

LINCOLN AND

*Continental*

comments



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## Pink 1959 Lincoln Continental Coupe at the 2007 Eastern National Meet

**P**ink Lincolns are not very common compared to pink Cadillacs and Chryslers. The color was offered by Lincoln from 1957 through 1963 but very few were sold. The Duncan family of Bridgeville, Pennsylvania, entered a pink 1959 Lincoln Continental coupe at the 2007 Eastern National Meet in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and won a Lincoln Trophy. This may be the first time a pink Lincoln has ever won any major award at a National Meet. Technically, the color is called Cameo Rose.

Years ago this car was owned by Bob Follette, now deceased. He won a Primary First at Dellroy, Ohio, in 1983 and then his son Bill won a Primary Second at Dearborn in 1984. The car was at Indianapolis in 1985 and won a Primary Second in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1987. It was shown by Bill Follette both times. Camp Hill was the last time it was shown prior to Cherry Hill. The car is still in the family after all these years. When Bob died in about 1992 the car went to his son Bill who never used it. He just stored

it. Fortunately he stored it inside. About four years ago the family was going to sell the car. But Bob's granddaughter Gina said "If you are going to sell that car you are going to sell it to me," and that is how the car has stayed in the family for now 35 years. Gina and her husband Eric have had the car for about two years and had it restored by Chris Dunn's Lincoln Land in Florida. It was a very nice original car a quarter-century ago but years of non use had taken their toll.

Chris Dunn gave the car new paint, a new interior, rebuilt the engine and transmission and just did a lot of detailing. In restoring the car Eric found a tag showing that Bob Follette had bought the car in 1973 from a

dealer how had bought it in San Jose, California, in 1972. Chris Dunn was on hand to show us the tag and give us the restoration details.

"Although it's going back to Pittsburgh on a trailer, we do plan to drive it," Eric promised. "I'm especially eager for my father-in-law to see it. Our two little ones, five-year-old Abbie and seven-year-old Allie, are already fighting over who gets it when I die. To them, it is the Big Pink Barbie Car."



It's hard to imagine that 1959 is now nearly 50 years ago or that the original 1958 model was introduced 50 years ago. At the time it was as radical as the Lincoln-Zephyr. Nobody had ever built a unitized car this large before. The car was nearly as big as the Classic Lincolns of the thirties. The reason it was so large and different looking was that Lincoln wanted a car that would be bigger in every respect than the Cadillac and look much different.

When this basic body style was introduced for 1958 it bombed in the marketplace along with almost everything else in 1958 except the American Motors and Studebaker lineups. Lincoln production plummeted that year from 41,123 to 29,684, and that was with three models, the Continental and the standard Premiere and Capri. Even the all new 430 cubic inch engine failed to build much enthusiasm among buyers.

Lincoln management knew they had a bomb on their hands shortly after introduction time. John Najjar, the original stylist, was taken off the project and the 1959 facelift was turned over to Don DeLaRossa who was charged with toning down the design. The 1959 grille was made less extreme, the scallops in the front fenders were subdued, and the rear end was made more changed slightly. Very little was done to change the interior, especially the sunken instrument panel with the huge instrument pod. But the overall body reworking was extensive enough that no 1959 body panels, bumpers or exterior trim pieces are interchangeable with 1958.

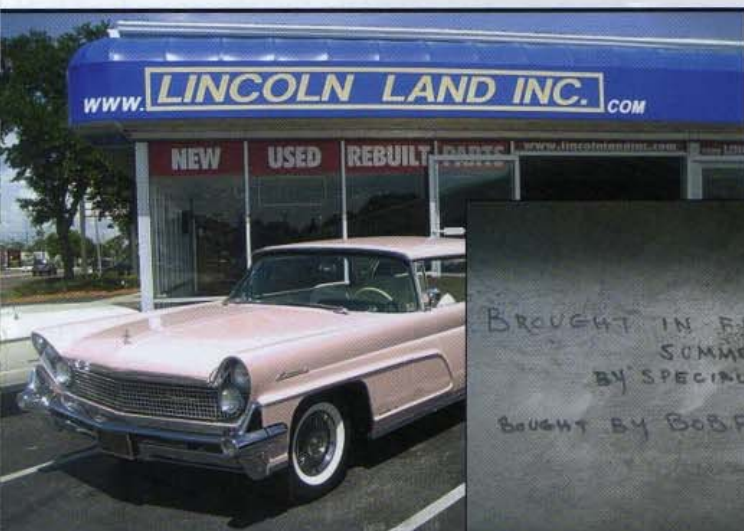
Engine horsepower was reduced from 375 to 350. The Mercury Marauder three two-barrel carburetor setup which raised the horsepower to 400 was no longer available. Here Lincoln had gone to all the trouble to build an entirely new and more powerful engine from 1952-57 and now they were detuning it. Horsepower would go even lower in the 1960 model.

Two new models were added for 1959, the Town Car and the Limousine. These were not extended wheelbase models. They were black formal versions of the Continental four-door sedan with padded tops and smaller rear windows. The Limousine had a divider window. These models were done by Hess and Eisenhardt and they were continued through 1960. Very few of these cars were built.

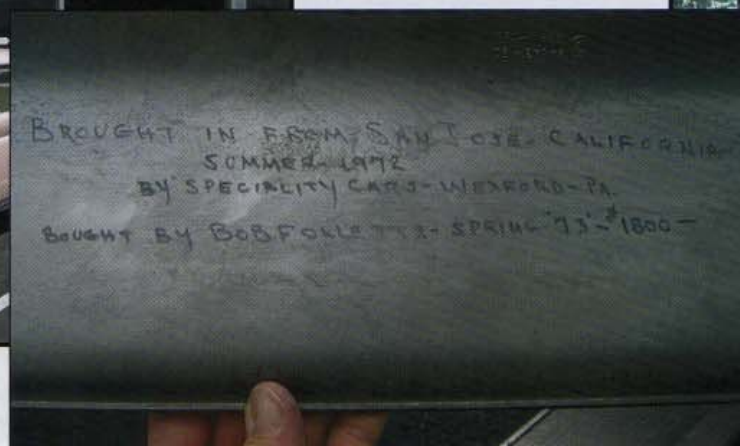




Chris Dunn and Eric Duncan.



The plate below shows when the car was bought.



Unfortunately, 1959 Lincoln production was even poorer than 1958 with 15,780 Lincolns and 11,126 Continentals produced for a total production of 26,906.

Production of all 1959 Lincolns and Lincoln Continentals was as follows:

Capri	
53A Four-Door Sedan	1,312
57A Hardtop Sedan Landau	4,417
63A Hardtop Coupe	2,200
Premiere	
53B Four-Door Sedan	1,282
57B Hardtop Sedan Landau	4,606
53B Hardtop Coupe	1,963
Continental Mark III	
54A Four-Door Sedan	955
65A Hardtop Coupe	1,703
68A Convertible Coupe	2,195
75A Hardtop Sedan	6,146

What is a 1959 Lincoln Continental like to drive? The feeling inside is one of enormous space, legroom, elbowroom, shoulder room, room everywhere. But for the car's sheer size it is every bit as easy to handle as the 1957 model. You forget how big the car is once you get used to driving it, but you will never get used to parking it unless you can find an unused bus stop.

The 1958 model had more bugs than Benjamin Franklin's wood pile. The 1959 model was much improved. The 1960 model is the best of the three years and a wonderful car in every respect, but by this time the car was about as popular as the Chrysler Airflow of an earlier era. Today these Lincolns/Continental are true cult cars in the tradition of the Edsel, the 1959 Cadillac, and the bathtub Nash with the rear seat that folds down into a bed.

