



Steve Snyder's 1933 Model J Duesenberg sedan by Weymann looks perfectly at home here



What could easily pass for a Duesenberg dealership is actually the William Lyon Collection



Past Regional Directors Steve Snyder and Aaron Weiss in front of the Fernandez & Darrin Duesenberg

**SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA
REGION
MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
AND THE**

WILLIAM LYON COLLECTION TOUR

NOVEMBER 12, 2022 / COTO DE CAZA, CALIFORNIA



BY REGIONAL DIRECTOR
PAUL WHITNEY

PHOTOS BY
**MARK SHEAR, FRED LAX,
JIM DAVIDSON
AND PAUL WHITNEY**

On November 12, 2022, our Region conducted its annual membership meeting during lunch at the impressive Coto de Caza Country Club in south Orange County. Thirty-six members attended.

First up on our agenda was a discussion of our club's financial condition. Our balance sheet is strong: with an update, as of December 31, 2022, we had \$73,471 in total assets, all current, of which \$69,471 consisted of cash deposits in banks. Total liabilities were \$16,195, and our net equity was \$57,277. Revenue for the year was \$14,449 and expenses were \$20,147. We incurred a net loss of \$5,698 resulting primarily from increased expenses for printing and insurance due to inflation, slower receipt of membership renewals last fall, and a reduction in projects revenue. To improve net revenue, we plan to increase our advertising revenue and add new members.

Next, we announced the results of our Board of Managers election. Members elected for three-year terms were John Milliken, Robert Robin and Paul Whitney. >



Frank Chirat brought this 1936 Packard 120C Convertible Victoria by LeBaron



Tom Scheil's 1934 Packard 1101 Phaeton



The Clendenen's 1926 Springfield Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Pall Mall Tourer

Our fourth candidate, Mark Shear, made a strong showing. Mark has volunteered to assist the Board with special projects this year. His efforts will be much appreciated and serve as an example of someone not being a Board Member who is willing to assist in the operation of our Region.

Last, we discussed membership status. We ended the year with 225 dues paying members, including 65 associate members. We expect some modest attrition this year so it's very important to attract new members to both make up the difference and expand our total membership. Your help in this regard is vital and driving and showing your Classic Car is the best advertisement for the Club.

Following lunch, we traveled a short distance to the William Lyon Car Collection housed at the impressive William Lyon family estate. General Lyon was a prominent residential real estate developer and entrepreneur in Orange County. He was also a Major General of the United States Air Force. During his lifetime, General Lyon — he always preferred to be addressed as General — was a passionate and discriminating collector of Full Classic® automobiles, assembling a world-class collection focused on Duesenberg, Packard and Cadillac. The collection is housed in a stunning exhibition building adjacent to the family estate. In 2018, the Region visited the Lyon Air Museum near the John Wayne Airport as part of the membership meeting that year, but touring the cars at the estate provided a more complete view of the collection.

Among the cars on display are a "modest" number of Duesenbergs — eleven to be exact! Especially amazing is a 1935 Duesenberg Model J Fernandez & Darrin Convertible Victoria. Greeting you as you enter the building is a stunning 1934 Packard Twelve LeBaron Runabout. As you can see in the attached photo, Fred Lax is attempting to sign up a new member. Fred- it's time to update your eyeglass >



Mercedes-Benz 770K Cabriolet B



Fred Lax and a prospective member



Mercedes-Benz 540K Special Roadster

prescription! And fellow Duesenberg owners Steve Snyder and Aaron Weiss looking quite at home among Model Js in the Collection.

Our tour concluded after about two hours of viewing time. Everyone agreed that the Lyon estate is the perfect setting to exhibit such a spectacular collection. Our sincere thanks to the Lyon family for the privilege to see it.

The membership meeting was our last official event for 2022, and the William Lyon Collection was third in our “Triple Crown” of major car collections we visited this year, having toured the Nethercutt Collection in April and the Mullin Automotive Museum in October. More tours and events are in work for 2023! ●



Cadillacs in the Collection



1940 Packard 180 Convertible Victoria by Darrin



1930 Cadillac 452 Roadster by Fleetwood



1929 Duesenberg J-101 Sweep Panel Phaeton by LeBaron



1929 Duesenberg J-264
Dual-Cowl Phaeton by Murphy



1931 Duesenberg J-499 Convertible Victoria by Fernandez & Darrin

A CLOSER LOOK:

THE WILLIAM LYON COLLECTION

BY **RON VERSCHOOR**

The Classics in the William Lyon Collection are all impressive but space constraints prohibit an in-depth review of each one of them. Presented here are nine Classics of note.

Duesenberg is the most prominent marque in the Collection and a good place to start is with J-101, chassis #2125. This LeBaron Dual-Cowl Phaeton carries the lowest engine number and was part of the Model J introduction at the New York Auto Salon in December 1928.

Next is a Model J with a strong connection to the Southern California Region. J-264, chassis #2285 is a long-wheelbase chassis equipped with Murphy Dual-Cowl Phaeton coachwork. It was part of the Nethercutt Collection in the late 1950s and moved to the William Harrah Collection in 1962. General Lyon acquired the car in 1986 when the Harrah collection was liquidated at auction. All three owners have been part of the Southern California Region and currently two other Murphy Dual-Cowl Phaetons can be found listed in our region: J-175 owned by the Rob and Jeannie Hilarides and J-403, owned by Aaron and Valerie Weiss. (Both of those are short wheelbase chassis Model Js.) J-264 also received screen time, appearing in Columbia

Pictures 1982 film, "Annie."

J-499, chassis #2516 is a Fernandez & Darrin Convertible Victoria fitted to the long wheelbase chassis. It is one of four Model Js carrying Fernandez & Darrin coachwork and the absence of sidemounts visually lengthens an already long body.

J-437, chassis #2450 is a Weymann Tapertail Speedster, a Gordon Buehrig design on the short-wheelbase chassis. The curvature of the two-tone paintwork from the hood through the cowl and into the front doors is echoed in the taper of the rear of the car. The V-shaped minimalist windshield and the absence of running boards gives it a particularly sporting appearance.

J-354, chassis #2560 is a Walker-LaGrande Convertible Coupe, the second of three built. Penned by J. Herbert Newport and built by A.H. Walker of Indianapolis, the Walker-LaGrande name was applied to in-house Duesenberg designs. The car features a very low convertible top that is lowered via crank mechanism.

J-585, chassis #2614 is the highest serial number for a Model J, a fitting bookend to J-101 at the other end of the Model J (and Lyon Collection) spectrum. Fitted with stunning Speedster coachwork by J. Gurney-Nutting, its sweeping lines are accentuated by the two-tone orange over black paintwork. Even at rest, the car appears to be in motion and its supercharged engine more than delivers on the visual promise of speed.

This is a right-hand-drive, long-wheelbase chassis and its original owner was the Maharaja of Indore. J. Gurney-Nutting Ltd., of Chelsea, London is more closely associated >



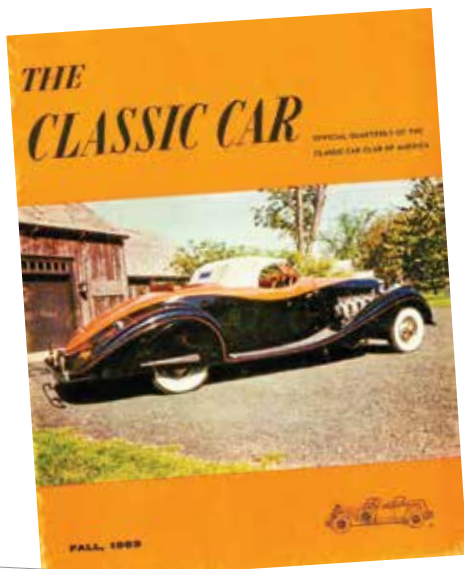
1931 Duesenberg J-437 Tapertail Speedster by Weymann



1934 Duesenberg Model J-354 Convertible Coupe by Walker-LaGrande



1935 Duesenberg J-585 Speedster by J. Gurney Nutting



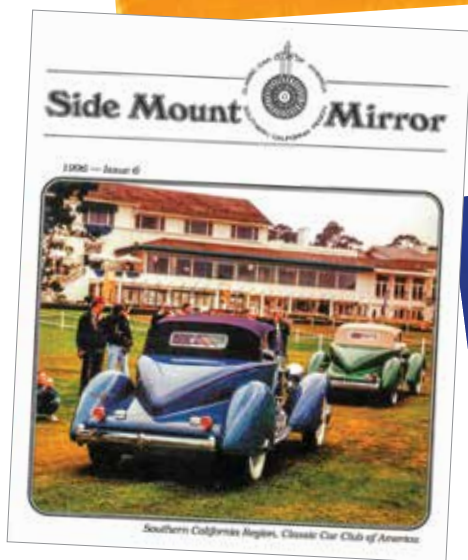
with Rolls-Royce and Bentley but J-585 is probably the firm's most memorable design. The car has received extensive press and exposure, appearing on the cover of the Fall 1963 issue of the CCCA's *The Classic Car* following its first-place win (at 99.5 points) at the Eastern Grand Classic in New Jersey that year. Owned by William Brewster of Stonington, Connecticut at the time, it was awarded CCCA Senior Classic #183.

Automobile Quarterly Volume 10, Number 2 (1972) featured six articles on Duesenberg, including an eight-page driving impression article on J-585. The cover of that issue (no photo, alas) was appropriately finished in orange and black.

Automobile Quarterly dedicated an entire issue to Duesenberg in the Volume 30, Number 4 issue (1992). J-585 was depicted on that cover, courtesy of artist Ken Eberts (also a Southern California Region member), in a delightful illustration entitled, "The Maharaja Gives Its Regards to Old Broadway". The scene positions J-585 in an intersection of 46th Street and Broadway in midtown Manhattan.

The 1934 Packard 1106 LeBaron Runabout is one of Packard's most sporting designs. Author Edward J. Blend documents that four of these LeBaron Runabouts were built in "The Magnificent Packard Twelve of 1934". A true two-seater, it employs the relatively short (by Packard Twelve standards) 135" wheelbase chassis and carries body style #275, priced at \$7746 when new. Owners from the 1960s to present include J.B. Nethercutt, William Harrah, Bob Lee and the Lyon Collection (who acquired it from Harrah, then sold it to Lee, the repurchased it around 2006). Bobbie'dine Rodda captured this photo of a procession of two of these Runabout for the 1996 cover of the *Side Mount Mirror*.

Complementing the array of Duesenbergs in the collection are Auburn and Cord, including this 1930 Cord L-29 Town Car by Murphy. It is one of three long-wheelbase chassis (153-½" wheelbase vs. the standard 137 ½" wheelbase) fitted with elegant Murphy Town Car coachwork. This example





1930 Cord L-29 Town Car by Murphy



1938 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Sedan de Ville by Franay



1934 Packard 1106 Runabout by LeBaron

features rear-mounted spare tires, giving it an even longer appearance than its twin in the Nethercutt Collection, which is equipped with sidemounts.

This 1938 Rolls-Royce Phantom III (chassis #3CM91) is fitted with Sedan de Ville

coachwork by Franay. It was displayed at the Paris Grand Palais in October of 1938 and its first owner was Karl Thiel, a newspaper owner from Zurich, Switzerland. Its flowing lines are a refreshing break from the rather upright and stodgy designs appearing on many Phantom

III chassis. About 20 years ago, a replica of this body was under construction, earmarked for an un-bodied Phantom III chassis left in Germany prior to World War II. General Lyon was kind enough to loan 3CM91 to a fellow collector for this project. ●