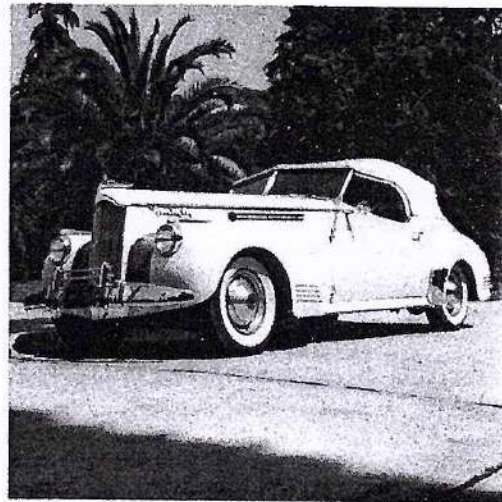
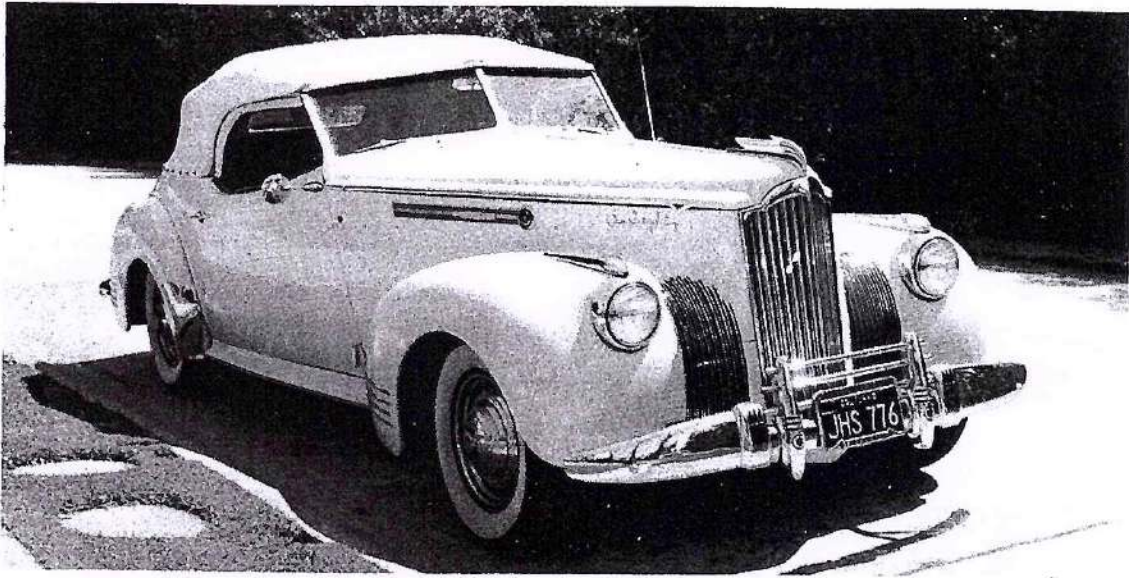
The first Packard Darrin convertible I saw was in the April 1962 edition of THE CORMORANT. It was a reproduction of a 1940 ad in Fortune magazine. Actually there were two ads, one for a Darrin Sedan and the other for the Victoria Convertible. The caption under the convertible read "Glamour car of the year", and it certainly looked glamorous to me! I decided right then that if I ever had the chance, I would get that kind of Packard. My next encounter with the Darrin body occurred on the Packard Automobile Classics National Tour to the Harrah Collection at Reno-Lake Tahoe in September, 1963. As my wife and I drove into the Caravan Inn in Sacramento in our 1937 convertible, we saw not one, but two superb Darrin convertibles parked in front of the office. Needless to say, we were both thoroughly impressed. For the next two days, even though there were scores of other beautiful Packards of every type to admire, the Darrins remained our favorites. By now we were both certain we would get this type of Packard if the opportunity ever arose. Little did we realize that in a few short months we would be the proud owners of what we thought was one of the most beautiful Packards we had ever seen — the 1942 Custom Convertible Victoria — body by Darrin.

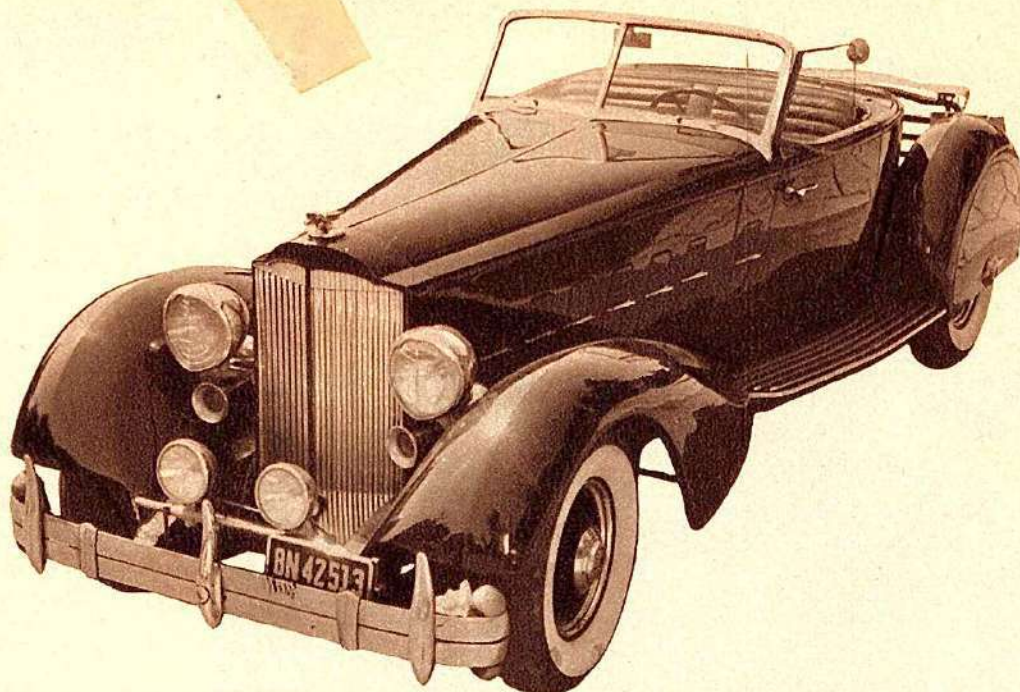


The car was originally sold by Earle C. Anthony of Los Angeles to the actor, George Raft. Since then it has had three other owners, all in Los Angeles. Most of the restoration work, engine, paint, upholstery, and top was done in Los Angeles during or prior to 1960. The interior is done in a beautiful red color and the exterior is cream colored lacquer. The total appearance of this combination is very striking and is complimented by a tasteful application of chrome trim.

The car has been entered in numerous competitive events and has won several awards, the most noteworthy being first prize in National competition from The Classic Car Club of America. The car has gone 101,000 miles and is a distinct pleasure to drive. It has the nine main-bearing engine and overdrive, so is smooth, powerful and speedy. According to Howard Darrin, the 1940 models were built at Connersville, Indiana, and the 1941-42 models were built at Cincinnati, Ohio. He said that there were approximately 250 of the 1940 models made and about 75 of the 1941 and 1942.

We expect to enjoy this fine Packard for many years and to take it on as many P.A.C. events as we possibly can.





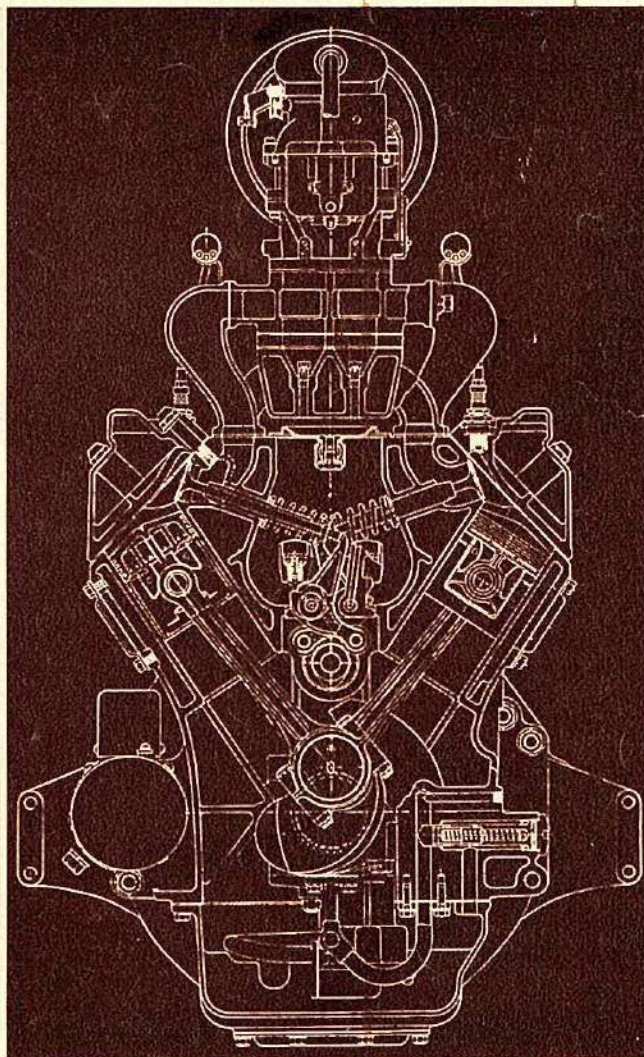
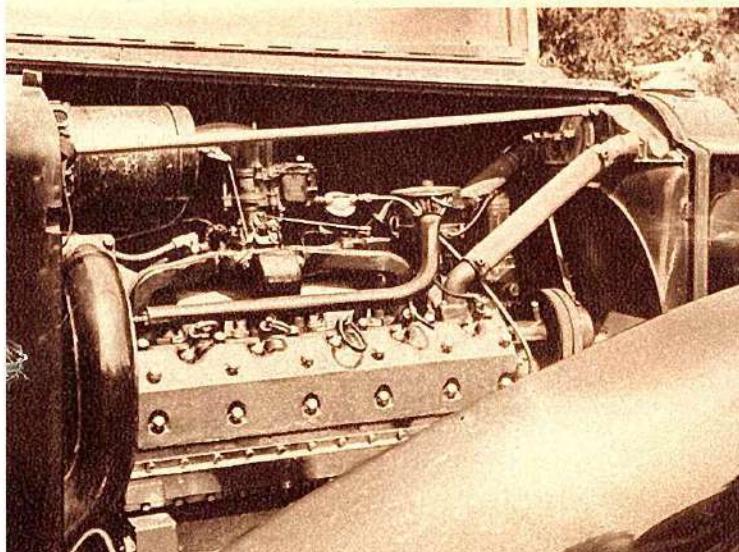
Bohman and Schwartz modernized the front fender shapes for Clark Gable in about 1936.

ever, the Packard V-12 had a hydraulic zero-lash valve mechanism which bore some similarity to that pioneered by the V-12 and V-16 Cadillacs a few years earlier.

A feature of the 1934 V-12 was a four speed transmission with spur gears. It was not noisy, but it did make a characteristic whine. First gear was so low that it was only needed for emergencies and the flexibility of the engine was such that it would easily propel the car at 5 mph in high gear on a 10% grade. Tires of 7.50-17 size were fitted, combined with a standard axle ratio of 4.69 which gave 3000 engine revolutions per mile. A 3-speed transmission and an axle ratio of 4.41 was specified on later V-12's and some 1934 models may have used the 4.41 axle. Brakes, incidently, were mechanical on the 1934 Packard Twelves.

There is no record of Packard speedsters being entered in sports car competitions, so far as we know. Though the V-12 was advertised as the "Boss of the Road", the magic century mark would have meant turning the engine at around 5000 rpm—a speed well beyond a reasonable possibility. Nevertheless Packard Twelve owners will tell you this—"of all the cars I've ever owned—this was the greatest." Ask the man who *owned* one!—JB

The compact 7.3 litre V-12 engine had a very large exhaust pipe.



Cross section of the Twin Six engine. Note that the pistons, as shown here, are not at top dead center. Con rods are very long.

Custom Bodies

THE 1935-1941 ERA

by George Finneran

NOTE: In the last issue of MOTOR TREND, our feature writer, George Finneran, wrote an article on the custom body era from 1930-1934. In this issue he continues his diatribe from where the previous one left off, covering the era from 1935 on. Editor.

CAME, 1935, and the auto industry in general, and the luxury trade in particular, discovered the existence of a world depression. This gave pause to think, as the French so aptly put it. Throughout the actual depression of 1929-35, we have seen how the boys in Detroit tried to defeat the unhealthy attitude of a nation by producing longer, more cylindered, more expensive, custom-bodied cars. The ostrich act couldn't go on forever; consequently in 1935-36, we have the three big carriage-trade manufacturers making a first stab at the general market—Lincoln's Zephyr, Cadillac's Model 60, the Packard Six and the 120. Nuf said.

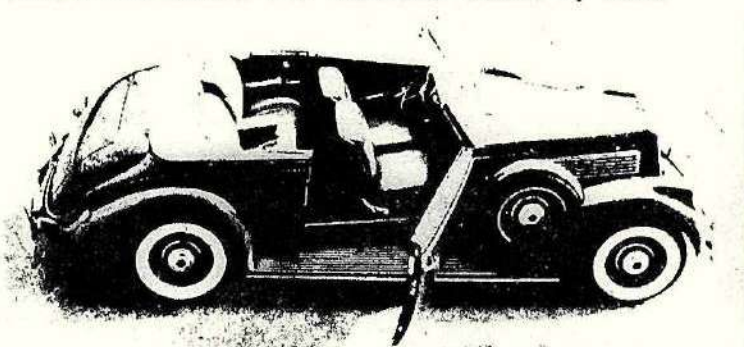
Of course, Stutz had gone by the boards, as had Marmon. Besides the Big Three, however, there were two independent firms who were producing stuff suitable for Gross Pointe, Newport, Miami, Fifth Avenue, and Hollywood. The Auburn Supercharged Speedster for 1935 and 1936, and its immediate successor, the 1936-1937 Cord (1937 supercharged), were a valiant attempt to maintain the standards of the long-hood crowd. Unfortunately, the front wheel drive of the Cord and the pure conspicuous



AUTO CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

ABOVE—Lincoln Continental V-12 Custom Club Coupe

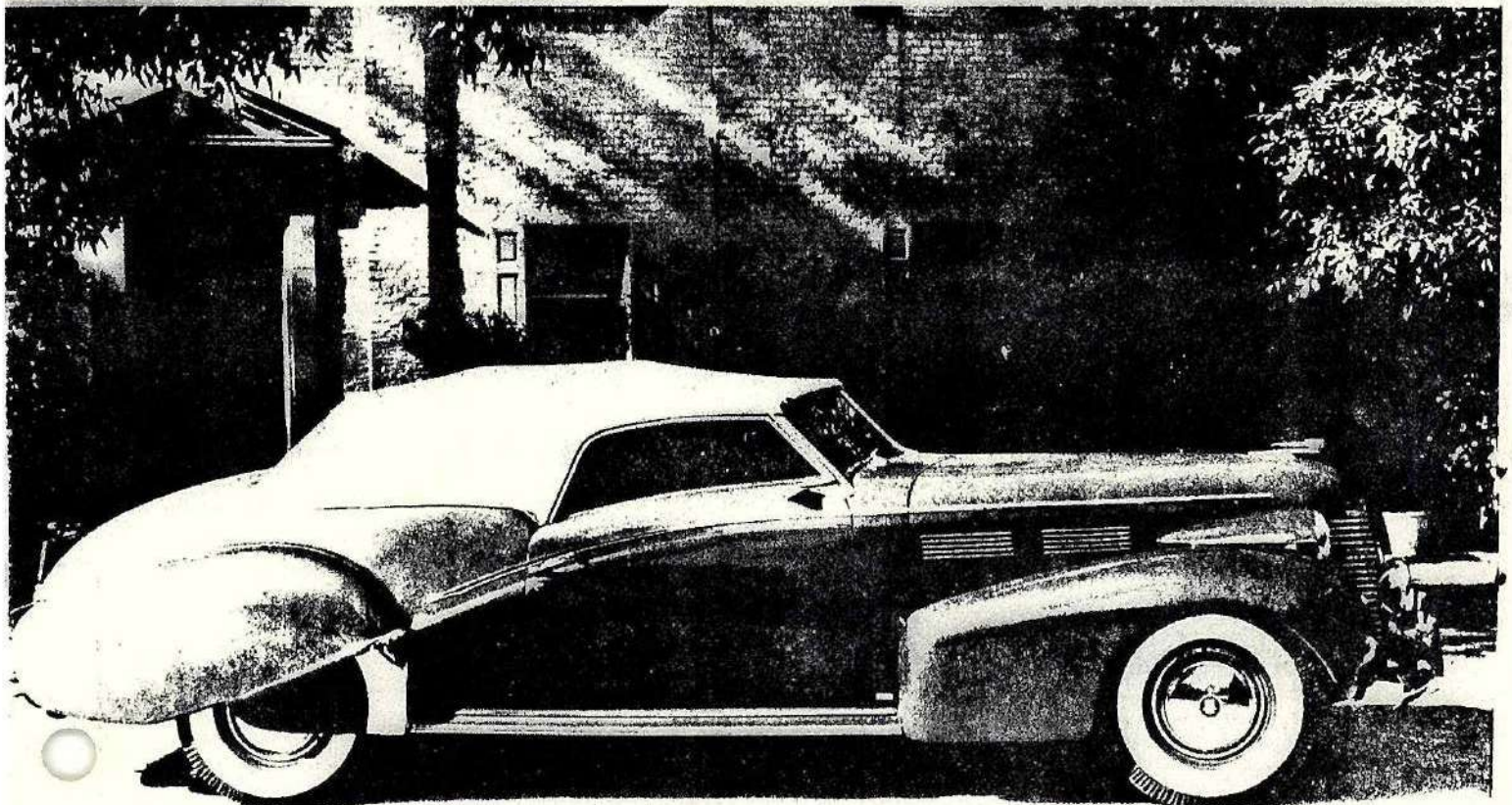
BELOW—1938 Lincoln V-12 Convertible Victoria by Brunn

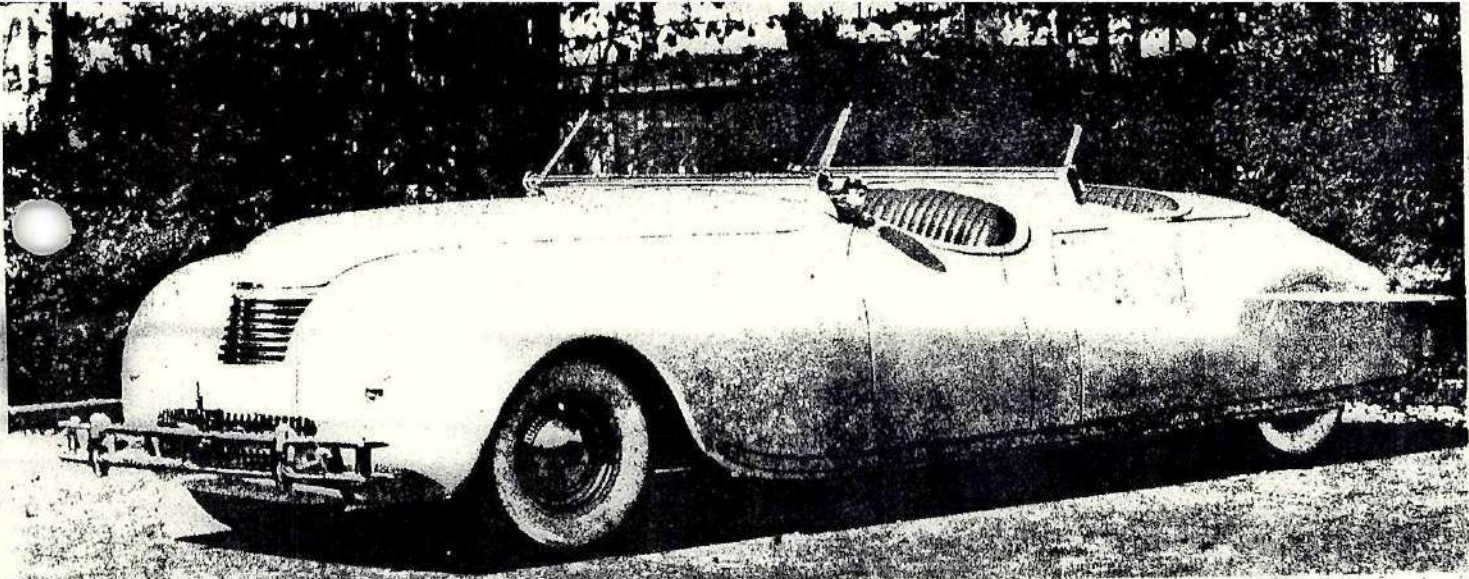


W. E. MILLER

BELOW—1940 Cadillac Model 62 V-8 with club coupe body by Bohman & Schwartz, on a 129-inch wheelbase

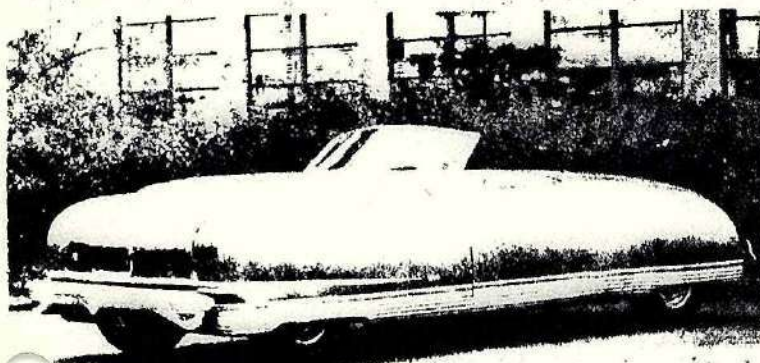
M. H. BOHMAN





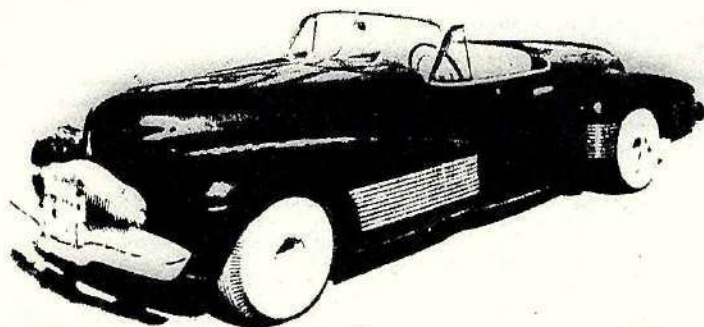
CHRYSLER CORPORATION

ABOVE—Chrysler Newport Phaeton, designed by Roberts and built by LeBaron, believed to be on a New Yorker chassis



CHRYSLER CORPORATION

ABOVE—Chrysler Thunderbolt convertible built by LeBaron



BUICK MOTOR DIVISION

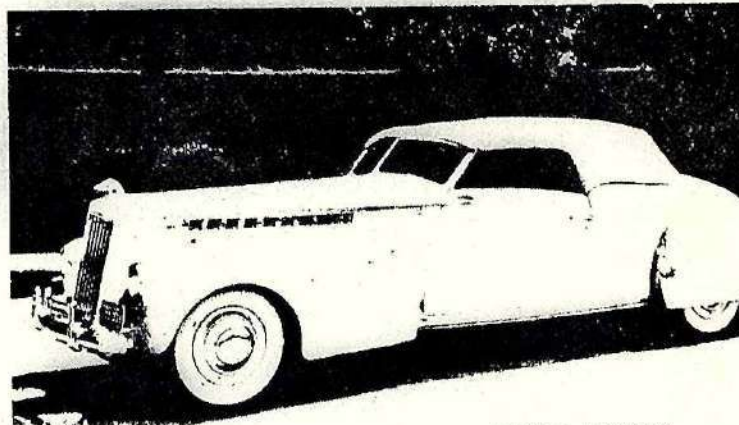
ABOVE—The 1940 Buick "Fireball" experimental coupe, designed and built by Harley J. Earl on the Buick Super chassis

waste of the Speedster were too much for the purchasing public. "Thorstein Veblen wouldn't like it, Leisure Class stuff, ya know," they said sadly.

The Auburn Speedster was actually the last of the long-hood line for the next four years, the Cord being in a class by itself. The front-wheel drive gave Cord an unfair advantage in the "how close to the ground can you get" school of design, and collectors of the classic car are inclined to discount the Cord for this reason more than any other. It had the finest dashboard of any car ever made in the U.S.; the almost confusing array of round, pleasantly numerical dials were a triumph of the functional-classic school. However—and your author speaks from sad experience—this dashboard was the cause of a

tremendous, nation-wide surplus in the treasuries of traffic courts from 1936 on. It seems that the combination of a fourth speed forward and a tachometer placed nearer the steering wheel than the speedometer caused numerous Cord drivers to read revolutions per minute for miles per hour. In fourth speed forward, therefore, thousands of Cord drivers were the source of revenue for towns with a sufficient number of cops on motorcycles behind signboards, and in one case—my own—the town of Westport, Connecticut, received \$20 because I happened to be reading the *altimeter* for the speedometer at the time of the arrest.

As for design, the Auburn and the Cord were factory-designed, according to *Motor Annual*. The Auburn Speed-



EARLE C. ANTHONY

ABOVE—1941 Packard Custom Super 8-160, with body by Bohman & Schwartz. Paint is 16 coats of light cream lacquer.

ster was actually a speedster, boat-tail and all, and the Cord came in four body styles: a convertible coupe and convertible club coupe, a four-door sedan, and the 1937 Beverly four-door sedan, a chauffeur-drivable sedan.

These two cars—Auburn and Cord—and Pierce Arrow, Packard (Super 8 and V-12), Cadillac V-12 (to 1937), V-16 (to 1940), and the K Series Lincoln were the only products the Stinkinrichfolk could purchase and still retain any individuality on the road and in the parking lot. In the Packard and Lincoln lines, one could still obtain, for a suitable sum, a convertible sedan by Dietrich, Rollson, or possibly LeBaron, and also convertible club coupes and coupes; no more roadsters and phaetons after

(Continued on page twenty-one)

Custom Bodies

(Continued from page fifteen)

1937 except on very, very special order like for the White House, for instance. Or for plain, ordinary, everyday thousand dollar bills.

On all these cars, the basic Continental design had been immeasurably altered, and for good. The flaring, non-skirted, front fender was gone as was the narrow, "V" shaped radiator. Gone, too, was the narrow body, the auxiliary (usually leather or canvas-covered) trunk, the chromium-trimmed running board, the large-diameter, massively constructed steering wheel, the forward-opening door, the round instrument dials on the dash, and in most custom cars for some obscure reason, gone was the low, swept-back, "V" windshield.

What you got in place of all this, was (in the 1938 Packard V-12 for instance) an almost vertical "V" windshield, balloon front and rear fenders, practically no running board (for local gendarmes to hop upon and shout "foller dat cah!"), a dainty, white, spring-spoked steering wheel, high



COURTESY EARLE C. ANTHONY

DARRIN TOWN coupe, a semi-convertible

road clearance, a bulky body, a bustle trunk aft, comparatively inferior upholstery and top material, no gadgets for the driver to play with as in former Packards (for instance, no shock absorber control, vacuum brake selector switch, crankcase level push-button indicator, etc.), and in general, the uncomfortable feeling of conducting an overstuffed mattress down the highway. The same may be said of the 1936-1939 K Series V-12 Lincolns and the very rare V-12 and V-16 Cads, Cadillacs, of all the Big Three, maintained the long narrow line of post-'35 days; however, their design was beyond comprehension in the V-16 series. The 1938 V-16 convertible sedan, a comparatively common model, was sooooo long that it was almost a burlesque of the design.

Came 1933, and a recurrence of the "custom cars for Depression-ridden people" campaign by the Big Three. With the Business Recession of that



COURTESY OF PACKARD

1941 ROLLSON Packard convertible sedan

year squatting on the shoulders of rich and poor alike, Darrin came over from Paris and fathered the famous Packard Darrin convertible coupe, and a year later, Lincoln was to unveil the much-admired Continental. But this economic cycle was to prove too much for the "Wot Depression?" attitude, for Pierce Arrow hit the dust, the Packard V-12 followed suit in '39, and the Cad V-16 in '40. Of course, you could always have a custom car made for you by Rollson (still in New York), LeBaron, Brunn, Fleetwood, Derham, or Bohman and Schwartz (Pasadena, California—the successors to Murphy there). But the design of your custom car would not be too distinguishable from any of the stock Packards, Cads, or Lincolns—the fenders would be about the same, the general body lines also. The Continental Look (1933-42) was modified by these custom body builders to include about three distinctive effects: the long narrow hood (again), the cut-down door (encore), and the swept-back look (ditto, ditto).

Chrysler, quiescent in the custom field since the 1933 LeBarons, came out with three interesting cars during this last period. For the New York World's Fair in 1939, somebody—I am inclined to suspect Derham—designed and built a raft of low-slung, swept-back-looking phaetons (possibly convertible sedans) on the Chrysler Crown Imperial chassis, and very slinky, Terry-and-Pirates-type cars they were too, as they purred from bar to bar carrying dignitaries to the wondrous Fair.

In 1940, Ralph Roberts—one of the original founders of the LeBaron Company—designed the Chrysler Thunderbolt and Newport. According to the Chrysler Corporation, the six Thunderbolts and the five Newport phaetons were their "forecast of future style trends. . . ." and by studying the photographs included here, you can see that Chrysler did some mighty accurate forecasting. The Thunderbolt, some of you may remember, was a push-button paradise; push a button, the headlights were uncovered, push a button, the rear deck slid down and the

all-metal top swung around and down under, the deck zipping shut like a mouse trap, push a button, the windows whipped up and down, push a button—well, you get the idea. In the same year, Harley J. Earl designed and built on the Buick Super chassis the "Fireball Experimental" convertible coupe illustrated, with the same features as the Chrysler Thunderbolt.

At the beginning of these articles, I promised you students of classic design an opportunity to become an expert at recognizing custom bodies. The following is a partial list of identification data on the jobs we have discussed:

LeBaron bodies may be identified by looking on the bottom of the cowl-piece, usually behind the left spare wheel if the car has its spares mounted in fenderwells—for the name signa-tured in brass.

Dietrich uses a rectangular bronze plate about one inch by two inches tacked in the same place as above—just in front of the driver's door and usually directly above the spot where front fender and running board meet.

Murphy, Derham, Brunn are usually found on the right-hand side, in about the same location. *Murphy* uses a rectangular plaque, *Derham* a bronze shield, and *Brunn* a scroll.

Fleetwood, Rollson, Judkins, are on the left-hand side, close to that point where the hood and cowl meet.

In conclusion, let me repeat what I said in the beginning. If you see something coming down the street that's low to the ground, with spares mounted on the fenders, with a "V" windshield slanted back until it's resting on the driver's forehead, the doors are cut down low, it looks like it has 15-inch tires in back and 19-inch in front, it's got Vogue whitewalls, and lots of chrome—don't be in too much of a hurry to say "huh, one of them furrin jobs"—Detroit had its moments, brother, when the boys got together in the back room and said, "Let's give 'em a lotta car for their money!"

1939 PACKARD Darrin convertible club

AUTO CLUB OF SO CALIF.



Sebring Formula . . .

This top event will soon be run (March 23rd, 10 A.M. to 10 P.M.) and we feel that race director, Alec Ulmann is worth quoting.

"The Sebring race is an engineer's race dedicated to the improvement of the breed of the automobile rather than a promoter's spectacle . . .

"Today it (the Le Mans race) is considered the greatest classic of all endurance races. No one can question the tremendous influence that this 24-hour contest has had on the development and improvement of the sports car and, by reflection, on the utility car of today. In the same tradition of Le Mans, the organizers of the Sebring 12-hour Endurance Race, since its inception in 1950, have endeavored to maintain, by means of their mandatory regulations, the basic principle of fair competition between manufacturers willing to challenge each other's engineering talents on the unimpeachable test ground of the race circuit before the eyes of their customers, the general public.

"The accent in this race is not on the heroic prowess of the driver or the acrobatic skill of the supporting crews, but on the meticulous year long development and preparatory work of the engineers, planners and testing men whose handiwork is being tested before the world to see."

Ulmann rightly places the most stress on his Coefficient of Performance race, just as they do at Le Mans, but the crowds watch only the overall positions. For Sebring the C of P is equal to $D \div d$, where D is the total miles covered by the car in the 12 hours and d is computed by the formula:

$$d = \frac{825 \times \text{cc}}{\text{cc} + 250} \text{ (in miles)}$$

Where the engine is supercharged, the exact engine size in cc is multiplied by 1.4—very commendable and much more realistic than moving the contestant up one class when he employs artificial aspiration.

To boil this formula down to its bare essentials, the car which best exceeds its "formula rating" wins the race. Or, stated another way, the handicap winner is the machine which exceeds its minimum required average mph by the largest percent. Sample formula speeds for various size engines are as follows (given as average mph rather than total miles):

750 cc.....	51.56 mph
1000	55.00
1250	57.10
1500	58.92
2000	61.10
3000	63.46
5000	65.47

New Cars . . .

Late entries in the 1957 race include a 5- to 6-passenger car to be known as the "Flintridge DKW Darrin Mark II Sports." Whether a sports car or not (and we say not) Howard Darrin has come up with an interesting styling treatment with a clever grille featuring the famous 4-ring Auto emblem. (Spoiled, however, by the headlights). The all-steel body will be made in Los Angeles and it has a removable hard top.

Another new car expected momentarily is the English made "Thrust," powered by the

new Austin A-35 engine (950 cc). We don't know much about this job but if the response is similar to that received on last month's Berkeley report, our mailman will think Christmas is a full season instead of a week or two.

Borgward still haven't come up with their long-expected 1.5 litre competition sports car, but they have just announced a really beautiful TS Sport Coupe. It looks quite a bit like an enlarged VW-Ghia Karmann and is said to have a top speed of 150 kph (93.15 mph).

Porsche isn't very "publicity minded" (why should they be?), but we have finally dredged up a list of the 1957 modifications which include:

1. A new carburetor air temperature control for more efficient operation under widely varying climatic conditions.
2. Revised front torsion bars with an adjustment for re-setting the standing height.
3. Needle bearings (instead of plastic) at the front suspension arms.
4. Revised rear suspension and engine mounts to allow an initial rear wheel setting of 0° camber (at no load) with no change in bump travel or body location above the ground.

American Styling . . .

All reports indicate that Virgil Exner's styling genius, as fully exploited in the new Chrysler lines, has had a tremendous public acceptance. Ford's Fairlane also seems to be popular, and some soothsayers are even saying that Ford will outsell Chevrolet this year, something which hasn't happened since 1937 (in passenger cars). Certainly it looks as if G.M. is going to have to accept a drop in their market penetration (52% in 1956). Stylists we have consulted all sum it up about like this—the Chrysler cars look like

they are moving even when they are static, the G.M. cars look "slow," with built-in head-resistance even when they're moving. At least we predict that Plymouth will move up to its rightful 3rd place this year.

Imported Car Sales . . .

In the imported family car field, it looks like someone is going to be disappointed, for they are all predicting tremendous gains in sales. American Motors is in the most ludicrous position of all. In one breath they advertise that the small European car is short on room and comfort (as compared to the Rambler), and in the next they foresee a 150% gain in Metropolitan sales. Of course, the Rambler is a good, sensible automobile—a size we have long advocated as being amply large. The Metro is a keen little job, too, but it's neither fish nor fowl—no room for a family, yet not a sports car either. So, who buys Metros? Maybe frustrated T-Bird prospects?

Renault of France has doubled their production capacity and are now in a position to deplete their domestic backlog of orders and send an ample supply of Dauphines over to us. They plan to sell 16,000 cars in the U.S. during 1957, have an 8000 car backlog now.

Volkswagen have announced nothing, but 1956 sales will be close to 50,000 units in the U.S. and we expect 1957 shipments to be about doubled.

B. M. C., with their new A-35 and Morris Minor 1000 are talking five-figure sales for this year, exclusive of their MG-A and Austin-Healey Six, which are still in short supply due to the shipping shortage.

Add to these the goals of DKW, Borgward, Mercedes, Jaguar, Triumph, and Rootes, and you have a rough tally of 200,000 imports for 1957. This is getting to be big business.

Borgward Isabella TS (Touring Sport) Sport Coupe is the full name for this new model, priced at around \$3000.



MISCELLANEOUS RAMBLINGS

By JOHN R. BOND



LAST month Bernard Cahier did a story for us on the Top 13, referring to Grand Prix drivers. This in turn led to interminable R & T staff discussions on who are the top American sports car drivers. After considerable wrangling we decided to rate on ability rather than merely studying the record and finally agreed on 12, listed below but not necessarily in order of rank.

Carroll Shelby	Ed Crawford
Phil Hill	John Fitch
Ken Miles	Walt Hansgen
Paul O'Shea	Masten Gregory
Pete Lovely	Sherwood Johnston
Jean P. Kunstle	Jack McAfee

An interesting sidelight on the growth and age of the sport is shown by a list of inactive top drivers. How many remember Phil Walters (possibly the greatest of them all), Bill Spear, Erwin Goldschmidt or Tom Cole?

The SCCA has announced its 1956 National Point Champions, based on 10 road races and 4 hill climbs. Interesting to note that there was a tie for highest points between Dick Thompson (Corvette) and Paul O'Shea (300 SL). Perhaps there's a moral here that it isn't necessary to have an expensive all-out racing machine to be a "champion."

The West Coast Championship based on points earned in 19 West Coast main events for modified cars lists the top 10 drivers as follows:

1. Ken Miles	6. Jean P. Kunstle
2. Bill Murphy	7. John Porter, Jr.
3. Richie Ginther	8. Jack McAfee
4. Sam Weiss	9. Eldon Beagle
5. Carroll Shelby	10. Lou Brero, Sr.

Cyclops Too . . .

In this issue we introduce a new R & T "character" to our readers, Cyclops 2, the impossible (or is it?), lovable little cycle-car. It may not be a surprise to some of you to hear that one of our two modest, anonymous authors was responsible for our Poguar Road Test—a phony pogo-stick if there ever was one—but we still get letters from people who want to buy one and are dead serious about it.

Actually the Cyclops saga is too close to the truth to be funny—to us. Hardly a day passes that we do not get a call from someone who wants to import a car that will sell better than the VW. They ask about the Goggomobil, or the Lloyd, or the Mochet, or the Fiat 600. The plain fact is that you can find

cheaper cars and better cars, but no competitor seems to have the same successful combination of distinctive appearance, price and reputation. Two French cars, the Dauphine and the Simca Aronde appear to be the toughest competition, and with their aggressive sales campaigns they are going to make VW feel the pressure. Both these cars are priced within a few dollars of the VW and offer more of everything—from doors to economy.

Road Tests . . .

No car we have ever tested posed the problems described in our Lotus report on page 18. Also unusual is the fact that our data is so much better than a British report on a similar car. However, in case anyone doubts some of our figures, owner Chamberlain has clocked a standing ¼ mile with a 1100 cc Lotus in 13.43 seconds—whereas our best recorded time was 15.8 seconds.

The Changes are Made . . .

Last month we promised that "there'll be some changes made" and beginning with this issue R & T will be 64 pages, *not counting the covers* (as some magazines do). Our success has been amazing to us, but probably because we know little or nothing about the publishing business—we just like cars. Once we said we would like to own Ferraris but drive Volkswagens. We still have five of them

(VWs) among our staff, plus the 2.4 as a badge of prosperity.

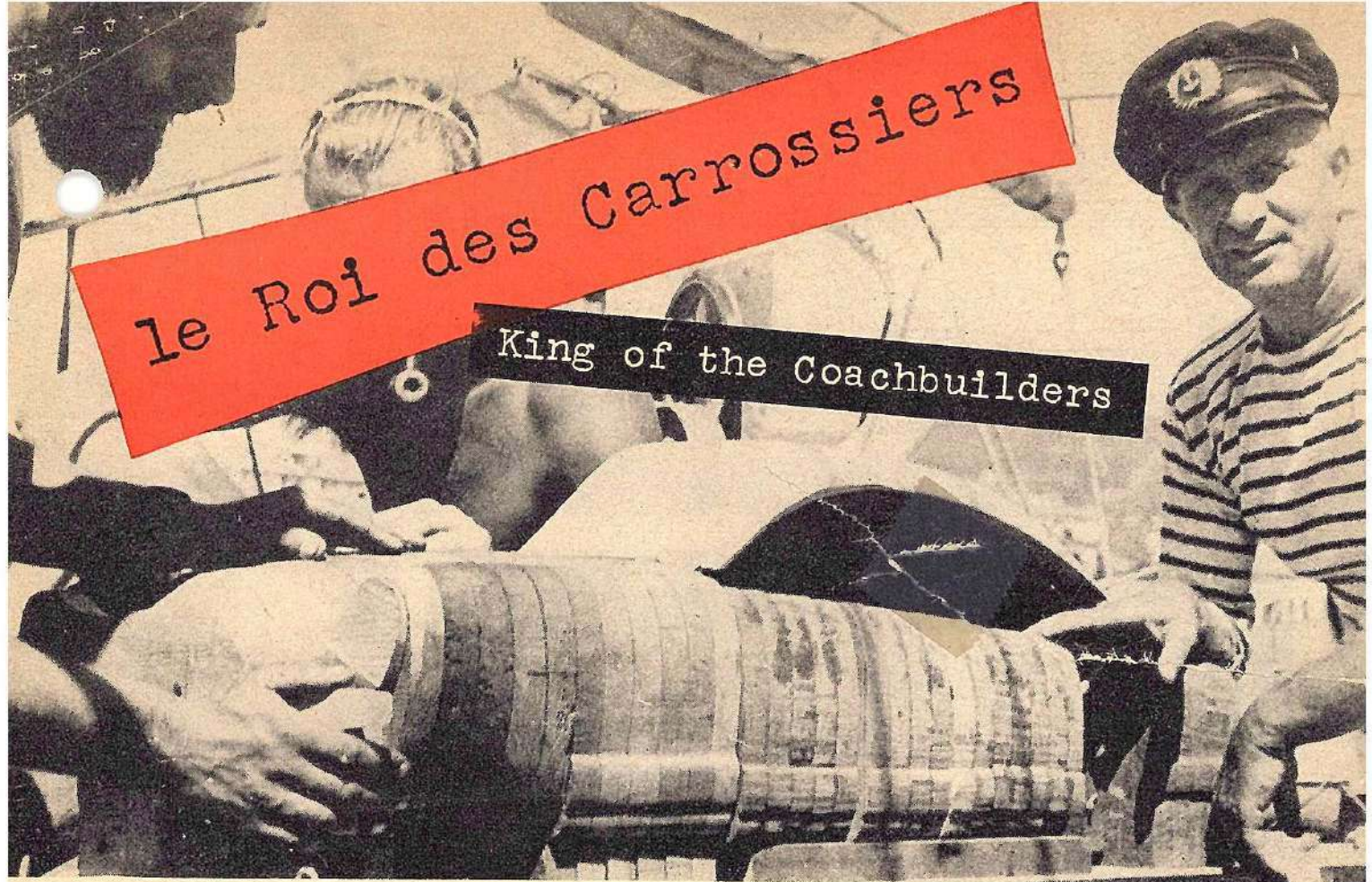
Also, we are now settling down in our new offices, with twice the floor space previously available. Many readers have asked us, "Where is Playa del Rey located?", and the best answer to that is right on the Pacific ocean, due west of Los Angeles' International Airport. Also we are only 2 miles south of the new 25 million dollar Marina del Rey small boat harbor project but have no intention of starting a boating magazine.

Proprietary Information . . .

Our tire article, concluded this month, has stirred-up a rash of questions about specific makes of tires. None of the researchers are willing to divulge exact information on a particular tire. We can find (see bibliography page 57) comparisons labelled tire A, tire etc. which is really frustrating, but that's the way it is. Even Michelin, with their acknowledged lower slip-angle than any other tire never give any specific data. Some drivers do not like Michelin-X tires because they say the lower slip angles give less warning of an impending skid—which is true to a certain extent since in the final outcome (a spin-out) the last shred of adhesive ability is not much different between tires of the same tread durometer (tread hardness), on a given machine and on a given turn.

Prototype of a new sport model DKW styled by Howard Darrin to be built on the west coast.





le Roi des Carrossiers

King of the Coachbuilders

DARRIN OF PARIS. That was the sign on a new showroom right in the heart of Hollywood's exotic Sunset Strip.

Now Hollywood could *never* ignore a sign like that. Rumors whispered through the town by way of the usual well-oiled channels. It became known that he did not make dresses, he had never "coiffed" a hair-do, but that he *had* designed fabulously luxurious limousines for King Alfonso of Spain and Leopold of Belgium. "The crowned heads of Europe!" the whisperers said.

Fascinating stories continued to drift through the studio lots. They told about the Paris auto show where Darrin was engaged as a design consultant by Minerva, Panhard, Daimler-Benz, Armstrong-Siddeley, Renault, Citroen: all the great auto manufacturers of the continent. After the show, at a dinner given for the most famous designers of the day, Darrin was put on a throne and crowned King of the Coachbuilders—*Roi des Carrossiers*.

The ever-cynical press agents were considerably shocked, and Hollywood became somewhat breathless when it was discovered that all these rumors were uncontestedly true. Marlene Dietrich and Norma Shearer already drove \$24,000 Rolls-Royces that had been designed and constructed by Darrin in Paris; and soon the "Parisien" designer was building special cars for Dick Powell, Clark Gable Errol

"Dutch" Darrin has carved for himself a remarkable career which, perhaps, has not yet reached its peak

By Jim Earp

Flynn, Donald Meek, and the Countess Dorothy Di Frasso. Darrin had definitely "arrived."

Hollywood could not resist the lure of a French designer; and somehow the rumor never did insist on the fact that the fabulous Howard A. Darrin of European renown is as American as Coney Island.

Darrin chuckles as he remembers those days. "With a name like Darrin, and that sign 'Darrin of Paris,' everyone automatically assumed that I was French. In Hollywood that was worth more than all the work I had ever done. Of course I *had* been designing cars in Paris for 15 years, so why should I tell anyone that my ancestors were American pioneers, or that a Darrin fought in the American revolution? It would just have disappointed them. I don't remember that I ever actually *told* anyone that I was French, but then I never did discourage anyone who wanted to think so."

Darrin has a natural instinct for showmanship; he is a born promoter. And both his ideas on design and the cars he has constructed are as bold and original in

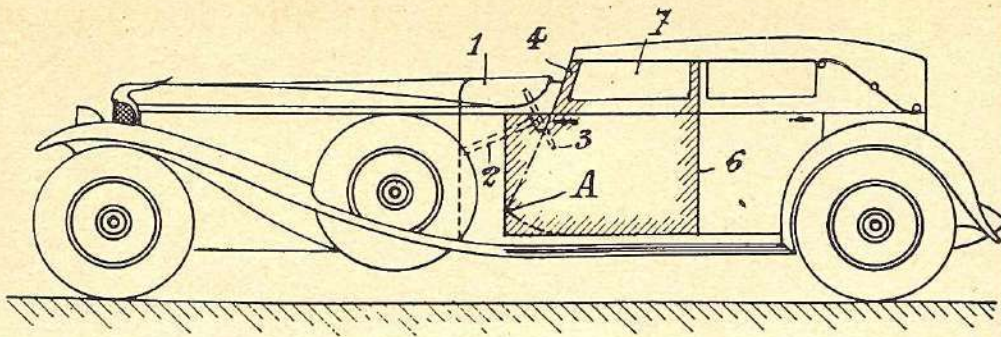
their concept as are his schemes to attain financial backing. That is why he has reigned as king of the coachbuilders for 30 years.

Darrin the artist and Darrin the business man worked as a smooth team when he first started in Paris. He and Tom Hibbard had gone to Paris in 1922 as representatives of the budding LeBaron Company, but they soon realized that the French capital, loaded as it was with wealthy tourists from all over the world, represented a gold mine to enterprising coachbuilders.

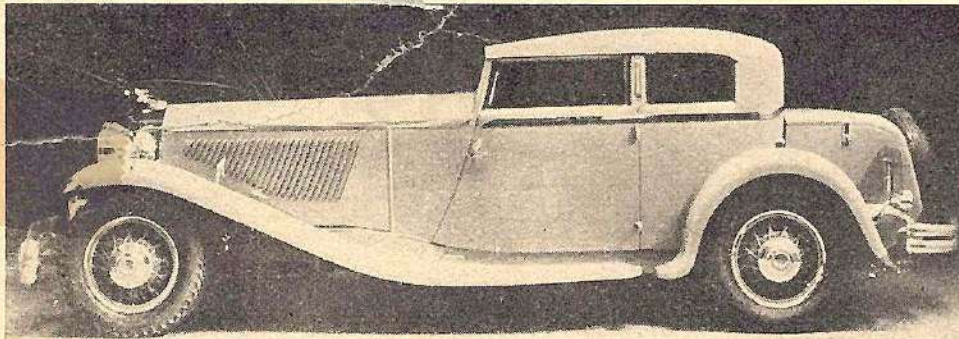
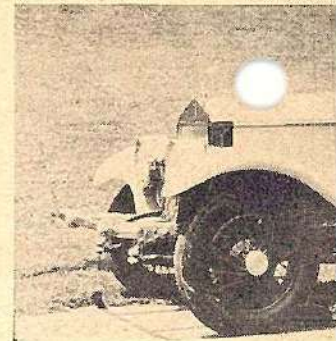
Then Darrin noticed that there was no agency in Paris for the Minerva, although the cars sold well in the United States for \$13,000 to \$15,000. Their well-scrubbed American faces shining with hope and promise, Messrs. Hibbard and Darrin scurried off to the Minerva factory in Antwerp, Belgium.

They proposed simply that they be given the Paris agency for the Minerva. When the Belgians pointed out that Minerva

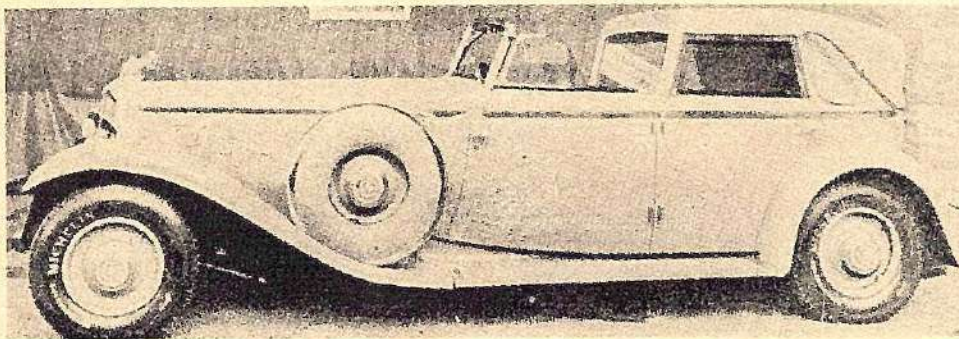
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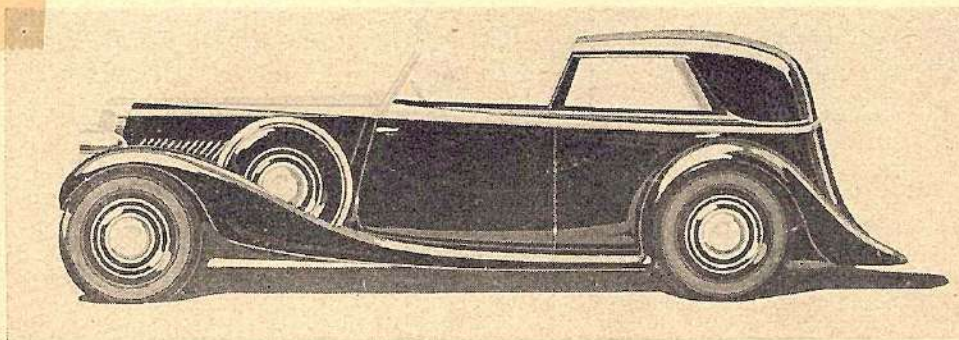
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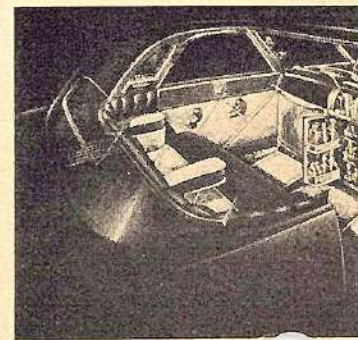
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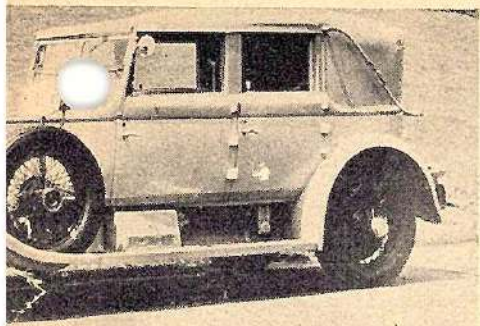
1 & 2. It is startling to realize that classic Rolls-Royces were with their day. Curved sides, rakish and the "speed" back sported (top right) shocked conservators. Orders of 50 each of these general and Darrin produce in quantity. General Motors paid for permission to use these "radical"

3 & 4. A *Brevet d'Invention* reward for inventing the using. Although the citation increase in driving safety through visibility, Darrin was chiefly improving appearance in modeling the hood.

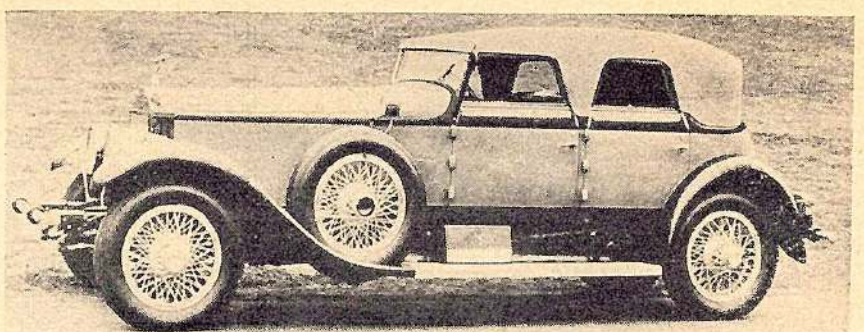
5 & 6. These two cars—one powerful, the other appealingly feminine—were both constructed on Packard chassis by Fernandez. Note that the Fernandez and follows a straight line around the hard and Darrin molding (1) curves up the windshield post the hood. Sloping tonneau with these moldings were Darrin years.

7. The then Viscount Louis

All photographs



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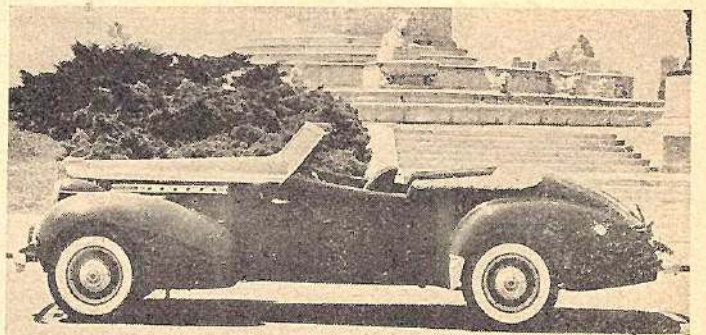
from the collection of "Dutch" Darrin

insisted on specifying the features of this beautiful limousine and knew exactly where and how he wanted them placed. The only thing missing is a barbecue pit. In the jargon of the hucksters, "Has many extras."

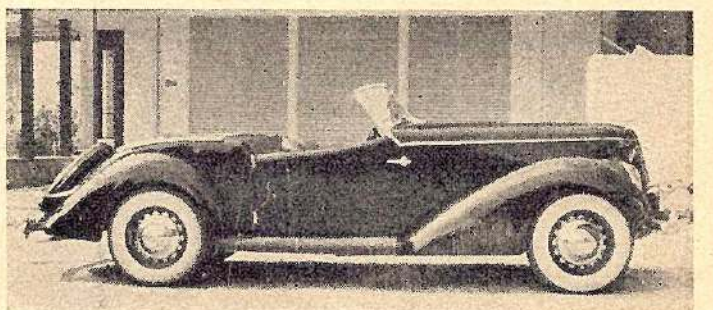
8. To many minds the most beautiful car Darrin ever designed, this Rolls-Royce was constructed in Hollywood for the Countess Di Frasso. Note that the sleek, feline lines are unmarred by any gadgets. Many will recognize this beauty as the star of several Springs Mills advertising shots.

9. This 1937 Ford four-seater is the first car Darrin designed upon his return to the United States. The motor was stock the last we heard, but what if a full house Merc, headers, a Barris paint job were . . . ? Colonel Fogel of 8862 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles still owns the car.

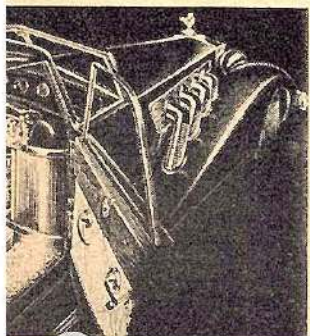
10. This is the famous Packard Darrin. The first was a "one off" model for Clark Gable. Gable was in a fever of anticipation while the car was being completed, but rumor has it that Gable returned the car in three months. At every stop light panting females clambered aboard by way of the low, cut-away doors. Needless to say, driving became something of a hazard.



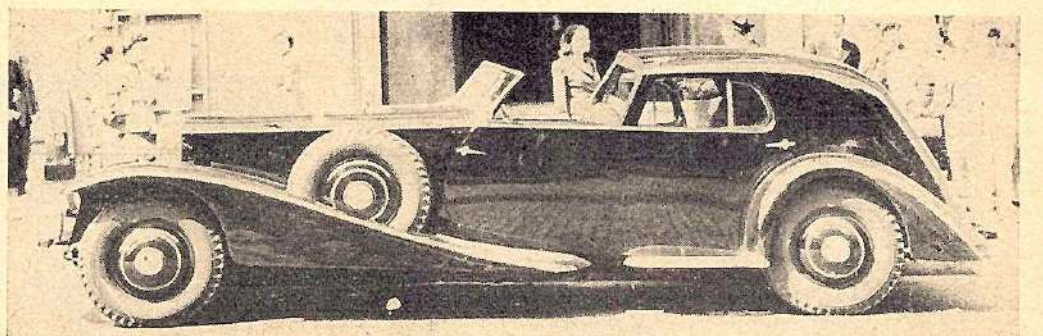
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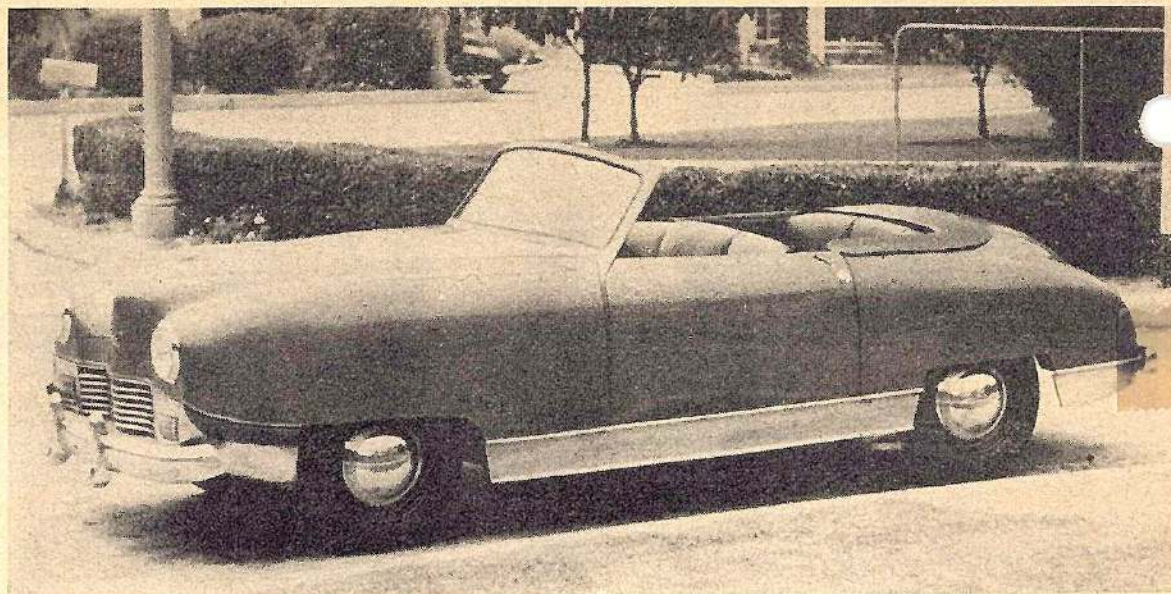


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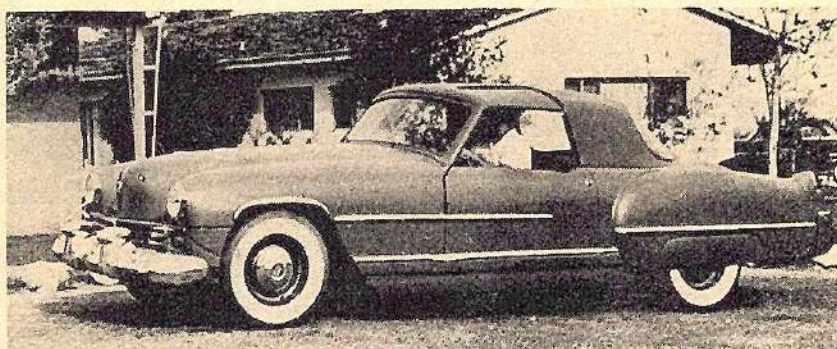


8

le Roi des Carrossiers—King of the Coachbuilders



11



12



13



14



15

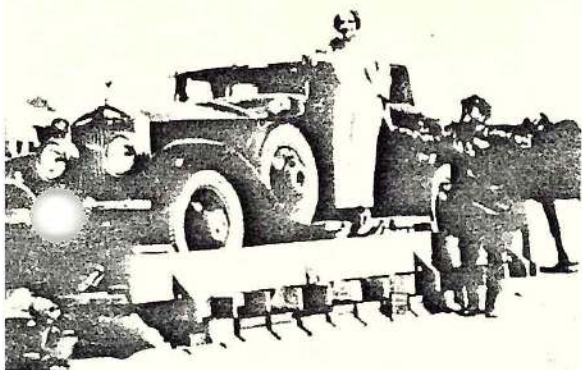
11. This car is chiefly interesting because the body is constructed of Fiberglas. Designed and constructed in 1946, the car was too far ahead of its time. Darrin says that production plans were shelved because of the inadequate Fiberglas available at that time.

12. This 1951 Cadillac boasts a sliding type drop-head. Entire hard top is demountable. Although the hood is electrically operated, it is seldom necessary to raise it. The barely perceptible "Vs" along the hood are functional. One is a dummy. The other two lift so that water and oil can be checked and filled without raising the hood.

13. This, the only Packard Clipper convertible made, was sold to Errol Flynn in 1941. Note the swept-back fenders and cut-away doors. Had Packard refrained from changing Darrin's plans, all Clippers would have been graced by these features.

14. The graceful fender line of this late model Kaiser was drawn into the plans in 1946. The factory made such changes until 1951.

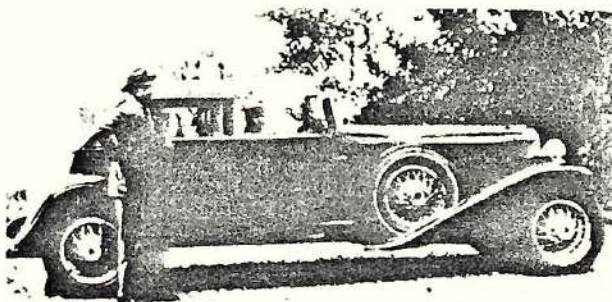
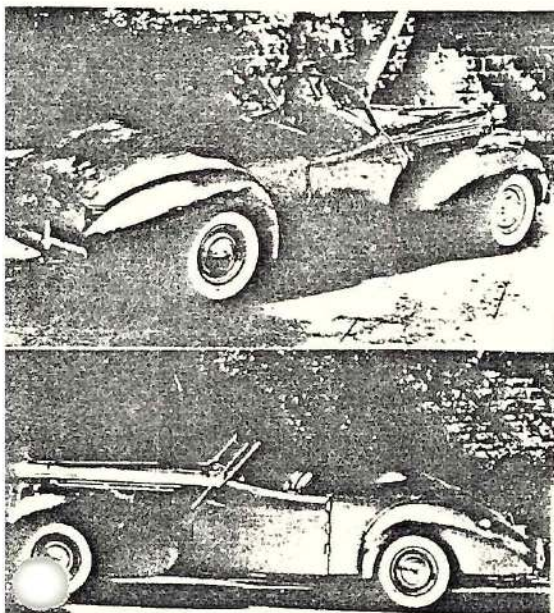
15. This controversial Fiberglas sports car looks even better in real life. Kaiser hopes to have them in production soon. We are all waiting.



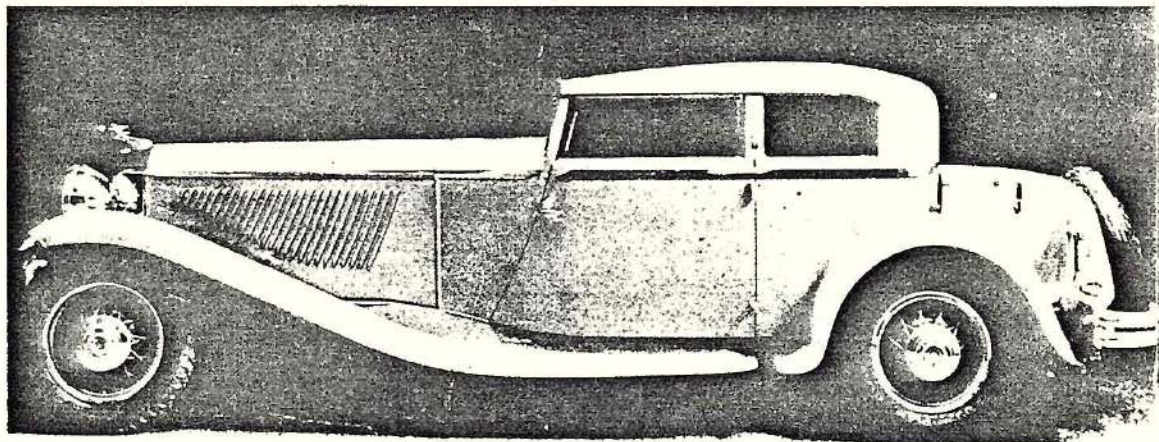
MARLENE DIETRICH WITH CAR

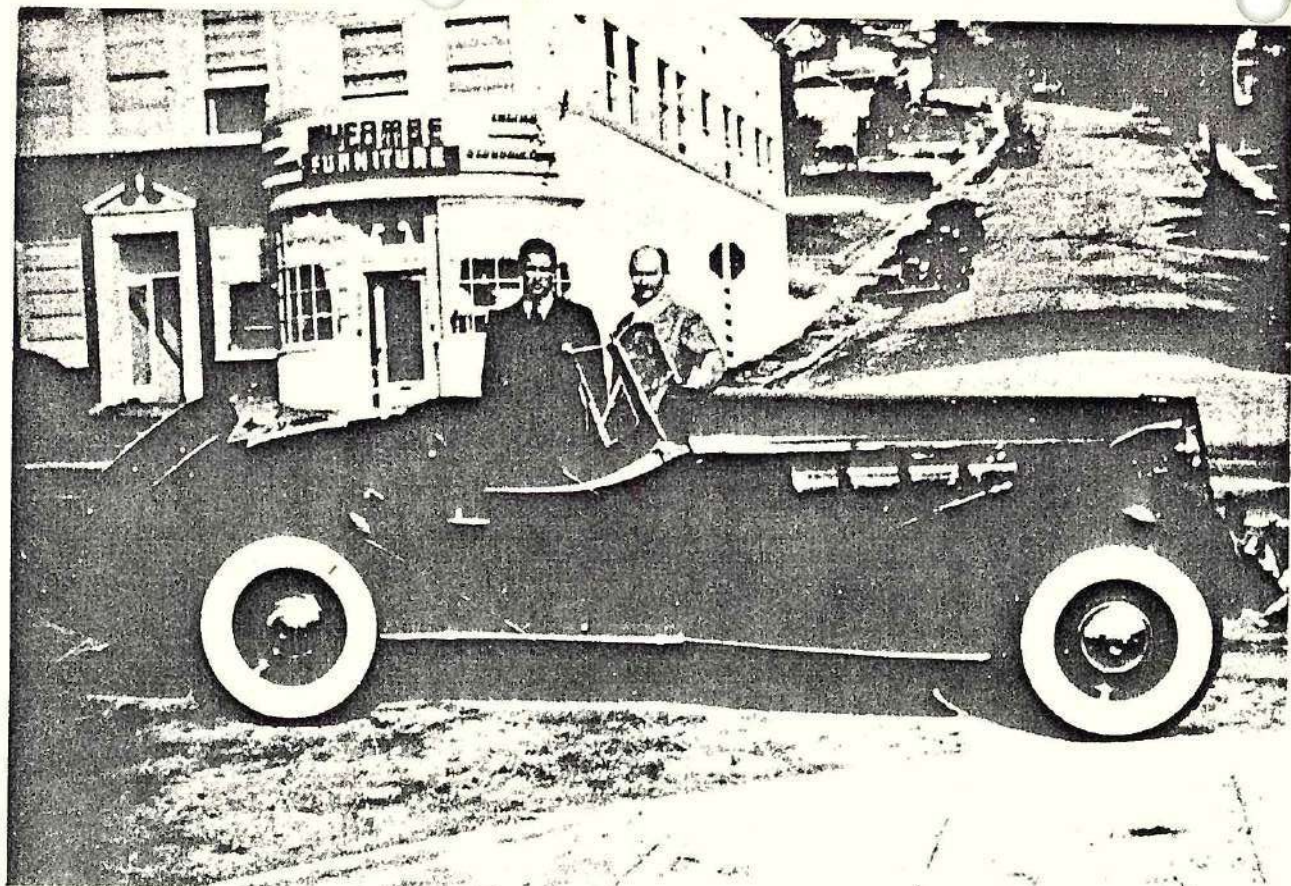


DESIGN OF CAR

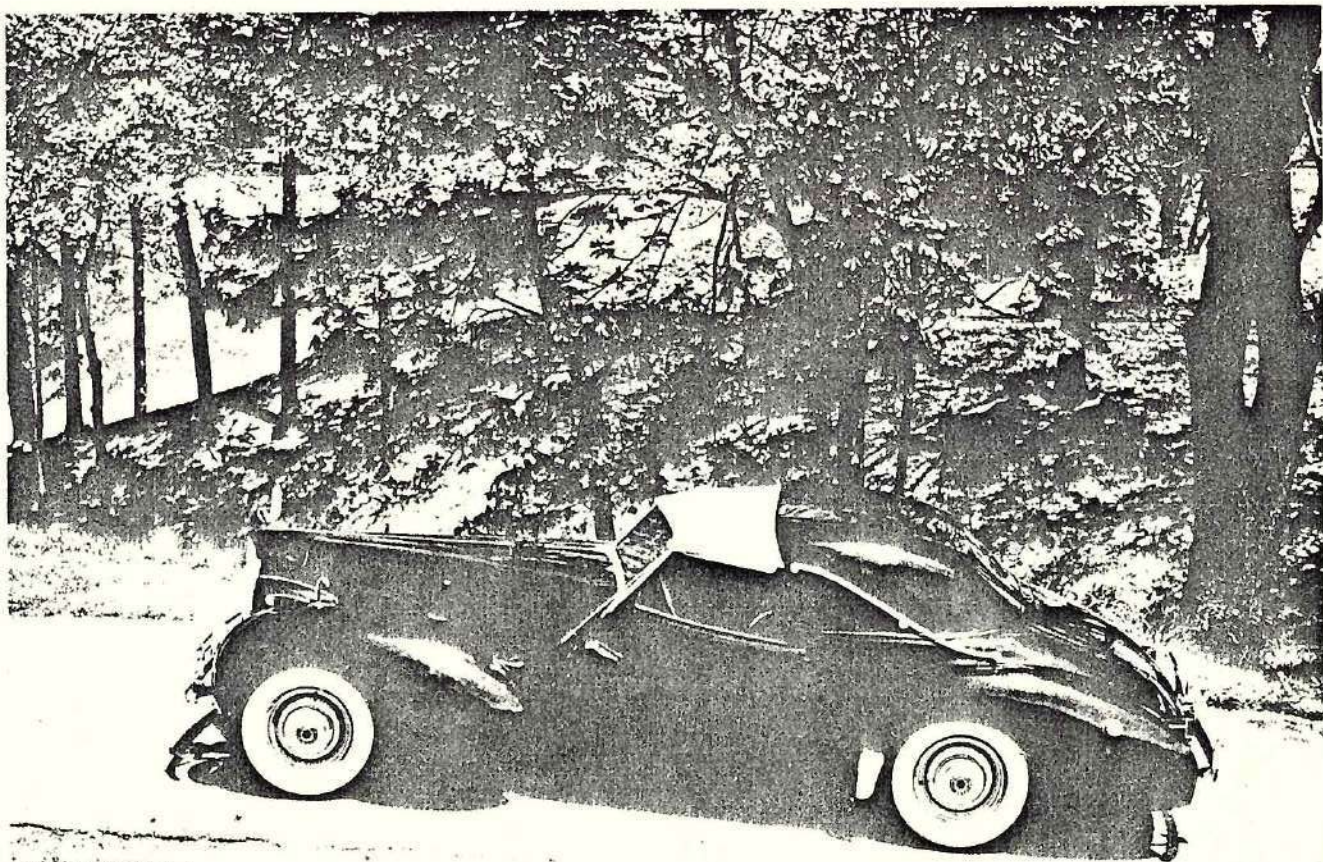


KING ALFONSO'S CAR



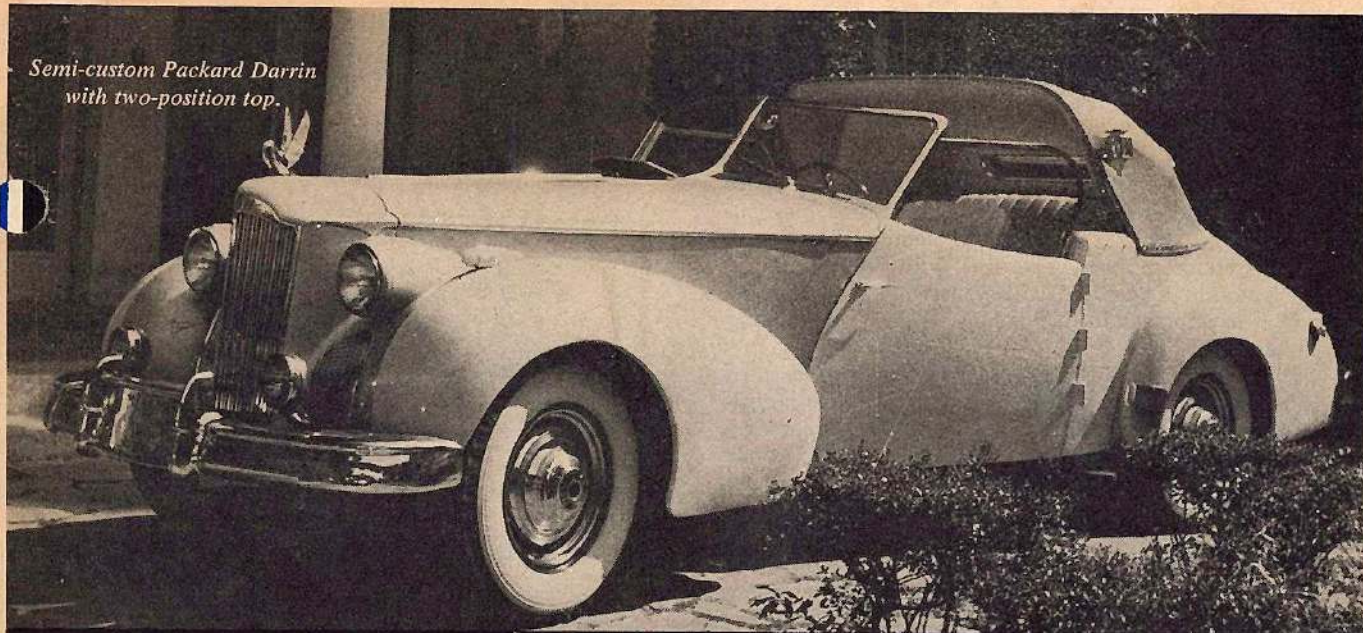


1938 PACKARD DARRIN - PROTO TYPE. THIS CAR WAS BUILT FOR DICK POWELL.



1940 DARRIN WITH SPECIALLY BUILT TOP AND CLOTH FRONT PORTION. (TOP WAS REMOVABLE)

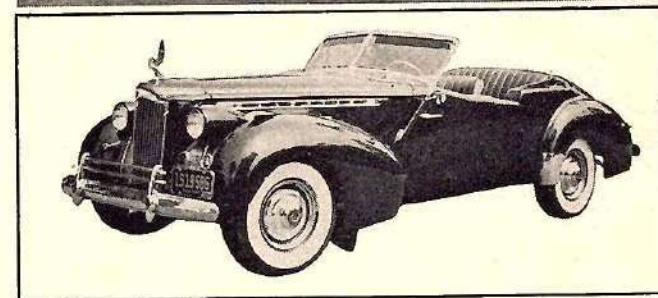
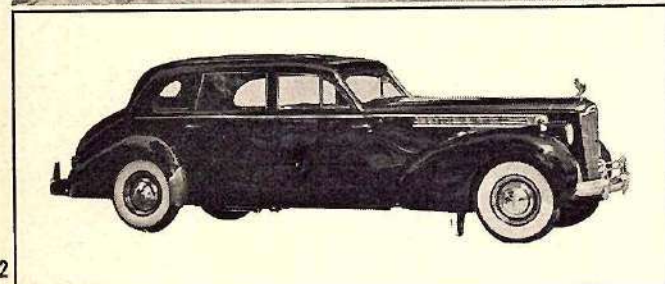
Semi-custom Packard Darrin
with two-position top.



The Last of the Great Packards

By Hal Broda

PACKARD. The greatness of that name and the esteem in which it was held have outlived the car itself. But how they typified their times! What could be more reminiscent of the Roaring '20s' sporting flavor than a Packard roadster? And the '30s live again in the memory of the mighty Twelves and the Super Eights, regarded by many as the zenith of luxurious personal transportation. ● As the Depression came to a close, though, economic forces started changes in the habits of the car buying public. Where somber, massive town cars with open chauffeur compartments once glided down Fifth Avenue, chic convertibles and sporty sedans began to appear—with owners at the wheel. ● Faced by the necessity of keeping pace with this trend, Packard changed, too. The massive Twelves were retired, giving way in the prestige bracket of the company's offerings to a new series of Senior Packards. Somewhat high and narrow by today's standards, these cars were nonetheless long, lithe, and exquisitely graceful. There lingered more than a touch of the past. Running boards, for instance, were still available as an option, and side-mounted spares continued on many models. These features weren't distracting in 1940, but by 1941 and '42 they stood out conspicuously. ● Equally conspicuous as an asset, though, was the wide variety of exotic and outstandingly beautiful semi-custom bodies on the custom Super-Eight 180s designed by Darrin, LeBaron, and Rollston (this, long after other manufacturers had eliminated such costly extravagances from their catalogues). For those with a flair for the unique, other custom designers created one-of-a-kind body styles as status symbols for the discriminating. Designers and buyers alike praised the cars' near-perfect proportions, made possible by an ample wheelbase of 148 inches—the longest in the industry—and the Straight Eight engine, which allowed a narrow hood. ● Mechanically, these Packards warranted the respect of previous decades. Sound and dependable, they carried a 356-cubic-inch, side-valve



1) Darrin's 1941 Clipper convertible had little chrome, no hood ornament, full-flowing fenders, notched doors — all before these innovations became popular. Erroll Flynn owned this car.
2) Bohman & Schwartz created coachwork on 147-inch wheelbase of this lithe sedan. Hood was elongated 15 inches, and steps underneath rear doors retract. Sedan cost \$10,000 to build.
3) Traditional Darrin model of 1939 used the 160-hp Straight Eight, standard fenders and running boards. Notched door was a hallmark of these semi-customs, which sold extremely well.

4) Radical Darrin modification incorporated clamshell fender line, pushbutton doors, and an adaptation of boat-tail trunk. Handsome bumpers, hubcaps, huge headlights helped the design.
5) Packard Twin Six, with body by Rollston, had considerable rear overhang, padded top with front portion convertible, and horrible rear vision. This was a one-off custom automobile.
6) Heavy 1940 convertible had good performance despite weight, handled well, hugged road through lowness. Bullet headlights were standard on all 180s, as were smoothly rounded fenders.

engine with a conservative rating of 160 hp at 3500 rpm. A 104-pound crankshaft riding in nine main bearings contributed to the car's renowned smoothness and durability. This engine was, in fact, a direct descendant of earlier Super Eights and was judged so successful that it was continued through 1954. It can be said that a Senior Packard, given the advantage of one of the lighter bodies, performed as well as any of its contemporaries.

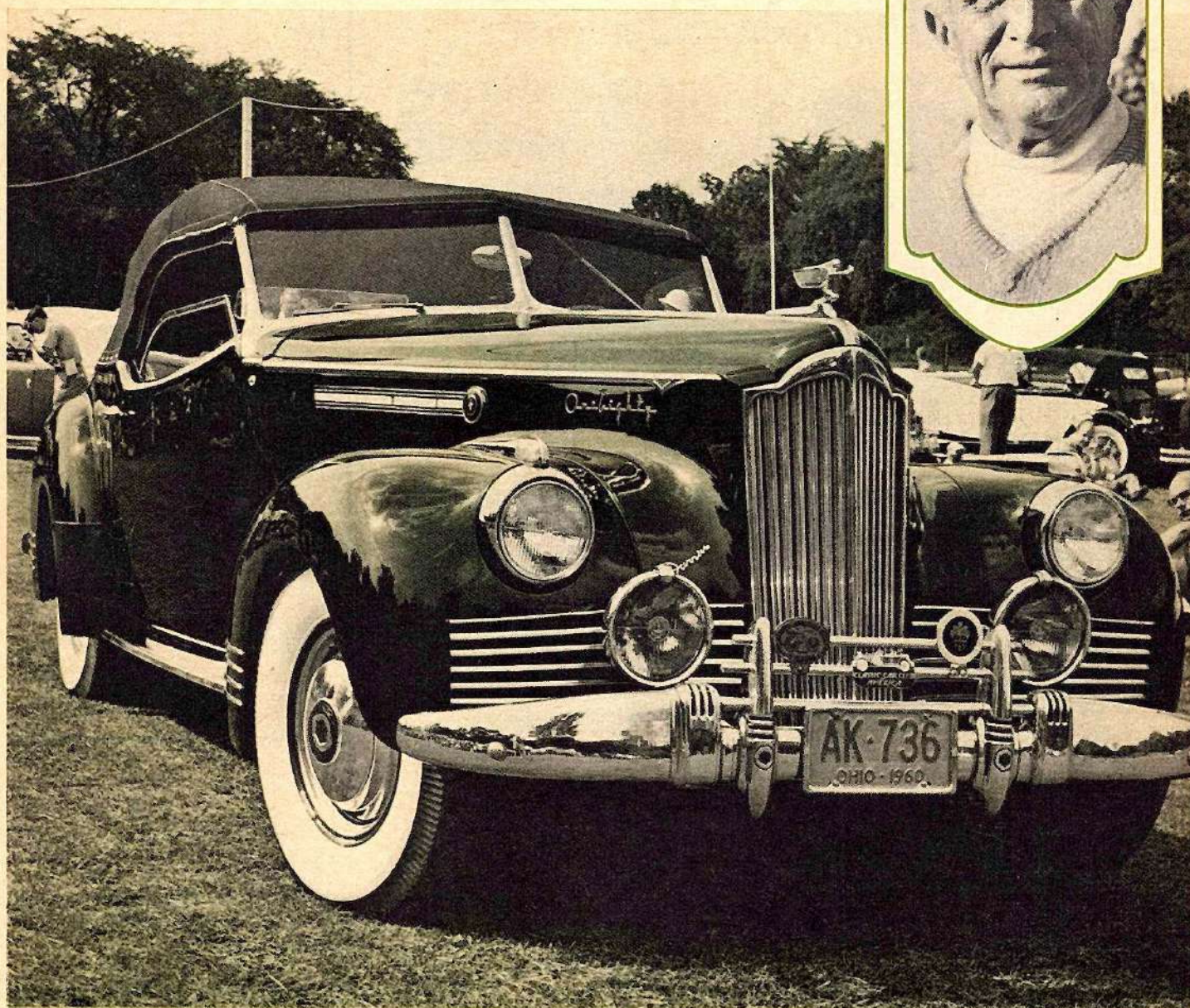
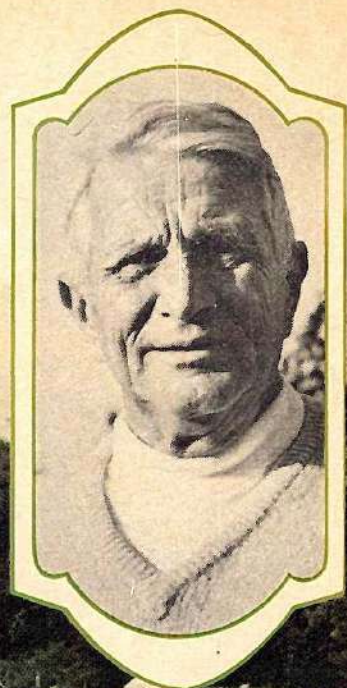
● The chassis' traditionally rugged design stressed a smooth, quiet ride. Handling was light and sure. Driver and passengers alike enjoyed a sense of extreme well-being, an assurance rarely equalled today. Seating was second to none, and interior appointments reflected superior tastes. It's interesting that a Packard owner could have refrigerated air conditioning as an option a full decade before it was offered by other manufacturers. ●

As the nation's roads became smoother, Packard's problems became rougher. Competition for the luxury dollar was keen. Lincoln's Continental was outstandingly smart. Chrysler produced a car of enviable reliability and good taste. Buick's Century would nudge past the century mark with ease. And Cadillac offered an impressively well balanced package: a fresh new concept in styling (pioneered by the 1938 Fleetwood Sixty Special), a fine V-8 engine, and the newly developed Hydra-Matic transmission. ● Packard officials became increasingly aware that they hadn't been bold enough in their styling departures, and in 1941, the rakish Clipper was introduced to complement the more traditional 160s and 180s. The Clippers were such a popular success that they continued unchanged in 1942. ● When automobile production resumed after the war, it was soon obvious that the Clipper came closer to fulfilling the modern driver's dream, so the aristocratic 160s and 180s were discontinued.

● With their passing, an era faded. The 160s and 180s are part of automotive history now, but they're affectionately remembered as the last, elegant vestige of the classic period — the last of the great Packards. ●

Stars, Cars and the Last Of the Custom Coachcrafters **PACKARD DARRIN**

BY WARREN W. FITZGERALD



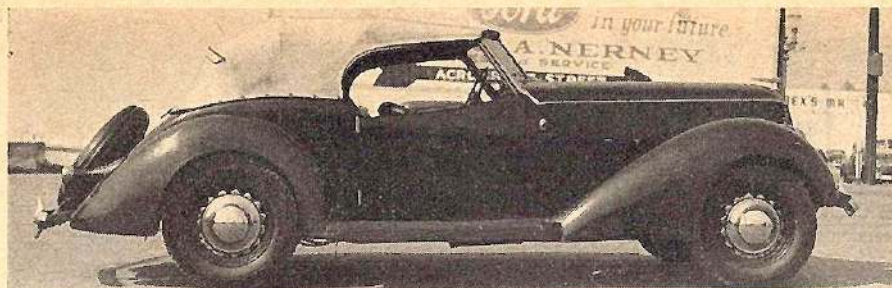
LIKELY THE last Packard Darrin built is No. 15, a Victoria on a Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis. It was discovered in a basement and restored. Howard "Dutch" Darrin (insert) learned coachbuilding in Europe, brought his craft to Hollywood.

AS THE 1930s drew to a close, the coachbuilt automobile was on the wane. The Great Depression had taken its toll of the luxury car market. Improved engineering, coupled with sophisticated manufacturing techniques, had closed the once wide gap between mass produced and individually crafted automobiles. There were fewer custom offerings to be had than ever before in the history of motor cars. Yet in this period of decline there appeared

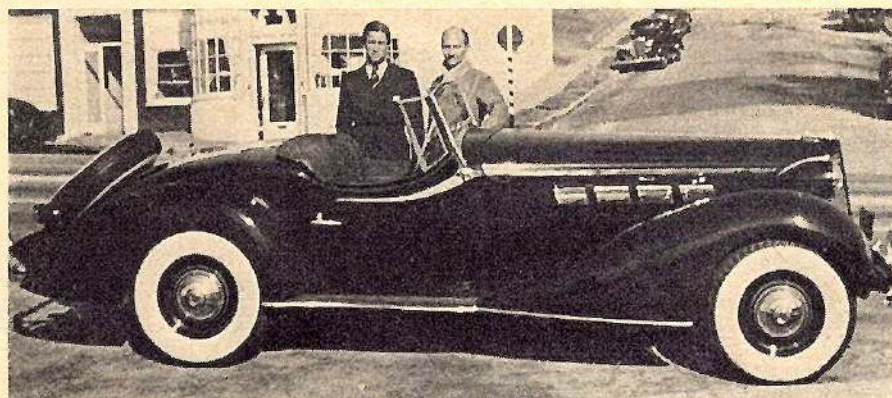
three cars to whet the enthusiasm of the buyer yearning for something different. The first was the Cadillac Sixty Special, introduced in 1938. Second was the Lincoln Continental, which made its debut the following model year. Last was the Packard Darrin, marketed by Packard for 1940. The Cadillac was the least custom built, in the sense that its body was factory made. The Continental also was factory built, but assembled from modified Zephyr body

panels. The 1940 Packard Darrins, for which there were three body styles, were custom built from Packard parts in Indiana and sold to the Detroit firm in lots of approximately 25.

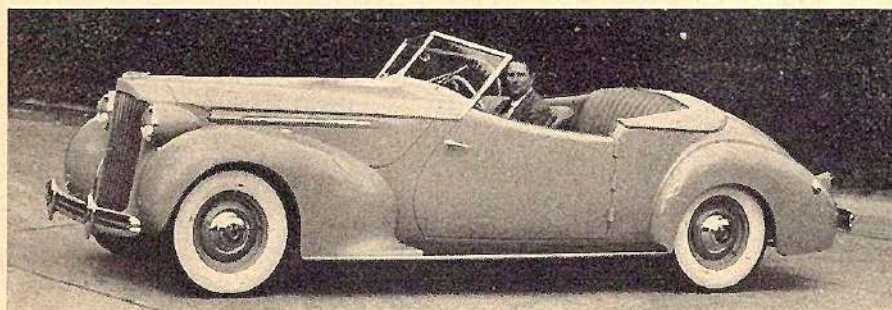
Howard "Dutch" Darrin was no newcomer to the field of custom body design. A native New Yorker, in 1923, he and Tom Hibbard established the firm of Hibbard & Darrin in Paris. The two young men took Paris by storm and rapidly became leaders in Euro-



DARRIN'S FIRST American-built body was constructed on a 1937 Ford V-8 chassis. The success of this initial effort was such that the designer built a second custom body on a 1937 Packard 120 chassis.



THE ORIGINAL Packard Darrin, built on the 120 chassis, showed marked similarity to the Ford. The car was sold to actor/crooner Dick Powell and thus was born Darrin's film colony custom body venture.



THIS DARRIN Victoria was built on a 1938 Packard Standard 8 chassis, equivalent to the 120. Darrin, shown at the wheel, sold the 4-passenger custom car to motion picture actor Chester Morris.

DARRIN

pean coachbuilding. Original arrangements called for Hibbard to carry out design tasks while Darrin was responsible for sales. They soon found they both had talents on either side of the business. Their efforts suffered from the fading economy and after about six years they parted company. Hibbard returned to America, while Darrin remained in Paris, joining the banker, Fernandez, in another custom body firm. For a few years Darrin created some beautiful automobiles carrying the Fernandez & Darrin coachbuilder's plate, but eventually this association was terminated.

In 1936, Darrin also returned to the United States, primarily at the invitation of Darryl Zanuck, who wished him to play polo. Darrin loaded a

small English deHaviland Puss Moth biplane on a German freighter and sailed for New York. On arrival, he unfolded the wings of the little airplane, which was covered with signs "Paris to New York" and flew it to California. There he received a hero's welcome. Darrin was immediately smitten with California and found life in the movie capital much to his liking. He soon discovered that his association with Zanuck would be limited to polo fields, for they did not see eye to eye on any arrangement through which Darrin could enter the movie industry. Darrin was adopted socially by Countess Dorothy di Frasso, who invited him to all her parties, broadening his circle of friends.

In 1937, Darrin met Percy Morgan, who owned a Jensen Ford and asked Darrin to build him a similar car. Thus the first American Darrin body was constructed on a 1937 Ford chassis.

PACKARD DARRIN A Model Summary

1937

Style.....Roadster
Type.....
Bhp.....
Bore x stroke, in.....3.25 x
Displacement, cu. in.....282
Wheelbase, in.....120
Price.....
Weight, lb.....n.a.
History: One produced, sold to motion picture star, Dick Powell.

1938

Style.....Victoria
Type.....Eight
Bhp.....120
Bore x stroke, in.....3.25 x 4.25
Displacement, cu. in.....282
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$4200
Weight, lb.....n.a.
History: With 1939 models, 16-18 cars were produced in Sunset Strip shop.

1939

Style.....Victoria
Type.....Super Eight
Bhp.....130
Bore x stroke, in.....3.188 x 5.00
Displacement, cu. in.....320
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$5300
Weight, lb.....n.a.
History: Some are thought to have been built on 120 chassis.

1940

Style.....Victoria
Type, model.....120, 700
Bhp.....120
Bore x stroke, in.....3.25 x 4.25
Displacement, cu. in.....282
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$3800
Weight, lb.....3826
History: Built at Connersville, Ind.; number produced is not known.

1940

Style.....Victoria
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....1806/30
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.50 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$4593
Weight, lb.....4121
History: Approximately 40 were produced, including those on 120 chassis at Connersville.

Heartened by the success of this small victoria, Morgan and Darrin built a second custom body on a 1937 Packard 120 chassis. This, the first Packard Darrin, was a 2-passenger convertible with doors cut away.

THEY SOLD the car to actor/crooner Dick Powell and surmised the movie colony held promise for a small custom body venture. These first two cars were built at Guy Newell's Body and Fender Shop on South Grant Ave., between 15th and 16th Streets in Los Angeles. Space was inadequate, so Darrin moved operations to the Crown Coach Co. and started two more Packards. He also undertook construction of a Rolls-Royce town car for Dorothy di Frasso.

The first of the Packards, built on a 1938 Eight (equivalent of 1937 and later 120 types) chassis, was sold to Clark Gable. It was a very unsatisfac-

1940

Style.....Convertible Sedan
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....1807/710
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.50 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....138
Price.....\$6332
Weight, lb.....4050
History: Eight or nine were produced at the Connersville plant.

1940

Style.....Sport Sedan
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....1807/720
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.500 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....138
Price.....\$6100
Weight, lb.....4215
History: First car was started in Sunset Strip shop, completed at Connersville.

1940

Style.....Sport Sedan
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....1807/730
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.500 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....138
Price.....\$6100
Weight, lb.....n.a.
History: One car built in high version at Connersville; believed to exist in Florida.

1941

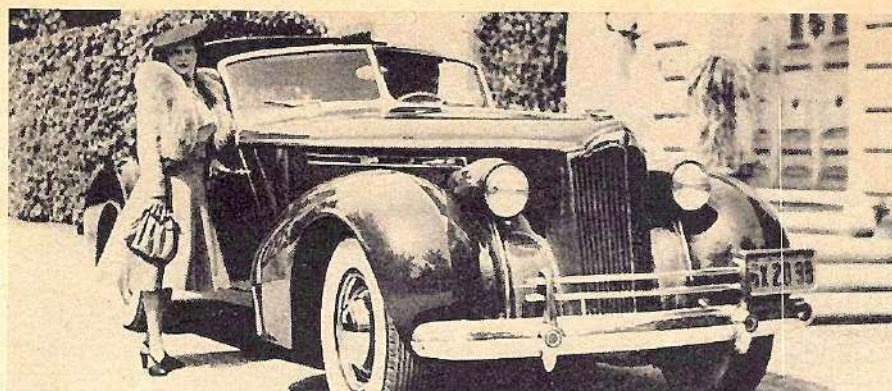
Style.....Victoria
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....1906/1429
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.500 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$4685
Weight, lb.....4040
History: Approximately 35 built at Sayers & Scoville, Cincinnati, Ohio.

1942

Style.....Victoria
Type, model Custom Super 8 One Eighty.....2006/1529
Bhp.....160
Bore x stroke, in.....3.500 x 4.625
Displacement, cu. in.....356
Wheelbase, in.....127
Price.....\$4783
Weight.....3920
History: Fifteen were built at Sayers & Scoville plant, Cincinnati.

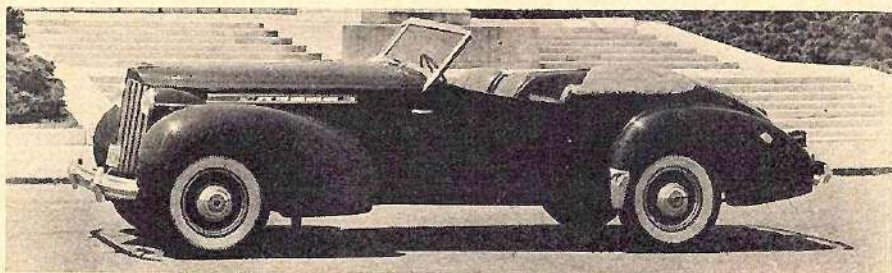
tory automobile. It was structurally deficient and leaked like a sieve. Gable remarked to some of the workmen that, "... the farther you get away from it the better it looks." One of Darrin's workers, Paul Erdos, who had been in the business for some time, suggested that he hire a fellow he'd known at Joe Kirchoff's body shop, a German-born craftsman, Rudolph Stoessel. Darrin subsequently asked Stoessel to head his group. Shortly thereafter they moved into quarters on the Sunset Strip.

The shop was in an old bottle factory (now a supermarket). They repainted it and placed a sign, Darrin of Paris, on the front. Darrin had no funds to replace the broken plate glass windows, so he built a windowless recessed facade of plywood. In this he soon placed two of his complete automobiles. The open air display was a magnificent crowd stopper. Inside, the



RUDY STOESEL

BUILT ON a pre-production Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis, this 1940 Packard Darrin Coupe deVille was the second Sunset Strip car to be constructed. The 4-in. sill below the door was common to all but a few cars.



POSSIBLY THE car which was instrumental in formation of the Packard Darrin association is this Darrin Victoria, built on a Packard Super 8 chassis in Darrin's Hollywood shop—now a busy supermarket.



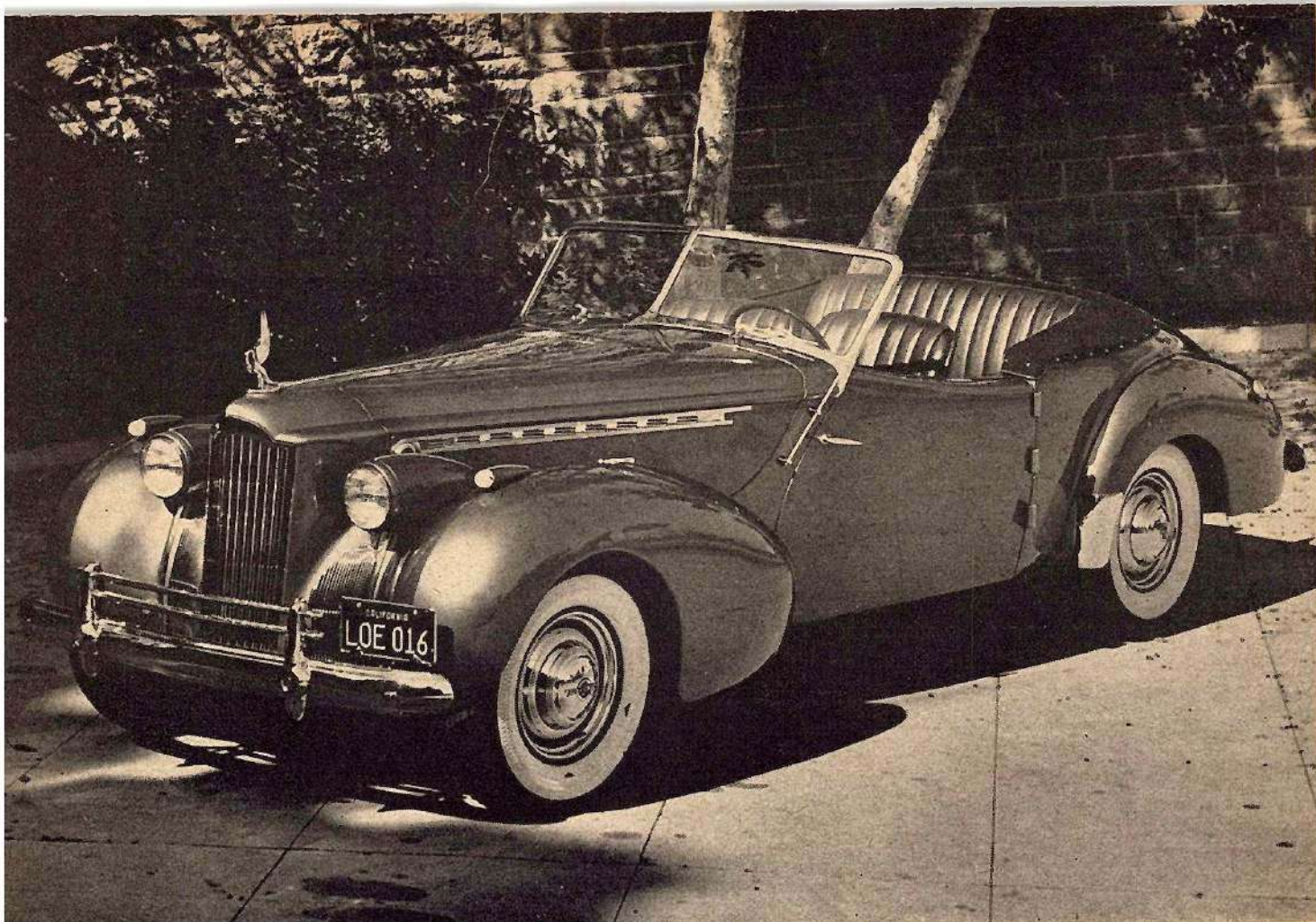
THIS 4-DOOR convertible sedan was built on a Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis. The 1940 vintage car is perhaps the best proportioned convertible sedan built. Eight copies are thought to be in existence.

organization was comprised of a small group of talented craftsmen and a number of helpers. Burton K. Chalmers was in charge of sales. Stoessel was shop manager. They hired an Australian office girl, whose pronounced accent provided some amusing communications problems. Erdos, whom Darrin felt was as talented as Rudy, was the principal sheetmetal worker. Joe Michelli and Carl Cohen, both very experienced men, completed the wood-working assignments. The blacksmith and heavy-metal man, who also cast fittings, was Charlie Ratsenberger. Harry Felds, who had been with Auburn and Cord, was the upholsterer. Paint work was subcontracted to other shops.

THE SUNSET STRIP cars were 4-passenger convertible victorias customized from Packard Eight business coupes, which carried a factory list

price of \$1225. Their roofs were removed, and they were otherwise incised and lowered 3 in. This required new cowl, so Stoessel designed and fabricated a pattern and ordered them cast in aluminum. Rear fenders and deck were rotated slightly upward, around the wheel centers, to produce a better rear profile. The first few cars, perhaps three or four, retained the running boards. Stoessel says only the first two did, but photos reveal three.

The characteristic feature of all subsequent Sunset Strip Packard Darrins was a 4-in. sill at the bottom of the doors. Darrin located an interior decorating supply firm, Clark and Burchfield, which was importing chrome-dyed leather from Germany, and purchased all his upholstery material there. He said the leather displayed genuine saddle quality and that it was nearly impossible to tell that it had been finished.



ONE OF the original Connersville "production Darrin" cars, this 1940 Victoria, on a Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis, recently was restored to magnificent condition by Rudy Stoessel, builder of the original Sunset Strip Packard Darrins.

DARRIN

The second sleek, exciting victoria was sold to actor Chester Morris, and members of the film colony began to take notice. Rosalind Russell and Al Jolson were among Darrin's early customers. In all, 16-18 automobiles were built in the small shop during 1938 and 1939. A few of them were built on the 1939 Super 8 chassis. Two, possibly three, were assembled in 1939 on pre-production 1940 chassis. These were supplied to Darrin by Packard after both parties agreed to start limited production.

Throughout his active career Darrin was an extremely successful salesman. He approached Packard and secured an arrangement that called for his car to be shown at a dealer meeting on the Packard Proving Ground at Utica, Mich. This apparently occurred early in 1939. Darrin hired a driver to shuttle the car from Los Angeles to Detroit. Darrin proceeded to Detroit by other means. Upon arrival, Darrin was told by Packard officials that his car was not to be shown. This did not stop the builder. Neither did the fact that his victoria had been sideswiped and had sustained disfiguring damage en route to Detroit. He told his driver

to get the car on the proving ground by any subterfuge, to drive in through the gate as though the car were part of the show. Then the driver was instructed to park the car just off the main road, damaged side away from view, and to take the keys and get lost. The bluff worked, the guards thought the car belonged inside, and it remained in plain view of passersby. The dealers were so taken with the Darrin Victoria that they persuaded Packard management to make the cars available for sales through Packard.

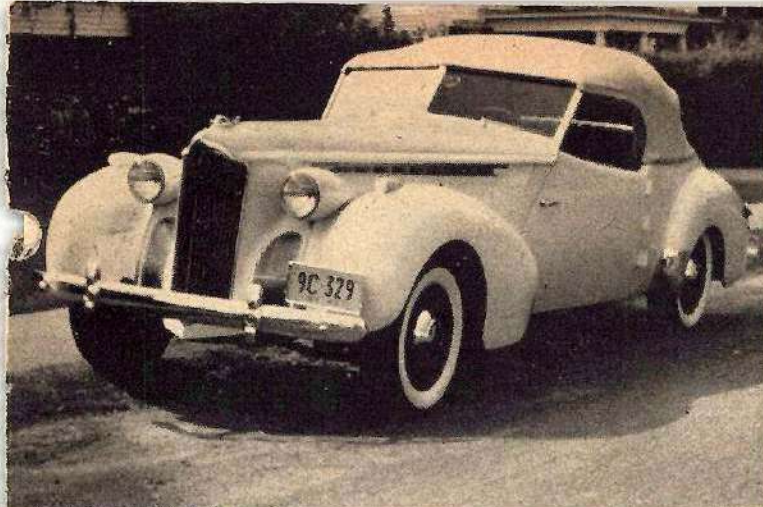
Darrin could not have met the Packard contracts in his small Sunset Strip shop. Thus, while in Detroit, he closed a deal with the president of what remained of the Auburn Motor Car Co. to build Darrin cars in the Auburn Connersville, Ind., plant. Bert Jones was hired to manage the operation for Darrin. In Los Angeles, two cars were started on 1940 chassis. One of these was a handsome coupe de ville which was sold to movie actor Donald Meek for his wife. The other, built on the first 138-in. wheelbase Model 1807 chassis, was a 4-door sport sedan. The body, according to Stoessel, was painted in primer, but unfinished when Darrin moved the operation to Connersville. Darrin and Dick Fitch, one of the builder's financial backers, towed the car to Indiana, where it was com-

pleted in time for introduction of 1940 models.

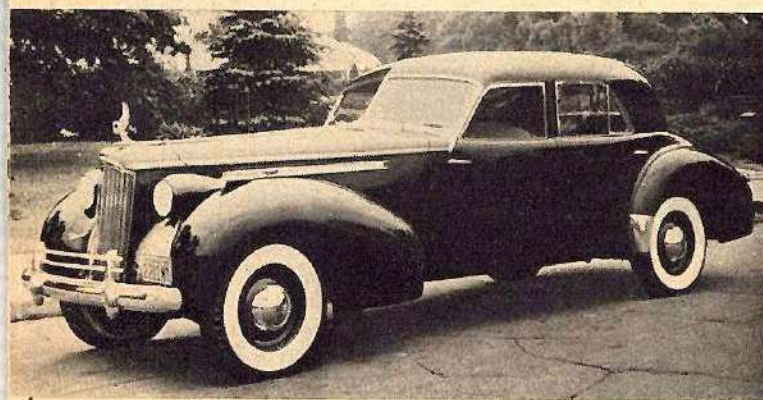
The third style of Darrin car, a 4-door convertible sedan, was initiated at Connersville. These cars were among the most attractive convertible sedans ever built, because the long 138-in. wheelbase, combined with the 3-in.-lower hood, made for stunning proportions. Both sedan types required a greater number of specific body panels than did the victorias and thus were expensive to build. Early in 1940, one sport sedan was built on the Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis without altering the body below the belt. Even the running boards were retained.

THE ACCOMPANYING illustration shows just how crude was the appearance of this car. It was listed as style No. 730 and a faint notation on the Packard file holding its pictures reads, "Model discontinued—do not send out pictures." Darrin relates that local managership of the Connersville plant changed and the successor did not want to continue building the sedans. Darrin says he would have gone along with that, but the new manager terminated all arrangements and Darrin was forced to find a new plant for his 1941 models. He now wishes that he had built victorias only.

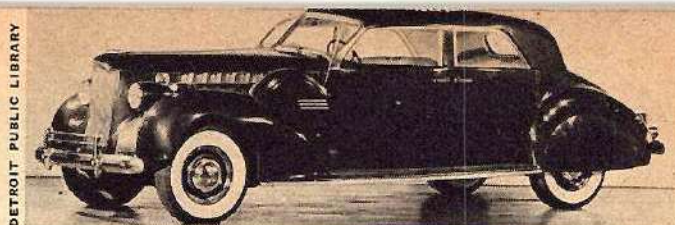
The question of just how many of



RARE PHOTO confirms existence of the 1940 Packard Darrin Victoria on a 120 chassis. Significant features are small wheels, simple bumper and plain hood ornament.



THIS DARRIN Sport Sedan, on a Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis, is believed to have been started in California, completed in Darrin's Connersville, Ind., plant.



BODY STYLE No. 730 was an attempt to build a Darrin sedan without extensive alteration to the standard Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis. Only one example exists.



THIRTY-FIVE of this model, the 1941 Packard Darrin Victoria on Custom Super 8 One Eighty chassis, were produced at Sayers & Scoville's Cincinnati operation.



MASTER COACHCRAFTER Rudy Stoessel, 28 years later, discusses with his son, Bill, full restoration of one of his original Sunset Strip Darrin Victoria cars.

which model Packard Darrins were built is intriguing. Valid records are not available. Darrin's recollections are at some variance with observed cars. One of the most knowledgeable Darrin enthusiasts, Charles Blackman of East Lansing, Mich., has recorded Darrin serial numbers for some time. He knows of three 1940 sport sedans, one of them a high car as described above, and possibly another. He has located eight remaining convertible sedans and knows of a possible ninth. The highest 1940 victoria serial number he has noted makes it the 40th car, but the number built on the smaller One Twenty chassis is completely unknown. All 1941 and 1942 models were victorias and Blackman believes 35 '41s were built. Only 15 chassis were produced by Packard for these cars in 1942 trim and the 15th car is known.

Charles Blackman owns the prototype sport sedan that was started in California and finished in Connersville. It was delivered to its first owner in Dallas, Tex., in September, 1939, and was equipped with factory-installed refrigerated air conditioning. The car made its way to Mexico City, where it survived until it was discovered by Blackman. He now is restoring the car. He also is the source of the only available photograph of a 1940 Darrin Victoria on the Packard

One Twenty chassis. It is reproduced from a Kodachrome he took in 1941.

The 1941 and 1942 model Packard Darrins were built in the Cincinnati, Ohio, plant of Sayers & Scoville, which built ambulance and hearse bodies. The victorias assembled in Cincinnati were much less custom than those of the preceding year. This is reason to believe that Packard was not at all unhappy about this because, though Darrin contends that only his prototypes were structurally deficient, there is evidence that some customers were displeased with Connersville-built Packard Darrins. This is reported by P. S. deBeaumont, recently known for his automotive writing, but in 1942 an engineer at Packard. He claims that the efforts to lower the body weakened the cars and that he was placed in charge of a remedial program.

HE WROTE in the November-December, 1947 issue of *Sports Car* (the SCCA magazine, then three mimeographed pages) that modification kits and instructions were provided Packard dealers. The major fault, according to deBeaumont, was removal of the radiator cradle forward and its replacement with a 0.188-in. steel strap. The original member had braced the fender support. Elimination of the cradle permitted the front end to

shake. There were other problems, but this was most significant.

It appears that 50 Cincinnati-built Darrin Victorias were ordered by Packard and that 35 were completed in 1941 model form. Production for the 1942 model year was curtailed throughout the industry and it is definite that only 15 Darrins were built.

From the beginning to end of his relationship with the Packard Motor Car Co. Darrin's situation was tenuous. He characterizes it as an on-again-off-again affair. He claims responsibility for the Packard Clipper and states that his design fee was first offered to him in cash and later in the form of an order for 50 more Darrin Victorias. He accepted the latter, only to have the contract cancelled by the war curtailment. His feelings toward the now defunct firm were never the same. He did try a postwar Darrin based on the Clipper, but only one was built, to be purchased by his friend, Errol Flynn. Whatever his association with Packard may have been, Dutch Darrin was responsible for creating the largest share of visual excitement offered by that firm in the years immediately before World War II. His cars were for the elite, the elegant, and were fitting transport for movie stars, celebrities and anyone who met life with dash and flair.

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHARLES A. BLACKMAN

STROTHER C. MACWINN

trim is the norm, and the trim sometimes falls off when the glue—not clips but glue—holding it on goes sour. Orange peel is to be expected in paint. A few knobs may fall off the dashboard while the car is still young. And yet we're asked to pay more than ever for a new car. Evidence would say that for quality of construction the old cars were miles ahead of new ones.

There are areas, though, where Detroit, has made great progress, the Vega excepted. Today's engines are quite marvelous and should go an easy 100,000 miles without any digging into their innards. Automatic transmissions are strong and trouble-free, demanding the very minimum of maintenance. Brakes are so much better than on cars of twenty years ago that the older cars seem positively primitive in this department. And handling is vastly superior. Take a ride in a good '57 Buick and then a '77. The later car will corner like a Ferrari compared to its ancestor.

No, they don't build 'em like they used to, for a myriad of reasons including worker disinterest, automation, computer designing, government edict, air pollution, fuel economy, and hundreds of other factors. Quite simply, they can't build 'em like they used to. I think that at this time we're being offered a better chassis and drive train and much poorer bodies and interiors. It's a tradeoff, just like every car design from the very beginning was a compromise.

► Recent commentary in a letter to the editor in the Early Ford V-8's Twin Cities Regional Group publication, *Rumble Sheet*, points out a very visible division in approaches to the old car hobby.

The letter writer, whose name was wisely withheld by the editor, takes members to task for driving their early Fords to various events. He asks; "Why is this club obsessed with driving their vehicles all over the country subjecting them to wear and tear, breakdown potential, and most certain depreciation?" He likened a recent event of the club to "the juvenile carrying on of a marauding motorcycle gang." He also revealed that he is a Ford enthusiast who buys the cars for investment, has them professionally restored, pays top dollar for N.O.S. parts, attends auctions, and joined the club "to keep appraised of the current value of my investments."

Well, just why do the Twin Cities folks drive their cars? Apparently they've deluded themselves into thinking that driving from one place to another might just be the primary function of an automobile.

You have to admire the letter writer's candor. He's in the hobby for the bucks—only the bucks—and says so. The only problem, alas, is that he happened to join a group who evidently enjoy using their cars for touring rather than trailering them to auctions. They don't regard their cars as investments but as instruments of leisure, sociability, adventure, history, and relaxation.

We have no argument with people who prefer the investment angle rather than the meets and outings approach to old auto collecting and restoring. That's their prerogative and some vintage cars, among them certain early Ford V-8's, have been outpacing inflation at a gallop. But we don't think that hobbyists who prefer to drive and use their cars should be scolded for enjoying them in this manner. One approach is strictly business, the other is strictly hobby. You pay yer money and you takes yer choice.

Sesser, Illinois

Once Around the Hobby

Dutch Treat

The gentleman holding a color print of three of his creations for Packard is the famed car designer and stylist, Howard "Dutch" Darrin, now in his 80th year. Some of Dutch's fans and friends helped put together the set of four lithographs; illustrator Bill Dobson did the painting.

Recently the General Motors Design Center brought Darrin to Detroit to honor Vice-President of Styling William L. Mitchell, who retired this year. A banquet honored both Bill and Darrin, and an exhibit of Darrin designs was labeled "The Dutch Touch." After the visit Bill Mitchell wrote: "We all appreciated having the great Dutch Darrin pay us a visit. Our young designers were especially inspired and hung on your every word."



It's easy to hang on Dutch's words, not just those of the classic car innovators, but the path he cut through the social and movie worlds from Paris to Hollywood. There is Dutch the polo player, Dutch the man trusted by the studios to keep Errol Flynn out of trouble. (Which must be like letting the fox guard the henhouse.) Then there is Dutch the designer of cars for nobility and movie stars. For example, take the four color plates of this print series:

Packard Plate: 1940 Coupe de Ville for Donald Meek; 1941 Clipper Convertible for Errol Flynn; 1938 Roadster for Dick Powell.

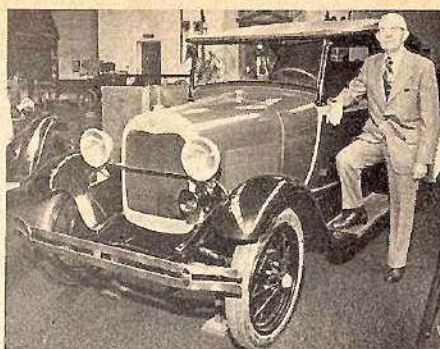
Duesenberg Plate: Towncar for King Alfonso of Spain; Coupe de ville for Greta Garbo; V-Flap Convertible Sedan.

Rolls Royce Plate: 1934 Town Towncar for Countess Dorothy Di Frasso; 1935 Town car for Duc de Doudeauville; 1935 Towncar for Duc de Caz.

Hispano-Suiza Plate: 1932 Coupe de Ville; 1932 Towncar for Madam Badollet; 1935 Hardtop Victoria for Baroness Rothchild.

There are two things that make this print set differ from others: First, the cost is low for a set of four prints, and second, all are personally signed by Dutch Darrin. The set may be ordered from Dutch Darrin Prints, 130 Ocean Way, Santa Monica, California 90402 for \$25. plus \$1. postage.

... Bob Stapleton



Two old friends meet in Henry Ford Museum. Henry Todd, who worked on Number 1 Ford Model A in 1927, examines one of the line on the 50th anniversary of the Model A.

Courtesy of The Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan

A Century for Pierce

Members of the Pierce-Arrow Society are planning to hold their 1978 annual meet at Buffalo, New York to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the George N. Pierce Company which later evolved into the Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company. Prior to manufacturing automobiles, Pierce produced birdcages and well-respected shaft-drive bicycles. Their bicycle experience led them into motorcycle as well as car manufacture and the early Pierce 4-cylinder motorcycles also boasted shaft drive. The Pierce and Pierce-Arrow cars enjoyed an unsullied reputation during their years of production as one of the finest autos built anywhere in the world.

The Society's 100th Anniversary Committee hopes to have 100 Pierce-built cars on hand for the celebration, which is scheduled to begin on August 11.

Marmon Owners, Unite!

Philip W. Belote is reviving a club for Marmon owners and enthusiasts, which has been dormant of late. It is open to all owners of Marmon and Roosevelt automobiles and dues have been set at \$6.00 per year. Membership information is available from Mr. Belote at 629 Orangewood Street, Dunedin, Florida.

S.A.H. Honors Three

Miss Mary Cattie, Henry Austin Clark, Jr. and George Risley were named Honorary Members of the Society of Automotive Historians at its Annual Meeting in October 1977, at Hershey, Pennsylvania. The three were cited for their outstanding contributions to the preservation, recording, and dissemination of materials concerning automotive history, and for their unselfish assistance to others involved in this field.

Miss Cattie is the former Curator of the Automotive Reference Collection of the Philadelphia Free Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Clark, a well known automotive historian, collector, and writer owns the Long Island Automotive Museum in Southampton, New York, and the museum's library in Glen Cove, New York. George Risley, until his recent retirement, was a researcher and archivist at the National Automotive History Collection at the Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan.

The new Honorary Members join Owen Bombard, John R. Bond, Roy D. Chapin, Jerry E. Gebby, William Harrah, Peter Helck, Strother McMinn and Raymond Wolff who had been elected previously to the same membership category.

Letters



Dear Sir:

We are restoring a 1934 Packard and had the misfortune to have the starter and generator for the car stolen.

Even though we are almost positive who took them, we have been unable to prove it.

The parts were restored and ready to install, so you can imagine the disappointment we have experienced.

We are asking the membership of Packards Int. if they know the whereabouts of these parts which we could purchase. We will certainly appreciate any help we can get.

Thank you.
Cline M. Dahle and
Marsha S. Dahle
4608 So. State St.
Murray, Utah 84107
(801) 262-5521

Gentlemen:

Please find check for dues enclosed. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much I enjoy the Club even though I haven't been able to make any of the events. The magazine is beautiful and informative.

I'm still working on the Darrin 4 door conv. and making steady progress. Tore it right to frame rails and now have chassis completed - body back on - and now doing all doors - new wood, etc. Another year ought to see it completed. Have to limit this project to just winter months. Needless to say - getting very anxious to get her on the road.

Here's hoping you reach 2,000!

Sincerely,
Gordon C. Morris
Maryland, N.Y. 12116

Dear Sir:

I would like to express my thoughts on the new look of the magazine of the Packards International. I like the new paper as it contrasts well with the cover and it is easier on the eyes to read. The arrangement of the ads is the best yet and they too are easier to read.

I would like to thank Ray Hunter for stopping the Mazda advertising from cashing in on the Packard slogan. I had a good laugh when I saw the pictures on page 54.

I enjoyed the article by "Dutch" Darrin and am looking forward to the next issue. To me these articles are important because they help educate the growing membership. A lot of us are new to the Packard and join the club to learn about the cars in order to give them the best treatment.

As the president's editorial stated the membership is growing near 1,600 and there are more coming in each year.

There have been many informative articles since I have joined only 3 years ago and I look forward to more on all models and years.

Even though I only own one Packard, I think I just might enjoy it as much as another member who is fortunate enough to have a dozen.

I appreciate all the hard work that goes into a real fine magazine, keep it up.

"Ask the man who owns one"
Richard Wurzer
Cerritos, California

Dear Sir:

Just wanted you to know how much I enjoyed my first issue of your magazine. I am the proud owner of a 1937 115 C four door sedan. Of course I know this is not the rarest of all great Packards, but I love it. However, I do have an advantage over many members and that is being a Detroit Police Officer. I am assigned to the area of East Grand Blvd. and the Packard Motor Plant located there. You know when working midnights I almost feel I can hear the sounds of our great cars being built. I also often park the scout car in front and try to imagine the cars coming out the front gate. Of course, not all my partners share my enthusiasm! However, I did want you and your members to know that one of the members is watching the store.

Respectfully yours,
Patr. Robert Arman
7th Precinct
3300 Mack Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gentlemen:

I loaned Frenchy Lefebvre the most recent P.I. magazine and he had a comment I thought might be of interest to everyone regarding the insurance situation. Here in Michigan a number of years ago Marvin D. King owned a 54 Packard Clipper which was struck by an uninsured motorist. Marvin King's insurance company declined to do anything so Marvin procured an affidavit stating the value of the Packard Clipper by Frenchy Lefebvre who is considered an expert on everything from Rolls Royce to Packard and every other vehicle on the road or ever built. Marvin went into court and collected about \$1,500.00 damages part of which went to the attorney.

It is unfortunate that there is not an antique vehicle appraiser in each state who is above question, and who is connected with our club. This situation shows that something needs to be done along with legal advice to right this situation which is most discouraging. I cannot use the language in this letter which is properly descriptive of insurance companies and their lousy attitude. But this situation demands more than words, it demands action. Perhaps there should be a committee set up to examine all insurance regulations in all the states, and then a plan of action through Senators, Congressmen, etc. Also possibly other clubs should be contacted and apprised of the situation so as to try to get as united a front as possible to indicate to the insurance company the right course of action. Or perhaps the situation warrants a new insurance company responsive to the needs of owners of Classic Car vehicles like the Caribbean and others.

Sincerely yours,
Frederick B.R. Hirsch
3505 Burns
Detroit, Mich. 48214

Editor's Note: What's the matter with J.C. Taylor? We have been printing their insurance application for years! Many of our members, including yours truly, have had serious claims and have found them superb and exemplary in their competent handling of claims.

Hi there Bill;

I was quite interested in the article in your latest publication regarding Clark Gable's Packard Darrin owned by Mr. & Mrs. Sam Broadhead. You mentioned in the article that his car is one of two. I have pictures of the second Darrin, it has been in the Seattle area since 1950. It has the wooden cowl & dashboard but has the cast windshield frame, other than that, it is identical to the Clark Gable car. This car is painted a Fox Tail Metallic Grey, and has been in storage since 1952. Someone replaced the engine with a V 12 Cadillac engine and put in an Auburn Rear-end with Columbia OD.

Other than that, the car is all there and has a lot of work to do to it before it is restored, however, it never was in any flood so it wouldn't be as bad as the Gable car to restore.

Your magazine was certainly packed with goodies this month and felt a lot heavier than the previous issues to date.

I understand the Harrah Swap Meet turned into the worst dust bowl they ever had. I am glad I didn't bring a car over to show in that case, since I have a dust allergy anyway and am rather fussy about driving in dusty areas. I had several friends who went over the Wednesday night before the meet with cars they thought would sell over there, not one had any luck finding buyers. I guess the market must be way off this year for selling cars.

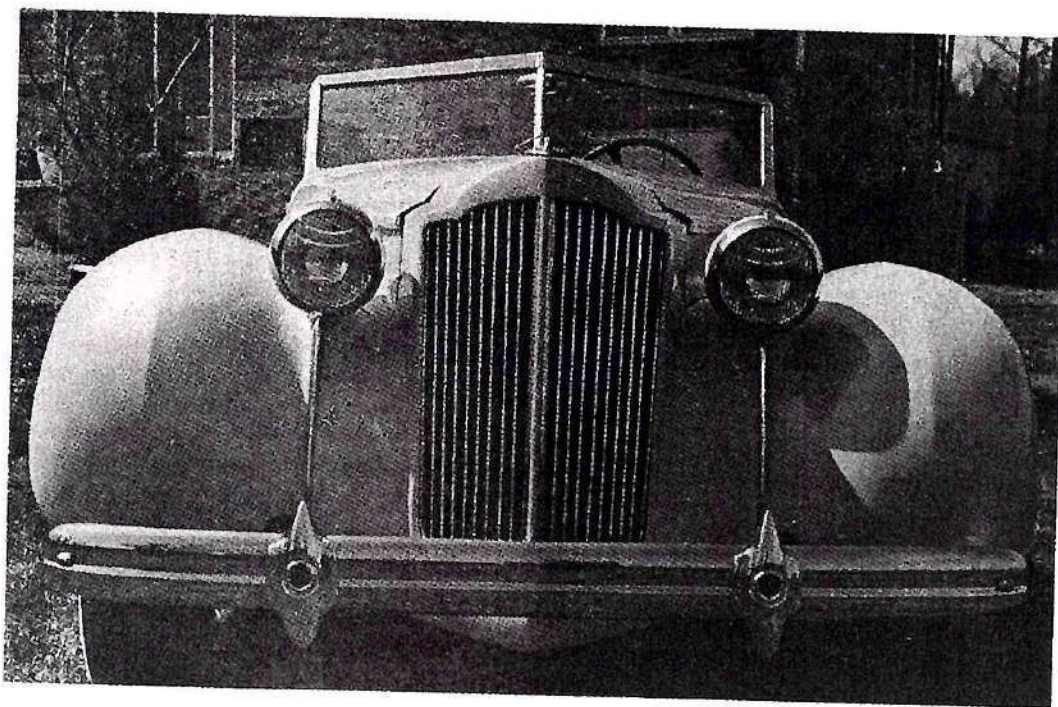
You mentioned about the 10th Anniversary party for the P.I. Club for next year. Count me in, I'll certainly try to make it down for the occasion even if I can't bring a Packard and have to fly down.

So long for now, and keep up the fine magazine.

Sincerely,
Hugh H. Russell
1833 N.W. Blue Ridge Dr.
Seattle, Wash. 98177

OUR 1938 PACKARD DARRIN

—by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Broadhead



By 1937, Howard (Dutch) Darrin who, among other things founded America's first airline (Aero-Limited) had gained world wide recognition as an automobile stylist. Darrin was born in the U.S.A., but most of this recognition was gained through his enterprises in Paris, France. In 1937, because of a coincidental acquaintance with Darryl Zanuck which resulted from mutual interests in the game of Polo, Darrin was led to move to California where, after a short time, he set up shop to build custom automobiles, believing that a market for these automobiles existed within the movie colonies. The first product of this endeavor was built on a 1937 Ford chassis for Percy Morgan. The second was built on a 1937 Packard 120 chassis. This was a two passenger convertible and was sold to Dick Powell. This was the first "Packard Darrin." These first two cars were built in Newell's Body and Fender Shop in Los Angeles.

At this point, Darrin decided that a larger operation was justified, and moved to the Crown Coach Company where he built two five passenger "Packard Darrins." The first of these was built on a 1938 "Packard Eight" chassis and was sold to Clark Gable. Apparently, both of these cars were built with wood cowls.

After building these two five passenger cars, Darrin hired Rudolph Stoessel and moved into larger quarters in a building which was previously a bottle factory on the Sunset Strip.

Stoessel designed aluminum cowls and incorporated them in all Packard Darrin cars built at this location, which, according to best records, totaled 16 to 18 during 1938 and 1939. Among the customers for these cars were Al Jolson, Chester Morris, and Rosalind Russell.

According to available records, in 1939 Darrin made a deal with Packard to produce his cars as an addition to the Packard models. He subsequently arranged with the management of the almost defunct Auburn Motor Car Company to produce these cars at its Connersville, Indiana plant. There seems to be no record of how many of these "Connersville" cars were built, but it seems safe to guess that it was less than 100. Although these cars were built on various Packard chassis' and with some body variations, the similarity of all known Packard Darrin automobiles, including the first few built in California, with respect to styling, is unmistakable.

A few more were built in Cincinnati. This ended Packard Darrin Production.

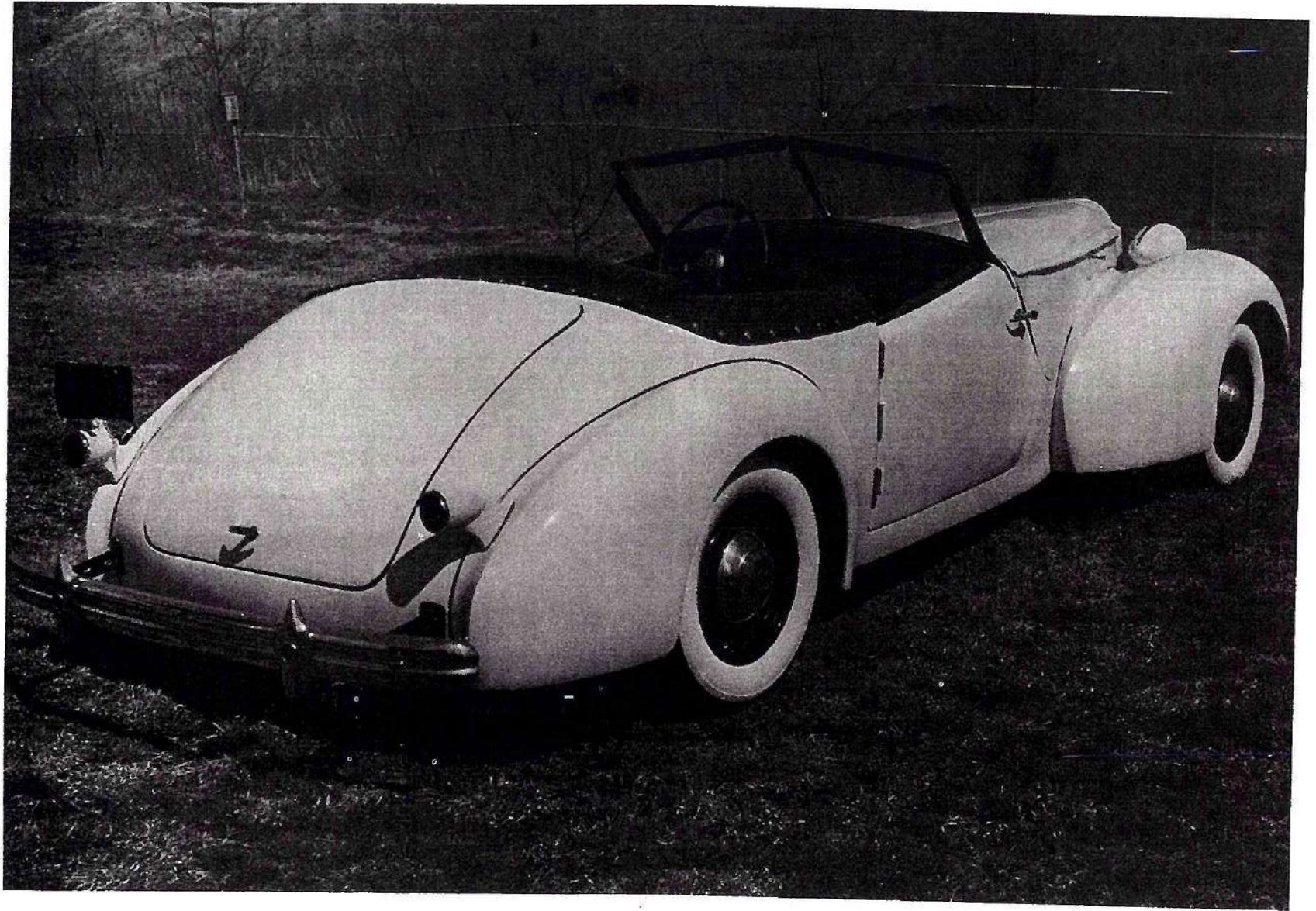


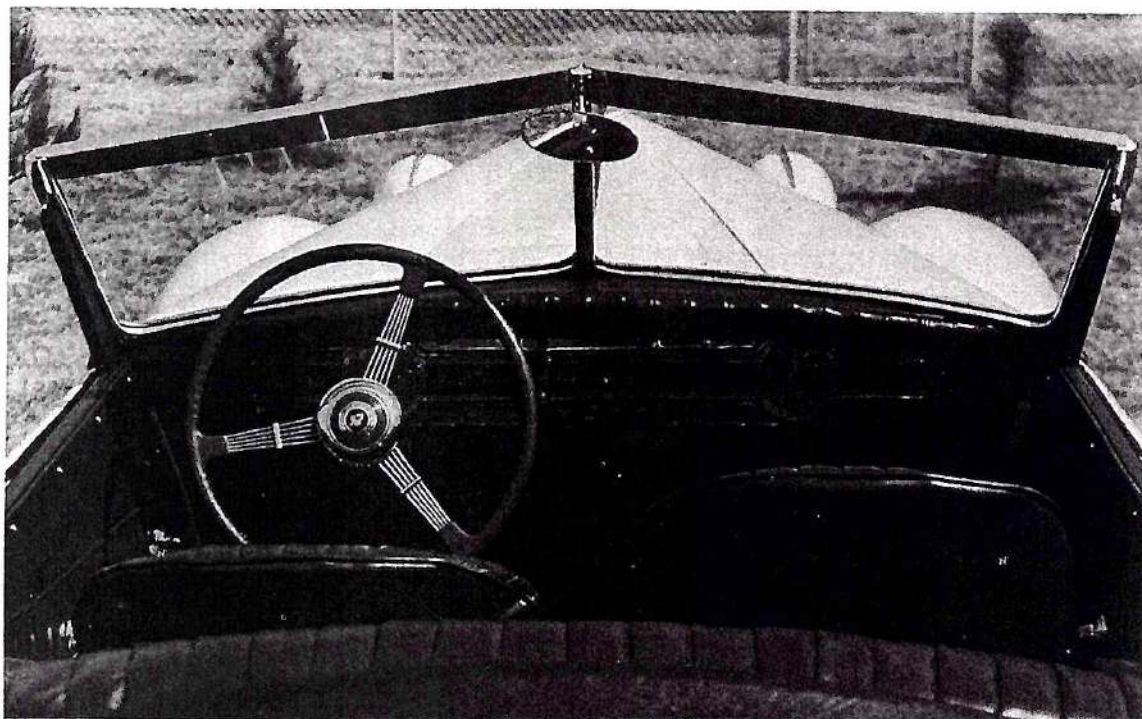
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The body is Packard Cream and the interior is red leather.

In 1962, in partnership with James Plumb, Jr., we purchased the 1938 Packard Darrin which we believed to be the Clark Gable car from Ernest Sulek in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. An ex-military officer bought it in California, drove it to Iowa and sold it to him as the Clark Gable car. It was stored under a shed near the Cedar River, which submerged it by flood a couple of times before we bought it, with results as shown by the accompanying photograph.

Down through various hands, several changes from the original had been made, including replacement of the engine. Fortunately the engine change was never recorded as a title change with the result that our title bears the original 1938 Packard Eight engine number, A 309 389. In the process of restoration we replaced the engine with one identical to the original.

In process of strip-down pursuant to restoration, we noted, written in blackboard chalk on the inside of one of the kick-boards, "Cook's Top Shop, 6063 Melrose." We also found a fishing license issued to Geo. Bruce, 1135 N. Wilcox, Hollywood, age 45, height 6 ft., 1 in., by Culver's Sporting Goods, Bishop, California, for the year 1950.

The number stenciled on the frame, which we have preserved, is PACK 127 7-22-37 52A.

The cowl was wood and had been reproduced in the process of restoration to as nearly original as was discernable. The car was built on a 1938 Packard Eight chassis and apparently started as the coupe model of that year. The trunk lid is that of the coupe and is essentially un-modified. Other parts were fabricated by Darrin by modifications of the stock parts. For example, the hood and fenders were fabricated by removal of sections of the stock hood and fenders and welding in custom sections. The stock radiator shell was shortened by removal of about 2½ inches to form the lower profile shell, and the thermostatically operated vertical grill bars were also shortened accordingly. Springs were shortened by partial removal to further lower the profile. The steering column was lengthened by welding extensions to both the shaft and housing. Clutch and brake pedals were extended by use of hardwood blocks.

Because this was the first five passenger Packard Darrin, it is probably valid to consider it as the "hand made" prototype for all later Packard Darrins.

Restoration has been completed, with a few minor exceptions, to as nearly the original as was ascertainable. The replacement engine was completely rebuilt to new condition. All other mechanical parts were disassembled and cleaned or replaced as required for restoration to mechanically perfect condition. The result of this restoration is shown by the accompanying photograph of the car as it presently appears.

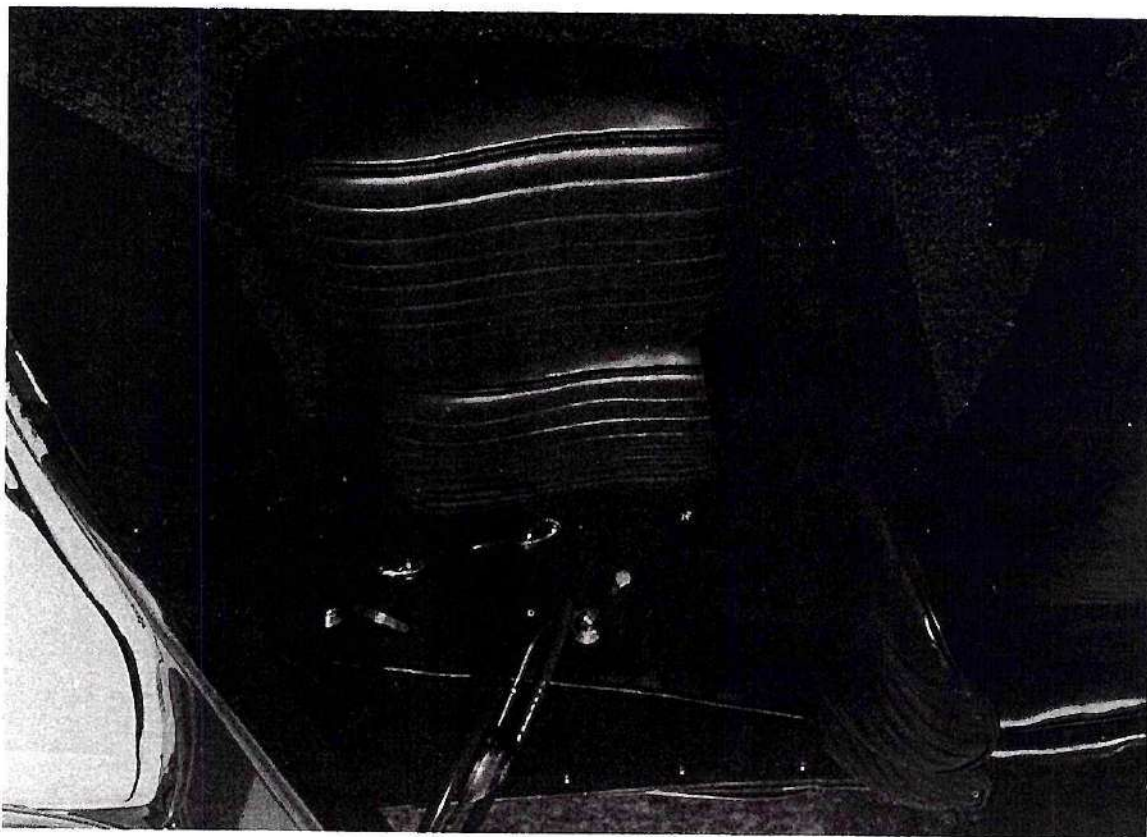
In 1968 we acquired total ownership of this car through purchase of Jim Plumb's interest, and moved it from Cedar Rapids, Iowa to Huntsville, Alabama, where it is presently located.

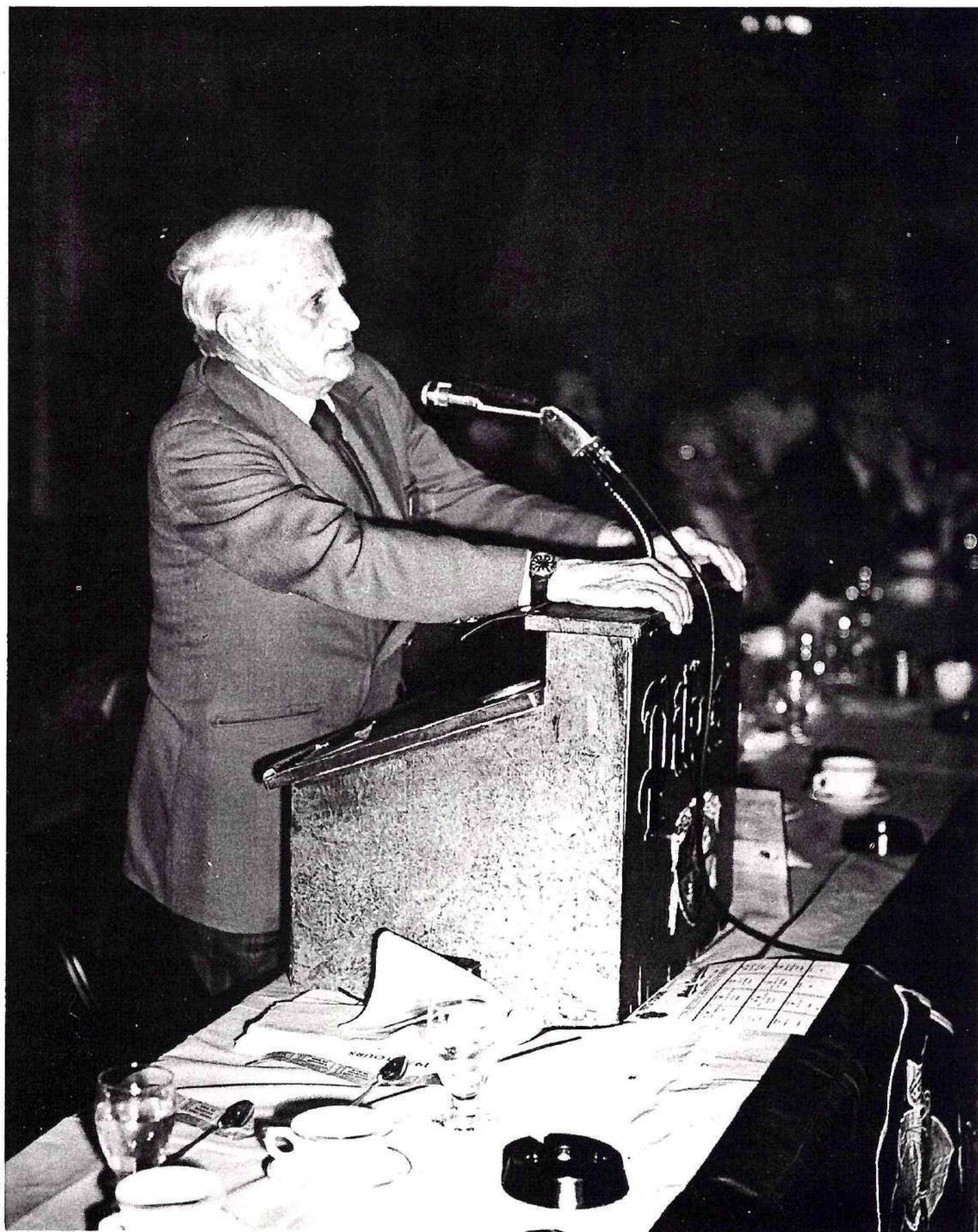
In the summer of 1969, the help of the Research Department of Harrah's Automobile Collection (headed by Mr. Skip Marketti) was enlisted in an effort to document the original ownership of the subject automobile. Several clues were investigated without success until, as a result of the aforementioned fishing license, Mr. George P. Bruce of Los Angeles was contacted. The applicable part of Mr. Bruce's reply to Mr. Marketti, dated February 21, 1970, is quoted as follows:

"I am writing you in regards to your letter. The car, a Darin bodied 1938 Packard belonging to Clark Gable was bought from him at that time by my brother who has passed away some time now, George Bruce. He worked in pictures, played small bits parts and knew Clark Gable. That's how he came to buy the car from him. He used the name George in place of his real name Andrew Bruce. At that time the car was paid a lot of money for it. I just can't remember what Andrew said it had cost him, but in order for my brother to buy it, the price was reasonable."

Quoting Mr. Marketti, "We have at last found what we feel to be proof enough regarding the original ownership of your Packard Darin."

With the original owner identified, and the restoration completed, we now find the car a wonderful source of pleasure and enjoyment. Once again, you can "Ask the Man Who Owns One."





SPRING 1972

Editors note: P.I. has been "SAVING" the following Darrin story for this issue since we knew we would have "Dutch" as the main

speaker for this year's Membership Meet. We felt the dual attraction of both articles would increase your enjoyment.

March 24, 1971

Mr. Howard Darrin
130 Oceanway
Santa Monica California

Dear Dutch:

Looking through some of my old papers I came upon a photo of the Packard Clipper of 1941. I was surprised as to how the design had survived the test of time. Reflecting back I have often wondered if the automobile enthusiasts were aware of the great part that you played in its development. As you probably know I spent two tours of duty at Briggs Manufacturing. First in 1937 after I left Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg and again in 1939. I worked for the legendary John Tjaarda who headed the Briggs Styling Office. We sort of operated as a gesture of good will department to our clients Ford, Chrysler and Packard in those days and offered our services basically as styling consultants, in other words the fresh outside viewpoint as an assistance to augment each company's styling activity.

I shall never forget the shocker one morning as I entered the Briggs showroom, which was always kept under lock and key, and saw a beautiful quarter scale model in clay of a Packard proposal. None of us in styling knew where it came from or who was responsible for its execution. I picked up all the marbles in the guessing game by simply stating that only one man in the world could have designed this model. One, it had all the fingerprints of Howard "Dutch" Darrin. There it was with the downward swept belt line and an inimitable Darrin blind quarter, with a Darrinized notch-back roof flowing into a beautifully swept rear luggage compartment. Two, it had a front fender flow that washed itself out at the front door that had the characteristic Darrinized angle of fender flow. It was a real shocker to all of us. Our approach at Briggs sort of emulated the straight through belt line of the Buick, Olds, Pontiac torpedo body which if anything would have only flattered General Motors by our sincere form of imitation. My first impression was that it's too beautiful to be a production car and that it is no doubt a custom one-off Packard proposal designed to be sent to Europe to be entered in all the Concours de Elegance events where it no doubt would garner many beautiful silver trophies, which when emptied of their contents of champagne, would find their way back to Packard Detroit as symbols of Packard's supremacy in styling aristocracy.

Several hours later John Tjaarda informed us all that indeed it was a Darrin proposal and that Ed Macauley, director of Packard Styling, had ordered that templates be taken off the model and blown up full scale

and that we at Briggs were to build a full size clay model verbatim for study. As the model grew we could certainly see that it was a winner. I then recall that it was shipped to Packard Styling and Werner Gubitz, who I believe was then Chief Stylist, and Charles Yeager, his assistant, made some slight modifications by raising the belt line slightly and increased the capacity of the trunk to meet competitive requirements. Other than these slight modifications the final design had at least 80% or more of your original thinking in your quarter size model.

The following face lifts of the Packard Clipper certainly proved to be disastrous. How can anyone forget how ungainly and heavy looking and monstrous looking they became trying to follow a trend that was incompatible with its basic Clipper styling. Perhaps if they had only left well enough alone Packard might have lived long enough to fight another day.

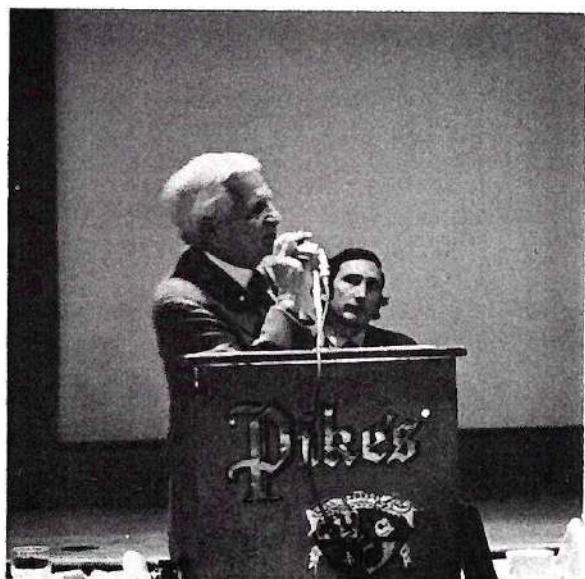
My dear Dutch, rejoice in the fact that you had the courage during your Darrin of Paris days on Sunset Boulevard to build the most elegant of Packards ever. Who can ever forget your magnificent Packard Darrins that truly represented the "Aristocracy of Motordom".

I simply had to write this letter as unfortunately our profession is at times most unkind to us. Our triumphs in creativity on so many occasions pass by so unnoticed while our small failures are at times amplified way out of proportion. You have had the most fantastic of careers. If you had done nothing else in your lifetime your Packard Darrins have immortalized you for all time to come.

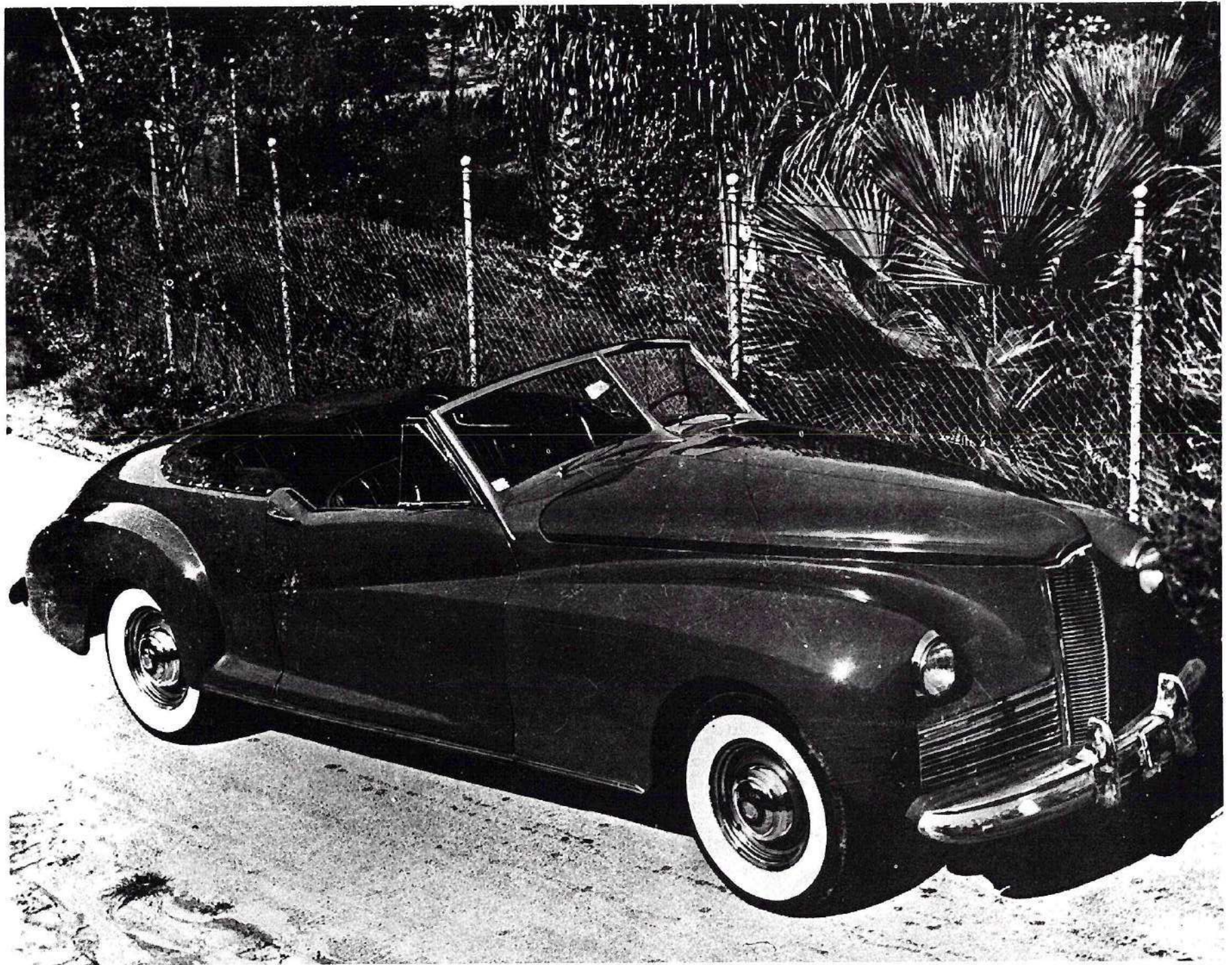
Best regards always,

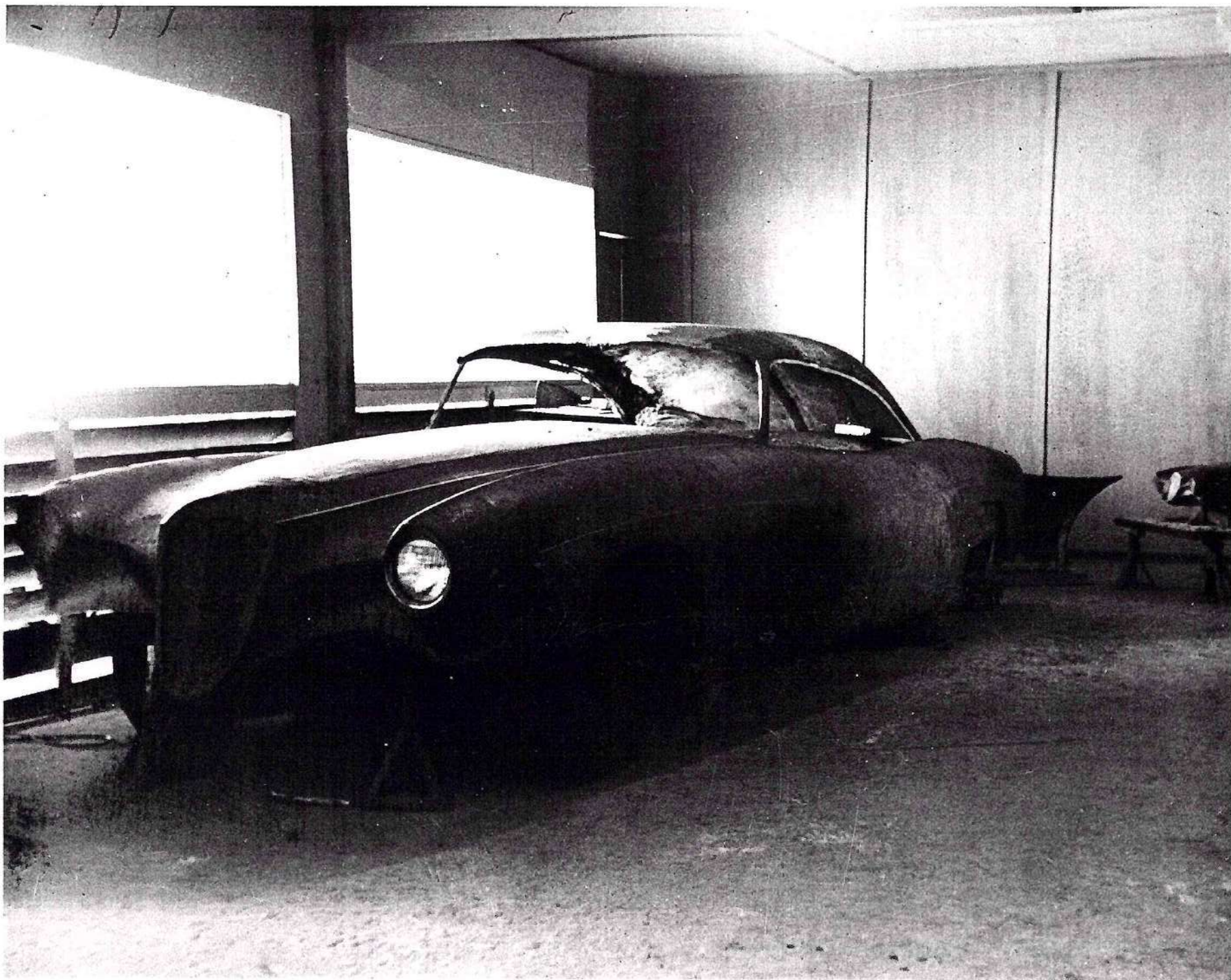


Alex Tremulis
Automotive Styling Consultant



SPRING 1972





"The Important Role Of The

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

And Its Origin"

by Howard "Dutch" Darrin

As President of Packards International I am proud to announce that the following by Howard "Dutch" Darrin will commence a series of feature articles for Packards International publications. Mr. Darrin has graciously consented to do the forthcoming series for Packards International to help the classic car hobby more clearly understand the early development of custom coach work.

Mr. Darrin and Packards International may release the right to reproduce these articles to any organized car club upon request.

In the early 1920's, the coach builders of Paris decided to hold a Concours D'Elegance in the Bois de Boulogne. Such great coach builders as Labourdette, Million-Guiet, Kellner and the not so great, but very ambitious Hibbard & Darrin Coachworks. At first it was a publicity venture that developed into a very important social event. The cars were entered by the various coach builders and also by the owners, and were driven by some beautiful ladies dressed in the height of fashion. There was also called a Concours D'Elegance Femina reflecting the fact that the lady with the entry would also be judged by her costume and elegance. It was rather a special event. The great couturiers of Paris cooperated in the Concours D'Elegance Femina to a very great extent; such as Patou, Scapperelli, Worth and Marcel Roschash all furnished their latest creations for these events.

The most interesting part of the Concours d'Elegance was, of course, the automobile itself.

It was judged by its elegance of appearance, regardless of the spit and polish in minute detail that today has become a large part of the judging of automobiles in competition. In no way am I criticizing the present method of judging, as cars are now being judged that are some thirty or forty years old and it is very important that the detail and the authenticity of the car should be judged and given favorable points. However, in those days, at the start of the Classic Period there was no such thing as restoring or showing restored cars. The cars were all immaculate, but as they passed the judges' stand the judges would mark down the appearance, the advanced look, the beautiful colors, the striping and other interesting innovations of the various entries. The chauffeur-driven cars naturally were driven by the chauffeur and sometimes by a footman in elegant costumes and a lady sitting in the rear of the Sedan or Town Car. Then the cars would stop past the reviewing stands and the judges would carefully inspect each car. The cars were arranged as to category: Touring Cars, Town Cars, Sports Cars, etc.

Up to 1924, very little attention was given to the proportions of the car. For so many years, cars had been built with four to five inches more head-room than the present day car and no points were taken off for height. In the closed car, Town Car categories, one of the most important features was the upholstery, the vanity cases, the compartments in back of the driver which were usually made of some beautiful burl walnut and carried various necessities, for in those days cars were used by the affluent for distance traveling to a greater extent than they are today. By 1924, however, it became very evident that some of the

Concours D'Elegance - Continued

builders had started to lower their automobiles. Bodies at that time were actually designed by the buyers. They would say "I want a car with a certain head-room, with a certain foot-room; I want extra seats, I want this and I want that." So the coach builders were forced to follow the desires of the clients and this naturally held back to some extent the perfection that might have been attained had the coach builders been left to their own devices. However, in the case of Hibbard & Darrin, our main source of sales came from America and the American dealers — Packard, Hispano-Suiza, Isotta Fraschini, Minerva, Cadillac, Mercedes-Benz, Rolls Royce, Renault and many others. The dealers themselves were the ones who specified or selected from our designs the ones that they preferred. We saw no reason why there should be more than thirty-six to thirty-seven inches above the cushion, instead of the prevailing forty to forty-two inches, and submitted only designs of that dimension. As a matter of record, that is today the height of most every car manufacturer — thirty-six to thirty-seven inches over the cushion. Now I am not implying that because of this advantage that we won any more Concours D'Elegance than any other builder. As a matter of fact, it took four or five years for the judges and the laymen to realize that not only had the appearance and architecture of the car been improved by the lowering of the roofline, but the center of gravity and safety of the automobile had become a big factor. We were, however, fortunate enough to be recognized by our fellow coach builders who took out certain license for reproduction of our architecture at the same time retaining their own distinct style of body. However, the sports cars were a totally different story. They had to be the last word in lowness, sleekness and have a racy look. These points were the ones that would win the prize.

From all of this, I hope the reader will gather that it was a totally different situation. Actually, it was a parallel to the couturiers' desire to create new models and interest, and augment their sales by changing as much as possible. In the case of the automobile, the cars were built to last but it was a big opportunity at each new Concours D'Elegance to bring out some feature, some advantage — a better looking trunk, a better way of mounting the tires, better looking fenders, and various other important features of the car that

would attract the attention of the judges. As I mentioned before, it was a real social event. Many of the movie stars drove their cars and also the international society group took a great interest as they do today in the automobiles. By 1928, it became very evident that to win the Concours D'Elegance, certain definite rules of architecture had to be followed. Very close attention was given to the contemporary design perfection as the ultimate by the majority of the coach builders. The fenders became a major consideration — the longest, sleekest and most elegant got the points, and the tops, rooflines, long bonnets and various slopes of the windshield were also important factors in judging the cars.

I will continue the story of the Concours D'Elegance in the next issue where I will take up the present day Concours D'Elegance and great impetus these Concours have given in the restoration and the preserving of the great cars of the past for future generations to admire. It is the backbone of the entire classic car movement and inspires various clubs to do the great things that they are doing in this respect. Had it not been for these various clubs with their large membership, the great names of the past would have been lost and the cars would have then ended up in the scrap heap.

The collection of classic cars is now reaching great magnitude and is actually more enthusiastically pursued than collections of paintings and furniture. The collectors seem to get more enjoyment and recreation out of cars than in mere decoration of their homes which after a certain time ceases to be exciting although deeply appreciated. And I humbly and graciously thank all of the car clubs for the part they have played in keeping the names of these builders of the past alive forever. I feel also that the time has arrived that selection, beauty and architecture should play a larger part in the buying and judging of the automobiles. Today the old masters and the great cabinet-makers have gradually emerged and been classified as to their genius — reflected in the price that the objects of art are now being sold for. It has become evident also that the classic car collectors are using the same method in the purchase of classic cars. The name of the maker is very important, but above all, the selection of his best works becomes more and more predominant and influential in paying the astronomical prices that classic cars are now being sold for.

"The Important Role Of The

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

And Its Origin"

by Howard "Dutch" Darrin

Concours D'Elegance today has become, in itself, an international event. This fact extends the meaning even further for our club, Packards International. Unfortunately, very few new cars are deserving of appearing at a true Concours D'Elegance; therefore, we are forced to look back on a past era for the product that does qualify. Where I am confident that few will quarrel with this statement, enough years have gone by that automatically dictate the necessity of restoration. It is almost impossible to realize the tremendous effort given in the restoration of cars as old as the history of the automobile. Let me again stress the point that without these great restorative efforts and the clubs that foster them, there would be little or no concours-type automobiles available today. Indeed, it is a tribute as it would be woefully sad to have these superb hallmarks of elegance and design forever lost to our civilization.

In the restoration of the automobile, probably Harrah's of Reno, Nevada is the best example. His shops and able craftsman are the most extensive in the world. Mr. Harrah's museum is for his own pleasure as well as the pleasure of the visitors that come to see the beautiful cars on exhibit. The Briggs Cunningham Museum (Costa Mesa, Calif.) is as fine a presentation as normally can be made of elegant cars. These two brilliant examples are veritable motor shows in the Concours D'Elegance motif. Each car is beautifully presented, usually roped off with signs explaining exactly the date and history of the automobile.

Regarding today's method of judging the various categories of the classic and antique cars as

well as the post-war classics, I want to say that I certainly do not in any way wish to criticize the wonderful work the judges have done in segregating the different categories and their methods of judging. Last year, when I was invited to speak at an organization's National Show, I did notice one point that could possibly be improved upon. The mere fact that there is only one thing I could find fault with is, in itself, the highest compliment that I can express. Convertible automobiles are much more difficult to bring up to mint condition than hardtops; and, I noticed that in the late classics, they were not segregated. In other words, closed cars and convertibles were judged in the same category and this can put the convertible at a considerable disadvantage as a convertible automobile exposed to the weather with a top made of cloth is difficult to be brought up to the brand new look of the sedans and closed cars. Fortunately, your Board of Regents have apparently thought of everything as Packards International's judging rules do not suffer this disadvantage.

While we are on the subject of "spit and polish," and the elegance of the automobiles exhibited, I would like to discuss the following situation which arose during a recent Concours D'Elegance show held at the Hollywood Bowl. The point came up at the meeting held before the Concours, regarding the presentation of the various grand awards, "Best of Show," "Best Restoration," and "Elegance." At first it was thought that if the owner of a car won two grand awards with the same car, for example "Best in Show" and "Most Elegant,"

he would have the right to choose which one of the two prizes he would accept. Then, the second place winner in the other category would become a first place winner. I happen to have been one of the Elegance judges and we felt it was wrong to put in the hands of the contestants the right to decide who was to be first or second in the category that deserved the most attention. It was decided that we would make the selection. In order of importance, Elegance would take the first place, since it was a Concours D'Elegance; Best in Show second; and the Best Restoration third. Thus, confusion was eliminated and the contestant did not have to choose which cup he wanted to accept. This was changed by the Rules Committee and turned out very successfully.

At Buck Hills Falls at a Classic Concours, two Rolls Royces received ninety-nine and three quarters points. They lost the quarter of a point because Phillips head screws were used in place of regular slotted screws which were proper at the time of manufacture. I basically feel that anyone arriving at ninety-nine and three-quarters per cent deserves one hundred per cent, yet I must admit that if this were done it would not allow the restorer who accomplished every item perfectly the opportunity to get a perfect score. It likely is the fact that a 100 point system is entirely obsolete and doesn't allow enough spread with which to judge such magnificently restored cars. Packards International's 250 point system is infinitely superior and allows minute and precision judging to be exercised. This system allows the fine deductions for extremely minor discrepancies without taking away from the overall aggregate range. I wish my readers to understand that I am making these comments in the spirit of my own professional experience and I feel that bringing a car up to such a phenomenal degree of restorative magnificence makes me feel sorry when a Phillips head screw can affect a score so obviously. With this observation the second installment of Concours D'Elegance is closed.

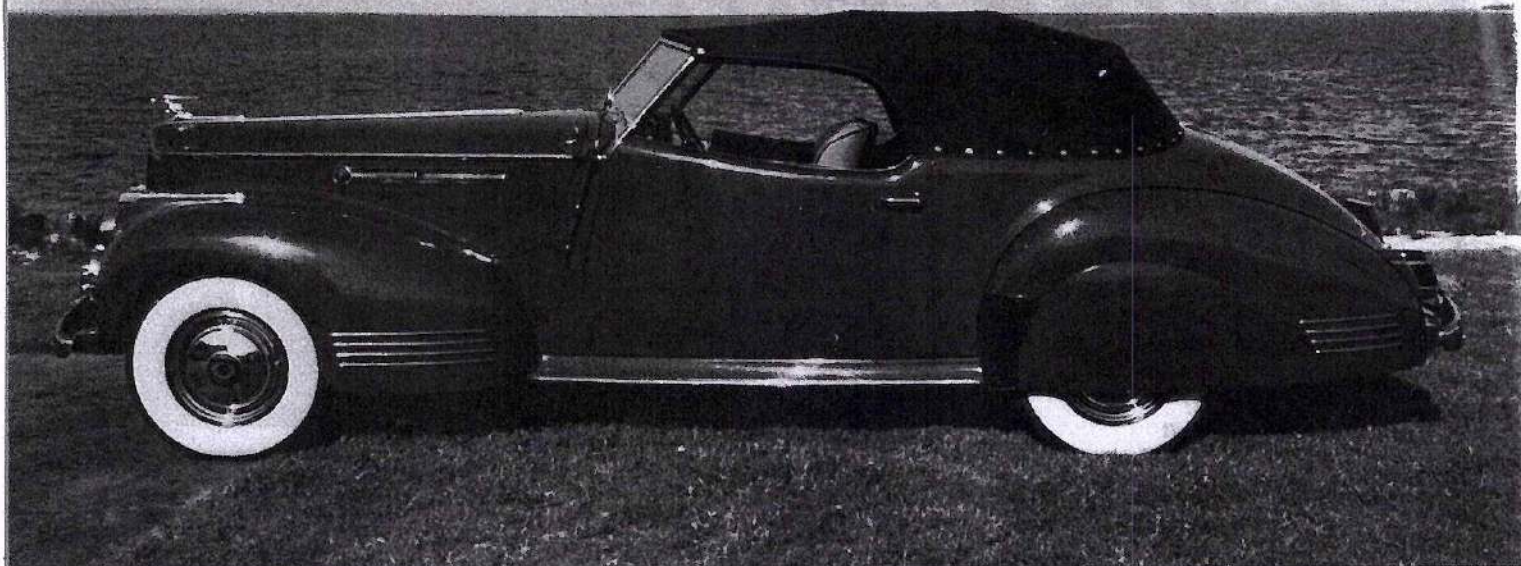
I would like to make a few comments regarding the beautiful work that has been done on cars that were practically unacceptable to a junk man. One especially that I want to single out is a four-door convertible sedan with one of my bodies on a Packard chassis dating 1940. This car is being resurrected from the grave and actually is a fantastic exhibition of perseverance, hard work and tactical skill for not only an amateur, but a pro-

fessional as well. The owner was kind enough to loan me the castings for the main part of the Packard Darrin which included the windshield castings—practically the entire portion necessary to build the Packard Darrin.

I've made duplicates of these castings and bought a 1940 Packard and intend to make a prototype of the Packard Darrin 1940 manufactured in 1973, but with a 1940 coupe. At the same time there are several people interested in having me convert '38, '39, & '40 Packards which are adaptable to this casting assembly. However, they must be either coupe or convertibles on one-hundred and twenty-seven inch chassis. If there is demand for these bodies I will build a few out of nostalgia only because since there are so few of the Packard Darrins now in circulation I'd like to see them again on the streets. I just received a letter from James Hollingsworth that tells me he has six 1940 models, three 180's and three 160's. He says he does not own a Darrin and if the rumor is true that I am to build some more cars, he would be most appreciative of any information regarding my plans as to the estimated cost.

However, at this time it is very difficult to give any cost estimates; but, in any event if I do revive the Packard Darrin, it will be authentic and not like a Duesenberg with a Dodge chassis or a Stutz on a Pontiac chassis. What I am trying to say is that it will be a Packard Darrin and will have everything the old '38, '39 & '40 Packards had, and be, in my mind, authentic. Also interesting is that the 120 model chassis, one of my favorites, was not a classic chassis until a special body was put on it, and I would be very appreciative if any of our readers know of any 120's or '38, '39, '40 coupes etc. that are for sale, especially in the Western section of the country. In closing I want to also pay tribute to the great restoration job done on the Packard Darrin Gable car owned by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Broadhead (see P.I. Pub. Vol. 9, No. 1 Spring 1972 issue).





1942 PACKARD DARRIN

180 VICTORIA CONVERTIBLE

By Robert Jay Stevens

Howard "Dutch" Darrin, one of the most talented and creative designers to apply his genius to automobiles, produced some of the most exciting designs imaginable. And, many of them appeared on Packards.

Darrin did a lot of design work for Packard on its regular production models, but his own custom bodies earned him more in prestige, and money. Although best remembered for his work with Packard and Kaiser, Darrin collaborated with most major American and European auto makers at one time or another during his illustrious career.

Darrin returned to the U.S. in 1937 after some 15 years in Paris as a custom coach builder and dealer for Minerva, the prestigious Belgian auto maker. Darrin, a gutsy, persuasive individualist who was proud of his talents and efforts to the point of being egotistical, held American automotive designs in contempt, except for the fabled Cord 810. From his new studios in Hollywood, Calif., he sought to correct what he perceived as gross styling deficiencies in American luxury cars. His services were appreciated by his wealthy clientele, most of whom were noted stars of film and stage. Soon, he was supplying Packard with Darrin-styled bodies in 1940-42. And, gorgeous creations they were. He had, indeed, improved on American styling.

In addition, at a time when Packard needed a styling boost, he participated in the development of the new production Packard for 1941, and he's generally credited with the basic design adopted for the '41 Clipper.

But Darrin's real masterpieces were not regular production line items, but rather beautifully executed designs crafted in his own California shop. When dealers clamored for more, operations were moved to the defunct Auburn plant in Connersville, Ind., and then to Cincinnati, Ohio for 1941 and '42. Even at that, production was minimal, although no accurate production figures are available for the Darrin Packards.

While not the most expensive model in Packard's line, the Darrin model, which was sold through Packard's regular dealer network, was far from the cheapest. In the '42 Packard line, for example, the Packard Convertible Coupe (Series 2023, Super Eight Clipper 160), sold for \$1,917, while the Darrin Victoria Convertible retailed with prices starting at \$4,783.

At those prices, the Packard Darrin was obviously attainable only by the very affluent, and most Darrin buyers were movie celebrities. The 1942 Packard 180 Darrin Victoria Convertible featured in this treatment was originally delivered to the "singing cowboy," Gene Autry, according

to the car's current owner, H. William Kranz, Bay Village, Ohio.

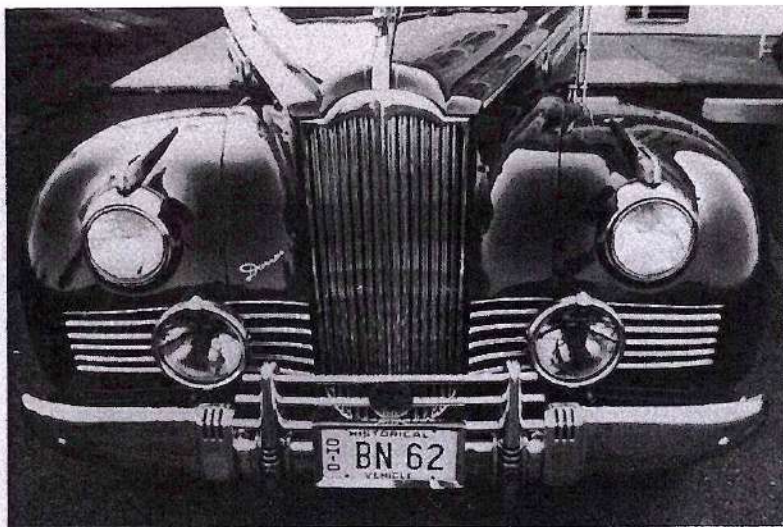
The car, apart from its celebrity status, is a stunning example of superior Packard engineering and sumptuous Darrin styling. It's a car that's both sporty in design and elegant in appointment.

The '42 Packard Darrin, officially Series 2006 Special, Model 1529, was based on a 127-inch wheelbase with 7.00x15 tires standard. It stretched 215½ inches long and measured 76 1/8 inches wide and 64 inches high. Front and rear tread figured to 59 5/8 inches and 60 11/16 inches, respectively.

The car (it seems almost sacrilegious to refer to a Packard Darrin as merely "a car") is loaded with all the equipment usually standard on a top-line Packard, including air filter, ash receiver, automatic choke, directional signals, air foam seat cushions and a powerful straight eight-engine. Front coil springs and rear leaf springs were featured.

Options available with the standard Super 180 found on the Darrin include overdrive (a \$60 option), radio (\$57.50) and heater and defroster (\$40.00).

The engine used on all Super One Eighty models, including the Darrin editions, was an L-head eight with a displacement of 356 cubic inches and a bore and stroke of 3 1/2x4 5/8 inches. It cranked out a respect-



Photos by Ken New and Bob Stevens

2



3

able 165 hp (39.2 taxable) at 3,600 rpm. Maximum torque figured to 292 lbs./ft. at 2,000 rpm. Its compression ratio was a modest 6.85 to 1.

The silent running straight eight was cranked to life via a 17-plate, 120 amp/hr. battery and with the standard three-speed manual transmission, the rear axle ratio was 3.92 to 1. Capacities for the 180 were: Crankcase, 7 quarts; gas tank, 20 gallons, and cooling system, 20 quarts.

Production on the Super 180 Series for the war-shortened 1942 model year ran to 672, including the 2006 and 10 other models in three other series in the Super 180 line-up. The Darrin Victoria Convertible was the lightest of the 11 entries in the 180 line, weighing 3,920 pounds. It had a turning radius of 22 feet.

Kranz bought his '42 Packard Darrin when it was just an old used car back in 1956. It has received a total restoration with Henry L. Seitz performing all the body, paint and upholstery work.

During the quarter of a century Kranz has owned his Packard Darrin, he's driven it on a number of special occasions to shows and other special events. The Darrin has appeared on nine Classic Car Club of America caravans.

It might have been used even more if Kranz didn't own several other top-line cars, including some full classics. Kranz, a

three-year national director of the Classic Car Club of America, also owns a '35 Duesenberg, six Packards, three Cadillacs and a Rolls-Royce. He also maintains membership in the Antique Automobile Club of America, the Veteran Motor Car Club of America and several Packard clubs.

Although it's surrounded by high-caliber motoring machinery in the Kranz collection, the '42 Packard Darrin would be a standout in any crowd.

Packard had things going its way in 1941 until Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Its new Clipper, which was still enjoying its "launch" period, would be an old design lacking the glamour of an all-new model when auto production would resume at Packard in October of 1945. And the Darrin Special would be absent from Packard's '46 line - never to appear again. But then there would soon be a Darrin of another name - Kaiser.

Club corner

The Classic Car Club of America, which determines through voting which cars are authentic classics, is headquartered at P.O. Box 443, Madison, N.J. 07940. Established in 1952, the CCCA now has more than 4,000 members.

1. The five-passenger Packard Darrin is a gorgeous red with a black top. The large fender skirts don't seem to bother the rare Packard at all; neither adding to nor detracting from its pure classic styling.

2. Purely captivating front end reflects the epitome of grace and elegance in pre-war automotive artistry. There's no mistaking this grille for anything but a Packard. Note the Darrin name in script to the left.

3. Packard's noted Goddess of Speed mascot survived in various forms from the mid-twenties until 1950.

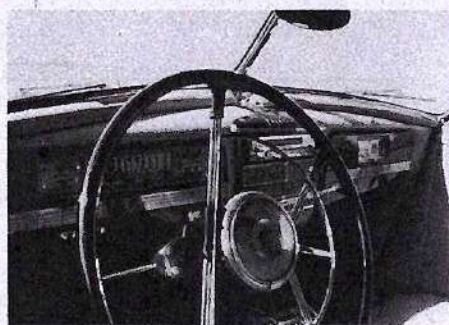
4. Richly appointed interior of the five-passenger convertible is extremely comfortable and reminiscent of the form-fitting bucket seats popular some 25 to 30 years later. Air foam seat cushions were standard on the 180 series. The CB radio and fire extinguisher are, obviously, non-factory "extras" provided by the owner.

5. Nicely detailed dash hosts a full complement of instruments, including 110-mph speedometer with odometer and trip odometer, amps and fuel gauges to the left, and temperature and oil gauges to the right. The ash tray and directional signals were standard on all Packards in 1942, but the radio was optional at \$57.50 on all models, and the heater and defroster ran an extra \$40.

6. The One Eighty model designation, the top-of-the-line series for Packard in 1942, is proudly proclaimed on the trunk lid with the Packard name appearing center stage on the stylish rear bumper. The Darrin nameplate appears again on the rear body just above the left taillight.



4



5



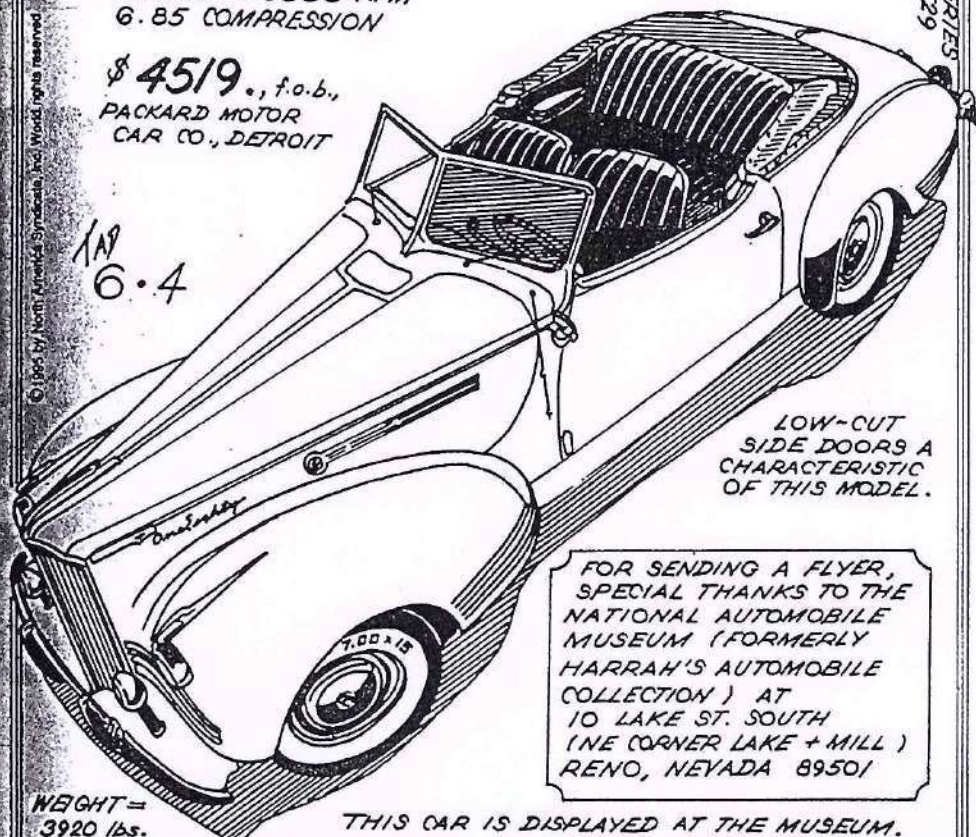
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A TIMELESS CLASSIC!
1942 PACKARD-DARRIN "180"
 127" WHEELBASE (BODY BY DARRIN)
 356 c.i.d. L-HEAD STRAIGHT-8 ENGINE
 165 HP @ 3600 RPM
 6.85 COMPRESSION

\$4519., f.o.b.,
 PACKARD MOTOR
 CAR CO., DETROIT

180
 6.4

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LOW-CUT
 SIDE DOORS A
 CHARACTERISTIC
 OF THIS MODEL.

FOR SENDING A FLYER,
 SPECIAL THANKS TO THE
 NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE
 MUSEUM (FORMERLY
 HARRAH'S AUTOMOBILE
 COLLECTION) AT
 10 LAKE ST. SOUTH
 (NE CORNER LAKE + MILL)
 RENO, NEVADA 89501

WEIGHT =
 3920 lbs.

THIS CAR IS DISPLAYED AT THE MUSEUM.

2006 SERIES
 MODEL 1529

Darrin modified Packard bodies

Automobile designer/custom-body manufacturer Howard "Dutch" Darrin was born in 1897. As a youth in 1916 he patented a motor-driven electric gear-shift and sold the rights to General Motors. In the 1920s and 1930s he created custom auto bodies in Paris (Hibbard & Darrin and Fernandez & Darrin), and in the 1940s he operated out of Southern California.

In 1938, he began modifying Packard bodies to order and, for 1940, Packard began to offer a Darrin convertible in its automotive line. For a time there was even a Packard-Darrin sedan.

Many of these cars were sold in Southern California, where the Packard-Darrin became a darling of the movie crowd. They were in vogue from 1940 to '42, until the war called a halt to the party.

When civilian car production resumed for the 1946 model year, most of Packard's new cars were cheaper, Clipper-type sedans, and no Darrin models. In 1946, Dar-

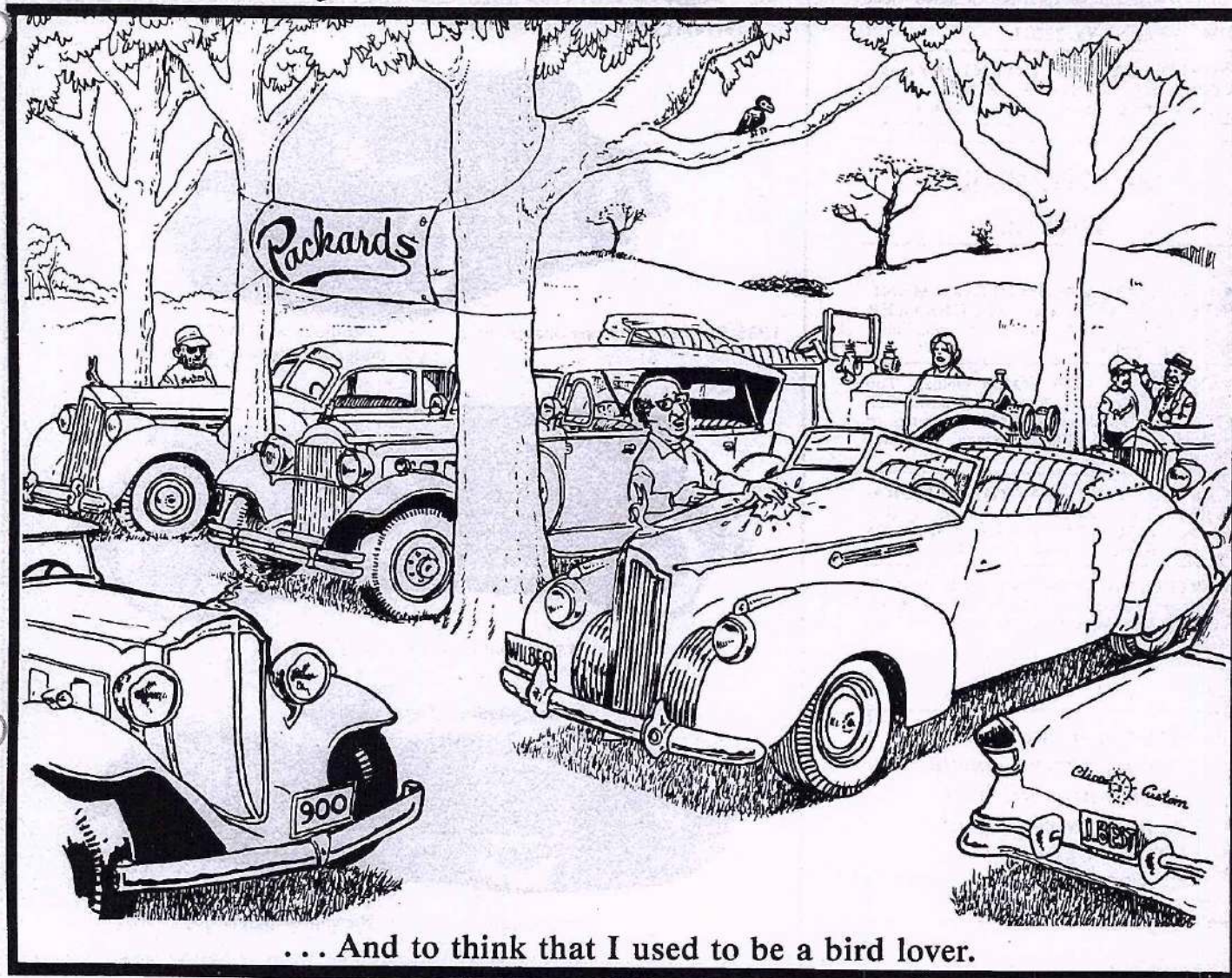
rin proposed to manufacture a fiberglass-bodied sports car under his own name. Regular production of that car never came to pass, but the pilot model was styled somewhat like a 1947 Frazer, which was no coincidence because Darrin was doing designs for Kaiser-Frazer.

In 1953, K-F authorized Howard Darrin to design a new Kaiser-Darrin fiberglass-bodied sports car with sliding side doors, and 435 of these were produced in the 1954 model year.

Another accomplishment of Howard "Dutch" Darrin, who lived until 1982, was the patenting of a new type of auto body construction in 1927. In addition, he had a long career as an award-winning industrial designer.

Y

Wilber, The Car Collector



... And to think that I used to be a bird lover.

Coming...

THE PACKARD HAWK by Fred K. Fox

CARROZZERIA ITALIANA by Dennis Adler

BUGATTI DAY AT SILVERADO by Arch Brown

CORVETTE'S DREAM SHARK by Thomas Brownell

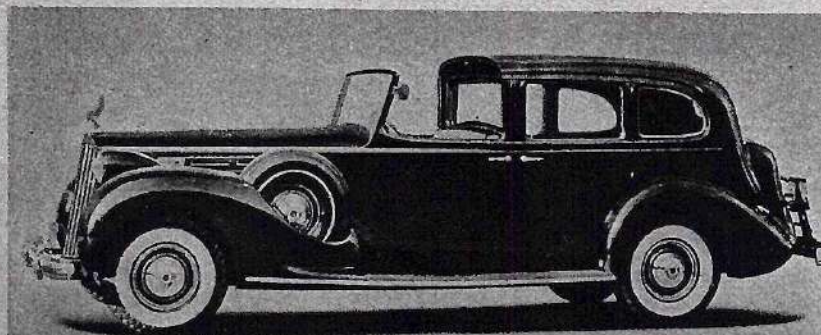
COUPE D'ELEGANCE AT FONTAINEBLEAU by Jan P. Norbye

MY WHEELS NEED BETTER CARE, HE SAYS by Ralph Shaffer

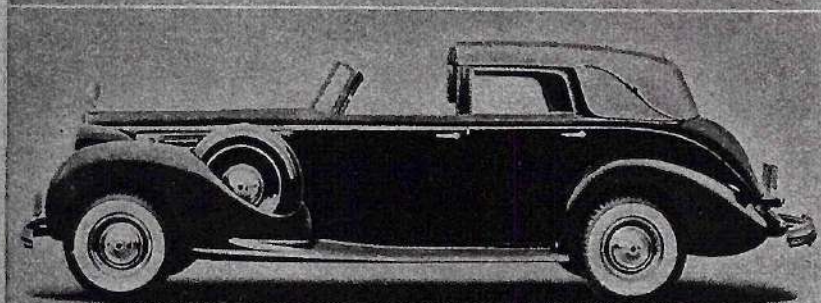
THE FIRST SERIES FIREBIRD (1967-1969) by Ed Morehouse

AUTOMATIC ROUGH: MY SECRET FEAR OF OLD CARS AND OPEN ROADS by Tom Murray

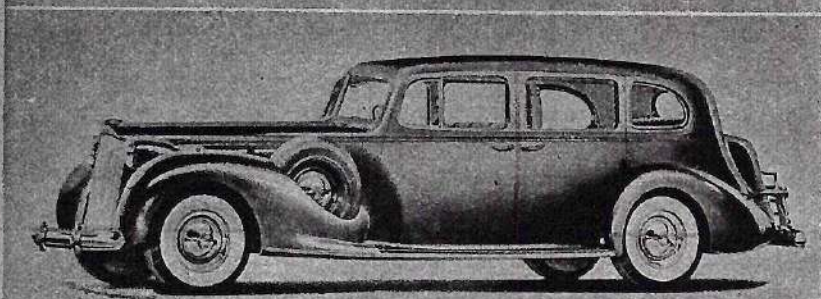
AND MORE!



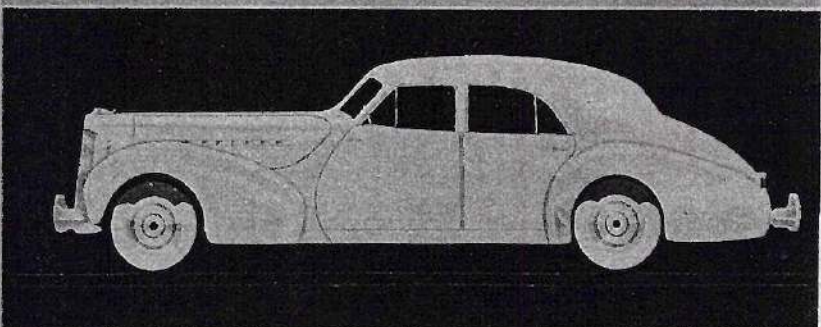
Massive grace of this 1937 custom brougham seems to be partially destroyed by bulging front fenders. Windows, however, are neat.



Custom Twelve all-weather cabriolet has LeBaron body. Front design, not typical of the famous designer, has bulky, awkward style.



The 1938 model lacked the grace of the '37s but is nevertheless considered an outstanding example of mechanical smoothness.



Original design by Darrin of 1940 Super Eight was listed at \$6,900, is considered by many the most beautiful of all Packards.



After several minutes serious contemplation about how to begin this opus, I decided on a song parody. The story of my life might be subtitled "how to succeed in the automobile business without really crying." That's simple, and that's it. A life rich with setbacks has given me the knowledge and experience necessary to cope with the many obstacles that are placed in the path of body designers or stylists. I think I've encountered them all. Engineers who resist any advance in material design that might improve the architecture or the appearance of the car, because it encroaches on their domain or "offers problems." And in the case of the automobile companies, executives—*every* executive being a potential body designer, and each having a totally different idea what an automobile should look like. Believe me, this latter is still the largest single contributing factor to the lack of advancement in automotive design. As an example, one of the world's largest automotive manufacturers has openly stated that they always try out any new design on one of their divisions, and if successful then allow the other

divisions to use the same theme, a practice unfair to the division that tries out the new design and finds it unsuitable and unfair to the other divisions if the particular design is a great success, thereby setting them back several years in their own development of new ideas. So much for wailing.

All in all, as I look back, I feel that everything that has happened to me had meaning. For instance, it seems that if Edsel Ford had taken my advice and prepared for the Model A before the end of the run of the Model T, I would probably have gone to Detroit and been very little heard of from then on—no matter what I might have accomplished. If the Dodge Company, in building the Victory Six, had used a body with a sloping windshield, as I had recommended to them, some five years ahead of the industry, I would probably have ended up a millionaire with no inclination to be anything *but* a millionaire. And if I had continued with General Motors I am afraid I would have at best become an assistant to the assistant to the Vice-President of Design, truly a fate worse than death.

Summer 1968 AQ

DISASTER IS MY BUSINESS

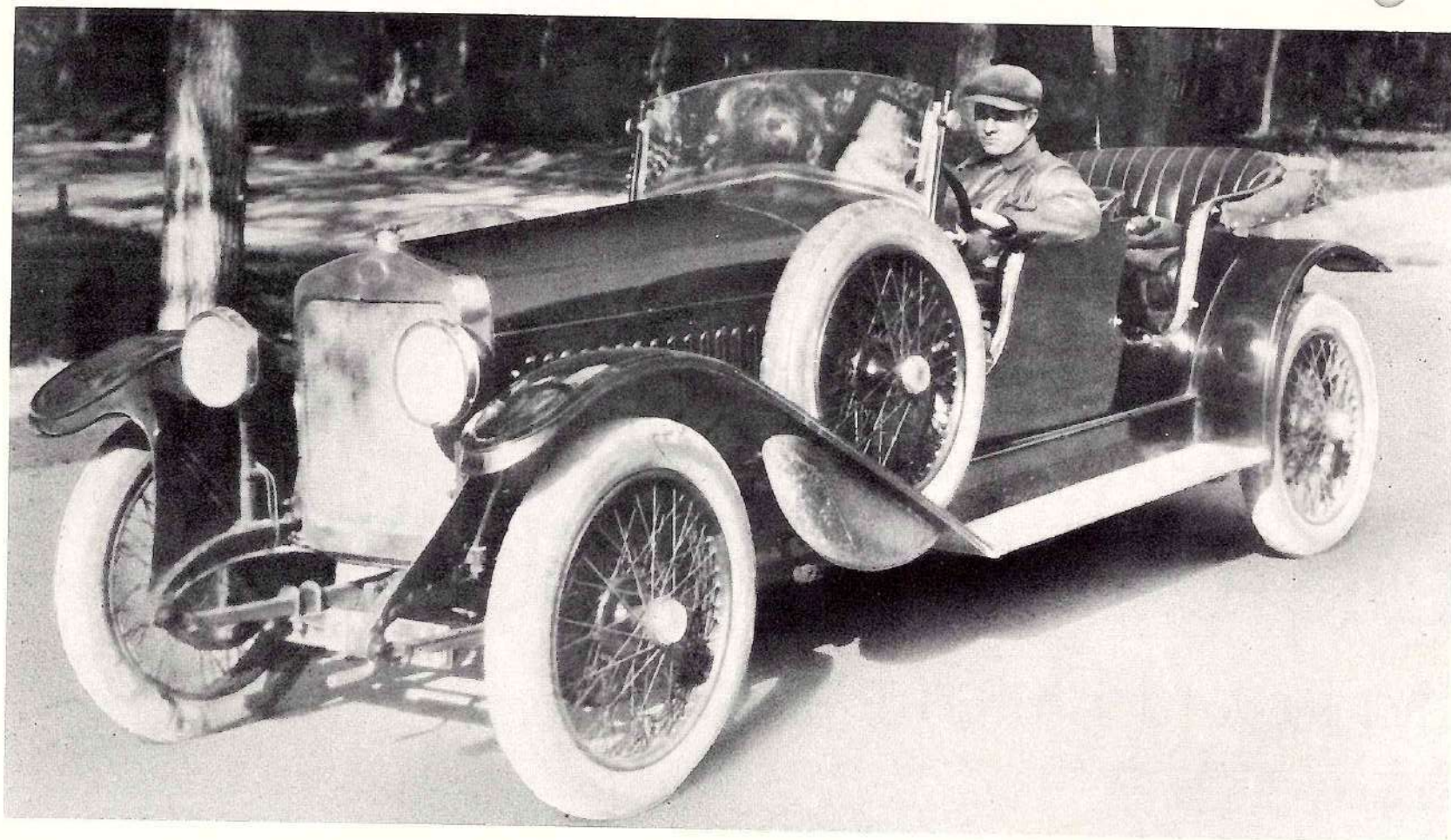
by Howard "Dutch" Darrin

But worst of all I would have lost the opportunity of working with a number of great geniuses in the auto industry of France, like Louis Renault, André Citroën, Ettore Bugatti, the brothers Panhard—associations that brought me very close to these men from whom I learned so much and to whom I owe so much. I should also mention my wonderful association with Sir John Siddeley of Armstrong-Siddeley, for whom I was privileged to build show cars and assist in designing. England was also one of my most successful markets. It was my privilege to build as many Rolls-Royce bodies as any other manufacturer outside England. And it remains my firm belief that the designing and building of custom bodies is the shortest road to the developing of new and startling designs. This has been proven in recent decades by the Italians, without a doubt the leaders not only in custom bodies but in advanced styling, both for production and custom work.

It must be realized that the progress to be made in the art of both beautifying the automobile and making it more acceptable to the public is a com-

bination of engineering, architecture and, naturally, of styling. This combination no longer exists in America for any individual. It is for this reason that Italy, with its many custom builders, has been able to develop stylists who are not only experienced and qualified in the construction of automobile bodies, but are also very familiar with chassis problems, allowing them to approach the automobile as a chassis-body entity and enabling them to follow designs through to actual construction.

My own story in this whole lofty business begins—humbly—back in 1916, with John North Willys. He had heard about me through the daughter of his advertising agent, had been told that I was an engineer with Westinghouse, and that I might be able to solve a problem that had long intrigued him—that of designing an electric gearshift. It was Mr. Willys' far-sighted belief that a simple automatic gearshift could be installed in an automobile. At this time he was building 1,500 Willys cars a day, but the greatest sales obstacle was the new customer who had never driven a car



before. I agreed to design an electric gearshift, and Willys shipped me a car.

I remember receiving the notice from the freight company that there was a car waiting to be picked up. I was so thrilled and excited that it took me three hours to locate it. By the time I got it on the street and had the engine running I suddenly realized that not only did I know nothing whatsoever about building an electric gearshift, but I could barely drive a car without one! However, I finally got it home, put it away in a little workshop, pulled up the floorboards and had a good look at the gearbox. After a bit of study I finally conceived the idea of using two small electric motors with a field coil wound with a double wire, so that all that was necessary to reverse these motors were two little buttons which I mounted at the center of the steering wheel. (Some time later Cutler-Hammer brought out an electric gearshift magnetically actuated which was not practical, due to the ex-

cessive amount of current it needed to change the gears.)

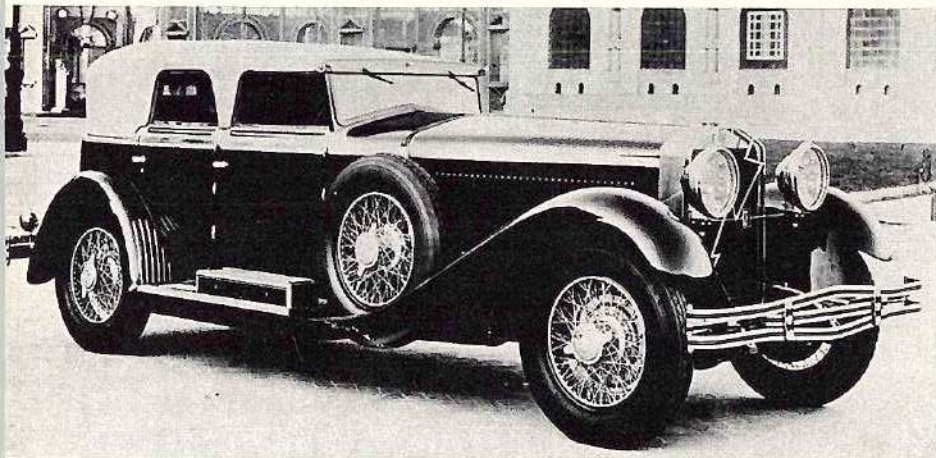
Willys expected the gearshift to be put into production in 1917; however, the war interrupted the program, and when the war was over the backlog on car deliveries was so great that any mechanical device for shifting gears was put off until twenty years later when Oldsmobile introduced the Hydramatic in 1937.

However, during that period two things had happened that would influence my entire life. First, my service in France had endeared me to that country, and secondly the automotive experience I had in designing the electric gearshift made me feel that this might be my career, rather than electrical engineering.

Dutch Darrin's first venture into custom body building in Paris: a 1922 Delage.

By 1920 I had founded America's first scheduled airline, called Aero Limited. We had stations at Atlantic City, Miami, Palm Beach and several other localities. We had purchased six HS2L flying boats and had altered the gunner's cockpit to accommodate four passengers. We flew these planes between Miami and Nassau, Palm Beach, Key West and Atlantic City. We were recorded in the Manufacturer's Guide as the first scheduled airline in America, and employed several ex-Navy pilots such as Jack Rutherford, then well known in automobile racing circles. Juan Trippe, inspired by our efforts, formed Pan American Airways out of the Miami base and went on to an enormous success as the president of that company. As for us, there was disaster. When four of our pilots were killed in a seaplane traveling between Palm Beach and Miami, we sold out and gave the new owners use of the name "Aero Limited."

On my return to New York I purchased two Delage chassis from Walter Chrysler. He had bought them to study, and I was fortunate to get both for \$1,200. I put bodies on each chassis, one of which, incidentally, I sold to Al Jolson. In the course of this venture, I met Tom Hibbard.



I would like here to pay tribute to Tom, my former partner, who in my belief was the pioneer in the custom body revolution. As founder of Le Baron in 1921, he was the creator of the famed Le Baron bodies that were so popular then and so highly desirable by collectors today. Various European car importers—Isotta, Minerva, Hispano—brought to Le Baron immediate acceptance, and he received numerous orders.

About this time Brooks Ostruck, the Minerva dealer in New York, wanted to have bodies built in Europe for the Minerva chassis. I decided to take a flyer and make the trip to France. Because my ideas so coincided with those of Tom I invited him to join me in the trip. Initially we thought we might establish a European branch for Le Baron. However, when we arrived in

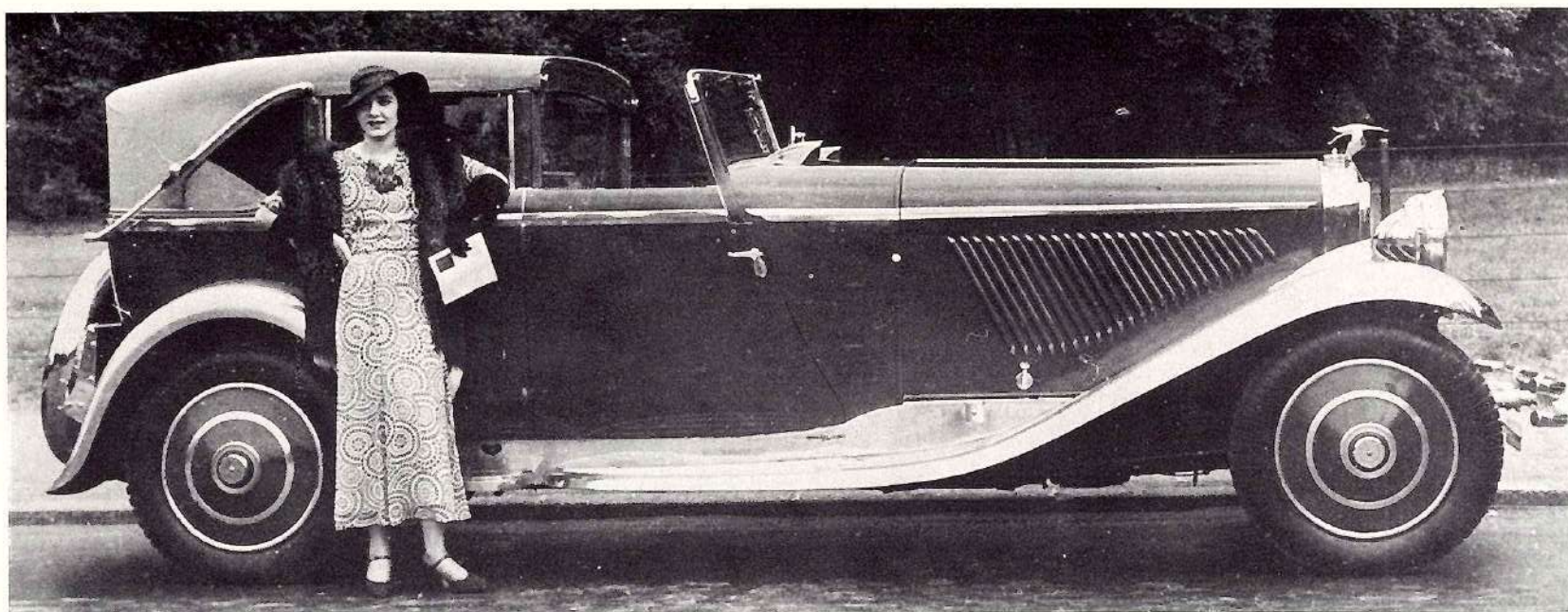
A striking 1929 Isotta-Fraschini built by Castagna, Italy, under Darrin license.

France, the chance for a Minerva dealership seemed so attractive that we abandoned the idea of using the Le Baron name and organized our firm as Hibbard and Darrin. This was in 1922.

Initially the Minerva company greeted our proposition of a Minerva agency in Paris with amusement. In truth, they said the idea was absurd; in ten years they hadn't sold a dozen Minervas in all of France. My idea was to sell the cars to Americans living in Paris. When they returned to the United States they could bring the cars home, with the duty exemption on used property, at a cost considerably lower than the New York price. Minerva didn't like this at all; they wanted to protect their New York agents who were selling their cars for about \$13,000. Consequently they insisted that the cars not be shipped to America for six months following purchase, figuring, I suppose, that by that time the cars would be considered "used," and a price lower by a couple of thousand dollars would be not inappropriate. Yet they still weren't convinced. I don't think they trusted us, but finally they accepted our good intentions, and agreed to our dealership if we would put up \$20,000, of which \$5,000 would be paid for each car that somehow found its way to New York before the stipulated six months had elapsed.

We agreed to this, feeling that somehow we could talk them out of the deposit if we proved to them the car was actually going to stay in Paris. Fortunately for us the Paris salon was held one week after our arrangement with Minerva, and we had cards printed up with "Minerva de Paris" and "Minerva de France," as well as colored drawings of body designs. While one of us stayed at the Minerva stand the other roamed around the salon looking for any Americans who looked rich enough to buy one of our cars. We did a terrific business. Instead of having \$20 in the bank, we ended up at the close of the salon with over \$25,000 in deposits. We rented a showroom on the Rue de Berri just one block from the Champs Elysées. The rent was minimal, and as a matter of fact, when we later moved to the Champs Elysées, we rented this particular showroom to a Duesenberg agent who in turn gave us many body orders. We were very fortunate in many ways. Those Belgian coachbuilders turned out some fine work, although they took a little supervision, and we spent some time at Minerva in Belgium adapting their factories to the American type of sheet metal construction, using as little wood as possible.

Much to our surprise, we sold quite a number of our cars to Frenchmen. One amusing situation came about when a member of the French nobility, whose name I shouldn't mention, saw one of our bodies on a Minerva chassis and decided to buy one for his Hispano chassis. Because he used his car for the opera and other formal events, he specified that we must raise the roof to allow him to wear his silk hat. So six months later, when he came to get his car, he brought along his valet who had a leather box containing said hat. When he went up to the car he was delighted but could not understand why it did not look higher than the other cars. When he got into it he found sitting difficult and the silk hat impossible. He debarked, furious, calling us every name imaginable—in French, of course. I tried to pacify him by telling him that there must have been a misunderstanding, that I assumed he would go to the opera with Madame la Duchesse, and certainly he wouldn't wear his hat in the car while she was present. This only in-



furiated him more, and he stomped out of the showroom demanding his money be returned. Several days later, his secretary phoned us demanding to know why Monsieur le Duc's car had not been delivered. We were, of course, delighted. It proved that the appearance of the car was what had attracted him, and he wanted it, whether it fitted his hat or not.

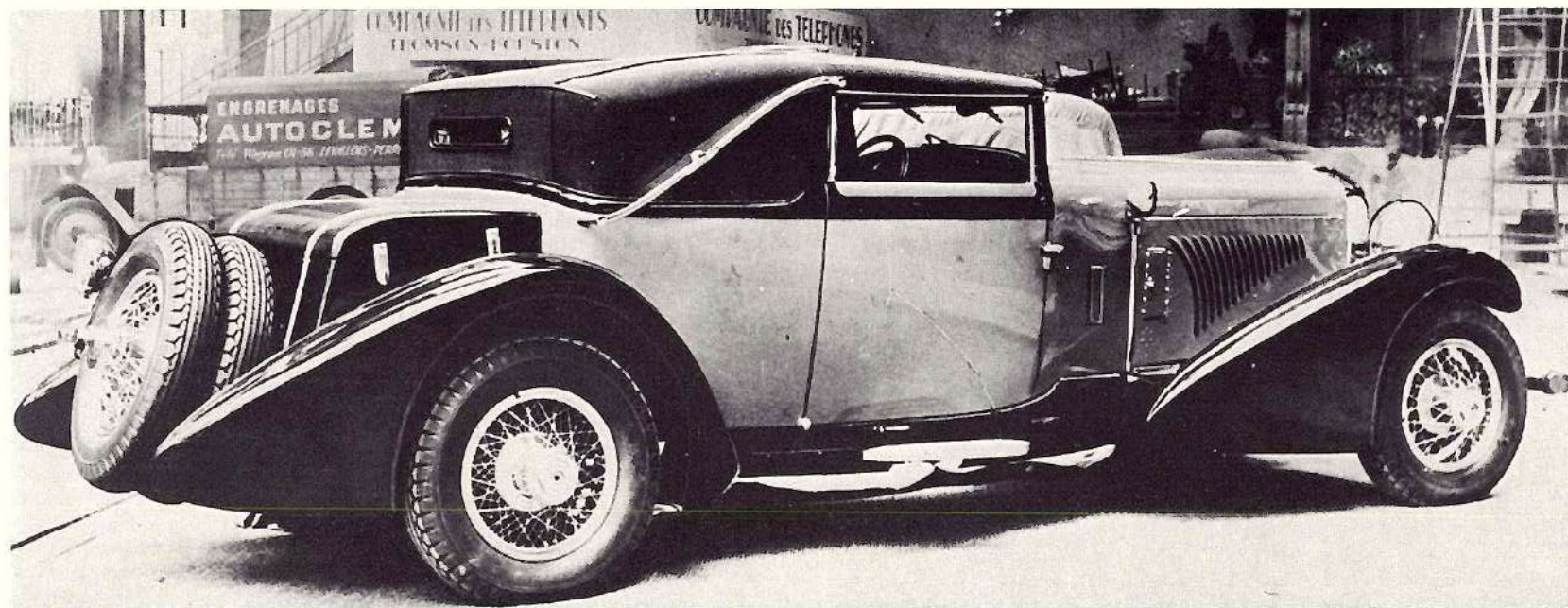
We were two young kids when we came to Paris with only an idea. But everything seemed to help us make an impossible dream come true. In Paris at that time there was what might be called a vacuum caused by four years of war, and lack of capital and many other things, and the automobile coachbuilding business had not recovered. Also, the old ideas still held forth. Now understand, the French coachbuilders were terrific. They had terrific sports cars, in fact they had terrific cars of all kinds, but their construction was not up-to-date. And they were difficult to export to different climates because wood, and in some cases cloth as in the Weymann bodies, was used for panels. This was a great handicap.

Tom and I actually stepped into a situation in which we couldn't do anything wrong. Believe me, we weren't geniuses. We actually weren't very experienced, but we had one thing in our favor—our way of thinking. We thought ideas should be young and numerous old customs disregarded. We were riding high. We were consulting engineers for nearly every top motor-car company in the world: General Motors and Stutz in America, Renault and Citroën in France, Minerva in Belgium, Rolls-Royce, Armstrong-Siddeley and Barker in England, Daimler-Benz in Germany. For those companies to which we contributed design and styling, we built sample bodies

or show cars. Never, never had such an opportunity been given anyone. And, believe me, we were deeply grateful. During the 1928 Paris show, a friend of ours said, "You should be very proud. This might be called the salon of Hibbard and Darrin." Looking back, this might seem extravagant, but the only way to evaluate it is to look at photographs of 1928 production cars and the photographs of some of our cars. Actually, we hardly took a car on the street that a crowd didn't gather around with all sorts of questions. If any two people should have had their heads turned, it was Hibbard and me. And to tell you the truth, our heads were turned.

Actually the most profitable transaction we ever made occurred when a personal friend, Alex D'Arcy, who afterwards became an actor in Hollywood, came into the showroom. He told me that he had a customer, Vergil Neal, a perfume exporter to South America, who wanted to buy a special Rolls-Royce, but unless we quoted higher than Kellner Frères, our competitor across the street, we would lose the business. This I could hardly believe; however, I asked him what Neal had been quoted, and a price of \$41,000 was mentioned. A couple of hours later Mr. Neal came into the showroom with Alex and looked at our cars. Finally came the question of price, and after a long discussion of his needs, we quoted \$43,000. His face lit up, he beamed, turned to Alex and said, "You see, you're right. They *are* the best coachbuilders!"

Fernandez and Darrin Hispano-Suiza, Gran Prix winner at 1933 Paris show.



It took us a while to even admit to ourselves that we had ascended to this eminence. I had more than my share of luck, and if I may digress a moment, I'd like to illustrate. The biggest news event of 1927, of course, was the epic journey of the *Spirit of St. Louis*. When Lindbergh left Paris after his historic flight, he circled the Eiffel Tower and then flew over the Place de la Concorde, and as he had promised the night before at a gala dinner, dropped a note saying "Good-bye people of Paris." Believe it or not, I saw the plane circling, jumped out of my car, leaving it stalled in the middle of the Place, and as the parcel dropped from the plane, I ran after it and caught it like a football. I slid on my face for a few feet, then about fifteen other people piled on top of me. Ironically Charles Levine, whose contribution to aviation history has never really been recognized, had some time before urged me to join Clarence Chamberlain in a transatlantic flight, but I had been down in the ocean between Palm Beach and Bimini and felt single-engine planes too impractical. Ironically, too, Lindbergh had talked to Charlie about flying across—solo, but Charlie hadn't thought he could make it. And here Fate had given me the booby prize. Out of four million inhabitants in Paris, I was the one to catch Lucky Lindy's note, and I became a hero in the shadow of a hero. The story was widely carried by the press, and I received a congratulatory letter from my brother-in-law who hadn't spoken to me for five years. I doubt he had but the vaguest idea of

what I was doing in the automobile business.

Well, I was busy. Both Tom and I were up to our delighted ears in work. Around 1927 Brooks Ostruck bought out our Minerva agency, for which we were very happy. We were able then to concentrate and expand our business in bodies, thus opening a whole new vista of Rolls-Royces, Hispanos, Delages, Mercedes, Packards, Cadillacs and so on. Paris was a city of opportunity, and our showroom was the happy meeting place for friends and customers alike. I met Lord Mountbatten and had the privilege of playing on his polo team at Deauville. He ordered one of our cars. Because of his position, it had to be built in England, so he arranged with Barker to build the body to my drawings. This, of course, thrilled me to no end. When we delivered this car with the centuries-old Barker nameplate coupled with our own few-years-old nameplate you can imagine how we felt. By the same token, when we built bodies in Paris for Rolls-Royce of America, the bodies would be then delivered to Brewster, the Rolls subsidiary in New York City. This time our nameplate appeared with one of the oldest and most respected coachbuilders in America, and also Tom's alma mater.

Of course, regardless of how well we were doing, we always worried before a show. I recall the night before the Paris salon in 1928, we were arranging our cars on the Hibbard and Darrin stand and on several other stands where we had exhibits. Martin de Alvaga Unzué, better known as "millionaire sportsman Macoco," came by our stand. He was a friend, and I showed him our various cars.

He looked for awhile and inquired about prices. I told him. Then he said,

Fernandez and Darrin Duesenberg, similar to Garbo's, built for 1933 Paris show.

"I think I'll take them all!" I asked him what he meant; *all* the cars on our stand? He said, "No, I want that one on the Rolls stand, and I want the one on the Hispano stand, and I want the one on the Chrysler stand. Then I want the four on your stand." Then he asked me if I wanted him to sign anything. I just asked him about delivery dates and he said right after the show. Well, this was too much for me. We had been working day and night for a week and wondering whether we were going to have any success at all—and now all of a sudden we were sold out! Well, Hibbard had to practically carry me out to the nearest bar, and I downed a couple of pernod. They were enough to fix me good.

Over the years I think Macoco bought somewhere near twenty-three cars from us, most for resale and the majority being sent to the Argentine. I still hear from him occasionally, and he wants me to come down to Buenos Aires and build some cars. I admit the idea is interesting.

So were most of our customers. Wonderful people who loved automobiles. One of our most touching experiences revolved around a little German lady who lived in Coney Island, New York, with her husband; together they had made a lot of money. She was on her first trip to Paris and happened to stroll into our showroom. Frankly I didn't expect to sell her an automobile, but she was delightful and amusing and stayed with us for several hours, getting into a car, sitting in it, trying all the accessories. Finally she said, "I'll take one. How much is it?" I told her around \$11,000 and that delivery would take about a year. "I can wait," she said, "I've got the 'wot' to ride in. I've a 'Pickard' and a 'Udson.' As a matter of fact, I think I'll take two. But whatever you do, don't make a sucker out of me. My old man would never forgive me." Then she sat down and wrote out a check for \$10,000. We carried out her order more carefully than if she had been royalty.

Often our business was more than just automobiles. I'm reminded of a certain Mrs. Collins, a very rich American woman who ordered one of our Minerva creations. First she bought the automobile, and the next thing we knew we had sold her a chateau at Deauville that we had acquired on speculation. Then we helped her purchase furniture, and our New York agent acquired a beautiful pedigreed show dog for her. I mention this only to show our diversity: We were very happy selling just automobiles, but we were willing, if asked, to give advice on practically anything.

This policy had its amusing aspects. Many of the Paris antique dealers decorated our showroom with fine paintings, valuable tapestries, and the like—and we got a lot of first-hand information about other things of value. One day Tom heard about a property in Spain, one of the few remaining estates that carried a title with the land. He called me at the factory and said, "Dutch, how would you like to be half a Duke?" I liked the idea pretty well, despite the fact that the property consisted of a ruined castle and a lot of rock. The price was attractive, and the whole thing appealed to our sense of humor—and before long we found someone who liked the idea of being a whole Duke.

Now I would like to turn to our experiences with European manufacturers. Overall they were delightful. Take our association with Sir John Siddeley of Armstrong-Siddeley. He had given us a three-year contract to build bodies for the English automobile salon and also to consult on body design.

We would go over to Coventry periodically and suggest designs, draw up various proposals and create a couple of cars for the London and Paris salons. But at the end of three years we had accomplished practically nothing. What we didn't realize was that Sir John was from the old school; he felt that he had a terrific business with Prime Ministers and such, and that the Armstrong-Siddeley was a conservative and dignified automobile and should remain so. But he was under considerable pressure from his directors and the sales organization to modernize, and so he employed us to show that he was doing everything possible in that direction. Our contract expired around the time of the 1930 Paris salon, and we were feeling rather blue about the situation because we knew that we had not earned our money. We awaited Sir John's arrival with trepidation. When he came to our stand, he was beaming, and he said, "Mr. Darrin, Mr. Hibbard, I think that you were inspired when you increased the diameter of the hub caps to five inches. You improved the looks of the car considerably. How would you boys like to renew your contract for another three years at the same figure?" We were extremely fond of this great man who had virtually developed an empire in Coventry, and we told him that, frankly, he wasn't taking full advantage of what we could offer him, but we were willing to renew the contract if he would give his word that he personally would consider the various improvements we had to offer. He readily agreed to this, and I'm happy to say, in later years we were able to help him.

Now we come to Louis Renault, a very modest but outspoken individual, and we considered it a great compliment that he called on us for advice. He was really a man that, I would say, would be least expected to call on two Americans as styling consultants. He personally ran every phase of his business and was fully conversant with all problems. In 1928 he invited Tom and me down to his house on the Seine, and we spent the afternoon with him. He agreed to pay us a certain figure—not much, but we were sure glad to get it. We had tried to talk him into paying us on a royalty basis but didn't succeed. However, we did succeed that same year with Daimler-Benz, and they were the only company to pay us a royalty in Europe, except for other coachbuilders. They allowed \$5.00 on all cars over three liters and \$2.50 for all cars under three liters. I must say it was very unusual, and if I didn't have the contract in my files, I wouldn't believe it myself after all these years.

We had numerous contacts, too, with American manufacturers. During the New York auto show around 1927, Herbert Franklin visited our stand, introduced himself and asked about the Hispano-type radiator he had placed on his air-cooled car. Could I suggest anything to improve its looks. I could and did. The simulated radiator cap was too small, and I suggested that its diameter be increased similar to the one on the Hispano. He did this and later sent me a nice thank you letter for the suggestion.

We also met and got to know the great Fred Moskovics, president of Stutz and an outstanding figure in the field of engineering. We signed a consulting contract with him in 1929 for a \$10,000 a year fee, and it was one of our nicer relationships with an American car company.

One of our less happy experiences was with E. L. Cord who, when in Paris around 1926, ordered a sample body that would hopefully inspire his

designers back in Indiana. We understood that if he accepted the model, he would recompense us in one way or another. We made a very good price—actually cost price—on the car. When I delivered, I went to his factory in Indiana from Paris. He thanked me very kindly, accepted it, used it as a basis for a new design—but, unfortunately, he had forgotten all about any idea of compensation. You might call such an experience a “dry run.”

On the other hand, we had an amazing experience with Stewart MacDonald, president of the Moon Motorcar Company. One day he was looking in our window at a new Minerva body. We invited him in, but he said he wasn't a buyer, only a window shopper, but finally he did come in and introduced himself. It turned out that he was making a car called the Diana that resembled the Minerva. So after a long talk, I suggested that we go to St. Louis and work on his new car. He seemed to like the idea and asked what we charged. We told him General Motors was giving us a thousand dollars a day, and if we cut the price, it might not be ethical. He was a little shocked, but he was nice about it and said if we ever got to America to give him a ring. Later that year when I was in Detroit, I did just that. He agreed on the fee and asked how many days would I need. “Well,” I said, “maybe we can make it a weekend party.”

Two or three days wasn't very long, but I thought perhaps I could give him some outside lines and then his staff could fill in the body draft. That way he would get away for about \$3,000 which pleased him no end. When I arrived at the plant Friday morning he had everything ready, drawing materials, instruments and so on, and I plunged to work. About noon they wheeled in my lunch on a tray. I immediately went to Mr. MacDonald's office and said, “Look, in France we take two hours for lunch. Now what's the nicest restaurant the farthest away from the factory? If you will loan me a car I think I can make it back here in two hours.” He was rather aghast, but he gave me the car, and I took off. Actually I was pulling his leg. To make up for lunch, I stayed 'till two in the morning working on the plans and was able to finish the job in three days as agreed upon. Some people may remember this car as “the Moon with the Hispano-Suiza radiator.”

Now I would like to tell you about a few of my disasters. The first I call my gold-plated disaster. It involved Edsel Ford. One day sometime in late 1926 he came into our showroom and gave us an order for five Lincoln bodies. We were delighted. Several days later I happened to meet him on a polo field, and in the course of conversation I suggested that we make up a sample body for the Model T, something that could be held in reserve in the event that he might want to change the body style. He received this suggestion most unfavorably, and actually was rather annoyed that I should even suggest that the Model T would be changed at any time in the near future. When next I saw him I again broached the subject, suggesting that we put our body offering on a Chevrolet chassis with practically the same wheelbase—that way there would be no question of a security leak. This suggestion fared no better than the first, and for an awful moment he said that he was considering cancelling the Lincoln body order because he felt that any rumor of an impending change in the Model T would be catastrophic. Before I had the opportunity of speaking with him again, the Model T was laid to rest, the Ford company shut down for quite a period of

time, and millions and millions of dollars were lost. When later I did see him, he said, “Dutch, why didn't you hit me on the head with that polo mallet?” Well, I still had had some hope of selling him on the idea, but the events came just too fast. He was a grand person, and I only wish I had had the good fortune to serve him. Tom Hibbard later became head of Ford styling, and I was gratified to think that he would be working for Edsel Ford. What I learned from this experience was that when you know you're right, *never give up!*

Now to my platinum-plated disaster with Dodge. I categorize my disasters, incidentally, not chronologically, but by the degree of my own personal devastation. Around 1926 Charlie Schwartz had negotiated the deal between the Dodge family and Dillon Reid when that banking organization bought the company. He came to Paris and invited me to New York to talk to the new Dodge management about redesigning the car. I went.

The problem was simple enough. They wanted a car to impress the public and increase sales. They were going to put a six-cylinder engine in a four-cylinder chassis, but in addition to increased power, they also wanted to have a more important and expensive looking car. Well, this fit in very well with my line of thinking, because I knew that simply by sloping the windshield, the body length would look more compact and the hood would appear to be a lot longer. I had been doing this for several years and explained exactly what I had in mind. They sent me out to the Dodge plant, gave me a check for \$10,000 and an order for four sample bodies. This order was executed with all haste, and on completion the cars were shipped to Detroit and I followed them shortly after. I must say I was received very cordially. The engineering staff placed everything necessary at my disposal, and I was lulled into a false sense of security. I drew up the actual loft drawing of the slightly modified version that the engineers pointed out was necessary for making the dies, and we came to a complete understanding without the resistance which I had been warned to expect.

They were wonderful except for one small detail. They decided that thirty cents was too much to pay for a double arm window regulator necessary to lift the front window which was supported on only one side due to the windshield design. Without saying one word to me on the subject they bent the windshield forward, thereby not only shortening the look of the hood but upsetting the car's whole balance. If they had gotten in touch with me and advised me of the problem, I think I could have solved it without straightening the windshield by merely putting a vent in the front window as there is today. But engineers sometimes like to prove stylists screwballs, when in reality they shouldn't get any kind of a hold on the design of the automobile. And the saddest part of the whole deal was that if they had just pushed the base of the windshield backwards so that the windshield glass and steering wheel would have the normal clearance, they would have had an acceptable car much the same as their competition—no car in production at that time had a sloping windshield. However, produced in its revised form, the car caused the loss of millions to the Dodge company and stockholders—and to Charlie Schwartz who had a considerable amount of stock in the company. My only reward from the venture was that it made Charlie Schwartz my supporter for life. Later he would arrange with me to design a

car for Lehmann Brothers for department stores, and he would introduce me to Joe Frazer, but that's another story.

Probably there is no metal precious enough to describe my next disaster—with General Motors. It all started in 1927 over the marked resemblance to the patented Hibbard and Darrin molding that appeared on the Cadillacs for the Paris Salon. The matter was settled in Paris; Tom handled it. Then both of us met with Alfred P. Sloan, Jr. and Harley Earl for lunch, and Sloan told us to write out a contract for whatever we wanted and they'd sign it, "because we want a couple of young boys like you in the organization." Then Earl took me aside and said, "Now Dutch, I'm not even sure of my job, so make it for only a year." We did, a \$25,000 retainer, plus \$1,000 a day for work done at their factory or at our factory at their instruction. We built five or six bodies, one on a Chevrolet and several on a Cadillac. These bodies eventually were used by Fred and Larry Fisher.

When I returned to Detroit from my Moon weekend, in 1928, I sat around the then Book Cadillac Hotel, waiting for the styling department at General Motors to receive me. They just wouldn't let me in. Whiling away the time, I met the road company of *Broadway*, one of the first plays about gangsters, then playing at the Cass Theater. I had so much fun with these people backstage during performances, and one day they suggested that I go on stage as one of the lingerie gangsters. My line was to be: "Bring on the lingerie!" Well, I rehearsed that line at least 100 times. But when my cue came, I missed it completely, and was shoved out on the stage completely tongue-tied. Somebody picked up my line for me. And that was my brief and only appearance on the legitimate stage.

Unfortunately, one of the Fisher brothers was in the audience, and there was quite some talk about the resemblance of one of the actors to a gentleman known as Dutch Darrin. But even this didn't get me into the styling department where the 1929 Buick was being completed. Maybe I was the last person they wanted to see. Finally, however, Alfred Sloan sent for me, and we had a long talk and he showed me pictures of the Buick mock-up. Now, one of the big misunderstandings with General Motors was the styling department's impression that I had disapproved of their work. Actually I was very embarrassed about the whole thing, and I told Mr. Sloan that I couldn't give any opinion from a photograph and that my arrangement with them was to create and offer new designs that would not conflict with those of their styling department. Sloan said the Buick looked pregnant. I didn't coin the phrase, but Harley Earl thought I did.

Well, the whole thing was blown way out of proportion. I was in such bad grace that it seems General Motors felt I deserved no consideration whatsoever. A lot of incredible things began to happen. Hibbard and Darrin, as everyone else, was thrown into the Depression, and times were tough. General Motors allowed our contract to expire, and then late in 1931, without my knowledge, they sought out Hibbard and offered him a job.

By this time Tom had had it with custom coachbuilding, and he accepted. But he didn't have an easy time of it. Heads of styling were very careful not to use anything that smacked of Hibbard and Darrin design, and the French curve was banished from the styling department. Flat-sided bodies were continued for far too long. I met Harley Earl several years afterwards at the

Paris salon and asked him how Hibbard was doing. He never really said, pointing out that he had drawers full of fantastic cars he had "drawn by terrific artists." One thing I do know is that none of these drawings he told me were so fantastic ever got out of the drawer and into one of his products.

When Tom left, I made what was probably the most important decision of my life. I decided to stay in the body business. Actually it had taken me many years to establish myself not as the salesman of Hibbard and Darrin, but one of its contributing designers. The torpedo, or what Tom calls the convertible phaeton body, the dreaming up of which he credits to me, proved to me that I was a designer, but it took a little longer to convince everyone else. As Tom says, the torpedo was good publicity, although not a big seller itself, but what we did with it was exchange the vee in the canvas of the roof for a straight pillar and this became the Hibbard and Darrin car. We didn't really have to design another car after that; with that formula we could devise just about any variation desired by a client. Anyway, I'm sure General Motors thought I had played little part in the thing. To them Tom was the designer of our duo, and when he joined GM I think they figured they'd hear no more from me.

It might have been a surprise to them when I joined with Fernandez. Mr. Fernandez was a fine man, a banker, with wonderful ideas, but so many interests that he had not the time to devote to designing custom bodies. With great appreciation for what this fine man offered me, I certainly attempted to put forward my best efforts. We had the most modern factory in France and the most important showroom on the Champs Elysées. He not only provided all the encouragement and financial backing necessary, but he went out of his way to buy both Rolls-Royce and Hispano-Suiza chassis and have them ready in advance—something that we never had been able to do at Hibbard and Darrin. Mr. Fernandez also had very useful connections in England where he had an agent who sold a large number of our bodies. Actually most of the Fernandez and Darrin cars stayed in France or England, very few reaching America.

Curiously, even by this time General Motors continued to think of me as a salesman. During one Paris salon, Charles Kettering stopped by my stand and looking it over said, "Dutch, are these some of the designs Hibbard left when he joined us?" I laughed and said no, that I had gotten the idea in Cannes, phoned my draftsman in Paris and, being the world's greatest salesman, was able to sell him on the idea and designed the car over the phone. Kettering was amused. So was I.

After Tom left I continued the relationship with Sir John Siddeley. Another rewarding experience was my association with André Citroën, which was rather brief because he died soon afterward. But I had the good fortune to collaborate with him on the 1932 Citroën which I think was the first unit body ever conceived. And what I learned during my association with him about unit body construction has stood me well to this day.

A unit body has many exterior sheet metal parts that can be changed at will. I have worked both on unit body and regular construction Panhard, DKW Auto-Union and several other European cars as well as American makes—in the changing of the sheet metal parts which is now called, in the trade, face-lifting. I go a little further by calling it fitting a new suit of

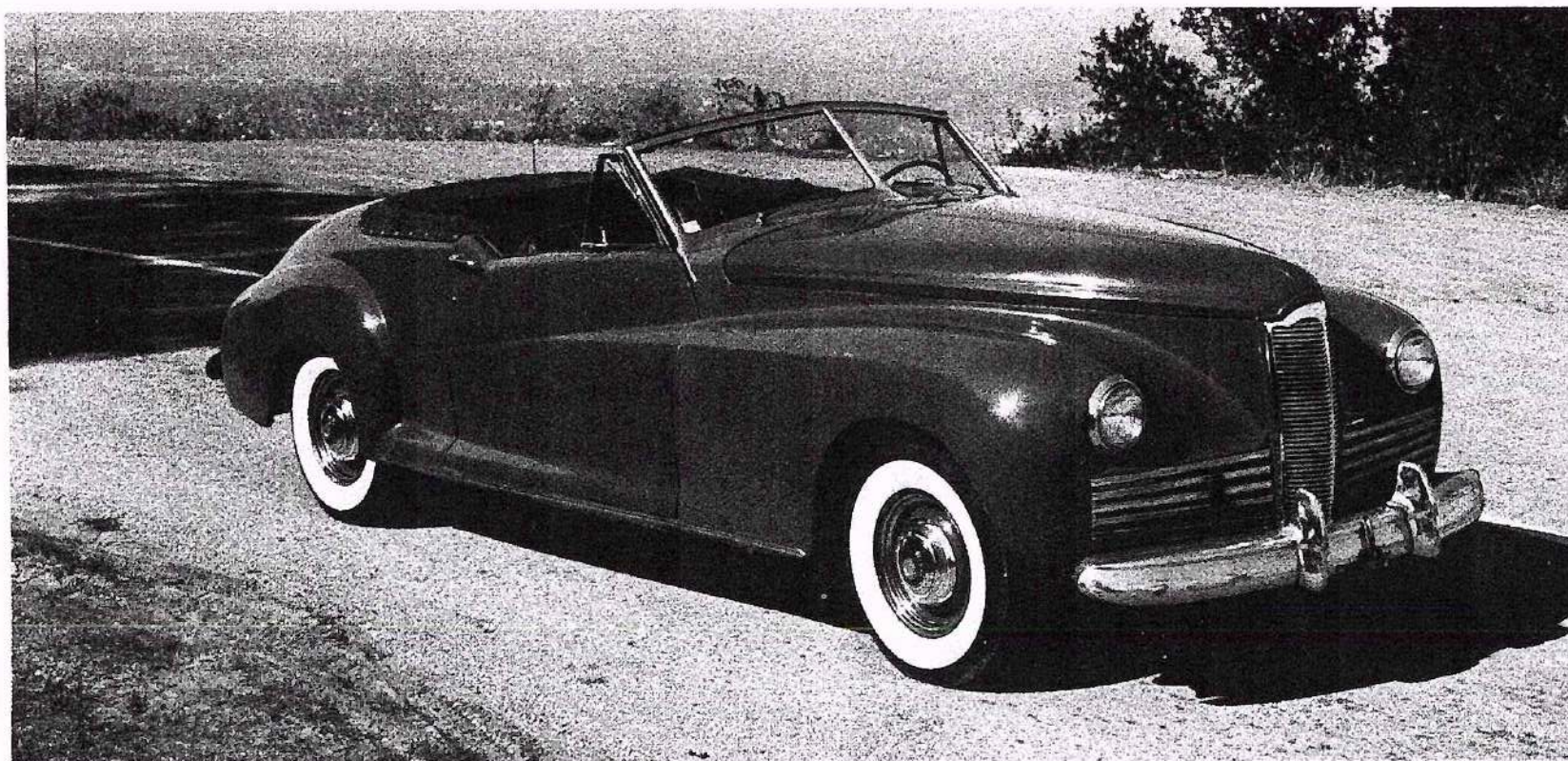
clothes. Up to a short time ago this was the procedure of most major manufacturers, but I'm wondering today whether this yearly change is just a method for inducing more sales, rather than improving styling.

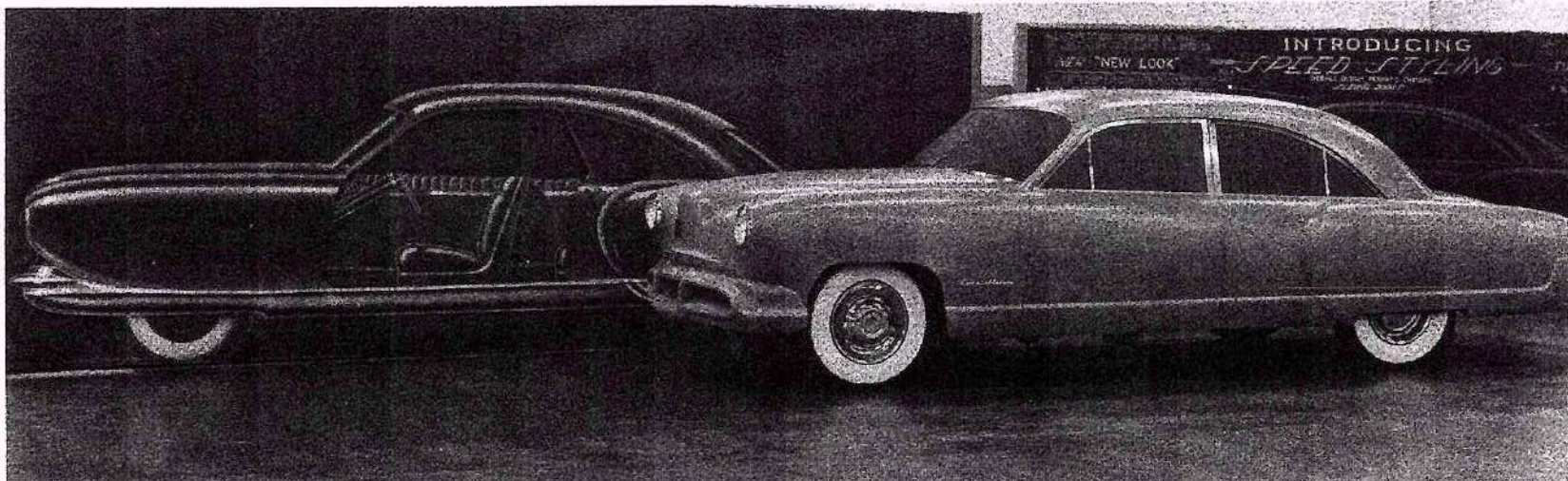
In looking back over the past ten years, I would say that in the early Sixties there was nothing to be really proud of. However, since the Buick Riviera, I feel the industry has arrived at a very excellent formula of design. But what are they going to do for an encore? It is very interesting to note that André Citroën's particular genius enabled him to build a car that has held up better and lasted longer—for reasons other than looks—than any other French car.

Around 1934 Studebaker asked me to come to South Bend to see if I could mix up their dies a little bit without spending too much money and come up with some sort of improvement. I had a Puss Moth airplane with a Gypsy Major motor, and as I could fold the wings, I decided to put it on a boat and bring it to America. From New York I flew to South Bend.

A one-off Packard Clipper body built in 1941 for the swashbuckling Errol Flynn.

On arrival Studebaker president Paul Hoffman met me and took me to his home for dinner. Then he gave me a big story of how I must be smuggled into the plant as Mr. Loomis. The chief body engineer frowned on any talk of a stylist being retained at that time. So I was taken to the plant as a visiting fireman, and the chief engineer of the whole works, who was let in on the Great Secret, called me to his office and asked me to show him what I had to offer. I showed him a conventional color drawing. Now he had been dealing with some of the illustrators and may have had some sad experiences, because he looked at the car and said, "Well, it looks nice, but from what I can see of it, it must have about a 190-inch wheelbase." I suggested he measure it, so he got out his slide rule and went through some gymnastics and finally came up with the answer: around a 160-inch wheelbase, according to his calculations. Just to rib him a bit I said, "I don't know about the slide rule business, I never use them. Why don't you just take a ruler and measure the wheelbase. It's to scale." He did, and it came out very simply 101 inches, or right on the money. Thus convinced, they said, "All right Darrin, go right out in the shop. But remember one thing, you can only spend \$50,000." I don't know how they figured the budget,





whether it was with a slide rule or a ruler, but anyway it didn't measure up. But somehow I was able to come up with some fairly good juggling of different dies and did make what might be called another model car.

After the Studebaker deal I took off for California to meet a friend. But this is a story that has a prologue, so I'd like to go back a few years to Paris. One day I was relaxing in the clubhouse of the Paris Polo Club, when Baron de Rothschild, a member of the board of directors, told me that there was an American out on the playground next to the polo field with a horse and polo mallet knocking the ball around amongst the children. He asked me to go out and see what he was up to, so I did. I drove up to the edge of the playground, got out of the car and approached the gentleman on horseback—who turned out to be Darryl Zanuck—explained to him the hazards of polo on a playground and asked him why he hadn't come into the Polo to play. He said his secretary had told him it would take two years to become a member. But I knew that if he belonged to any other club he could play as a visiting player, and he did, so I invited him in and arranged a game for him that afternoon. He won a cup! It turned out that this was the first cup he had ever won, and you can imagine how delighted he was. He couldn't show enough appreciation, and he asked me if there was anything he would do for me. There was.

At that time I also had an American movie theater, just a small place where I ran American talkies. So I said, "Sure, I'd like to have a picture." He gave me a picture all right. He gave me *Forty-Second Street*. It was my downfall, because it ran for a year, and I already had a weekly business of introducing a new program every Monday and having a delightful time. We had a bar and sold more drinks and made more money on the bar than we did on the picture. All of a sudden I wasn't getting the weekly change for the road show type of operation.

Well, to get back to the story at hand, Zanuck invited me to play polo on

the coast and said, "don't even bring boots, we'll take care of it." So from South Bend a friend and I flew to California. We got an aviator's reception. On the side of the plane we had plastered "Paris," "London," "New York," "South Bend" and so on—which was a big gag as everyone knew that we had shipped the plane to New York. But it was all fun, and it was a wonderful experience to be entertained by Darryl Zanuck in Hollywood, an experience I will never forget and probably the reason I decided to return to America in 1937.

The first car I built in America was a two-seater sport body on a Ford chassis for Percy Morgan, then a Packard 120 two-passenger convertible with cutaway doors and a long, long hood for Dick Powell. But he sold it after a few months because he said that people were yoo-hooing at him and he was embarrassed. Next was a Rolls-Royce for Countess Dorothy di Frasso. She specified only that it had to outshine the Rolls of Constance Bennett, her great social rival. The general contention is that it did. Then with Rudolf Stoessel and Paul Erdos, I opened a shop on the Sunset Strip, from whence to outfit any other celebrities who asked. We did very well. Our logo "Darrin of Paris" convinced more than a few that I was French, and in Hollywood that was better than all the work I had ever done. The Darrin four-passenger Packards came next—and then the war, during which we operated a flight training school in Nevada.

Shortly before V-E Day, the flight training program was cancelled, and I spent a season crop dusting and seeding in California—a messy business, I kept getting rice up my sleeves—and laying plans for my next disaster: the Kaiser caper.

I was in New York later that year with Mathis (Mat-Ford of France) for

During the Kaiser caper, Darrin's full-size clay model, chosen for production.

whom I was designing a small car. Charlie Schwartz invited me to meet with the Lehmann brothers about an automotive project they had in mind for their string of department stores, and one day while sitting with them and Charlie, Joe Frazer walked in to borrow some money for Graham-Paige. Charlie said it would be a good idea if I designed Frazer's new car, but recalling the Dodge deal, stipulated that it had to be without changes by any engineers. So I signed a contract, came up with a car, and the engineers proceeded to botch it up anyway. They wanted a rear engine, so they raised up the back end, filled in the Darrin doors, flattened the curved sides and removed the extended rear fender line. It was unrecognizable. Henry Kaiser, a marvellous man incidentally, spent a lot of time with me trying to rectify some of the mistakes, but the dies were already well in hand, so little could be done. The car came out as the Kaiser-Frazer. I had my name taken off it.

Then it came time for the new model in 1951, and I worked up a scale model of what I had in mind. Joe Frazer stopped to see me in Palm Springs and he said that I'd better hie to Willow Run because they had a couple of

cars there under consideration and ten days to decide on which one to produce. So I flew to Willow Run; they wouldn't let me in the styling department, didn't want to pay my royalties. I pointed out that I had a contract, that I would give \$5,000 to the workman's fund if they'd let me in, and that I would take no longer than ten days to do whatever I was going to do. Finally someone sneaked me in, and I saw the cars they were considering and decided I'd better get to work. The staff wasn't overly cooperative; they wouldn't give me any workmen at all, just one helper from their staff whom they sent home every night promptly at five o'clock. So I procured some of the clean-up help from the factory, gave them ten or fifteen dollars a night, and we proceeded to put together the two tons of clay for my version of the 1951 Kaiser. As it progressed I phoned Tom Hibbard who was chief of styling at Ford at the time and asked him for some tin foil for the bumpers, to dress the thing up a bit. He said sure, he'd send it over. A couple of days later I found my Kaiser competitors applying foil to their car and asked to borrow some, but they said, no, it did not belong to the company. So I called Tom again, and he said he'd already sent it over. It didn't take me long to figure out who was using it.

The meeting came off just as scheduled in ten days. Everybody came—all the heads of the complex Kaiser organization. All the Kaiser stylists lined up smack in front of my car, blocking it from view. In marched the gang, Henry Kaiser greeting everyone with a nod. He looked at the only two cars in sight. I knew he made quick decisions and never changed them, and I thought that I was done for.

I had to get his attention. I loosened my belt, and let my pants fall down. Henry noticed me. He also noticed the bodies standing in front of my body, and he tried peering over them. Then he said, "Gentlemen, please move away from this car." They did, with a slight push from me. Less than a minute later, he said, "Well, this is it!" And that was the Kaiser for 1951.

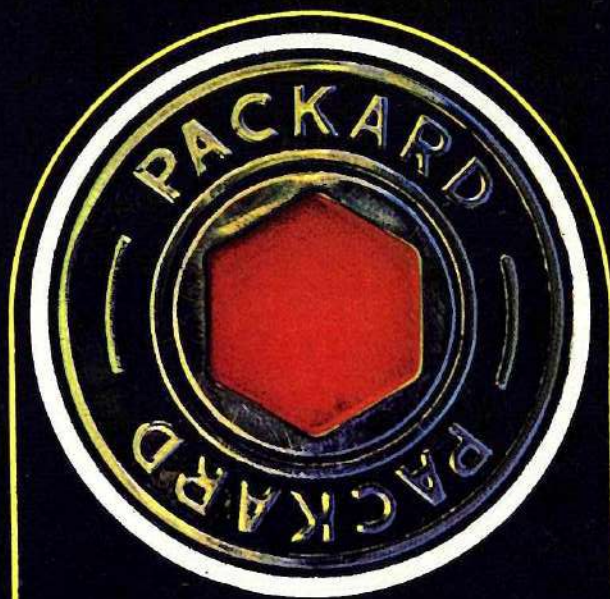
The only trouble I had with the Kaiser-Darrin was naming it. I built the car in my own shop in Hollywood, so I didn't have to contend with company engineers or stylists. At first the company wasn't really interested in the car, but then they came around and held a big meeting to decide what to call it. They concluded "DKF," for Darrin, Kaiser, Frazer. I said this was pretty silly, the DKF was a German motorcycle, the DKW a German car. Why use initials that would serve only to confuse? There were about thirty executives there, and they took a vote. It was unanimous for DKF. Then Henry Kaiser quietly reminded them that he hadn't voted. You could have heard a pin drop, and Henry said, "I say we call it the Kaiser-Darrin." Then Henry smiled—broadly—and winked at me.

A lot has happened since those Kaiser days, but *AUTOMOBILE Quarterly* has asked me for another story, so I'll save my further recollections for that. Right now I'm mocking-up a custom Rolls-Royce for Peter Zage. It's a gift for his wife, but he also wants an exclusive on it for display all over the country. It opens a whole new vista for me—a great opportunity.

I was asked once to describe my life in about five words. I can do it in one—happy. I've spent it doing the three things that I most enjoy in the world—building cars, flying airplanes and playing polo. Combine that with being married to a terrific woman—and what more can any man ask? ♦

Dutch Darrin with a customer for his Kaiser Darrin: Hollywood's Walter Pidgeon.





SUPER 8 VICTORIA queen of the darrin packards

Shortly before the last war Dutch Darrin had also designed and built a series of beautifully proportioned Packards which were sold through that company's dealer network. So the story goes, Darrin had been summoned to Detroit by Alvan Macauley, Packard president, to discuss what they might do for each other. Darrin had already made a number of special-bodied Packards for himself in Hollywood, selling them to the likes

of Clark Gable, Dick Powell and Chester Morris, and it seemed that this might well be the beginning of a beautiful friendship. It almost wasn't.

Firstly, the Packard engineers grumbled that custom bodies were a risky business as they were mostly made of wood, etc. Before the startled onlookers Darrin climbed up on the car he had brought with him and proceeded to jump up and down on it, demonstrating better than any number of words the



strength of the cast aluminum cowl that Darrin fitted to all of them.

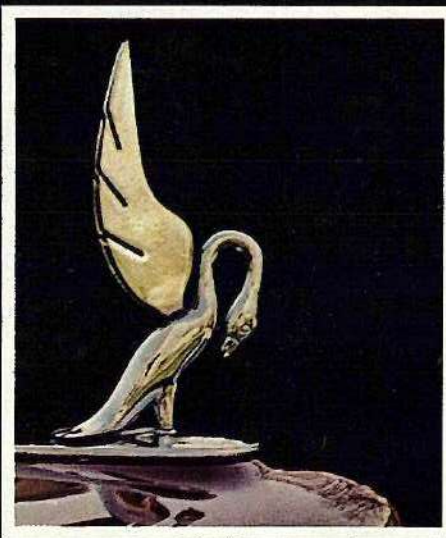
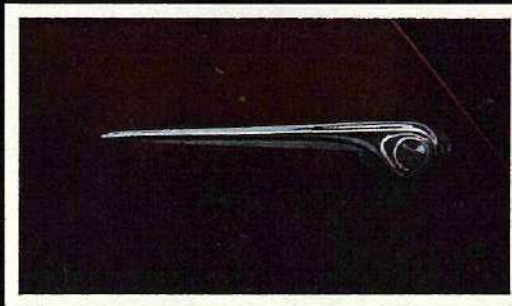
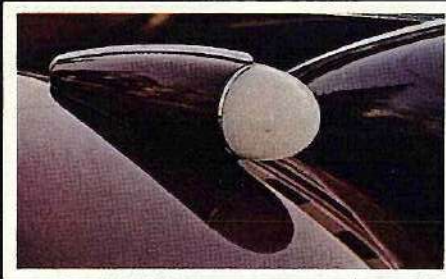
Macauley placed an order for five cars, later cancelled it but was finally bullied into ordering an initial dozen by infuriated Packard dealers who had seen the car and threatened to cancel their dealership if they couldn't have one.

Darrin's little shop in Hollywood really didn't have the capacity to cope with the added production, so arrangements were made with the moribund Auburn factory in Connersville, Indiana, to build the majority of the Darrin / Packards.

Later, in 1941 and 1942, the cars were built in Cincinnati, and that, alas, was the last of them. The car appearing on these and the following two pages is a 1940 Super 8 Victoria, from Connersville. Don't you wish you had one?



OWNER: IRVING ROTHMAN, ROARING 20 AUTOS



3rd Donnie Allison, Ford
4th Lee Roy Yarbrough, Ford

Rebel 400

Darlington, South Carolina, May 11th
1st David Pearson, Ford, 132.7 mph
2nd Darel Dieringer, Plymouth
3rd Richard Petty, Plymouth
4th Buddy Baker, Dodge

World 600

Charlotte, North Carolina, May 26th
1st Buddy Baker, Dodge, 104.2 mph
2nd Donnie Allison, Ford
3rd Lee Roy Yarbrough, Mercury
4th David Pearson, Ford

GRAND TOURING CHAMPIONSHIP

Rockingham, North Carolina, March 9th
1st Tiny Lund, Cougar, 95.8 mph
2nd Swede Savage, Cougar
3rd Bud Moore, Cougar
4th Buck Baker, Camaro

Hickory, North Carolina, May 21st

1st David Pearson, Cougar, 67.6 mph
2nd Tiny Lund, Cougar
3rd Buck Baker, Camaro
4th Bud Moore, Cougar

Greenville GT

Greenville, South Carolina, May 28th
1st Tiny Lund, Cougar, 63.0 mph
2nd Bud Moore, Cougar
3rd Buck Baker, Camaro
4th Jim Vandiver, Camaro

Columbia GT

Columbia, South Carolina, May 30th
1st Buck Baker, Camaro, 72.8 mph
2nd Donnie Allison, Mustang
3rd Lee Cutler, Porsche 911
4th Jack Ryan, Porsche 911

Cracker 200

Macon, Georgia, June 1st
1st Tiny Lund, Cougar, 70.1 mph
2nd Donnie Allison, Mustang
3rd Buck Baker, Camaro
4th Jim Vandiver, Camaro

U.S.A.C.

Indianapolis 500

Indianapolis, Indiana, May 30th
1st Bobby Unser, Eagle-Offenhauser, 152.8 mph
2nd Dan Gurney, Eagle-Gurney/Ford
3rd Mel Kenyon, Gerhart-Offenhauser
4th Denis Hulme, Eagle-Ford

contributors

ALFRED NEUBAUER is one of racing's most distinguished, and formidable, figures. It was under his

direction that Mercedes-Benz dominated racing during three separate eras—during the Twenties, the Thirties and the Fifties—and most of whatever we know about race management or strategy we have learned from him. Possessed of a remarkable degree of gentleness and sensitivity, he was nonetheless both feared and idolized by many of those who drove for him, and he commanded the awestruck respect of everybody else. He now lives in semi-retirement at Stuttgart, not too far from the Daimler-Benz works which he has personified for most of his life and which he still visits frequently.

PHIL HILL, as the saying goes, needs no introduction. A former World Champion Grand Prix driver, (Ferrari, 1961) and a collector of numerous other devices besides automobiles, he is an uncommonly articulate and knowledgeable gent who has as sharp an eye for an unusual piano as he has for motorcars. His latest acquisition, by the bye, is an extremely rare 1907 T-head F.L.A.T. landaulet, now in the process of restoration. Hopefully the car will be ready for showing at club meets by next spring.

HOWARD DARRIN is more sheer fun than just about anybody. He happened to drop by our offices one day (looking for a photo of a Packard he had designed) and he had the staff mesmerized within five minutes. There is, apparently, no limit to the stories he can tell about the coachbuilding business, both yesterday's and today's, or the people in it. We didn't get much work done that afternoon. But we did make a wonderful friend and landed a delightful article to boot. It seems that over the years just about everybody and his dog has written something on Dutch, and he needed little convincing that he finally ought to tell it like it really was.

AUTOMOBILE *Quarterly* has, since its inception, been a stalwart champion of the leisure-time historian, without whose efforts much of the fascinating web of automobile history would be lost and without whose contributions many of the stories in *AUTOMOBILE Quarterly* could not have been published.

At this time let us introduce to you three gentlemen whose valuable aid contributed immeasurably to the Buick section in this issue. A resident of Flint, Michigan, for the past thirty years, CLARENCE H. YOUNG has been employed variously as a social worker, administrator, employment manager and production manager, the latter for the Flint radio station WFDF. For the past six years he has been assistant director of the Manufacturers Association of Flint. Using the pen name of Thompson Young, he has written freelance articles for a wide variety of magazines, including *Esquire*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *McCall's*, and the *New York Times*. Long fascinated by the history of the automobile industry's development in Flint, he co-authored with William A. Quinn a biography of C. S. Mott published in 1963. His interest in and collection of Buick and Durant memorabilia is most impressive, as is that of ROGER VAN BOLT, also a Flint resident. Dr. Van Bolt earned his Ph.D. in history at the University of Chicago, was historical research editor of the *Illinois State Historical Library*, head of the research and information section of the Henry Ford Museum and

Greenfield Village, chairman of the Social Science Division of Flint Community Junior College and since 1965 has been director of the Sloan Panorama of Transportation. PARKER LITTLE is a subscriber from Chamblee, Georgia, who stopped by our offices about a year ago while on vacation in New York and who offered his help in historical research whenever we needed it. Currently a project engineer at GM's assembly division in Atlanta, he is a graduate of the General Motors Institute and worked previously at GM plants in New York, Michigan and Kansas. An active member—now treasurer—of the Atlanta section of the Society of Automotive Engineers, he has through the years amassed a large library of brochures, clippings and photographs of historically important cars, with especial deference to Buick, his favorite.

In subsequent issues we would like to recall for you the research consultants who contributed to the marque histories we have published in the past.

notes and picture credits

I REMEMBER RUDI

Excerpted, with the permission of the publisher, from *Speed Was My Life* by Alfred Neubauer (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1960). Painting by Walter Gotschke.

MEMORIES OF A RACING DRIVER'S WIFE

38: Photograph by Don Vorderman. 45: Courtesy of United Press International.

SSK IMPRESSIONS

Photographs by Laura C. Cunningham. Mercedes-Benz Club of America, Box 4550, Chicago, Illinois.

DISASTER IS MY BUSINESS

60, 61: Courtesy of George Moffitt.

SUPER 8 VICTORIA

Photographs by Don Vorderman.

WOULDN'T YOU REALLY RATHER BE A BUICK

Clara Durant letter courtesy of Clarence H. Young. 79, 82, 87, 88 right, 93, 94, 99 above: Photographs by L. Scott Bailey. 83, 86, 91: Photographs by Henry Austin Clark. 84: Photograph by Tom Burnside. 85: Photograph by Charles Miller. 88 left, 97, 98, 99 below: Photographs by Don Vorderman. 92, 96: Photographs by Russel Berry. 102, 103: Photographs by James R. Israel. The Buick Collectors Club of America, Sidney Aberman, 4730 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213. RESEARCH CONSULTANTS: Clarence H. Young, Roger H. Van Bolt, Parker Little.

THE BUG THAT ROARED

Photograph of Chevrolet and Burman in 1910 Bugs courtesy of the Sloan Panorama of Transportation. Color photographs by L. Scott Bailey.

COLOPHON

Courtesy of Clarence H. Young.



Coachcraft

Still going strong—California's sole surviving coachbuilder

by Strother MacMinn

RUDY STOESSEL is Coachcraft—he's one of the few remaining men in the U. S. who has built and understands how to create an entire automobile body from the frame up. He does this in the classical manner, using hardwood frames, steel forgings, bronze castings, and aluminum or steel panels.

Three partners—Rudy Stoessel, Paul Erdos, and Burt Chalmers—launched Coachcraft in the spring of 1940 at a time when custom body building was in the sunset of its era. Through the initiative of this trio, their organization not only survived but flourished through two decades (and a third with Rudy), yet the importance of Coachcraft's accomplishments have rarely been acknowledged. The shop perceived and catered to a hard core of Southern California enthusiasts who insisted on distinctive, individualized, top-quality cars.

To understand Coachcraft as it is today would be impossible if you didn't know Rudolph Robin Stoessel. He was born Apr. 17, 1907

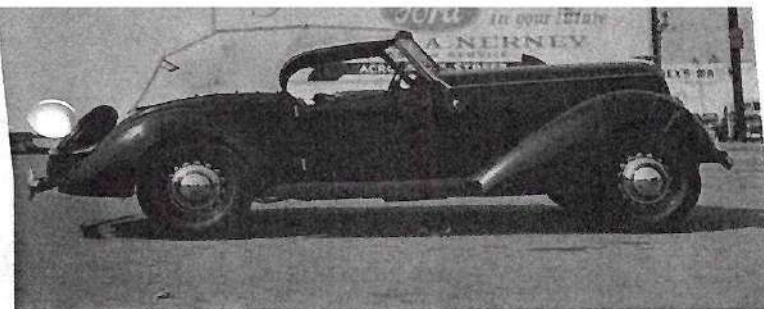
and grew up in Herzogenaurah, Bavaria, near Nuremberg, in a family of 10. At 13, he began an apprenticeship as a cabinetmaker and woodworker, studying structure, carving, and furniture design. Low economics forced him to take part-time work building radio cabinets and as a furniture mechanic.

Rudy's aunt in Buffalo, N. Y. had sponsored an older brother's emigration to the U. S. in 1925; Rudy followed in 1926 and found a job at a Buffalo planing mill. Looking for improvement, he was hired into Pierce-Arrow's experimental department and built prototype body parts in wood. This job lasted until 1929 when employees in that section were given the choice of either working on the regular production line or severance. Rudy resigned, his last project at P-A being a special towncar for Herbert Hoover's inauguration.

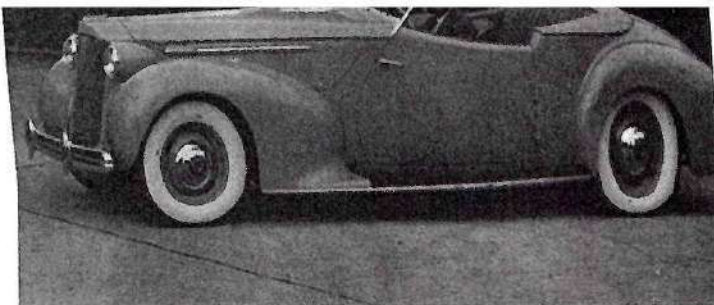
Young and adventuresome, Rudy had thought of taking a trip around the world ending in Germany, so he headed west with two friends via Greyhound. Arriving in Los Angeles with a total of \$25 left, he took a job as a cabinetmaker.

Several months later, he had the good fortune to be hired by J. Gerard Kirchhoff, a perfectionist craftsman/designer/inventor and former general manager of Walter M. Murphy, Coachbuilders. Kirchhoff had spun off from Murphy and formed his own special bodyshop in Pasadena. Rudy's first assignment was to help build a 2-passenger boattail speedster body for a custom chassis designed by Harry Miller for a Santa Barbara sportsman. The metalman who paneled Rudy's body frames was Paul Erdos, a Hungarian craftsman who had come to America in 1914, had served in the American Army, then worked as a metal shaper at the Bender body plant in Cleveland before coming to L. A. in 1926. These two men formed a friendship that was to last more than 30 years and that eventually made them partners in Coachcraft, Ltd.

Rudy's next job was with a Southern California Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg distributor named Fuller, where he helped build a variety of bodies, including two on L-29 chassis and an Auburn hearse. Then back to Kirchhoff to work on a Duesenberg touring towncar for Mrs.

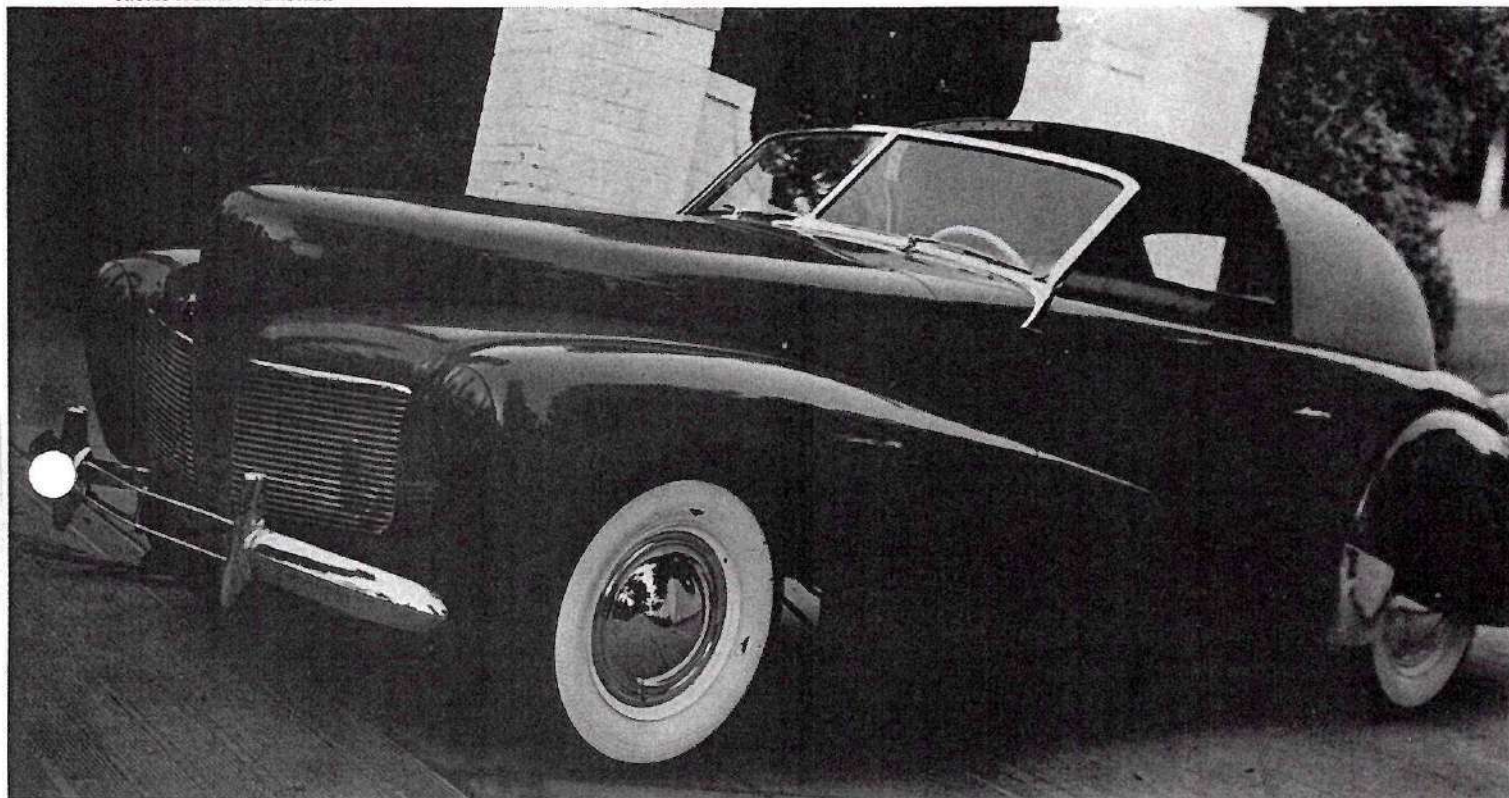


Dutch Darrin's first continental-style, U. S.-based sport phaeton was this '37 Ford, built at Crown Coach and financed by restaurateur Percy Morgan. Design later led to Darrin Packards built by Rudy Stoessel.



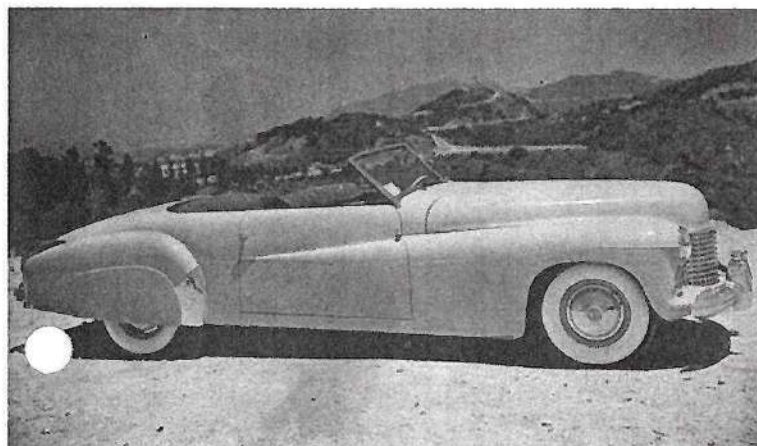
One of the first Darrin Packards shows Dutch at the wheel—this in '38. Darrin had his own shop on Sunset Strip in those days, and when he left, his 3 top men—Stoessel, Erdos, Chalmers—formed Coachcraft, Ltd.

PHOTOS COURTESY THE AUTHOR

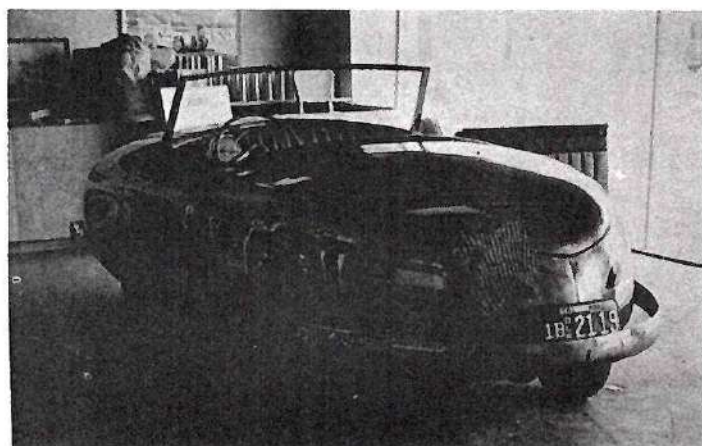


Peter Stengel commissioned Coachcraft to build this special cabriolet on a 1941 Mercury chassis in 1940. Among its features, fenders were extended, a 3-piece removable hardtop added, and all side glass, including the

quarter panes, rolled down into the door. After driving this car only a few months, Stengel sold it to Mrs. G. Huntington Hartford II, but then repurchased it in 1950. Stengel still owns the car, and it's now altered.



Coachcraft gave this 1941 Cadillac convertible the same treatment as Stengel's Merc, with flowing fenders, special windshield, removable top.



Bill Hewson's Rocket, built by Coachcraft in 1945 with aluminum body, V-8-60 amidship, was to go into postwar production but died aborning.

FLORIDA REGION

TARPON SPRINGS AUTO MEET

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of the Tarpon Springs Auto Meet at Tarpon Springs, Florida. March 1972 marked the seventh year for the event, and the usual excitement abounded.

The first day people came in from all over the southeast. By early afternoon Coburn Park hummed with activity. Participants were served dinner in the form of a tasty fish fry. Afterwards the cars lined up for a Gaslight Parade through town. Cars stretched away as far as the eye could see, and the streets were filled with people cheering us on. Everyone in Tarpon Springs is most enthusiastic over the show and go all out to make the event a big success.

Tarpon Springs is a picturesque little town approximately 28 miles northwest of Tampa, Florida near the Gulf of Mexico.

The prolific sponge industry, which was to become the community's most important means of livelihood, was founded at the settlement in 1890 by John K. Cheney, an early settler who sent out the first hooker boats.

John Cocoris was the first Greek to settle in Tarpon Springs, importing sponge divers from the island of Greece. Since that time, the town has grown famous for its endless docks lined with colorful sponge fishing boats that depart for the open sea for weeks at a time to harvest crops of golden sponges.

Today Tarpon Springs maintains the reputation of the largest natural sponge market in the world, despite a crippling blight of red tide that struck the sponge market in the 1940's, reducing the fleet from more than 200 to less than 30 boats.

Tarpon Springs is also noted internationally for its old world Greek culture. The Greek community, which comprises 2,540 of a 9,000 population, remains a center for exotic Greek foods, colorful traditions and costumes, and dramatic demonstrations of ancient religious rites of Epiphany in January and at Easter, and has bestowed on Tarpon Springs the nickname "Venice of the South".

Later that evening entertainment at the Elks Club was most unusual; the "Grandmas and Grandpas" put on a musical featuring music and jokes of yesteryear. Attired in colorful Gay Nineties costumes, they presented a pretty picture. All are of the Social Security set, yet no armchair sitters these for they really get involved and "have a ball" entertaining young and old.

We were out early the following morning since cars had to be removed from the Ford Garage by 8. Spotted Hal Hewson polishing his rare 1931 Packard Victoria coupe; Dick Stevens put a last minute shine on his 1924 Packard sedan which is always a winner, and it didn't disappoint him at this meet.

Alice and Dick Stevens were attired in attractive costumes for the occasion. She wore a pretty print with matching bonnet and he, knee length knickers, red socks, red vest and carrying a pocket watch inscribed with the word, "Packard".

New P.I. members Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Devereaux of Sarasota attracted a good deal of attention with their big Stearns-Knight sedan. Fitzzy and Jack Kranyik came in from Ocala with their 1931 Model "A" sedan, and they took home a trophy for that fine auto. Emily and Syl Seager also picked up two more trophies; one for the 1920

1940 Packard Darrin owned by Barbara and Larry Cole



SUMMER 1972

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THE FLORIDA REGION AT CYPRESS GARDENS — By Petie Clapper

Beautiful Cypress Gardens was an appropriate setting for the annual antique and classic car meet. The world famous gardens have been featured in many movies. Weekend activities began early with a wiener roast dinner Friday evening, followed by movies of early auto racing.

Our members came in from all over the state, and we had an excellent showing. Most everyone stayed at the big Sheraton Hotel right at the grounds, and it was "bursting at the seams" with car folks. Being only moments from the grounds, the hotel proved a most convenient escape from the sweltering heat. A cool dip in the pool, air conditioning and cold drinks saved the day.

John Dewey and Jess Cook attended the "flea market" for the Region. Fitzzy and Jack Kranyik, Betty and Hal Waddell and Charlie Burk had their regular stalls set up also. All were out early to catch customers and do some fancy trading.

There was a Saturday morning parade to The Early American Museum over on the main highway several miles distance. Upon their return, cars were exhibited throughout the day, and the usual large crowds gathered to admire them. An afternoon auto auction enlivened the activities.

We signed up several new members: Charles Coney of Juno Beach, Arvin Williams of Ft. Myers and George Baxley, Jr. of Jacksonville.

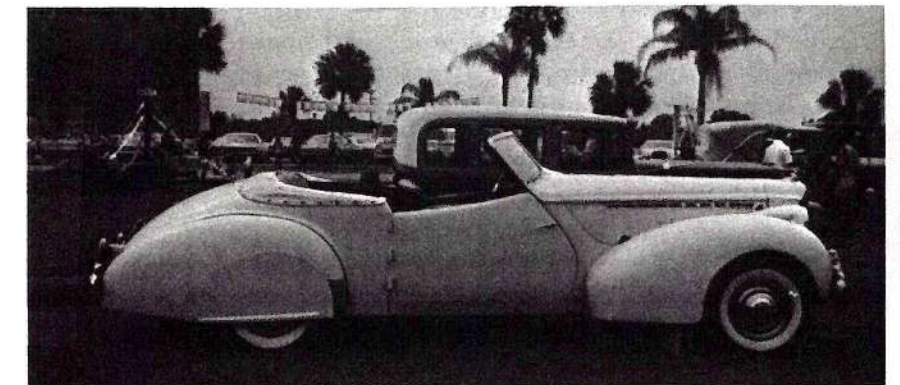
Charles Coney caused a stir with his newly acquired big black 1941 Packard formal sedan.

Barbara and Larry Cole drove down from Orlando in their 1940 Packard Darrin. Beautiful car! Homer Brown's 1936 Packard Convertible, Twelve was a first place winner as was Richard Stephens' 1925 Packard Runabout.

(Continued next page)



JOHN DEWEY — In charge of Region "Flea Market" Space. PI Banner painted by Hubbard Clapper, Sr., President.



1940 Packard Darrin — Owner: Larry L. Cole, Orlando, Fla.



1937 Packard Convertible Coupe — Owner: John Dewey, Sorrento, Florida

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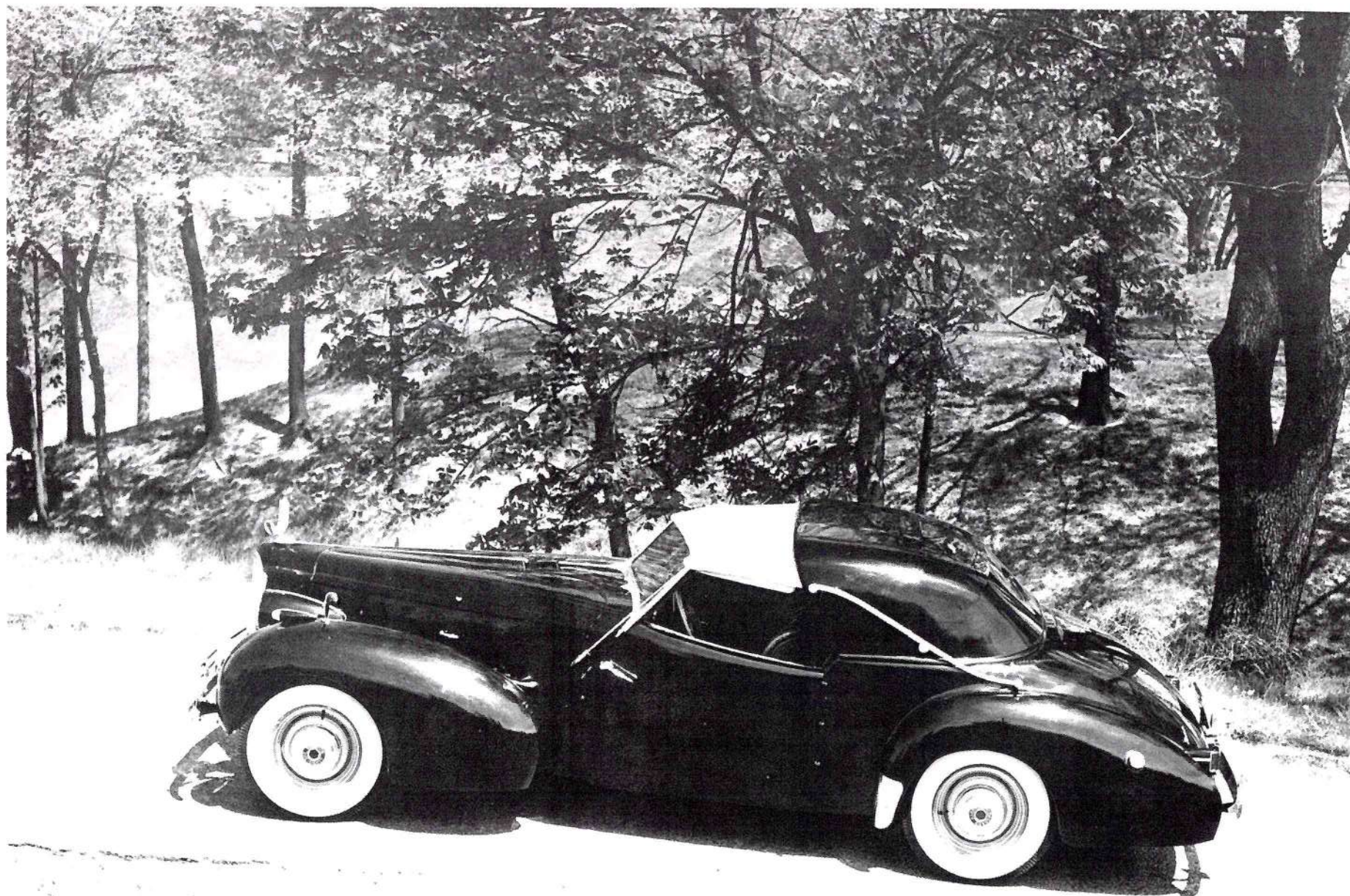
SUMMER 1973

FIGURE "L"



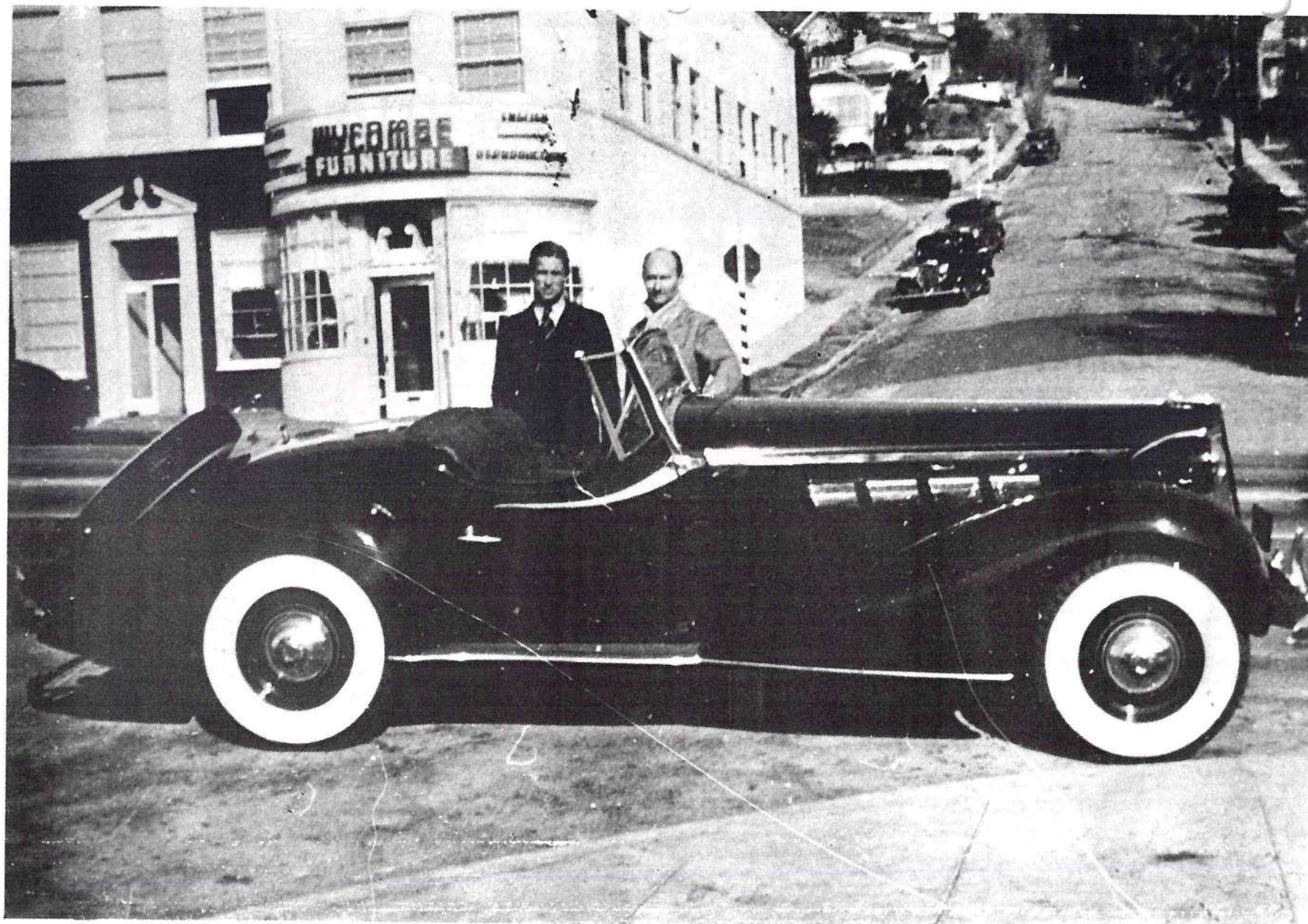
DARRIN CAR (1945) WITH WIFE AT THE WHEEL. THIS CAR HAD FULL TILT FORWARD HOOD AND FENDER ASSEMBLY, AND SPRING LOADED LICENSE PLATE FRAME TO HIDE GAS CAP.

FIGURE "N"



1940 DARRIN WITH SPECIALLY BUILT TOP AND CLOTH FRONT PORTION. (TOP WAS REMOVABLE)

FIGURE 177



1938 PACKARD DARRIN - PROTO TYPE. THIS CAR WAS BUILT FOR DICK POWELL.

FIGURE "O"

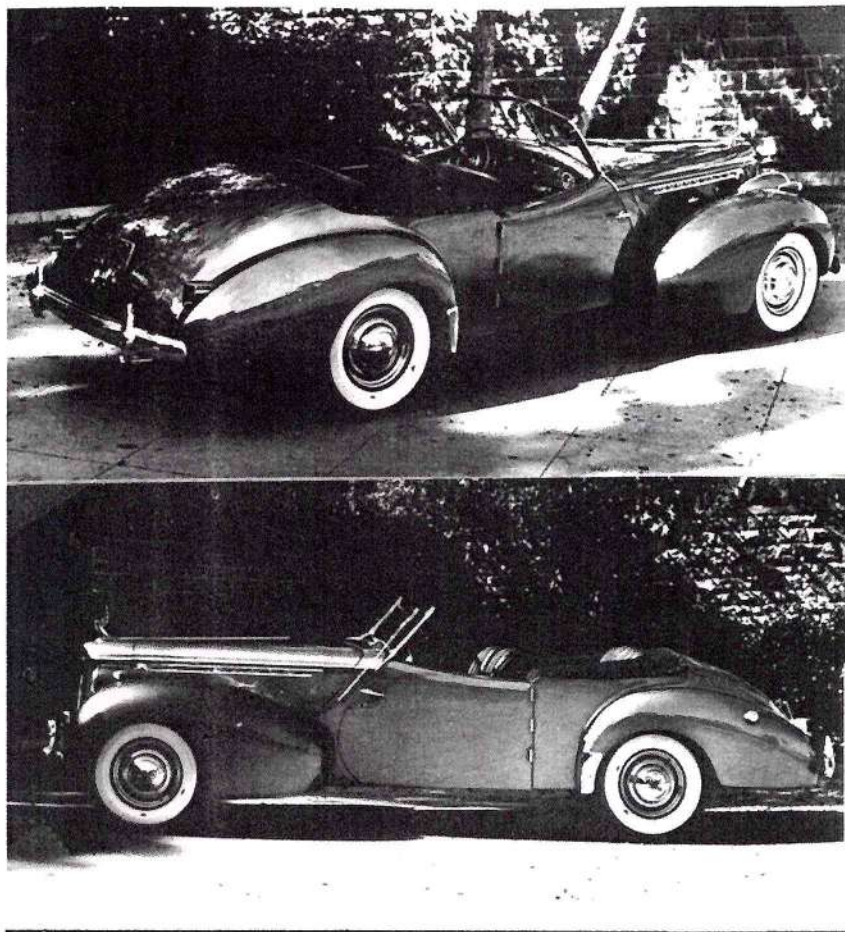


FIGURE "O" — 1940 DARRIN

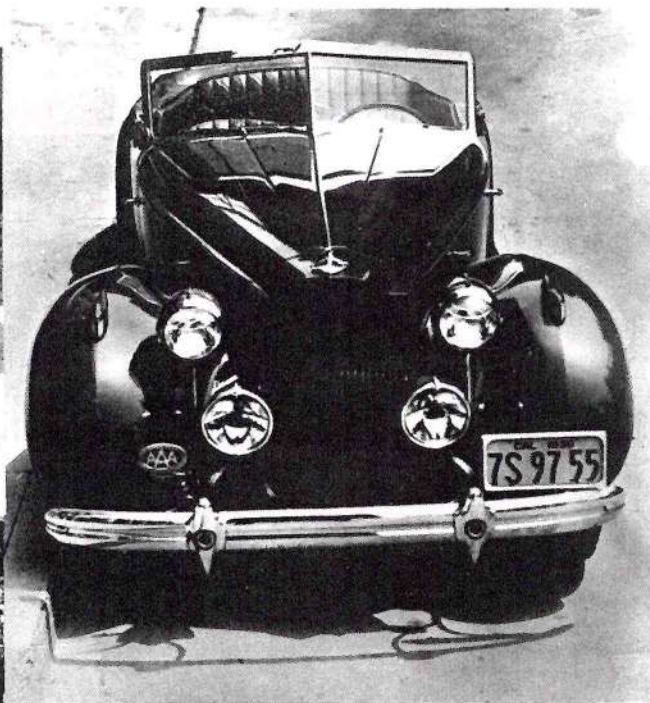
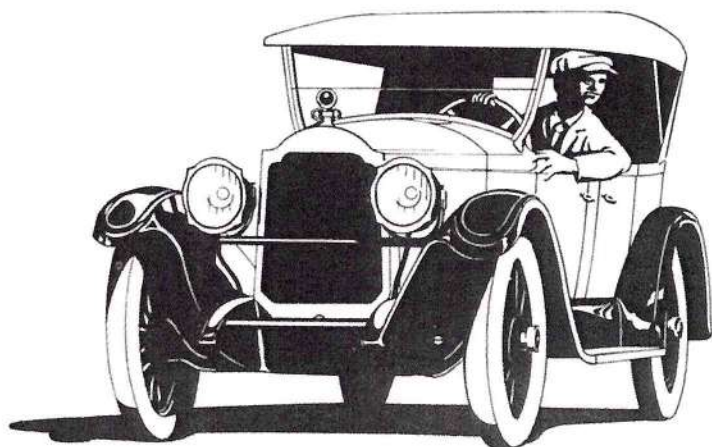


FIGURE "P" — PACKARD PROTO TYPE FOR 1957. COMMISSIONED BY PACKARD MOTOR CAR CO. TO DESIGN ENTIRELY NEW LUXURY CAR.



Design Patent - continued

In closing, I think that one of the worst disappointments in my life was when I found that a license plate that lifted to uncover the gas cap had not been applied for on the Darrin car, (photo L). It covered everything including the hood that opens like the Jaguar sports car and the construction torsion bar application, but failed to cover the license plate which was springloaded at the back of the body where when lifted you could fill your gas tank. Now this was used by Ford (1955) and General Motors (today) and Ford acknowledged me as the inventor, but inasmuch as I had not taken out patents I had no claim. They asked me to testify that I had designed this and that they were being sued by another party at a later date!