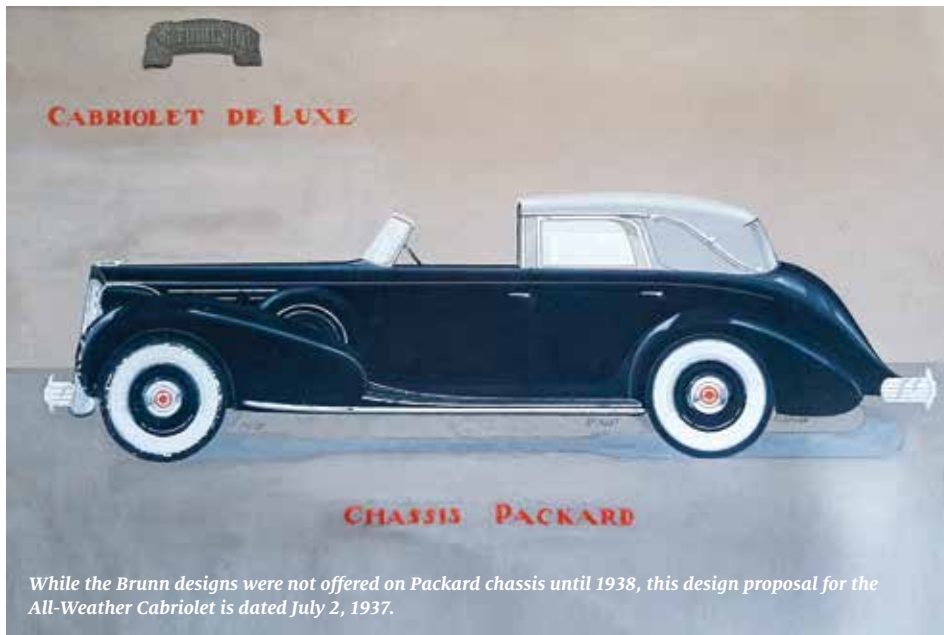


From the Spring 2008 issue of *The Classic Car* is this image of Hermann A. Brunn's personal car, a 1936 Lincoln K Touring Cabriolet.

# PACKARDS LOST AND FOUND, PART 2

BY RON VERSCHOOR



While the Brunn designs were not offered on Packard chassis until 1938, this design proposal for the All-Weather Cabriolet is dated July 2, 1937.

“While Packard Twelve Custom cars generally meet the requirement for either the conservative or more extreme type of cars, we realize that there is a limited clientele who desire something entirely different. You have only to inform us of your customer's desires and we will then submit for his approval designs especially prepared for him by leaders in custom body building whose reputation for creative ability, craftsmanship and excellence of coachwork is outstanding.”

— 1939 PACKARD DATA BOOK



To paraphrase a line from the original “Packards, Lost and Found” article which appeared in the 2020-2 issue of the *Side Mount Mirror*, “One never knows what might be lurking around in the garages of Lakewood...”

While few and far between, automotive barn finds are still to be found. This 81-year-old, multi-cylinder, custom-bodied Full Classic® appeared on eBay in December 2020. It is a 1939 Packard 1708 Touring Cabriolet by Brunn, believed to be one of 10 made that model year.

Brunn & Company of Buffalo, New York was known for high-quality, well-built bodies and was most closely associated with Lincoln, having partnered with Edsel Ford shortly after the Lincoln nameplate became part of the Ford portfolio in 1922. Brunn designs were also fitted to other Classic chassis including Duesenberg, Cadillac, Pierce-Arrow and as illustrated here, Packard.

Brunn's Touring Cabriolet design first appeared on a 1936 Lincoln K chassis, Hermann A. Brunn's personal car and a familiar sight in Southern California when owned by the late Walter Shearer of Thousand Oaks and Camarillo. This design was equipped with two distinctive features: fully collapsible rear quarters (as a landaulet) and two skylights or “neutralites” fitted above the windshield. It was offered >



Advertisement introducing Packard's Brunn Touring Cabriolet.

## 1939 Packard Model 1708

1939 Packard Twelve Brunn Touring Cabriolet  
1939 Brunn Packard 12 Touring Cabriolet

Condition: **Used**

“Non running, 1939 Packard Twelve Brunn Touring Cabriolet, placed into long term, indoor, garage ” ... [Read more](#)

Time left: 5d 19h | Thursday, 4:09PM

Current bid: **US \$37,200.00**

[ 21 bids ]

Reserve not met

Enter US \$37,300.00 or more

Place bid

Add to Watchlist

# PACKARD MOTOR CAR COMPANY

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

PACKARD DISTRIBUTERS

MAY 15 11 17:44

May 16, 1939

REFER TO THIS LETTER BY NUMBER

TO BE NOTED AND INITIALED BY

REFER TO THIS LETTER BY NUMBER	
TO BE NOTED AND INITIALED BY	

AVAILABILITY OF 17TH SERIES CUSTOM CARS

Gentlemen:

The following Custom cars are offered subject to prior sale and release by the Factory or Distributer, in whose stock they are located.

### BRUNN TOURING CABRIOLET, STYLE 4086

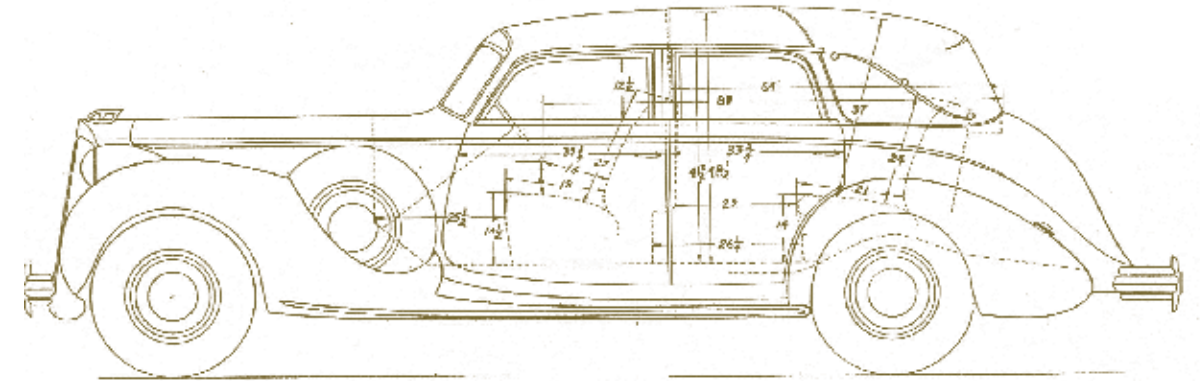
- S. O. 1708 - 2003 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Entire car - Black. Stripes - Ivory. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Seats and lazybacks - Laidlaw 271-D. Sidewalls, headlining and door panels - Laidlaw 771-D. LOCATION: San Francisco. Delivery: Immediate.
- S. O. 1708 - 2007 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Lower panels, chassis parts and wheels - Brunn Ruby. Upper panels - Brunn Beige. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Front and rear compartment - Laidlaw 749-D. LOCATION: Jacksonville. Delivery: Immediate.
- S. O. 1708 - 2010 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Lower panels, chassis parts and wheels - Black. Upper panels - Brunn Beige. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Front and rear compartment - Laidlaw 749-D. LOCATION: Boston. Delivery - Immediate.
- S. O. 1708 - 2014 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Lower panels, chassis parts and wheels - Black. Upper panels - Brunn Beige. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Front and rear compartment - Laidlaw 749-D. LOCATION: Los Angeles. Delivery: Immediate.
- D. 1708 - 2015 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Entire car - Black. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Front compartment - Black leather. Rear compartment - Laidlaw 749-D. LOCATION: Los Angeles. Delivery: Available May 20.
- D. 1708 - 2016 FENDERWELL EQUIPMENT - Whitewall tires. PAINT: Entire car - Black. Top - Haartz 5000. UPHOLSTERY: Front compartment - Black leather. Rear compartment - Laidlaw 749-D. LOCATION: Detroit. Delivery: Available May 20.

This letter is being sent to Distributers only. Please notify your Distributers immediately in order that they have a record of the available Custom cars.

Yours very truly,

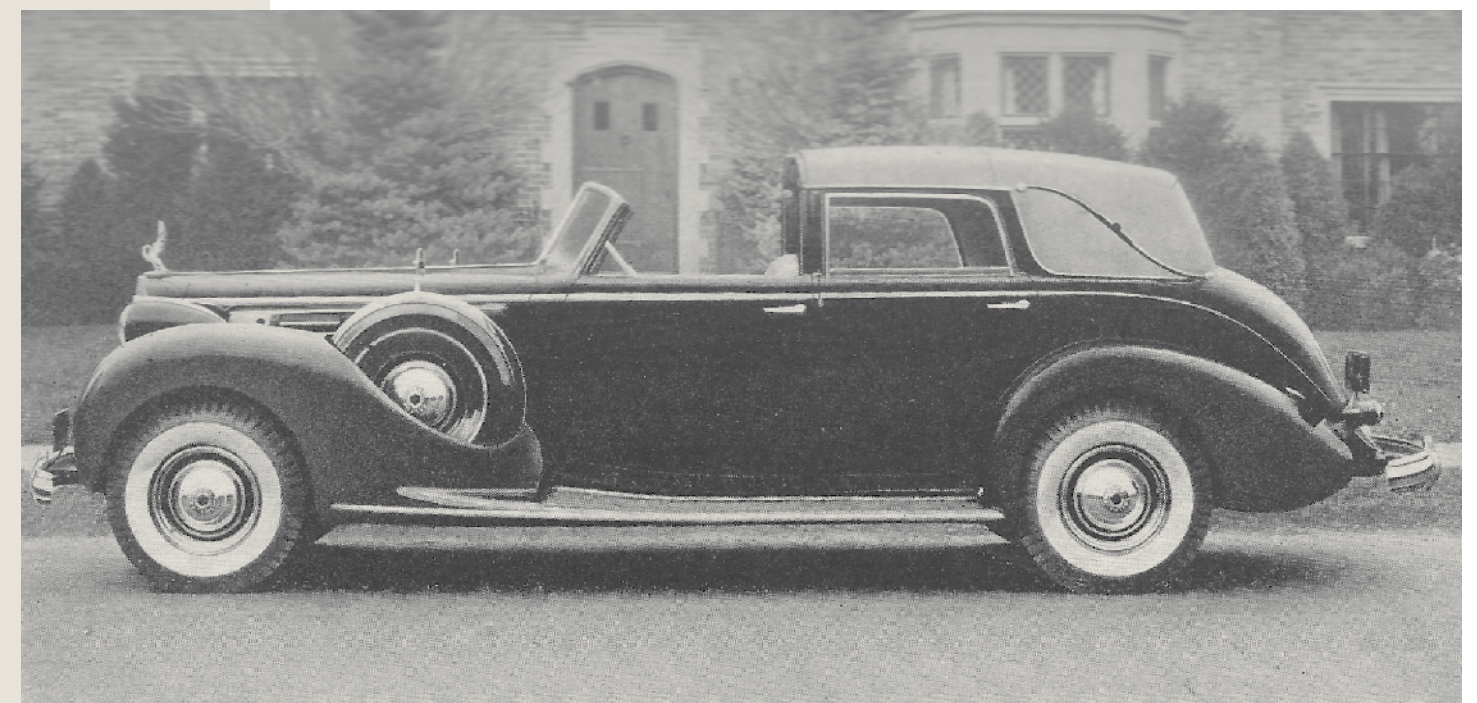
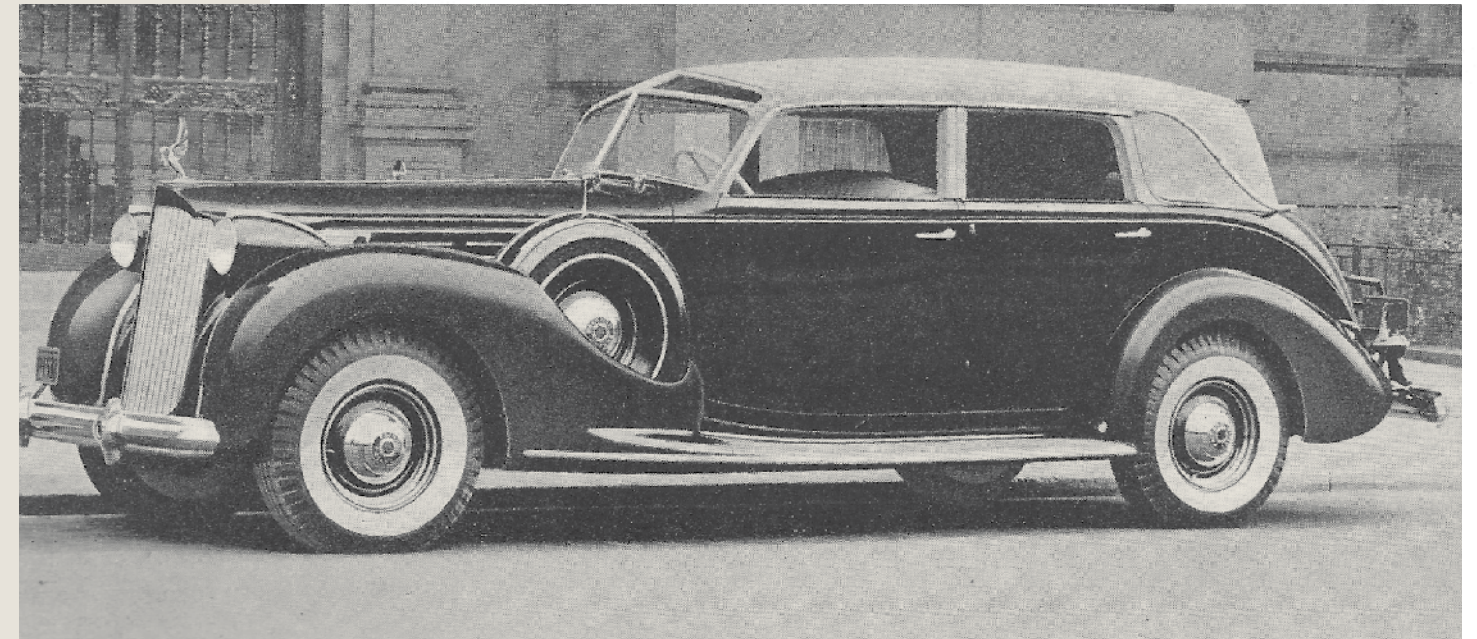
PACKARD MOTOR CAR COMPANY

H. W. Potter  
Manager, Custom Car Division



Photos this page from top: From the 1939 Packard Data Book is this schematic of Brunn design #4086, the Touring Cabriolet; promotional images for the Brunn Touring Cabriolet and the All-Weather Cabriolet.

Opposite page: Inventory listing of 1939 Packard Brunn Touring Cabriolets.





The luxurious interior appointments of the Touring Cabriolet

as a semi-custom design for the Lincoln K for the 1937 and 1938 model years and joined Packard's custom lineup for 1938 and 1939.

The 1938 "Packard Custom Cars" brochure described its exterior features this way:

*Rear quarter folds down to give open car vision and sunny rides. When raised it locks with rain-tight joint. Non-glare roof windows lend added vision to front seat passengers at all times.*

The interior description was equally impressive:

*Limousine or owner-driven sedan, no note of comfort or luxury has been overlooked. Beautiful matched grain wood moldings add to distinctiveness of this outstandingly smart vehicle, as do specially imported rugs, cunningly contrived parcel compartments and rich hassocks.*

The Brunn Touring Cabriolet was identified as style number 3086 (4086 in 1939) in Packard's custom car catalog, accompanied by a second Brunn design, its All-Weather Cabriolet (style numbers 3087 and 4087 for 1938 and 1939) that featured an open roof section over the chauffeur's compartment with a removable top, configured as a town car.

These two semi-customs were the most expensive models featured in Packard catalogs, both priced at over \$8,500 in 1938 and \$8,300 in 1939, more than twice the price ➤



Brunn's signature Neutralite skylights above the windshield



Photos this page clockwise from top: This side profile image shows front vent windows, a feature not normally found on Brunn's Touring and All-Weather cabriolets; ➤ Seat cushions with protective covers; ➤ Still visible on the eBay Packard (#2014) are these initials painted on the front doors. Could RVK reference its first owner? I found no match in California in "The Blue Book of Brunn Owners." Had those initials been RVJ, I believe I would have been obligated to purchase it!; ➤ Internet sleuths may have come across another Touring Cabriolet identified as number 1708-2014 a few years ago, but Packard historian Dr. Charles Blackman is of the opinion that those numbers were incorrectly recorded and the reported #2014 was actually #2019. Internet pictures of that car (#2019, not shown here) match the aforementioned inventory list description of black lower panels and Brunn Beige upper panels.

of the production Packard Twelve Touring Sedan. Between those two years, 23 Touring Cabriolets and 10 All-Weather Cabriolets were produced.

An internal Packard Motor Car Company memo dated May 1939 and signed by H.W. Potter (Manager, Custom Car Division) lists the custom cars available at that time. Nine Touring Cabriolets were listed, along with four All-Weather Cabriolets. This car, #2014 featured black paint on the lower body panels and Brunn beige on the upper panel with a tan Haartz top and Laidlaw cloth in both the front and rear passenger compartments. The car was located in Los Angeles.

Some of the photos shown here come from that eBay listing along with early ownership history of this car provided by the seller.

- Its original owner was a banker from Santa Barbara who had the dealer change the exterior color to tan before taking delivery. He also installed seat and door covers to protect the fabric, as he enjoyed having his dogs travel with him.
- Upon his passing, his nephew in Pasadena acquired the car.
- The current seller's father-in-law acquired it in 1954 and used it on a trip from Los Angeles to Mobile, Alabama sometime between 1954 and 1960.
- In 1960, the car was stored in a garage in Lakewood, California and has not moved since.
- The rear bumper and luggage rack were removed to allow the car to fit in the garage but both are included with the car.
- The original aluminum engine heads were replaced with cast iron heads but the aluminum set also comes with the car.
- Also included with the car are two "kneeling pads" (verbiage from the eBay listing) which must be the hassocks described and pictured in the original brochure shown here.

The eBay auction closed on December 24 with a high bid of \$49,100 which did not meet the seller's reserve price. Let's hope this Packard finds a new home within the ranks of the CCCA, preferably someone in the Southern California Region. •

### SEMI-CUSTOM BRUNN BODIES FOR THE 1938 AND 1939 PACKARD TWELVE CHASSIS

MODEL YEAR	DESCRIPTION	STYLE NUMBER	PRICE	NUMBER BUILT
1938	Touring Cabriolet	3086	\$8,510	13
1938	All-Weather Cabriolet	3087	\$8,510	5
1939	Touring Cabriolet	4086	\$8,355	10
1939	All-Weather Cabriolet	4087	\$8,355	5

*Production figure sources: CCCA members Charles Blackman and Roy Margeneau. A letter by Hermann C. Brunn that appeared in a Side Mount Mirror article (and published again in "California Classics", Volume 1) states that Lincoln K Touring Cabriolet production was "about 30."*

*These Brunn models were not only the most expensive Packard designs in 1938 and 1939; a review of early and late 12-cylinder Packards, including catalog custom designs, reveals these were the most expensive semi-custom Packards ever built.*



*Eagle-eyed observers will notice two interesting features found on the eBay Packard. Notice the grille appears to have chromed shutters rather than the alternating chrome and black shutters usually found on 1939 Packard Twelves.*