

The Lincoln Log



**A publication of the Lincoln and Continental Owners Club Hoosier Region
Volume 41 Issue 1
Winter 2025**

Table of Contents

- 2** From the Director
Joe S. Columbe
- 3** Directions to Lime Rock Farm
- 4** Prime Time at Bynum's
Jeff Shively
- 6** George Walker and the 1964 Lincoln Continental Mark Nine
Jim & Cheryl Farrell

FRONT & BACK COVER What might have been. Read the story of the proposed replacement of the 1961-1963 Lincoln Continental on **page 6**. Photos courtesy of Jim & Cheryl Farrell.

From the Director By Joe Columbe

I hope all is well with you and yours. We are great here in beautiful Rush County, Indiana. In January, we had a wonderful time at Bynum's in Indianapolis. The next event is a bit of a change of pace from years past.

We did have to change our regular annual picnic date this year due to the Lincoln & Continental Owners Club's Mid-America National Meet being held in Cincinnati on our usual June date. The new date for 2025 is **Saturday, April 26**. This is the fourth Saturday of the month. Please be at our home, 6722 West County Road 900 South, Milroy, Indiana, at noon.

We will again be offering lunch from Linne's Bakery in Shelbyville. The cost is **\$22.50 per person**. Water, soft drinks, beer, and indoor seating will be provided for all who attend. Guests of all car club members

are always welcome. Attendees are also welcome to bring their own lunch. Please note the map to Lime Rock Farm on the opposite page. Feel free to call **765-561-4900** or email jscolumbe@tds.net with questions or concerns.

An RSVP is essential so that we will have accurate numbers for overall attendance and the necessary lunch orders. Please get in touch with me **NO LATER than Tuesday, April 22, at noon**. This will give us time to set up our facility. You don't need to send money now- pay at the door. This is our 15th year! We had 115 in attendance in 2024, so let's top that number in 2025.

Joe & Eleanor Columbe

Joe S. Columbe is an LCOC member from Milroy, Indiana.



Annual Picnic at Lime Rock Farm

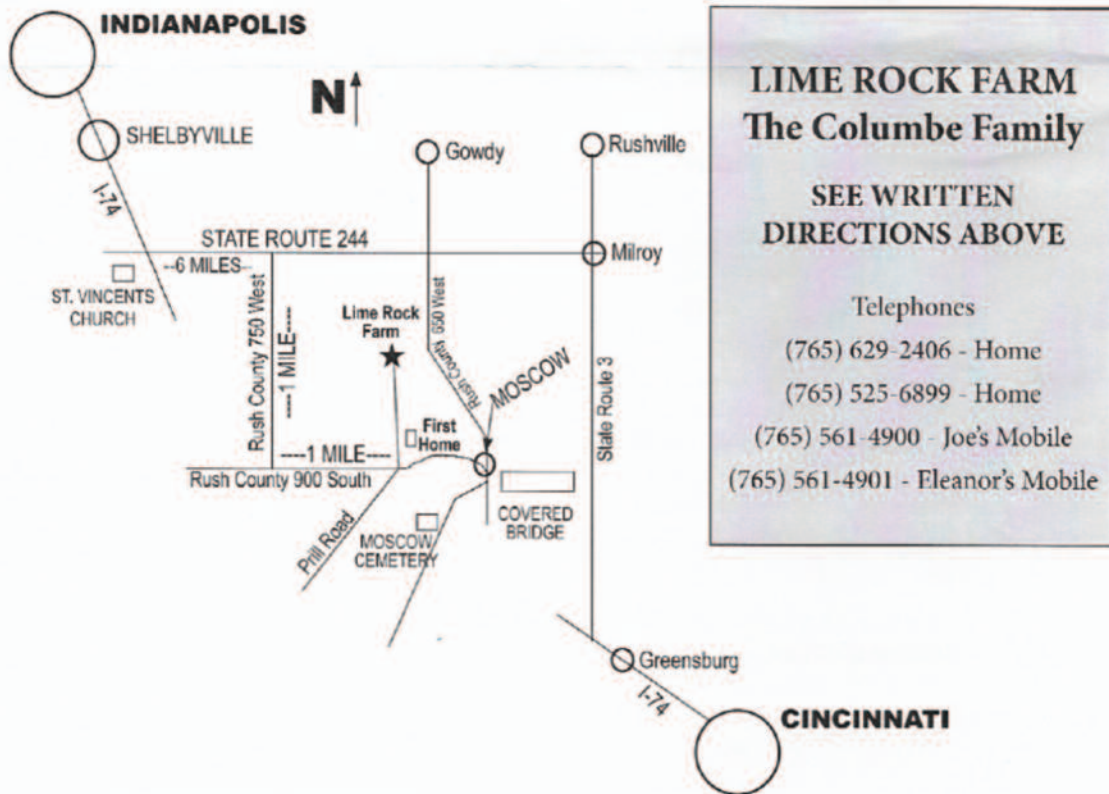
Saturday, April 26, 2025

Noon

PHYSICAL ADDRESS OF LIME ROCK FARM & FOR GPS USE

6722 WEST, 900 SOUTH
MILROY, INDIANA 46156-959846150
(South West Corner of Rush County, Indiana)

Lime Rock Farm is located about 40 miles south east of Indianapolis, and about 75 miles north west of Cincinnati. We are EXACTLY 6 miles East of I-74 (exit #119) on State Road 244, THEN 1 mile south on Rush County Road 750 West, THEN 1 mile East on Rush County Road 900 South. Our Driveway is on the north side of 900 South, just as Prill Road intersects with 900 South. We are back a long lane. Pass the first home and go to the second home.



PRIME TIME AT BYNAM'S

BY JEFF SHIVELY



As has become an annual tradition, the Hoosier Region shakes off the cold and gloom to meet on the south side of Indianapolis at the culinary institution known as Bynum's Steakhouse. This outing was extra special, as the restaurant had agreed to prepare several prime ribs for our group. Of course, no matter what you choose, the meal was well worth the time and money.

Part of the tradition is the Christmas gift exchange. Yes, it was into the new year, January 4, in fact, but that's OK. Many unique and fun gifts were brought by members, with some stealing the prizes of others, much to the comic dismay of the victim. But of course, turnabout is fair play, so many presents passed through many hands before staying with the lucky recipient who'd be taking them home.

As is always the case, we had members of the region from out of state, Ohio and Kentucky, attending. This is always a popular event and one that should not be missed.

Members attending included: Bill Baird, Ryan Beatrice, Tony & Michelle Blaine, Joe & Eleanor Columbe, Seth Fagen, Matt Gerhard, Charlie & Becky Griffith, John & Jupei Hannon, Darren Klingler, John Madden, Sean Madden & Dan Fagen, Jeff & Erin Owen, Gary Stapleton & Jim Lansbury, Jeff Shively, Mike & Anne Marie Smith, Brian Strim, Bob Thomas, Paul & Julie Temple, Allan Tharp, Rhett Tharp.

Jeff Shively is an LCOC member from Kokomo, Indiana.

ABOVE Waiting in anticipation for the feast to arrive. **BELOW** The safest cow in the joint. *Photos courtesy of Jeff Shively.*



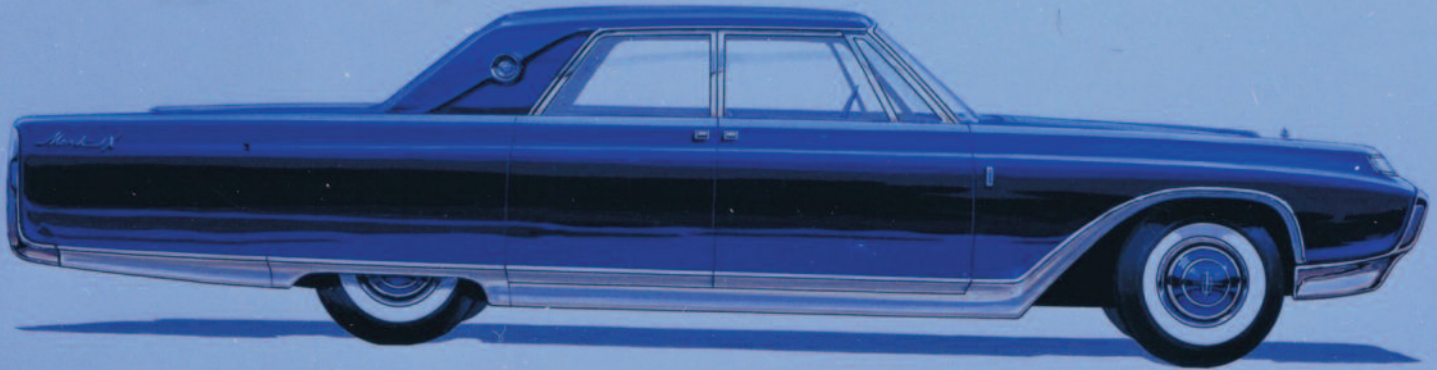


CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE John & Jupei Hannon drove this last-generation Town Car to Bynum's. Watching the next lucky contestant pick out his gift. Gary Stapleton shows off his prize. Director Joe Columbe sums up the year now gone and talks about thoughts for 2025. *Photos by Jeff Shively.*



George Walker and the 1964 Lincoln Continental Mark Nine

By Jim & Cheryl Farrell



Photos courtesy of the author.

When he became a consultant to Ford in the late 1940s, George Walker extracted conditions from Henry Ford II, which included Walker's control of all publicity about Ford design. Walker was also able to keep his lucrative private design firm and his interest in another business (Trim Trends) that sold automotive trim parts to multiple manufacturers. The last condition given Walker was the right to insert two of his employees, Elwood Engel and Joe Oros, into the Ford Design Department. Oros and Engel, although not employees of Ford, were there full-time and had the right to design and clay model their own Ford, Lincoln, or Mercury proposals if they didn't like the designs proposed by Ford designers. That arrangement didn't work very well and caused even more dissension among Ford designers. On May 22, 1955, HFII's solution was to make Walker a Ford vice president and general manager of the Design Department, which Walker promptly renamed the Ford Styling Center. Engel then became Walker's assistant manager, and in 1956, he named Oros as head of the Ford design studio.

Ford policy mandated that all executives retire at age 65. As Walker approached his 65th birthday in 1961, he was obsessed with Oros or Engel (preferably Engel) succeeding him. Gene Bordinat, as head of the Lincoln-Mercury design studio, was Engel's

primary competition to succeed Walker. That meant that Walker was actively trying to undermine Bordinat and build up Engel.

Ben Mills, then head of Lincoln-Mercury Division, didn't trust Walker. He felt Walker and Engel had pushed through the design of the disastrous 1958 Lincoln without much consideration of its salability. Mills also wanted a smaller Lincoln that displayed obvious continuity with past Lincolns. That directive was made clear to Bordinat who was supposed to be designing the 1961 Lincoln in his studio. Mills also wanted a longer nine-year design cycle for Lincoln.

Walker and Engel both were aware of Mill's displeasure. Although Engel's design for the 1961 Lincoln started out as a Thunderbird proposal, it later became a Lincoln proposal. Walker saw it as a feather in Engel's cap even though his 1961 Lincoln design had no continuity with past Lincolns. Engel's '61 Lincoln proposal beat out the one from Bordinat's studio, which had an unfortunate similarity to the 1958-1960 Lincoln- which by that time, nearly everyone at Ford disliked. Bordinat followed the rules; Engel didn't, and Engel's car won.

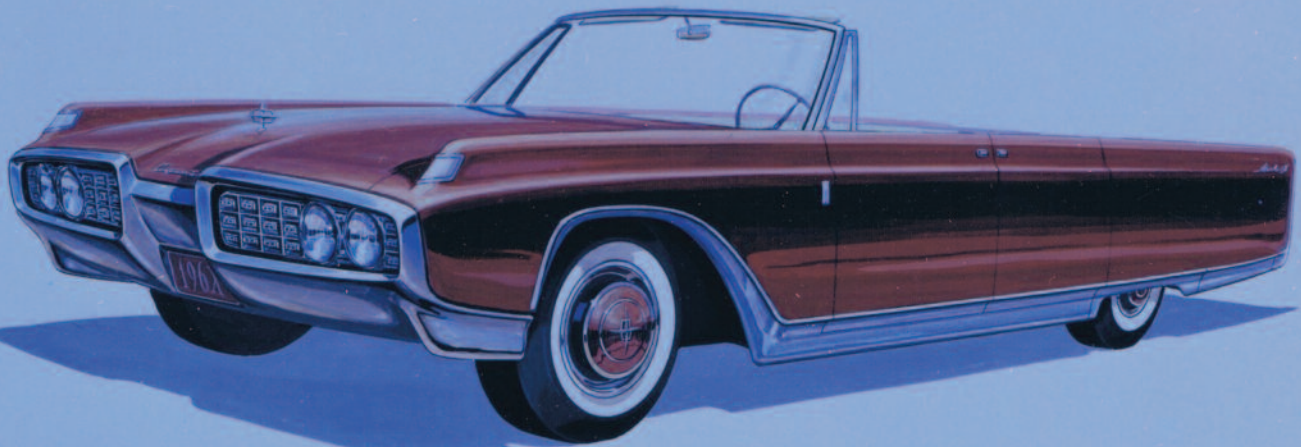
All of the above is prologue to what happened after Engel's winning 1961 Lincoln proposal was moved upstairs into Bordinat's Lincoln-Mercury studio to be productionized. Although Walker and Engel had lucked out with the winning '61 Lincoln

ABOVE The proposed replacement for the 1961-1963 Lincoln Continental, the Mark IX, in sedan form.

design, Walker quickly figured out that if Engel was also able to design the next Lincoln Continental, which under the old rules was due for change in 1964, it would go a long way towards Engel's appointment as his successor. Walker encouraged Engel to hand-pick the best designers available and to quickly begin work on the car they called the 1964 Lincoln Continental Mark IX.

Designers of the Mark IX were Engel, Gale Halderman (manager), Colin Neale, John Orfe, Bill Dayton, and Phil Payne. Although the finished Mark IX looks longer, it is actually shorter than the 1961 Lincoln. When finished, the Mark IX was so well-liked by all who saw it that Walker had designer Ray Smith install a small electric motor and steering so it could be driven at about five mph. The Mark IX was eventually built of fiberglass with four opening doors and a full interior. The special features of the Mark IX were all picked by Engel, including a small opening compartment on the hood to check fluids, a full vinyl roof that extended onto the trunk, and a partially retracting backlight. Everyone at Ford, including management, thought the Mark IX was a great-looking Lincoln.

Continental Sport Phaeton



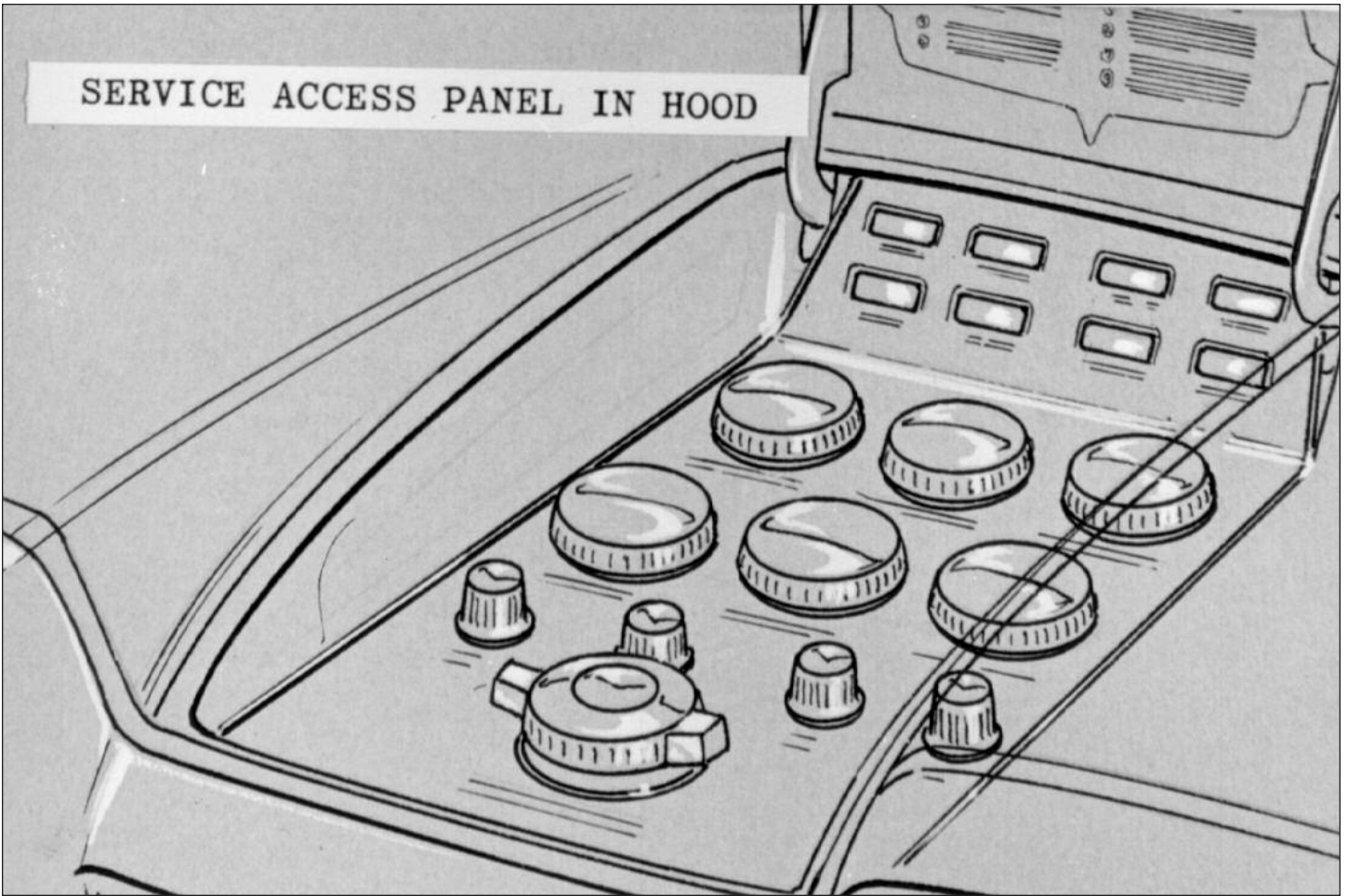
Bill Ford was not a fan of George Walker. After the Mark II had been discontinued, Bill Ford became a Ford VP and titular head of Ford design. Walker, who was also a VP and head of the Styling Center, disliked Bill Ford and openly referred to him as “that f—king kid.”

When it came time to choose Walker’s replacement, Engel got caught in a scandal. He double-billed for expenses he incurred during an oversight trip to Europe, which

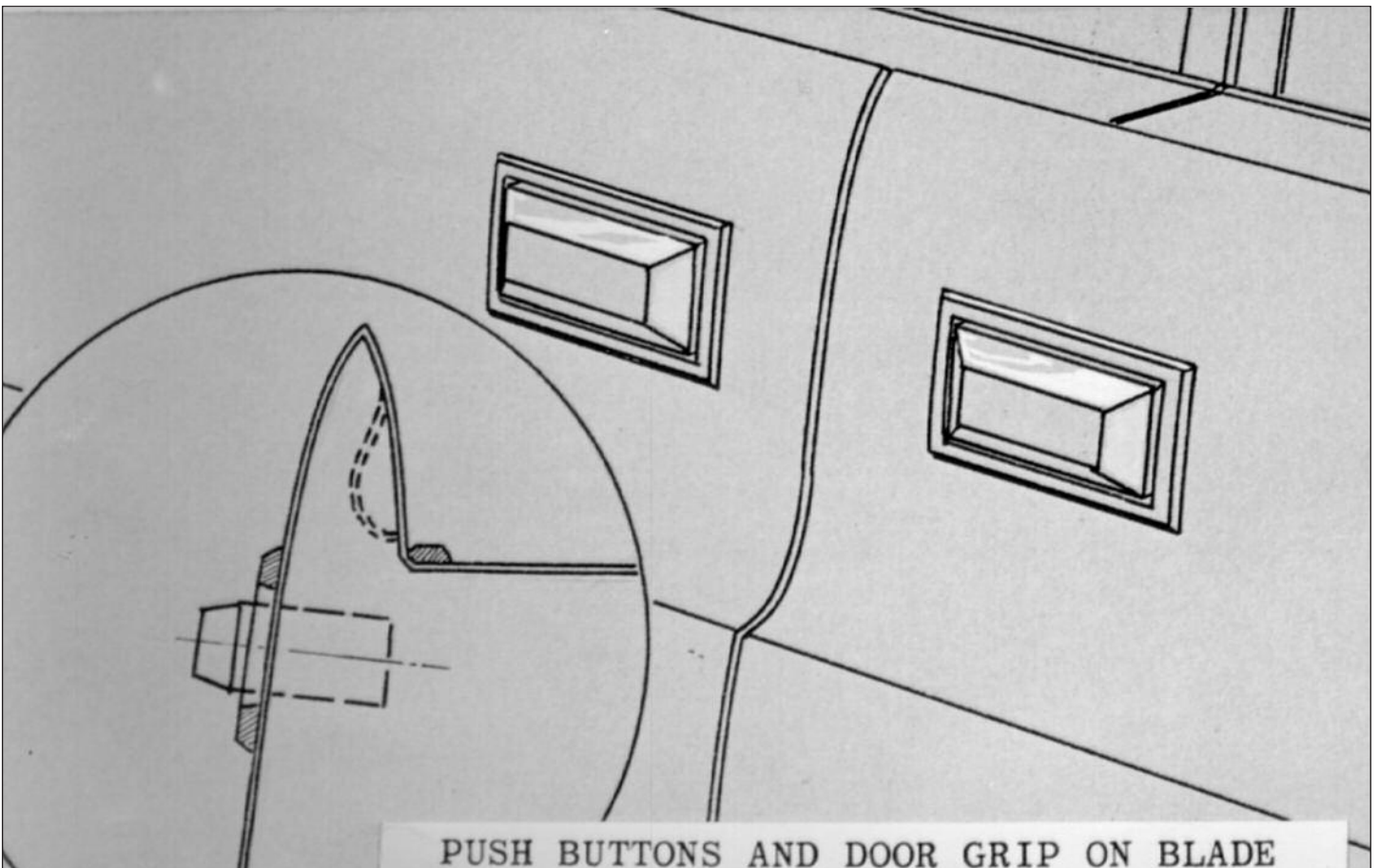
disqualified him. Walker then began supporting Oros as his replacement. Walker even told Oros he was a shoo-in, and photos were taken of Walker introducing Oros as his replacement. Meanwhile, HFII was hospitalized with mononucleosis, so Bordinat prepared and gave a slick-looking booklet to Bill Ford explaining why he and not Oros should become head of the Ford Styling Center – and why Bill Ford should control the selection. Bordinat also

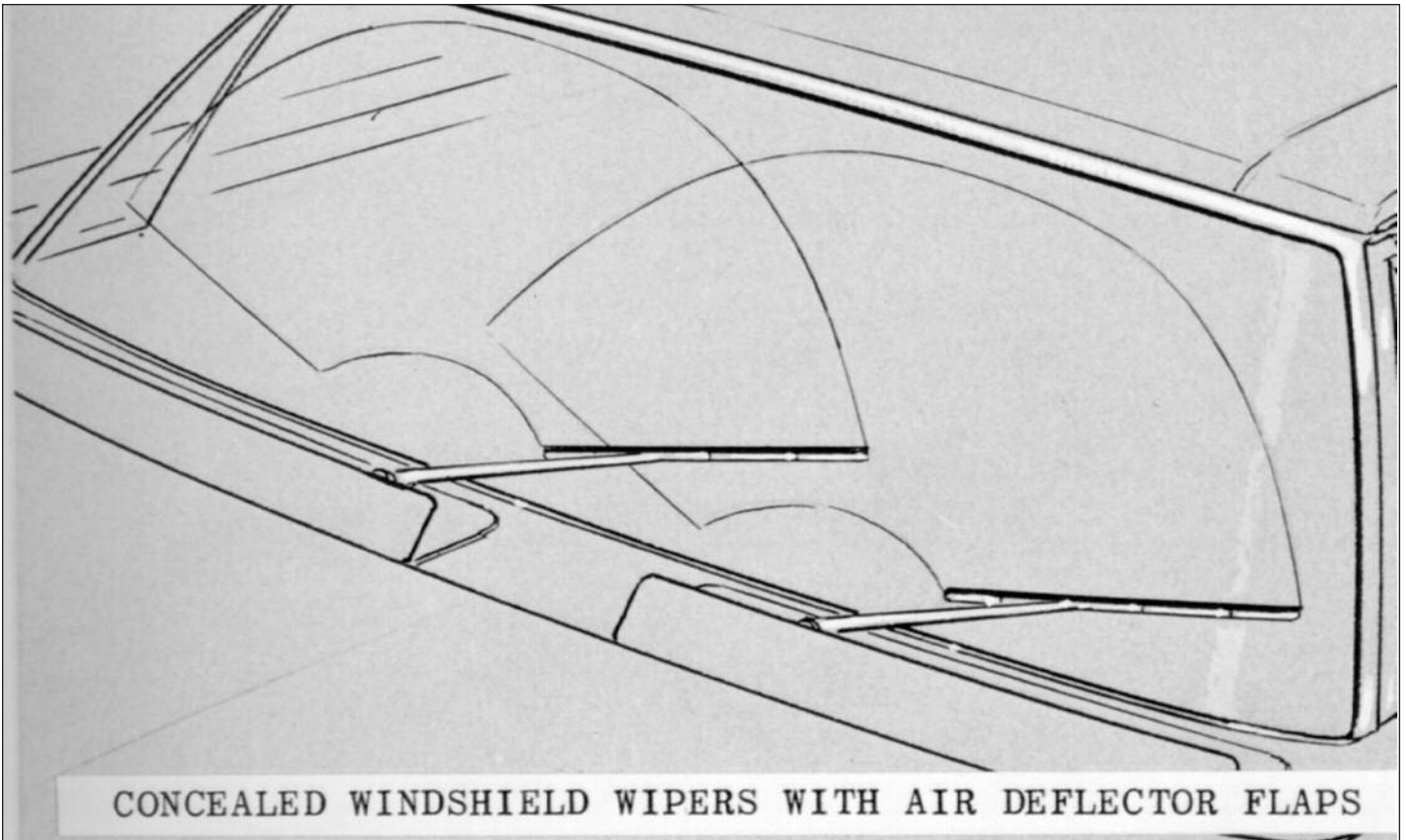
TOP The 1964 Mark IX in convertible form.
ABOVE The 1964 Mark IX with the car it would have superceded after the three-year production run.

SERVICE ACCESS PANEL IN HOOD



PUSH BUTTONS AND DOOR GRIP ON BLADE



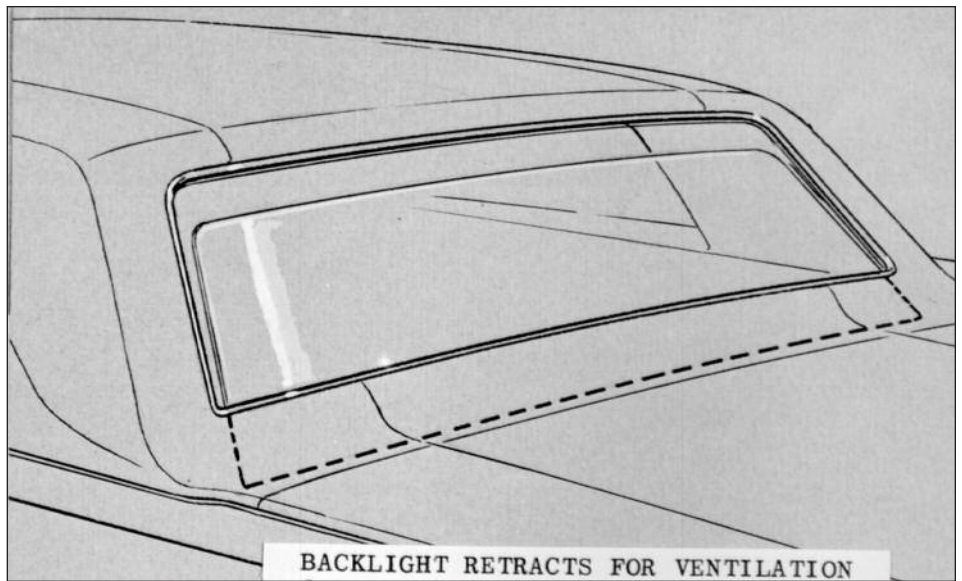


CONCEALED WINDSHIELD WIPERS WITH AIR DEFLECTOR FLAPS

arranged to meet with Eleanor Ford, the matriarch of the Ford family, who gave her blessing to Bordinat. Bill Ford and Mills then recruited other members of Ford's board of directors. Bill Ford even gave a fantastic speech to the board supporting Bordinat. After the board selected Bordinat as Walker's replacement, Bill Ford must have enjoyed coming back to the Styling Center to tell Walker his candidate had lost – and his successor was Bordinat.

So he could exercise Ford stock options that matured only after he turned 65, when HFII got out of the hospital, he agreed to keep Walker on the payroll and sent Walker and his wife on an all-expense paid trip to say goodbye at Ford plants worldwide. Walker was still bitter, and everywhere he went, he badmouthed Bordinat and members of the Ford family, including Bill and Henry Ford II. When word of his badmouthing got back to Dearborn, HFII recalled Walker and immediately retired him. Designers report that Walker never again set foot in Ford's renamed Design Center.

In November 1961, Walker was able to engineer Engel's appointment as the head of Chrysler's design department. Walker also tried to talk Oros into going to AMC as head of their design department. Bordinat had a talk with Oros. The end result was



BACKLIGHT RETRACTS FOR VENTILATION

that he and Oros enjoyed a good working relationship for the rest of their long careers at Ford. After Engel got to Chrysler, he offered Neale, Orfe, and Dayton jobs on such advantageous terms they couldn't say no.

What happened to the Mark IX? Bordinat was obviously NOT fond of the car. Mills was successful in extending Lincoln's design cycle to nine years, and the Mark IX just faded away. Besides, after Engel went to Chrysler, there was little chance Ford would

produce a car Engel designed. The next Lincoln was the 1966 Continental, which was a well-done refresh of the 1961 Continental.

If Engel had replaced Walker as head of the Ford Styling Center, would the Mark IX have become the 1964 Lincoln Continental? Who knows, but even a retired George Walker could be very persuasive.

Jim & Cheryl Farrell are LCOC members from Roseburg, Oregon.

