

# Lincoln and Continental Owners Club



## Spring 2016

### DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

During the third week in January, the National Board of Director's meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Westshore in Tampa where several significant items have been changed. You will be most affected by the Board's decision to stop publishing a paper copy of the Membership Directory and replace it with an online copy. You may review the instructions for use in the most recent copy of Continental Comments. This change will impact the LCOC National Printing budget significantly and allowed the yearly National dues to remain stable.

To bolster the National Treasury, the Board approved the creation of a yearly raffle that will occur each August at the Lincoln Motor Car Foundation Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan. I recently participated in a National Board conference call that changed some of the bylaws that will allow LCOC to be in compliance with State Laws and enable it to legally conduct the raffle. A total of 4,000 raffle tickets will be sold at the price of \$50.00 each. As of this writing, the single winner of the raffle will receive a 2016 Lincoln Continental, along with a cash payment to pay the income tax due on the winnings. I hope to have the tickets shortly and will contact you when they are available.

#### MEMBERS'S HELP NEEDED

I committed to the Region to host the Eastern National Meet in the Spring of 2018. If you are interested in helping organize and promote this event please contact me or Terry Sparks as soon as possible. I hope to have a location chosen within the next 90 days so we can start planning all of the activities associated with a National Meet. Hopefully we can have most of the schedule in place by the end of Summer next year.

#### PLANNED ACTIVITIES

On June 11, 2016 we will be touring the Elliott Car Museum in Stuart, Florida with a lunch to follow at a local restaurant. The museum is located at 825 Northeast Ocean Boulevard, Stuart, Florida 34996. The tour will start at 10:00 AM. We will also be given access by the curator to the garage area that is not available to the general public to see a few prized cars including a 1941 Lincoln. I hope to see all of you there.

The Midwestern National Meet will be held in Dayton, Ohio from June 15 to June 19, 2016. If you are interested in attending, the meet package and registration forms are at [www.LCOC.org](http://www.LCOC.org).

This November, we are invited to bring some cars to a car show in Downtown St. Petersburg sponsored by the St. Petersburg Yacht Club. More details on page 2.

Until we meet again-

Glen Wirtanen, Florida Regional Director

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#### Florida Region LCOC Board Officers:

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## UPCOMING FLORIDA REGION EVENTS

**June 11, 2016**

On June 11th, we will be touring the Elliott Car Museum in Stuart, Florida with a lunch to follow at a local restaurant. The museum is located at 825 Northeast Ocean Boulevard, Stuart, Florida 34996. The tour will start at 10:00 AM. We will also be given access by the curator to the garage area that is not available to the general public to see a few prized cars including a 1941 Lincoln. There is a museum entry fee of \$14 per person. This is an opportunity for those of you who live on the eastern side of the state to be a part of the LCOC activities. We hope to see you there no matter where you may be coming from in Florida!

**November 6, 2016**

Each year, the St. Petersburg Yacht Club conducts their Vintage Motor Classic which attracts about 300 entries including pre -1980 cars, boats, and motorcycles. As the show has grown in size and reputation, participants come from all over the Southeastern U.S. and more than 5,000 people now attend this event. South Straub Park, adjacent to the Yacht Club, provides a beautiful setting on the lawn and along the waterfront for vehicle display. The City of St. Petersburg co-sponsors the Vintage Motor Classic as a means of promoting the annual Honda Grand Prix held each spring.

LCOC Florida Region has been offered an exciting opportunity with the Vintage Motor Classic. If we can round up at least 10 or more of our pre-1980 Lincolns for the show, Lincoln may have its own designated show area. This is our chance to share the Lincolns we love in a prestigious show and to make others aware of our existence as a club!

Here are the details:

Date: Sunday, November 6, 2016 (Rain or shine, the show goes on)

Place: South Straub Park, adjacent to the St. Pete Yacht Club at 11 Central Ave. in downtown St. Petersburg

Time: Registration begins at 8 AM in the morning

Registration fee: \$25 per car, pre-show / \$35 per car, day of the show

For more information, you can go to [www.spyc.org/classic](http://www.spyc.org/classic)

Registration online will be available in the near future.

Although not a concours judging event, there will be a trophy presentation. According to their website, judging will be conducted by a non-professional group with instruction about what to look for with an emphasis on originality.

We have the challenge. Let's make it happen! If you have a pre-1980 Lincoln and want to participate, please contact Terry Sparks at either of the following as soon as possible:

email: [mtstampa@aol.com](mailto:mtstampa@aol.com)

Phone: 813-810-8985

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## ITEMS FOR SALE!

If you have a Lincoln or Lincoln related items for sale, please let us know and we can include it in our next newsletter. At this point, there is no charge for listing Lincoln items.

**Editor's Request:** For a successful newsletter, we need your input. Please send your ideas and comments to either Glen or Terry (contact info under Board Member list). Perhaps you may want to write an article about your own Lincoln(s) or some Lincoln related topic. We want to hear from you!

## FLORIDA REGION ANNUAL MEETING IN ST. PETERSBURG

by Terry Sparks

Florida Region members gathered at the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) on December 5th 2015 for our annual meeting. The gathering began with a docent led tour of this beautiful facility located downtown on the bay front. St. Petersburg has a growing reputation as an arts center and the MFA is a major part of the art scene in this part of Florida. Rather than looking hurriedly at every piece in each gallery, our docent directed our attention to selected ones and asked for our impressions. This type of interactive tour made our visit both interesting and fulfilling. Members were allowed to return to the galleries for further visitation after our meeting and lunch on site at the museum.



After the tour, we conducted our annual meeting in a room provided by the museum. Glen Wirtanen, Florida Region Director, reported on items affecting LCOC as a whole. He noted that national membership is down and discussed ways we might pursue to help build our membership here in Florida. Gene Billero asked about the possibility of providing membership applications to new Lincoln buyers through the dealerships. This option has been considered before. Apparently there are some cost issues which hinder effectiveness of this process. Bob Anderson who has been a member of LCOC for a long time indicated that assistance from Ford/Lincoln corporate is limited at best. He noted that we need to focus on our own efforts. The Region remains open to ideas about building membership. Glen reported that the LCOC national board meeting will be held in Tampa in January of 2016. The meeting site will be the Holiday Inn Westshore which is close to Tampa International Airport.



Turning to matters specifically relating to Florida, Jack Shea, Florida Region Treasurer, reported that we have over \$7,000 in the bank. Glen stated that our region can participate in various events but we cannot sponsor joint events with other clubs or entities because of insurance requirements. Board elections were held with Glen Wirtanen reelected as Director, Terry Sparks as Vice Director, Jack Shea as Treasurer, and Mike Maguire as Membership Director. We then turned our attention to a general discussion of possible future events for the Florida Region. Since our membership is scattered from one end of the state to the other, we continued efforts to plan events around the state. We are still looking for a good option in the Jacksonville area. Any ideas from members in that area will be appreciated. Jack Shea stated that in the past the region has sponsored driving tours of about 30 to 40 miles followed by a lunch or banquet in the area. We discussed the possibility of having a Lincoln car show event with sponsorship by Lincoln Dealers. One show was already in the works at the time of this meeting. Steve Peabody who lives in St. Pete would like for our LCOC members to participate in the annual St. Pete Yacht Club Classic Car Show to be held on the second weekend of November. The show is open to cars built prior to 1980. Entry fee is \$25 per car. This shows attracts about 5,000 people each year.

Before conclusion of our meeting, Jack Shea told us about endowment funding needs for the Lincoln Motor Car Museum at the Gilmore site in Michigan. A matching fund pledge has been made by Jerry Capizzi and Chris Dunn. The endowment will help keep the museum operating in the years to come. The Lincoln Motorcar Foundation is responsible for the museum which represents the cooperative efforts of the four major national Lincoln clubs. Jack made a motion for the Florida Region to donate \$1,000 to the endowment and this was approved by the members present.

After concluding our meeting, members gathered for a delicious lunch in the Museum Cafe which overlooks the bay. The MFA proved to be a beautiful setting for our annual meeting.

## FLORIDA REGION MEMBERS GATHER IN SAFETY HARBOR

By Terry Sparks

Located on the northwestern shore of old Tampa Bay, the historic Safety Harbor Resort and Spa provided the setting for Florida Region members and guests to gather for a presentation and lunch. On this same beautiful Saturday, October 24th 2015, the City of Safety Harbor also hosted the annual All-British Car Show which normally attracts about 200 show cars. Turnout for our event exceeded our expectations with 26 members and their guests attending. The presentation came from one of our own members, Herb Sheffer, founder of The Lincoln Mercury Old Parts Store in nearby Clearwater.

Herb surprised us with stories of his “automobile” encounters on two humanitarian trips he made to Cuba in 2005 and 2006. For years now, we have heard about the abundance of 1950’s American cars still in use on the island. Herb was amazed at how the Cubans have kept these cars in operation without ready access to replacement parts. I can only imagine that Herb’s business would sky rocket if there were open markets between the US and Cuba. Since Cuba has been open to other markets around the world, there are now more recent makes and models seen on the streets. Herb made the observation that there were very few American luxury cars among the 50’s cars still present on the island. Apparently, many of the wealthy Cubans were able to ship their luxury cars out of the country while they still had the opportunity to do so. However, he did see one Continental Mark II. This car belonged to the wife of ousted Cuban dictator, Batista, and was left behind when they fled the island in 1959.

As the relationship between Cuba and the United States has been evolving on a much quicker pace in recent times, the Cuban island scene will undoubtedly evolve as well. The process has already begun since Cuba has working relationships with many European nations and others around the globe. However, as markets between the US and Cuba are opened over time, the pace of change will quicken simply because the two nations are located so close together. For example, we now have regular flights from Tampa to Cuba. I have a feeling that if you want to see those old 50’s American cars on the road, you may need to book a trip there as soon as possible before they disappear from the road.

Before and after a great lunch and Herb’s presentation, Florida Region members were free to visit the All-Brit Car Show in downtown Safety Harbor. Six blocks of Main Street were closed off to vehicle traffic to make room for the show cars and patrons. Almost all of the best known British makes could be found. It was amazing to see so many of these cars in one place. Jaguar, Bentley, MG, Triumph, Lotus, Aston Martin and Mini-Cooper were well represented with both old versions as well as some new ones on display.



Florida Region members were invited to drop by my house in Safety Harbor after our lunch presentation and the car show. We had an opportunity to sit down for good conversation and discussion of issues relating to the region, the club, and our passion for Lincolns.

# THERE ARE PROBABLY AS MANY REASONS PEOPLE COLLECT CARS AS THERE ARE CAR COLLECTORS

by Reginald Brown

There are probably as many reasons people collect cars as there are car collectors. There are probably also as many reasons car collectors collect *specific* cars. Many times, the stories behind how collectors go about choosing, finding (or being found by) their cars can be as interesting as the cars themselves.

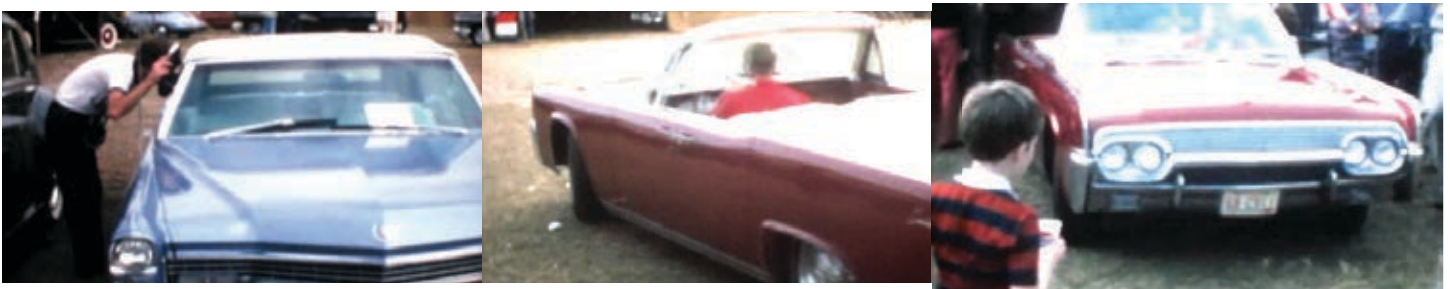
For me, the most interesting "how I came to buy *that* car" story relates to the purchase of my first (and come to think of it only) Lincoln 4 door convertible. Here is the story of that Lincoln" a royal red 1961, with white top, and red and white interior.

Mind you, I'd always lusted after the 1961-1969 vintage Lincolns, for as long as I can remember. In high school (I graduated in 1971), while others of my era fantasized about GTOs and Mach 1 Mustangs, my dream car was a pale blue, with white top, 1966 Continental convertible. Indeed, I tried to actually persuade my parents to buy me one, since it would have cost about the same as the new 1970 Torino they did buy me. They were having none of it, though, and it's probably just as well, as I think the daily upkeep on an aging Lincoln convertible, in the harsh Michigan climate in which we then lived, might have taxed my budget, which was based on the salary of a part-time window man at McDonalds.

Thus the tale of my first 4 door convertible begins five years after high school, in late winter, 1976. I was attending college in Michigan, it was the end of another long winter, and I had hated winter since I was a child. I do believe dislike of winter and car collecting may be somehow related; and for me the die was cast the day, as a child, when my parents sent me on a plane to Florida to visit my Grandparents. I left Michigan on a bitterly cold winter day, stepped off the plane in Florida to a warm 70 degree evening, and life changed for me forever the moment I discovered it was possible to be warm in the Winter.

But back to 1976. On a brief break from school, having had quite enough of winter, I on a whim booked a plane ticket to Tampa, Florida. I'd thaw out, and invite myself to visit a high school friend who, unlike me, had had enough sense to have moved to Florida already, living in Largo.

It happened that my friend was also a car guy, although he was a Cadillac man, not a Lincoln man, and in fact then owned a lovely Florida car, a 1968 Cadillac Coupe deVille, in light blue with white leather. During my sojourn in Florida, we took that Cadillac to a car auction, somewhere up around Tarpon Springs. The details of the day are lost to memory, but there's a photographic record, which we shall see figures in this story.



Now remember this was 1976, before the days of video cameras, but I did have a Super 8 movie camera. I took the movie camera to the auction, and my friend and I looked at, and I filmed, the cars. We each had a favorite at the auction, his a blue 1966 Cadillac Eldorado convertible, and me a red 1961 Lincoln convertible.

The film from that auction includes my friend admiring the blue 1966 Cadillac, and the movie reel ends with the 1961 red Lincoln being driven out of the auction tent towards me. It was a beautiful car, and down through the subsequent years I would watch that movie many times, thinking that when I someday bought my first Lincoln convertible, that a red one, and/or a 1961, would be a good choice.

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## THERE ARE PROBABLY AS MANY REASONS PEOPLE COLLECT CARS AS THERE ARE CAR COLLECTORS

continued

Twenty five years passed, and as I grew older and more affluent, collector cars would begin to grace my driveway. Quite a few (OK, most) of them were Lincolns, including a few 1960s sedans, but somehow I got to near 50 years of age before finally buying my first Lincoln convertible, which was a 1978 Andy Hotten conversion, of all things. But I still didn't own an elusive 1961-67 4 door convert.

Finally around 2000, I began looking for a 4 door convertible in earnest, and looked at, and drove, many, primarily 1964 and 1965s, which seemed to be most abundant. I came close on a couple, but I was really looking for something that drove really well, as I enjoy driving my cars more than showing them.

Then one day Lincoln Land got in for consignment sale a 1961 convertible. In red. I drove down from Georgia, where I then lived, and was quite interested after seeing it was an unmolested mostly original car and drove very well. It was even red, and looked just like the car in my old Super 8 movie.



I'd pretty much decided to buy the car, and Chris Dunn of Lincoln Land gave me the owner's phone number to talk about it. As we talked, I asked him how long he'd owned the car and where he'd purchased it.

And this is the story he told me:

He'd owned the car for around 25 years, and had bought the car at an auction in Tarpon Springs, Florida. He'd actually gone to the auction to sell a car, a 1966 Cadillac Eldorado convertible. The Cadillac didn't sell, but this red Lincoln came across the block and he bought it, and had owned it ever since.

I was kind of startled at that point, but then regained my composure long enough to ask him if the Cadillac was, by any chance, medium blue with a white leather interior. It was of course, and no doubt you've guessed where this is going. The Lincoln I was about to buy was the same car from my movie...not just one that looked like it. The very same Lincoln from my 25 year old Super 8 movie, when I'd played hooky from college on a whim and hopped a plane to Florida. The same Lincoln I'd already admired for 25 years. And even the Cadillac I filmed my friend admiring that day was *his* Cadillac.

He'd kept the car since that day, apparently just waiting for me. It was meant to be my car.

It didn't need restoring, but via Lincoln Land, I had it repainted in the correct royal red poly, supervised by the late Greg Englehardt, who then worked for Chris Dunn, in order to get the shade of red exactly right. Set off with a new white top and new wide whitewalls, it was a stunning car. I would end up owning that lovely convertible for nearly ten years, but life circumstances change, I moved to Bangkok and gave up my collector cars, and Chris Dunn found it a new home.

Down through the years I've owned more than fifty Lincolns, but that was the one I waited for the longest.