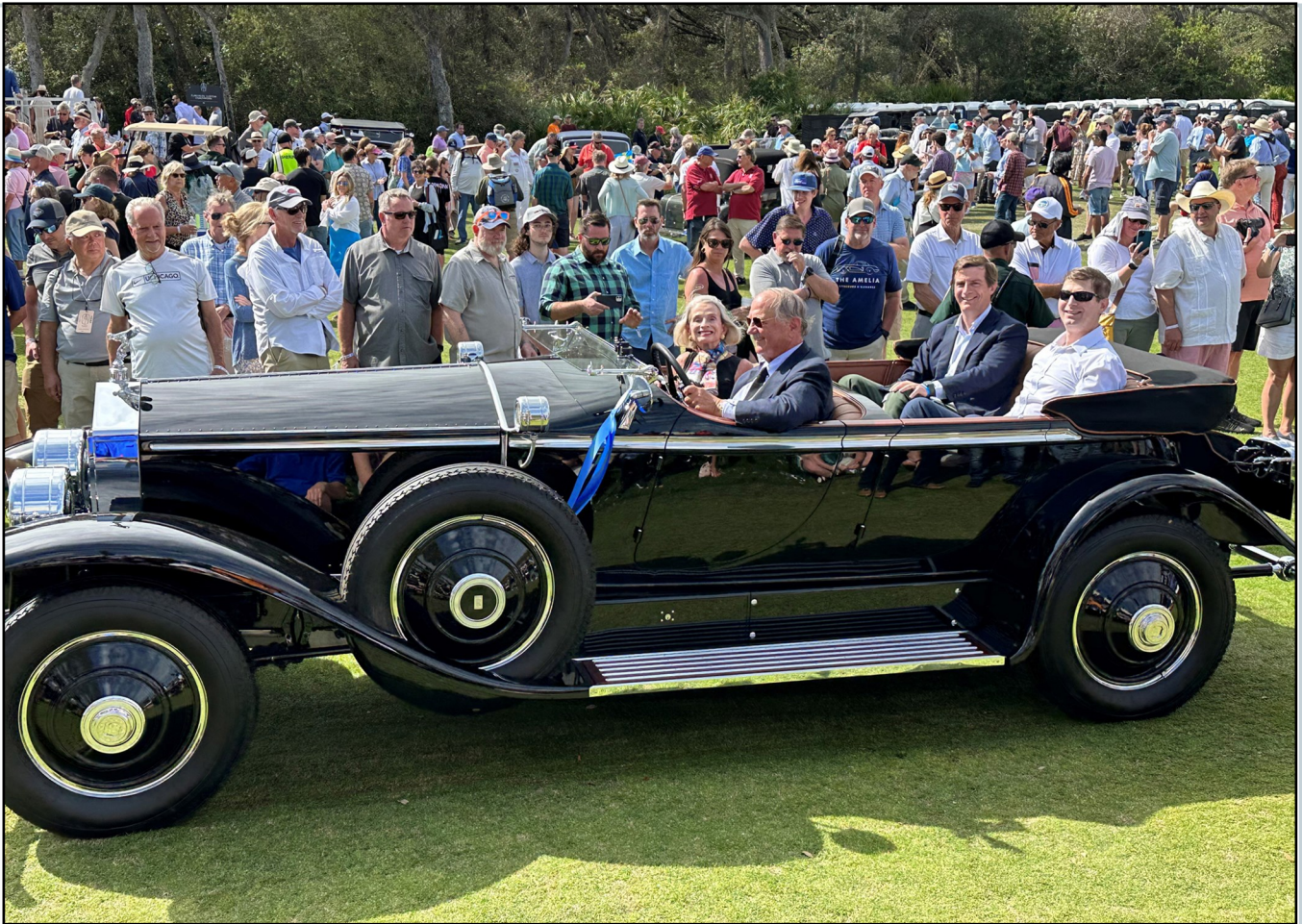


THE SPARK PLUG

News to spark your interest

May/June 2023

Spirit of St. Louis Region Classic Car Club of America



Kimmy and Steve Brauer and family enjoying their class first place win at Amelia in their 1928 Rolls-Royce PI

WHAT'S INSIDE

Director's Message	P2
Across the Editor's Desk	P4
Membership Musings	P6
St. Louis Car Museum Show flyer.....	P7
Pierce-Arrow Society Winter Meeting.....	P8-9

Fulton Churchill Museum Tour.....	P11
CCCA Annual Meeting.....	P12-13
Urbana Strong Collection Tour.....	P13-17
Three Region Grand Classic.....	P18
Calendar of Events.....	P20

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Director's Message

Some of the best turnouts for Clubs events are those that involve visiting a member's car collection at their garage or warehouse location. They are among my favorite activities, especially those whose collections go well beyond cars to include signs, posters, mascots, and more.....these types of 'automobilia' are fascinating to me, and just as much as the cars, they have a story to tell all their own.

For those who were able to make the three-hour trek in April to Allen and Nancy Strong's incredible collection in Urbana, IL, it was an unforgettable experience. The setting is a converted warehouse that at first site might be misconstrued as a local business, but once inside it's a step back in time. Another building sits nearby, full of more gems. It's magical really, and the Strong's have aptly named the space and their collection, *Magic Motors*.

Packards are clearly a favorite of the Strong's and along with the lovely oriental rugs and antique display cabinets surrounding the cars, you could well feel like you were in an elegant 1920s Dealer Showroom browsing the cars to find just the right one.

The uniqueness of the collection is further enhanced by Nancy's collection of antique clothing and hats that are displayed among the many automotive artifacts such as vintage car photographs, mascots and literature. She encouraged many of us who wanted to pretend to be Gatsby himself to try on full length fur coats and hats. Roving photographer Larry Hassel captured many such 'Gatsby's' through his camera lens.

The Strong's passion for preserving Full Classic automobiles and automotive history is on full display at this place, and it's inspiring.....in a word, magical.....Magic Motors. **John**



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Across the Editor's Desk



**Cover Classic - 1928 Rolls-Royce Phantom I Derby Speedster, Brewster & Co— S185FR
Owners Steve and Kimmy Brauer.**

It was 1925, and the Silver Ghost launched in 1906, was being retired. After seven years of experiment and test, the six-cylinder Phantom chassis was introduced. The New Phantom, as it was called, received the Phantom I designation retrospectively when the Phantom II appeared on the scene in 1930. From 1926 until as late as 1931, Phantom I's were also produced in the U.S. at Rolls-Royce's Springfield, Massachusetts factory. Of 3,340 Phantom I's produced, 1,241 were built stateside. P-I's continued to be built and sold in the United States even though the model had been replaced by the Phantom II in England. Chassis No. S185FR is one of five U.K. Derby-built P-I's to have been fitted with a Speedster body by Brewster & Co. It was delivered new to Robert D. Lay. It is further highlighted by its drum headlights, tubular bumpers, and dramatically flared rear fenders.

The Spirit of St. Louis Region Classic Car Club of America and our Spark Plug newsletter were very much appreciated at the recent CCCA Annual Meeting. Among other National awards we won 3rd place in the McManus Publication Award for regions with 100 or less members and 4th Place in the Technical Award. We also won 2nd Place in the Chuck Conrad Website Award

Spirit of St. Louis Region member Rose Gibson was among members of the 1st Mid America Credit Union who received an award from the Illinois Credit Union League. Rose is a Board Chair for 1st Mid America. Congratulations to Rose.

I must apologize for the lateness of this issue of the Spark Plug newsletter. In addition to some heavy work for Mecum for their May Indianapolis Auction, I was set back by the need to have a heart pacemaker implanted on 28 April. I am recovering slowly from my surgery but it has slowed me down considerably. Thanks to all of my Classic friends for the good wishes and valuable advice. **Jim**



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Membership Musings

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We ask that advertisers submit ads reflecting services or businesses consistent with our members' interests. Digital graphics are not required but will result in a higher quality advertisement. If submitting a hard copy of graphics please make sure there are no fold lines, tears in the paper or information that is not accurate.

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Welcome new members: William Hall of St. Louis, Missouri And Dan Hoodin of Springfield, Illinois.

I met William Hall at the Easter Show sitting next to his 1940 Buick series 80 Limited. Bill is a Political Science professor at Wash U and enjoys taking his Buick out. I first met Dan Hoodin when the Spirit Region joined the Rolls Royce Owner's Club on the Fall trip to Hannibal last October. He also drove his 1962 Rolls Royce Silver Cloud (nc) on the Magic Motors tour. He so enjoyed spending time with the car folks on the tour and seeing the collections that he joined the Spirit Region.

See reviews of our first events elsewhere in the Spark Plug. We've had two Spirit Nights. In March we had a really neat tour with the Jaguar Club to the Winston Churchill Museum in Fulton, Missouri. At the end of April, we had an unbelievably fantastic two-day tour to three collections in Mansfield, Urbana, and Paxton, Illinois. Many thanks to member Allen Strong for sharing his passion and signing up Steve Zumdahl and Royce Baier to also share their collections.

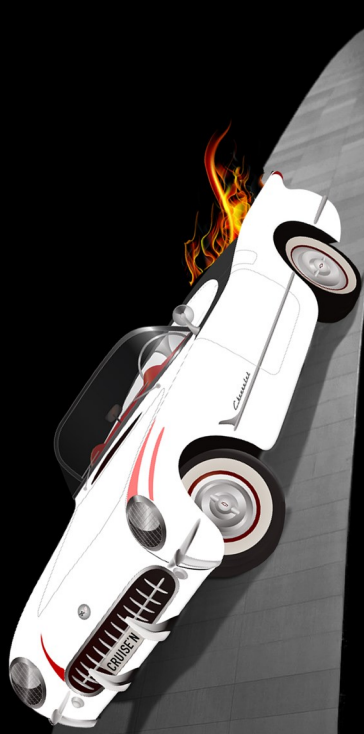
If the stars align, John Gibson promises a unique garage tour. John is attempting to corral cats Andy Dorris, Phil Taxman, and George Dorris to provide garage tours. Planning to still in process, looking possibly at July 1. Stay tuned for details.

We are looking to combine once again with the local Jaguar and AACA clubs this time to visit Spirit member Manns Restoration. Look for additional information to come. We are targeting a tour on Saturday, July 22.

We are still filling in some additional tour dates where we have space on the calendar. We will also continue to have monthly Spirit Nights, with an upcoming one on the Illinois side of things.

Planning continues on the Fall tour to Kansas City, October 13-15. We are getting a big hand from the Kansas City Cadillac and LaSalle Club and CCCA region. We've identified three car collections and other sites of interest. We are looking to work out of the Plaza area downtown. Members from Kansas City region clubs and the Oil Belt region CCCA would meet and tour with us. As we did last year, we will likely begin the drive to KC from Wendell Smith's Place in Chesterfield. Time to get a car tuned up for the trip. We will have more details once we nail down a hotel.

Todd



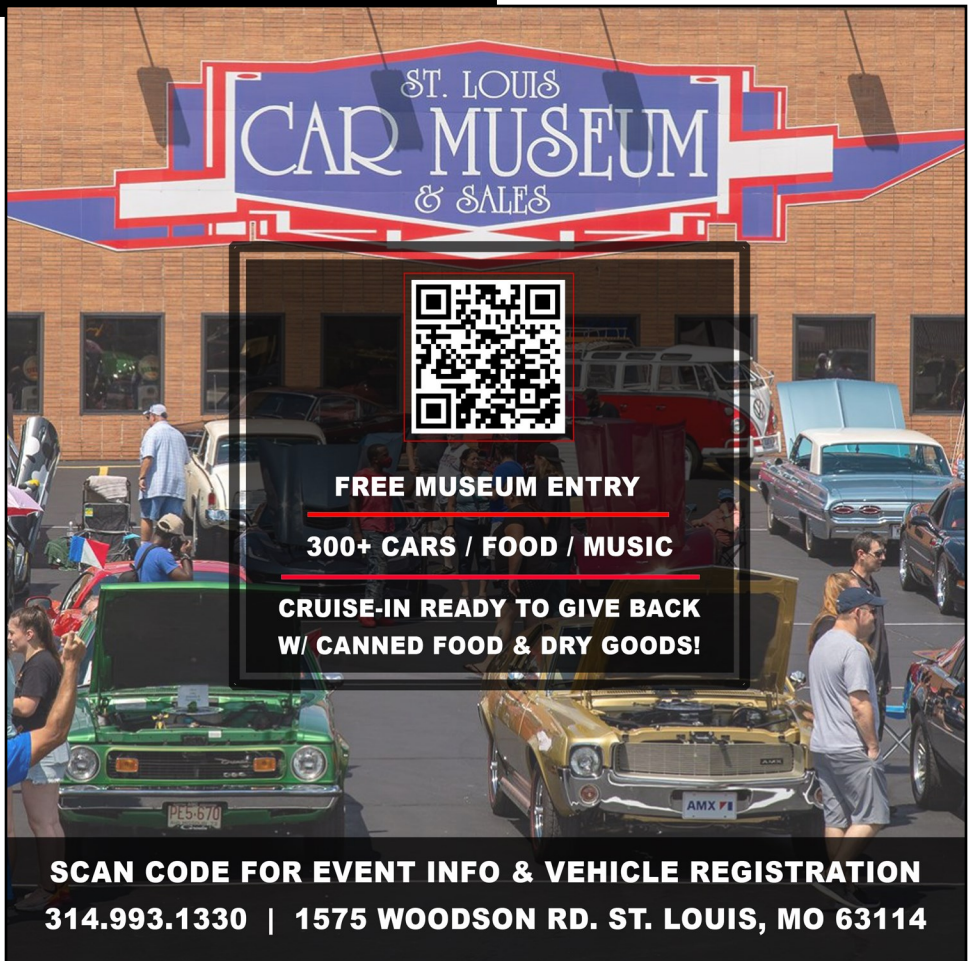
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Pierce-Arrow Society Winter Weekend Board Meeting

By Duane Wesche

The Pierce Arrow Winter Weekend (annual winter board meeting) for 2023 was Feb 23rd through the 26th and held at the lovely Charleston Resort and Marina in Mt. Pleasant, SC, across the bay from Charleston.

The meet officially began with a welcome party provided by the resort, on Thursday evening. Food stations were set up inside a meeting room with an open doorway to the patio with another station and bar. Those of us who arrived a little early were treated to a beautiful sunset. As the evening progressed, the lights of Charleston flickered on the other side of the bay and the passing of boats and ships crisscrossed the waterway. Friendships were renewed and made with the group of over 50 people in attendance. The weekend's itinerary was discussed by Rick Horn, one of the committee who ran the meetings.

Friday morning after breakfast, the group car-pooled to a research building on the campus of Clemson University that houses one of the submarines used by the south during the Civil War. This sub, the Hunley, was used to sink a Union ship blockading the port of Charleston. The sub was found several years ago buried in the bay, excavated and brought to a custom made tank with a specialized solution to keep the ship from decaying. The remains of the crew, as well as all the equipment and other items were and are still being extracted from the silt that filled the boat. The docent was well versed in the history of the sub's invention, manufacture, discovery and recovery. It was very interesting for a history buff like myself. I had been surprised by some of the discussion of the civil war being called the war of Union aggression against the south. But that didn't take anything away from the steps the scientific team is having to take to clean and preserve this 170 year old submarine.

Lunch was next at Momo's Riverfront Park which was held on the patio of an old building directly on the waterfront. The food was served family style and the plate fulls never seemed to stop coming. After lunch, we all got the chance to visit two of the three architectural gems in Charleston that the committee had been able to arrange for us to visit. The Thomas Heyward House, the Joseph Manigault House or the Charleston Museum. The houses were both over 200 years old and beautifully restored. The Charleston Museum tells the story of the 250 years of history since this museum was founded and is called America's First Museum.

Saturday was a dreary day, but temperatures were still in the 60's as we boarded a bus to tour the Charleston Tea Plantation, the only Tea garden in North America with hundreds of thousands of tea bushes that was started in the 1800's and is now owned by the Bigelow family. We were driven around the plantation on a trolley and the process of growing and harvesting the tea was explained. Tea bushes are never dug out, even if they die. One large multi acre field was planted over 100 years ago and still produces. We then got a tour of the plant where the tea is processed into the final products. All tea, at least here, starts with the same leaves and the different ways these are processed determines what type of tea you end up with, from green to black and so many in between.

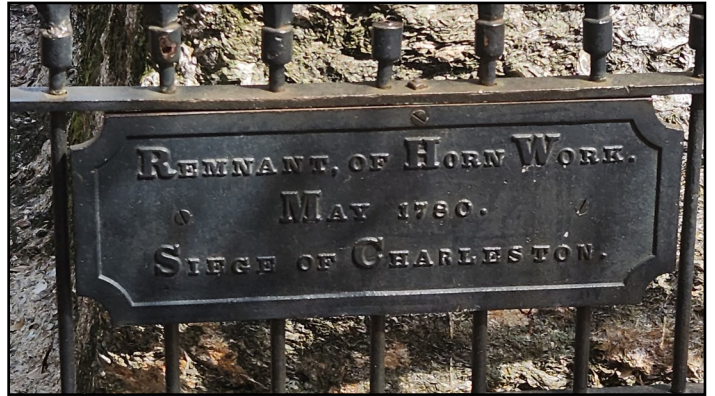
After the tea plantation, we drove to Angel Oak, one of the oldest and biggest oak trees in America. I was surprised that there were hundreds of people visiting this tree on a rainy day in February. I don't know how the bus driver got through the narrow rural poorly paved roads to get in and out of this area. We had another delicious down home lunch at a place called Sunrise Bistro. Arriving back at the resort, there was live music and an oyster roast and other "low country" fare.

Sunday was the Pierce Arrow Board meetings and the Pierce Arrow Museum meetings. For those not attending, a shuttle took you to downtown Charleston to shop or sight see. It was a beautiful day to explore.

The evening banquet was at the adjacent Fish House restaurant, on the waterfront with the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown moored directly in front of the windows. This year's annual meet and car show will be in Glens Falls, NY (near Lake George) June 20-24th. The regional events were also promoted, the upper Midwest is hosting a tour in Cleveland from May 5-7 and the Gathering at Gilmore Aug 24-27.

Every Pierce Arrow event has good food, good people and great cars!





Churchill Museum, Fulton, Missouri

By Todd Tobiasz

Pictures by Jim Schild, Todd Tobiasz and Larry Hassel

On Sunday, March 12, members of the Spirit Region joined the Jaguar Club on their annual Rallye. This year found us driving the scenic back roads west of St. Louis to the Churchill Museum in Fulton, Missouri, about 80 miles from our starting point in Chesterfield. It was a perfect driving day, just of a touch on the cool side. Jim Hendrix and Phil Taxman arranged for a well-informed docent-led tour of the church of St. Mary the Virgin and the adjoining Winston Churchill Museum. The church has its origin as a 12th century church that was redesigned by the famous English Architect, Sir Christopher Wren, after the great fire of London in 1677. It was left in ruins after the London bombing in World War II, then relocated to the campus of Westminster College in Fulton in the 1960's. The docent gave an interesting depiction of the stones strewn about the campus as the builders attempted to find the right pattern to put the church back together.



Westminster College's connection to Churchill dates back to the invitation that President Harry Truman extended to former Prime Minister Churchill to speak at the college in the months after the War. In one of the most famous speeches coming out of the war, Churchill described how "an iron curtain has descended across the Continent" in Eastern Europe. His speech presaged the Cold War which extended from the end of WWII to the fall of the Berlin Wall in the 1990's. The museum is a treasure trove of history that covered Churchill's life and career and the tragedy of the war. We could have spent many more hours there.

Lunch was enjoyed by roughly 30 participants at the Post Office Bar & Grill in Fulton. Thanks to Jim and Lisa and Phil and Lupe for organizing the trip and inviting the Spirit Region.





Annual Meeting of the CCCA, Philadelphia, PA. March 29-April 2, 2023 By John Groll

The greater Philadelphia area served as the backdrop for this year's annual meeting. Robert Hosenfelt and John Groll from our region made the trip. Weather was a mix of spring rains and chills and nice sunny days.

Wednesday was check-in day. The event site was the Ritz Carlton which more or less sits in the center of Philadelphia with most historical sites no more than a 10–20-minute walk. The hotel itself resides in the 1908 Girard Trust Rotunda building. Welcoming party that evening was held just off the main entry of the hotel and offered a nice chance to meet up again with other CCCA members from across the Country. Tours were the highlight of Thursday and the 2 buses were off to the first collection by 10:00 AM. We arrived in Allentown about an hour later at the N (icola) B(ulgari) Center for American Automotive Heritage. This collection is situated on an old drive-in theater property that still offers up its 8-foot-tall perimeter wall and full-size projection screen. Along the eastern and northern edges are some 14 buildings that house the collection and serve as restoration shops. Mr. Bulgari still resides in Italy but became intensely interested in American cars as a young boy growing up near the Vatican. He fell in love with the Buicks, Packards and Cadillacs he saw in the Vatican garages. He started collecting American cars and before long had purchased the Pennsylvania property and now has over 150 predominately American cars: ALL in running condition.

In fact, the Center has a staff of some 15 to 18 employees, who restore and maintain the collection along with procuring new vehicles. Mr. Bulgari reportedly visits the collection 4-5 times a year, spending 2-3 days at a time, driving a dozen or so different cars around the paved roads on the property. We were next served lunch at the welcoming lodge. As our group climbed back in the buses, each guest was generously handed a gift bag consisting of a wonderful oversize book "The Limousines of the Vatican" and a Brooklin 1:43 scale model of a 1953 Ford sedan!

Thursday afternoon took us to the Ross Myers "3 Dog Garage." After a "false stop" at Mr. Myers' working facility, we were redirected a few blocks over to the 32,000 sq ft main collection building. This provided yet another fascinating display of Classics, race cars, and muscle cars. In addition, a large number of rare and intriguing pre-war Fords from the former Mark Smith collection (when did you last see a 1929 Model A Town Car?) were in a special area of their own. The atmosphere was further enhanced by copious amounts of automobilia and period signage.

Friday morning brought regional, publications, and classifications meetings from 830 to 1030 with the rest of the day "on your own." We were able to visit the liberty bell, the Science History Institute and the Philadelphia Art Mu-

seum. However, we were not able to visit Independence Hall due to access being granted only through on-line ticket sales at 10:00 AM each day, a process very few tourists knew about. Likewise, our efforts to visit the Museum of the American Revolution were thwarted by the facility power supply being out.

Friday evening was a semi-formal dinner at the Union League of Pennsylvania. After a relatively simple meal consisting of Philly cheese sandwiches, the crowd was joined by none other than Ben Franklin himself! Mr. Franklin provided an intriguing hour-long presentation on this important period of American history and shed light on why Philadelphia as opposed to Boston or New York served as the cradle of government and policy-making at this period of time. "Ben" then took questions for another 30 minutes followed by posing for photos with CCCA members.

Saturday was a bus trip across town to the Simeone Museum featuring the racing and sports car collection of neurosurgeon Frederick Simeone, who passed away last year at age 86. Featured in the center of the Simeone museum were the Classics brought by Club members for display and judging. We returned back to the Ritz after lunch, to grab a nap and spiff up a bit before heading back to the Simeone Museum for the Awards Banquet featuring a surf and turf dinner. We had a wonderful time conversing with several members of the Club's publications judges.

Sunday was a gorgeous day and thankfully we had signed up for the optional bus trip to the Steve Babinsky collection. Due to the comparatively small building housing a large collection, the tour was limited to 45 people. A true gentleman, Mr. Babinsky hosted us in what was an old Studebaker dealership building in New Jersey about an hour and a half from Philadelphia. This building was packed with what I would describe as an unbelievable collection of predominantly unrestored Classics (and some non-Classics.) Of course, there were Packards, Cadillacs, Lincolns, and Chryslers. But also, a Franklin, Cunningham, Duesenberg, Nash, Stutz and McFarlan. A stunning sign and automobilia collection added to the ambiance. Mr. Babinsky then provided lunch at the small-town fire station one block away.

Inflationary times made the air travel, Ritz and even the events rather expensive. Nonetheless, it is not often you get the chance to visit these private collections, viewing the rare gems hidden away in attics and basements, rarely seen by the public. That and most importantly, the opportunity to meet up with other CCCA members, old and new. We had no regrets making this trip!



The NB Collection was housed in some thirteen different buildings. This is just one row in one building.



Steve Babinsky discusses his car collection with a young CCCA Member.



Classics among the neon signs at the Three Dog Collection.



Overall winner at the awards went to this gorgeous 1935 Cadillac V-16 Coupe.



Liberty Bell with Independence Hall in the Background.

A Magical Weekend in Central Illinois

By Todd Tobiasz

Pictures by Todd Tobiasz, Jon Lowell and Larry Hassel

Members of the Spirit Region, CCCA, Rolls Royce Owners Club, Cadillac & LaSalle Club, and Packard Club visited three Classic collections in central Illinois the weekend of April 22 and 23. Allen Strong was the organizer of the weekend's itinerary. When I spoke to him about the possibility of having a visit, he said, let's make it worth the trip. He set about to contact friends. The first stop was hosted by Steve and Susan Zumdahl in Mansfield. Steve set the tone for what became a weekend immersed in fine cars, accessories, and stories. He encouraged us to get close and feel the cars – "fingerprints do not scare me." Steve provided stories on each of about 18 Classic and newer cars in his collection. He then opened the backroom to six or seven additional motor vehicles and two horse-drawn vehicles. If that wasn't enough, we braved light snow and sleet to see a large collection of 19th century firearms, including a very rare piece with a unique history.

On to Urbana. After a relaxing lunch at Allen and Nancy's Silvercreek restaurant, we visited their collection – starting in the showroom. Plenty of time to wander around the cars and paraphernalia, playing dress-up with the many period coats and hats that Nancy has collected. Stunning examples of a dozen or more Classics. Cadillac V16, Auburn Speedster, Supercharged Cord, and more than a few Packards. Allen and Nancy gave us a narrative of the cars in the collection with background and history. Then it was off to the workshop. Some overflow for showroom as well as plenty of interesting projects. The collection will see lots of rotation as these projects are completed and come out. Dinner was at the Greenhouse Room at Silvercreek. Nancy Strong was dressed in an outfit appropriate for the cars of the day's touring.

Sunday morning we made the short drive north to Paxton. Royce and Sheila Baier have their collections in a repurposed mall. In addition to housing collections of cars and other interesting stuff, the mall is also the home of Simply Pat's Hats and Things – source of many hats in Nancy Strong's collection. The not-so-subtle theme in this collection is the 1941 Packard. There was probably not a body style from the year that was missing. And there were several examples of some. Original and restored cars. This Cadillac collector was feeling that I had missed something

important by not having a '41 Packard. Royce is a second-generation collector and has great stories of collecting cars with his father. Royce's collection is also one of keeping the cars driving and restoring those requiring it. He showed us a building with several ongoing projects. The Baiers are also proprietors of the local funeral home. He took us to the garage there which contained more cars, mostly his father's collection, and more stories. As an added treat we made the short walk down to Royce and Sheila's home, a large brick century home. We got a tour and history of the house, which the Baiers have renovated over the last 30 years.

The official tour ended after a pizza lunch in Paxton. Here we were able to relax and catch up with the Strongs and the Baiers to think about all we'd seen over the weekend. But for a few hearty souls we went on after lunch to investigate a storage facility for Allen Strong's projects. Once a grade school, the building's gymnasium is filled with untouched projects waiting for their day – cars found in original condition. Some of Allen's Pierce Arrow sleuthing abilities were described by him in an article in the Spirit magazine a couple of years ago.

One of the things that stood out from all three collections was the information that was gathered about the history of the cars we saw – that of prior ownership and how the car came to be a part of each collection. The time that Steve, Allen, and Royce gave the group providing insight into each car really brought the collections alive. The group was overwhelmed by the quality, history, and quantity of world-class Classics and non-classics we saw in the two days. Many thanks to the Strongs, Zumdahls, and Baiers for their sharing.





Nancy Strong at Dinner.



Dinner in the Greenhouse.

John Hartmann getting pointers from Nancy Strong in front of a 1935 Auburn Speedster.



Nancy and Allen providing history of the 1915 Packard Pace Car.



Some of the Magic Motors.



A quartet of Packards.



A pair of Packards.







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July 21-23 | Columbus Indiana | Mill Race Park

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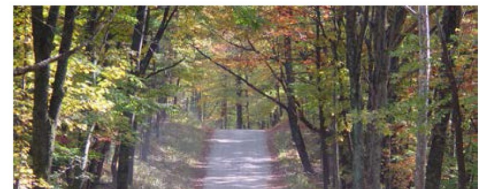
Special Events

Friday Afternoon – Downtown shops, museums, architecture tours and Zaharakos restored Victorian ice cream parlor

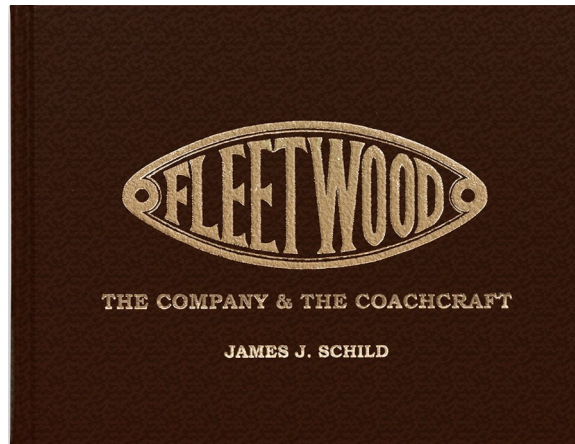
Friday night – garden cocktail party/ heavy hors d’ oeuvres at Irwin Gardens

Saturday – Cars are displayed around the Round Lake in Mill Race Park

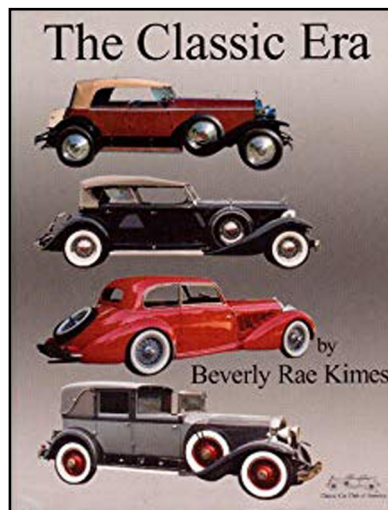
Sunday – Scenic drive through Brown County to rustic Story Inn for brunch



THE CLASSIC BOOKSHELF



The SSR Region proudly announces a re-issue of the book *Fleetwood, The Company and The Coachcraft*, by Region member James J. Schild. Long out of print, and a must for all Classic Car enthusiasts, the book is printed on high quality paper, and is the authoritative work on Fleetwood coachwork supplied to the finest American and European car manufacturers. Awarded the prestigious **Maurice Hendry Award** for excellence in journalistic contributions by the Cadillac & La Salle Club in 2012, and the **Thomas McKean Memorial Cup** by the Antique Automobile Club of America in 2013. Brown leatherette cover with gold foil stamping, 464 pages, 1100 b/w illustrations. \$99.50 postpaid. International buyers, please contact us for a shipping quote. Order your copy today from the SSR Region via email at ssr.cca@yahoo.com, or via our webstore at www.spiritcca.com.



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Jim Schild
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April Spirit Night at Helen Fitzgerald's in South County.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2023

>>Spirit Night, Bella Milano, O'Fallon, Illinois, Larry Hassel, Host

9 May, 2023

June 2023

>>Spirit Night. Host, Location and date TBD

>>CCCA Experience. European Luxury

June 2-6, 2023

July 2023

>>Three Region Grand Classic, Columbus, Indiana

July 21-23

>>Spirit Night. Host, location and date TBD