

May/June 2020

Spirit of St. Louis Region Classic Car Club of America



Bob Abbott and his 1928 Cunningham on the show field at Amelia Island 2020. John Gibson Photo.

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Thomas Quick teq56@yahoo.com

TREASURER Kevin Williams stlwcl@yahoo.com

SECRETARY Jim Heslop jimheslop@hotmail.com

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ACTIVITIES Todd Tobiasz

ttobiasz@sbcglobal.net

John Gibson

bxba62@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Todd Tobiasz

ttobiasz@sbcglobal.net

WEBMASTER

John Lowell

SPARK PLUG NEWSLETTER

EDITOR

Jim Schild jschild@htc.net

Director's Message

event cancellations and stay-athome mandates adopted by almost I know we all long for things to every State have virtually turned our daily lives upside down as we try our best to stay in place and practice social distancing. quite possible that many of you know of someone who has contracted this horrible disease, perhaps even a family member or close friend, so we hope and pray for their return to good health.

If you're like me, I try to limit my consumption of the never ending daily news of the Coronavirus, but then the many heart warming stories of the life-saving work of doctors, nurses, and first responders on the front lines come on and I'm drawn back to watching......what they do is incredible and inspiring to say the least. And behind the scenes are so many ordinary folks doing extraordinary things....things like making homemade masks or gowns, helping out at local food banks, ordering out meals from shuttered restaurants to help those businesses weather the storm, or just performing a random act of kindness. This is when we're at our best in America, this is what we do in difficult times, and this is what makes us truly

unique......we extend a helping

all in this together.

hand to those in need because we're

My hope in this message is that We ourselves feel that what we you are well and staying healthy are doing is just a drop in the during these most difficult and un- ocean. But the ocean would be precedented times as we battle this less because of that missing silent enemy called Covid-19. The drop...St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa)

> get back to some degree of normalcy, and that includes activities in the SSR – CCCA Region, to when we can once again convene at a Spirit Night or get together for a tour in the Classics, but until that time, why not share a story or two about what you are doing or have been doing to stay busy during the pandemic. Member Wendell Smith suggested we do this and I think it's a great idea. Perhaps you've started a new restoration, or maybe even finishing one up, organized your garage or finetuned your Classic for the inevitable return to daily life and the resumption of fun in the Club. Share your story and send it to our newsletter Editor, Schild.....we'd love to hear it!

> Above all, stay well, and have hope.

John



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Across the Editor's Desk

enjoying their cars and each other's fellowship. Wendell will be sending those out to readers. Smith offered the idea of asking our members to tell couple months of seclusion. We are fortunate that our enjoying our cars, our club and our friends again. members came through with some very interesting sto- Jim Schild ries that we hop will inspire others to make the best of been able to do.

First Wendell Smith, John Gibson and Bob Abbott send their story of their wonderful trip to the Amelia Island Concours, which was scheduled just prior to the pandemic breakout. This is one of the best shows in the world and their story allows the rest of us to enjoy the highlights of the event. Next, award-winning author and restorer Terry Wenger reported on his continuing restoration of a 1939 Cadillac Coupe. Todd Tobiasz entertains and educates us with a story of the partial restoration of his 1936 Cadillac convertible sedan. John Gibson relates his work on the engine in his Pierce-Arrow.

Normally this would be a time of news about great I took this opportunity to tell about my experience while events past and present but with everyone in the world in assembling a new storage shed in back of the house to the grasp of the COVD19 pandemic and accompanying fill with some of the parts and other things in the way of government shutdowns and restrictions, the Classic Car work in our big garage. My life is a little less stressful Club Spirit of St. Louis Region has to find other ways of now that my new novel is finished and published so I

We hope and pray that life will be back to normal or their stories of what they have doing during these past as close as it can be, very soon and we can all get back to

this strange time and get some things done we have not If anyone is interested in a very nice Classic Cadillac, Cecile Mesker has the 1931 Cadillac 355A five passenger sedan for sale that her late husband Doug had and worked on for many years. Many of you with Cadillacs probably knew Doug and the car. It is an excellent very original Cadillac with rare rear mounted spare and a couple of unusual accessories. You can contact her at: cecilemesker@me.com for more information.







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Membership Musings



Welcome new members: Ken Hundelt – St. Louis, Missouri

Well. Isn't this a conundrum? What to say about club membership during a shelter-in-place order. I can't say that much is going on with the people aspect of the club. The pandemic has pretty much assured that any gatherings are being shut down for six to eight weeks. If you are feeling a little edgy at practicing social distancing, you may be asking yourself if you are more of a people-person than you thought. It's probably a good time to rethe age-old question: visit Would we still have a club if there were no cars versus would we still have a club if there were no members? I think it is pretty clear that although the cars are the subject, we have repeatedly

said that owning a classic is not a requirement for membership — the appreciation of the finest cars from the classic era and a desire to share that appreciation are the requirements. Indeed we have members who have moved on from owning and maintaining Classics but who remain members. Everyone benefits from the experiences we share with our friends and fellow club members. We all look forward to rejoining our friends and sharing time together among some Classic cars.



2020 Amelia Island Concours

By Wendell Smith-Photos by Wendell Smith and John Gibson-

Banner Photo Amelia Island Concours web site.

Background Information

As most of you are aware, I enjoy car shows. I find all shows interesting; however, there is a show on each coast that I find really special. These are Pebble Beach in California and Amelia Island in Florida. Both of these shows are very selective. They are therefore billed as "Concours D' Elegance" events; each has major car auctions in advance of the show and many of the major venders have tents set up on the show field.

My first attendance at the Amelia Island was approximately ten years ago. David Schultz was serving as national president of CCCA. Our annual meeting, which was being held in Savanah, Georgia, immediately preceded the Amelia show. David also just happened to be the chief judge for the Amelia Concours. He arranged for the cars exhibiting at our annual meeting to have an opportunity to exhibit as a group in a special section at the event. It is less than 100 miles from Savanah to Amelia Island, Florida. The classics were routed on scenic backroads. We had a lunch stop and brief display of the cars en route at Jekyll Island, Georgia. I followed the mini caravan of classics driving a modern car. I was so impressed with the Jekyll Island Club and resort that I have returned there for a couple of days lodging every time before I attended another Amelia Island Concours.

The Jekvll Island Club was a private club where the rich and famous vacationed. It dates back to 1879. Initially it was a hunting club for men. In 1888, the club officially opened as one of the first condominiums in the United States as a retreat for rich families. At one point it was reported that club membership represented one-sixth of the world's wealth. J.P. Morgan, Richard Crane (Crane plumbing), Vanderbilt, Pulitzer, etc., were among the members. The facilities consisted of a large clubhouse/hotel, eighteen private homes, golf courses, and just about any amenity one can imagine.

Unfortunately, many of the club members lost their fortunes during the depression, and they were unable to pay their property tax. After years of neglect and abandonment, the state of Georgia took over the property for back taxes and restored the property to

its original splendor. In 1987 the property was reopened as a state park. One can stay in the grand hotel, in a room at one of the stately summer houses, dine in the original restaurant, etc. Amelia Island is approximately sixty miles south of Jekyll Island and forty-five miles northeast of Jacksonville.

If you fly to the show you typically fly into Jacksonville. Or if one drives from St. Louis, it takes a couple of days by car, or allow three days if towing a trailer.

The Amelia Island Concours

This year marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the show at Amelia Island. I understand the concours has grown from a small beginning to the present week-long event. Several members from our local club have had a presence at Amelia. Robert Pass was one of the founders of the show. Peter Brown and Bill Davis are long time judges at the event, and many of our members have been fortunate to have cars selected to participate. The late John Porbeck won his class at the show when exhibiting his freshly restored Pierce-Arrow Judkins coupe. Greg Rhomberg also won his class at the show when displaying his Anheuser Busch boatmobile. Steve Brauer and Mark Hyman show at the event every year and are consistent winners. Alan and Nancy Strong also typically show at Amelia. We saw them at the event; however, they did not show a car. This year Bob and Sonia Abbott were invited to show their rare 1928 Cunningham touring car.

Since John and Rose Gibson as well as Jan and I typically attend shows in the Midwest together, we couldn't pass up the opportunity to take in the Amelia show with the Abbotts. John and Bob towed the Cunningham while the rest of us flew into Jacksonville. We all met at the Jekyll Club for three days of relaxation prior to going to the event. We only took in one of the three auctions that are held prior to the show. The auction we attended was RM-Sotheby's. This auction was held on Friday and Saturday. There were approximately thirty very nice Rolls-Royces and Bentleys from an estate that were in this auction. Because of our membership in the Rolls Royce Owners Club our \$150 admission fee was waived. I was tempted to buy one of the Silver Ghosts; however, good sense prevailed. Almost every car in the auction was listed at no reserve. I think only a couple of the hundred or so cars in the auction met the posted low point of the estimated price range.

The coronavirus was just starting to enter the US and the economy was starting to plummet. There were some excellent car buys to be made if you were not planning to sell stock for your purchase. For example, I visited with Shawn Dougan at the auction, he told me Hyman Ltd. bought three excellent Rolls-Royces. If you would like to see the cars that were in the auction and what each one brought take a look at: <rmsothebys.com>.

The grand finale of the week was the show on Sunday. Approximately four hundred cars were displayed over the grounds of the eighteen hole Golf Club of Amelia Island. Cars were grouped by category (make, model, type, etc.). It is truly spectacular and well worth the \$100 per person admission to view the cars. Judging transpires early in the morning. When the field opened to the public at nine a.m., the judging had been completed and ribbons were soon on the cars. Despite the emerging virus, the show had record attendance with over 40,000 reported to have been present from all over the world. For more information on the show and registration details on next year's event see: <a href="mailto:ameliaconcours.org.

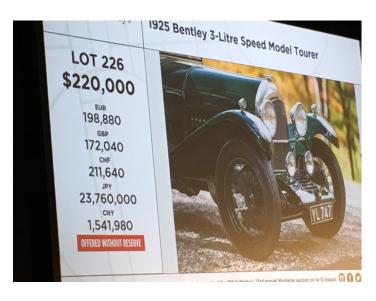
Wrap-up

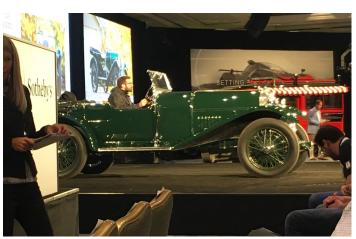
When one goes to Florida following a harsh winter you have to make the most of the warm weather. My daughter has a beach house just south of St. Augustine. Following the concours we all took advantage of this situation and spent a few days at the beach house enjoying the weather and taking in the sites of St. Augustine, the oldest city in America. By the time we got ready to head home, coronavirus had become a real threat. Jan and I canceled our return flight and rode home with the Abbotts in their tow vehicle. The Gibson's chose to continue their vacation plans and traveled across Florida before returning from the Tampa airport. Fortunately we all made it back safely. I hope this isn't true, but we may have just attended the only car show that is held this year.















SSR members Steve and Kimmy Brauer were in attendance at Amelia Island with one of their Bentley's.



Above and upper right: Bob Abbott's Cunningham posing for it's day in the sun at Amelia Island.

Right: A fine Silver Ghost passes the judging stand in style.



Editor's Note: This is a 1927 K Mercedes Fleetwood Roadster that was previously owned by my great friend Herbert E. von Fragstein who passed away in 2018. This car is pictured in my Fleetwood book.





1939 Cadillac Number Two

Terry Wenger

My project during this period is one that I started in December of 2018, a 1939 Cadillac 7557 2-4 passenger coupe. It is a coupe body with two rear jump seats that is mounted on the long wheelbase chassis. This 141-inch chassis was used by all the Cadillac V16s and the Cadillac 75's of that year. Most of these cars were built as limousine or seven passenger bodies.

Only 15 of this coupe were made in '39 and as near as I can determine, only three or four still exist. It was originally delivered in New York City, and it appeared in the Baltimore area in 1961. It was brought to St. Louis about 11 years ago, and I bought it in late 2018.

Some of you might remember the other '39 Cadillac convertible that I had about 45 years ago. That car was a 61 series and I tried to get that series classified as a Classic several times over the years to no avail. This car, however, is a Classic.

It arrived to my shop as a complete but well-worn car, and probably had not run since the mid-sixties. The engine was completely stuck and had the connecting rods assembled upside down, making it a real challenge to disassemble. The tires, adorned with port-a-walls, were from the WWII era. The body had rust in various places and the wood structure in the rear had rotted away. The body was built by Fleetwood with modifications to the normal sedan-limousine style body to make it a coupe. From the back of the door forward, the car was all metal construction. From that same point backward, the body was of wood and steel composite construction using lead for finishing wherever required.

After evaluating the car as to what would be needed for restoration, I proceeded to take it apart. The engine was in terrible shape from the long period of inactivity and wrong assembly. Luckily, I had another engine that I rebuilt, and after cleaning and painting the frame, installed it with a new clutch and transmission. I also rebuilt the engine accessories including the carburetor, fuel pump, starter, generator, distributor etc. I then attended to the front suspension adjusting or replacing what was needed. The complete braking system was sent away for rebuilding and all new hoses and lines were installed.

At this point I determined that the bodywork should be done and the new paint should be put on the car before the

weather turned cold. I wanted to strip the old paint, but had not counted on it having epoxy primer on it. This type of primer cannot be stripped with chemical stripper like most other paints. I had to grind it all off and have it blasted off the removeable parts. This method tended to damage all the factory lead work on the car. I also rebuilt all the wood framing in the trunk and around the rear window. After much sanding and priming, I was able to paint the car in the correct shade of Oxblood Maroon basecoat clearcoat.

I do most of my own polishing on the pieces that need chrome plating and there was enough to keep me busy. The wiring for the car was in rough shape so I built a new harness incorporating a few modifications such as turn and hazard signals. The dashboard was also stripped and regrained to match the original.

About this time came the Corona quarantine, so in keeping with the purpose of this article to tell what was happening during this period, here is what has been done. The paint had been wet sanded previously so I buffed it out. The old body and taillight harness was taken out and a new one was made. I assembled the dashboard and rebuilt the heater and started the process of measuring how much material would needed for the interior. The headlight reflectors were sent out for silver plating and the headlights were rebuilt when the reflectors returned. I also rewired the taillights and fog lights. The engine compartment splash pans were blasted, then I painted and installed. This is where I am with this project at this time. I have a lot of assembly and the complete interior yet to be done, so it will be another year before completion.









March 2020 Spirit of St. Louis Region CCCA Spirit Night hosted by Dave Stephens at Carnivore Restaurant on the Hill. Great food and a good time was had by all. Keep posted for new Spirit Night events when our real life returns.





1936 Cadillac Body Restoration

By Todd Tobiasz

My 1936 Cadillac 5 passenger convertible suffered from a peeling dashboard and chipping around the trunk and rear fenders. Last fall I spoke with Bill Zerrer and Ryan Stout at Albertin's Auto Body & Collision. They proposed to work on my car when time was available starting in January targeting to be complete by Easter. They started with the dashboard. One of the technicians, Dennis, completely disassembled the dashboard and removed it from the car. I chose a darker color for the dash to set it off from the rest of the car. This also gave me a chance to have Dennis install the correct glove box lock that I found at Hershey last year. Dennis also noticed that a number of fittings were in poor condition or strangely installed. Fortunately, my replacement glove box lock came with a mostly complete dashboard, so I gave him that dashboard. He salvaged the better materials to reinstall in the car. He also suggested that a number of chrome pieces should be re-plated while we had them out.

After the dash was mostly complete Bill started work on the back end. It turned out that the reason for all my paint chipping was the amount of body putty used to smooth the body metal during the prior one or two paint jobs. Bill took the back end down to bare metal from the back of one rear door to the other. In the process he found a couple of small patches completely filled with putty that he replaced with metal. He was also unhappy with the fit of the trunk. It looked to him that the car had minor rear-end damage which left the lower portion of the trunk pushed slightly up and in. He also noticed that I had two righthand hinges, which kept the trunk from opening and closing evenly. I found the correct hinges on-line and from my Hershey source. Bill was able to pull the back end out and down and says I should notice a big improvement in the operation of the trunk lid. I also took a few pieces from the back and sent them with the dashboard pieces to St. Louis Plating. The car was largely done on time, but some of the reassembly has had to wait on the longer than expected backlog at the plater. I should have the chrome back shortly and I hope to have the car back by the end of April.











A little Pierce-Arrow opportunity for the winter/spring.

By John Gibson

Early this winter I was doing some cleanup work on the Pierce-Arrow. I noticed a small amount of anti-freeze setting on top of the head. Following normal procedures I inspected and cleanup the fluid and tighten all the radiator clamps and left for a couple of days. Further inspection indicated the fluid was weeping for the flat surface of the head, with being a non-pressured system my concern was raised. I proceeds to clean off the surface and uncovered a prior repair which had been stitched. Only corrective action was to remove the head and determine if it could be repaired or find a replacement head. I run EVANS anti-freeze in the Pierce-Arrow at \$50/gallon and am quite concerned of any loss of fluid, the Pierce-Arrow capacity is 6 gallons.

I took a two prone approach, one having the head repaired and locating a replacement head. (See photo 1) The head was takin to Chapin Head repair in Chapin Illinois. I had used this vendor before and was quite satisfied with prior results. It was determined the head could be repaired with a concern that the thickness of the casting was quite thin on the flat surface and radiator fill neck. Head was repaired and pressure tested to 25 PSI. Head was reinstalled and refilling with anti-freeze and the head begin leaking at the radiator fill neck, bottom line the head was junk. I was not a happy camper. While the repair process was ongoing I was reaching out to my contacts within the Pierce-Arrow Society looking for a replacement head. Good news was this head was used from 1929-2931 which was their peak production years. Therefore I assumed there should be an ample inventory to be acquired in individual's spare parts inventory.

The search resulted in finding two in Michigan not for sale, a pallet of heads in Indiana, but would not be available for inspection until spring thaw (which might not even have the correct head). A head in Delaware in a worst condition that ours for only five hundred dollars with an unknown condition. Two spare engines which were not for sale and a gentleman in Louisiana whom would loan me a head until I was able to find one. As always searches are interesting and I would comment that the members of the Pierce-Arrow Society are very helpful and a great group of individuals to be associated with, thus I did find one in Washington State (see photo 3). Head has been blasted and ready to be installed when I receive my final parts for installation. Wish me well.

Chapin Head Repair	\$400
Head Gasket	\$200
Anti-Freeze	\$150
New Head	\$700
Second Head Gasket	\$200
Misc.	\$100
Labor	\$0



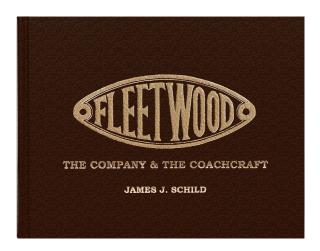




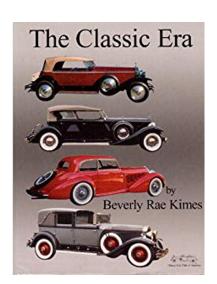


A meeting in the Gibson driveway of Bob Abbott's 1935 Ford (NC), 1928 Cunningham and a 1941 Cadillac.

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.ccca@yahoo.com, or via our webstore at www.spiritccca.com.



The SSR has a limited supply of the award winning book, *The Classic Era*, by the late Beverly Rae Kimes, available for sale. Hardcover, 8-1/2 x 11, 720 Pages. The top and bottom cover Classics are owned by SSR members. These books are brand new and a must for the Classic Car enthusiast. \$50.00. To reserve a copy, contact Bob Radel at 314-991-3590.

My Adventures during the 2020 COVID19 Affair - By Jim Schild

I have enough unfinished projects and responsibilities that I should never need a special time to deal with them but we have taken on a new one during this trying time. Many of our Classic and Antique cars have been in need for too many years. One reason is still not getting heat and air-conditioning in the big garage. Another more obvious reason is the parts, pieces and other things that have accumulated in the garage making it impossible to get to some of the work that needs to be done. With 11 old cars to work on it is easy for tires, wheels, parts and pieces of them to be in the way of other things that need to be done. We finally got around to purchasing an outdoor storage shed to create "A Place for Stuff."

After much investigation, we decided on an 8 x 10.5 foot tan plastic build it yourself Duramax Woodbridge storage shed from Menard's in Manchester, MO. The shed comes in a large box The new shed with the beginnings of the steel roof structure inthat weighs 335 pounds so our Ram 1500 R/T was needed to haul it home. Another box held the kit for the framework that goes under the shed. There are about 650 parts in the kit that includes tiny screws, plastic plugs and pins and plastic panels. The instructions must be followed to the letter and in the correct order and close attention must be paid to the manual. It took me a few weeks in and amongst cold days but when it is all done it seems to be very strong. The floor is made of sheets of CDX 3/4-inch plywood which took the help of member Larry Hassel to cut and move as they are heavy and awkward to handle. The total cost was around \$810.00 but with coupons and rebates it came in for less. We did not put it on a concrete foundation so it could be moved if necessary. Once the stuff is moved into the shed I can get to work finishing the 1936 Cord restoration and engine repairs on the Classic 1947 Rolls-Royce SDV, which looks and is exactly like the other two Silver Wraiths which are from 1950 and 1951 and not Classics which the national club feels are "modern" cars and would "dilute" the club.



The 8 x 10.5 ft. Duramax Woodbridge shed with the walls up.



stalled. A little ladder work is needed from this point on.



Work on our 1936 Cord 810 Convertible Phaeton Sedan will be accelerated with more space to work around things in the garage. It is mostly painted and all of the red leather interior trim by the late Rick Hulett is finished and stored in the house in boxes.



Jim Schild 5 Rowan Oak Lane Columbia, IL 62236



Car Storage Space Available

SSR member Robert Pass has five spaces available in his private, climate controlled and sprinklered building near the intersection of I-170/Page at 8436 St. John Industrial Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63114. The cost is \$200.00 \$150.00/month per car and \$100.00/month per trailer. If you are in need of car storage, please contact Robert at:

cell: 314-330-0877 website: <u>Robertpass.com</u> email: <u>Robert@robertpass.com</u>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2020	
Cancelled until further notice.	
T 2020	
June 2020	
SSR Spirit Night Location and host to be announced	June 2, 2020
SSR Spark Plus Submission Deadline	June 20, 2020
July 2020	
Veteran's Home Show, 10600 Lewis & Clark Blvd., Bill Albertin	July 26, 2020