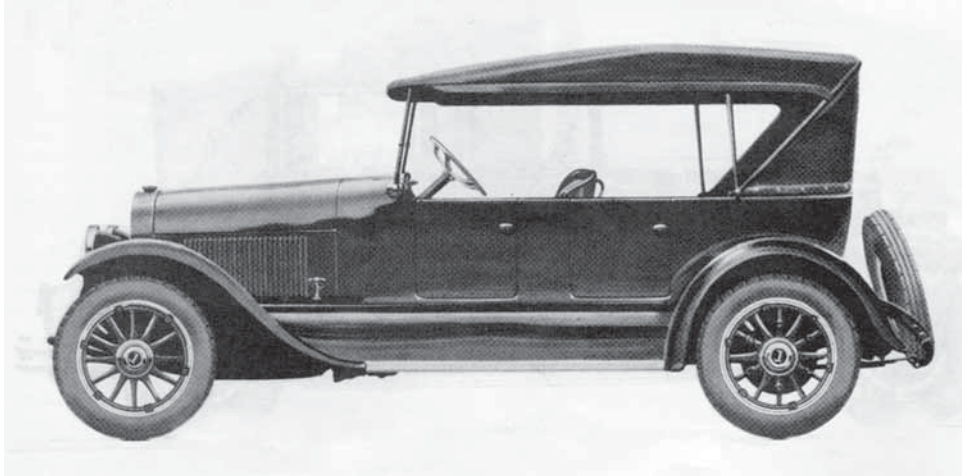


Lincoln and Continental CONFAB

Western Region Lincoln and Continental Owners Club Publication Volume 37 No 7, Sept., 2008



1920 Lincoln Touring.

The First Lincolns

The Lincoln Motor Company was founded in Detroit in 1917 to build Liberty aircraft engines. When World War I ended in 1918, founder Henry Leland shifted to luxury automobiles based on his experience with Cadillac. His goal was to build a better V-8 than the Cadillac. So advanced was this new engine that it was continued with some modification until 1931.

The original plan was to begin production in April, 1920, but there were so many financial and technical problems that the first Lincolns were not built until September when a severe recession had set in. Only 23 were sold in September, 125 in October, 367 in November, and 159 in December. That adds up to less than 700 sold for the year against several times that many built or remaining as unassembled parts. All of the remaining cars and eventually assembled parts were sold as 1921 models.

There were only 76 sold in January, 1921, 21 in February, 205 in March and 351 in April. Lincoln finally went into receivership on November 21, 1921. Eventually the company was sold at auction to Henry Ford on February 4,

1922. By that date Lincoln had produced only 3,407 automobiles. It is uncertain how many of these survive. It cannot be more than a handful.

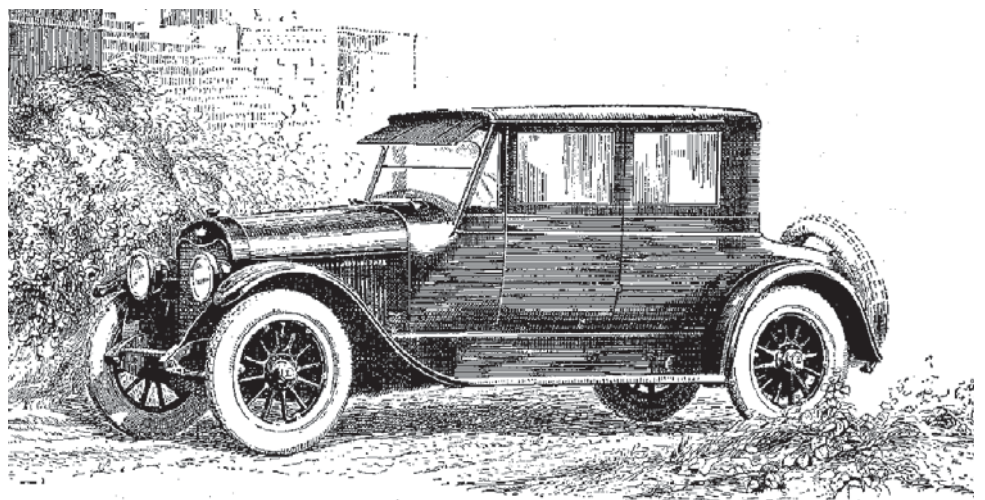
In 1920, there were eight Lincoln body styles. The number was expanded to 15 for 1921. Other than increasing the number of body styles 1920 and 1921 models were identical. The most popular body style was the four-door touring with 1,015 built. The rarest was the glass partitioned Berline with six built. Some models were built on a 130 inch wheelbase,

others on a 136 inch wheelbase. The transmission was a three-speed sliding gear type with a multiple disc dry plate clutch. Brakes were mechanical and were on the rear wheels only.

Ford's only immediate change was to sandwich the Lincoln name between "Ford Detroit" and placed within the oval shell. Some time in 1922 Ford went from cast iron cylinder heads to aluminum. Later came an improved timing chain and sprockets. Prices were cut by \$1,000 on all non-custom bodies. Lincoln sales for 1922 were 5,662 and many of these must have been 1921 cars sold as 1922 models. The number of body styles went from 15 to 25 and engine horsepower was increased from 81 to 90. Changes came rapidly in 1923 but that's another story.

There are very few pre 1923 Lincolns left. One is a mostly original 1921 touring owned by Bob Montague in Virginia. Another is a 1922 dual cowl phaeton owned by the late Grant Milne in Lucerne, Colorado. The only one we know of in California is the 1921 prototype in the Mabel Norman collection in Sylmar.

1920 Lincoln Coupe.



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director's message

As you can imagine, Janet and I and all the volunteers are working like beavers on the final stages of the Irvine Meet coming October 8 to 12. Janet and I are planning the Wednesday night dinner at Prego's. Jim Ayers has received all the perpetual trophies back from winners last year. Tom McCarthy is working with Jim in addition to his help on transportation needs during the event. Norm and Nancy Hoskins have secured the boat cruise and dinner Thursday night. Bruce Hutchinson and George Richards along with Bob Reed are working on field and judging issues. For the hospitality room Steve Erler is donating 2 cases of wine. Chris Dunn is sponsoring part of the hospitality room and Bob Gee will host the room. Shirley and George Richards are working on the auction with the help of Larry and Karen Frazier. Nancy Hoskins, LaVonne Howley, and Jan Fenske have agreed to help with the registration desk. Den Fenske is doing the calligraphy on the name badges. Jack Rosen and Steve Ouellette are sponsoring the judges breakfast. Randy Mytar will be the Friday night auctioneer. I have spoken to Art Astor and they are ready for us to view their new layout of 80 plus cars. Marv and Jan Wendt are readying the tally of ballots for the board election. Tim Howley is working on a surprise celebrity visitor at the banquet. Many members have volunteered to judge but we can always use more. If any of you want to get involved please contact us and we will find an activity. Don't forget we are looking for auction items. A member is bringing his 44,000 mile 1973 Town Car to be auctioned at the Friday night event. Any amount over the reserve goes to the club.

Registrations are coming in every day and the hotel is beginning to fill up so get your reservations in. Marriott's cut off is September 24 so be sure to call 1-866-440-3373 and mention Code # LCOH when making reservations.

We have cars coming from the East and Gulf coasts as well as all parts of the West. One member is bring his 1956 Mark II that he has owned since new.

See you all in Irvine

Mike and Janet

The Continental Confab is published and mailed every six weeks. Dates as published annually. The deadline for submitting articles and ads is 20 days prior to the planned mailing date. All articles and ads should be submitted in writing to: 1780 Iris Way, Escondido, CA or e-mail t.howley@cox.net.

Western Region dues are \$30 a year; add \$10 for Western Region membership outside the U.S. (Canada or Mexico). All dues are payable in U.S. currency to Western Region Membership Chairman, 9318 Chaparral Road, Canoga Park, California 91304-1206. Membership in the Western Region of LCOC is open to all parties interested in Lincoln Continental automobiles. Ownership of a Lincoln automobile is not necessary to join LCOC. You must, however, be or become a member of the National LCOC to be eligible to join the Western Region. Dues are in addition to Region dues. The Continental Confab is the official publication of the Western Region LCOC. It is distributed by First Class Mail to Western Region Members. Material contained in the Confab is intended to be as factual as possible, but neither the Western Region nor the editors assume any responsibility for the correctness of the material or its sources. Nothing in the Confab may be reproduced without the written permission of the editors and the Western Region Board of Managers. Car-related marketplace ads are free to members, except those conducting a commercial enterprise. Ads will run for three issues. Advertisers must contact editors to extend or modify ads. Non-member ads are \$10 per issue, with a three issue minimum. We request you notify editors when vehicle or parts are sold. All free ads are subject to editing and space availability. The deadline for submission of articles or ads is the 20th of the month prior to the issue requested. Publication and mailing shall be the first of the month, bi-monthly. All article contributions may be submitted in writing to: Confab, 1780 Iris Way, Escondido, CA 92027.

Coming Events

Southern California

October 8th to 12th
Western National Meet
Marriott Hotel
Irvine, CA

Saturday, November 15th
Annual Meeting
(Site to be determined)

Visit us on the
World Wide Web Region:
www.LCOC Western.org
National:
www.lcoc.org

Welcome New Members

John Campbell
57 Blue Heron
Irvine, CA 92603
949-854-0150
1956 Continental Mark II

Richard Claton
424 S. San Rafael Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91105
626-622-3700
1990 Mark VII

Robyn Dyer
4444 Hansen Avenue #236
Fremont, CA 94536
510-742-5421
1981 Continental Mark VI



Nethercutt's 1921 Lincoln at the 1991 Western Meet in Universal City.

California has the First Lincoln

The earliest known Lincoln to survive is the 1921 phaeton in the Mabel Norman or Jack Nethercutt Collection in Sylmar, California. It was shown at 1991 Western National Meet in Universal City.

In the very beginning, Henry Leland commissioned the Brunn Body Company in Buffalo, New York, to build bodies. The first body they built was a phaeton for the first Lincoln, prototype number one. Like a lot of the first Lincolns built it was never sold. After Henry Ford bought the company in 1922 the car remained at the factory. It was driven but very seldom. It is hard to imagine that a car would be kept at the factory that long in those days, but this one was. Finally, in 1929 it became one of the first cars placed in the new Henry Ford Museum. It remained there for something like 35 years. The only record of its being driven there was in 1963 when museum curator Les Henry took it on an AACA Pike's Peak Climb.

Eventually the museum decided it was somewhat of a duplicate of the Thomas Edison 1923 Lincoln touring which they felt had more historical significance. (Such were the priorities in car collecting in the sixties.) In about 1964 Jack Nethercutt was able to buy the car for his California collection. The car still had very few miles and

really did not need restoring. The engine was removed and disassembled but about all it needed was some valve work. The car was repainted and the upholstery was redone and that was about it.

The car was rarely taken out of the Nethercutt Collection in now over 40 years. In 1991 it appeared at the 1991 LCOC Western National Meet at the Warner Brothers movie lot in Universal City, California. It was one of about a half dozen early and Classic Lincolns entered at that meet. (The only LCOC Meet with more was St. Louis in 2000.) The car won the Edsel Ford Trophy at Universal City. We have not seen it since. As an aside, there was a sudden and unexpected rain storm at that meet. This may have been the only time the car got wet in its history.

There can be no earlier Lincoln in existence today than this one. There may be a few Lincolns built in 1920 out there but we do not know of them and we certainly do not know of any in California. Many of the Twenties Lincolns were turned into tow trucks because they were so well suited for that purpose. The bodies were simply cut off behind the driver's seat and towing gear was installed. A few have survived for this reason. There is one on display in Northern California.



*Part of the field at the 1999 Western National Meet
in George Mason Park in Irvine, California.*

Western National Meet

Marriott Hotel, Irvine, California,
October 8-12

We are getting down to the final stretch and Mike Gribble reports a significant amount of interest in requests for meet packets. The tours are set up, the Show Area is set up, the Perpetual Trophies that were awarded at Federal Way, Washington, last year are being retrieved and all the other details are being addressed.

The Registration Packets include a dinner for early attendees, Newport Harbor Cruise and Dinner, and a tour of the Art Astor Museum in addition to the traditional Friday night dinner and auction followed by the Saturday Car Show and Banquet.

*Cassan's 1936 Brunn Victoria K
at the 2002 Western Meet in Ventura.
The car won the Elliston Bell Trophy
at Irvine in 1999.*



The hotel and show field are the same as the 1999 Western National Meet with several improvements.

The packets are available as follows: You can E-mail to the Gribble's: Mike Gribble mrgrestgrp@msn.com You can phone the Gribble's: (951)204-8685. Or you can go to the Web Site: Region: www.LCOCWestern.org

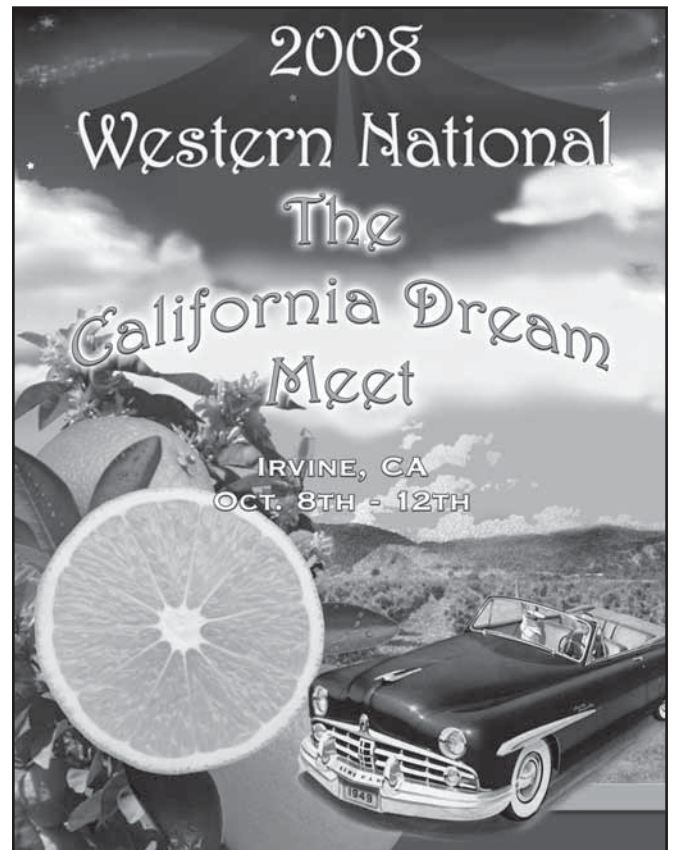
Although gas prices are up, Mike was able to get very favorable room, parking and banquet rates at the Marriott. To make reservations at the Irvine Marriott Hotel call 866-440-3373 and ask for Group Code LCOH.

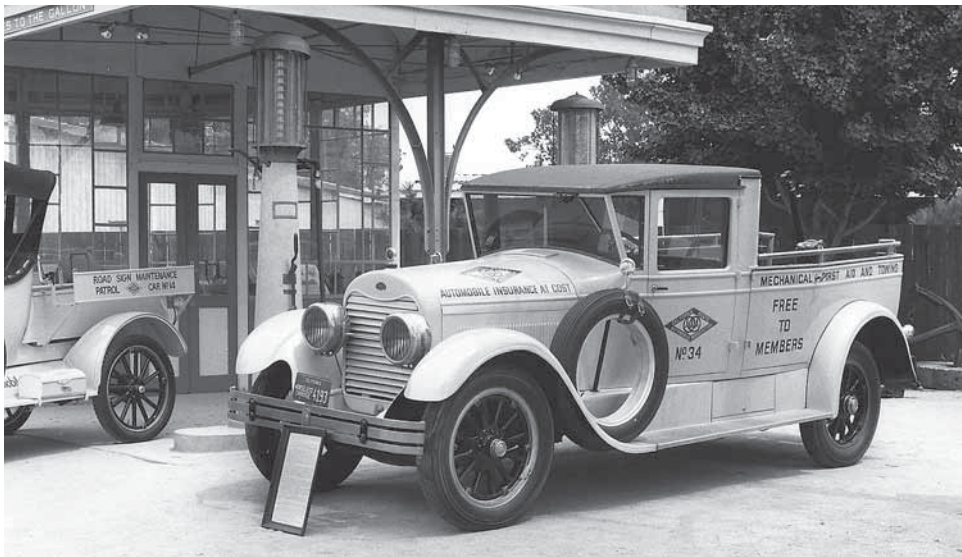
One of the key sources of entertainment and income is the Auction. To make it work, we need a very good Auctioneer (which we have), a crack crew administering the action

(which we have) and interesting and "auction friendly" items. Mike has stressed that, due to increased costs of activities and changes in the items that National controls, success of the Auction becomes paramount this time. An urgent appeal is underway for items that will keep everyone's interest and provide spirited bidding. Car parts, baskets, household / garage items and significant gift certificates are welcome. Mike is providing more information in his Director's Message.

Several of our members are assembling unique baskets for raffle, silent auction or the main auction. Your help is greatly needed.

Finally, we regret that John Wayne, Cary Grant, Joan Crawford and several other classic Hollywood celebrities have declined our invitation to appear as our Awards Banquet guest speaker. We are trying to outdo Abraham Lincoln who was the surprise speaker at the Mid-America National Meet in Itasa, Illinois, last year. However, another famous Hollywood star of the classic era has agreed to appear. His or her identity will be a secret until the banquet. *Tom McCarthy*





1922 Lincoln Tow Truck at a 1920 vintage service station in San Jose, California, Historical Park.

Petroleum Shortage in 1921

In 1912 there were less than 400,000 cars and trucks built in the United States. By 1915 the number was nearly a million. That figure jumped to over 1.5 million in 1916. By 1920 over 2.24 million cars were built. By this time the number of cars and trucks on the road was exceeding the available supply of petroleum. Half of these cars were Model T Fords. The other half were nearly 100 other makes built in the U.S.

A lot of the increased demand for petroleum was coming from farm machinery, buses, and trucks. Also, more U.S. petroleum was being exported. Railroad trains and ships had not yet become part of the equation because they were still being powered by coal and steam. But the contribution of automobiles powered by electricity and steam was insignificant because by this time these modes of transportation were falling out of popularity.

Never before had there been such a worldwide shortage of fuel, especially oil, and this could be seen at the pumps in an increase in the price of gasoline from about 14 cents a gallon to about 20 cents in just one year.

The Federal Trade Commission said the shortage was largely psychological. The failure of some north Texas oil

fields was an excuse to exaggerate the short supply and increase the prices. Refiners were now potentially able to get twice the amount of gasoline from each barrel of crude oil with the new "cracking" process. Big midwest oil companies were getting a 35 per cent gasoline increase from crude using this method but refineries elsewhere were getting only a 12 to 22 per cent increase. Oil producers were also looking to South America and Mexico for more oil.

Gasoline from wheat, oats, and rye was being studied as a possible solution. Experimental work was being carried on at a U.S. Department of Agriculture farm in Arlington, Virginia. Other possible fuel sources the farm was experimenting with were rice and corn.

All of this was commonly called "straw gas" and it was found that 50 pounds of straw could produce enough fuel to drive a light roadster 15 miles.

Straw gas was nothing new in 1920. The process was developed by George Harrison, a Canadian engineer, in 1914. Experiments were later carried on at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada. The university in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, exhibited straw gas production at the Exposition

of Chemical Industries at the New York City Fair of 1918. However, work on the project seemed to die after this point. Nobody seemed to be taking alternative fuels and alternative forms of power seriously.

In 1918, the United States produced 69 per cent of all the oil produced in the world or 365 million barrels, and of this 101 million barrels were produced in California. But by 1920 the California oil fields were running short by about 10 million barrels a year. A primary reason for this short supply was the growth of the California population during and right after World War I.

There was a lot of talk about fuel conservation through the production of small cars with smaller engines and more miles per gallon. But very little ever came of it. In the late twenties Jordan produced the Little Custom Jordan and Marmon produced the Little Marmon. There were several others. But these smaller cars cost as much as the bigger cars and the public did not want them. Americans wanted six-cylinder cars instead of four, then eight cylinders, and then ever more powerful eight cylinder cars. Gasoline consumption from cars went up instead of down. The Willys was never a big success. European cars never went over big in this country before World War II. The Crosley flopped. The Henry J fizzled. Ford's smaller V-8 in the late thirties and six in the forties were more or less jokes.

As the California and Texas oil fields failed increasingly to keep up with the demand, America looked to foreign oil as the solution. Tragically, right after World War II the Los Angeles Red Line trolley cars and rails were scrapped for General Motors buses. More freeways were built and as fast as they were completed they were filled with more automobiles. We are now nearly 90 years from the petroleum shortage of 1921 and we have still not solved the problem.

These facts and figures were taken from *Motor Land*, the Pacific Coast magazine of motoring of the era.



Some of the cars at the 2008 ENM at the Dublin, Ohio, Marriott.

2008 Eastern National Meet, Columbus, Ohio, August 14 -17

The Eastern National Meet was held in Dublin, Ohio, (Near Columbus) August 14-17 and was hosted by the Ohio Valley Region. The weather was sunny and mild. The number of cars judged was 118 with several more exhibited or for sale.

The event began with a complimentary barbecue at the Dublin Marriott Hotel Wednesday evening. This was followed by a complimentary bus tour Thursday to the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, nearly 100 miles away.

Friday there were several tours in Columbus including a display of the cars and lunch at the Ohio



*Above, members in front of the Ohio Statehouse in downtown Columbus.
Below, Margaritaville Costume Contest Friday night.*



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Statehouse in downtown Columbus.

Saturday the concours was held in the hotel parking lot. The Lincoln Division of Ford Motor Company set up a large tent and made some new Lincolns available for test drives by the members. Unfortunately, the 17-year-old son of one of the members totaled a new MKX by following the Navigation system and driving the wrong way on a one-way street. Luckily, nobody was injured.

Saturday evening, the Awards Banquet was held at the hotel. Winner of the Elliston Bell Founder's Trophy was the Duncan family with their pink 1959 Continental Mark IV coupe. This car was featured on the front cover of the May-June issue of *Lincoln and Continental Comments*.

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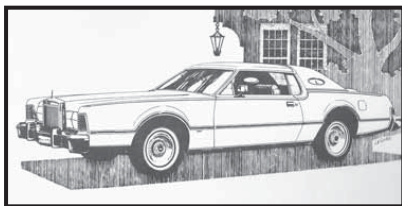
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Collection Reduction. Long time Member in Southern California Bob Gee is starting to reduce his collection of 17 cars and an extensive inventory of parts, most of which are for '65 and '66 Convertibles. The cars are: 1967 4 Door Lincoln Continental - was running well when stored \$2,000. 1968 4 Door Lincoln Continental - 460 Engine - was running well when stored \$1,000. 1977 4 Door Town Car - 460 Engine - was running well when stored \$750. 1979 Mark V - Original Paint - Runs. Needs work \$750. 1976 4 Door Town Car - Given to Richard Nixon by Ford Motor Co. \$3,500.

Contact Bob Gee at (951)571-3319 regarding the above and the parts list.

1976 Continental Mark IV. Rare Black Diamond, special Black Diamond Fire metallic paint, pinstriping, black premium bodyside molding, black padded roof Cayman Grain, black leather interior with patent leather inserts, forged aluminum wheels, AM-FM Quadrasonic, rebuilt transmission and brakes, second owner, original California car, all documentation from new, 460 V8, \$5,950, Duane Bowers, 805-526-3119, Simi Valley, dabowers@pacbell.net.

1986 Mark VII. Light blue, good shade, has won at LCOC National Meets in Santa Fe, Scottsdale, and others. \$3,000 but we can talk. Need to move. No work required on your part. Good inside and out. Drive anywhere. Original California car. Bruce Hutchinson and George Richards were previous owners. At least they know the car. Dick Cronkhite in Prescott, Arizona. Phone 928-443-1366

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WESTERN REGION



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