

A Visit to the Automobile Driving Museum

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You there, I say you...

While the Corvair meet is outside, on closed street with 83 cars in a sunny day, I go to the building, its the Museums event, so after shooting some pics, I venture in.



They are busy in the interior side stand with pop corn, chips, drinks. This museum is laid out well, I like it. Lighting is good, offices, and you can go in two ways: climb two levels stairs, then go right in, or from the medium sized cafeteria. However, there is a large room, whose two sides of a long rectangle are glass. The Premium Articles are here, over years I have seen

very imposing autos, but public was never allowed in there. Oh, once I got in....and standing there, was my friend's 1937 Packard Type 180 Super 8. Level of resto: High. Color: dark grey, though not too much. This year fenders were getting bulbous and this, in a long wheelbase car, with that paint job + conical wheel covers painted same grey....inside this museum showroom. Big open Packards have presence to spare, no wonder they were owned and driven in most major cities during the 30s.

So there were just a few other people inside, but it was odd at first, being observed by others outside looking in. I could barely see them.



I am inside building, look to the side, yep, the Salon has got the important automobiles, but no one inside, no change. Go look from different angle and there on door to go in, there's a small sign: IN ORDER TO HAVE ACCESS, SPEAK AT DESK. For a split second, I thought - No, it can't be, then I look at the desk and there's this girl, about 15, blonde, pimples, white too big shirt, sort of unkept hair, this was turn of the century imagery and I instantly saw her in that setting. I smiled for no particular reason. Walk up, she's reading a book, she's way in there....Excuse me, is there a way to go inside? -Oh just a minute, let me let you in. And I'm....in the room. By myself.

There are different cars this time. How about some of the best bodies from STUTZ, CADILLAC, and PACKARD, all American iron in here. The sheer opulence of line; together with buildings architectural details and materials, well, what a treat to see them this way, as originally advertised, in lavish surroundings. The size of these motorcars, all supremely restored under perfect lighting.....and as for the interiors, oh, don't you want to get into the back of one of these big cars? Could be a big closed one, with all those kidney shaped windows, while the sun is coming up, maybe go to church.....



Now, the Weyman Stutz, that low-slung job speaks of action and derring-do, popular for being in the right spots, made in small production, it's a mighty confident purveyor of a strong America, Indy and all.



That white open Packard. I have ridden in my friends 37, the big grey car. Took it on Sunset Boulevard, a favorite because of banked turns, condition of streets, and beautiful areas. I'm a front passenger, car is so heavy that you cannot push it with big side-walls, so we are cruising. The inside is done in darker grey leather, single wide pleats. I have my arm hanging out of passenger side, convertible top up but those massive dual side-mounts, clad in steel, the conical caps, all in this big Phaeton with early aerodynamics plus perfect dark-grey paint

job. At one point we were on a very small street in old Santa Monica.....sun is going down....a woman is taking the groceries out of car. We are in traffic on her street. She comes from under the trunk of the car with bag of groceries from her arm, turns around, sees us, and her mouth drops wide open. She grabs her husband's arm, guy says "What do you want?!!" Tugs more. "What IS it?!" He turns around and guy just freezes. He betrays no emotion, appears hypnotized, looks at me. I smile at them and look away, then traffic eases up while they stay rooted in place. Still, most people ignore car, probably like a castle or house going down the road to them. I later get out of car in an underground garage where car is kept with other gems. I snapped out of it when returning to modern car. Started it, took off, let's see how long will it take to get there, but then the night began to look different.... and I slowed down, looked again, but saw nothing resembling a '37 Super 8, let alone a Phaeton. But this is Los Angeles. Somewhere there's one ready to drive, maybe one right now. Hey, want to take a side street?

Good night

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