

**Capitol Cadillac celebrates
85th anniversary**

**The Peach State Region chugs its
way through the Smoky Mountains**

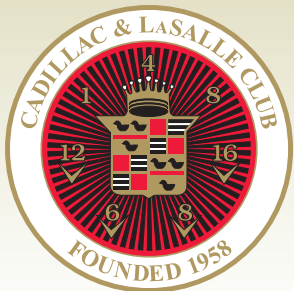


The Self-Starter

October 2019

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Volume 62, No. 10 » October 2019

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Fabulous fins were the order of the day at Capitol Cadillac this spring. A 1958 Eldorado Biarritz Convertible and a 1960 Coupe de Ville display Cadillac's design esthetic during the Eisenhower years. Photo by Josh Pinho/Potomac Region.



Capitol Cadillac

85th ANNIVERSARY

CELEBRATION

By Vince Taliano

IMAGES BY LYNN GARDNER, RANDY
EDISON, SANDY KEMPER, JACK MCLOW,
JOSH PINHO, AND MATT LAUR





On Sunday, May 19, the 27th Annual CLC Potomac Region Spring Car Show & Automobilia Auction was held at Capitol Cadillac in Greenbelt, Md. This year's show celebrated the 85th anniversary of the dealership.

Approximately 70 Cadillacs and LaSalle's, ranging from 1906 to 2017, were on display on this warm and sunny day. Exhibitors brought Cadillacs



ABOVE LEFT: The show field at Capitol Cadillac's 85th anniversary celebration had something for just about everyone.

LEFT: Cadillacs of the 1960s and 1970s are very popular in CLC circles. A lovely 1968 DeVille Convertible owned by Ron Renoff of Severna Park, Md., leads a row of drop tops and hardtops from this bygone era.



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: This 1949 Series 62 Convertible is owned by Randy and Susan Denchfield of Chevy Chase, Md. ¶ Dan Ruby's flashy 1958 Eldorado Biarritz Convertible steals the show wherever it goes. ¶ Juan, left, and Luis Aranda are all smiles. Juan is a charter member of the Potomac Region. ¶ David Alt of Finksburg, Md., brought several early cars to the show, including this 1906 Model K. Vince Taliano is having the time of his life! ¶ Over two decades of Cadillac evolution were on display, spanning 1941 to 1964.



and LaSalles from as far away as South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. National CLC luminaries in attendance included board of directors member Michael Cascio, Jack and Nancy Hotz, Mike and Vicky Barruzza, Valley Forge Region director Michael Stinson, CLC Discussion Forum moderator Dan LeBlanc, and Art Archambeault.

Fittingly, the showroom at Capitol Cadillac was reserved for cars sold new by the dealership, including Mike Carlin's 1937 LaSalle; Emerson Duke's 1941 Series 63 Sedan, which was driven over 500 miles to the show; Juan Aranda's 1947 Fleetwood; Daniel Jobe's 1967 Eldorado; and David Alt's 1906 and 1918 Cadillacs, along with his 1909

Brush. Alanson Partridge Brush, the creator of the Brush car, helped design the original one-cylinder Cadillac engine.

The playing of the national anthem by disc jockey Mike Veilleux at 10 a.m. signaled the beginning of the show. DJ Mike kept the attendees informed through the day with announcements, and entertained with his mix of music. Sandy Kemper was master of ceremonies for the event. Attendees enjoyed a cake presented to Daniel Jobe that was decorated with the likenesses of the three presidents of Capitol Cadillac. Our shows wouldn't be successful without the support of Daniel and Capitol Cadillac. To show our appreciation, the Potomac Region presented Mr. Jobe with a large

painting by automotive artist Dan Reed depicting the 1946 Series 62 Convertible that he drove in the *Hemmings Motor News* Great Race in 2014.

As with past shows, approximately two-thirds of the owners submitted ballots with their peer judging selections. The judges also did a great job, and a lot of great cars won awards.

Best of Show—Overall honors was awarded to Randy Edison of Annandale, Va., for his 1954 Series 62 Convertible. It was a well-deserved recognition for Randy's car that was restored by Penn-Dutch Restoration Services in Pennsylvania. As was the case with the previous shows, the Best Post-War category was divided into an early



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period of 1946–1964 and a late period of 1965–present.

1964 seems to be the natural cutoff point for the early period, as it represents the last year of the iconic Cadillac fins (except for the 1965 Series 75 Fleetwood). The winners of the Best Post-War (Early) were Randy and Susan Denchfield of Chevy Chase, Md. for “The Contessa,” their 1949 Series 62 Convertible. Best Post-War (Late) was won by Jim Hartnett of Kensington, Md., for his 1992 Brougham. The car has been a consistent class winner over the years, but this was its first award as Best of Show. The Dealer’s Choice Award naturally went to one of the cars sold new by Capitol

Cadillac. Mike Carlin’s 1937 LaSalle, the oldest car on hand that was sold by the dealership, won the prestigious award.

An event of this scale relies on a lot of dedicated individuals. Special thanks to Daniel Jobe and his staff at Capitol Cadillac and to the Potomac Region volunteers for all of their hard work that made the show a success. Special appreciation goes to the donors of items for the automobilia auction. The live auction, led by auctioneer Dan Ruby, netted over \$900 for the Region, and Scot Minesinger’s sales of 50/50 tickets brought in another \$200. Honey Bun Cake Factory of Washington, D.C., was on hand for the second year,

offering its great rum cakes along with coffee for early-bird attendees. Red, Hot & Blue Barbeque served its delicious food for lunch.

At the end of the show, everyone was invited to attend the Fall Cars & Coffee at Capitol Cadillac, scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 28. Once again, congratulations to Daniel Jobe and Capitol Cadillac for 85 years of sales and service! ■

Vince Taliano of North Potomac, Md., the 2017 Henry M. Leland Award winner, served many years as director of the Potomac Region and continues to serve as its newsletter editor and webmaster.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Nancy Hotz, left, and Vicky Barruzza of the Valley Forge Region visit during the Capitol Cadillac celebration. ¶ Like other cars sold new at the dealership, this 1979 Fleetwood Brougham earned an honored spot on the showroom floor for the duration of the event. ¶ Understated elegance was exemplified by Steve Newby’s 1940 Cadillac Fleetwood Series 60 Special.





*Happy 85th
anniversary,*

AN ARTIST'S RENDERING of Capitol Cadillac when it was at 1222 22nd St., NW, in Washington, D.C. The cars range from

1934 to the late 1960s in this imaginative vision of one of America's most storied automobile dealerships.

Capitol Cadillac

By Richard Sills and Vince Taliano

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS EXCEPT AS NOTED

On April 15, 1934, *The Washington Post* reported, "Akers to Open Cadillac Agency." Floyd DeSoto Akers took over the representation of Cadillac and LaSalle automobiles under the name of Capitol Cadillac Co. Mr. Akers, a World War I veteran, was a native of Wabash County, Ind. But the *Post* reported that he is "no stranger to Washington," having been Cadillac zone manager there for three years before he left in 1928 to assume direction of the Boston zone.

A sales and service building at 1222 22nd St., NW, in Washington, D.C., containing over 40,000 square feet of space in a four-story building, became the headquarters of the new dealership. It provided space for offices; the service department; parts department; and a shop, paint and trim department.

In addition, the building provided a large display room to showcase more than a dozen new Cadillacs and LaSalles, and a "dead storage department so that owners who desire, on leaving the city for an extended time, arrange to leave their cars in the care of the company." In the shop, the new

Akers to Open Cadillac Agency

New Company Takes Sales and Service Building on Twenty-second Street.

Under the name of Capitol Cadillac Co. Floyd D. Akers has taken the representation for Washington and vicinity for the Cadillac and La Salle line of automobiles.

A sales and service building at 1222 Twenty-second street, containing over 40,000 square feet of space in a four-story building will be the headquarters of the new company. On the first floor of the building will be a display room, with driveways on each side. Immediately back of the sales room will be a receiving department for incoming work for the service department. On this same floor will also be located the parts department.

The second floor in addition to general offices and salesmen's offices will also have a large display room where it will be possible to show at one time a dozen or more models of the Cadillac and La Salle line. This floor will likewise contain a dead storage department so that owners who desire, on leaving the city for an extended time, arrange to leave their cars in the care of the company.

The two upper floors will house the shop, paint and trim department. In the shop all of the newest labor saving equipment, designed especially for service work on these cars have been installed.

Mr. Akers is no stranger to Washington, having been Cadillac zone manager here for three years. He left here in 1928 to assume direction of the Boston zone of the same company, which position he resigned to take the representation in the city. Associated with Mr. Akers are a number of former Cadillac employees, some of whom have been connected with the sale and servicing this type of car for more than fifteen years and many for ten or more years.

THE WASHINGTON POST



JOHN WILLIAMS

CAPITOL CADILLAC'S showroom in the late 1940s.

dealership installed "all of the newest labor-saving equipment, designed especially for service work on these cars."

Capitol Cadillac added the Oldsmobile franchise in 1947 and was then known as Capitol Cadillac-Oldsmobile. Adding the Oldsmobile marque gave the dealership access to a new category of buyers. Some of them ended up as Cadillac customers.

In his book, "Right from the Beginning," Washington, D.C., native and political commentator Patrick J. Buchanan related the story of his father's visit to Capitol Cadillac-Oldsmobile in 1947, when the author was nine years old. Mr. Buchanan's father, a successful accountant, had gotten through the war years driving an "old red Dodge." When peacetime came, he was ready to buy a new Oldsmobile to carry his large family through the hills of Western Pennsylvania to visit the grandparents in Charleroi, Pa. Mr. Buchanan recalls:

"When he went to Capitol Cadillac-Oldsmobile, a client and friend, the manager, Ken Moore, counseled my father not to buy the six-cylinder Olds, but the new eight-cylinder job; with all his luggage and kids, Pop would need the extra power. How much, Pop asked, for the eight-cylinder Olds? Twenty-four hundred, came the reply. And how much is that Cadillac over there? Twenty-eight hundred.

The new, blue, four-door Cadillac sedan my father wheeled home that night was the sensation of the neighborhood. No one else on Chestnut Street had ever owned one. One neighbor came up to the door to ask, 'Say, Bill, isn't that a Cadillac?' We had arrived. Even though we had a garage off Chestnut Street, every night we left that magnificent machine in front of the house. With its mighty V-eight engine and hydromatic (sic) drive, the Cadillac was the sleekest, fastest, most powerful car on the road. When we roared up the Pennsylvania Turnpike to Charleroi,

THE BEGINNING of a legend. *The Washington Post* announces the opening of Capitol Cadillac in its April 15, 1934, edition.

even with five or six kids in the car, we swept past trucks, cars, everything on the road—with us looking out the window, waving at the poor folks my father sped past at eighty miles per hour.”

In the General Motors’ hierarchy of sales outlets, Capitol was considered a distributor, which was higher up on the organization than a typical dealer. As such, it opened two suburban dealerships, Akers Oldsmobile-Cadillac in Alexandria, Va.; and Suburban Cadillac-Oldsmobile in Bethesda, Md. Both of these stores were later sold. The Virginia dealership is now Lindsay Cadillac, while the Maryland dealership is Coleman Cadillac.

In the March 1958 issue of *Popular Science* magazine, an article describes how Capitol Cadillac serviced and repaired the White House Cadillacs used to transport President Eisenhower, the first lady, and other dignitaries. In the article titled, “The World’s Most Pampered Vehicles,” author William McGaffin described the following:



ABOVE LEFT: Floyd Akers, founder of Capitol Cadillac. Mr. Akers was succeeded by his son-in-law, Howard Jobe, as president of Capitol Cadillac.

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"Included in the collection are two Secret Service Cadillacs with very special numbers, and the President's Cadillac, a black 1955 Series 75 limousine model with white sidewall tubeless tires. (The tires, standard heavy-duty models, are changed every 10,000 to 12,000 miles as a safety measure). The top has been replaced to take a sliding roof panel (giving the President plenty of room to stand up while riding in parades). It has blue upholstery and is air-conditioned. The Cadillacs are taken to Capitol Cadillac Co., at 1222 22nd St., NW, where Floyd Akers, the company president, supervises repairs."

Floyd Akers remained at the helm until he retired in 1970. Aside from his automotive career, he was a civic leader, serving as chairman of the D.C. Armory Board and as a trustee of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He was also a part owner of the Washington Senators baseball team.

In addition to his other contributions to Washington, Mr. Akers had a significant role in launching a well-known local success story—the Blackie's chain of restaurants. Ulysses George Auger, known as "Blackie," was a Pennsylvania native and a second-generation Greek-American.



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CAPITOL CADILLAC took good care of the White House motor pool during the Eisenhower Administration. Here, from left, Maj. Gen. William J. Abendroth and President Dwight D. Eisenhower confer with Floyd Akers of Capitol Cadillac.

According to Mr. Auger's obituary in *The Washington Post* in 2004, he served in the military during World War II, and, shortly thereafter, he came to Washington. He and his wife, Lulu, started a café at 22nd and M Streets, NW.

In her book, "Lulu: One Woman's Journey from Poverty and the Occult to Enduring Faith and True Riches," Lulu

describes how Floyd Akers helped them along the way:

"About six months later, in September 1949, we lost the lease on our café. We had been working day and night for three years, yet it seemed we could lose it all with just one registered letter



FROM "LULU: ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY FROM POVERTY AND THE OCCULT TO ENDURING FAITH AND TRUE RICHES"

FLOYD AKERS' GENEROSITY saved the Minute Grille from certain closure in 1949. The restaurant's owners, Ulysses George Auger and Lulu Auger, never forgot that

kind gesture. As their business ventures grew more successful, the Augers made it a point to buy two new Cadillacs each year from Mr. Akers.



DANIEL JOBE proudly shows off the painting of his 1946 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible given to him by the Potomac Region.

announcing that our property was up for sale.

Although we were dejected, I remained hopeful that God would provide an opening for us to continue our business. And He did, through Mr. Floyd D. Akers of the nearby Capitol Cadillac Co., who would often come into our café. He endorsed a note for \$10,000 at the bank, and we were able to lease a bigger premises across the street. We called it the Minute Grille, with the extra “e” in Grille for effect.”

The Minute Grille catered mostly to auto mechanics working at the nearby Capitol Cadillac dealership. The restaurant eventually became Blackie’s House of Beef in 1953, when it began offering roast beef and prime rib to a full house of customers. Ultimately, the Augers owned a chain of restaurants, as well as hotels, banks, real estate, and other investments. Mr. Auger, always one to remember his friends, customarily bought two new Cadillacs every year from Mr. Akers.

Floyd Akers’ successor in 1970 as president of the company was his son-in-law, Howard L. Jobe. Mr. Jobe was a native of New York City, but had lived in the Washington area since 1941. He served in the Navy during World War II and was a graduate of Georgetown



CAPITOL CADILLAC’S current building, seen from the air in 2014.

University. During the 1950s, he worked in the automotive classified advertising department of *The Washington Post*. In the late 1950s, he became a manager at Capitol Cadillac-Oldsmobile. For a short time, he also worked for an affiliated company, Capitol Parisian Motors, which responded to the increasing demand for imports by offering French-made cars for sale.

During the 1970s, the Cadillac Division of General Motors encouraged its metropolitan dealers to leave the cities and establish themselves in the growing suburbs, where space was available to expand sales and service facilities. As a result, Howard Jobe successfully planned and executed Capitol’s move to Greenbelt, Md., in 1979. Alas, his father-in-law, Floyd Akers, did not live to see the dealership’s departure from Washington; he died in 1978 at the age of 83. Mr. Jobe continued his tenure at the helm of Capitol Cadillac-Oldsmobile until his death in 1990.

Since 1990, the dealership has been headed by Howard Jobe’s son (and Floyd Akers’ grandson), Daniel Jobe. In addition to serving as president of the dealership, Daniel is a CLC member and an antique car enthusiast, with a fine collection of vintage Cadillacs. In 2014, he completed the *Hemmings Motor News’*

Great Race in a 1946 Cadillac convertible, and his dealership sponsors an Annual Spring Car Show and Automobilia Auction and a Fall Cars & Coffee for the CLC’s Potomac Region.

And so, the Standard of the World retains a vital and robust presence in the Washington, D.C., area. ■

Richard Sills of Lancaster, Pa., is a past president of the Cadillac & LaSalle Club. Vince Taliano of North Potomac, Md., the 2017 Henry M. Leland Award winner, served many years as director of the Potomac Region and continues to serve as its newsletter editor and webmaster.



TIME TO CUT THE CAKE, break out the punch, and make a toast to 85 glorious years at Capitol Cadillac!