



Mississippi Valley Packards

March 2014

PACKARDS IN THE 1940s...

by Gerald Perschbacher (LL.D.)
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Packards from the decade of the 1940s hold a special mystique that fascinates car aficionados today. Why?

+ **NOSTALGIA**—For people born in the 1940s, these cars are reminders of their childhood. The same holds true for many people born in the 1950s, since the cars of the forties were still seen on city streets until the parade of progress marked them obsolete or the crush of time rendered them useless. Today, younger generations like to see the “cars of their parents” or of their grandparents.

+ **IMPROVEMENTS**-- The 1940s were transition years marked by widespread progress. Automotively, only a small percentage of cars in 1940 used automatic transmissions. By 1949, the vast majority had the option. High compression engines gained in popularity. Gadgets grew in appreciation, dash-mounted push-button radios being the most obvious advancement. Few decades have seen so many major improvements in motoring.

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+ **SIMPLICITY**—Cars made in the 1940s are metal wonders, relatively simple to tinker into operation. Thick metal can be reworked. There is sparse use of plastic, except on select sections of instrument panels and trim piece (which, happily, are usually being remade to the delight of restorers).

+ **HONESTY**—If cars could be called “honest,” then Packards made in the forties would quickly come to mind. These heavy cars were relatively nimble and easy to operate, straightforward in repairs, not hard to maintain, and suffered through many strains and much neglect with hardly a whimper. Those are good reasons why cars of the early forties survived the ration years of the Second World War and went on to provide years of service, even to the present for collectors.

+**COLLECTIBILITY**—Packards made in the forties provide fun motoring for car collectors and are appreciated by the general viewing public. Most are priced moderately and deliver many miles of trouble-free travel. That’s why they are the choice for tour-seekers who drive great distances in conjunction with fellow enthusiasts.



For 1940, Packard's traditional grille design was updated with a thinner motif. Shown is a 1940 160 Club Sedan.

Junior Packards were heavily promoted by dealerships, as indicated by this picture of Santa riding in a new 1940 model in a business district of Houston, Texas. Note the "grease pencil" cropping marks atop the picture. This picture was used in print communications from the factory to its dealers.



Senior Packards of the 1940s have something in common: the 356 straight-eight motor was (and is) a magnificent power plant. Initially it delivered a significant 160 horsepower and was considered by industry experts to be the most powerful production motor of its era. The motor first nestled under the hood of a 1940 Packard and was continued throughout the 1940s. Its last year was 1950, and that was on the 23rd Series which is considered a late 1949 model entry.

Senior Packards (in the top price level) carried trim differences on the exterior when compared with the Junior models (priced to sell in the medium range). Example: there are moveable grille louvers on the 1940 Super Eight (Senior) but not necessarily on the One-Twenty and One-Ten models. In the 23rd Series versions (late 1949-1950) there is a significant difference between the front grille sizes between Seniors and Juniors. Not necessarily so for the 22nd Series (1948-early 1949) which relegated the Super Eight designation to the smaller Junior body and chassis. However, there are huge size differences to the frontal grille of the top-line Custom Eight when seen beside the Supers, Deluxe, and Standard Packards of the remaining 22nd Series.

Packards of the 1940s also included the outstanding Clipper styling which was phenomenal when introduced in 1941. The sleek side styling bespoke a future trend in car design with front fenders fading into the front door and a hefty transfusion of Packard styling tips that preserved the upright grille, albeit smaller than before and using horizontal lines instead of up-and-down slats.

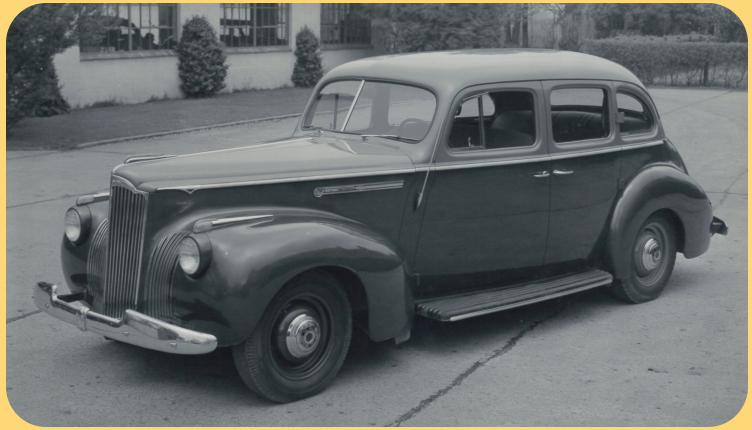


When the 1941 Clipper styling was introduced in Cleveland, the distributor made this display.

Clipper styling would permeate the entire lineup of Packards in 1942 and was the sole design for 1946-47 versions.

Clipper styling was applauded in its day and still holds up very well as a classy design -- which is granted full classic status on Senior models, thanks to the Classic Car Club of America.

Interior finish and appointments on the Senior Clippers is outstanding while the insides of lesser Junior models is far from cheap but still a step lower in top-running quality and comfort. Seams on Senior headliners run fore and aft rather than left to right, which adds to the feeling of length.



Old styling still lingered in 1941 with innovative touches to exterior trim being exhibited in this pre-production model. Some of the trim ideas never made it into production. The car is a six (Junior model).

The convertible was at its Packard peak in the 1940s. It was favorably promoted by Packard officials who could not envision the world without a new Packard convertible. However, the Clipper styling of 1941-1947 was not inclusive of the drop-top version. In other words, no Packard convertibles were produced by the factory in quality after the demise of the 1942 model run (which included a sparse number of convertibles based on the older prewar design) and before the launch of the 22nd Series, which, by the way, had a convertible as its launch model.

Packards of the 1940s usually are reliable, relatively easy to maintain, plentiful for collectors, very comfortable in ride plus handling, and give owners tons of pride and pleasure.



For 1948, Packard officials and board members headed to the Proving Grounds in Utica, Michigan, to see the new products. This styling would basically continue into 1950. The design was an update on the Clipper of 1941-1947.

February meeting at Sherman's



NOTICE

Dues for Mississippi Valley Packards are now due.

Annual dues are \$15.00

Mail your check to:

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Home Phone Area code - number

Work Phone Area code - number

E-Mail Address

Mississippi Valley Packards
c/o Elliott & Dolores Cytron
151 Ladue Pines
St. Louis, MO 63141

Annual Dues \$_____ .00

1919 Packard Chassis Project Voluntary Contribution \$_____ .00

Your assistance in any amount will help make this Packard operational.

Grand Total \$_____ .00

Swappers Corner

For Sale

Whole Front clip for (1949) Custom Packard. Seems complete. Has front fenders, grille, radiator support hood, inner wheel house panels & pipe ducting. Has surface rust but is restorable. Must pickup. Photos available-contact me. \$375 or OBO Located in Farmington, MO , Ken Chapman 573 631 5480.

Great fundraiser for MVP Buy at wholesale, sell at retail for your project!!

1937, 38, 39 Packard Parts. Would like to sell as a package. Stromberg EE3 carburetor, with choke assembly

Set V-12 horns V-12 hub medallions (2) NOS Delco type arm shocks. V-12 and Super 8 L-8 oil filter (V-12 and Su 8) V-12 Aluminum heads (4) Super 8 exhaust manifold Set of Super 8 rod bearings (NOS Federal Mogul)

AND

Used engine parts; pistons, rod bearings, valves, springs, rocker arms, hydraulic lifters, timing chain. Interior, exterior trim parts, door handles, window cranks, new sun visor, elbows and brackets, sill plates, mirror parts and much, much more! All parts may be viewed at any time. This would be a great fund raising project for any car club. Buy at wholesale, sell at retail for your project. Contact Bob Radel at (314) 991-3590 between 7-9am.

1948-50 Packard Radio For Sale \$50. Randy 314-221-8385

Got a lead on a Packard? Packard parts? Literature? What to sell your Packard? Then take good advantage of our listings in the HELM. It's a free service to members and friends of the club. Keep those Packards in town!



Sunday, April 20, 2014, Easter Concours d'Elegance , Horseless Carriage Club of St. Louis
Website , Forest Park in St. Louis Website

Sunday, May 4, 2014 , Model T Club Swap Meet , Annual MTFC Swap Meet , Model T Club
Website , Gateway Motorsports Park, 700 Raceway Blvd. , Madison, IL 62060 .

Sunday, June 15, 2014 , Cars With Class , Father's Day Car Show , St Louis Museum of
Transportation , 11:00 – 3:30 pm

Let your friends know if you get a Packard! Don't just do it by word of mouth. Do it in print, too. Send an announcement (with picture, if possible) to the editor of the Helm and state a sentence or two about the car. If you need more space than that, just jot down the facts or even draft a short article and send it along.

Note: Dates and locations for events may change. Watch the Helm for updates.

Deadlines for submissions for The Helm are the 20th of every month.

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“Ask the man who owns one!”

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