

# Philanthropist, Author and All Around Great Car Guy, Spotted At the 2020 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

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The Amelia Island Concours held its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The smorgasbord of cars: Stunning, amazing, unbelievably varied and simply wonderful to see under the blue skies of that chilly, clear Sunday March afternoon. On the field, of course, were both prewar and post-war Bentleys and Rolls-Royce motorcars: a selection to make any enthusiast delighted beyond even the greatest of expectations. But part of the automotive adventure is finding an example of another marque having its own long history and admirers.

If you have been in the hobby for any length of time, it would not be difficult to recognize Mr. Gene Epstein of Pennsylvania. His Graber drophead Bentley, B184MD, had graced the cover of the latest *Atlantic Lady*, and Mr. Epstein in no stranger to this magazine. But what about the Continental he was showing? No—not a Continental made at Crewe, but rather a Mark II crafted at the Allen Park Body & Assembly facility in

Allen Park, Michigan. And it is always fun to find something that you never knew even existed. On the field was his 1956 Continental Mark II reimagined by the famous Derham Coachworks. The Continental Mark I had given the appellation to that metal



spare tire holder attached, on a full width plinth, to the rear bumper. The Mark II honored this tradition with a semi-tire shape molded into the trunk (boot) lid. But what did Derham do? They smoothed out the trunk then added—what else? That rear automotive appendage known now for decades as the Continental Kit. There were interior modifications as well. And guess which car won in its class?

So not only did I recognize Mr. Gene Epstein, but, because of his enthusiasm, openness and friendly demeanor, he welcomed me to stop, chat and admire his Mark II up close and personal. Certainly not an unpleasant way to spend some time at the 25<sup>th</sup> Amelia Island Concours d' Elegance.



Gene Epstein's 1956 Continental Mark II Derham Victoria Coupe won "Best in Class" at Amelia Island Concours, March 2020.

Shown at right side, rear of vehicle, is Gene's wife, Marlene, and their French Poodle, Augie.