

## Our Pride and Joy



This very stately 1939 Lincoln Model K, also known as the “Royal Car” is owned by Richard and Linda Kughn, and is on display at the Lincoln Museum. Photo courtesy of John Walcek.

*Welcome to the Northstar News, the monthly publication of the Northstar Region of the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club. We value your opinions and appreciate your input concerning this newsletter and the operation of the club. This is your club.*

‘What kind of car is this, dear?’ Queen Elizabeth might have asked of King George VI while admiring the powder blue broadcloth upholstery and the handy little compartment she could place her gloves in when not required for regal waves to the crowds along the 1939 Canadian Royal Tour route.

The traditional rides of Britain’s kings and queens since Edward VII got the royals mobile with internal combustion generated horsepower at the turn of the 20th century were suitably stately Lanchesters and Daimlers. But when the incumbents decided to play tourist in our not so far flung outpost of empire in 1939 it was from the back seats of North American-style automotive aristocracy. The royal cortege included a pair of McLaughlin-Buicks, a Chrysler and a Lincoln.

And George, a keen motorcyclist during his younger years and an enthusiastic motorist, would likely have known which-was-which and so informed his Queen Consort when she was riding in the 1939 Lincoln Model K Convertible Sedan with body by LeBaron.

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## *Board Of Directors - 2015*

Title	Name	Phone Numbers	email
Regional Director	Bob Johnson	H(651)257-1715	arborbob41@aol.com
Director at Large	Tom Brace	H(651)644-1716	trbrace@comcast.net
Technical Consultant	Ron Fenelon	H(320)763-4197	rlf8536@gctel.net
Director at Large	Dennis Owens	H(612)269-6482	
Activities Director	Jay White	H(952)432-5939	jay@jwhiteandassoc.com
Publications/ Membership	Dave Gustafson	H(952)435-1919	davidwgustafson@att.net
Treasurer	Harvey Oberg	H(651)739-9754	
Secretary	Roger Wothe	H(952)473-3038 O(952)583-5339	rwothe@mchsi.com
Director	Bob Roth	H(763)475-1429	
Sunshine Secretary	Faythe Oberg	H(651)739-9754	

Members and guests are welcome to attend the Board Meetings. Our meeting location will be printed elsewhere in the newsletter, as it often will be held in conjunction with other club events.

Articles and other information for the newsletter should be sent to David Gustafson, Editor, at 308 Brandywine Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337.

### *Pride and Joy continued...*

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What the king likely didn't know that far off early summer was that this extravagantly sized, styled and powered Lincoln was in its final year, winding up an automotive era launched by the seemingly boundless prosperity of the late 1920s but soon to sink up to its axles in the mire of the 1930s depression.

Or that within a couple of months the world would be at war – although his Canadian tour's purpose was in part to ensure we loyal Canucks would step in beside the motherland when all the peace treaties hit the fan.

The original monarchical visitor to Canada was Prince (later king) William in 1786, but George VI was the first reigning monarch to turn up on our doorstep expecting the royal treatment. And then prime minister Mackenzie King was all too happy to provide it, including ordering four classy cars from General Motors, Chrysler and Ford.

King, as minister in attendance, toured from coast to coast with the royal entourage including its dip into the northeastern U.S. The irony of this side-trip appar-



Richard and Linda Kughn with their 1939 K Royal sedan at the Lincoln Museum this past August.

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## Trivia from the Internet



Richard and Linda Kughn. Two very classy classic car collectors.

*Richard Kughn didn't expect to buy five cars in one day. But he couldn't ignore the gleaming 1939 Packard and the 1948 Cadillac beckoning him from the auction block. The 1928 Ford Model A, the 1952 Buick and the 1930 Pierce-Arrow were tough to pass up, too. "I lie a lot," Kughn laughs. "I always say I'm not going to buy anything, but if I see something I like, or that I think is going for less than it's worth, I'll buy it."*

*Kughn spent \$293,500 for the cars at the Aug. 2 (2009) Meadow Brook Con-*

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## Editors Message

Suddenly it's 2015. A full year of opportunity and excitement awaits us. Bob Johnson, along with your board of directors has a full year of brunches, car shows, tours to keep your wheels in motion each and every month of this coming New Year. We hope that you had an enjoyable holiday season and that only the very best awaits you for this brand new 2015.

Virtually all of this issue centers around the magnificent Lincoln model K, produced from 1931 through 1940. This past August, while attending the Lincoln Museum dedication, I had the opportunity to meet two very nice people, long time collectors of many things, Richard and Linda Kughn of Dearborn, MI.

Through a chance encounter, Linda invited me to join her and Richard for breakfast at the Four Points in Kalamazoo. Brad and Carole Yoho also joined us, and we had the greatest time talking about old cars and Lionel trains. Richard Kughn owned the Lionel train company for a period of time and saved the company from going out of business. Brad Yoho has a nice collection of Lionel equipment and I have a very modest one also. The people who collect old cars and play with trains, are indeed, some of the best in the world. And I do believe, that the

LCOC has more than their share.

The annual LCOC board meeting is being held January 15 through January 17 in Los Angeles. We are hoping to make a few changes that will make our beloved club appeal to a wider audience than we presently have. Our core mem-

bership is getting grayer and grayer each day and like the smile of the Cheshire Cats' smile will eventually disappear, unless we come up with new and very creative ways to boost membership. As always, we welcome any suggestions that you might have to improve our club and open our doors a bit wider to attract some new members.

The automotive press is alive with rumors regarding a new Lincoln model to be introduced in 2016. The name being bandied about is "Continental". This would be a refreshing change from the three letter designations for models that Lincoln is using and a return to the rich heritage that the company draw upon to excite buyers of any age.

Wouldn't it be great to see a four door (opposing doors, of course) sedan, larger in proportion to the present MKS and maybe even offered as a large two-door sedan. Nothing could be finer.

Till next month, David, Marion and Sweet Olga, the Samoyed.



Olga is posing with her UGLY Christmas sweater. It says, "Dear Santa Define Good" We entered this picture in an ugly sweater contest held by our Veterinary service office, and remarkably, our Sweet Olga won the contest. She (we) won a \$25 credit against her next bill for services. We haven't figured out a way of getting our Blue Cross/Blue Shield to extend coverage to her, so every little bit helps.



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*cours d'Elegance auction in Rochester, Mich. This year's event featured, among other spectacles, a 1932 Lincoln KB Coupe, a 1934 Cadillac V-16 and the rare 1960 Chrysler 300F-along with plenty of nostalgia for a by-gone era and a flailing industry. The theme fit well with Kughn's collecting interests: He has molded his 80-car portfolio, worth an estimated \$8 million, into a showcase of brilliant American engineering. "The automobile is a rolling, changing sculpture," says Kughn, 79. "Art collectors like to collect from different periods. That's the way I am with cars."*

*But not just any cars or periods. He prizes American examples from the 1940s and the 1950s-the 1952 Buick Roadmaster Limousine, the 1953 Cadillac El Dorado and the 1953 Buick Skylark among them. Not all his cars are true classics; to receive that distinction, they must have been made with particular specs between 1925 and 1948. But they're beloved, and, in some cases, like the 1953 Oldsmobile 98*

*(Continued on page 5)**Directors Message by Bob Johnson**January 2015*

Mary and I hope that everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year with your family and friends. We hope that you will be able to enjoy 2015 to its fullest. We are excited about 2015. What we have planned for you, our friends here in the North Country, includes visiting Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota and of course much in Minnesota. Now is the time to prepare your Lincoln for touring our wonderful country this summer, it is only 90 to 120 days from now. It would be nice if winter passes as fast as last year did. Please review our 2015 Activity Calendar. We hope that you will be able to attend our activities and enjoy our fellowship while meeting new friends in this great old car hobby.

The LCOC's annual Board of Directors Meeting will be held January 15-17, 2015, in Los Angeles, CA. I will be attending as both your Region Director and as the Executive VP for LCOC. What is awesome is that Dave Gustafson, MN, Paul Andahl, ND, Dick Koop, MO, Perry Bush, WI and John McCarthy, IL are also on the National Board of Directors and members of our North Star Region. This will be a very interesting meeting as we will be making changes to add the **Lincoln Motor Car Heritage Museum** to LCOC's annual plans. All four Lincoln Clubs will now have the responsibility to support the museums operation.

My involvement in LCOC management and policies goes back to 2003 and has been both very rewarding and very frustrating at the same time. LCOC has implemented many changes to encourage membership, fellowship and having fun activities, but our membership is still decreasing and we now have less than 2700 national members. The LCOC bylaws require that all regional clubs (such as the North Star) require their members to also have a current membership in the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club to be an active member in a regional club. A year end review of both our national and regional membership rosters shows that a few of our members have let their LCOC membership lapse. If you are one of those who have forgotten to do this, please give Cornerstone Registration at 763.420.7829 and they will quickly work you through the renewal process. The LCOC desperately needs every member it can to continue to survive. Please keep your membership in the LCOC up to date.

Our January Sunday Brunch, will be on January 11th, at the Machine Shed, Lake Elmo, 8515 Hudson Blvd N, at 11:30 AM. We were there last March and we had good food at reasonable prices. We have included directions on the back page of this newsletter. Call Jay White to RSVP by January 7th at 952.432.5939 or email [jay@jwhiteandassoc.com](mailto:jay@jwhiteandassoc.com). Our January, North Star Region Managers board meeting will be at 10:30 AM and all members are invited to attend.

For February, we have been invited by the CCCA to their 21th annual potluck and auction on Saturday evening, February 21st, at 5:00 PM **till** 7:00 PM, at the Firefighters Museum, 664-22nd avenue NE in Minneapolis. This museum is full of antique firefighting equipment and pictures depicting the history for over the past 100 years. Please bring a good potluck item share. The North

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*Fiesta convertible, of which GM made only 450 (perhaps 50 survive), they're valuable. It's Kughn's way of preserving a golden era in auto-making, when swooping lines and gilded trimmings gave motoring a certain elan. The collection is housed in climate-controlled warehouses in Michigan and Florida.*

*Motown-made cars of that era hold a special significance. Production and design stopped during World War II in service to the military machine, and the decade that followed sparked a creative burst for Detroit designers and engineers meeting a pent-up demand. Starting in 1953, GM Motoramas in seven cities showcased the new models to great fanfare, often with orchestras and fashion models. In 1953 the Motorama in New York City introduced the Corvette, now worth \$200,000 in mint condition.*

*Kughn is fanatical about details. He*

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## Our Pride and Joy continued...

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ently delighted King. He described it as "poetic justice" as George VI was great grandson of Queen Victoria, who had placed a £1,000 bounty on the head of King's grandfather William Lyon Mackenzie, who promptly booted it across the border to escape.



The "Royal" Lincoln K with the King and Queen on board during their Canadian tour.

The King's Lincoln was among the last of a class of lavish cars created for an America awash in money in the 1920s, but soon to drain away when the Wall Street crash of 1929 pulled the plug. Lincoln, Marmon, Packard, Pierce-Arrow and Cadillac were among car makers cashing in by producing large luxurious automobiles, but couldn't seem to prevent their momentum carrying them into the early 1930s when even more elegant examples emerged, among them the K class Lincolns of 1931.

The Ks weren't all-new designs but their mechanicals were updated from the previous L models, including the L-head V-8 engines and the chassis stretched to provide an impressive 145-inch wheelbase. The look was lower and wider on the 23 models offered in nine body styles and, of course, custom bodies were also produced by best auto

couturiers of the day, names such as Brunn, Dietrich and Judkins.

In the face of the deepening depression, Lincoln introduced an even more extravagant V-12 model in 1932 in response to rivals V-12s and V-16s. But initial sales of the K models of about 3,500 annually dropped to the 2,000 range by the mid-1930s and never bettered that.

It was all over for the big Ks by 1939, their pride of place taken by the smaller more affordable Zephyrs, and it appears only 133 were built in 1939, among them the King's K car.

To create it, Lincoln modified a standard Series 413 Le Baron Convertible Sedan. The powertrain remained standard – with the 414-cubic-inch L-head V-12 producing 150 hp delivered by a three-speed manual – as did most of the bodywork, but alterations included a higher windshield and side glass – described as "shatterproof" – and a raised rear seat to allow the royals a better view. "Puncture-proof" tires were also fitted for their peace of mind and lap robes for their comfort, plus a pair of umbrellas in a drawer under the driver's seat.

Right: The Royal Crest mounted at top of windshield



The Lincoln was returned to Ford and spent until the mid-1980s in the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit, getting an outing in a parade marking the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 and again in 1959 for a visit by the Queen and Prince Phillip. It was

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agonized about whether to buy that Pierce-Arrow. "It had a god-awful raspberry mohair or wool interior," he says, and he wondered whether that motif was legit. His wife, Linda, said, "It looks like a bordello!" Kughn once spent \$200,000 restoring a car he declines to name. On another occasion, he and his head mechanic, Robert Ferrand, devoted months searching for fold-down trunks for two 1934 Packards.

How can he indulge such extravagance? The Detroit-born Kughn is a self-made millionaire raised in a blue-collar family in Cleveland. He always had a flair for cars (while in his teens he constructed from scrap a 1923 Ford Model T). Poor vision that hindered his ability to read, he explains, caused him to drop out of Ohio University after a year of engineering studies. He spent 30 years at Taubman Co., a developer that

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## *Pride and Joy*

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sold to Richard Kughn owner of the Carail Museum in Detroit in 1985, which lent it to the Queen Mum again to help her celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Queen Elizabeth Way highway. Richard Kughn kept it until 2004, was sold to John O'Quinn in 2004, as he was downsizing his collection due to health reasons.

Seventy-two years later, this historic Lincoln, still resplendent in its Royal Maroon paintwork and bearing the royal insignia, was rolled out by RM Auctions at its St. John's (formerly Meadow Brook) auction in Plymouth, Mich., and when the hammer dropped, went to a new U.S. owner, once again, Richard Kughn who repurchased it for \$297,000.

In amazing original condition, the Lincoln wears its Royal Maroon livery well. The car has been maintained, not restored, so changes have been limited to touch-up in high-stress areas. It has a tan canvas top, twin side-mount spares, color-matched wheels and Trippe driving lights. The car shows fewer than 4,000 original miles. A singular artifact of historic importance, it is a remarkable, one-off car with fascinating royal provenance.

The two royal tour McLaughlin-Buicks survive here in Canada, but the Chrysler has disappeared.

It is hard to imagine collectors seven decades hence being much interested in acquiring the black Cadillacs and Chevy Suburbans that provided transport for the most recent royal tour by Prince William and his bride, Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge. But it seems likely this wonderful old Lincoln will still be generating interest and commanding a significant investment in the coin of somebody's realm.

## *31 - 40 Model K*



1931 LeBaron bodied roadster

Walk through the City of San Francisco police garage and there, among the Harley-Davidsons, Ford Crown Vics, and the battered Chevy Impalas, you would see what is believed to be the oldest active police car in the United States. It's a fully restored 1931 Lincoln Model K seven-passenger touring, an excellent example of the 1931-1940 Lincoln Model K series.

This 80-year-old beauty is a rolling history lesson, its back seat having played host down the years to presidents, war heroes, movie stars, politicians, and other notables.

Back in 1937, when it was still the police chief's official car, this Lincoln was reportedly the first automobile to cross the Golden Gate Bridge during opening ceremonies. Even today, it occasionally emerges from the garage to take part in parades and other civic functions.

The purchase of this Lincoln was something of a civic extravagance in Depression-era 1931, for its factory price of \$4,400 would have bought 10 Ford phaetons.

For that matter, a Packard of comparable size and power would have cost the city about \$800 less and carried arguably more prestige to boot. Then again, San Francisco, long known as "The City that Knows How,"

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*specialized in building gas stations, then shopping malls. Starting as an estimator, Kughn rose to become president. In 1979 he founded Kughn Enterprises, now a \$2 million (estimated 2008 sales) assortment of radio stations, restaurants and real estate. Kughn has also invested in model trains (he owned and ran Lionel Trains from 1986 to 1995), movies (his Longbow Productions backed *A League of Their Own*) and trading cards (via *Upper Deck*, which he cofounded). It looks a bit as if Kughn is reliving his boyhood dreams.*

*This is his second stab at vintage-car collecting. He spent five decades assembling a stunning group of 250 meticulously restored examples, heavy on Duesenbergs, V-12 Packards and Mercedes models. But he sold off most of them after he became afflicted in 2001 with an undiagnosed lung condition that left him wheelchair-bound and on oxygen. Within two years he was on his feet and buying again.*

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## *All About the 1931 - 1940 Model Lincoln K*

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had a certain status of its own to maintain.

This historic Lincoln Model K was powered by a V-8 that was carried over from the last of the predecessor Model L Lincolns. (Nobody, it seems, has an authoritative answer as to why Lincoln went backwards in the alphabet.)

The L was the very first Lincoln, designed by the legendary "Master of Precision," Henry Martyn Leland, who founded Cadillac in late 1902, then built Liberty aircraft engines during World War I before establishing Lincoln.

The Model L, introduced in September 1920, carried a 60-degree flat-head V-8 of 357.8 cubic inches and 81 horsepower. By 1928, this smooth, quiet engine had been bored out to 384.8 cubes and 90 horsepower but was otherwise basically unchanged. Fast and sturdy, the Prohibition-era Lincoln was a favorite on both sides of the law.

The Lincoln Model K appeared in 1931 with 120 horsepower on unchanged displacement. A higher compression ratio (5.2:1 vs. 4.8:1), together with a dual-downdraft carburetor -- an industry first -- accounted for most of the difference. Developed in response to faltering Lincoln sales, the K was much more handsome than the rather stodgy L. A new 145-inch wheelbase, up nine inches from the L's span, contributed to a graceful look.

So did bodies mounted slightly lower on the chassis and wheel diameter reduced from 20 to 19 inches. Again riding atop the radiator cap was a sleek greyhound designed by the Gorham silversmiths, a Lincoln

hallmark that would persist until World War II.

Other new technical features in the Lincoln Model K included a larger fuel tank; a mechanical fuel pump, replacing the troublesome vacuum tank; and worm-and-roller steering, an improvement over the previous worm-and-sector type.

Houdaille double-acting hydraulic shock absorbers were carried over from late Model Ls. Freewheeling, a popular -- though dangerous -- fad of the time, was supplied as standard equipment.

Times were tough in 1931, especially for luxury-class cars. Sales at both Cadillac and Packard were off by about one-third from the previous year. Yet, Lincoln was able to post a minuscule gain of about 2 percent in 1931, producing 3,311 cars for the model year and 3,592 for the calendar 12 months -- about 77 more cars than in 1930.

Though this was far from sufficient volume to turn a profit (Lincoln lost some \$4.6 million in 1931), the new line had clearly won the public's acceptance.

But the competition had been busy, too. Cadillac introduced its huge new Sixteen in January 1930, then followed up in October with a V-12 priced about \$800 less than the eight-cylinder Model K.

Others soon got into the multi-cylinder race, Marmon with a superb V-16 during 1931, Packard and Pierce-Arrow with V-12s the following year. Even Franklin would offer a huge V-12 by 1933.

The big news for the 1932 Lincoln Model K line was the magnificent Model KB, still considered by

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## More Lincoln K's

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*These days he can't resist showing off beauties from his stable. Meadow Brook is a homecoming of sorts for Kughn (he and his wife live 30 minutes away in Dearborn). Set on 1,400 acres of what is known as Oakland University, Meadow Brook is a series of golf greens at the base of a Tudor mansion built in the 1920s by John Dodge. Kughn is popular among this well-heeled crowd—couples and men in safari hats and navy blazers. Friends rib him about his "comeback"; their wives rush up to greet him with a kiss. Driving slowly in his blue 1953 Olds, Kughn muses, "Most people are interested in things of the past, and, whether it's a piece of furniture, a toy train or an automobile, they like to touch it."*

*None of Kughn's 13 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren has expressed interest in his fleet. It will likely be sold off after he dies.*

*From the internet, Forbes, August 20, 2009 issue.*

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some classic-car buffs to be the finest Lincoln of all time.

Replacing the K but built on a modified version of its chassis, the KB carried a new 65-degree V-12 with 150 horsepower (which was probably a conservative rating). At a whopping 447.9 cubic inches, this engine was very nearly a match for Cadillac's 452.6-cubic-inch V-16.

Road tests conducted at the famed Brooklands circuit by Britain's *The Autocar* showed a KB could do 95-100 mph despite curb weights of 5,200-6,000 pounds.

Fortunately, Lincolns of this period had brakes to match their speed. As on the Model L and 1931 K, these were cable-controlled Bendix Duo-Servo units with 340 square inches of lining area, 24 percent more than on the Cadillac Sixteen. Drums were ribbed for cooling and made of tough high-carbon steel.

Though technically new, the KB powerplant was derived from the K-series straight eight, and thus inherited its costly fork-and-blade connecting rods that had been a Lincoln hallmark from the start.

The rock-hard cylinder blocks were cast from a close-grained iron alloy comprising 15 percent steel, 1 percent nickel, and 0.5 percent chromium. A massive 93-pound crankshaft was cradled by seven huge bronze-backed babbitt main bearings. In short, this engine was built to last.

The other string to Lincoln's bow for 1932 was the Model KA, a V-8 series on the same 136-inch wheelbase as the last Model Ls. The engine here was essentially that of the 1931 K, except that horsepower was raised to 125.

At \$3,200 for the five-passenger

sedan, the KA cost a sizeable \$1,500 less than comparable 1931 models. The KB, on the other hand, was quite pricey for the day at \$4,300-\$7,200, yet most models actually cost a few dollars less than comparable 1931's.

The KA was offered in seven body types, all factory styles built by Murray. It has been reported that the Soviet government ordered 400 of these cars -- nearly 19 percent of 1932 series production -- for use by tourists and foreign dignitaries, although "Uncle Joe" Stalin himself was partial to Packards.

KAs were usually delivered with colored bodies and black fenders, while KBs were typically finished in two tones of a given color and reportedly required some 59 quarts of paint.

Another distinction was the cloisonne radiator badge: red on KAs, blue on KBs. Like 1930-1931 Lincolns, the KB offered both factory body styles as well as semi-customs supplied by some of America's leading coachbuilders -- 24 choices in all. Enhancing appearance for both series were more rounded radiator shells, hoodside doors instead of louvers, fender-mounted parking lamps, and wheels again reduced in diameter, this time to 18 inches.



1932 Judkins KB Coupe

The 1932's were undoubtedly the most elegant Lincolns yet, a fact owed in no small degree to Edsel Ford and his Lincoln Model K design. Though

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## 1931 - 1940 Lincoln Model K continued...

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nominally the president of Ford Motor Company, Edsel didn't run the place in most respects; his irascible father was still really in charge.

But there was an exception. According to industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague, who worked with Edsel in creating several Ford exposition buildings during 1934-1940, "In the field of design [Edsel] had a free hand. Here his unique ability was, in his father's eyes, both mysterious and highly respected, not to be interfered with. . .

"By choice he moved quietly, behind the scenes, where public eyes could not follow him. Thus, the fact that among his many superb qualities he was also a great designer was known to few except those who had the privilege of collaborating with him in this field."

Edsel Ford was a prominent patron of the arts, serving for many years as president of the Detroit Institute of Arts, where he commissioned and inspired masterful, if controversial, frescoes by Diego Rivera.

A man of impeccable taste, with a keen eye for line and form, he had set up a studio in the old Leland Lincoln plant as a sort of retreat where he could develop his design concepts, free of interference from old Henry. His goal was succinctly expressed when he remarked, "Father made the most popular car in the world. I would like to make the best."

He'd begun influencing Lincoln design soon after Ford bought out the founding Leland family in 1922. Each year he would solicit proposals from America's most prominent coachbuilders and decide which firms would supply which body types. Thus, for 1932 as an example, Willoughby was assigned to do Lincoln's limousines, Brunn the cabriolets, Dietrich the coupes and convertible sedans, Judkins the berlines and formal coupes, and Murphy the phaetons and roadsters.

Among the rarest and most desirable of 1932 KBs are the convertible Victoria by Waterhouse (only 10 built) and a Murphy sport roadster (just three copies).

But despite coachbuilt cachet and a more impressive lineup, Lincoln sales sagged in 1932 as the De-

pression headed toward rock bottom. A major reason was that even those few people who could still afford expensive automobiles were often reluctant to be seen in one at a time when people were selling apples on street corners and lining up at soup kitchens.

For the calendar year, Lincoln managed 1,765 KAs and 1,641 KBs for total sales of 3,406, down about five percent from 1931. Still, this wasn't a bad showing in comparative terms, as both Cadillac and Packard dropped 39 percent from their dismal 1931 totals.

Lincoln godfather Henry Leland died on March 26, 1932, at age 89. By year's end, the remarkable V-8 he had designed more than a dozen years earlier would also pass into history.

Anticipating even more challenging competition, Edsel Ford had instructed chief engineer Frank Johnson in 1931 to develop a new 12-cylinder engine that would be less costly to build than the Leland-based engine but just as smooth, quiet, and powerful.

Ford Motor Company's new 12-cylinder engine arrived in the 1933 Model KA, a version of the 1933 and 1934 Lincoln Model K, sporting an unusual 67-degree cylinder-bank angle.

At 381.7 cubic inches, the new V-12 was marginally smaller than the eight it replaced but made the same 125 horsepower.

More importantly, it was lighter than the KB twelve, which enhanced handling, and was, if anything, even smoother. The new KA powerplant also marked a radical departure from Lincoln's traditional engineering, with four main bearings instead of seven and no costly fork-and-blade con-rod arrangement. Instead, blocks were offset and rods placed side-by-side on the crankshaft journals. Also featured were replaceable insert bearings, an innovation at the time.

Lincoln established its own coachworks in 1933, making that year's "factory" bodies literally that. Styling was a cautious evolution of 1931-1932, with a few touches prompted by competitors and industry trends.

Among the most noticeable was adoption of skirted fenders as a running change in February,

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## *Still more model K*

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though these were available for earlier 1933s as a no-cost retrofit.

Also evident were larger freestanding headlamps (no more crossbar), a bolder grille with standard thermostatic shutters and slightly greater rearward rake, newly hidden horns, a stylish dip in the front bumpers, and a return to hoodside louvers. Wheelbases were unchanged.

Inside was a redesigned dashboard with a speedometer recalibrated to 110 mph, though that was wishful thinking.

All this applied to both 1933 series -- the KA and the KB -- as did a stronger new-design X-member chassis, a reworked transmission, new thermostatic shock absorbers that automatically adjusted for temperature, and brakes allowing the driver to select different pressure levels to suit road conditions.

Yet for all this, sales fell again. The market for cars of this character and price had all but disappeared by 1933. The patrician KB was especially hard hit, with only 533 built for the year.

A broad array of semi-custom models was still cataloged, but most again numbered in the mere handfuls. KA production totaled 1,114, down nearly 37 percent from 1932.

Lincoln responded to "hard times" more aggressively for 1934, regrouping around a single engine. In essence, this was the 381.7-cubic-inch V-12 bored out to 414.2 cubic inches, which combined with higher compression (6.38:1) to yield the same 150 horsepower as the larger 1932-1933 KB mill.

The tighter compression mandated costlier high-octane Ethyl gasoline, but at a time when premium fuel rarely cost more than 22 cents per gallon, the extra expense was probably no handicap to Lincoln sales.

The new KA 414-cubic-inch V-12 was four inches shorter and an inch narrower than the KB's 448; it also boasted aluminum cylinder heads. Even so, some Lincoln purists took a dim view of it, among them Wilfred Leland, son and longtime associate of Lincoln founder Henry Leland.

Over time, however, the 414 proved even smoother and more flexible than the bigger V-12, as

well as more fuel-efficient. It nearly matched the 448 in low-rpm torque, though it fell somewhat short at the top end.

Detroit was moving to streamlined styling, and the 1934 Lincolns reflected the trend, becoming smoother and more integrated in appearance. High-lights included painted shells surrounding more strongly vee'd radiators, a return to hoodside doors, skirted rear fenders, new cowl ventilator doors, and painted metal spare-tire covers.

Both series now wore blue radiator emblems, and there were new "Equal Action" mechanical brakes with twin shoes and molded linings.

Wheelbases remained the same, but the factory touring and phaeton styles became available only on special order, due to dwindling demand, and the KB series now listed far fewer semi-custom bodies.

The Depression had all but wiped out the market for expensive handcrafted cars. Locke, Waterhouse, Holbrook, and Murphy had already closed their doors, and other coachbuilders were soon forced to do the same.

Only Brunn, Dietrich, Judkins, Willoughby, and LeBaron remained as "authorized" Lincoln coachbuilders, and for 1934, they produced only 159 semi-custom KBs combined.

Production of factory-bodied models totaled 445, plus a few bare chassis. The KA fared much better at about 1,545 units, which boosted Lincoln's total volume by some 31 percent to 2,149.

For 1935, Lincoln eliminated its less expensive models to concentrate on two substantially changed series marketed under a revived 1935 Lincoln Model K designation.

Lincoln was still losing money, and Edsel Ford and other company officials (no doubt with a nudge from the founder) evidently decided there was no profit to be had with big cars costing less than \$4,000.

It seemed a surprising move, but only until November 1935, when Lincoln unveiled an even bolder response to the changing market. This, of course, was the radically styled Lincoln Zephyr, with pioneering unibody construction, V-12 power, and prices as low as \$1,275.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Still more on the model K

(Continued from page 10)

Zephyr was to Lincoln what the LaSalle was to Cadillac: a more saleable medium-priced product to keep the company afloat until happy days, again, really were at hand.

Though the economy had not fully recovered in 1935, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal had made things better, and the Zephyr sold like no Lincoln before: more than 14,000 in its first season alone, and that with just coupe and sedan body styles.

By contrast, the most affordable 1935 Model Ks



1935 Model K LeBaron convertible sedan

cost \$4,200, a jump of \$900 from the comparable 1934 models -- which was a major jump. Lincoln again offered semi-customs, but fewer of them: by LeBaron (now part of Briggs) and Brunn on the 136-inch chassis; by Brunn, Judkins, and Willoughby on the 145. (Dietrich, now a part of Murray, was no longer building Lincoln bodies.)

The costliest of these was Willoughby's \$6,800 sport sedan; only five were built. With this price range, the Model K was just too expensive to sell very well in 1935, and production fell 30 percent to 1,411, including 580 short-wheelbase cars and 820 long models, plus chassis and miscellaneous specials.

And more's the pity, for the 1935s were the most improved Lincolns since the original Model Ks. Styling underwent a major transformation, becoming softer and more rounded, yet more imposing.

Wheel size was reduced once more, to 17 inches. The radiator cap was newly hidden beneath the hood, though the Gorham greyhound remained in its customary place.

Fenders were larger, bumpers smaller, headlamps more bullet-shaped. Safety glass was newly standard for all windows.

In addition, bodies were moved 11 inches forward on the chassis to position all passengers firmly between the axles for a more comfortable ride. The center of gravity was lowered as well. Softer front springs and new shock absorbers were adopted, as was a rear anti-sway torsion-bar stabilizer.

The 414-cubic-inch V-12, still at 150 horsepower, got needle-bearing tappet rollers for quieter operation and got an extra rubber mount for a total of five. Freewheeling became standard, and the transmission picked up better synchronizing for easier shifting.

Last but not least, the 1935s received a new dashboard with space for a newly optional radio.

Styling on the 1936 and 1937 Lincoln Model K became even sleeker than before, with updates the first year and a complete redesign the next.

On the 1936 model, windshield tilt went from 20 degrees to a more rakish 27, "pontoon" fenders appeared, headlights sat lower astride a deeper radiator, pressed steel wheels replaced the traditional wires, and running boards were noticeably narrowed.

Offerings in 1936 numbered 19, including



1936 Model K 136 inch wheelbase convertible

coachbuilt models. Technical changes were few and minor but significant.

A much-slowed steering ratio required 4 1/3 turns

(Continued on page 12)



## One last page on the Model K

(Continued from page 11)

lock-to-lock instead of three, freewheeling was (blessedly) dropped, and there was a new transmission with a helical-cut gear for first as well as second and third.

Though still improving, the national economy in 1936 was by no means back to pre-Depression levels. Even so, automobile sales increased dramatically, especially among medium-priced marques such as Buick, Chrysler, and the Packard One-Twenty.

At Lincoln, Model K volume rose about seven percent to 1,515 (some sources say 1,523), still a disappointment. It's worth noting, however, that Packard sold a thousand fewer of its senior cars during 1936 versus the previous year.

This situation must have been terribly discouraging to Lincoln management, and perhaps especially to Edsel Ford. But, determined to give it one more try, Lincoln introduced a completely restyled Model K for 1937. Rounded, even bulky in appearance, it carried streamlining a step further with fender-mounted headlamps and, on most offerings, built-in trunks.

Metal-covered dual sidemounts were standard on only five models, mostly coachbuilt styles, though still optional for others. The factory touring body was finally dropped altogether.

Mechanically, it was time to play catchup, at least to a point. Hydraulic valve lifters, pioneered by Pierce-Arrow in 1933, were finally adopted, and a revised camshaft helped improve performance, though advertised horsepower remained at 150. But mechanical brakes were still the order of the day for the big Lincolns, and would remain so even after other Ford Motor Company cars got them for 1939.

Only the most modest of changes marked the 1938, 1939, and 1940 Lincoln Model K as sales continued their downward slide until the line was dropped. The 1939s, however, included two of the most famous Lincolns ever built.

*One was a special touring car, based on the Le-Baron convertible sedan, used by England's King George VI and Queen Elizabeth during their historic June 1939 tour of the U.S. and Canada.*

The other special 1939 was a Brunn convertible sedan on a 160-inch commercial chassis built as presidential transport. FDR himself dubbed it the "Sunshine Special," and of the several cars in the

White House fleet, this was the one he ordered be flown for use at his wartime conferences in Casablanca, Tehran, and Yalta.

But not even the presidential seal of approval



Probably the most recognizable 1939 K's ever, the one used by President Roosevelt and President Truman, on display at the Henry Ford. It was updated with a 1942 Grill to make it look more fashionable.

could save the classic Model K. Production figures for the line's three final years are in dispute. Richard Burns Carson, writing in *The Olympian Cars*, says 986 were built during 1937, followed by 378 in 1938, and 221 in 1939. On the other hand, the *Encyclopedia of American Cars* by Consumer Guide shows 977, 416, and 133, respectively. Other authorities quote still different numbers, but it's a fact that a few left-over 1939s were sold as 1940 models.

It's remarkable the magnificent Ks lasted as long as they did. Duesenberg and Marmon were long gone by the time hallowed Pierce-Arrow closed its doors in 1938, and the Packard Twelve was history a year after that.

Cadillac had dropped its V-12s after 1937, and the Sixteen would follow after 1940 and a final 61 units. At least the big Lincolns didn't go to the grave alone.

An era had ended, and, as they say, we shall never see its like again. Classic-car authority Paul Woudenberg has said of the Model K Lincoln: "Perhaps no car in production at that time could match [it] for sheer quality without regard to cost." That's tribute enough to Edsel Ford's commitment to build the best.

From the internet.....

## Directors Message continued...

(Continued from page 4)

Star Region shares 50/50 in auction proceeds. Please bring quality auction items to donate and your check book. This is a chance to meet more great people in the old car hobby. Our February, North Star Region Managers Board Meeting will be at 4:00 PM in the museum board room and you are invited to attend. (More information to come)

If you enjoy our "Our Pride and Joy" articles, we need your help. If Dave Gustafson could have several articles in advance for the newsletter it would make his job so much easier. I don't think that we realize how much work Dave does to publish our *monthly* newsletter. I receive most of the other region newsletters, and believe me, we have one of the best and it is the only one published on a monthly basis. Several LCOC regions do not have a newsletter, and several that do, only publish quarterly because it is too much work getting enough articles for the newsletter. Dave can only do the newsletter with the material that you send him, so get busy. Again, this winter is a great time to write that article about your car that you keep putting off because you were too busy during the summer.

Not only is Dave Gustafson our Newsletter Editor, he is also our Membership Director. Dave will be mailing Northstar Region Membership renewal invoices for 2015 dues, during the middle of January.

Please save Dave the extra work of having to send out reminders about your renewal being late, **Send Your Renewal in ASAP**. We need Dave to spend his time on our newsletter, not having to worry about late renewals. The other reason is the information you provide is used in our 2015 Region Directory and we would like to publish it as early as possible

Winter is a time to work on our Lincolns and write "My Pride and Joy" Lincoln articles about your car, for Dave Gustafson. We want to feature your Lincoln, but first you have to write the article, if you need help, Dave will help you in any way possible.

As always, keep the journey continuing in our marvelous Lincolns.

We need you, our members to help make our club better. We cannot do it all by our selves. Send in your stories about your favorite Lincoln, old or new, it doesn't matter, we all want to hear about them. And if you have any ideas for tours, events, or anything else our members would be interested in, let us know. Your input is always appreciated. We had fun in 2014 and we want to have even more in 2015. Stay in touch and let us know what you want. Best wishes for 2015 from your North Star Region board of directors and the Northstar News.

## For Sale



1977 Lincoln Continental Mark V for sale. 18,000 miles, two owners, \$15,500. Fresh, quality, repaint in original Dark Cordovan Metallic; matching leather interior. Undercarriage and engine bay are super clean, portions repainted. All bright work is straight, smooth, polished, beautiful. Everything works including the clock that keeps time and ice cold A/C from original unmodified R-12 system. New tires, belts, battery, complete true dual exhaust, much more. The full story with pictures can be found on thelincolnforum.net at <http://www.thelincolnforum.net/phpbb3/viewtopic.php?f=15&t=46235>

Please call Perry Bush at 920-205-1295 or email [pab1063@new.rr.com](mailto:pab1063@new.rr.com)

## *You May Be Interested in these Items for Sale*

The space on these two pages is provided as a service to our readers who wish to place ads for automobiles, parts and other treasured parts that they wish to find new homes for. In an effort to keep our pages fresh, we will publish your ad for a period of three (3) months.

*After that period of time, we will delete it unless we hear from you that you wish to have it continue for another three issues.*



Mark VIII file photo

For Sale: 1998 Mark VIII, 65K miles, no winters, Bright Toreador Red Metallic, light tan leather, ready to enjoy and show, \$9500. Charles Hanson, 320-596-2210.

1957 Lincoln Capri 2dr, complete, needs total restoration, inside storage for years, \$2,500? Or good offer, more info & pictures, [email-bwfreiberg56@yahoo.com](mailto:email-bwfreiberg56@yahoo.com)

Available winter storage for collector cars or boats: keyless dead storage in the heart of Edina. Free standing, 2 1/2 car garage, 25ft wide X 23ft deep, sheet rocked and insulated. 24/7 monitored security. Will hold 3 cars, boats, or combination. Rent 1, 2, or 3 spaces @ \$100/month.

Call Dave Kotz, cell 612.384.0566.



**Northstar Region grille badges** are now available.

To obtain yours, contact Harvey Oberg at 651.739.9754



For Sale:  
Leaded Glass Lamps. Priced from \$50 to \$300.  
Perfect for reading your Northstar News.

Call Dave Bodziak 612.788.3758

For Sale:  
1993 Lincoln Continental **new** air suspension pump. \$125 Identifying numbers on unit are 3B484; F20C; 9B2G; and E90Y-5319-B call Don Peterson, Winona, MN 507.454.3010, 507.429.0476 or (office) 800.657.4422.



# *Preview of Coming Events*

- January Sunday Brunch, Machine Shed, Lake Elmo, January 11th, 11:30 AM, 2015  
Board meeting at 10:30 AM  
LCOC National Board meeting, Los Angeles, CA, January 15-17, 2015
- February CCCA Potluck/Auction, Firefighters Museum, 664 22 Avenue NE, Minneapolis,  
Saturday, February 21, at 5:00 PM. Please bring a quality auction item as our  
Region gets 50% of proceeds. Board Meeting at 4:00PM
- March Sunday Brunch, Sole Mio Ristorante, Woodbury, (Date to be determined)  
Board Meeting at Morries Ford Lincoln, Thursday March 12 at 7:00 PM
- April Sunday Brunch Spasso, 17523 Minnetonka Blvd, Minnetonka. (Date to be  
determined) (family Style \$12.95) Board meeting at 10:30 AM
- May 7th Annual Memorial Day weekend car show, Morries Ford Lincoln,  
Minnetonka, MN Saturday, May 23, 10:00AM to 2:00PM. Board meeting at 1:00 PM
- June Saturday, June 27th, 50th Wedding Anniversary, Mary and Bob Johnson's home, Shafer,  
MN. Just come and enjoy the moment, Food and refreshments will be served under a  
tent. Our family, friends and the North Star Region members are invited to this grand  
celebration. We will have a special area for Lincoln parking.  
Eastern National Meet, June 10-14, 2015, at Concordville, PA
- July 12th Annual Outstate Classic Lincoln Car Show, Saturday, July 18th, Sioux Falls Ford  
Lincoln, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. 10 AM to 2:00 PM.  
Driving tour, Friday 8:30 AM leave Burnsville for "the Grotto", West Bend IA, then on  
to Sioux Falls. Car show on Saturday, special tour Saturday afternoon, then Sunday leave  
for home, stopping in Tyler MN to visit the other Bob Johnson. Hotel information for  
Friday and Saturday nights will be in a future issue.  
*Board Meeting at Morries Ford Lincoln, Thursday July 9th at 7:00PM*
- August LCOC Mid America National Meet. Hosted by the LCOC. August 6-9, 2015. All  
Lincoln owners are invited to participate. LCOC will have Judging and Exhibition  
non-judged classes.  
Driving tour on way to Lincoln Museum event, we will visit the Pontiac Motor car  
museum, in Pontiac, Illinois on Tuesday, August 6th, then tour south of Chicago to  
Kalamazoo, Michigan.  
Board Meeting at Morries Ford Lincoln, Thursday, August 13th at 7:00PM

BACK ISSUES OF THE NORTHSTAR NEWS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE  
ON THE NORTHSTAR LCOC WEB SITE.

[www.northstarlcoc.org](http://www.northstarlcoc.org) Click on publications.

Issues are in PDF format and may be printed on your color printer.

## **North Star Activities**



### **January Sunday Brunch**

**Sunday, January 11**

**Machine Shed, Highway 94, exit 250  
North on Inwood Drive 11:30AM**

Come early and attend the North Star Board meeting at 10:30AM.

We were there last March. It was such a nice experience that your board decided to return for our first brunch of the New Year. We will have our own area, so we can have some room to socialize with our friends and enjoy some of the great home cooking that the Machine Shed is known for. The prices are reasonable and the service is great. Come help celebrate our first activity of the new year. It will be a good day to get out of the house and find out about the exciting plans that the North Star Lincoln club has for 2015.

Please RSVP to Jay White by January 7, 2015, by calling 952-432-5939 or email [jay@jwhiteandassoc.com](mailto:jay@jwhiteandassoc.com).

## ***Upper Midwest Region of the Classic Car Club of America***

### **POT LUCK DINNER & AUCTION**

**Saturday, FEBRUARY 21, 2015 5:00PM**

**Firefighter's Museum, 664 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418**

**WELCOME LCOC MEMBERS and FRIENDS!**

RSVP - Information will be in the January and February newsletters.  
Bring a food dish to share.

AUCTION INFO: Please bring quality auto-related items (parts, literature, toy cars, auto-related collectibles, etc.) to donate for the auction. Auction proceeds will be split with the Lincoln Club.

There will be a North Star board meeting at 4:00PM, preceding the CCCA potluck.