

OREGON REGION • CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

*"From the mountains to the prairies, to the oceans white with foam..."*



# *The Hood Release*

FALL 2016



1934 Cadillac 355-D Town Sedan  
Owner: Mike Eshaia



## 2017 Board of Managers

[www.oregonccca.com](http://www.oregonccca.com)

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## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS, our board of managers, our various committees and volunteers for making 2016 a fun and eventful year for our club. I would like to especially thank our hard working Tour Committee Rodger Eddy, George Potter, Robert Douglas and Howard Freedman, and our Activities Director, Sylvia Potter for making the arrangements for all of our tours and events.

2017 IS SHAPING UP to be another great year! On November 19th, fifteen board and club members spent three hours at Freedman's garage discussing the kinds of activities we would like to participate in, and produced a draft 2017 activities schedule. Tour highlights for the year include our February Multnomah Falls Valentine's Day tour and brunch; an April overnight tour to Silver Creek Falls and the Oregon Garden; a May overnight tour to Skamania Lodge with the Mercedes Benz Club; our annual Strawberry Social and of course our fabulous fall 8-day tour to central Washington and BC Canada. We also will be having many one-day activities as well. These are all great events, and we look forward to your participation. If you know of people who might be interested in joining us at our various activities, please introduce them to Bill Price, our membership chairman. Owning a classic car is not a prerequisite to joining the club.

OUR CLUB has three ways to communicate with you—our monthly “Brake Cables,” our quarterly *Hood Release*, and our wonderful website ([www.oregonccca.com](http://www.oregonccca.com)), produced and updated by George Potter. Please do not hesitate to offer comments and suggestions that will benefit our club. We look forward to a great CCCA, Oregon Region 2017.

Bill Jabs  
DIRECTOR, OREGON REGION, CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

## FROM THE EDITOR

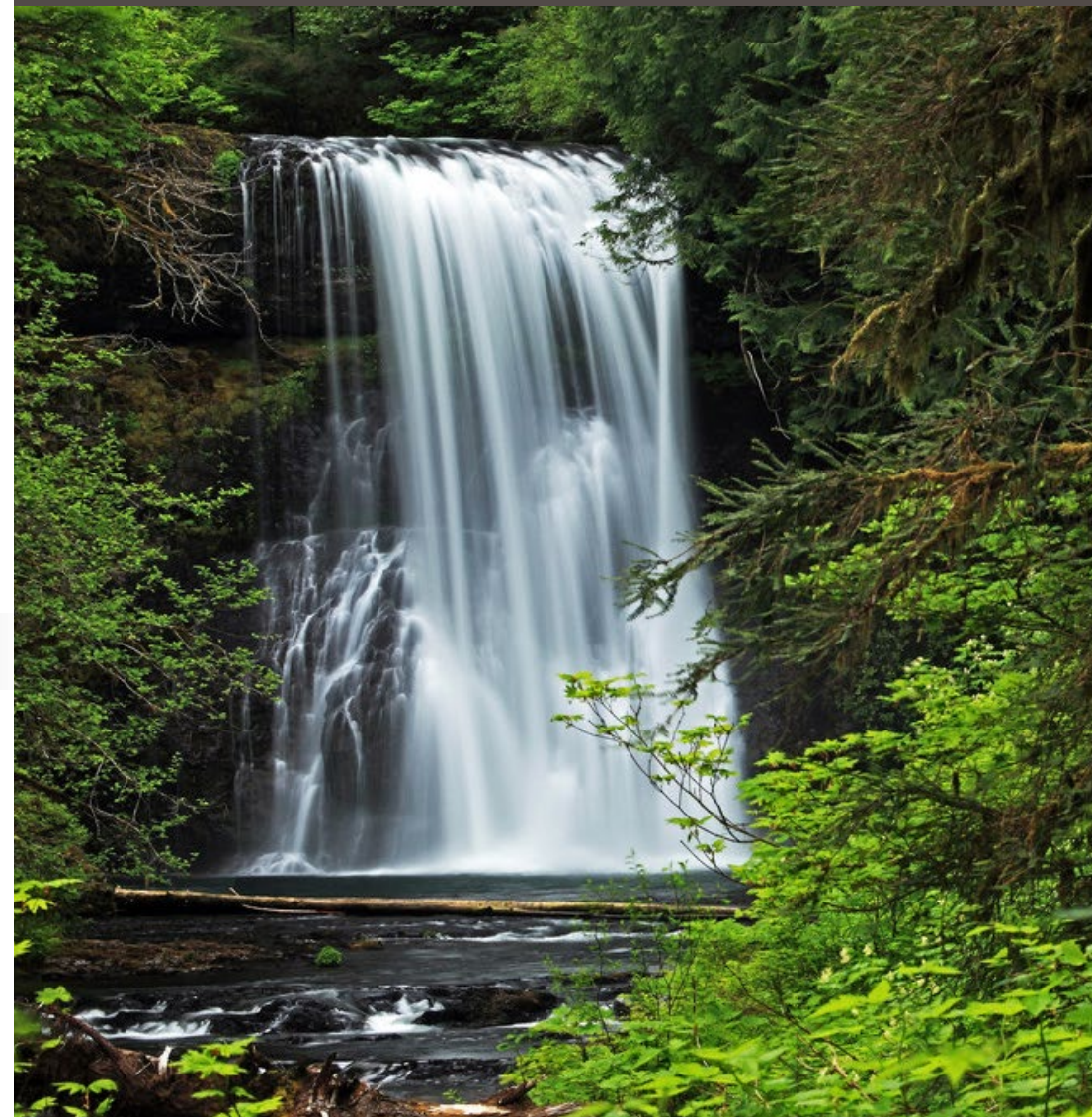
LOYAL READERS of the *Hood Release*, we wish you a joyous holiday season and a splendid start to the New Year—which is sure to be an exciting one under the continued leadership of our Director, Bill Jabs! Admittedly, this “Fall” Issue of the *Hood Release* comes closer to the middle of winter, for which I must beg your indulgence. When I'm not editing the *Hood Release*, I am staying busy as a first-year teacher, which means plenty of long hours prepping new lessons and grading papers and tests, then followed by the attempt to recover after surviving each week! While I am thoroughly enjoying these new challenges, they are also the reason that issues of the *Hood Release* do not arrive as speedily in your mailboxes as your Editors would like. Hopefully as I become a seasoned veteran of the classroom (and the Classic Car scene), you will find future issues of the *Hood Release* to be more timely.

IN THE MEANTIME, I would like to offer my deepest gratitude and admiration to my co-Editor (and father), Larry Schick, who has absorbed the brunt of *Hood Release* tasks while I have been swamped with my day job (and who did not sanction the writing of this Editor's message!) It is thanks to his tireless efforts, impeccable research, and inexhaustible patience that this issue of the *Hood Release* is in your hands. As much as I have enjoyed transforming his work into a printed publication, I hope you will enjoy this look at the many activities Oregon Region club members participated in during the Fall Season, including a tour report from several brave women who ventured to Steens Mountain on the September Tour! We are also particularly excited to offer you an up-close look at the dazzlingly restored Cadillac 355-D Town Sedan of Mike Eshaia and the history of the 355 Series, as well as a glimpse at the rare Marmon automobile. Thank you for reading!

Laura Schick  
MANAGING EDITOR, *THE HOOD RELEASE*

# THIS SPRING VISIT MT. ANGEL ABBEY

2 DAY,  
1 NIGHT  
TOUR



APRIL  
29–30,  
2017

AND  
SILVER FALLS  
WITH THE  
OREGON REGION CCCA

CONTACT  
HOWARD  
FREEDMAN  
FOR DETAILS



# OREGON HIGH DESERT AND STEENS MOUNTAIN TOUR

With Special Reports by Pat Cox, Sylvia Potter, Rosanne Hunt,  
B. J. Bennett, Mary Jabs, Georgia Mitchell, and Virginia Galvin

September 10-18

Photos courtesy of George Potter

## Pat Cox:

What a beautiful day to start off our 2016 Fall Tour! Meeting up at Elmer's Restaurant were 13 cars to begin the tour. Bill and Mary Jabs, Roy and Beverly Asbahr, and John and Georgia Mitchell joined the tour at a later time, giving us a good-sized tour of 16 cars. Rodger Eddy presented his usual thorough drivers' meeting. Howard was walking around with the Blooper Flag around his neck--I guess he figured he may as well put it on as he may get the award sooner or later!

Because of a later start from Elmer's than planned, we by-passed our first scheduled rest stop at Beacon Rock. Upon arrival at the WAAM Museum in Hood River, we found that the parking lot was overflowing, since it was one of their regular "Fly In" weekends, so we moved on to lunch at either Hood River Taqueria or Shari's Restaurants. The Asbahrs joined up with the tour in Hood River, and from there we stopped at Rowena Crest viewpoint on Highway 30 near Mosier, to take in the spectacular scenery.

We headed on 13 miles to Dufur, to the infamous Balch Hotel. It was a hot drive, but we all got there with minimal vapor lock issues. We were warmly greeted at the hotel, with a smooth check-in by their staff. As usual, Sylvia started setting up Happy Hour in the reading room at the hotel. She was a trouper for all nine days of the tour, making Happy Hour truly "happy!" By then, John and Georgia Mitchell had joined the tour (I should have known that Georgia would not miss Happy Hour!). Dinner was at the hotel and Howard presented dessert for all to share in celebration of the 11th anniversary of Larry and me. Ironically, Larry and I were so busy prepping for the tour that we both forgot about our anniversary until the day of the tour! Let's face it: Dates and times are of no significance when each and every day is good!

Dufur is such a nice, slow-paced and oh-so-quiet town, and the Balch Hotel is a totally magnificent building. Tomorrow, we drive on to Madras.



On the road to Dufur and the Balch Hotel.





### Sylvia Potter:

We started the second day of our Oregon High Desert and Steens Mountain tour with a delicious breakfast buffet at the historic Balch Hotel in Dufur. We had only 78 miles to travel that day, with the route relaxed and very scenic. Just 19 miles from Dufur, our first stop was at White River Falls. At the base of the falls we could see the ruins of a hydropower plant, which supplied electricity to North Central Oregon from 1910 to 1960. We were up above the magnificent falls with three different falls thundering 90 feet down over the edge of a basalt ledge into the canyon below: a beautiful sight to behold!

Our route then took us along the Deschutes River. The river had both gentle and aggressive rapids and many adventurous rafters were out, having fun in the sun. Our lunch was in Maupin at the Imperial River Company, a unique hotel with a rustic restaurant and tasty food. Most of us sat outside on the patio and enjoyed a fine lunch sitting in heavy chairs made of juniper logs, and watching the rafters jousting and ultimately splashing into the cold waters of the Deschutes. Too much fun!

Just out of Madras, we visited the Erickson Aircraft Collection. They have several World War II fighter planes, which of course fascinated many of us. After arriving at our motel and settling in, we had our usual happy hour and awarding of the "Bloopers Flag." Bill Jabs was the lucky recipient for losing his gas cap, which prompted him to make an "official request" of anyone who might happen to have an extra 1941 Lincoln Continental gas cap for sale. Afterwards, we all headed down the street to Gino's Italian Restaurant, where we had yet another delicious meal. Then it was off to bed with full stomachs and great expectations for the rest of our journey to Frenchglen and Steens Mountain.



### Rosanne Hunt:

Day four gave us two different perspectives on this wonderful trip into the wilderness area in the State of Oregon. But first, I need to report on our arrival at the Frenchglen Hotel Tuesday afternoon, after spending Monday night in John Day. Howard had made arrangements for a BBQ man from Burns to come over and prepare a cowboy BBQ dinner for us, but when we arrived at the hotel, the proprietor John told us that the BBQ man had cancelled. Instead, John and his staff put together some great sandwiches, soup, and salads so we could enjoy a picnic out in the hotel yard. John and the Frenchglen Hotel staff saved the day for all of us!

Our first full day in Frenchglen was sunny and the temperature crisp. Those who were lodging at the hotel (Mona and Orville, Howard and Evelyn, Roy and Beverly, Virginia and Mike, Quentin, Aloma, and Paul and I) enjoyed a wonderful breakfast served by John and his staff at 7:30 in the morning.

After breakfast, those who needed gas filled up at the Mercantile Store down the street. Paul and I enjoyed snooping around the store and enjoyed coffee on the porch. While the rest of the group went on the journey up and down the Steens Mountain, the Frenchglen group enjoyed a leisurely day of games, tea on the porch, and relaxation. Paul Hunt and some of the boys played a Texas game called "washer toss" on the lawn. After lunch, Sylvia taught Aloma, Ruth and myself how to play a lively card game called Spite and Malice. Ruth won the game and earned bragging rights with a tough victory!

Lunch at the Frenchglen hotel was fabulous, but the most delicious part for some was the cold root beer floats served in frosty glasses! Yum.

After the gang returned from visiting Steens Mountain, we had Happy Hour on the picnic tables on the lawn. Dinner was a delicious pot roast with salad, broccoli, roasted potatoes, and wonderful rolls, followed by a dessert of homemade marionberry cobbler and ice cream. All in all, it was another fun and relaxing day with good food and great friends!







### BJ Bennett

Another perspective on our first full day in Frenchglen:

George, Sylvia, Bill and Ruth hosted a breakfast for those staying at the Steens Mountain Wilderness Resort. We had a great breakfast with scrambled eggs, ham, bacon, biscuits and fresh fruit, including Asian pears. After breakfast, we took a trip to the top of the Steens Mountain East Rim Overlook and Kiger Gorge Overlook, where the weather was quite cold and blustery.

Bill took a pickup load up the mountain, with Brad and Hyang Cha in the bed of his enclosed truck. At one of the stops, they were forgotten to be let out for quite some time. They received Frenchglen T-shirts for their good spirits in lieu of giving out the Blooper Flag to Bill that night. After a squirrely ride down in Rodger's station wagon, he was told that his rear brakes were not working-which explains why the car stopped one foot short from taking out a motorcycle in the parking lot!

It was a relaxing afternoon of savoring peace and quiet at the Resort, followed by a hosted home-cooked meal at the Frenchglen hotel, family-style overflowing the seating in the hotel dining room to the front porch and picnic tables out in the yard.

The Mercantile in Frenchglen had an interesting assortment of goods, including fox pelts hanging from the ceiling. Several people in the group made purchases there, continuing our trend of supporting the local economies we pass through while on tour.

### Mary Jabs

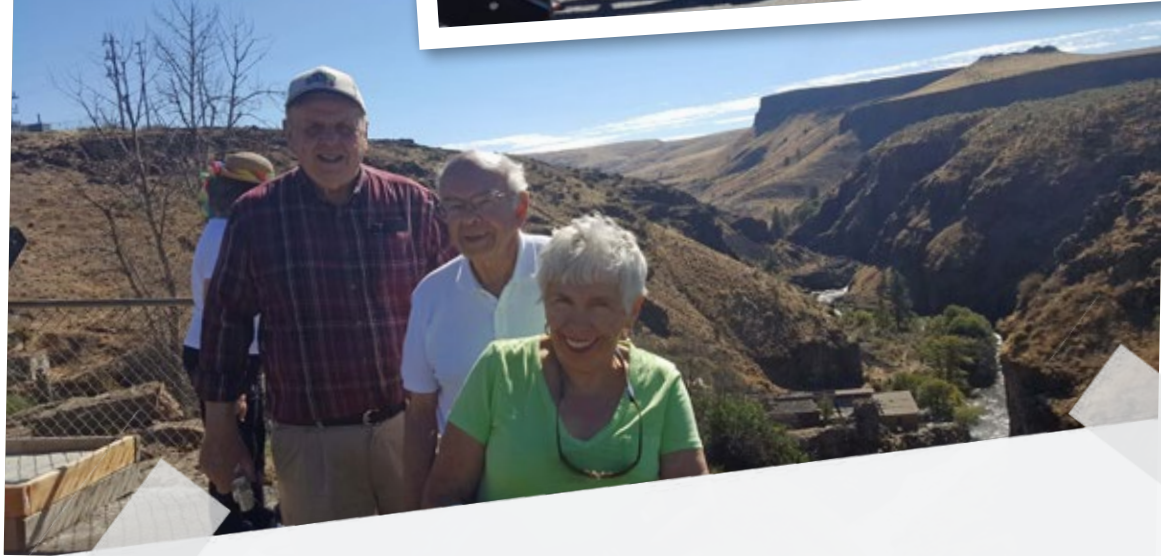
On Thursday morning, we split into two groups; the first group left after breakfast in Frenchglen at about 9:30, heading out to our next adventure. This group included the Eddys, Cataldos, Mitchells, Ipsens, Szerlipps, Mona and Orville, and Bill and me. We met in the little community of Fields, Oregon. Mona and John took their Classics, and everyone else piled into Rodger's station wagon and Bill George's truck. The view of the desert we had seen the previous day, from the top of Steens Mountain, looked beautiful. The dessert up close and personal was a wonder! This 7 mile by 14 mile surface was perfectly flat as far as the eye could see, and looked like what one might expect to see on the surface of the moon. The ground was a hard, dry clay with a porous surface. Standing there, I wondered how many years ago this are held water, and who would choose to live in this hot, desolate climate. We were told that the desert gets only about three inches of rain a year!

The Mitchells checked out the old hot springs and everyone "circled the wagons" out on the desert, taking lots of pictures. Our group then returned to Fields and met up with the rest of the gang for lunch. The burgers, fries, sandwiches, and milkshakes were great and filling. I'm not sure anyone was able to finish their famous Fields shakes, but we all enjoyed the pictures on the wall at Fields that showed small airplanes having landed out on the highway, taxiing in for gas at their pumps.

After lunch, we drove to Adele and stopped for a break. The combination service station/restaurant/bar was adorned with game heads, branding irons, and other Western paraphernalia, reminding all of us we were still in cowboy country. We arrived at the hotel in Lakeview just in time for the day's Happy Hour. After the big breakfast in Frenchglen and the milkshakes with lunch at Fields, we had to make room for dinner at a local Italian restaurant in walking distance from the hotel. Another full day of sightseeing, driving, and eating left us ready for sleep.







### Georgia Mitchell

A covey of quail skittered across our path on the bright Lakeview morning as the Mitchells departed (a bit behind the group after taking extra time to wash the hard-working Packard). Savoring the memories of the extreme beauty of Steens Mountain and Alvord Desert, we motored along toward Chiloquin for lunch. Oh, wait! Did we miss that tiny sign pointing to the right that said, "Chiloquin?" It wasn't on any tour maps or directions... Hmm, smells like a Blooper! Thus, the Mitchells missed Chiloquin entirely, and headed on through Klamath Falls and on to the deep blue inspiration of Crater Lake. After breathing in the lake's beauty for a while, it was on to the Prospect Hotel for a social hour on the wide porches, with dinner perfectly prepared and served by the hosts and staff. And finally, a deep and restful sleep under quilts in a cozy upstairs room. Ahhhh!

### Virginia Galvin

Our last day of the 2016 Oregon CCCA fall mini-tour was Saturday, September 17. We got an early start with breakfast at the historic Prospect Hotel. My personal favorite was a delicious Creme Brulee French toast. And of course, we had to take pictures in front of the hotel before leaving.

We drove past the Crater Lake turnoff and stopped at Diamond Lake to enjoy a great view of Mt. Mazama across the lake. Back on Highway 138 we took a turn hoping to see Toketee waterfall, but instead we had a view of campers. It was a nice, warm and sunny day to be out camping. Back out on the road, we found lunch at the Steamboat Inn, which is set along the Umpqua River with a scenic patio and a garden full of colorful flowers.

After lunch, we continued our drive through the Cascade Mountain Range following the North Umpqua River. The leaves were just starting to turn and the weather felt like fall. Our next stop was in Colliding Rivers Park, the confluence of Little River into the North Umpqua. Both rivers were very low, looking calm and peaceful amid a landscape of farmland, ranches, and animals. In Oakland, we added some old-time color with our old cars to their Living History Day celebration.

Everyone continued North to find our hotel for the night, and then went out to visit Alex and Amy Haugland's car collection in Springfield before dinner at the Pump Cafe. A good dinner was followed by goodbyes and safe travels to those continuing north.

Evidently, attempting to get an early jump on the Blooper Award, Howard managed to run out of gas while leaving the Pump Cafe parking lot. He then discovered he had been carrying an empty gas can for the entire trip. The fuel problem was quickly resolved when Orville hustled down the block to fill the gas can. Mike and I headed home to Fall Creek already looking forward to another fun-filled trip next September.







## TECH SESSION REPORT

*Pictured: Bob Earls presents a tech session on winterizing Classic Cars to an enthusiastic audience.*

ON SATURDAY, August 20, 2016 at 10:00 A.M., ten members of the Oregon Region of The Classic Car Club of America, plus two young guests, Dave Charvet's son Ted and his friend Duncan, attended a tech session given by Bob Earls. In addition to reviewing the literature he provided from The Haggerty Insurance Group on preparing your collector car for touring, and discussing Donald W. LeGoullon's "Step-by-Step Guide to Winterizing Your Car," Bob's presentation also included several valuable tips and suggestions from his background of forty-plus years of working on the restoration, repair, and maintenance of automobiles of various types. Among Bob's recommendations were changing a car's brake fluid every other year and adding a pint can of Marvel's Mystery Oil prior to filling up the fuel tank for the winter, then running the car on idle for fifteen minutes.

In addition to the perspective Bob provided, several attendees shared their own personal experiences with the challenges of maintaining vintage cars and identifying parts sources or acceptable substitutes which become required as a result. Our director Bill Jabs described his successful technique of cleaning out a car engine's cooling system using such common household items as Cascade dish washing soap, white wine vinegar, and baking soda without resorting to the more aggressive practice of chemical flushing. Dave Charvet pointed out that Cooper's Vintage Auto Parts in Burbank, California can make fuel tank sending units that could fit virtually any car if original ones are no longer available. After Bob's presentation and the subsequent conversations that followed, attendees enjoyed a lunch provided by Howard which included a variety of sandwiches, soft drinks, and dessert. ■

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# ANNUAL HALLOWEEN POTLUCK

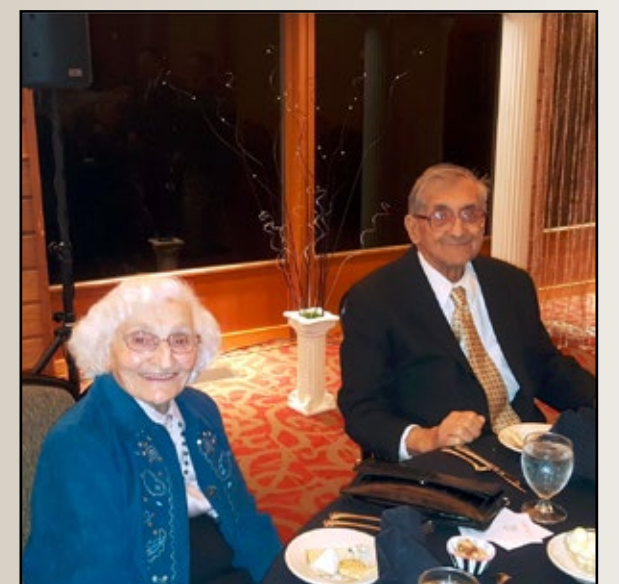


ON SUNDAY, October 30, 2016, members of the Packards of Oregon club joined the Oregon Region of the Classic Car Club of America for the Annual Halloween Potluck and party held at the Freedmans' garage. In addition to the camaraderie and delicious food provided by the attendees who brought a variety of salads, main dishes, and deserts, the highlight of the evening was unquestionably the auction of both automobile and collectible memorabilia brought by the attendees. One of the guests, disguised as a chicken but looking and sounding amazingly enough like David Charvet, conducted the event as if he had professional experience as an auctioneer. He was ably assisted by Mary Jabs, who kept the auction moving forward, keeping track of the identity of bid winners and the dollar amounts of their winning bids. More pictures of the Halloween tricks and treats can be found on the Oregon Region of the Classic Car Club of America's website.



# The GREAT GATSBY Gala

THE OREGON REGION of the Classic Car Club of America's Annual Membership Dinner was held on November 6, 2016 at the Tualatin Country Club. The theme for this year's event was "The Great Gatsby Gala," as evident by the accompanying pictures of members who were appropriately dressed in their finery for the occasion.





# ° ALL IN THE FAMILY °

MIKE ESHAIA'S 1934 CADILLAC 355-D TOWN SEDAN



BY LARRY SCHICK

AS IS OFTEN the case, Mike Eshaia's interest in cars dates back to his high school days, when he decided to build his own hot rod for his first car. As a native Portlander, he grew up in the Beaverton area near Cedar Hills Blvd. in what was then essentially a rural area of Washington County by today's standards. Among the businesses that were in operation at that time was Madill's Auto Wrecking, where Mike and his older brother spent many hours looking over various wrecked vehicles in search of a potential candidate for the hot rod he planned to build.

ONE DAY he noticed what were the remnants of a 1934 Ford Cabriolet, resting against the back part of the fence that encircled the wrecking yard. Upon closer examination, he realized that the car had no motor, but he decided to buy it anyway for a price of \$15.00. He later found a 1941 Ford two door sedan which he bought for the engine swap. Admittedly knowing little about cars at that point in his life, Mike was fortunate enough to have lived across the street from a neighbor who was knowledgeable about rebuilding and repairing cars and was very helpful in advising him on which parts

could be easily rebuilt and which should be completely replaced. After Mike finished building his 1934 Ford Cabriolet hot rod, he drove it throughout his senior year in high school, no doubt attracting much attention, some he likely welcomed, and some he quite possibly didn't. He later sold the car some two years later in anticipation of his plans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps.

AFTER his undergraduate studies in Boise, Idaho, followed by fulfillment of his subsequent tour of military duty, Mike moved back to Boise where he assumed a position with the State of Idaho in 1963. One late fall evening after he had completed his day's work as a member of a surveying crew, he stopped at a local café and inquired about the identity of an unusual looking old car parked outside which reminded him somewhat of his 1934 Ford. One of the patrons said that the car was a 1934 Cadillac which his boss, an Idaho lumberman, was trying to sell. Intrigued by its appearance, Mike impulsively offered \$700 for the car, not knowing anything about its condition or its past history. To his great surprise, his offer was accepted and he suddenly became the new owner of a 1934 Cadillac Town Car!

AT THAT POINT, he decided to take yet another gamble and drive the car home to Boise that night, even as a light snow began falling. With the temperature somewhere around 30 degrees F, he decided to pull over off to the side of the road and look for the heater/defroster switch. He soon discovered that there was no switch to be found as the car had no heater, so he had no choice but to endure the chill of the roughly 425 mile drive home. Fortunately, the snowfall was light with little accumulation since he also soon realized that not only was the passenger side windshield wiper arm missing, but the entire wiper mechanism was inoperative as well!

WHEN HE REACHED his home in Boise around 2:30 A.M. the next morning, he found his wife waiting up for him since he was late and had decided to drive straight home from Sandpoint without calling her (of course cell phones were non-existent in 1963!). "What is that!" she asked, "and why do we have it?!" Mike tried to explain that he thought it was a "neat and interesting looking car which he just wanted to buy." And besides, it had lines which reminded him somewhat of his first car—the hot rod '34 Ford Cabriolet. His explanation seemed insufficient, as he recalls, "since we didn't speak for a while."



*Mike's love of cars dates back to his high school days.*

FOLLOWING his return to Portland a short time later, Mike began the challenge of performing a complete body-on ground up restoration of the car, taking it completely apart down to the rolling chassis. Although the car was very complete and straight, with its original Gray Bedford Cloth interior in outstanding condition, some of the issues he needed to address, in addition to the broken windshield wiper mechanism and missing passenger side wiper arm, were missing chrome trim pieces on both sides of the running boards and significant structural damage to both front fenders sustained at the hands of previous owners over the years. Over a two-year period, Mike personally not only did all of the mechanical repairs, but also the body and paint work as well, repainting the car in the original combination of its Antoinette Blue body with single stage PPG lacquer paint which he hand sanded and polished, and its cream colored wire wheels. He also restored the fabric center sec-



*The flowing lines of the 1934 Cadillac 355-D Town Sedan.*



tion of the town sedan's top as well as the rubber running board material. The only restoration work he had done outside his shop was the re-plating of any chrome trim pieces as required. The true testimonial to the degree of excellence of Mike's restoration is the car's award of a Senior Badge at the Classic Car Club of America Grand National Event held at Forest Grove in 2013, where it scored 98.75 out of a possible 100 points.

ALTHOUGH Mike is currently undecided on whether or not he will enter his 1934 Cadillac 355-D Town Sedan for judging in the Premier Class at the 2017 Grand Classic Scheduled for June 23rd and 24th in Sequim, WA., there is no question regarding the car's ultimate fate. Mike says his children and their friends grew up riding in the car, and it's been a part of the family for over fifty years, as evidenced by his daughter Allison's recent statement "that car belongs in our family!" ■

*The simple yet elegant dashboard of the 355-D.*



*The 353 Cubic Inch V-8 with 120 bhp at 3000 rpm.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA SCHICK

*Mike still uses the key and fob he obtained from the previous owner in 1963, along with the original Cadillac Operator's Manual.*



WITH  
◦ SPECIAL THANKS ◦  
TO  
MIKE ESHAIA



# Curb Appeal

BY LARRY SCHICK

## CADILLAC'S 355 SERIES CARS



upon the sale of a larger number of less expensive offerings in their senior line while still not jeopardizing their reputation for uncompromised quality and craftsmanship.

In 1934 when Mike Eshaia's Series 355-D Model 20 came down the assembly line at Cadillac's storied Clark Avenue Plant in Detroit, the automobile industry, not unlike virtually all of the other prominent manufacturing industries in America, was mired in the depths of the Great Depression. The record of 4,587,400 passenger cars sold in 1929 as reported by the Automobile Manufacturers Association had plunged to barely 1.1 million units by 1932. Particularly hard hit was the demand for the long wheelbase, top of the line cars featuring custom designed bodies with twelve and sixteen cylinder engines offered by the luxury car makers. By then, many of those manufacturers had come to the realization that their survival hinged

INTRODUCED in September, 1930 for the 1931 model year under the leadership of Lawrence P. Fisher, then General Manager of the Cadillac Motor Car Division of General Motors, the Series 355-A Cadillac was intended to be just such a car. Resting on a 134" wheelbase with its 353 cubic inch, 95 hp. L-Head V-8 Engine, it carried a base price of approximately \$2850, compared to Cadillac's top of the line Series 452 cars with Fleetwood bodies and V-16 engines which sold in the upper \$5000 range. By the 1934 model year, the 5,080 units of 355-D series cars sold like Mike Eshaia's accounted for nearly 40% of the total of 13,014 units sold by the entire Cadillac Motor Car Division, including 7,195 LaSalles. By comparison, sales of the Model 370-D 136" wheelbase V-12s and the Model 452 154" wheelbase V-16s totaled only 683 and 56 cars, respectively.

SEVERAL mechanical improvements were made to the Cadillac Model 355-D of 1934, including an entirely new chassis with an "X"-frame design added for increased strength and rigidity, resulting in a 2" reduction in overall vehicle height. Of perhaps greater significance was the introduction of an independent "knee action" front suspension featuring front coil springs and center point steering which afforded a significant improvement in ride and handling. Front shocks also became an integral part of the suspension, as was the addition of a rear stabilizer bar which reduced

body roll on turns. Of additional note was the replacement of torque tube drive with the Hotchkiss design in the car's transmission system. Under the hood, the Cadillac 353 cubic inch V-8's horsepower rose to 120 at 3000 r.p.m. for 1934, aided by a boost in the compression ratio to 6.25 to 1, and the extension of the air intake ducting to provide colder, more dense air to the carburetor rather than hotter engine compartment air.

THE 355 SERIES body style clearly reflected the design influence of the legendary Harley Earl whom Lawrence Fisher had hired in 1927 to establish the Art and Color Section of General Motors. As the series evolved, as exemplified by the 355-D, styling became progressively more streamlined with air-foil shaped front fenders brought low over the chassis, a unique, although arguably impractical bi-plane style front bumper, and a vee-shaped grill flanked by two tear-drop multi-beam headlights. A long hood nearly stretched to the base of a deeply sloping flat windshield. A graceful rear deck completely covered the chassis and rested between two tail lights that matched the teardrop shaped front headlight design.



*The grill of the Cadillac 355-D with multi-beam teardrop headlights.*

TO APPEAL to as broad a market as possible, the 355-D was offered in three different Series. Both the introductory Series 10 and the intermediate Series 20 Town Sedans like Mike Eshaia's car were built by GM's Fisher Body Division, and featured wheelbases of 128" and 136", with selling prices of \$2545 and \$2745, respectively. The upper end Series 30 car rode on a 146" wheelbase and contained a more lavish interior provided by the Fleetwood Body Division with a selling price of \$3345, intended to attract those buyers who desired a more luxurious model but did not wish to enter the realm of the V-12 and V-16 price range.

THE IMPORTANCE of the 355 Series Cars built from 1931 to 1935 in the history of the Cadillac Motor Car Division of General Motors can hardly be over-emphasized. Not only did those cars play a key role in enabling the marque to weather the storm of the Great Depression, they also served as a bridge to the introduction of Cadillac's 60 Series cars of 1936. From that car, which featured an all new steel one-piece "turret top" and introduced the famous 346 cubic inch flat-head V-8 engine, evolved Bill Mitchell's legendary 1938 Sixty Special, whose ground-breaking design set the trend for American automotive styling that would prevail throughout the next decade. ■

## CADILLAC 355-D

### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

**WHEELBASE:** 136"

**CURB WEIGHT:** CA 4800 LBS.

**ENGINE:** 90 DEGREE L-HEAD V-8

353 CU.", 3.38" BORE X 4.94" STROKE

120 HP AT 3000 RPM

**TRANSMISSION:** THREE SPEED

REAR WHEEL DRIVE

**BODY STYLE:** SPORT COUPE, CONVERTIBLE COUPE,

CONVERTIBLE SEDAN, TOWN SEDAN,

5 PASSENGER SEDAN

7 PASSENGER SEDAN

7 PASSENGER IMPERIAL SEDAN

**PRICE:** \$2,595 TO 2,995

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 2729 UNITS



*Mike Eshaia's Cadillac 355-D shows off its graceful rear deck and teardrop-shaped tail lights.*



# MARMON

## The Relentless Pursuit of Perfection

BY LARRY SCHICK

*Of all the* automobiles that graced America's highways in the Classic Era, few were deserving of more recognition and appreciation than the cars that bore Howard Carpenter Marmon's name.

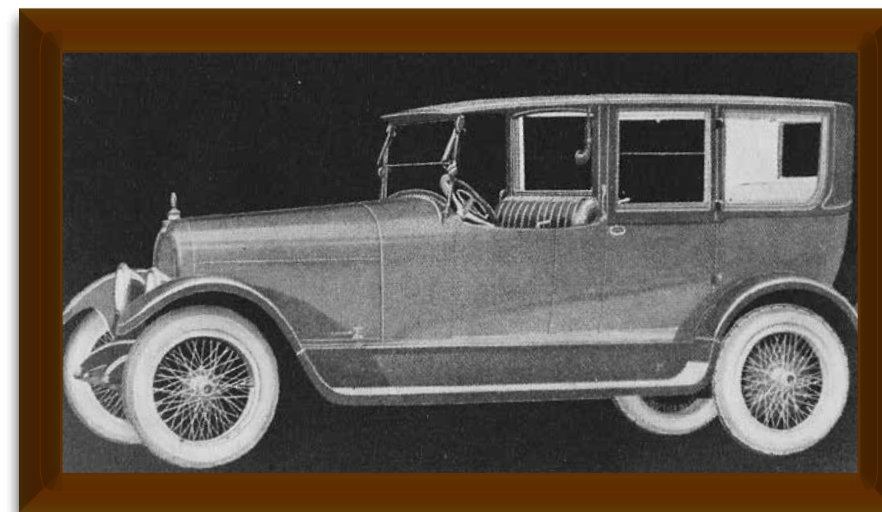
BORN IN 1876 in the East Central Indiana town of Richmond on the border with Ohio, Howard Marmon seemed destined by family heritage to become one of the American automobile industry's most brilliant engineers. His father, Daniel W. Marmon,

a graduate of Earlham College in Richmond, became a partner in the local firm of E. and A.H. Nordyke Co., the world's leading manufacturer of milling machines and grain elevators for the flour and cereal industries. He soon acquired an interest in the firm which then became the Nordyke and Marmon Co. in 1876 and moved to Indianapolis later that same year. As a boy, Howard was a frequent visitor to the factory, intrigued by the various mechanical devices and machinery in operation. Particularly fascinated by engines, he spent many hours watching locomotives bringing trains to and from Indianapolis.

After earning his degree in mechanical engineering from the University of California in Berkeley, Howard joined the Nordyke and Marmon firm in 1899 and soon gained the position of Chief Engineer at the age of 23, working with his older brother Walter Carpenter, also a graduate engineer from M.I.T. Given Howard C. Marmon's engineering background and his passion for engines and working machinery, it came as no surprise that under his leadership, the Nordyke and Marmon Co. announced its entry into the developing automobile manufacturing industry in 1902. Recognizing that the offerings of many of the early automobile manufacturers at the turn of the century were little more than motorized bicycles and carriages, the Nordyke and Marmon Company's automotive division under Howard C.'s leadership sought to build a motorcar offering superior mechanical features and highly innovative design which would be unequalled.



*Pioneering automobile engineer Howard Marmon*



*Marmon Limousine Model 34 A circa 1919*

INDICATIVE of his goal of building the finest possible car with the best available materials and state-of-the-art engineering technology, Howard Marmon's first prototype featured an air-cooled two cylinder engine of "V" configuration featuring a fully pressurized lubrication system achieved by utilizing a drilled camshaft and a gear-driven pump for oiling both main and rod engine bearings. Further design improvements resulted in the production of Marmon's 75 bhp V-8 engine powered car which appeared at the 1908 New York Auto show. Recognizing early on, undoubtedly because of his engineering background, that excessive weight was the bane of performance, Howard Marmon began experimenting with the use of aluminum as an alternative to iron and steel in the manufacture of car bodies and engines, which culminated in victory in the inaugural Indianapolis 500 Mile Race in 1911 with the Marmon "Wasp." With his commitment to building cars offering outstanding handling, performance, and durability, combined with luxurious appointments, Marmon soon became a favorite with racecar drivers and members of social status and affluence as well. That rare combination culminated in the debut of the Marmon 34 in 1916.

THE MARMON Model 34 of 1916 featured an aluminum push-rod overhead valve straight six cylinder engine block with cast iron sleeves. Other aluminum components such as rocker cover, lower

crankcase, and differential housing, all combined with a body fitted with an aluminum hood, fenders, and radiator shell to produce a car several hundred pounds lighter than its competitors at 3295 pounds. Styling featured smooth exterior sheet metal void of edges and corners as well as exterior hinges and door latches, save for those on the hood. Fenders and running boards flowed into each other and combined with a rounded radiator shell and flush doors to give the Marmon 34 a sleek design that rivaled Cadillac and other contemporary luxury cars in its price range.

FROM a production standpoint, the Marmon 34 was an unqualified success, although it failed to surpass the 4000 unit level throughout its eight-year run from 1916 to 1924. Unfortunately that same engineering genius that enabled Howard Marmon to introduce revolutionary technological advances to the automobile industry far ahead of the offerings of competing manufacturers also seemingly prevented him from recognizing that wealthy car buyers no longer remained content with only six cylinder engine-powered cars and body styles that were once attractive but later appeared dated after eight years without change.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, the Marmon automobile division of the Nordyke and Marmon Company began feeling pressure from its creditors by 1924. With the decision to seek new management from outside, George Montague Williams was hired from General Motors in a corporate reorganization which resulted in the formation of The Marmon Motor Car Company as an independent entity. Williams brought with him the Alfred P. Sloan marketing concept of offering a range of models aimed at attracting potential buyers of varying levels of income, rather than a single luxury car. Williams's first new model was the "Little Marmon" of 1927 which reflected his attempt to enter the medium price range in an attempt to attract more buyers.



# MARMON *The Relentless Pursuit of Perfection*



*The Marmon Big Eight of 1930  
Photo with permission from Ron Verschoor*

ALTHOUGH the new car was powered by an eight cylinder engine which the public wanted, its shorter wheelbase and lower selling price of a mere \$1895—some \$1000 less than the least expensive big Marmon—likely compromised the Marmon’s reputation as a luxury car maker and confused the buyer, resulting in little positive effect on sales.

AS A CONSEQUENCE of Williams’ decision, which was in direct conflict with his own philosophy, Howard Marmon appeared to have withdrawn from day-to-day active involvement in the management of the Marmon Motor Car Co., yet continued his engineering efforts to produce his concept of the world’s greatest car. Meanwhile, G.W. Williams continued his efforts to expand sales by introducing yet another medium-priced Marmon in 1929 called the Roosevelt in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt.

IN CONTRAST to the “Little Marmon,” the Roosevelt was well-received as it offered economy and performance in the Marmon tradition with its 202 cubic inch L-Head straight eight engine that developed 65 bhp, surpassing competitive makes such as

Dodge, Chrysler, Oldsmobile, Studebaker, and virtually every other car in its price range of only \$995. Riding on a compact 113” wheelbase, the Roosevelt had a lighter, more compact and youthful appearance, courtesy of Alexis de Sakhnoffsky, staff designer of the Hayes Body Corporation who supplied Marmon’s bodies, although it was unquestionably a step down from the Marmon Model 34 and, like the Little Marmon, not considered a classic.

WITH THE Roosevelt’s debut, Marmon enjoyed a record sales year in 1929. Unfortunately, fortunes changed in 1930 as the Great Depression was now well underway following the Stock Market Crash in October of the previous year. In addition, reliability problems unexpectedly arose with the Continental-designed engine Marmon had utilized in haste, rather than relying upon an engine of their own design, which seriously damaged the Roosevelt’s reputation. Not completely satisfied with the results of the decision to pursue the medium-priced sales market, Marmon announced its return to the luxury car field in 1930 with the introduction of the Marmon Big Eight.

THE MARMON BIG EIGHT was truly a luxury car in every respect, with its attractively styled body and lavish interior that rode on a 136” wheelbase and weighed 4500 pounds. With a 315 cubic inch eight cylinder engine that developed 125 bhp compared to the 95 bhp of Cadillac’s V-8 and the 90 bhp of Lincoln’s engine, Marmon reclaimed its reputation as a Luxury car with sporting performance. While continuing to live on his 5000 acre estate in Pineola, North Carolina during this time, Howard Marmon was likely encouraged by Marmon’s re-entry into the luxury car market. He had begun working on the development of an aluminum cast V-16 engine as early as 1926 after he had become acquainted

with Ettore Bugatti’s work on his sixteen cylinder Aero Engine a decade earlier while studying European aircraft in France in World War I as a member of the U.S. Army Signal Corps.

Although Bugatti’s early sixteen cylinder engine design was unsuccessful, it served as Howard Marmon’s inspiration for continued research and development on his project. Unlike Bugatti’s design which featured a pair of straight eights sharing a common crankcase, Marmon’s V-16 was an aluminum overhead valve design cast as a single unit with crankcase and cylinders. With its 491 cubic inch displacement, 6.0 compression ratio, and two barrel carburetor fed by a mechanical pump, Marmon’s engine produced 200 bhp and was guaranteed to reach speeds of over 100 mph. In contrast, Cadillac’s 452 cubic inch V-16 engine was essentially comprised of two straight eights sharing a common crankshaft since each eight cylinder bank operated entirely independent of the other and shared no components.

In the Marmon Car Company’s last attempt to capture the market for multi-cylindere luxury cars then dominated by its chief competitors Cadillac, Packard, and Pierce-Arrow, Marmon commissioned industrial stylist Walter Darwin Teague Sr. and his son to create a design befitting the new V-16 engine. The result was a modern style with continuous horizontal lines flowing from front to rear and a radiator cap hidden under the hood to minimize unnecessary ornamentation which might affect the car’s aerodynamic appearance. The suspension and its components were also cleverly concealed from view. A single piece windshield slanted back to meet the smooth curved roof that blended into rounded rear quarter panels. A horizontal beltline extending from the radiator completely around the car gave it a low rakish appearance.

With bodies built by LeBaron, eight different models of open and closed cars were offered on a 145” wheelbase weighing an average of 5500 pounds.



*The 1931 Marmon Sixteen Convertible Sedan. Photo used with permission by John Beil, courtesy of Collectible Automobile®.*



MARMON V-16 VERSUS THE CADILLAC V-16

	YEAR INTRODUCED	DISPLACEMENT	COMPRESSION	BHP	TOP SPEED
MARMON V-16	1931	491 cu."	6.0:1	200	100+ MPH
CADILLAC V-16	1930	452 cu."	5.3:1	175	95 MPH

The new Marmon V-16’s were selling in the \$5200 to \$5500 price range, which was slightly below the comparable Cadillac V-16 models.

From every conceivable standpoint, the Marmon Sixteen should have been an overwhelming success in taking its place with Duesenberg and Peerless as one of the legends of the Classic Era. With its 200 horsepower engine, power brake booster, and weight some 500 to 1000# less than comparable luxury cars of its day, it was capable of out-performing virtually all of its competitors. Unfortunately, it, too, was doomed by poor timing, as were most of its competitors in the luxury car field. In Marmon’s case, a corporate decision to delay production until 1931 to save expenses even though Howard Marmon had completed the chassis design some three years earlier allowed Cadillac to introduce their V-16 over a year sooner, which was particularly costly.

In addition to the devastating toll The Great Depression had already begun taking on luxury car sales by the time the Marmon 16 entered the field, Marmon’s insistence on manufacturing all of its own key components in-house such as engines, transmissions, clutches, and brakes, also drove up operating expenses compared to its competitors. With only 56 Marmon Sixteens sold in 1933 and a grand total of only 356 in all produced from 1931 to 1933, the Marmon Motor Car Company entered receivership on May 1, 1933, thus officially signaling the demise of the Marmon Sixteen—Howard C. Marmon’s motoring masterpiece that secured his place in history as arguably the most brilliant automotive engineer of all time. ■

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... Never has that been more conclusively demonstrated than today ... Nearly four years ago, in the heyday of the Six, Marmon turned decisively to the straight-eight ... Improved and simplified it ... Added modern meaning, modern looks, modern comfort ... Built into it Marmon individuality of style ... Now there are four great Marmon Straight-Eights in four great price fields—the Big Eight, the "Eight-79", the "Eight-69", and the Marmon-Roosevelt ... Each an automobile for those

who insist their cars must look as well as travel

In the modern manner ... Marmon Motor Car Company, Indianapolis

EDITOR’S NOTE: For additional information on Marmon cars and restoration, please see Michelle Cousineau’s article, “Successfully Re-casting Marmon Sixteen Cylinder Aluminum Heads” which appears in the CCCA’s Southern California Region publication, the “Side Mount Mirror.” According to Howard Freedman, the patterns described in Cousineau’s article will be donated to the CCCA Museum.

FROM THE VAULT...

THE SUBJECT of this issue’s “From the Vault” was kindly provided by Howard Freedman. This copy of an advertisement, likely in a local newspaper circa 1940, reveals a Portland Buick dealer's effort to clear out the used car inventory at his St. Johns location. The reference to the “Main Buick East Side Store” suggests that Community Motors, Inc. was likely also a dealer of new Buicks at the N.E. 28<sup>th</sup> and Sandy Blvd. location. We offer it to the readers of the Hood Release in hopes that, in addition to enjoying their low, low prices, someone has knowledge or additional information on the history of Community Motors in Portland to share with the club.

Larry and Laura Schick  
EDITORS

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Built-in Trunk—Refinished; has fine tires and is a good buy, at only... \$395

'36 Buick Sedan  
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'37 Chev. Town Sedan  
Has a marvelous motor; excellent tires; a peach of a value, at only... \$425

'40 Chevrolet Coupe  
Radio & Heater—Super Deluxe; looks like a million \$665 and what a buy, at

'33 Chevrolet Coupe  
A good motor and a real buy, at... \$165

'39 Chev. Town Sedan  
Unusually low mileage. It would ordinarily be priced at any Chevrolet dealer for \$600. Our price for quick sale... \$595

'39 Plymouth Coupe  
“De Luxe”; Beautiful condition throughout... \$595

'39 Pontiac Sedan  
Built in trunk; clean as a pin throughout, only... \$665

'30 Pontiac Sedan  
Mechanically top; good tires; full price... \$115

'40 Nash 8 Sedan  
Built-in Trunk—Actually only been driven 10,000 miles by a most careful family. Heater; other extras... \$950

'38 Buick Sedan, built-in trunk  
Low mileage; beautifully kept by former owner; has heater and other extras; truly a steal, at only... \$625

'36 Pontiac Sedan, built-in  
Positively the greatest buy in Portland; its beautiful finish hasn't a blemish on it; real good tires; worth \$135 more than we are asking on this introductory sale

'38 Packard 6 Sedan, built-in trunk  
with radio and heater; clean as a hound's tooth; ask the man who has owned one if this isn't a marvelous value, at only... \$575

'39 Pontiac Coupe  
Has a real good motor; good tires; gleaming black Duro finish... \$575

'39 Buick Coupe  
Reconditioned and guaranteed; and what a buy, at only... \$675

'37 Studebaker Sedan—Has a good motor and a good buy

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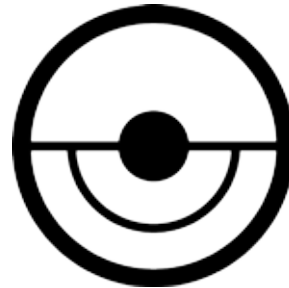


## MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

February  
**12**

### VALENTINE'S BRUNCH & TOUR *Multnomah Falls Lodge*

Join us for the Annual Valentine's Day Brunch and Tour, featuring a sure-to-be delicious spread at Multnomah Falls Lodge and a gorgeous drive through the Gorge.

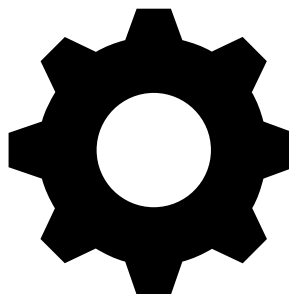


March  
**11**

### TECH SESSION

*Freedman's Garage*

Bob Earls will present this Spring's tech session on installing seat belts in your Classic Car.

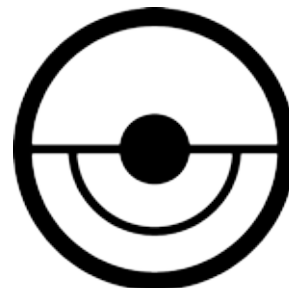


May  
**20**

### SKAMANIA LODGE TOUR

*With the Mercedes Benz Club*  
May 20-21

Join fellow car-lovers from the Mercedes Benz Club for an overnight tour to the beautiful Columbia River Gorge.

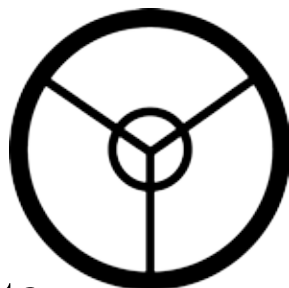


June  
**24**

### GRAND CLASSIC, PNW REGION

*Sequim, Washington*  
June 24-25

The Pacific Northwest Region cordially invites members of the Oregon Region to join them on the lawns of beautiful Sequim for a Grand Classic next summer. Plan to attend and represent the Oregon Region!



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