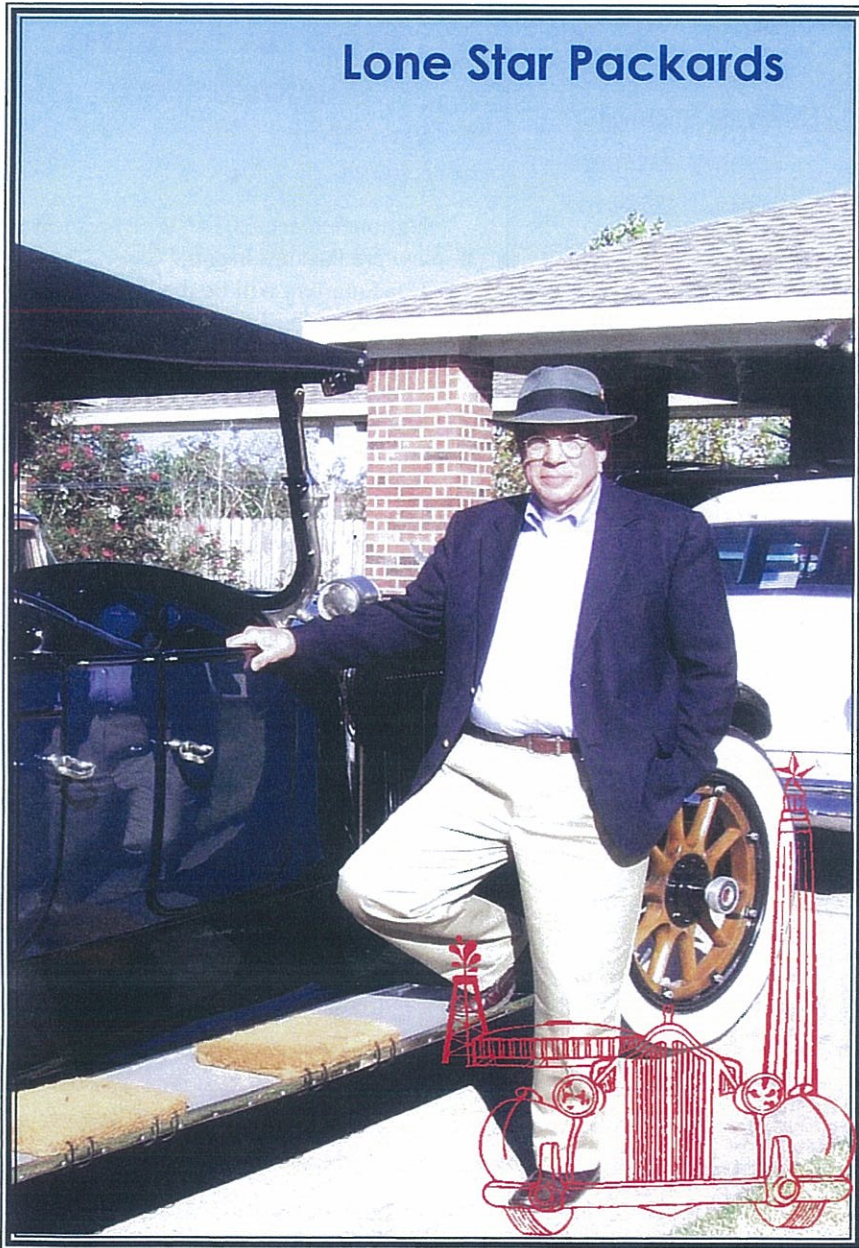


January 2014

The Owner's Manual

Lone Star Packards



- 2 -

THE OWNER'S MANUAL

PUBLISHED BY THE LONE STAR PACKARDS

From the National Packard Club

by Mike Rigsby
Chief Judge

National meet, 2014 will be in Warren, Ohio, where Packard began.

Headquarters will be the National Packard Museum beginning July 15, 2014..

This is an excellent location for such an event, but hotel space is tight, so make your arrangements now if you plan to attend.

2015 will see the National meet in northern California in the greater San Francisco area, and in 2016 we will probably be in South Bend, Indiana. This will be a Packard only event without the Studebaker people as last time.

As for judging, this 2014 Meet will be the first in which the Club will have a special class of customized and rodded Packards.

This Class 15 will be judged to the same standards as all other Packards except for authenticity.

Class winners will receive a plaque different from the other classes, but there will be first, second, and third place winners. All judging is ready to go now.

Director (acting)

Tommy Baccaro

Assistant Director

John Lortz

Secretary

Janice Musgrove

Treasurer

Rich Trokey

Membership

Janice & Ben Carter

Historian

Carol Baccaro

Webmaster

Doug Carlson

Newsletter

Mike Calistrat and

Mike Grimes

proof reader

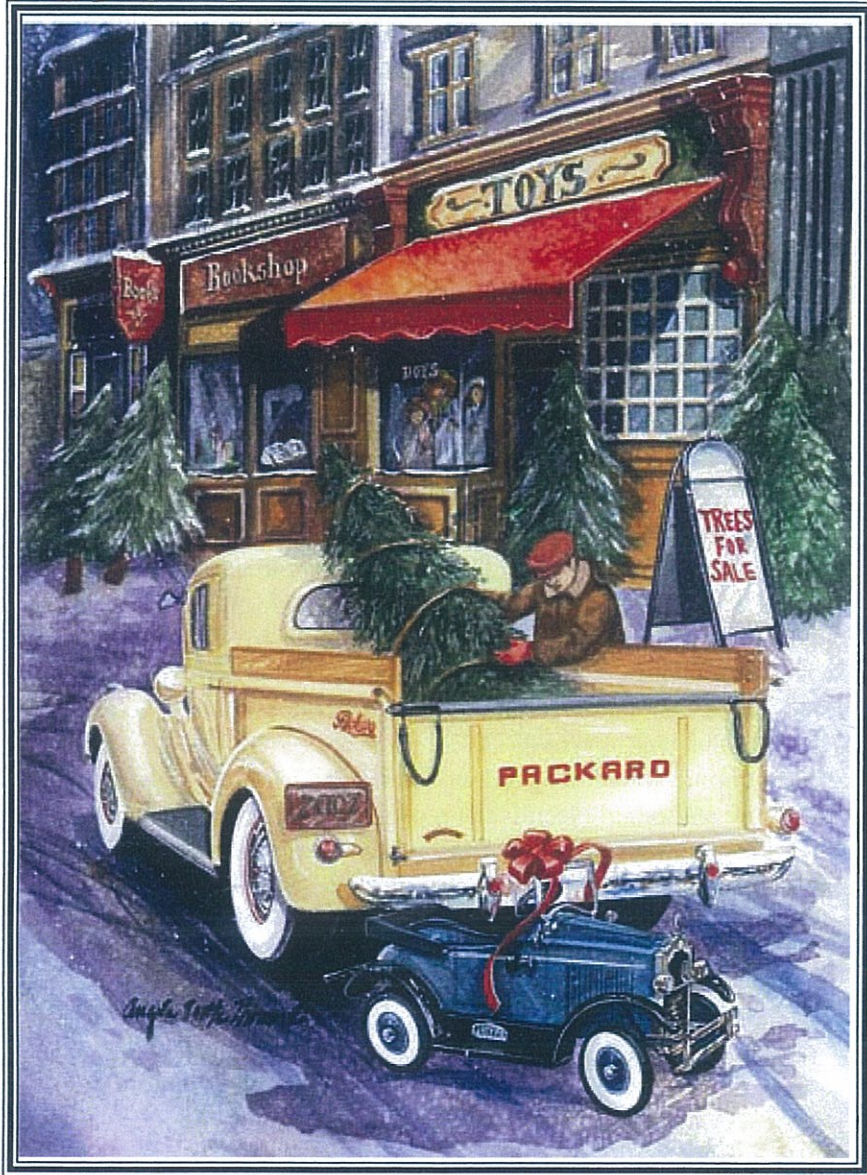
Caroline Calistrat

Cover Page: Tom Timmings proudly stands next to his Packard Twin Six

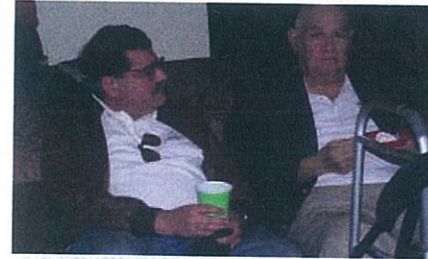
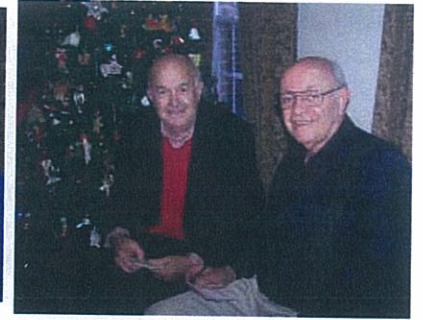
Back Page: Leon Ahler's 1941 Packard 120 Convertible Sedan

Lone Star Packards was chartered by the Packard Automobile Classic (PAC) in 1964. Our Charter requires that Lone Star Packard members also be members of the Packard Automobile Classics.

Wishing you a happy new year !



Immages from the party at the Baccaros
December 15, 2023



Overheard at the party !



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

We are moving into the year 2014! I am particularly happy to announce that we have gained at least four new families in the last couple of months. All of them have Packards and three of them are in different stages of running condition. I think we have approximately 80 Packards in one condition or another within our club. I would say we are doing our part to preserve the Packard name! In addition, we have maintained our core membership and Rich reports we are in the black.

Speaking of money, at the December meeting we decided to act on a fund request from the National Packard Museum in Warren, Ohio. We voted to send them a \$100 donation. As you know, we have given a substantial amount to the restoration of the Packard Proving Grounds in Shelby Township, Michigan. We have made several pledges in the past and have currently satisfied those pledges. You may remember we showed you a picture of the door on the service garage that LSP paid for. I think the amount was \$1500 and there is a very nice plaque attached to the door that says the funds were provided by the Lone Star Region.

If any of you have ever visited Auburn, Indiana I am sure you visited the Auburn/Cord/Dusenberg Museum which is housed in the old factory. Unfortunately, we were not able to save the Packard factory but we have saved a substantial part of the PPG. Seeing it this summer and knowing it is the only direct link we have to the Packard Company that was able to be saved, was very moving to me. Looking at the timing tower and going inside it, I could picture Alvin McCauley and other executives up there with their stop watches timing a shiny new Packard zooming around the oval propose we continue our support of the restoration of the Proving Grounds. Rich and I will look into what is available and we will propose adopting one of these projects in the near future.

We have activities planned through April. April of course is our annual gathering in Salado for the Texas Packard meet. There seems to be some question about what the foot print of the parking lot will

look like in April due to the Interstate highway construction. That was relayed to Larry Meyers by a hotel employee recently. Larry and Lily are still members of our club but they now live outside Longview in Hawkins and also belong to Arklatex. As you know each of the regions has a responsibility for the meet. Parking on Saturday morning is the job assigned to Arklatex. After many years of service, Billy Vaticalos is passing that duty on to Larry and Lily. He told me one time getting it organized into the various classes was like herding cats and I believe him. Larry is proposing the early registrations be provided to him about a week in advance and then he will plot out areas based on those numbers.

The map would be available when you pick up your packet. Late registrants would be squeezed in as possible or may just be in a mixed area to themselves. Sounds like a good plan to me and I wish them the best. If I remember correctly from the Sunday morning meeting last spring, we will be increasing the cost of the on-sight registration to encourage people to send it in early but I do not recall the amount.

In January we will return to Rosenberg for lunch in a unique restaurant discovered by the Carter's, a visit to the railroad museum, and visits to the many antique shops. This meeting will be on the 3rd Saturday so we can be sure the shops are open.

In February the Timmins' will host at a nearby restaurant and then we will go to their home in Friendswood. In March the Sartins will entertain our meeting in Katy. More information to follow on all these activities. At this point May is open.

Ben and Jan have brought us into the technology age with our on-line membership application. I think he has or will soon send it to each of you. It is interactive so you can complete it on the screen and send it back to Ben. Then you need to send your \$20 check to Rich Trokey or give it to him at the next meeting. Let's try to get that done early so we can get the roster out a little sooner than this past year.

Here is hoping everyone has a wonderful 2014!

A PACKARD NAMED OVETA

by Steve Wonderman

Packard is of course most associated with those well off and “able to afford the finer things in life.” Sometimes though, Packard catered to a different crowd. For instance, suppose it’s 1941, and you and your wife had just weathered the Great Depression. And, say, you had managed to bring oh, say five children into this world, and you were able to find a really good job in the America of 1941, enjoying the first economic boom since the 1920s.

Remember, you’re a family man, so you like to spend all your spare time with mom and the kids, take Sunday drives, maybe go on a picnic in the country to get away from the stifling summer heat of the city, maybe a week’s vacation every year, a couple hundred miles from home. What do you do for a large family car that can hold that kind of crowd, all it’s gear, and be safe and comfortable, and reliable?

There are no mini-vans in any Detroit manufacturer’s plans yet, the station wagon of 1941 is generally a panel truck, and the Suburban is really a delivery vehicle (and after all, a truck.)

How about an eight passenger sedan with jump seats? When the kids are still small, you can take all five of them, and some of their little friends, with mom and dad riding high wide and handsome in that big front bench seat, with room for picnic basket, some canvas folding chairs, and a couple of Thermos bottles of coffee.

I am talking about just such a machine. It’s not a limo with a division glass to keep the chauffeur out of hearing, but a very large sedan with three rows of seats, intended to be driven by the owner with a large family or a LOT of friends. We have here the 1942 Packard “Sedan for

Eight Passengers,” Model 160, Super Eight, Long Wheelbase. And by long, we’re talking over 12 feet long, some 148 inches. The only thing longer wheelbase in standard production cars were the hearse/ambulance/commercial chassis at a whopping 160 inches.

Dee and I named her *Oveta*, since she was built and delivered to a widow lady in Boston just 6 weeks before Pearl Harbor, in late 1941. (*Oveta* was the Texas lady legend who was the first commandant of the Women’s Army Corps, or WACs, and watched over that branch of the service through World War II.)



We suspect she hauled a load of grandchildren around Boston and The Cape.

Our *Oveta* is elegant, and beautiful, but a tough, strongly built machine, powered with Packard’s legendary top of the line 356 c.i. straight eight, a three on

the tree tranny with automatic overdrive (how’s that for 71 years ago?) and of course, radio (A.M.) and heater/defroster. Sorry South Texans: no A/C, yet, even though Packard offered it “at modest additional cost.” Ahem.

The two tone color scheme is original, but a repaint, and the chrome and stainless are as she came from the factory, except rechromed outside door handles. The interior is wool broadcloth, as original, but was replaced a few years ago. The engine and drivetrain are all in great shape, have not been opened/rebuilt. Very smooth and powerful, she will do at least 80 mph (I don’t have the guts to push her further, but there’s plenty of throttle left.) and she should easily do 100-105. Probably ought to swap out those tires and tubes.

We found the car in St Paul, Minnesota, where she was used for weddings and proms in the Twin Cities for nearly 20 years, but only in the summer. In winter, she was garaged and kept out of the snow and

next page

road salt. The underbody area is not deteriorated a bit, nor is the running gear or frame. The massive amount of chrome looks factory fresh.

Provenance-wise, after the widow lady passed away, sometime in the '50s, her chauffeur (yes, she used a chauffeur even though it's not a limo) "inherited" the car and drove it for several years. (Sounds like Driving Miss Daisy?)

Sometime in the 1970s, the family of the original Packard dealer in Boston, tracked *Oveta* down, and bought her back. They drove around New England and used her as an attraction in their car showroom. One day, the family that we bought her from, found her at the dealer, and bought her to add to their limo fleet for weddings and proms, one of 40 such cars. This car was given to the son who drove the cars in the business for several years, and it was the last car they sold off from the fleet, as the family retired and got out of the business. They did not want to let her go. But, the son's own wedding and pending marriage required a cash infusion, and we were it !!

It was tempting to drive her to Houston from Minnesota, but we chickened out and had her brought to Roman Forest, Texas, by a car hauler. We got in her, and she immediately cranked and has been running well ever since we got her a few years ago (except for a new water pump this spring.)

Oveta has been on a couple of Packard Club local tours and meetings, and this year we were invited to participate at Keels and Wheels with several other Houston area Packards, where she received a lot of attention. Her sheer size is a crowd grabber.

An interesting tech note: those grill louvers are thermostatically controlled, in addition to the engine mounted thermostat, that works in the usual manner. The settings of the two thermostats are staggered, so that the louvers open first, then the engine water circulation. This was the last year that even Packard could afford that much temperature regulation!

Oveta is the star of our antique car fleet, which includes a 1951 Packard Patrician, 47 Custom, and an unrestored, 48 LWB Sedan for Eight Passengers, as well as a 1937 Cadillac 60 Sedan (bought by my dad in 1971.)

We hope to drive her on many tours and trips and to many events in the next several years.. We'll see y'all: On the Road !

LSP Chat

by Carol Baccaro

By the time you read this Chat, we will have celebrated the holidays and 2014 will have entered. I hope that you all will have a wonderful new year.

I'm not really aware of any members' news that you haven't already heard, therefore I will tell you about my beginning experience with Packards.

In 1970 I met this really nice, young man named Tommy, who happened to teach in the same school district as was mine. (Pasadena ISD) He was the president of the Classroom Teachers Association and some dear friends of mine decided to make me the representative for our school for the coming school year. Tommy had just acquired a 1952 Packard which he'd heard about on a daily radio show. He told me all about that Packard as we begin to date.

When my parents came for a visit, they stayed the weekend in Pasadena with my aunt and uncle. Tommy picked me up at my Gulf Frwy. apartment and we drove over to Pasadena for him to meet my parents, aunt, and uncle. Mother and Daddy lived through the depression and my dad was pretty impressed that in 1970, Tommy would be driving his 1952 Packard. To say the least, they all liked him "almost" as much as I, and the rest is history.

We celebrated our 43rd anniversary Dec. 19, and we are still rolling around in Packards.



The Engagement

THE WINGS OF

(see picture on the back cover)

by Leon Ahlers

Packard... The mere mention of the marque evokes images of social gatherings at the mansion, opening night galas and people of means gliding in grand style down the highways of yesteryear. Luxury motoring at its finest.

In the reality of today, however, it translates into expensive, hard to find replacement parts, less than stellar fuel mileage, and confusion among the uninformed: “*What’s a Packard*”, etc. I still feel that the pride of ownership is worth the price of admission.

My history with Packard dates back to the early 1950s. An elderly friend of my grandparents drove his silver-gray 1934 Packard to church every Sunday, and after services, I would often get to sit behind the wheel of that lovely automobile while the adults engaged in conversation. Once the door shut like a bank vault, I was alone with the richly woodgrained dashboard, the ticking of the clock, and the wonderful smell of the broadcloth interior.

The best part of the adventure was, when no one was looking, to grip the wheel, stand in the seat, sight down the hood through the wings of the cormorant and imagine what it would be like to actually drive that car down the road.

Sadly, by the summer of 1956, both Mr. Garrett and his Packard had gone on to their final rewards, though the memories are everlasting.

Fast forward to 1966. I was into my mid-teens and dreams of classic automobiles and more genteel times had been shelved for the more pressing items of the day, fast cars and pretty girls, or something along those lines.

One day that Fall, I lapsed: I found a 1940 Packard 110 sedan, complete and driving (though the block was cracked) for \$50. The deal was done, and I now owned my first Packard! The car was driven on a limited basis until I pulled the engine.

Many of you know how a simple project can be drawn out for years, so by the time I finished high school, worked in different places around the country, then spent three years with Uncle Sam, the project had mutated into a bit more of a total restoration than I was equipped to take on.

A CORMORANT

In 1972 I was able to sell the remains and purchased my 1939 Ford, but I was still hooked on Packards. About two years ago I started, in earnest, looking for a 1939 through 1941 Packard 120 convertible sedan.

Common logic told me that if I was ever going to find such an automobile, NOW is the time to act. The search was somewhat depressing in that there weren’t that many cars on the market which met my criterion.

Those which were available, were too expensive for my budget, too “*motheaten*” to drive without a lot of help, or needed a complete restoration.

In January I saw a viable candidate on Ebay; price was right, car was running and driving, and most of the mechanicals had been done. The timing was not right to make an offer, so I forgot about the car and thought that someone probably got a good deal.

In early April, the same car resurfaced on E-bay, and had no bids. The next week, same story, so I contacted the owner, asked about the car and was impressed with what he told me. After the “*auction*” was over, the car had not sold, so I booked a flight to Akron, Ohio.

Saw the car, (1941 Packard - 120 Convertible Sedan) drove the car, owner was honest, deal was done. That night, I phoned home and Pam agreed to meet me in Dayton, Ohio the following day to drive our “*trophy*” home to Houston. How trusting is that!

The trip home was fairly uneventful, except for the blinding rain and high winds. We completely missed the flooding, hailstorms and tornadoes which were dancing all around us.

Electrical problems (spark plug wires) shut us down in Casey, Illinois, but we made up for it by holding our 37th anniversary dinner in the finest dining restaurant in town: **Pizza Hut!**

Going crosscountry in a 70 year old, untested vehicle is not for everyone, and though it has its moments, there is a true sense of satisfaction (and relief) when you bring them back alive.

It is funny how things sometimes work out. I now know, after all these years, how it really feels to drive down the road *looking through the wings of a cormorant*.

A CLOSED CHAPTER

by Mike Calistrat

Restoring old cars was my hobby for many years. During this time I worked for many cars: Ford Model A, 1965 Thunderbird, 1975 Lincoln Mark IV, 1947 Lincoln, the 1949 Packard Twelve, and a few others.

Restorations gave me a lot of pleasure, and after I decided to retire, it took all my time. Restoration is many times a challenge, and I enjoyed finding solutions to what seemed an impossible job.

Slowly, slowly I got older, and working in the garage became difficult. The Packard Twelve gave me a lot of trouble, during and after restoration. It seemed funny to me that the car had power assist brake and clutch, but no power steering! No wonder; it was not invented when the car was built! With a lot of weight (6,000 pounds) and very large tires, I just had trouble turning the steering wheel. I gave up authenticity, and with the help of a friendly shop I installed power steering.

Now I could drive the car, for a short time, after which I became short of breath! Therefore, the car just sat in the garage and once a week I went there to admire it and started the engine and let it run for ten minutes. It did not take me long to realize that it was over; not only that I can no longer restore cars, but I cannot drive my prized one.

Rich people buy expensive paintings and hang them in plain view. I concluded that I cannot afford to behave like that. Therefore I put the car for sale. Foolishly, I thought I can get a fortune for it, but my restoration did not bring the car to the original condition; in my opinion it was better! But I could not find a buyer to agree with my interpretation of "better" Therefore, I had to lower my price until I found a buyer.

It was sold to Mr. Robert Nuss, a gentleman from Massachusetts. He came with his wife to inspect the car, he liked it, and paid for it. See his article, on next page.

Here I am now, a member of the Packard club, without a Packard car! You, the other members of LSP are my friends, and Caroline and I enjoy participating in your get-togethers. As long as we are welcome, we will come.

I have to tell you, however, that my attraction to old cars made me buy another one! It is a 1985 Lincoln Town Car (details next time). I really did not need an other car, but I could not resist the opportunity.

We bought Mike's '39 Packard Twelve

by Robert Nuss

To write this article I asked to see articles by other first-time Packard purchasers. After reading them I can tell you that my story is similar. I too have had a long-standing, unrequited passion for a Packard. My wife Lois and I retired to Cape Cod after selling a thoroughbred horse farm in Virginia. Luckily, we hadn't lost our entire fortune in the horse racing business. Cape Cod has an active assortment of classics, mostly Model A's, that run around mostly in the Summer. This heightened our desire to get a Packard.

I keep a regular search on the Hemmings web site and on E-Bay looking for Packards. We found Mike's car on eBay and spent twice what we wanted to, and got more than twice the car we expected. What a way to start in the Packard world, a Twelve! We travelled to Houston to see the car and met Mike and Caroline Calistrat. We have a little knowledge about a Twelve, certainly not expert knowledge, and we could see that Mike had made bold changes to the car including a unique paint scheme and had preserved the look and feel of a classic Packard while advancing the driveability of the car. It appears there are a few things to sort out in the electrical and interior departments, but these can be done by mere mortals like myself.

I got some good advice once. "*If you don't know horses know the man who is selling the horse.*" This is the number one reason why we own Mike's Packard today. Lois and I spent two days with Mike and were impressed (amazed is a better word) with his passion and knowledge about this car. We read the articles he wrote while restoring it and listened to his stories about travelling across Texas to inspect the shop that wanted to sell him the heads they had manufactured for the car. In our minds eye, we can see him looking into everything there and flying back with the heads in his luggage. We heard about how his sons bought him the Lalique 'Chrysalis' mascot for the car. He showed us pictures of the car as it was found in the barn and his emotions were apparent. We learned that the paint scheme was Caroline's choice modeled after a car she saw. She determined to use Packard colors. So the car got a more expensive paint job then it needed.

If ever we were to spend too much money and get more than we expected, this was the time and this was the car.

So, as I write this I am still waiting to hear from the transport company. Note to Packard limo owners: Shippers don't like to ship cars like this because it affects how much they can load. As we continue to work this shipping problem, and it looks like it will take a lot of money, Lois and I are comforted knowing that our Packard is still in Mike's garage. Nobody loves that car more than him.



Robert and Lois Nuss with the Calistrats

Our Golden Anniversary

by Tommy Baccaro

Our region will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year. The actual date is in July but I remember we celebrated the 40th anniversary right after the first of the year.

We are the third oldest region of PAC. For the 40th, we went to Mickey Gilley's Grill in Pasadena but it is no longer open. For that celebration everyone brought their old pictures relating to club activities and we did our best to find and invite former members even if they no longer had a Packard. We had a great turn out!

What are we going to do for our "Golden Anniversary" and when are we going to do it? We could have a similar luncheon at an appropriate eatery or maybe have a really special tour and name it the Golden Anniversary Tour? Please be thinking about it.

