



# The *Dagmar*

www.rmrlc.com

**May 2008**

## **Denver Art Museum Tour by John Cullinan**

On April 4th, 20 inquisitive members of the RMCLC met in the lobby of the new Hamilton building at the Denver Art Museum. Our purpose was to have a guided tour of the Restoration and Conservation department led by the department director, Carl Patterson.

Mr. Patterson and one of his staff kindly extended their workday to meet us at 6:30 and led us to a basement level of the old museum building. German architect Daniel Libeskind designed the new Hamilton wing and Italian Architect Gio Ponti designed the old building. Both buildings have something in common; they are the only examples of their architect's work existent in the USA. Some critics say there may be a good reason for that. But both buildings are interesting to look at, while the Ponti building is considered to have a better array of art display space.

From the basement of the Ponti building we were escorted to a special elevator that took us up to the 7th floor. This floor is was where previously the American West-

ern art collection was displayed. For the time being, it is being used by the Restoration and Conservation department for uncrating and crating paintings that arrive for temporary display in the museum. An exhibit of French impressionist paintings from the Louvre in Paris were on display in the new museum wing at the time of our visit and we learned they had been transported across the country in 8 specially designed unmarked trucks with atmospheric control to maintain temperature and humidity. We also learned that when some paintings from our museum's collection are sent out for exhibition at other museums and there is a concern about how the climate change may affect them, they are placed in a special sealed crate that maintains humidity at the level the painting is accustomed to. A special quilt show is planned for late spring and some of the quilts were being stretched and backed for hanging on large tables on the 7th floor.

Then Mr. Patterson took us into a section of the museum that few ever see, the actual restoration shop. There were some Indian artifact items being worked and Carl explained how they were experimenting

with ways to undo damage that had been done to a basket. Thinking it would preserve the basket, someone had treated it with oil, which is a very bad idea. Mr. Patterson's staff was trying to remove the oil without drying out the basket fibers. Another item was a northwest Indian cape with ermine tails and decorative mask. The items didn't look to be in too bad condition to us, but he said the ermine had been all dried out when it arrived and they have been slowing re-moisturizing it for months by raising the humidity and giving it a special backing using lamb skin obtained at a pharmacy.

We also saw how special lights called black lights were used to uncover old repairs and over-painting on old paintings. The public doesn't know that those near perfect pieces you might see in the museum may have had extensive repair work performed decades and centuries ago. A black light responds differently to new and old paint. Sometimes Mr. Patterson will take items over to Denver General to be X-rayed.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Getting Started

### The Director's Column By John Serfling



The problem with spring is that there are too many outdoor home projects. The days warm up and the ladder comes out. Around our house we have been repairing a greenhouse which is attached to the garage. I would much rather be inside the garage working on car projects, with the door open to let in the fresh air of course. At least I don't have to worry too much that the warmth will be short lived. These days it is the cold days that are short lived, so I can get the house projects finished up and get going on more car projects.

April started off well with an interesting tour of the conservation section at the Denver Art Museum. You can read all about it in John Cullinan's article. You can also read the salient points about the upcoming Washing Machine Museum tour, which John has put together with the assistance of Jerry Pache. Being educated

as a Mechanical Engineer, which, unfortunately, is not the same as being educated as a mechanic, I am really looking forward to that activity. Cars and washing machines aren't so different. One just has a lot more parts than the other and weighs a bit more, too.

We are all set for the tour to Steamboat Springs. Your VP of Fun tells me that there will be 9 cars going along, which probably means that 16 to 18 people have decided that they can afford the price of gas for a 300 mile tour. Brent has my money and John Cullinan has my registration form. If they don't have yours, it's time to send in your money and form.

My thanks to Rod Brewer for talking to us at the April meeting about the acquisition of his '47 Cadillacs. I really enjoyed hearing about the various convolutions that occurred in the process, especially how the Chrysler 300 figured into the process. His perseverance paid off nicely. If you haven't seen his blue convertible, you need to come to the May meeting and ask him to show it to you. Don't forget to ask him to honk the horn.

We are in for another treat at the May meeting. Harry Tiffany, who must have known the Lelands, will be our featured speaker. Harry always has interesting stories for us, so you won't want to miss this one.

The brakes continue to perform well on my '70 Eldorado. I'm sure that is a relief to all

of you who are tired of having to read about them. That doesn't mean that I don't have another story or two, though. This episode is about the starter and the level control (not quite automatic).

Occasionally, for a few months nothing would happen the first time I would turn the key to the start position. The second, third or fourth time it would work, however. A couple of Sundays ago, when I was in a big hurry to get to church, it took 20 tries before the starter did its thing. I may be slow, but I'm not completely stupid. When I got home from church I parked the car and did not move it again until I had the problem fixed. I have never removed a starter or even held one for that matter, but the manual made it look fairly easy and in fact it was. The only flaw in my plan was that I didn't realize that they weigh about 700 pounds. Well, maybe only 30, but when you are upside down and reaching over your head to hold the starter while trying to unscrew the hidden wire, it feels like 700 pounds. Fortunately, there is a plug about 18 inches from the starter. When it finally fell to the floor, it unplugged itself, since I still hadn't been able to remove one of the wires. If you have starter or generator problems, take them to Tom Clark. Don't buy one of the cheap new ones, get the old one rebuilt. I delivered my starter to Tom at noon. He called at 3 the same day to tell me it was ready.

*Continued next page)*

The total price was \$66. I had it reinstalled before dinner that night, using the floor jack to support it. You can hear the difference in how well the starter is performing. Life is good.

Interestingly, about the time I started having starter troubles, the Vent and Lo positions on the Automatic Climate Control quit working, although I did see a coincidence at the time. The manual lists four possible causes, one of which is a malfunction in one of the ignition switch circuits. After having the starter rebuilt, the ACC works properly. Two plus two equals..... Don't you love happy coincidences?

While the starter was being rebuilt I moved the jack stands to the rear of the car and removed the right rear tire and wheel to look at the level control system. The last time I had added air to it, which was a frequent occurrence, I could hear hissing. The advantage to that is that I knew I would finally be able to find the leak. Sure enough it was easy to find and fix. I didn't drive the car for a couple of days, and it held pressure that entire time. I was encouraged. Then I went for a ride. By the time I got home the rear end was nearly on the ground. More hissing. There was another hole near the first one. It could not have been there when I started my drive. Once again the jack stands went under the car and the tire and wheel came off. Obviously, some part of the suspension was nicking the tubing, but I couldn't figure out how. I rerouted the line and

haven't had any more trouble.

Once I fixed the tubing I decided to try my hand at getting the automatic valve to function properly. Last year I repaired the compressor, but it didn't do me any good, since the valve was stuck shut. It came out easily, I took it apart, cleaned it up and it started working. I have reinstalled the compressor, but not connected the two together yet. I check the pressure in the storage tank every day to make sure it is holding pressure and that the compressor still works. Next month I'll report on that.

If any of you have interesting stories about working on your cars, I'm sure Dave Leger, the Editor of this award winning

publication, would like to include them in future issues. Please type them up and send them to him.



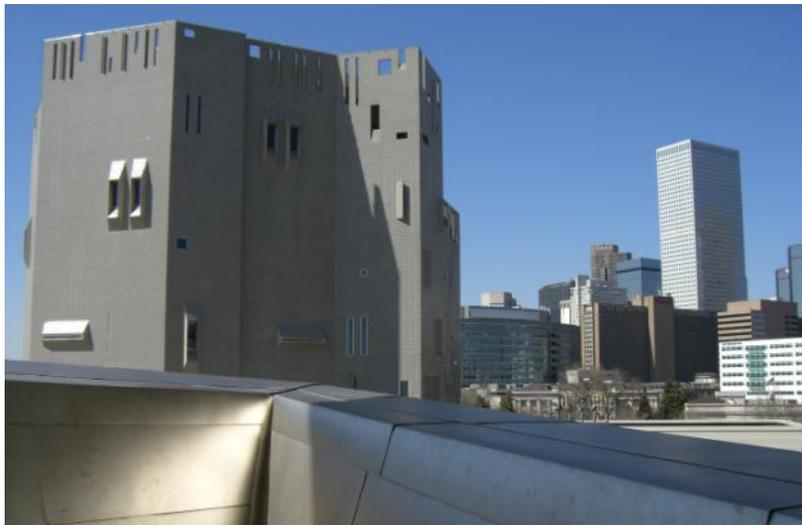
*(Continued from page 1)*

This permits him to look for other painting under the surface painting, and they can see how the artist may have changed the composition, by seeing the pencil sketches under the oil paint.

We also learned that there are only two colleges where you can get a degree in Art Restoration. Many apply but very few are accepted. The degree combines a lot of science and chemistry with art history. Those who graduated 30 years ago have to keep up with new developments, as many of the old ways of conserving and restoration are now considered to be wrong. One of the changes is that animal fats are no longer considered the wise thing to put on leather pelts and hides. They turn rancid. Not that long ago it was thought that mineral oil was a good way to soften and restore leather without the harm animal fats could cause. Now even mineral oil is suspect, although it does not have the problem with rancidity that animal fats have. Humidity is what conservators now recommend to revive leather, a long exposure to higher humidity. I suppose we could put a bucket of water on the floor of our cars when we put them in storage. If the windows and vents are kept closed, the humidity may help soften the leather seats.

From the comments I received and Mr. Patterson received, I believe the 20 members who attended the tour found it more interesting and informative than they had originally expected. I think we will find

the same response after the Washing Machine Museum Tour May 10th.



## Steamboat Driving Tour By John Cullinan

We are less than two months away from the start of our driving tour to Steamboat. We have 10 cars and 20 people signed up. Although the deadline has passed for reserving a room at the Nordic Lodge at a reduced rate, you can still call the Lodge at 800-364-0331 and get a room. You can also send an email to Izabela, the manager, at [Nordiclodge@springsips.com](mailto:Nordiclodge@springsips.com).

With snow this winter being 150% of normal, we should be seeing lots of green meadows and wild flowers as we travel the back road from Wolcott to Steamboat. If we arrive early enough we can attend the free concert at the Botanic Gardens on Thursday afternoon. On Thursday evening we will be joining the Steamboat locals on their annual summer cruise night from downtown to the ski area and back. Friday we will do some touring toward Clark and Steamboat Lake. Again, the wild flowers should be putting on a colorful show for us.

On Friday afternoon there will be time for shopping in Steamboat and that evening some of us will be going to the rodeo. Saturday morning there will be a farmers market on the courthouse lawn. Hiking and fishing may be on the agenda for some of us that afternoon, while others will be visiting the ski area and riding the gondola to the summit of Mt. Warner. We will have a group dinner on Saturday evening.

We have intentionally allowed a lot of free time for the tour attendees on Friday and Saturday, but I hope we can all come together and return as a group on Sunday. The drive back will take us over lesser traveled roads, over mountain passes, across wetland valleys, through narrow canyons and along mountain rivers toward Fort Collins. We will be traveling through Colorado moose country and North Park. A stop at the moose visitor center is planned. We might even see some moose. If we don't see any, we can look for interesting human life when we stop in Walden, one of the towns where old time ranchers still exist. From Walden we will drive east to Gould and 10,276 foot Cameron Pass. This is the dividing line between the Medicine Bow Mountains and the Never Summer Mountains. It also abounds in official wilderness areas: Rawah wilderness, Glendevey wilderness, Comanche Peak wilderness, Neota wilderness, and Cache La Poudre wilderness. We will also see evidence of the Pine Beetle damage on the western

side of Cameron Pass. On the eastern side of the pass we will start to enter the Poudre River Canyon where old time log cabin motels and lodges are found. Then we will come to highway 287 that will take us into Fort Collins and on to Denver.

I hope more of you can join us. Yes, gas is expensive this year. But this may be the last year we old car lovers will be able to drive without restriction. With the U.S. 70 toll road being considered, and new carbon foot print taxes being pondered, and with our officials considering insurance premiums and taxes that will be higher if you drive more than others or drive a car that uses more gas per mile than others, the days of free ranging and open driving may be behind us soon. So join us while we still can enjoy driving our cars. Call the Nordic Lodge at 800-364-0331 and get a room, or email Izabela, the manager, at [Nordiclodge@springsips.com](mailto:Nordiclodge@springsips.com).

*See page 10 for the registration form.*



## A Tale of IV V's By Michael Brittan

Rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic is a familiar refrain covering an exercise in futility. Revamping automobile rear decks, however, can perhaps reflect a more purposeful endeavor.

Within the General Motors family, major bodywork redesigns in a single model year are extremely rare. Yet, the 1949 Cadillac has the notable distinction of an intra-year redesign of the rear end of Series 61 and 62 sedans and the 62 convertible. The early '49 rear deck on these models was a carryover of the gently rounded '48 design. The mid-year redesign introduced a more squared-off deck lid. The corresponding Buicks and Oldsmobiles for 1949 appear also to have undergone this transformation.

It is difficult to reconstruct the exact thought processes of the Cadillac-Buick-Oldsmobile design teams which were charged with responsibility for the change. Motivation would certainly have been provided by the lack of trunk space in the early '49 convertibles, where the available volume was eaten away by the space allocated to the convertible top over the rear axle. This precluded a vertical spare position. As in the two-door "sedanette" coupe, the spare in the early '49 convertible trunk was laid flat on the trunk floor, leaving limited storage space for luggage and other paraphernalia. The change to a vertical mount for the spare necessitated a switch from a flat trunk floor

to one with a spare-wheel well.

A second consideration for Cadillac may have been an attempt to balance the front and rear design of the car, while simultaneously providing a link to pending Cadillac designs of the fifties. As noted in a previous article ('49 Times, Vol. 7, No. 4, Dec. 2007, page 3), the front of the hood was given a more vertical treatment in '49 compared with the '48 hood. It is conceivable that the designers considered that a squarer rear end would be more in keeping with the extra prominence afforded the front end, while serving as an introductory prelude to Cadillac deck lid designs of the fifties.

As noted in the earlier article, the overall '49 design embodied many transition elements which bridged '40's and '50's Cadillac styling. Apart from the more squared-off look, the wider '49 grille with bold bars and teeth, and integrated wraparound parking/fog lamps, heralded front-end brightwork of the fifties. Similarly, the completely new '49 dash format carried over well into the following decade.

To achieve the new rear-end design, the stylists cunningly reshaped the deck lid while leaving the trunk opening and its adjacent body panels intact. This avoided the necessity of generating different dies and stampings for these panels. The new bustle-back look lent a somewhat more forceful prominence to the rear end of the car, although the absence of redesign of the adjacent panels meant that the trunk design was perhaps

not quite as elegantly integrated as that of the sloping deck lids of the corresponding '48 and early '49 models.

It may be noted that the deck lids of the other '49 cars - the Sixty Special, the Seventy Five and the club coupe - all remained the same throughout the model year and were identical to the '48's. The Coupe de Ville appeared late enough in the '49 model year to have had the new rear deck treatment from the start - at least I am not aware of any factory Coupe de Villes with the early '49 deck lid. Not having to contend with stowing a convertible top, a Coupe de Ville with a vertically mounted spare could in principle have accommodated the earlier sloping deck lid.

A significant ramification of the altered deck lid design was that the new shape necessitated revision of the profile of the "V" to ensure a flush fit. Consequently, the early and later '49 rear deck "V's" are, strictly speaking, not interchangeable. They certainly have different part numbers. Through the valued input of Forty-Niner chapter president, Jay Friedman, we have in fact identified four different "V's" used on '49 deck lids. The relevant part numbers of the different rear "V's" are as follows:

V one: Part #3508186, used on all club coupes ("sedanettes") in both '48 and '49

*(Continued next page)*

V two: Part #3508187, used on all Series 61 and 62 4-door sedans and convertibles in '48 and early '49

V three: Part #3508494, used on all Series 61 and 62 4-door sedans and convertibles in late 1949, as well as on all '49 Coupe de Villes

V four: Part #3507586, used on all Series 75 limousines in both '48 and '49.

The absence of a fifth rear "V", and therefore a missed opportunity to contemplate an article entitled A Tale of V V's, is due only to the lack of regard for this newsletter by the Cadillac designers who omitted the "V" from the rear of the Sixty Special!

Excluding the Series 75 "V" which has a totally different shape, the question as to whether an incorrect "V" could be mounted on the wrong trunk lid, and, if so, whether the gaps would be unsightly, constitutes an intriguing piece of 1949 trivia for which I do not have the answer. Maybe some diehard '49 researcher would be willing to conduct the appropriate experiments with early and late '49 sedan/convertible "V's" and deck lids (with or without cars attached), and report findings in a future issue of this newsletter. If such an investigation were extended to include testing the adaptability of coupe "V's" to sedan/convertible/hardtop deck lids, the permutations and combinations could generate more than sufficient material for an accredited Ph.D. program.



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**Monthly Meeting:**

Regular business meetings of the Rocky Mountain Region Cadillac & LaSalle Club are held the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 7:30 pm. We meet at the TDS/J.W. Brewer Tire Co. 11900 W. 44<sup>th</sup> Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO. This is near the Ward Road and I-70 exit.

**The Dagmar:**

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**Deadline:**

Is the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Advertising:**

Display ads: \$15.00 per issue, \$125.00 per year prepaid for a business-card-size ad. Larger sizes available at a discount. Contact the Editor for more information.

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**Classified Ads:**

First three months free for Club Members (RMRCLC), after that normal rates apply. \$20.00 for three consecutive issues prepaid for nonmembers. Cadillac and LaSalle related ads only; there is a 50-word limit on each ad. Classified ads also appear on our web site at:

**Check out the RMRCLC Website at:**

[www.rmrclc.com](http://www.rmrclc.com)

and the national site at  
<http://www.cadillaclasalleclub.org>

**WASHING MACHINE  
MUSEUM TOUR**

SATURDAY, MAY 10TH

LUNCH AT THE EATON COUNTRY CLUB AFTER THE TOUR

Lee Maxwell, the proprietor is in the Guinness Book of Records for his collection

MEET AT RAMADA INN AT I-25 AND 120th AT 8:30 AM

Roughly 1100 washing machines on display - [www.oldewash.com](http://www.oldewash.com)

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————> **Memorial Day Parade with the Lady Marines on May 26th, meeting at the Albertson, southwest corner of Alameda and Broadway at 9 A.M.**

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## 1966 Cadillac Furniture

(see for sale listing next page)



### Steamboat Driving Tour Registration Form: \$20 Fee Per Car

Steamboat Springs Tour, June 19-22, 2008

\$20 per Car Participation Fee

Name of Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home and Cell Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_ home \_\_\_\_\_ cell

Year and Model of Car Being Driven: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Dinner on Saturday: I will attend \_\_\_ I will not attend \_\_\_ Total Number Attending \_\_\_

**Please clip, fill out, and return with check to RMRCLC for \$20 to:**

**Brent Hladky, 958 St. Paul St., Denver, CO 80206**

### ***Cars & Parts or Sale***

Just finished 1966 Cadillac furniture. Love seat (made from trunk area), Chair (made from front doors), Coffee table with glass top (made from trunk lid), End table with glass (made from Cadillac steering wheel, steering column, and hub cap). Black with tan upholstery, \$7.500. Contact Bill Bowser at 303-795-6460 or 303-475-9013. Next to be crafted: 1964 Cadillac desk, love seat, chair & coffee table. (May)

## **Official List Of RMRCLC Sponsored Functions**

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May 10th, Saturday Tour of Washing Machine Museum & lunch at Eaton Country Club

May 17th, Saturday, Abbey car show, Canon City

May 17. Saturday Shepler's car show, sponsored by Pontiac and Oldsmobile clubs.

May 24th, Saturday, Memorial Day parade, Denver, with the lady Marines

June 19th—22nd. The Great Circle Tour to White Sulphur Hot Springs, North Park, Cameron Pass, Poudre River Valley, Red Feather Lakes and back to Denver. See registration form p. 10

July 4th, Friday, Georgetown Parade and Cookout in Georgetown on July 4th .

August 12—16, 2008 Cadillac & LaSalle Club Grand National, Cherry Hill New Jersey. Join everyone for the 50th anniversary of the Cadillac & LaSalle Club—see <http://www.vfrclc.org/GN08.htm>

September 13, Saturday, Annual regional show, at McCaddon's Cadillac in Boulder

September 20, Saturday, Colfax Cruise

September 27th, Saturday: Arboreal Autumnal Splendor (aspen) Tour. Route to be determined.

November 8th, Saturday, Veteran's Day Parade with the lady Marines.

Other: Burger and taco runs will be organized on some weekends in May, June, July, August and September. More information to follow in subsequent issues of The Dagmar. We will hit some new places of interest this year on our burger and taco runs and include a visit to a historic or educational site as part of the runs.

## **Other Events**

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May 8,9,10 Hearse Con 2008 in Denver—see [www.hearseclub.com](http://www.hearseclub.com)

June 21, Saturday, Havana Cruise 303-399-4256 for details

September 20, Saturday, Annual Colfax Cruise

Rocky Mountain Region

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