

Larry Butcher Continues His Lincoln Continental Rebuild Narrative

By Larry Butcher, Chesapeake Region

--Part Two--

Under the hood was a whole other story, the V12 was removed years ago as most were in these early Continentals and Zephyrs. Many were replaced with overhead valve Cadillac, Olds or Buick motors, but the easiest was later Ford or Mercury flatheads. These engines would bolt right up to the transmissions, but another front cross member from the donor car would need to be installed, just as in this car. I had seen enough, after closing the hood and returning to the office, I told him I would like to come back to see it in the daylight. He agreed, but he could not hold it if he had a sale. I think I may have given him \$50 deposit and left. I went through the LCOC directory and called a few people for some advice, I really didn't know what I was getting into. A real nice guy named Verly Fox said he would come down from the Woodlawn area the next Saturday to take a look at it with me in daylight. I had learned something even before this, never buy a car at night and especially a cold wet night! Early the next Saturday, Verly and his wife showed up in a 1965 Corvette.

This was the first time I met Verly or his wife and thought this was quite nice of them. It turned out that Verly had owned a 1948 Lincoln Continental Cabriolet since 1953 and was a Charter member of the LCOC and had attended the 1st LCOC meet in 1953. I guess he had a soft spot in his heart for these early classics. He looked it over and after telling what Tom wanted for the car and engine 'delivered', it didn't sound like too bad of a deal. The engine that went with the car was located behind the office, balanced against the wall with a small drum of kerosene used to heat his office sitting atop the carb! It was a 1946 V12, 1946 to 1948 were same bore and stroke. The original 1942 V12 was 2&15/16" bore, extra bore needed to boost horsepower for the 'Liquimatic' automatic transmission.

The deal was done, and for a total of \$440, I owned a genuine 1947 Lincoln Continental... or so I thought. Now to get it home. We agreed on a delivery the next Saturday which turned out to be very cold, about 18 degrees with a 25 knot blow. During the week I found a garage in the Northwood area of Baltimore, for \$7.00 a month! I walked down alleys and any garage with leaves or other debris in front of the doors, I figured they weren't using it. After a few tries I had a garage. Tom delivered the car to the garage as promised, we both agreed the car would not make it on its own power. He went back to the lot and hooked up the V12 and delivered it behind my Uncle's garage nearby. Later that afternoon I finally relaxed. I owned a Lincoln Continental Cabriolet! Just like the dog that chases a car and catches it, what do I do now?

I went back to the garage each afternoon after work and looked the car over. I pulled the seats and looked for anything I could find out about the history. I found out from 'Continental



Rear/side view of Larry Butcher's updated 1946-1948 Lincoln Cabriolet after rebuild.

Comments', the trim items for each different year. I scraped the lacquer off the dash trim and a gold color appeared. The references I read said the '47 Lincolns had a silver finish. The window lifts did not work and looked somewhat homemade. I noticed when I had removed the back seat that the top was operated by two electric motors. The 1946-1948 Continentals and Lincoln Convertibles used an Electro-hydraulic setup. Now I'm not sure just what year his car really is! The title read 1947, but titles can be misleading. I have several old 'Motors Repair' Manuals and the one dated 1935-1951 listed the serial numbers for each year of car. The serial number is stamped on the front left side cross-member and the rear left frame horn extension. I compared this number with numbers listed in the Motor Manual and this was not the number

for a 1947 but a 1942! I popped open a door panel and found the window lift to be a vacuum unit, only found on 1942 cars. Sometime later I wrote to the Ford archives and received a reply from Henry Edmunds in the form of card which stated the correct year, options, and point of destination which in this case was Chester, Pa. Years later, when removing the front grille, I noticed that holes were burned into the front fenders to receive the bolts for the grille. On the 1942 models, the grille was curved in more, and the bolts were inserted differently. Well, I now have an updated 1942 and not a 1947. My good fortune, because the Lincoln Motor Car division only made 136 1942 Lincoln Continental Cabriolets due to production cutoff for World War II.

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in Royal Oak, Michigan, located just outside of Detroit to strike up a four car deal. We each ordered a new 1965 Pontiac; my Grand Prix, TWO GTO Tri-Powers, and a Catalina 2+2, 421V8, these were our dream cars.

The Grand Prix had 'Nightwatch Blue' exterior and dark blue bucket seat interior with a lot of chrome, fender skirts, eight lug aluminum wheels, Hurst three-speed manual floor shifter, wood grained dash and center console, 389 V8 with four-barrel carburetor, dual exhaust, and 'pos-a-traction' rear. The G/P was a fun car to drive. Terry and I married that summer after graduation, and the Grand Prix was our bridal car, along with a friend's 1965 Pontiac 2+2 for the bridal party.

One of the memorable ordeals in that 1965 Grand Prix was a blizzard that hit the east coast that first winter. We were stuck in Harrisburg when it hit and after a few days, proceeded to head home to Maryland with tire chains

strapped to the rear wheels. The trip home took awhile, but we made it with no damage to the car or us. When was the last time you used tire chains?

Terry had never had a driver's license, so a year later, and pregnant with our first born, I decided to teach her how to drive and get a Maryland license. After a few uneventful episodes with the stick shift and two feet required to push in the heavy duty clutch, she proceeded to almost take out a curb, a frightened Collie and it's owner in a parking lot. I can still picture that Collie. Therefore we decided to postpone the driving lessons until our daughter was born, and we could get a more practical family car. We Traded the 1965 Grand Prix in for a 1967 Pontiac Tempest Custom two door sedan, six cylinder automatic which was more economical, and easier to drive. Shortly thereafter, Terry passed her Maryland driver's test on the very first try, great memories!