

The
Pious
Pelican

January—February
2023



Northern California Packards

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A Region of The Packard Club, Packard Automobile Classics, Inc.

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Historian

*Historian	Fred Hill	925-939-4455	echohillpackards@comcast.net
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Pious Pelican

Editor	Clint Moore	408-426-0741	batbuick@yahoo.com
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*Not an elected position

Any changes, additions or corrections to the *Pious Pelican* should be directed to Clint Moore at batbuick@yahoo.com.

The Pious Pelican
January—February, 2023
Volume 62, No. 1
Director's Report

We've had a great start to the year with a wonderful visit to Sheldon Doing's crazy museum in San Rafael. I was impressed by the turnout considering we were competing with football playoffs and foul weather!

We are also just a few months away from the national meet that, thanks to COVID, we've been planning for more than 5 years! I think I speak for everyone on the planning committee when I say we are not only looking forward to hosting an incredibly successful meet, but also having an fantastic time participating in the many events of the week. I couldn't be more pleased with the turnout we had for our volunteer day and the number of people that are jumping in to participate to help in every possible way! The most important thing all of us can do right now is send in our registrations and make our hotel reservations. It can all be accomplished at this handy website: <https://bit.ly/2023PACKARDMEET>

Since there's little time to think about putting on regular monthly events before the national meet, I'm grateful to Ed Holloway and the Classic Car Club for inviting us to their planned March event. If you've not been to the Bertolotti Collection before, don't miss your chance. The variety of rare Brass Era cars is mind boggling... and then there's the room of sports and race cars!

2023 is going to be a memorable year, and I'm honored to continue serving as your Regional Director.

Happy Motoring!

Clint





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|----------------|--|
| March 25 | Bertolotti Collection (CCCA Event) |
| April ? | National Meet Drive Tour Testing |
| May 21 | Friendship Day |
| June 25-July 1 | PAC National Meet—SF Bay Area |
| August 20 | Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance |
| September 9 | Antique Autos in San Jose History Park |
| September 23 | Ironstone Concours d'Elegance |
| November 11 | Veterans Day Visit—Yountville |
| December ? | Holiday Party—Mountain View |

For a complete list of events, please visit our website at
www.norcalpackards.org/calendar.php

2023 Packard National Meet Update

The event we've all been waiting to put together is now just about 3 months away!

If you haven't yet done so, it's time to send in your registration!

Visit <https://bit.ly/2023PACKARDMEET> for the latest information and to fill out the online registration or download the paper registration form. The link to reserve your hotel room is also on that site. *Note: Despite what the website may say, there is no daily parking charge!* Remember, your master registration covers the administrative costs of the event as well as a banquet ticket and a copy of the new book on the history of the Packard Club, which started right here in our region! Participation in many of the other events is an add-on cost, just like shore excursions on a cruise.

The meet book is one of the most important items in the registration packet for all participants because it not only includes maps and directions for the drive tours, but it also details valuable information about the calendar and surrounding area. In order to produce a high quality publication, we are hoping to offset the cost with advertising. If you know of a business that may be interested in purchasing ad space, please direct them to Christopher Slater (408-599-9103 or gladstone.cottage@gmail.com) We also invite you to purchase a quarter page ad for \$50 in which you can include a personal greeting to welcome our friends from across the country.

Your planning committee has the following updates:

- Registrations and room reservations are slowly coming in. We currently have more than one third of the rooms booked and approximately 40 people registered. We hope to get at least 200 people!
- All of the driving tours have been finalized and associated reservations have been made. We are planning to have a drive tour testing day in April or May. This can be done either in your Packard or a modern car. Stay tuned for more info!
- The Packard Club 70th Birthday celebration is all planned, and the restaurant that will cater the event hosted our group for lunch at the volunteer day.



Continued on page 4

The food was excellent, so we are confident the celebration will be a success!

- We are working on securing a few notable raffle prizes for the final banquet. Mary Carpenter is graciously donating a custom made Packard quilt!
- On February 26, the call for volunteers was successful as 37 members showed up to the Doubletree hotel to find out how they can chip in. The week was discussed in detail, focusing on each individual event. "Lead" volunteers have been assigned for each day, and supporting volunteers have stepped forward for nearly every need.
- We visited Ralph Geissler's Packard Museum, which will be having its grand opening the week of the meet. His restorer and curator Albert is busy putting the finishing touches on the cars and the building. Our visit is going to be the culmination of Ralph's dream!

If you were not able to attend the volunteer day and look forward to helping, please call or email Jeff Mihaly (510-501-0415 or jeffmihaly@yahoo.com). There's still room to help in nearly every aspect of the event from assisting at the registration table to judging cars on the show field!

The next edition of the *Pious Pelican* will be the final one before the meet. Look for those final details and if you have any questions before then, do not hesitate to call or email!!



Initially it was standing room only at the volunteer event held at our host hotel on February 26! (Photo: Clint Moore)

Upcoming Event
Bertolotti Collection Visit
Saturday, March 25



Join Nor Cal Packards and the Classic Car Club on **Saturday**, March 25 for a tour of one of the most extensive collections of Brass Era cars in the Bay Area. John Bertolotti has been collecting cars for more than 40 years, boasting original and restored cars from many major independent manufacturers of the early days of motoring, including Packard, Pierce-Arrow, Stutz, Thomas Flyer and more. Mr. Bertolotti is also an avid race car enthusiast, and has a secondary collection of foreign and domestic sports and race cars from the 1950's and 60's.

After touring the collection, we will venture to near-by Pedro's restaurant in Santa Clara.

Space may be limited depending on interest, so RSVP to confirm your spot!!

Event Details:

What: John Bertolotti's Car Collection and Lunch

When: **Saturday**, March 25, 10am. Depart for lunch at noon.

Where: Address provided to confirmed attendees.

RSVP to Clint Moore batbuick@yahoo.com or 408-426-0741

Where We've Been **San Rafael Warehouse Museum** Text & Photos by Clint Moore



Members and guests were transfixed by our host Sheldon Doing as he told the tales of how he came to acquire many of the items in his collection.

Neither the threat of rain nor the NFL playoffs could keep our members away from the chance to visit Sheldon Doing's eclectic and quirky museum packed to the ceiling with kitschy collectibles, enigmatic ephemera and crazy cars. A few of our members braved the elements bringing their Packards! New member Gary Humecke even went so far as to have the top down on his 1936 1404 Coupe Roadster!

Inside the museum, cinnamon bread treats were served along with water and coffee to fuel our curiosity as we were treated to many sites, including one of the world's largest collections of memorabilia of 1980s pop sensation Max Headroom. Other gems included artifacts from many world's fairs, including the 1915 Pan Pacific and 1939 Golden Gate international Exhibitions in San Francisco. A highlight was when Sheldon fired up one of the giant mechanical music machines, which played drums, organ pipes, an accordion and more!

But no description of Sheldon's museum is complete without discussing the cars. The main attraction for our club was the 1953 Packard Henney Ambulance, which he purchased on eBay for \$600 because it didn't run. The vehicle came with all of the ambulance

Continued on page 10



Above: Bill Young and the 1916 Cadillac funeral coach.

Right: Your editor makes a new friend (note the cormorant on Ronald's shoulder!)

Below: Lucas Mihaly is ready to go back to the future in a DeLorean!





Above: Andy Sinclair's beautiful 1955 Clipper Super leaving San Rafael.



Below: New member Gary Humecke braved the rain with the top down on his sporty 1936 1404 Super 8 Coupe Roadster.



Above: Ralph putting the finishing touches on his Packard Rohnert Park opening to be our nation's



Above: The 1953 Henney Ambulance that Sheldon Doing bought for \$600!

Below: Jeff Mihaly, Ron Simon and friend Peter McCutchen admire the ambulance.

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accessories, and had been sitting in a shed in Chicago for countless years. Turns out it only needed a generator! Other cars ranged from a 1906 Schacht (never heard of it!) to the oldest known Cadillac funeral coach built in 1916 to a 1981 DeLorean DMC-12.

One by one people made their goodbyes as most rushed home to catch the football game, leaving only 4 of us to continue on to the planned lunch at Andy's Local Market. The deli sandwiches were superb, and thank goodness there was a table inside to get out of the biting January wind!

Many thanks for Sheldon Doing for opening his museum to our club. It was truly a memorable visit, and we hope to go back to see it again in the future!

Members who brought Packards:

Gary Humecke	1936 1404 Super 8 Coupe Roadster
Jeff & Lucas Mihaly	1937 1500 Super 8 Sedan
Andrew Sinclair	1955 Clipper Super Sedan
Zane Buck	1953 Hudson Hornet Sedan

(Hey, that's not a Packard!!)

Members who came Packard-less:

Ron & Mark Carpenter	Don Sears & guest
Neal Gapoff	Ron Simon & guest
Ed Holloway	Christopher Slater
Clint Moore	Mike Solomon
Dana Morgan	Ed Soss & family
Bill Price	Ladd & Maggi Stephenson
Bill Schoemann	Bill Young

Don't tell Glenda, but Don Sears was flirting with this fur-draped dame by the fins of a '59 Cadillac! In the background is one of the many music machines



Spotlight Feature

The Life and Designs of Dutch Darrin

Text by Michael Hayward and grandson Brayden Hayward
Photos by Clint Moore



Don Sears' stunning 1941 Packard Darrin One Eighty

Howard "Dutch" Darrin was born in Cranford, New Jersey in 1897. He got the nickname "Dutch" when his Father looked at him and said you look like "a little dutchman". At the age of 10, Darrin joined the staff of Automobile Topics Magazine and helped editors by cutting out newspaper clippings. Darrin was a pilot who served in France during WW1. Upon his discharge in 1919 he used money he saved to start Aero Limited. This was one of the nations first scheduled airline carriers. In 1923 Darrin and new business partner Thomas Hibbard sailed to Paris after exploring several opportunities they decided to form a partnership and sell luxury motorcars. The firm Hibbard & Darrin then opened a design office in Paris to design bodies to be built in Brussels. They would then target wealthy Europeans in their Minerva showroom. Darrin and Hibbard's built their custom motor coaches primarily on Rolls-Royce, Minerva, Excelsior and Isotta Fraschini chassis. The Stock market crash of 1929, ultimately, led to the demise of Hibbard and Darrin in January of 1931. The market for luxury custom coaches declined significantly during the depression. Darrin then partnered with French businessman M. Fernandez and was able to continue building and designing until 1935. He then moved to Southern California to pursue new opportunities.

In 1937 Howard Darrin relocated to Southern California at the urging of Darryl Zanuck. Zanuck was a co-founder of 20th Century Pictures, which would later become 20th Century Fox. Darrin would then open

a coach building facility located in Hollywood at 8860 Sunset Blvd and called it Darrin Of Paris. Darrin always thought Packard was the best car built in America. The car had an amazing chassis and its classic grill was a great starting point. The initial Hollywood Darrins were built on the Packard 120 chassis , which transformed a plain Jane into a work of art.

Initially, the tops were cut off the cars and fitted with a new windshield, a three piece cast aluminum cowl and custom doors. The running boards were also removed and a 4 inch sill was added below the doors in order to add strength to the body. Both the front and rear fenders were redesigned, and the radiator shell was cut down by three inches. The cars had a padded, wrap-around dash and later models had cutdown suicide doors.

I believe the first Darrin Packard was done for actor Dick Powell. There were several celebrities who owned Darrin Packards and include: Clark Gable, Tyrone Power, Chester Morris, Errol Flynn, Preston Foster and Ann Sheridan.

A total of 16 custom bodied Packard's were built in the Sunset Blvd shop between 1937 and 1939. Finally, Darrin was able to convince Alvin Macauley, President, Packard Motor Company, to display the Hollywood Darrins in their showroom to increase sales. In 1940 the Darrin Packards first appeared in the company catalog and was advertised by Packard Motor Company. There were 3 models available: convertible Victoria, convertible sedan and a luxurious 4-door Darrin sports sedan.

Darrin was able to lease an old Auburn assembly plant in Connersville, Indiana. In 1940 a total of 65 cars were built with each one of them being a rolling advertisement for Packard styling. Darrin had built an image car worth far more in prestige to Packard than actual sales. In 1941 Darrin went on to design the Packard Clipper. In the 1950's he went on to design bodies for Kaiser. I wanted to add that my 12-year old grandson helped me in researching and writing this article.

Henry Hopkins' Darrin-designed 1947 Super Clipper Club Sedan



Remembering Warren Lubich

Submitted by Nancy McKinney



Warren Lubich (right) with his brother Dwight at the 1999 Centennial Packard Meet in Warren, OH. (Photo: Doug Moore)

Warren was “ready to go” following a six-year medical odyssey. A second-generation native San Franciscan, he grew-up in the Crocker -Amazon neighborhood, attending Guadalupe Elementary School and James Denman Middle School.

His formal music education, which included classical piano and pop arranging and harmony, began at age seven. He attended Abraham Lincoln High School (1952) and received his bachelor’s in biology from the University of San Francisco (1957). Childhood visits to San Francisco’s movie palaces fostered a dream of someday playing the theatre pipe organ. He realized that dream in 1966 on the Wurlitzer of San Francisco’s Avenue Theatre, where he entertained with music of the 1920’s and 1930’s, and community sing-a-longs, until 1984. Warren also played concerts and silent movie programs throughout California and across the country, and between 1980 and 2003, he performed twenty-seven concerts in England, Australia, and New Zealand. Warren recorded four albums during his music career and was a long serving volunteer with the Northern California Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. Warren’s musical talents weren’t confined to the theatre pipe organ; he also played piano, calliope,

and accordion, performing with the Red Garter Band – including at 49er football games and in civic parades – and at the Gold Dust Lounge among other venues.

Music aside, he enjoyed a 36-year career as a research scientist at the University of California, San Francisco, working in the fields of osteoporosis and hyper/hypo parathyroidism in the Department of Medicine and brain tumor research in the Department of Neurosurgery. He retired from the University in 1994, having co-authored seventeen papers.

Warren enjoyed his hobbies of vintage automobiles – Packards and Lincolns – and gardening long before his retirement. He was active with Northern California Packards and the Lincoln & Continental Owners Club. He cultivated orchids and dahlias – the official flower of San Francisco – and volunteered with the Dahlia Society in Golden Gate Park and with Filoli in Woodside. He joined the Olympic Club in 1959 and the Bohemian Club in 1999 and developed a penchant for international travel later in life.

Warren is survived by his daughter, Nancy McKinney, and son-in-law, Greg McKinney, of San Francisco, and his brother, Dwight Lubich, sister-in-law, Elaine Lubich, and nephew, Derek Lubich, of Los Altos. Contributions may be made to the USF Class of 1957 Endowed Scholarship, and can be sent to USF Development Services, 2130 Fulton St., SF, CA 94117-1080.



*Warren's beloved 1950 Custom 8 Sedan, which is now owned by Jerry Wuichet.
(Photo: Clint Moore)*

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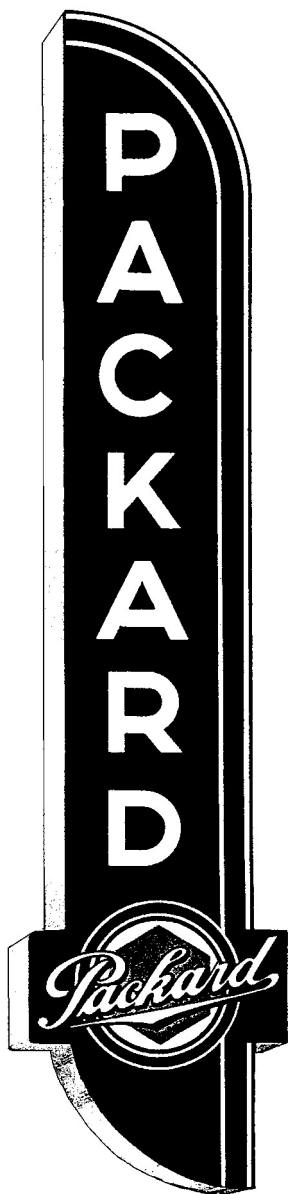
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