

Construction of Cadillac-LaSalle Museum Poised to Begin This Year

by Irena Granaas

The Cadillac-LaSalle Club Museum and Research Center stands on the threshold of achieving its long-sought goal of breaking ground on a permanent museum.

Thanks to donations from club members and auto buffs from all walks of life, the CLCMRC Board has received nearly \$900,000 of its \$1 million goal to move forward and break ground on construction at the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Mich.

The CLCMRC car collection has already been moved from storage and is now showcased as the Cadillac Gallery in Gilmore's Carriage House.

"We'd like to break ground yet this year. As we get into the summer, it's reasonable to expect we'll come up with the \$100,000 to get us over the hump," said CLCMRC Chairman of the Board Paul Ayres.

The planned 10,000-square-foot permanent facility will be built near the Gilmore center green.

The total funding goal for the project going forward is \$2 million, which includes a reserve fund to serve as ongoing support in perpetuity and money for furniture, fixtures and equipment, and exhibit design.

Until recently, the Gilmore Museum was open only May through October, but still drew 50,000 visitors annually.

Ayres said the Gilmore Museum is now open year-round and attendance has climbed "appreciably" since it achieved year-round status in 2012 after Gilmore opened its new Heritage and Reception Center.

"They have several buildings now that are heated in the wintertime . . . It allows them to operate year-round," said Ayres.

The reception center connects with another display area and the Franklin Museum, which is heated. The recently launched Ford Model A Museum, located across the street from the Franklin Museum, is also heated and open for visitors all year.

The Gilmore Museum sits on a 90-acre scenic site northeast of Kalamazoo just off I-94, midway between Chicago and Detroit. Home to the Classic Car Club of

America Museum and archives for years, the site more recently has become home to the Pierce-Arrow Club and its museum building and the Franklin Automotive Club display site. The Gilmore Museum grounds are also home to the new Model A Ford Club of America and Lincoln Foundation facilities.

When completed, the new Cadillac LaSalle museum will house the CLCMRC collection of classic Cadillacs, LaSalle's and Cadillac memorabilia, and showcase Cadillacs loaned to the club for temporary display.

Club sources note that more than 7,000 members around the world own, preserve, exhibit and drive these iconic American cars, and enjoy more than 18,000 collectible automobiles built by Cadillac.

The club will have a permanent home for its classic Fleetwoods, El Dorados, Sevilles, DeVilles, and LaSalle's for people of all ages to enjoy and to preserve their legacy for future generations.

And, with an expansion capacity of up to 23,000 feet, Ayres said the CLCMRC Board is confident it will offer adequate space to meet its future needs.

Ayres said the CLCMRC has had 16 cars donated to date, with an additional waiting list of 15 to 20 cars owned by club members. Two of the cars are a 1931 Cadillac Sedan and a 1937 LaSalle convertible.

The LaSalle was donated by the Kruidenier family of Des Moines, Iowa.

Most people are familiar with the Cadillac brand, but the name LaSalle may be unfamiliar to many since the brand ceased production decades ago, unless they remember the "All in the Family" TV sitcom of the 1970s where lead characters Archie and Edith Bunker (played by Carroll O'Connor and Jean Stapleton) sing in the opening credits, "Gee, our old LaSalle ran great - Those were the days."

Billed by GM as "The Companion Car to the Cadillac," the LaSalle was introduced in 1927 designed to fill a price niche between Buick and Cadillac.

"It was built from 1927 through 1940, sold by Cadillac dealers . . . and priced between Cadillac and

Buick," said Ayres. "They had a slightly shorter wheelbase. They were a lighter car and had a smaller engine, but were advertised as otherwise being in every respect a Cadillac, but badged as a LaSalle."

"So it was a matter of size and power, just placing it slightly below Cadillac in the GM hierarchy."

Club Treasurer Henry Knight said donations have come in from the CLCMRC's worldwide organization, from members in Europe and Australia.

"I'm trying to get a few people together to raise that (\$100,000). That's what's got to happen, because we will not break ground without sufficient money to complete the building this year," said the Auburn Hills resident.

Knight added, "I'm excited. This has been a lifelong dream for a lot of people, to have a



An artist's rendering of the planned Cadillac LaSalle Museum.

place where Cadillac, which is the standard of the world, can have its own museum . . . We've been 111 years in existence as a product, and are current today.

"It's appropriate that it's very near the U.S. auto capital of the world in the Greater Metro Detroit area."

To contribute to the Cadillac

LaSalle Museum, donors can send a fully tax-deductible check made out to the club's 501c3 account: CLC-Museum & Research, Inc., and mail to Henry Knight, 420 S. Grey Rd., Auburn Hills, MI 48326.

Upon processing the check, Knight will send a full receipt to each donor for tax purposes.

Cadillac Looks for Fashion Styles When Planning Designs

GM is blending fashion and automotive design.

And, as part of a larger effort to make Cadillac more fashionable, the company has launched "Style Driven," a four-part video vignette offering an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the life of fashion stylist Erin Walsh.

In the video series, Walsh is shown curating outfits for guests attending the famous Costume Institute Benefit at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City on May 7.

Walsh's eye for the beautiful and unique within fashion has made her to be one of the most sought-after stylists, and has already consulted the likes of Kristen Wiig, Kerry Washington and Gwyneth Paltrow, said Cadillac Communications spokesperson Jordana Strosberg. This year, Walsh styled actress Greta Gerwig for the Met Gala.

The video series follows Walsh as she makes her way through New York City in a Cadillac SRX picking dresses and jewelry for Gerwig. Throughout the series, Walsh offers insights into her process, the importance of the Met Gala and how Cadillac helps her make everything possible, Strosberg said.

"I have always marveled at the synchronicity of form and function in creative design," said Walsh. "To me, something beautiful, especially when it comes to fashion, should be made with an attention to detail that reflects this aesthetic."

"It is not inherent to design but rather takes a certain attention to detail and one that I do look for in architecture, theater, art, cinema and especially in brands that are capable of consistently guarding the marriage of art and commerce. Cadillac is so clearly

an example of this, historically and today."

The annual Costume Institute Benefit features a who's who in fashion and culture with celebrity attendees from film, music and fashion.

"Fashion and design are territories that easily mesh with Cadillac's Art and Science philosophy," said Melody Lee, director of Cadillac's Brand and Reputation Strategy. "Working with the team on the Vogue.TV video series to showcase Erin's unique approach in creating beautiful style ensembles is quite similar to the meticulous craftsmanship that goes into the design of Cadillac vehicles like the SRX."

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