#### The

## Pious Pelican

#### October 2020



### Northern California Packards

PAC's First Region Founded in 1960 www.NorCalPackards.org



A Region of The Packard Club, Packard Automobile Classics, Inc.

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Any changes, additions or corrections to the Pious Pelican should be directed to Clint Moore at batbuick@yahoo.com.

# The Pious Pelican September—October, 2020 Volume 59, No. 5 Director's Report

Bill Young has recently sent out our annual renewal forms along with a ballot for our 2021 Board of Directors. The Board sincerely appreciates your membership in our Club. The renewal fee is fixed at \$25 which pays for the publication and mailing of our *Pious Pelican*.

We have had to cancel almost every event this year because of the COVID 19 epidemic. This included our hosting of the 2020 National Meet, our annual holiday party and our swap meet. We did enjoy our annual Day-At-the -Movies on January 12 in Niles. Christopher Slater put on this event for our enjoyment.

In this edition of the Pious Pelican, you will see that we are planning to sponsor a driving tour on November 8, 2020 to Eastern Contra Costa. Watch for the official flyer on this event and/or read about the tour on the next page.

We are looking for your ideas on tours. If you can propose and/or lead a tour, let Clint (or me) know.

Your Board has remained active throughout the year. We have been conducting our meetings via conference call. If you are interested in what is going on, consult the *Pious Pelican*. Clint Moore, managing editor, states he has one more issue coming out this year after this edition (for a total of six this year). If you have an idea for an article, let Clint know.

The Board has committed to holding a celebration luncheon just as soon as it is safe and sane to do so. We certainly hope it is sooner-than-later.

Meanwhile, if you can, join us on November 8 for a driving tour. Let's stay in touch through the *Pious Pelican*, e-mail and with personal friendships.

Happy Motoring!

Steve Weir



#### Upcoming Event! East Bay Drive Tour Sunday, November 8

Join us Sunday, November 8 for our first and only driving tour of 2020. Due to COVID restrictions, attendance will be limited to 30 people and RSVP is required.

We will start the day at 10am at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek where participants can tour the renown displays of succulents and rare plants if they feel safe to do so. There's always something in bloom, so it should prove to be a beautiful way to start the day! If you do not plan to tour the gardens, you can plan to arrive closer to 11:30am when we will be departing for the driving portion of the day.

Next, we will finally give our Packards some much needed exercise. The 27 mile route takes us for a scenic drive on the country roads around Mt. Diablo and through historic Brentwood to our destination of Hannah-Nicole Vineyards.

The winery will have socially distant tables reserved for our group, and individual lunches will be prepared by Brentwood favorite Sticky Chicken & Ribs.

Per the COVID guidelines published in the June issue of the *Pious Pelican*, the organizers will strive to make this a "touchless" event with no physical interaction between organizers and participants. MASKS MUST BE PROPERLY WARN COVERING YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH AT ALL TIMES WHEN OUTSIDE YOUR VEHICLE, and everyone is encouraged to remain at least 6 feet apart. Participants are encouraged to only ride in vehicles with members of their own household. If you are not feeling well the day of the event, stay home.

Attendance is limited to the first 30 people who RSVP. Weather permitting, participants are encouraged to bring their Packards.

Specific details will be provided to participants prior to the event.

#### Event-at-a-Glance

When: Sunday, November 8 at 10am, departing for Brentwood at 11:30
Where: Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Rd., Walnut Creek.
(Ygnacio Valley Rd. exit from 680)

**Cost:** \$20 per person includes tour and lunch. Garden entry is on your own.

RSVP Required: Clint Moore, 408-426-0741 or batbuick@yahoo.com

Ask the man who owns one!



November 8 East Bay Drive Tour—see article on

page 2.

January 11 Board Meeting—Phone conference (contact Steve Weir for more info)

For a complete list of events, please visit our website at www.norcalpackards.org/calendar.php

Correction: On page 12 of the last issue of the *Pious Pelican*, the gentleman on the right posing with Old No. 1 should have been identified as Warren Packard III, grandson of William Doud Packard. Many apologies!



### **Member Spotlight**My Search for a Woodie Wagon

Text and Photo by Bruce Cumming



Bruce Cumming's 1940 110 Wagon poses at the Flying A!

Ever since I was a kid growing up in Southern California, I have always loved cars. Yes, I was the kid who knew the make of every car on the block plus all the cars on Colorado Blvd. and surrounding streets. I could spot a Ford or a Mercury or a Buick or a Nash or a Pontiac. Who couldn't at three years old when autos, unlike today, all looked pleasingly different? But one style I was really fond of was the wooden station wagon. I was always fascinated by the old world construction, the simplicity, the color, the shape and grain of the wooden bodies. Even at a young age I thought wood cars were a work of art. At age 13 my brother and I spotted a 1940 Ford surfer wagon during a family vacation on Balboa Island. I said that's a car for me.

Never forgetting the wooden cars, my desire was rekindled about 20 years ago when my wife Rhonda and I started attending Woodies on the Wharf, my favorite car show, on the Santa Cruz pier. So I started looking for a Woodie, first casually and then seriously about 10 years ago. I looked at Fords and Mercurys but most were pricy and maybe overpriced. But in addition to the Fords, I saw an occasional Packard that I liked but figured I could never afford one. As fate would have it, I spotted a Hemmings ad touting a 1940 Packard 110 wagon for sale in Colorado. I didn't call right away and the following month the ad was gone. Nonetheless I called to see if the car was still for sale. The seller said that it was indeed still for sale so I asked my friend and Packard expert Tim Toland, who was visiting family in Denver, if he could take a trip down to Pueblo to check out the car. Tim said he would go anywhere to check out a Packard! So Tim and wife Kathie drove to Pueblo, checked out the car, and (after getting it running) reported that the Packard was in fine shape but the car was a poor runner as it had been

sitting in a garage for at least four years. Several weeks later Rhonda and I motored east to Colorado, drove the Packard and bought it on the spot. Later, we had the wagon shipped to San Carlos by Intercity Lines.

This Packard has an interesting history because it really <u>was</u> a barn-find. Just not for me. The story goes something like this. In 1974 a Mr. John Engelbrecht of Pueblo heard that there was an old car resting in a barn on a ranch somewhere near Westcliff, Colorado, high in the Rocky Mountains. He and his wife Lorraine drove up to look for the car and discovered it was a 1940 Packard station wagon, a rare automobile even in 1974. Mr. Engelbrecht learned that the car had been parked in the barn for 19 years, having last been driven in 1955.

Upon finding the car, a deal was struck with the seller and the 45,000 original mile Packard was hauled back to Pueblo for a complete restoration, mostly performed by Mr. Englebrecht himself. Once the car was completed in 1978 it did not sit idly. The Engelbrecht's drove the Packard throughout the United States putting on another 28,000 miles as members of the Veteran Motor Car Club of America. In 2010, no longer able to drive, Mr. Engelbrecht parked the old Packard in his garage and there it sat rarely driven by the family for the next five years. Sadly, John Engelbrecht passed away in 2013 at age 93. Daughter Sandy then began to sell off her Dad's five cars including the Packard wagon.

For those unfamiliar, the 1940 Packard 110 wagon is quite rare, one of only 243 built. I've only been able to find about seven left in the U.S. This Packard was first sold in Chicago at Northwest Motors on May 25, 1940. How it ended up in Colorado no one seems to know. It is powered by a 100 h.p. 245 cu. inch flathead six. The car weighs in at 3470 lbs. and has a wheelbase of 122 inches. The current mileage sits at 74,709. The chassis was of course built in Detroit by Packard then shipped to Hercules Body in Evansville, Indiana where the wooden body was handcrafted and attached to the chassis. In 1940 this car would have sold for \$1195.

Once I acquired the Packard, Nor Cal members Tim Toland and John Higgins, as well as my good friend Tim Repp and I worked almost daily for several months to get it running just right. We touched the carburetor, fuel pump and distributor, rebuilt the linkage and boiled out the gas tank. Installed new tires, worked on the brakes and spruced up the upholstery. The car now runs great! Although the motor was rebuilt over 40 years ago, it runs whisper quiet. The transmission and overdrive shift smoothly. The steering operates as if it was powered and the suspension is solid yet smooth. In short the Packard drives much like a modern car. While there is always more work to be done, I am very pleased with the results of our efforts. I was very proud when the Packard was shown for the first time at Woodies on the Wharf in Santa Cruz on June 25, 2016.

And I absolutely could not have done it without the help of guys like Tim, Tim, and John. This is a testament to the camaraderie of the Packard Club, the encouragement of many other club members and the friendship, spirit and unselfish efforts of a bunch of talented, hardworking retired guys.

### Where We've Been Ironstone Corona Concours Tour

Text by Clint Moore, Photos by Christopher Slater



Everyone was a winner at Irontsone this year as all participants in the event received a special ribbon. COVID restrictions, there could be no car show, so instead Chris Bock and his team put on a drive tour and lunch. The weather could not have been more pleasant as cars toured the rolling countryside on either a 60 or 85 mile route. We opted for the longer drive, which took us through the gold rush towns of Columbia, Jamestown and Knights Ferry before returning to Murphys. Once back at the winery, all cars drove across the amphitheater stage to receive their honorary ribbon before being directed to the lawn to enjoy the box lunches provided. Approximately 100 cars made the trip. and Nor Cal participants included Bob

and Karen Reed, Jeff Mihaly, Christopher Slater, Clint and Vickie Moore, and Warren Martin. Also in attendance were Jay and Tina Hubbard from Silver Circle Packards (in a Pierce Arrow, of all things!).



Jeff Mihaly's 1937 1500 Super Eight Sedan along one of the beautiful country roads of the Gold Country..



Above: Bob and Karen Reed braved the longer 85 mile route at the Ironstone Corona Concours Tour in their 1937 1501 Super Eight Sedan.

Below: Jeff Mihaly smiles from behind his mask while Vickie Moore enjoys her box lunch near the Moore family 1946 Custom Super Clipper limousine.



### **Out and About**Members on the go!

In the absence of formalized events, some members have been taking drives on their own or attending to needed repairs. Send us your photos if you're "out and about!"



Michael Solomon submitted this photo of his 1938 1600 Sedan which he drives from Placerville to his mom's house in Fair Oaks, about 25 miles away. He tells us, "The family is keeping her quarantined so every other week I go down to the valley with groceries and do the yard work. It's a win win. I get to drive the Packard and she gets to stay safe!"

Ed Soss writes about the Goddess of Speed on his 1936 120, "After using plumbing tape (carb to gas line) and black tape (hood) I found a way to put the old girl to work."



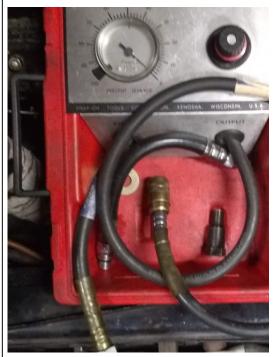
Two Packards were among the dozen classics in a CCCA display at Blackhawk Plaza on October 3. Clint Moore's 1932 903 Convertible Sedan and the Fornbacher's 1941 110 Club Coupe. (Photo: Clint Moore)



Former (and hopefully returning!) members John and Angelina Fornbacher pose in period garb with their 1941 110 Club Coupe. (Photo: Christopher Slater)

### **Technical Update**Cylinder Leak Down Testing

Submitted by Jeff Mihaly



The Snap On MT324 Cylinder Leak Detector

I've always thought that the basic compression test was the gold standard of diagnostics when determining the health of the internals (valves, rings, bore) of an internal combustion engine. There's now a new gold standard—a cylinder leak down tester.

I've been working on a 1930 Packard 740 which came to me running poorly, though drivable (sometimes). The engine has a random inconsistent misfire that you could clearly hear at the tailpipe. Usually, such problems are ignition related with common culprits being old spark plug wires, a failing coil, sloppy distributer shaft, points or bad spark plugs. spent considerable time going over the ignition and determined through a variety of

tests, that the ignition system was not at fault here.

In the process of checking the ignition, I had a helper come by who listened at the tail pipe as I pulled/grounded the spark plug wires cylinder by cylinder. Usually, a test like this will quickly isolate the problem cylinder or cylinders since you're removing the spark from that cylinder. One would expect that with the spark gone, the engine will run worse than with the spark in tact so if there is no change in how the engine runs after disabling the spark to a particular cylinder, that cylinder is now suspect. The odd result was that disabling the spark of individual cylinders had almost no impact on the sound of the engine at the exhaust pipe. It had an irregular exhaust sound with or without spark plug wires attached.

I decided to do a compression test next, which perhaps should have done earlier. I've always thought that an even test is a good test, within reason. 30 lbs. evenly across an engine is certainly not good but around 70 would be. Indeed, I had an even test, from 65 lbs. on the best cylinder to 57 lbs. on the lowest. Though generally lower than optimal, I didn't think this to

be a problem, so I took a break and thought about it for a week.

Over the week, a few ideas came to mind:

- Bad head gasket? No, I'd have really low compression in 1 or more cylinders.
- Weak valve springs? Maybe, but hard to test without major disassembly.
- 3. Flat cam lobes? Possibly, so I measured individual valve lift with a dial indicator. Two of the 16 were .010 flat, but not enough to cause the problem.

I next looked for an intake manifold leak or a vacuum leak, without finding one. I couldn't understand why the poor running of this engine could not be traced to one or two or three non-contributing cylinders. So I went forward with more diagnostics. A friend suggested that maybe I had sticky valves which would close during cranking, giving me a good compression test but closed too slowly when running and that resulted in leaky valves and poor operation. I removed the valve cover and exercised each valve with a prybar against the valve retainer and all valves opened without excessive resistance. I was able to move the valve stems side to side with the valves open which suggests bad guides but while the bad guides are a problem, they were not causing the problem after which I was chasing.

Stumped! I talked to really smart people and tried to figure out why an engine with even compression, good consistent spark, and no discoverable intake manifold or carburetor problems ran so poorly. One consultant mentioned a leak down tester, a tool I had never used before. I was skeptical that this tester would show anything different than my compression test and to my surprise, it certainly did.

It works by putting a metered amount of compressed air into the cylinders (one at a time) and measures how much of that compressed air is leaking out. It does this by measuring how much additional air it needs to supply to that cylinder to maintain a factory pre-set desired pressure. The only difficulty in using this tool is that you first must bring the piston in the cylinder to be tested up to top dead center (TDC). You can achieve this by watching the valves on the paired cylinder. Cylinders 1-8 are paired, as are 2-7, 3-6, and 4-5. If you want to test #7, watch the valves on #2. With a socket on the crankshaft pulley and a breaker bar, turn the engine and watch the exhaust valve on #2. It will be open as the piston rises in the bore and close when the piston reaches the top. As soon as it closes, stop turning the engine. With #2 at the top of its bore, #7 is on TDC compression. You can verify this on some engines by looking down the spark plug hole, and on a 1930 Packard 740 with 7/8" spark plugs, this is quite easy to do because you can look in and see the top of the piston even with the top of the bore. Now you're ready for the test.

With piston #7 at TDC compression (meaning that both valves are closed and the piston is at the top of the bore), you have the smallest volume

space in the cylinder and the easiest to test with the leak down tester. I screwed in a 7/8" spark plug adaptor with a hose on it into the spark plug hole. I hooked up compressed air to the meter and adjusted the dial to zero. Next, I plugged the hose that's in the spark plug hole into the meter and watched the leak down gauge. My results were very interesting.

For each cylinder tested, you get a percentage of leak down by the gauge. The worst on the 740 was #8 which had 82% leak down and because I had the manifolds off, I could dig down further as to exactly where the leak was occurring. With the meter still hooked up, I could put my fingers in the intake and exhaust ports to see if any air was getting past the valves. With #8, I could feel cold air bleeding past the intake valve into the intake port. VERY unexpected. Before this test, I was suspicious that the rings were allowing some compression to pass by, and I figured that the exhaust valves may be leaky since they get so hot during operation, but NOT the intake.

In discussion with a friend about these results, we realized that leaky intake valves put exhaust and fire into the intake ports and intake manifold which causes havoc with the mixture. Some of the mixture gets burned inside the intake manifold and what gets delivered to the waiting cylinders is a partially burnt mixture.

I continued to rotate the engine so as to bring each piston to TDC compression and check the leak down. In the end, these were my results:

- 1. 24% leak, slight intake valve leak
- 2. 56% leak, moderate intake valve leak
- 3. 64% leak, no valve leak detected
- 4. 75% leak, significant exhaust valve leak
- 5. 70% leak, significant exhaust valve leak
- 6. 36% leak, no valve leak detected
- 7. 40% leak, no valve leak detected
- 8. 82% leak, moderate intake valve leak

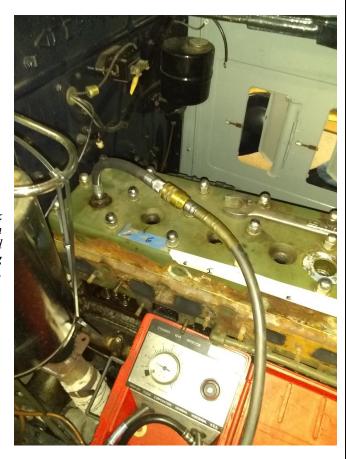
Some further analysis: on the chart above showing the leak down, when there is no valve leaking I assume that it's all going past the rings. With #3, where I had no valve leak and a 64% leak down, I assume that the rings/bore are quite worn. For #6 which also showed no valve leak but a 40% leak down, the leak must also be going by the rings. The interesting cylinder is #1 which has the smallest leak down at 24% but some of that leak is out the intake valve. If the intake valve leak were zero on this cylinder, I wonder what the overall leak down on this cylinder would be. I'm looking forward to the follow up test!

The reason why the leak down tester is my favorite new diagnostic tool is because it revealed the very worn condition of this engine even though a standard compression test showed 57-65 lbs. across all cylinders which seemed to be acceptable. In reality, the engine was quite worn and the intake valve leaks are particularly troublesome as noted above. I reluctantly returned the borrowed meter to my friend.

The next move was to remove the cylinder head and oil pan. Then, after first measuring rod bearing clearance with plastigauge, I withdrew the piston-connecting rod assemblies from the engine. After removing the fasteners which attach the cylinder block to the crankcase, I lifted the cylinder block out, put it in the back of my truck and delivered it to the machinist. When I get it back and reinstalled, I'll do a follow-up article to this comparing the leak down of the engine before and after the visit to the machine shop.

To eBay I went and found the Snap On MT324 Cylinder Leak Detector and purchased it. Prices range between \$50-100 for the units (used condition and claiming to work well.) It arrived yesterday and I can't wait to use it. My instinct is that somewhere between a 20-30% leak down may be acceptable on an old Packard engine that's in relatively good shape. I'm going to do a test on the engines in my '37s and give an update to the club about my findings there. Those engines run very well and I assume will have a small leak down measurement.

I hope this helps you to diagnose some troubling engine problems and keep your Packard on the road!



Cylinder Leak Detector with hose connected to #8 spark plug hole.

### **NorCal Club Business**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2020

Submitted by Milton Wheeler, Secretary

Members Present: Steve Weir, Jeff Mihaly, Milton Wheeler, Bill Young, Phil Sherman, Bob McCoy, Clint Moore,

Dave Wooldridge, Chris Slater, George Beck, Tom Beidleman, Michael Solomon, Ladd Stephenson, Orin Kerr.

Treasurer: After discussion, our new treasurer will be Ladd Stevenson and Kelly Monaghan will be his assistant. Ladd Stevenson will report to the board.

Voted: Our yearly club fee will stay a \$25.00. This covers the cost of the Pious Pelican.

Membership: Bill Young reported that we are out of stock with our Calendars, and he has the 2021 Ballots for the club board members, to be sent out this week, for all members to vote on.

Health & Welfare: Phil Sherman said he is ordering special Packard Cards for him to send out. He said he will pay for them himself.

Projects: There was a discussion of ordering more Proving Grounds hats in popular colors. The board voted to let Christopher decide how to proceed.

Technical: Phil Sherman is going to write an article for the Pious Pelican on putting a new Oil Pump in the Packard V-8 engines to help quiet the valve lifters.

Tours: Because of the virus, we have had no tours. But there was an Ironstone tour, that several Packards went on. Clint will be working on a Driving Tour for next year.

Website: It is working well.

Pious Pelican: Clint is working on the current Pious Pelican.

Historian: VOTED – To accept Don Figone's collection of Packard literature and make it available to our members. Ladd Stephenson will donate a File Cabinet to store the collection.

Publicity: Going well.

Audit Report: George Beck is working on it.

Proving Grounds: Voted to donate \$500 to the Proving Grounds. But that has been changed to donate, the money, to a specific project.

Adjournment: 5:40 pm

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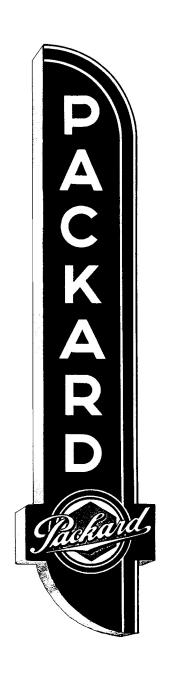
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