

collectible & classic

May 2016 #56

# RETROAUTOS

## 1954 Firebird I GM's Jet Turbine Classic



Chase Morsey:  
He Saved the  
Ford V8



Styling the '65  
Chevrolet



Henry Ford  
Museum



Classic  
Patents



HQ Monaro GTS





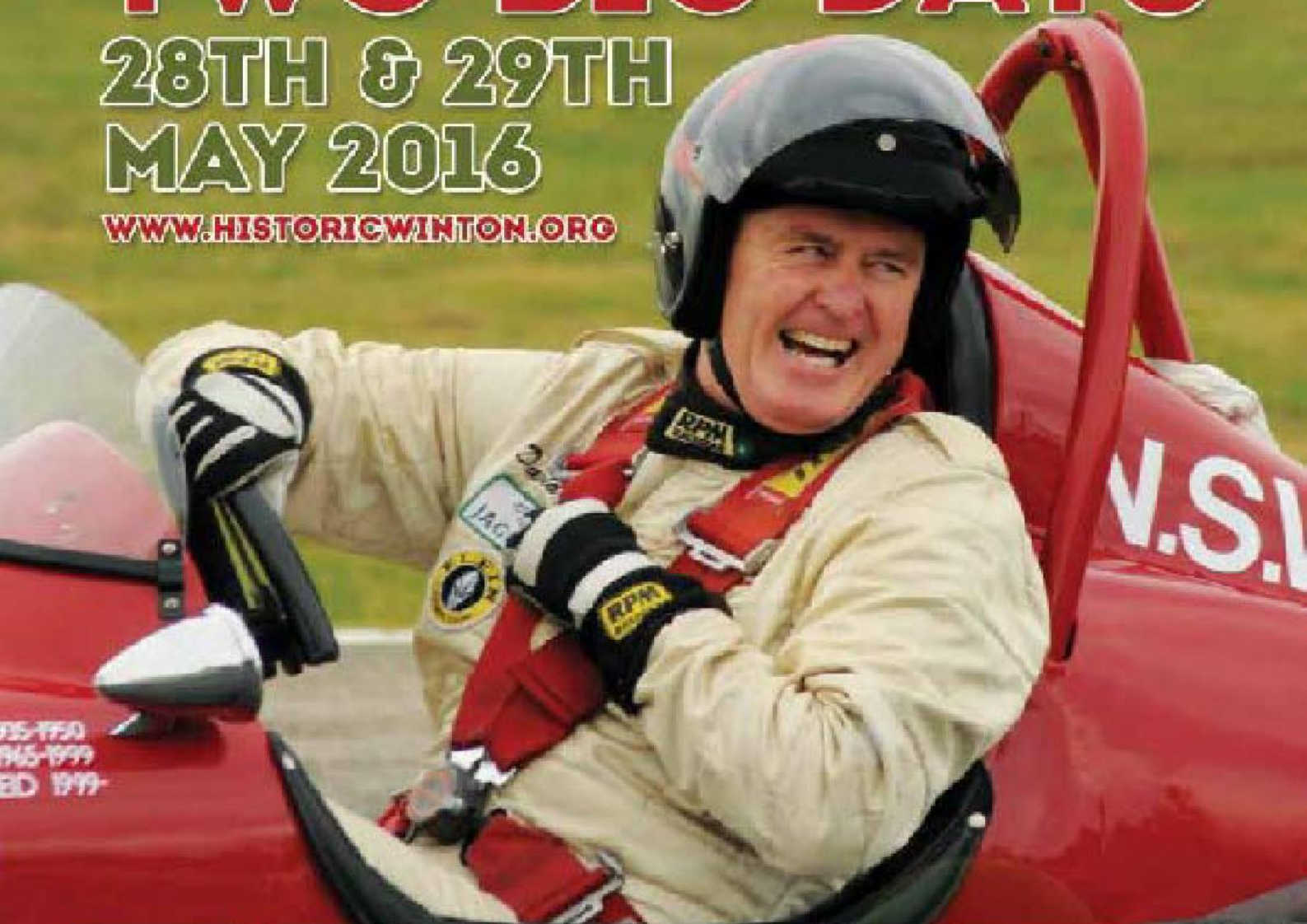
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MAY 2016

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1965-1999  
ED 1999





# In This Issue

## About Us

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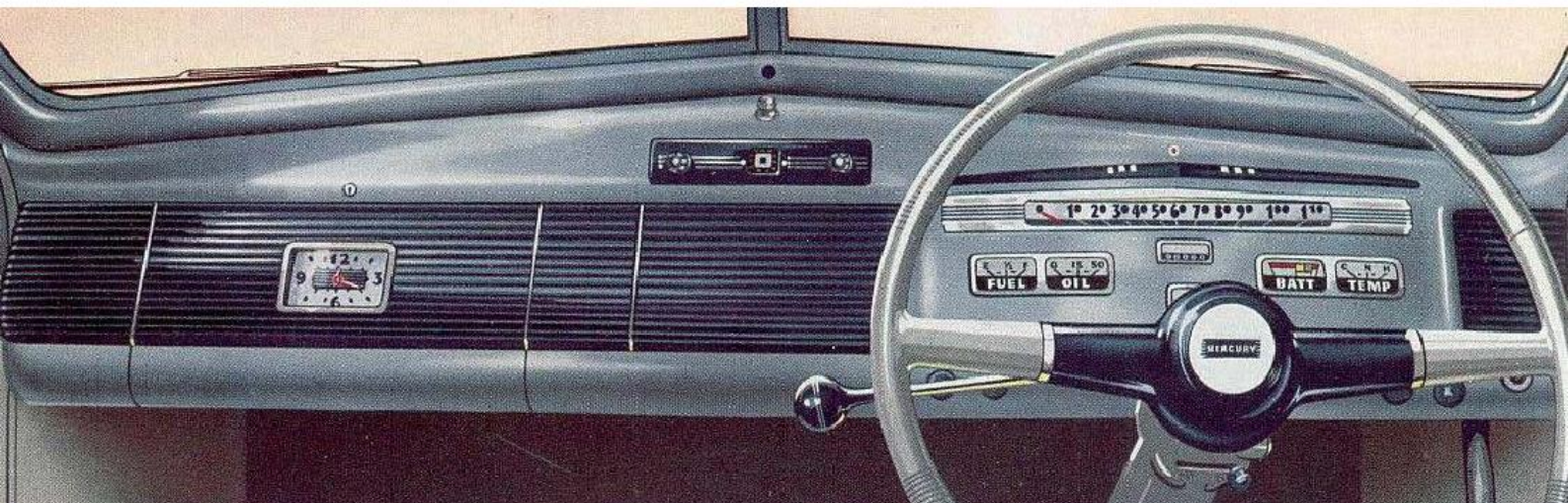
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Front Cover: The GM Firebird I





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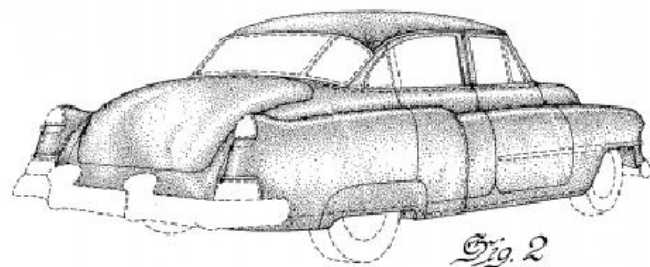
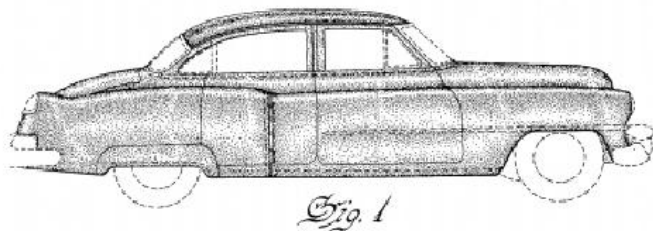
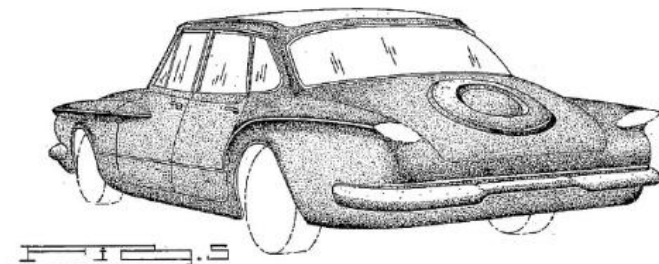
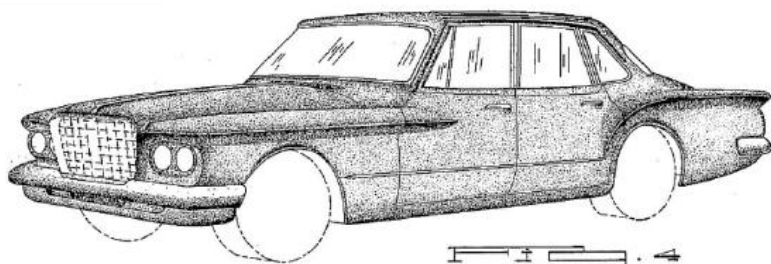
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Patent application drawings for the 1959 Valiant and 1951 Cadillac. See more, starting page 72.

Welcome to the May 2016 edition of Retroautos.

When you think of the Ford V8 engine it is inconceivable to learn that in 1949 Ford executives had made the decision to discontinue the engine Henry Ford made famous.

And then along comes a young Chase Morsey. He had just joined Ford, in 1948, and takes on the mission of telling Henry Ford II and his Board of Directors that they were wrong.

Risking his career, Morsey uses data and consumer research information and convinces Ford's owner to reverse the decision, and the rest is history.

Morsey went on to be integrally involved in many of Ford's iconic successes, including the Thunderbird and Mustang.

Morsey wrote a book about his experience. Go to page 58 and marvel at what Morsey achieved.

Our story last month about the previously secret "FG" Holden sure created a lot of buzz and positive comment.

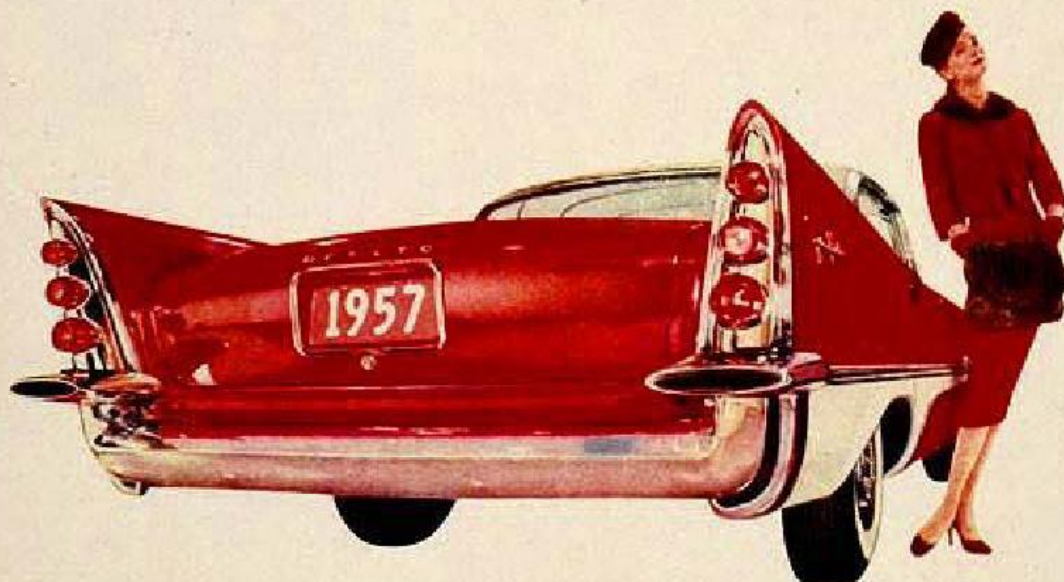
The photos of the car confirm what a number of Holden enthusiasts have long believed but had not been able to establish with any great certainty, other than some vague references in Holden documents from the early 1950s. Well, now we know. The FG existed and was actively considered.

And we have more in the pipeline, so keep tuned.

May 15<sup>th</sup> sees National Motoring Heritage Day across Australia. There's so much happening, but what we here at Retroautos think is missing is one BIG national event that draws national media attention to the world of classic and collectible cars.

We hope you enjoy the 56<sup>th</sup> edition of Retroautos. It is published with passion and with pride.



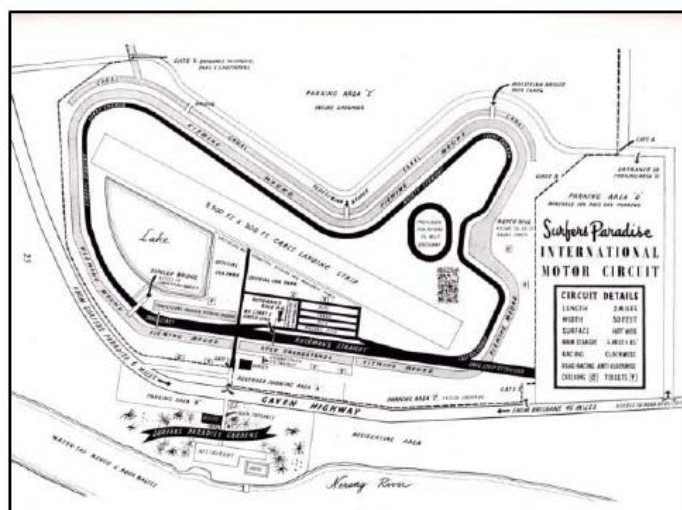


# Retro News

## 50 Years since Surfers Paradise Track Opened.

Drag racers will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of Surfers Paradise International Raceway on April 10th at the site formerly occupied by the Gold Coast track.

The Surfers Paradise circuit, which also incorporated a road course and speedway was given over to real estate development in 1987.



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## Motorsport Legends at Motorexpo

Three of Australia's greatest motor racing legends will make special onstage appearances at Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building for the first-ever FPM Motorexpo on 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April. Allan Moffat, Fred Gibson and John Bowe will be on the Shannons Superstage at 12 noon and 2pm on 10<sup>th</sup> April to talk about their many racing triumphs. They will then sign autographs for their fans before taking in the show, where many of the exhibits have connections with their racing careers.

## Market Sees Slight Increase

The Hagerty Market Rating for North America is up slightly for March 2016, by a mere 0.05 of a point.

Auction sales values increased a little but private sales values were flat.



## NRMA and Classic Cars

In recent times the NRMA roadside assistance organisation has managed the activities of the NRMA Classic Car Club. In an email to club members the NRMA said that they "now believe it is prudent to redirect our focus from directly managing and operating the Club."

## June 2016 in Retroautos

Peter Sara's 1954 Vauxhall Velox has been in his family since new. We chat with him about the car and its history.

In late 1961 General Motors developed a mid-sized concept car called the Solaris. It was the work of three stylists: Carl Renner, Don Lasky and Leo Pruneau. The Solaris was used as the foundation for the styling of the 1964 Opel Kapitän and the HD/HR Holden. With the help of GM Archives and Leo we have found the photos of the never-before-seen Solaris. See it only in Retroautos. Here's a sneak peak.

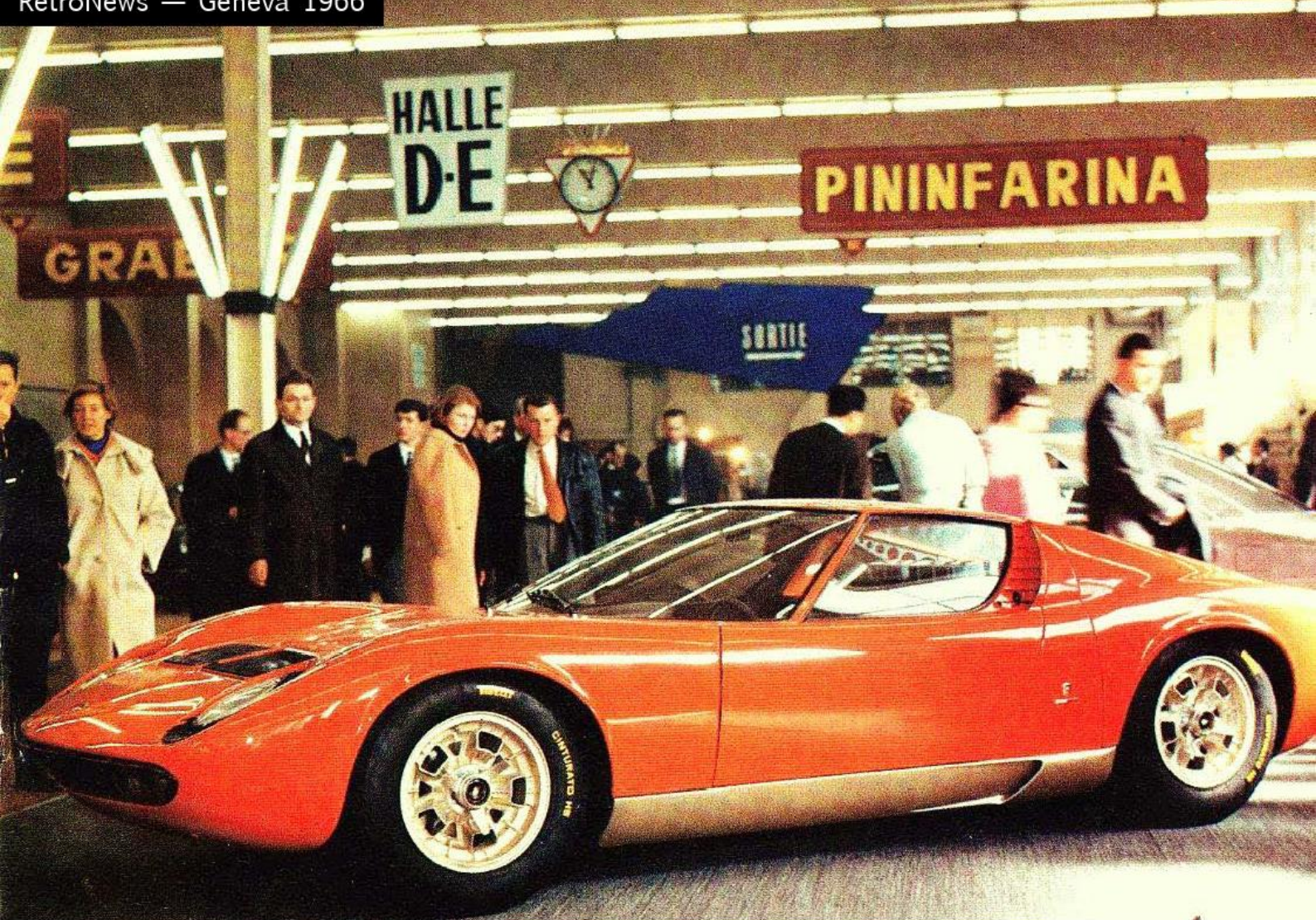


The Chrysler Thunderbolt (pictured below) was one of most technologically advanced and beautiful cars of the 1940s. Celebrate it's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with us in the June 2016 edition.



The NRMA says it wants the Club to transition to a new independent operation. The NRMA once owned the magazine *Australian Classic Cars*, which it shut down a couple of years ago.





# 1966 Geneva Motor Show: Birthplace of Classics

Little did anyone know that the 1966 Geneva Motor Show would contain so many classics of the future.

When tractor manufacturer Lamborghini pulled back the curtain and revealed its stunning Miura to the media and public everyone stood back and said "WOW!!"

This mid-engined automobile, with svelte styling by Bertone, immediately set the template by which all other super cars have

been styled and judged for the past 50 years.

It caused a complete rethink at Ferrari, who had come to Geneva with their usual range their front engined, long nosed cars.

Meanwhile, over at the Vauxhall stand, the GM subsidiary showed off its XVR concept. It was styled by a team led by Leo Pruneau and comprising Wayne Cherry, Jud Holcomb and John Taylor.





Painted in British racing green, it was a two seater that featured no front pillars.

Instead, a spine ran up the middle of the front windscreen and onto it were hinged the gull wing doors.

“We must have gone through 100 windcreens in an effort to fit it all together” Leo told Retroautos.

This year Vauxhall showed off their new GT concept at Geneva, the inspiration for which is said to be the XVR.

Unfortunately, the XVR never went into production.

If you were at Geneva all those years ago, you would have seen the last car Pinnifarina was actively involved in designing.

It was Alfa Romeo’s 1600 Spider duetto. A simple yet elegant shape, the Spider became the less expensive alternative to a Ferrari.

Produced from 1966 to 1993 the basic shaped remained unchanged.

This car gained iconic movie status when it was used by Dustin Hoffman in the 1967 film *The Graduate*.

News continues of page 12.

Below: Vauxhall XVR development team. Left to right are: Wayne Cheery, Jud Holcomb, Leo Pruneau and John Taylor.







Top: The clay design proposal for the Vauxhall XVR. GM images copyright GM Media 2016  
Inset: Vauxhall's latest sports concept the 2016 GT.  
Below Advertising image for the 1600 Spider. The same shape was used from 1966 to 1993.







Top: The car was also offered with a fixed hardtop. Fur coat and snow was optional.  
Below: Dustin Hoffman in the Alfa. The movie accurately portrayed the electrical foibles of the Alfa, including the malfunctioning fuel gauge. Alfa sold 124,104 Spiders during its production run.







In a quiet corner of the Geneva show was the Skoda stand.

The Czechoslovakian manufacturer had survived through two world wars and was now under communist control, but that did not stop it from turning out interesting cars.

Skoda used the Geneva show to debut their small, rear engined two door hardtop, the 1000 MBX. It was based on their four door sedan and featured a 998cc motor.

Only 2517 coupes were made during the period 1966 to 1969.

Using old VW underpinnings the folks at Skoda came up with a car that has slowly gained significant classic status in Europe.

With so few produced, the 1000 MBX (pictured here) is rare and much sought after these days. We could not find a 1000 MBX for sale so we have no price guide for you. Our guess you have to pay whatever a seller wants for these rare cars.

1000 MBX images courtesy of Skoda







## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pininfarina's Death

One month after the '66 Geneva show, the legendary Italian car designer Battista Pininfarina died.

His styling skill was sought by many car makes including GM, Fiat, BMC, Peugeot, Alfa Romeo, Ferrari and Maserati. One of his most enduring, reused and copied design shapes (in two and four doors) arose from his 1957 Lancia Florida II concept, as these images, on the right, show. Although it looked like a two door, the Florida II was a four door.



1957 Lancia Florida II concept

RetroNews



Peugeot 404



Fiat 1800



Dodge Dart



Fiat 130 coupe



Rolls Camargue



Buick La Sabre











# Retro Auctions

This month we focus on Auctions America (which is owned by RM Sothebys) and H&H Auctions in the UK.

Pictured here is a 1956 Lincoln Premiere coupe which goes on the block at Auctions America's May 5<sup>th</sup> event in Auburn, Indiana.

It's a no reserve car with an estimate of \$A57,000

And in the March edition of Retroautos we incorrectly labelled the 1956 Ford Fairlane as a '55 model. Thanks to Trevor Poulsen who pointed out the mistake.

[www.auctionsamerica.com](http://www.auctionsamerica.com)





H&H in the UK are selling what might be the world's most expensive Lagonda 3-Litre Drophead Coupe at their auction on 20<sup>th</sup> April at the Imperial War Museum in London. The car was custom built in 1954 for the Duke of Edinburgh and driven by him until 1961. If you would like to sit where the Duke and Queen have sat, you will need to have about \$A1,000,000, according to the price guide. That's about three to four times the worth of a less royally connected version.







Arm chair style seats cushioned the royal rear from all those pesky bumps.







The Duke's Lagonda during his 1956/57 Royal Tour down under and else where. The car was greeted in Australia by one of the Lagonda's most senior engineers to ensure that it did not disgrace itself at the Melbourne Olympics. Dunlop similarly went to great pains to ensure that all its Australasian branches were stocked with suitable tyres. As you do.



It might look like an ordinary Ford Capri and it is, except for one difference. This one is the original car used in the Minder TV series. H&H have a price guide of \$A192,000 on it.





Above: The no reserve 1956 Lincoln Premiere at Auctions America (AA).

Below: Another no reserve beauty on offer at AA. This time it is a 1968 Chevrolet Impala wagon. Price guide is \$A21,000. We think this is a bargain and parts are cheap and plentiful.







Above: At AA you can get your hands on this ultra rare 1959 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham, hand built in Italy by Pinnifarina. It is number 48 of 101 built. It features a four-speed Hydra-Matic transmission. AA say the owner reports that the air-ride suspension is in working order, which was always the problem with these Eldorados. Costing more than a Roll Royce at the time, it is a no reserve offering with a price guide around \$A140,000





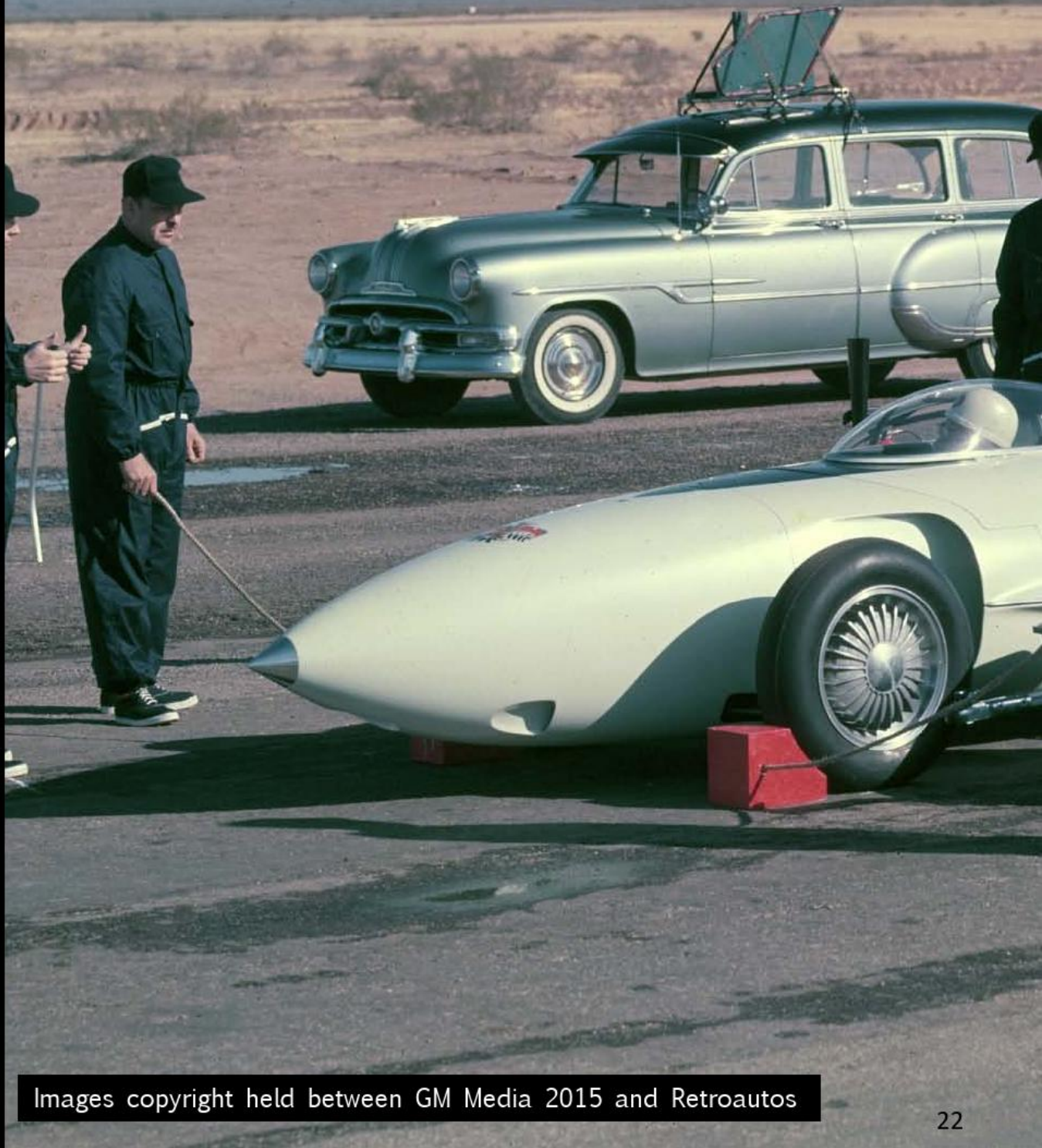


Below: Also a no reserve, with a \$A35,000 price guide is this 1968 Chrysler Newport Custom two door hardtop. These Elwood Engel styled cars reflect his “fill it out to the corners” design approach. While he was at Ford, Engel was responsible for the 1961 Lincoln Continental. When he moved to Chrysler Elwood reused the Lincoln’s sharp edged, long, low oblong styling theme on just about every car in the Chrysler range during the 1960s. (Images thanks to Auctions America)





# Firebird I



Images copyright held between GM Media 2015 and Retroautos



# Experimental Turbine

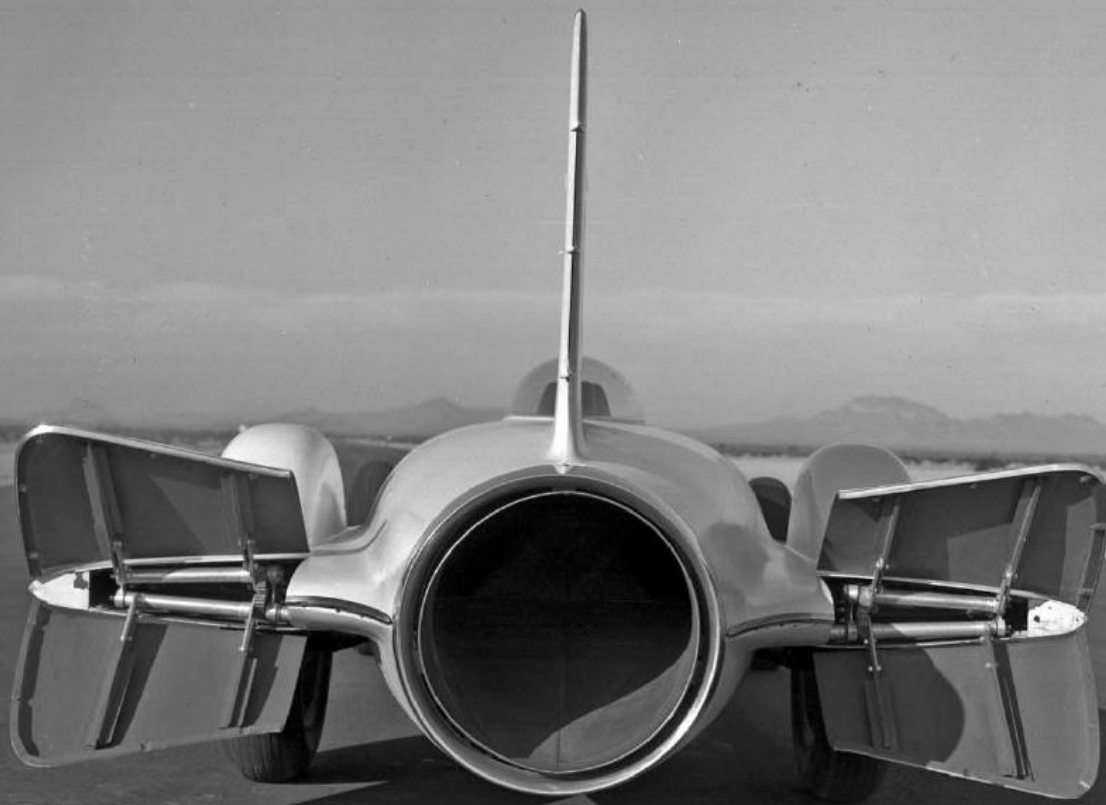






Here's looking at you, kid. The exhaust gases exited at 1300 degrees.





A rare image of the Firebird I airbrakes being deployed

Look! Out on the road! Is it a car?  
Is it a plane?

It's both! It's General Motors (GM)  
Firebird I dream car of 1954.

This concept, labeled XP21 by  
General Motors, brought fighter-jet  
styling, wings, a vertical tail fin and  
jet-turbine engine technology to the  
highway.

It taxied into GM's legendary  
Motorama in January 1954 and  
ignited the debate about feasibility  
of gas turbine engines in automotive  
applications.

The Firebird I was the first gas  
turbine automobile ever to be built

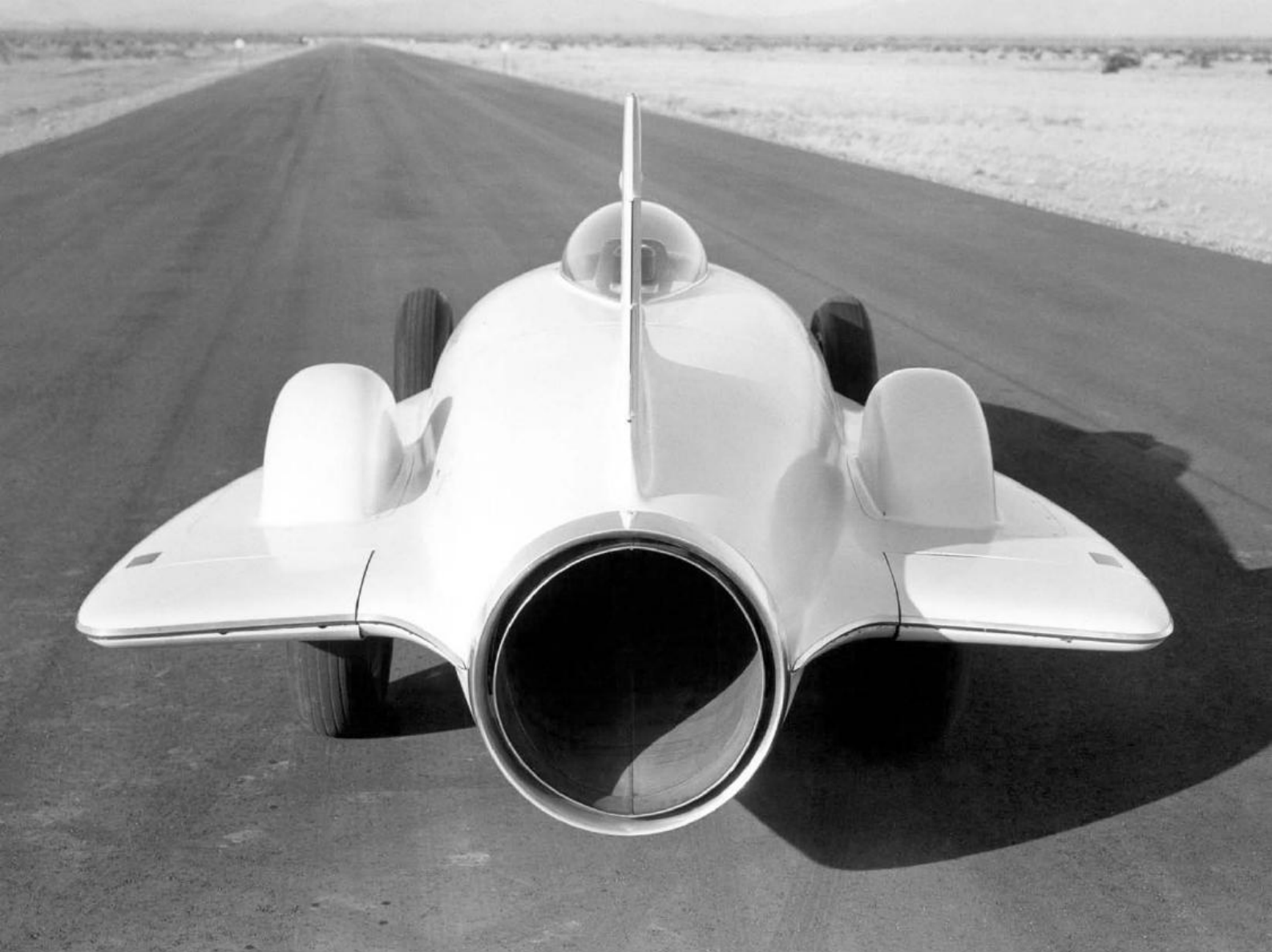
and tested in the United States,  
beating Chrysler's efforts by a  
couple of months.

Powered by a 370-horsepower  
Whirlfire GT-302 Turbo-power gas  
turbine the Firebird I was never  
intended to be put into production.  
It was built only for the test track.

The idea for Firebird 1 originated  
with Harley J. Earl, the GM Styling  
supremo who also designed the  
car's aircraft-inspired fiberglass-  
reinforced plastic body.

The Whirlfire engine was developed  
under the direction of Charlie  
McCuen, then general manager of  
GM's Research Laboratories.





Unlike a jet airplane, which develops thrust through the action of exhaust gas through a tailcone, the Whirlfire engine propelled the Firebird 1 through a power turbine acting on the rear wheels via a transmission.

The engine produced maximum power at a turbine speed of 13,000 rpm.

Problem was, the exhaust gases exited the rear of the car at almost 1300 degrees! This was not a car to tailgate.

Then there was the noise from the “un-muffled” jet engine.

Emmet Conklin, one of the engineers on the project, was the

first to drive the Firebird. He got it up to 160kmph on the first outing.

And that’s when it all went wrong.

As Emmet accelerated down the test track the rear tires lost traction because of the extreme engine torque.

“That’s enough for me” Conklin was reported to have said, or words of a similar nature. Three-time Indianapolis 500 winner Mauri Rose (1941, ’47 and ’48) was then appointed test driver/pilot.

The car was shown at the 1954 GM Motorama where it vied for attention with the Chevrolet Corvette prototype.





Above: Charlie McCuen General Manager of GM's research laboratories stands beside the car at GM's Technical Centre in Michigan. Despite its advanced engine technology the car had drum brakes!

Below: The 'Bird on the test track at GM's Arizona proving grounds.







The exhaust gas temperature and single seat design restricted the versatility and practical application of Firebird I.

In 1956 GM unveiled the Firebird II, a four seater which was firmly aimed at the family. In 1959 the Firebird III appeared, all fins and space age design. Then, in 1964, GM constructed a 4<sup>th</sup> Firebird, pictured at right. This was re-styled in 1969 as the GM Century Cruiser.

The Firebird I still exists, as do II and III. All have pride of place at the GM Heritage Center in Detroit.

A silver replica of the Firebird also sits atop the Harley J. Earl Trophy awarded to the Daytona 500 winner.

1964 Firebird IV. It was crushed in the 1980s.



Rover's 1950 Jet 1 turbine powered car.







Above: All three Firebirds. They are on permanent display at GM's Heritage Centre in Michigan.  
Below: Indy 500 winner and Firebird "test pilot" Mauri Rose with GM styling boss Harley Earl.







The Firebird I shouted out the depth of GM's technological prowess, inventiveness and financial resources in the 1950s. While Rover in the UK and Chrysler in the USA also had turbine cars, none capture the public's imagination as well as the Firebird I, II and III.







Above: Side opening canopy mimicked a jet aircraft.  
Below: Publicity photos like this one reinforced the “jet-age” technology and design of the Firebird















**FIREBIRD**  
by General Motors





The driver sits just ahead of the jet turbine. Cockpit is narrow and small.

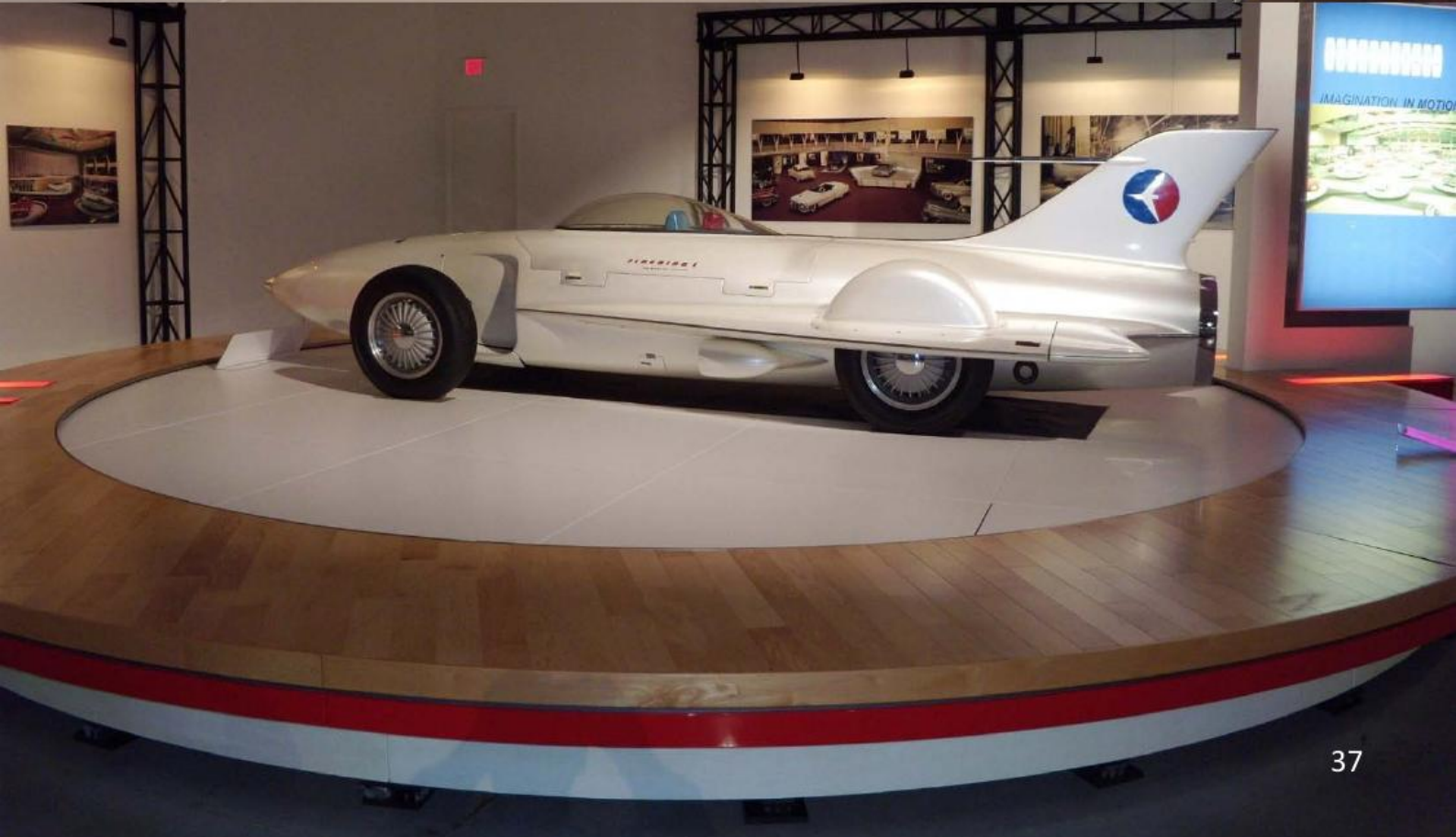
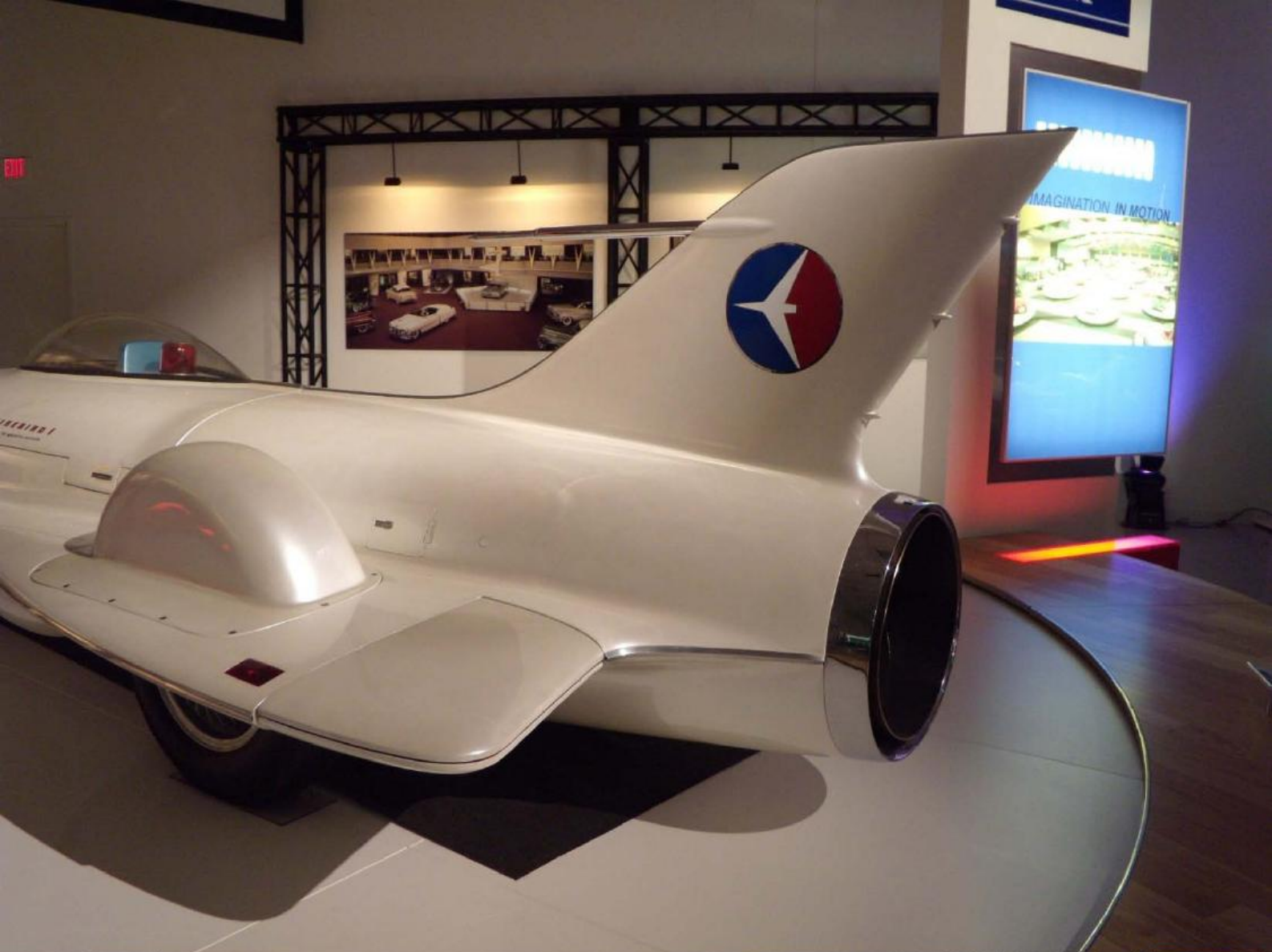




Above and next page: At the GM Heritage Centre, the Firebird I is located on a raised turntable. Below: Hard to miss. The 'Bird is displayed outside of the Heritage Centre.









# The Henry Ford and Classic





# Greenfield Village Museums





The entrance to the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village



If you are a classic car tragic then the Henry Ford and Greenfield Village complex in Dearborn, USA, will be on your bucket list.

This vast shrine to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century and its achievements is crammed full of the historic, the exotic, the weird, the classic, the everyday and the mundane.

Henry's original quadricycle is here. And so too is Jim Clark's 1965 Indy 500 winning Lotus.

Want to sit on the actual seat in the actual bus in which civil rights hero Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a young white man? It is here too.

There's trains, stage coaches, four Presidential limousines, including the one that John Kennedy was in when he was assassinated.

The chair on which Abraham Lincoln was sitting in when he was shot is here.

And then there are the cars, of all description and brand name. From a rare Bugatti to a 1967 Toyota Corona, to a '55 Chevrolet, to the first Mustang built, it's all here.

Henry started collecting "relics", as he called them, in 1914. Six years earlier his Model T had been released and now the money was pouring into his bank account.

"I am collecting the history of our people as written into things their



The 1965 land speed record breaker, the Golden Rod, is one of the Museum exhibits.



hands made and used. I think this is the best way of preserving our history and tradition", he once said.

By the early 1920s, the collection was growing exponentially, so Henry moved it all into a vacated tractor assembly building he owned in Dearborn.

But the collecting continued and Henry soon realised he needed a bigger place.

And so the Museum and Village idea was developed. Construction work began in 1928 and is ongoing.

The Village reflects Ford's idea of the "perfect" town at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It is eerily similar to Main Street at Disneyland.

Model T Fords and horse drawn carriages cruise the neat streets and families picnic on the manicured lawns.

The Wright brothers' workshop was rebuilt in the Village.

There's a replica of Thomas Edison's laboratory and recreations of his most famous inventions.

Ford's first factory building is here, too.

After Henry died in 1947 the Museum continued to collect.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, Museum staff placed new emphasis on items that were intrinsically beautiful and worth collecting, especially fine furniture and folk art.

During this time, the museum also acquired an enormous Allegheny steam locomotive and a DC3 airplane.

By the 1980s, many people recognised that the museum's collections were unique and "unparalleled."







The actual bus on which Rosa Parks made her defiant declaration in December 1955, in Alabama, when she refused to give up her seat to a young white male and go stand down the back of the bus. You can sit in the seat she sat in, as President Obama did, and so too us.







This 1903 Packard was the second car driven coast to coast across the USA, taking 61 days.

Henry Ford's original Quadricycle is on display.



At this time the collection was so huge much of it was in storage and largely inaccessible to museum staff and the public.

Since then much work has been done to ensure as much as possible is on display.

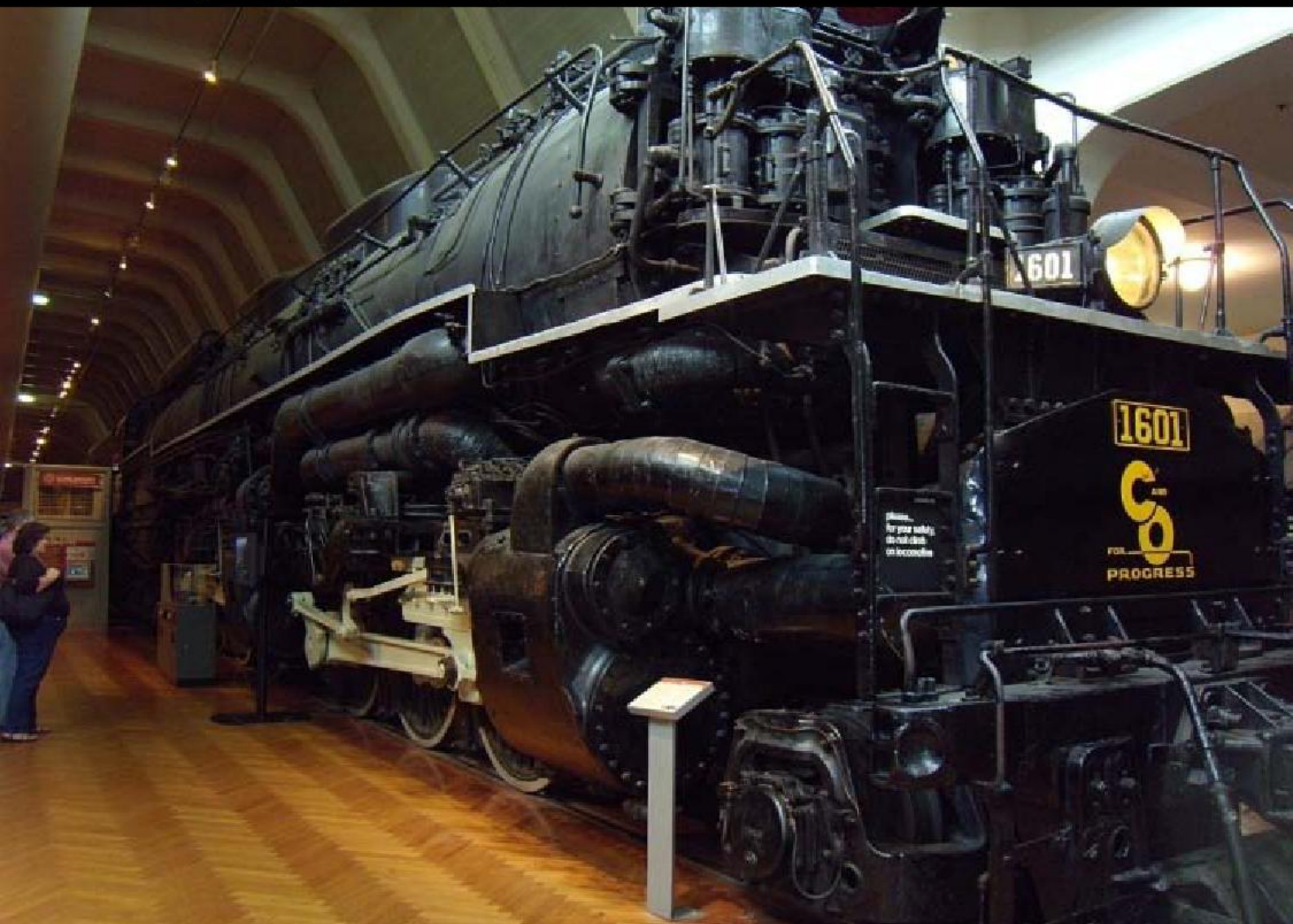
The Retroautos team has visited the Museum and Greenfields Village. It is one of the great auto museums in the world. It should be on all classic automobile enthusiasts' bucket list.

Three days is needed to properly tour the Museum and the Village. Then it's back to the grim reality of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Detroit.





Above: Oh, yes, the hot dog car is here too.  
Below: The huge Allegheny steam engine, indoors..







Above: An art deco styled Dodge Texaco fuel tanker.  
Below: A Bugatti Royale stands next to one of nine remaining Chrysler Turbine cars







Above: 1956 Chevrolet under an old McDonalds sign. That's Lamy's roadside diner in the background, where you can order your burger, fries and shake and dream about being on Route 66. It was a real diner, built in 1946, and transported to the Museum in 1987.

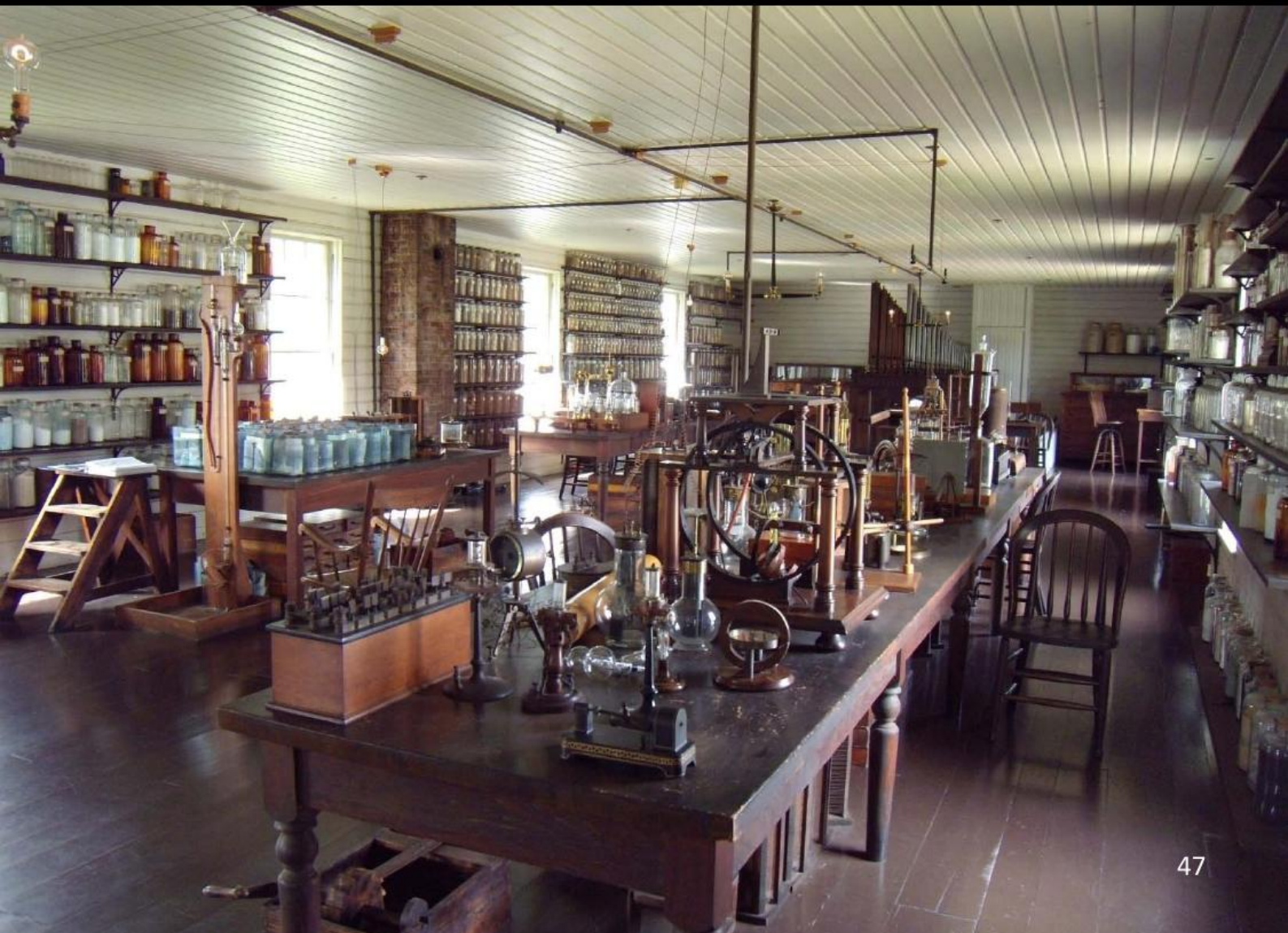
Below: Yep, stage coaches and all manner of transport from the 1800s.







Above: The reconstructed Thomas Edison laboratories in Greenfield Village.  
Below: Inside the lab are reconstructions of all the ideas he worked on. Simply amazing.







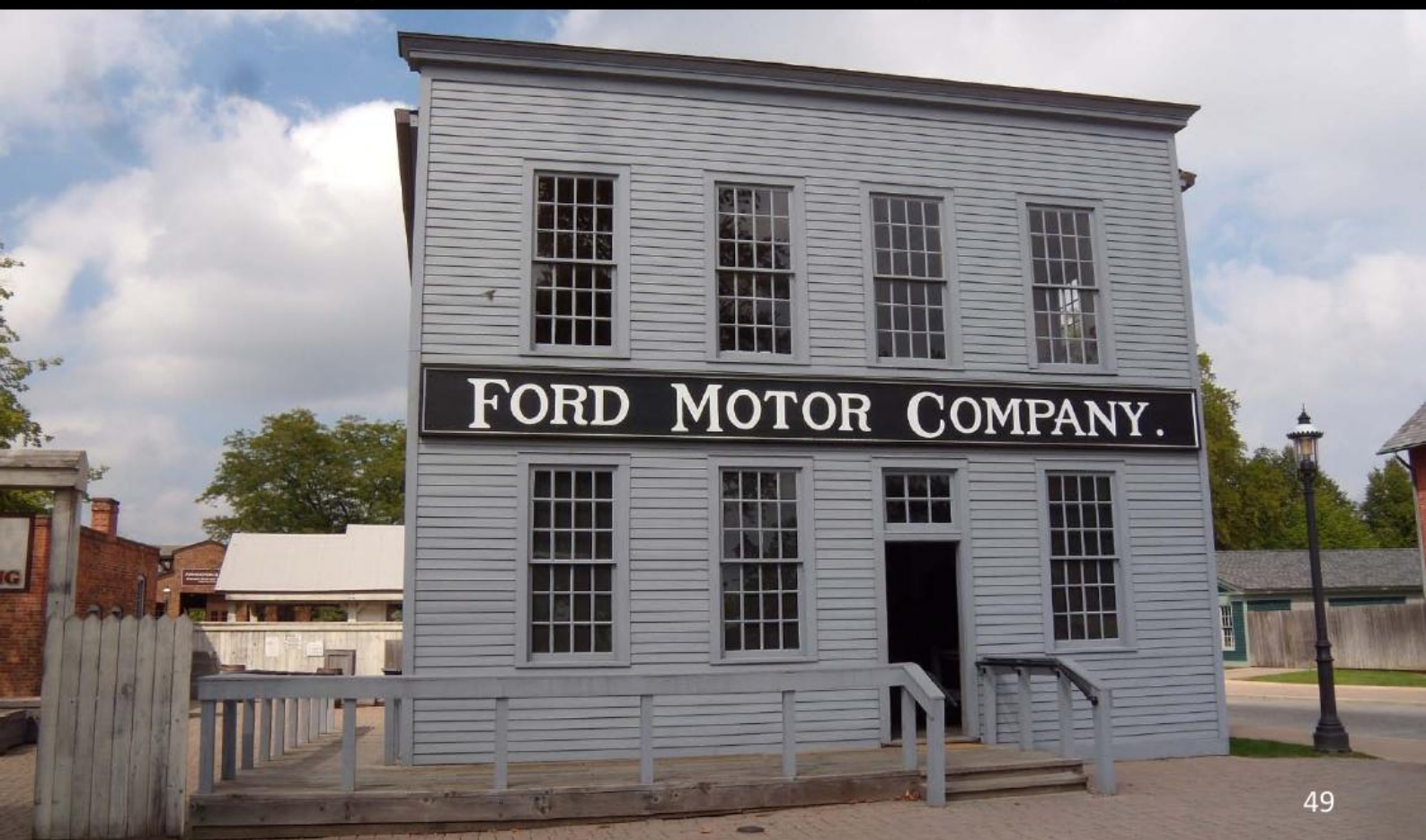
Above: Ford had the Wright Bros shop rebuilt at Greenfield Village.  
Below: Despite delivering mass transport on a global scale, Ford always longed for the “simple life” of his youth. The Village has horse drawn carriages, and Model Ts circulate all the time.







Above: Model T rides cost \$US10 per passenger and the drivers know everything about Ford, the Museum and the Village. The Village sits on 80 acres. The streets and grounds are kept pristine. A lake is located in the middle. There's a working farm of the late 1800s.  
Below: Ford's first factory, one of 83 American historical buildings in the Village.





# Dream GTS-







“I had two basic choices. I could faithfully restore it as a Kingswood or rebuild it as a car I’d dreamt of owning.”





The basic Kingswood starts its transformation into a GTS.







# Monaro

Tim Kolloosche has always been a HQ Holden guy.

“My Dad bought me one to work on when I was twelve. I fixed it up during my apprenticeship,” he says.

So when he began thinking about to restoring a HQ Holden Kingswood he’d bought off eBay he faced a “classic” decision.

It had only 50,000 miles on it and the body was in ok condition.

Mechanically the car was also in reasonable condition. But Tim had a decision to make.

He recalls the situation.

“I had two basic choices. I could faithfully restore it as a basic Kingswood or rebuild it as a car I’d dreamt of owning when I was a young boy”, he says.

The dream won hands down.

It took Tim a long six years to complete the project, but he is now the proud owner of a ruby red four door Monaro GTS.

“I’ve also been able to secure the same number plates that were on my Dad’s HQ Holden when it was new,” he says.





Back to the bare metal for Tim's Kingswood.

Owning the Motorvation Custom Paint and Panel in Melbourne sure helped Tim with the restoration knowledge and skills, however all of the work was done in his spare time.

"My business was just starting so naturally I devoted all my working time to customer's cars. The Monaro was completed on the weekends and at night," he says.

The restoration involved Tim and his son Alex stripping back the car to its bare shell and chassis. The body panels were sandblasted back to bare metal and painted it all in the gleaming red colour.

"We re-hung all the panels and doors to close the gaps and get them as tight as possible," Tim says.

Tim decided to replace the soft Kingswood springs with the sportier RTS components, upgrade the brakes to discs all round, create a new interior; insert a new "350" V8 and convert the fuel system to LPG.

"It runs only on LPG," says Tim.

"There's custom built LPG tank designed to fit under the boot floor which eliminates those big cylinders you see in the boots of taxis," he tells us.





The result of all this attention to detail is a show stopper classic Holden.

"I use it on the weekend and drive it to work once or twice a week," Tim says.

Lucky tim, we say.











From Kingswood to GTS, the transformation took Tim six long years while he built up his panel beating and restoration business.

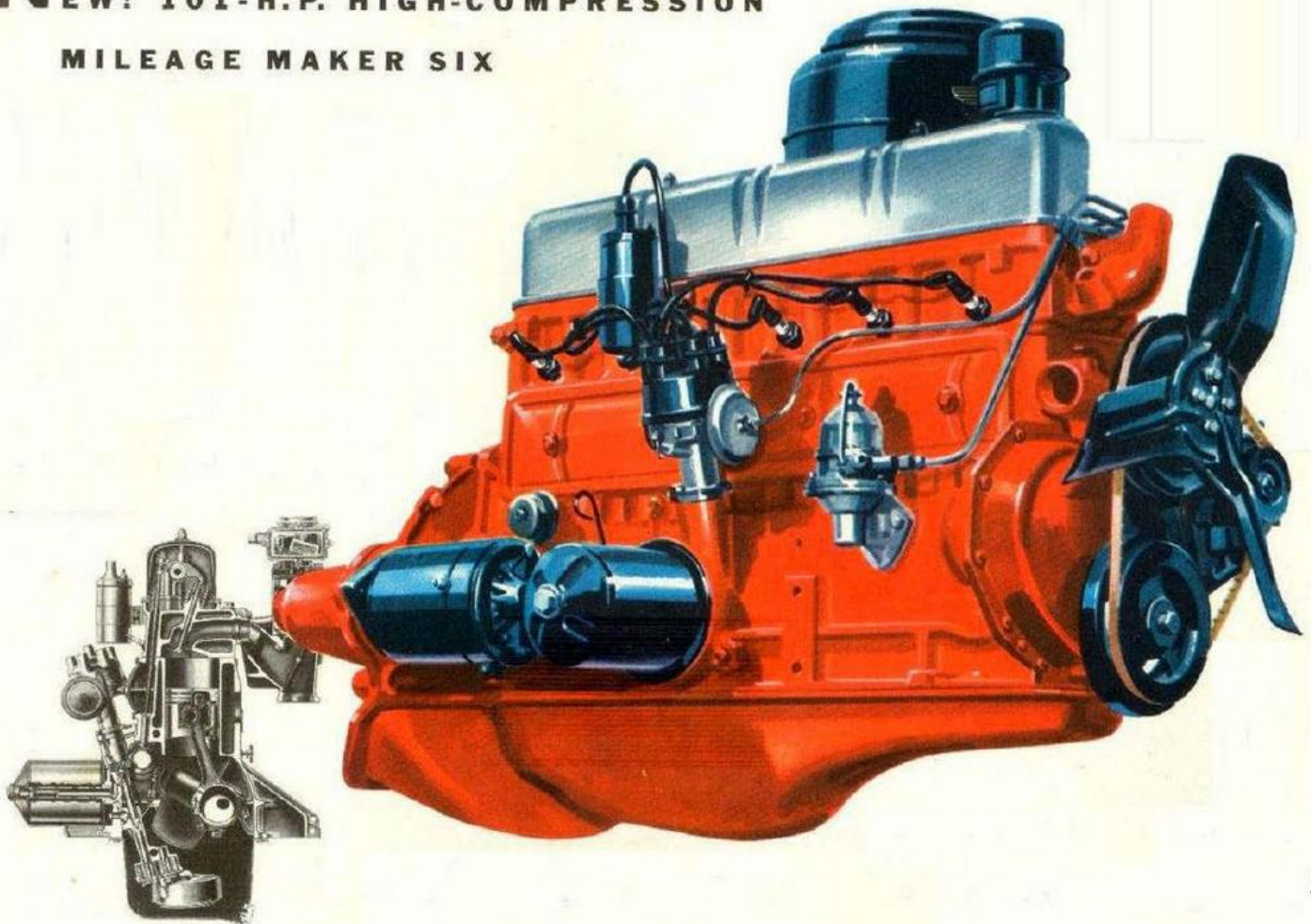




# Chase Morse

“...Morse thought getting rid of the V8 and replacing it with a six was a crazy idea and said so, risking his career....”

**N**EW! 101-H.P. HIGH-COMPRESSION  
MILEAGE MAKER SIX

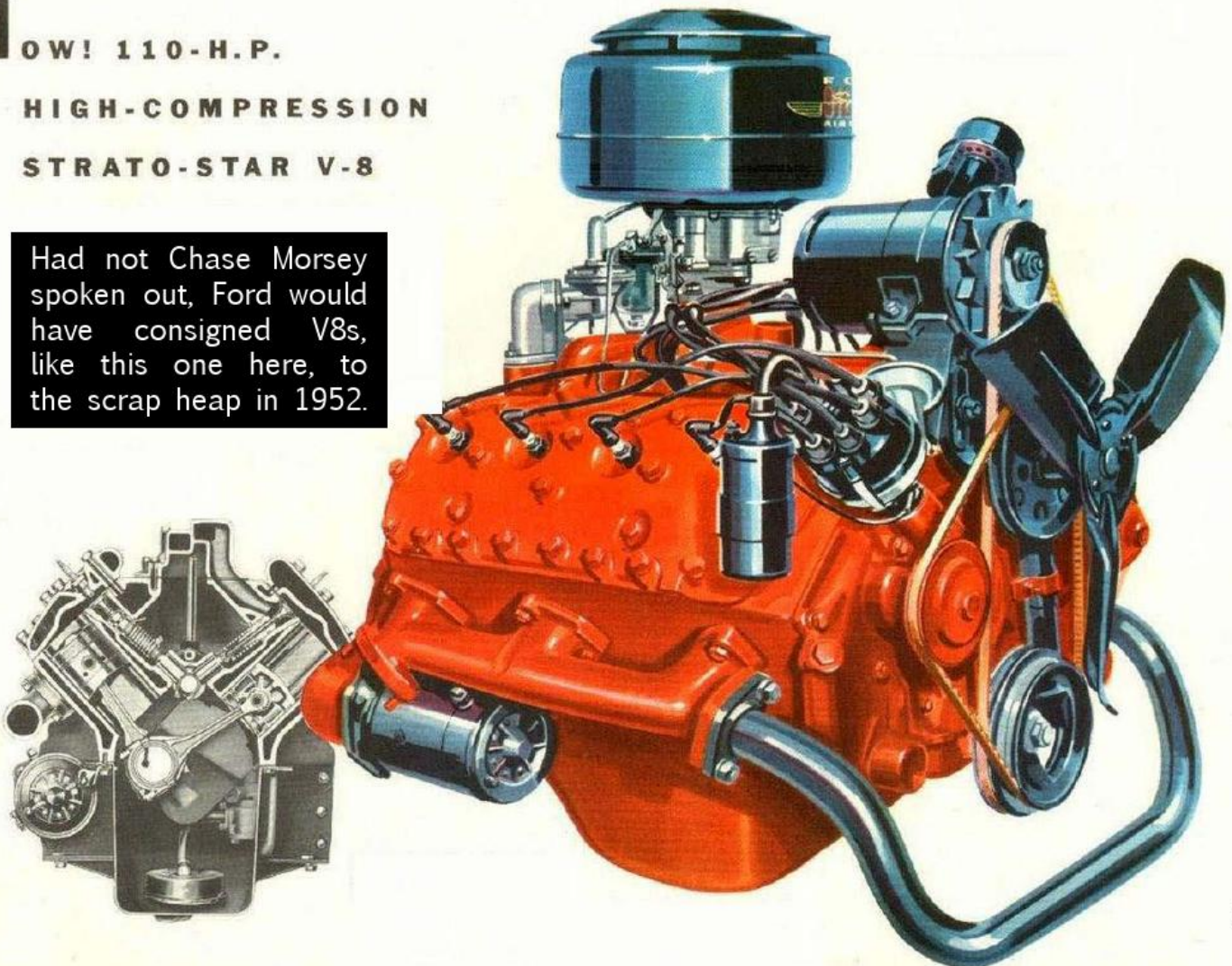




# The Man Who Saved the Ford V8

**N**OW! 110-H.P.  
HIGH-COMPRESSION  
STRATO-STAR V-8

Had not Chase Morsey spoken out, Ford would have consigned V8s, like this one here, to the scrap heap in 1952.





Chase Morsey, known as the man who saved the Ford V8, died February 25th at age 96.

Morsey joined Ford in 1948 as a trainee. As a new manager Chase was given Ford's future product plans to review. These plans had been approved by the Ford Board and Henry Ford II himself.

What he read was that the company was planning to discontinue its V8 and use six cylinder motors across the Ford range beginning in 1952.

There was no empirical evidence for this decision, rather the "gut feel" was that because Chevrolet only used six cylinder engines, then Ford should do similar.

Being a real car guy and Ford fanatic Morsey thought getting rid of the V8 and replacing it with a six was a crazy idea and said so, risking his career.

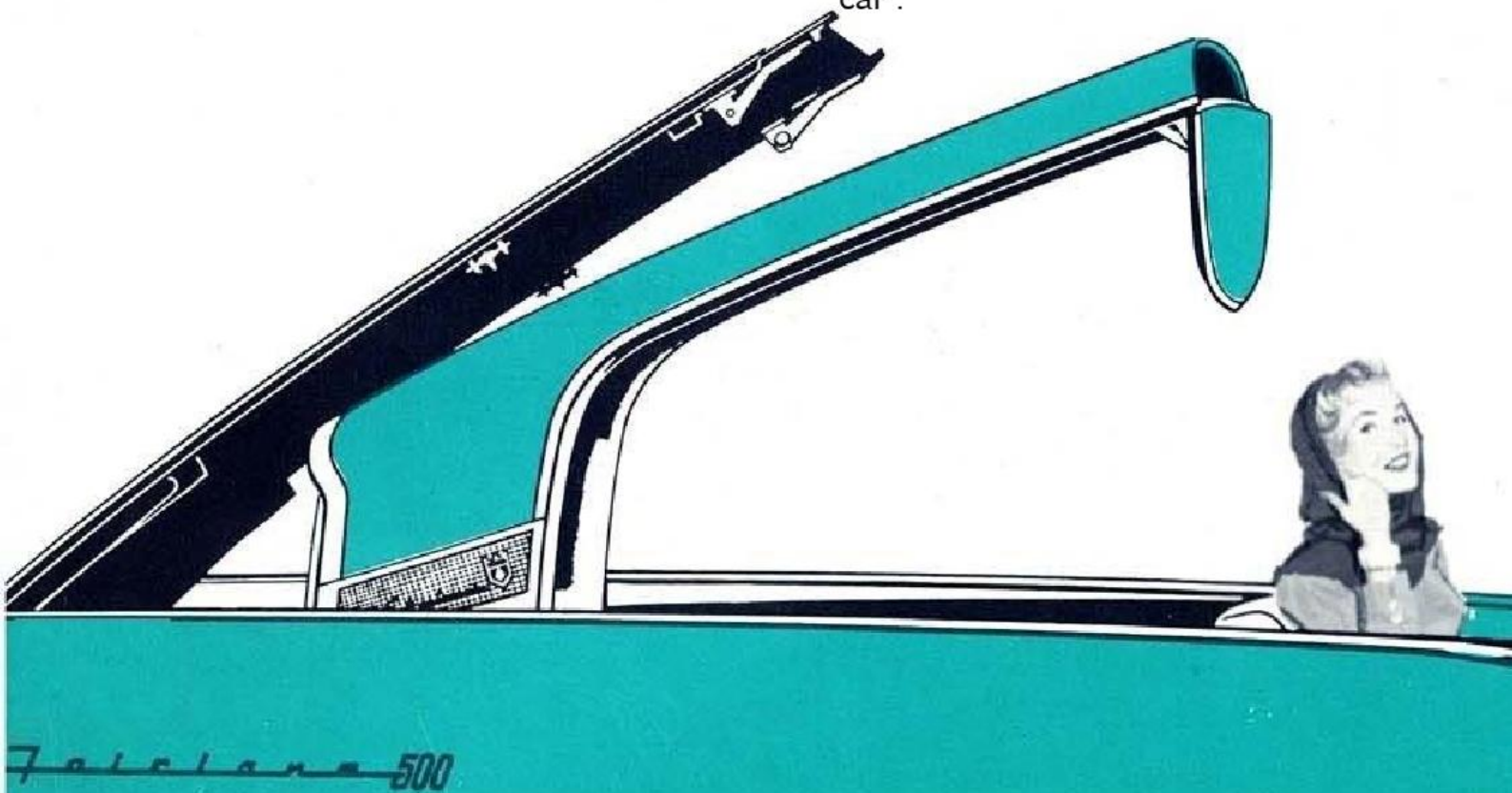
He believed that the V8 was part of Ford's DNA and to get rid of it risked a sales catastrophe.

He also predicted that Chevrolet would unveil a V8 during the early to mid-fifties, and if that was the case, Ford would be at a BIG disadvantage.

More to shut him up than anything else, senior management gave the young Morsey just three months to prove his claims.

So compelling was his consumer based research and subsequent presentation to Henry Ford II, in April 1949. That not only was the V8 reinstated, but Morsey was given a promotion and tasked with setting up a forward product planning department, based on detailed research, not "gut feel".

Morsey's new department identified the market for the Thunderbird, for which he invented the term "personal car".





Morsey was instrumental in the packaging and development of the '57 Ford, recommending its two wheelbase approach, 116 inches for the low priced Custom models and 118 inches for the upmarket Fairlanes.

He also championed the retractable roofed Skyliner, which was advertised as the Hide-A-Way Hardtop.

So successful was the 1957 range that Ford came within a couple of hundred cars of beating Chevrolet.

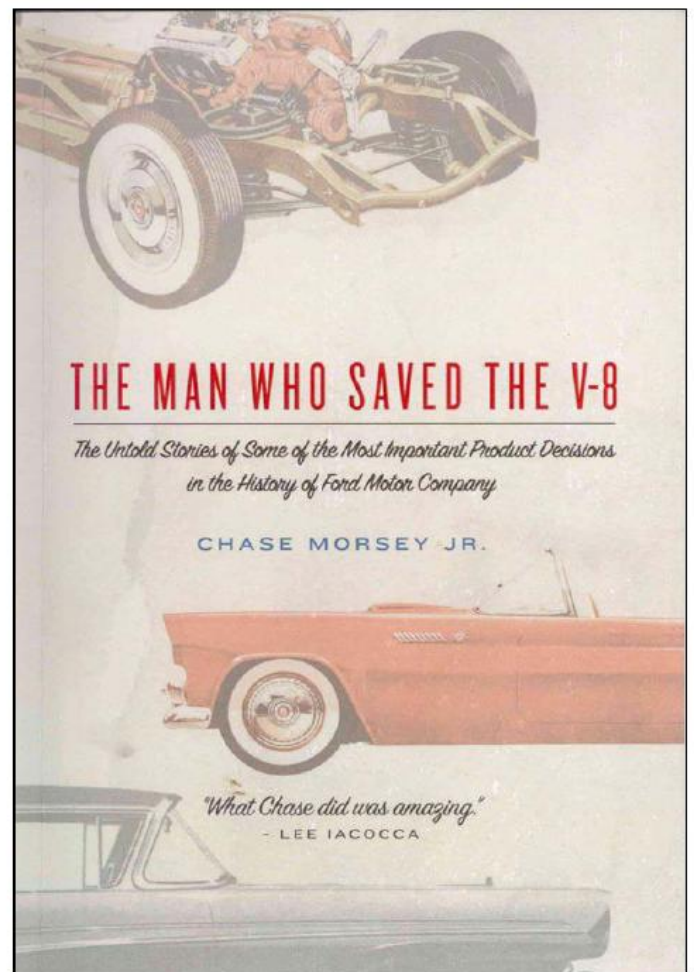
Chase then went on to hold various senior roles in Ford, and was in charge of marketing the Mustang.

Morsey left Ford in 1964 and opened his own Ford dealership in Arizona.

After that he went to RCA as its Chief of Marketing. In 1970 he established his own oil company.

Chase was a mate of Ronald Reagan's and played a weekly game of golf with the former President.

His book, published in 2013 is called "*The Man Who Saved The V8*". It is a must-read.





1957 Ford Skyliner



Newest new kind of Ford now in production

## THE BIRTH OF A MECHANICAL MIRACLE

The amazing story behind a startling new advance in cars, the car with the hide-away steel top—how Ford developed it and made it . . . and at low Ford prices

It all began with the misuse of a couple of words back in 1948.

Just shortly after the war ended, automobile manufacturers started making two-door sedans without center posts. They called these cars "hardtop convertibles." Remember?

*Only they wouldn't convert!*

That was challenge enough for the engineers at Ford. "Why not," they asked, "build an all-steel hardtop that really *would* convert?"

Most of the automobile industry said it couldn't be done. A *true* hardtop convertible couldn't be built.

Well, the car that "couldn't be built" is at Ford dealerships across the land—today!

It's a steel-top sedan with all its snugness and safety. But it's *also* a convertible—with all the wide-open freedom that any sun worshiper ever could want!

Ford built it. And it's just about the most

revolutionary change in transportation since the Ford replaced the horse on the American Road.

When you first watch this all-metal top retract into the rear deck of Ford's new Skyliner it looks like a miracle. But it's no miracle to the Ford engineers who built it.

The same kind of miracles are daily routine for these master planners. They're the kind of miracles that go into every Ford car. Now turn the page and see how this miracle car works . . .



Here's how the world's only Hide-Away Hardtop operates at the touch of a button



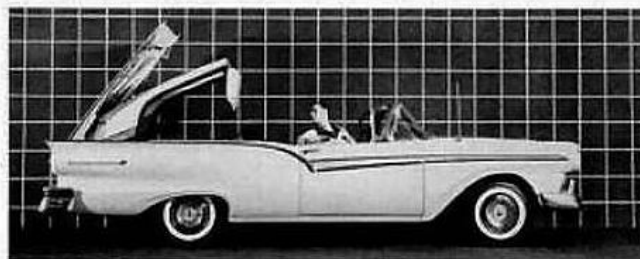
1. The magic begins when you touch the button marked "Top" . . .



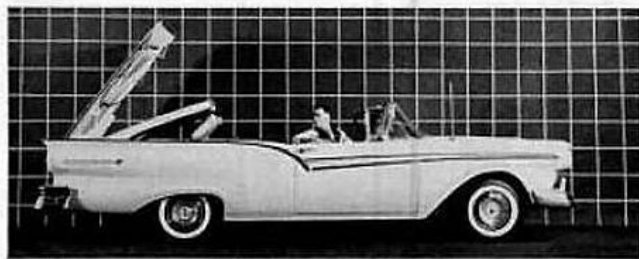
2. Smoothly, electric motors lift the rear deck lid . . .



3. And then the top separates from the body . . .



4. Up and back goes the top. Front piece folds down . . .



5. Lower and lower sinks the top. Front piece tucks under . . .



6. Now the rear deck lid starts to lower itself . . .



7. Down . . . down . . . goes the deck lid . . .



8. And there you are . . . in the smoothest convertible ever!

Ford's introduction of the Skyliner, world's only all-steel hide-away hardtop, represents the beginning of a new era in automotive design. This newest new kind of Ford brings the motoring public the most exciting idea in automobile design since Ford presented the first two-door sedan in 1915.

If you are planning to buy *any* new car—no matter what kind—the fact that Ford created this car is important to you. For all the exhaustive research, planning and testing that went into the Skyliner is dramatic proof of the engineering skill you get in every Ford model.

So plan to see this history-making car, this prototype of a whole future generation of cars. It's ready for your own personal inspection now in the showrooms of many Ford Dealers. And ask your Dealer to show you the exciting advances in *all* models of the new Ford line for '57. For all the Skyliner's fabulous engineering is based on the very same "Inner Ford" that has proved the sensation of the industry in all 21 Ford models. These cars surround the rugged "Inner Ford" with the year's most successful styling—neither freakishly radical nor staidly conservative. And the heart of the "Inner Ford,"

of course, is its V-8 engine, made by the makers of 23,000,000 V-8's—more than all other car manufacturers combined.

Perhaps the most surprising news of all about this Ford Skyliner is its low price. A comparison of manufacturers' suggested retail prices shows only four "soft top" convertibles (including a Ford) are priced less than the Skyliner!

So plan to stop in soon and see your Ford Dealer. After you've watched this mechanical phenomenon go through its quick-change routine a few times, we believe you'll agree that a whole new age of automobiles begins with this car.



# RetroSpective

RetroSpective brings you stories from previous editions of Retroautos which are no longer available on the internet.



All images copyright GM Media 2015



# Design to Driveway

## Styling the 1965 Chevrolet







MADLER  
10-1-62

44694



CHEVROLET '65



Three renderings of '65 Chevrolet proposals from 1962.

2658  
1-14-62





Looking somewhat like a '65 Chevrolet, this clay was done in April 1962.



According to the late David Holls, the former Director of Corporate Design at GM, the 1965 Chevrolet range was one of GM's finest range of cars.

It was "far superior to any of GM's competitors", he said.

"The Chevrolet version had a massive grace to its shape", he added.

And David Holls ought to know what he is talking about. He was the guy who put the fins on the 1959 Cadillac, he helped shape the 1963 Corvette, the 1966 Buick Riviera, the very successful 1970 Chevrolet Monte Carlo and the smooth, elegant 1970½ Chevrolet Comaro.

Work on the 1965 Chevrolet started in January 1962, with a series of side profile renderings. Like all full-sized GM cars of the era, the big Chevys were a derivative of the corporate design theme that introduced curved side glass, the rear



mudguard "hip" and more rounded body shapes.

By December 1962 Chevrolet stylists had developed two similar concepts, which were then converted into full sized clay models.

The two clay models captured many of the visual motifs of the production model, especially around the rear end.

More work needed to be done but essentially the final car was an amalgamation of the two clay prototypes you see on these pages.

While the sedans and 4 door hardtops were progressing, the shape of the coupe, especially the roofline, was more contentious. No one could agree what it should look like.

It is here the story gets interesting because the roof line of the 1965 coupes has a strong Australian link





By December 1962, with the snow on the ground in GM Styling's viewing courtyard, the familiar shape of the 1965 Chevrolet was clearly evident in these two proposals. Compare them with the final production version of the car, pictured at right, and signed off in September 1963, one year ahead of its public debut. The production car has sharper edges and stiffer roof line.







to Leo Pruneau, former design supremo at Holden. Retroautos spoke to Leo about the Chevrolet coupe and he picks up the story.

"I was working in small design studio with a couple of clay modellers. I had just finished the HD Holden station wagon, this was about July or August 1962. We'd done what we could there, and we had a little bit of a lull. So I said to myself that we'd better look

"busy and we started to shape a semi-fastback the roof line and upper body of a coupe in clay. It had no front end nor rear end, not even sides, just the upper body and roof."

According to Leo, Bill Mitchell came into the studio one day and looked at what they were doing and yelled out: "That's it! That's the way it should be". And then he walked out.







Two versions of the '65 coupe. The one pictured above has a notchback roof line, while the one below has the Leo Pruneau semi-fastback styling.







Leo recalls: "Next thing I knew the Chevrolet group came and took it away and the next I saw of it was on one the '65 Chevrolet coupe proposals."

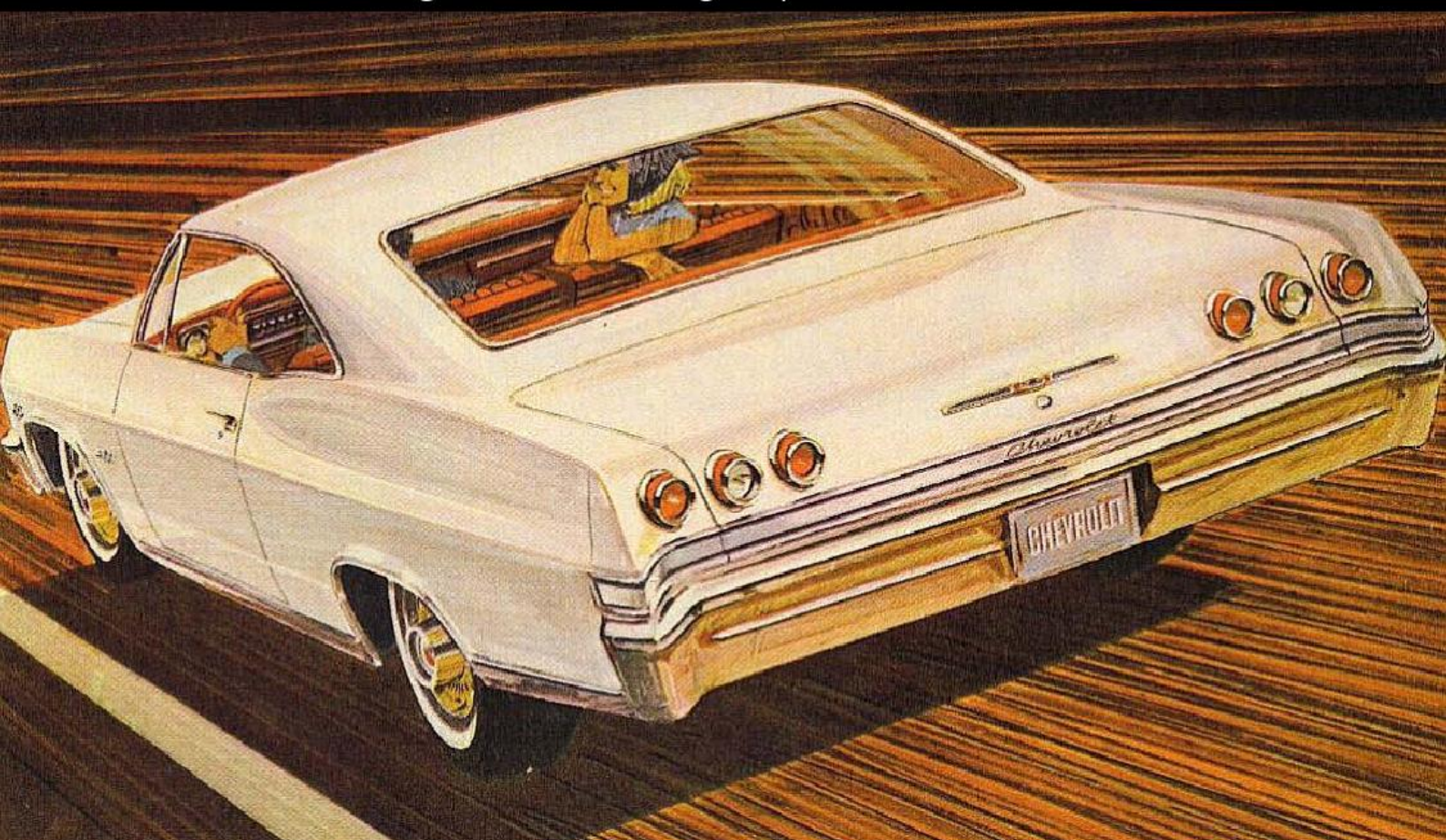
But there's even more to this story. Let's hear from David Holls again.

"The studios were past deadline with the coupes, and Bill Mitchell, the boss of GM design, needed an immediate decision from GM President, John Gordon. Mitchell showed him two ideas, a notchback coupe and another example with a semi-fastback roof line. Gordon really had no appreciation for what he was looking at and commented that both looked almost the same," Holls said.

Gordon's indifference made Mitchell almost choke, according to Holls.

Needless to say, the semi-fastback got Mitchell's vote, and it went into production, and became a strong styling image for Chevrolet coupes for the next five years.

Above: Side views of the two coupe proposals.  
Below: Wonderful advertising artwork for the big coupe.





# Classic Patents

Dec. 3, 1935.

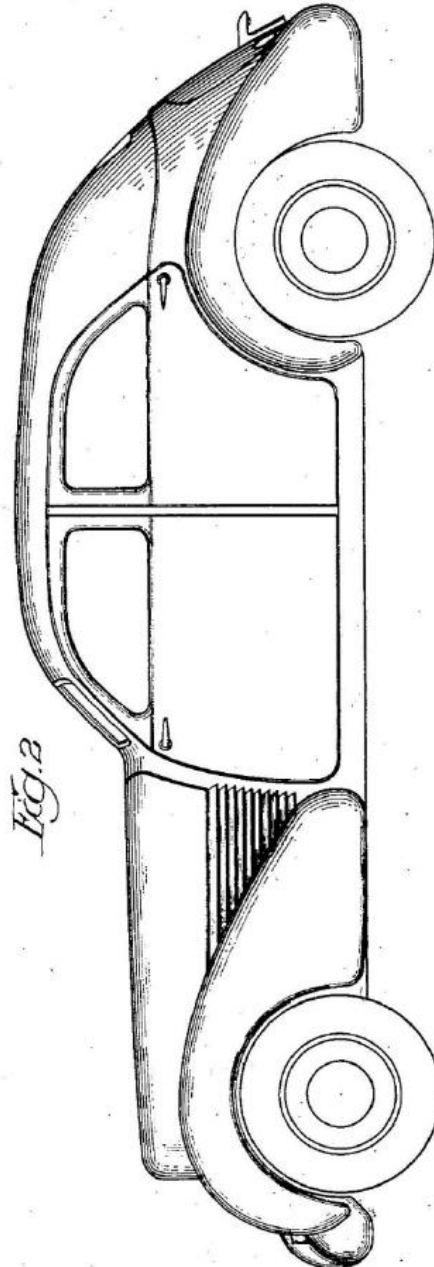
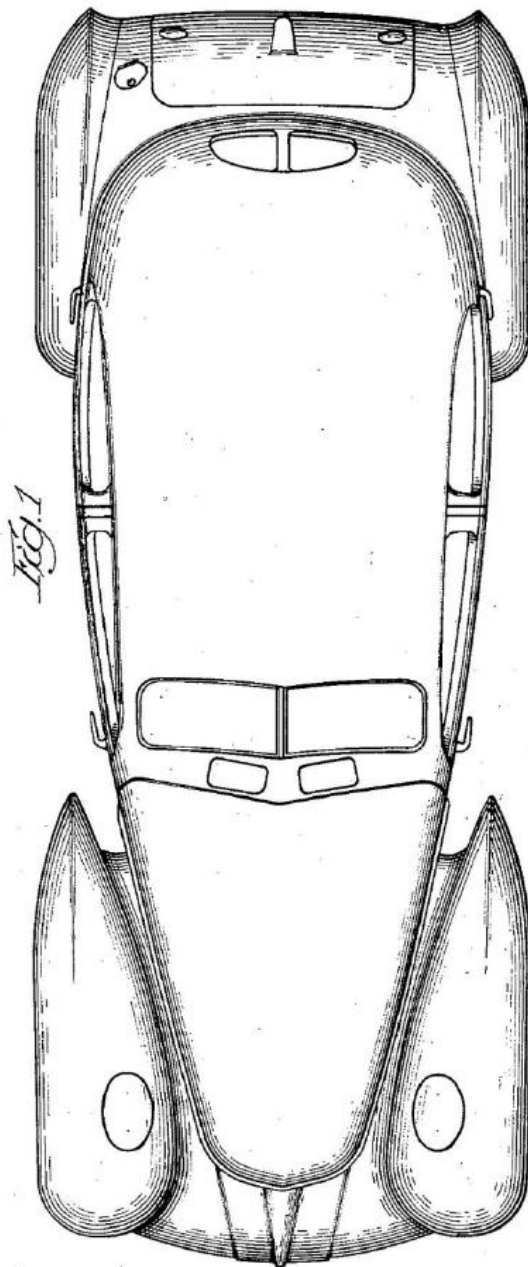
G. M. BUEHRIG

Des. 97,697

AUTOMOBILE

Filed Aug. 5, 1935

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



Inventor  
Gordon Miller Buehrig  
By Fred Gulach Atty.

Gordon Buehrig's patent for the Cord 810.



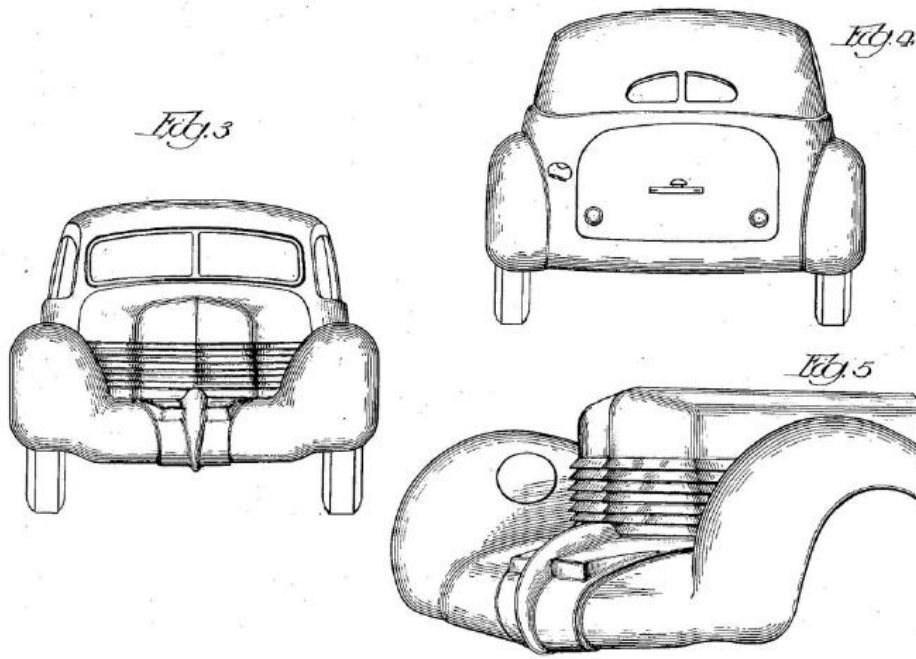
Dec. 3, 1935.

G. M. BUEHRIG  
AUTOMOBILE

Des. 97,697

Filed Aug. 5, 1935

2 Sheets-Sheet 2



*Inventor:  
Gordon Miller Buehrig  
By Fred Gould and Fritz  
Lutz*

The Retroautos team has dug into Patent Office archives and found these wonderful artefacts.

They are automobile designs and ideas from some of the USA's leading car designers of the classic styling era: John Tjaarda, GM's Harley Earl, Chrysler's Virgil Exner and Auburn/Cord/Ford stylist Gordon M Beuhrig.

Car companies habitually patented thousands of ideas, designs and innovations, in order to protect their intellectual property rights. And they still do.

The images on the previous and this page are unmistakably of the Cord 810/812, arguably the most advanced design for its time in the USA. Whilst the Auburn/Cord company went bankrupt, the car itself entered automobile immortality along with its designer, Gordon Buehrig. He also patented the removable T-top, way back in 1951, when he was working at Ford.

On the following pages you will find a 1938 idea from Exner to incorporate the grille and radiator air intake into the bumper bar. Exner was working for GM at the time. Then there's his design for the first Valiant.

GM's Harley Earl was thinking about wrap around windscreens in 1921, as the patent on page 77 shows. Thirty five years later the 1956 patent application shows a generic General Motors C-body car with a wraparound windscreen. Harley never gave up on what he thought was a good idea!

John Tjaarda's 1933 patent for a rear engined car looks like a bigger version of the VW Beetle. There's always been speculation that Ferdinand Porche, the VW designer, saw Tjaarda's design and thought it worth emulating.

Patent Offices around the world are full of automobile designs and ideas, and many are searchable on-line.



March 12, 1940.

V. M. EXNER

2,193,229

BUMPER

Filed Feb. 2, 1938

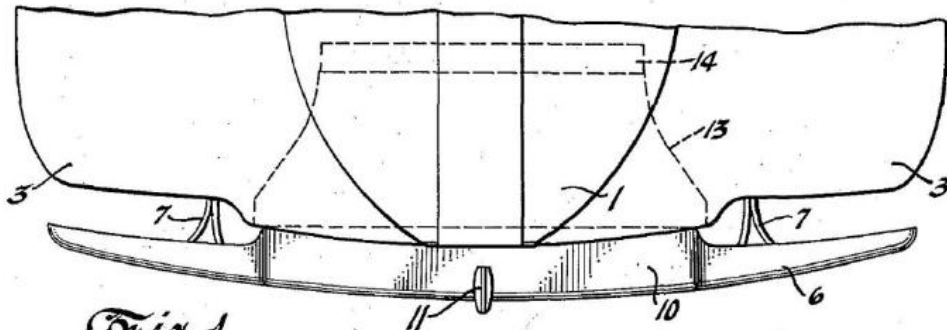


Fig. 1

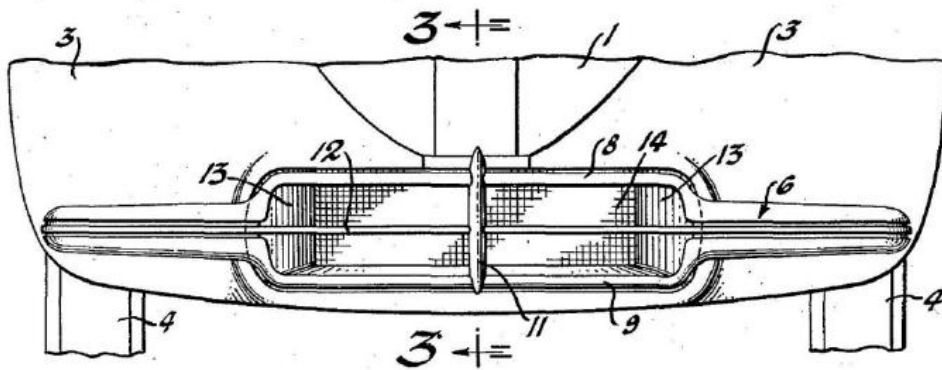


Fig. 2

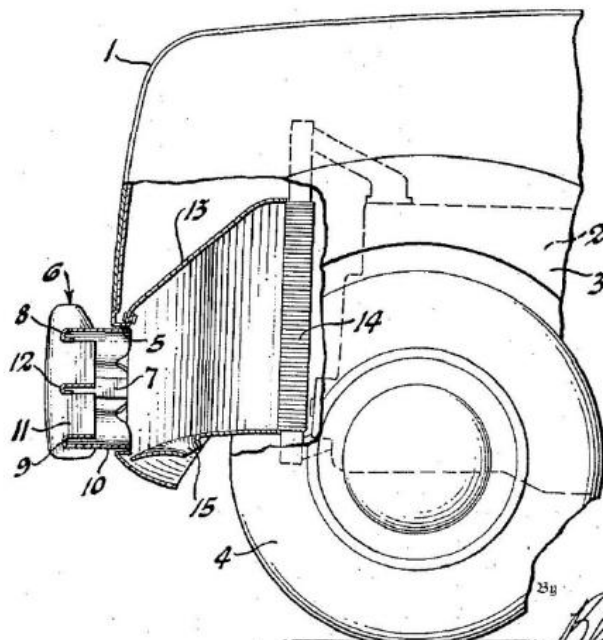


Fig. 3

Inventor  
Virgil M. Exner  
Blackburn, Spencer & Flint  
Attorneys



190,563

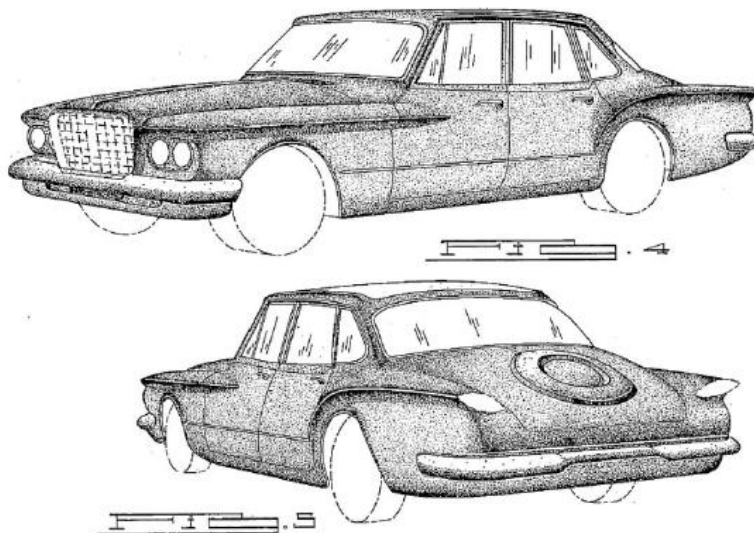
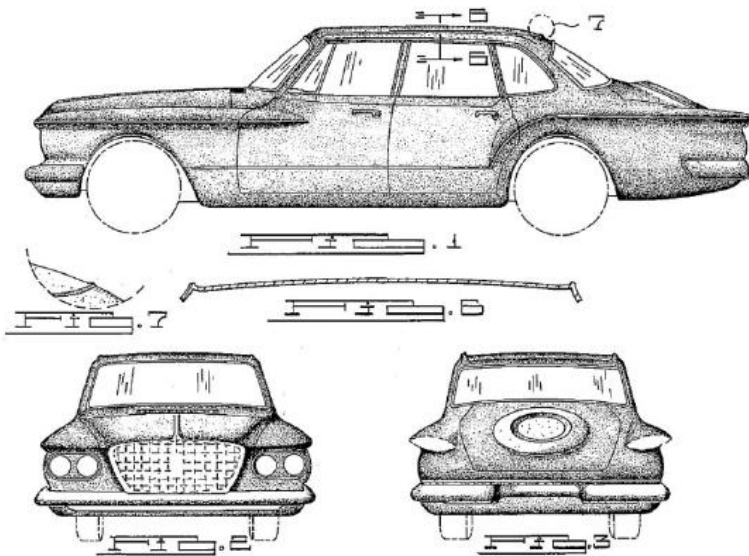
## AUTOMOBILE

Virgil M. Exner, Birmingham, Mich., assignor to Chrysler Corporation, Highland Park, Mich., a corporation of Delaware

Filed July 5, 1960, Ser. No. 61,228

Term of patent 7 years

(Cl. D14-3)



1959 Valiant styling patent.

Des. 190,563

PAGE 2

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of an automobile embodying my new design, the side opposite to that shown being substantially the same.

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view thereof.

FIG. 3 is a rear elevational view thereof.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view taken from the front of the automobile.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view taken from the rear of the automobile.

FIG. 6 is a sectional view taken on the line 6-6 of FIG. 1, and

FIG. 7 is an enlarged fragmentary view of the area designated by the broken circle 7 in FIG. 1.

The dominant features of my design reside in the full line portions of the drawings.

I claim:

The ornamental design for an automobile, substantially as shown and described.

References Cited in the file of this patent

Valiant Brochure, recorded Jan. 15, 1960, front cover.



Jan. 22, 1935.

J. TJAARDA  
AUTOMOBILE

Filed Nov. 1, 1933

Des. 94,396.

Fig. 1

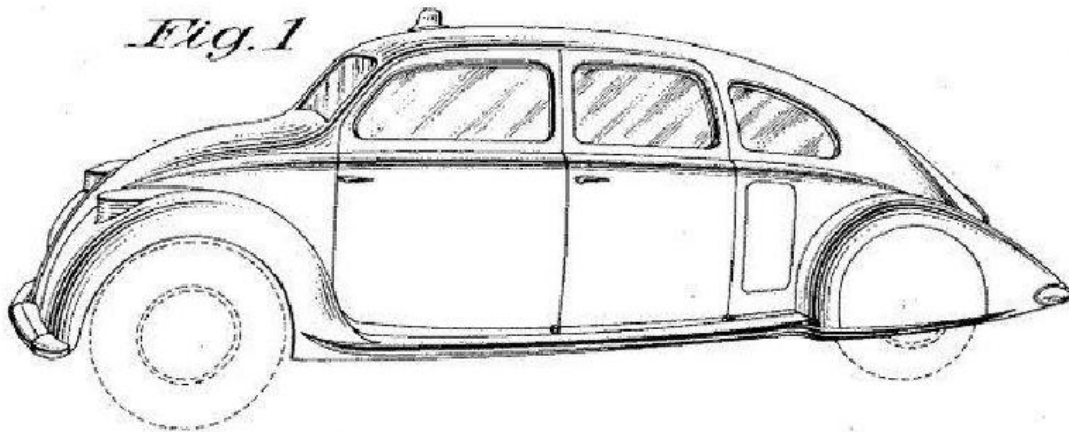


Fig. 2

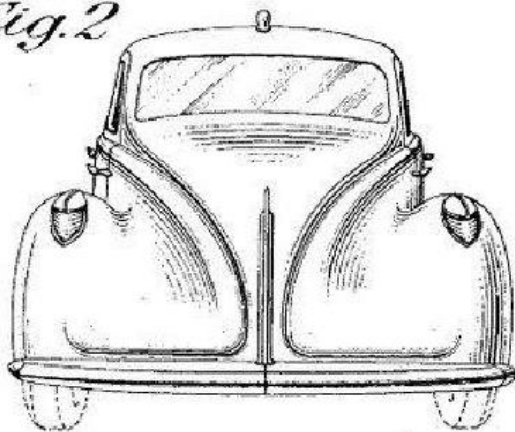
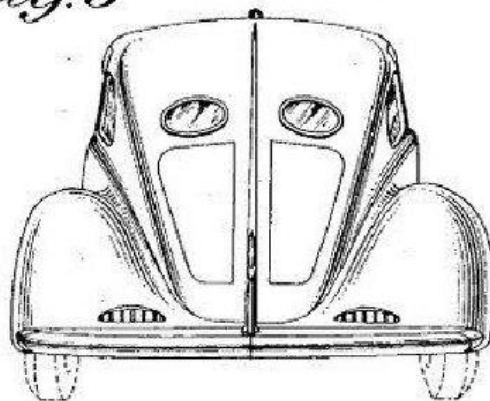


Fig. 3



By John Tjaarda  
Inventor  
John Tjaarda  
Automobiles

Above and below: John Tjaarda's revolutionary rear engine patent and the full size concept car on display at the Ford stand at the Century of Progress exhibition in Chicago in 1933/34. Automotive legend has it that Ferdinand Porsche saw this car and scaled it down for his VW design. What is known is that Edsel Ford and Bob Gregorie used this design for the basis of the 1936 Lincoln Zephyr. The engine went from rear to the front.



Chicago World Fair 1933  
Box 1 # 268

268-WF

76



# United States Patent Office

Des. 178,349  
Patented July 31, 1956

178,349

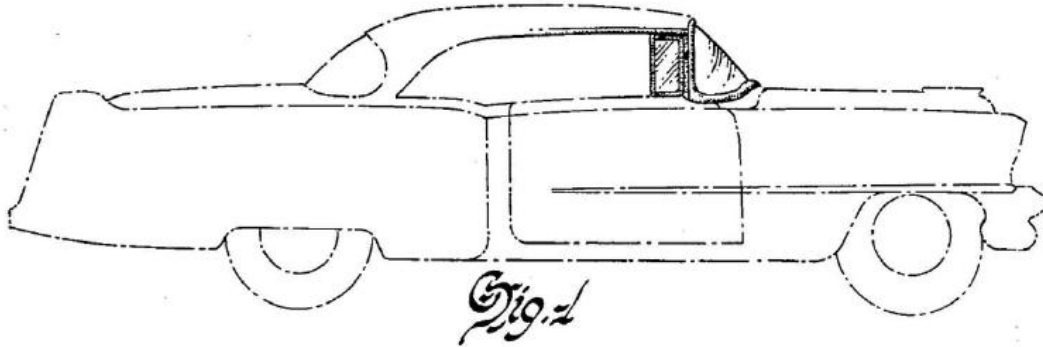
## AUTOMOBILE

Harley J. Earl, Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich., assignor to  
General Motors Corporation, Detroit, Mich., a corpo-  
ration of Delaware

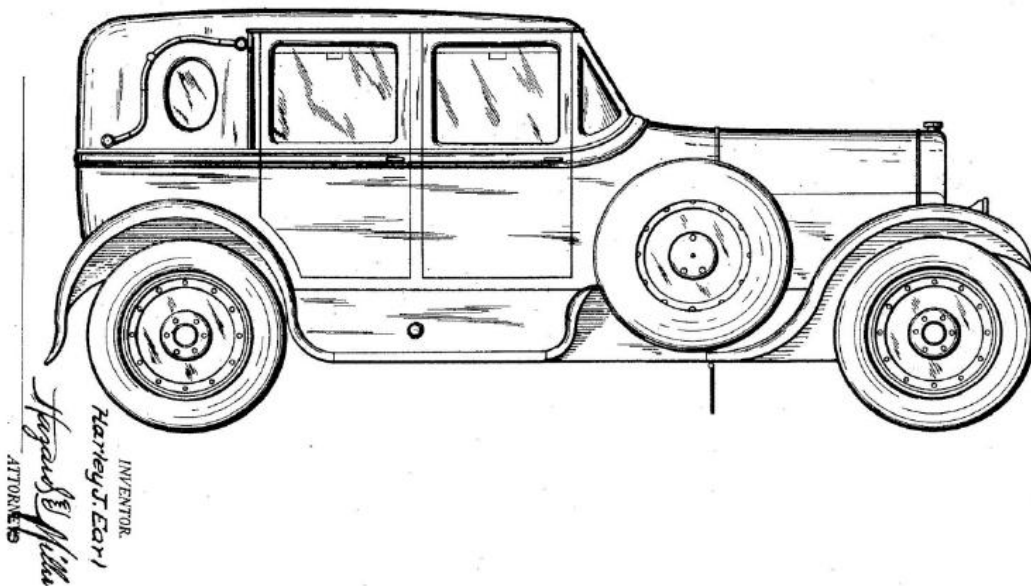
Application January 4, 1954, Serial No. 28,313

Term of patent 7 years

(Cl. D14-3)



Above: GM's Harley Earl's patent for the wrap around windscreen.  
Below: An earlier idea of Harley's for a wrapped front screen, this time from 1921



58,665.

DESIGN.  
H. J. EARL,  
AUTOMOBILE BODY,  
APPLICATION FILED NOV. 16, 1920.

Patented Aug. 9, 1921.

INVENTOR,  
Harley J. Earl  
ATTORNEY



206,063

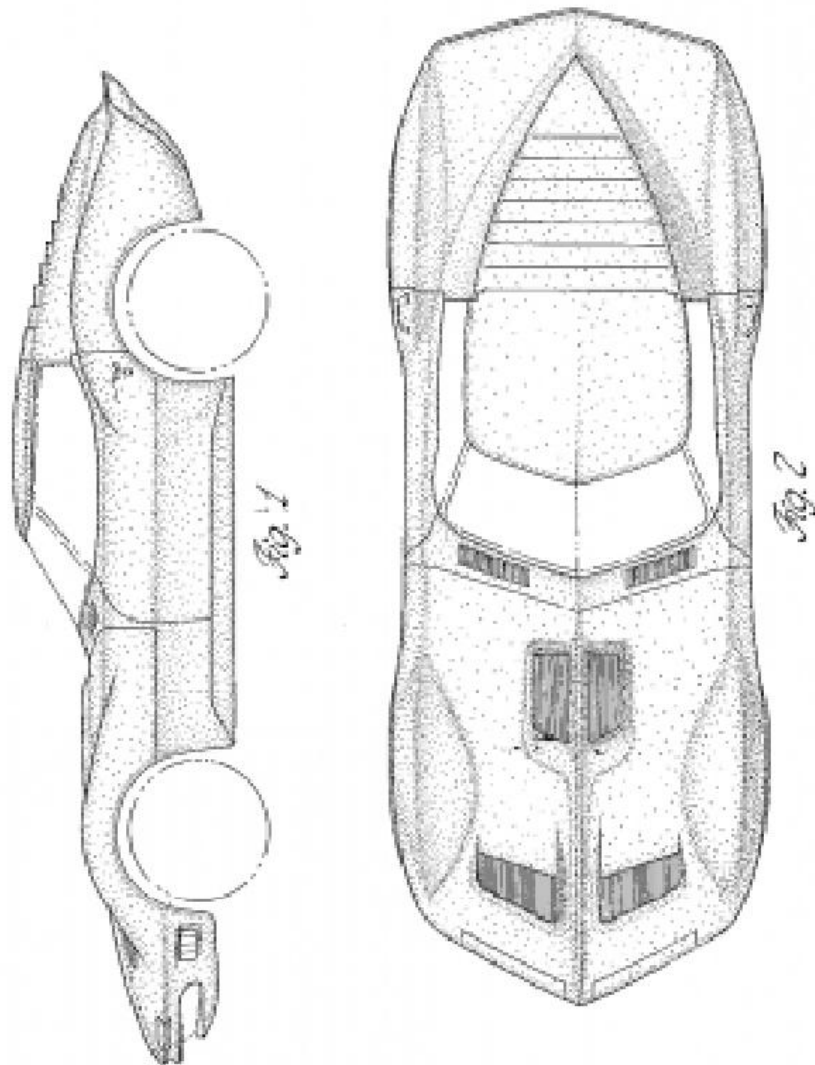
## VEHICLE BODY

William L. Mitchell, Bloomfield Hills, Mich., assignor to  
General Motors Corporation, Detroit, Mich., a corpo-  
ration of Delaware

Filed Mar. 21, 1966, Ser. No. 1,550

Term of patent 14 years

(Cl. D14—3)





182,883

## AUTOMOBILE

Harley J. Earl, Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich., assignor to  
General Motors Corporation, Detroit, Mich., a corporation of Delaware

Application December 28, 1956, Serial No. 44,351

Term of patent 7 years  
(Cl. D14—3)

Des. 182,883  
PAGE 2

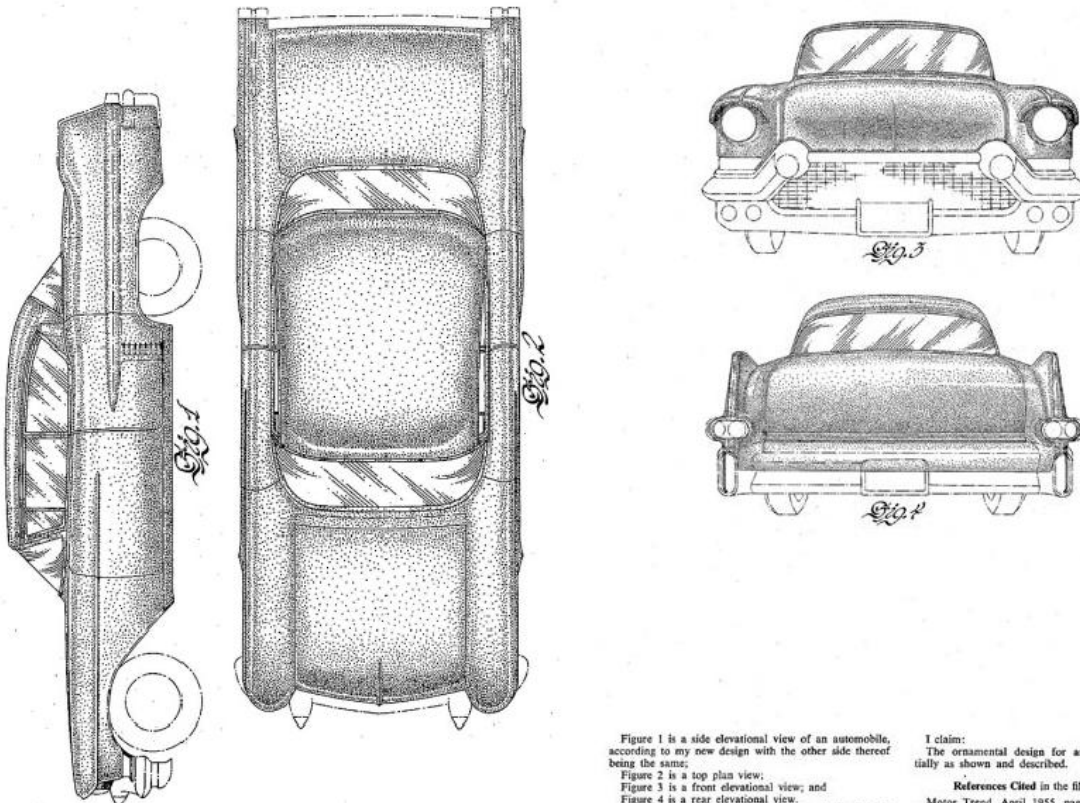


Figure 1 is a side elevational view of an automobile, according to my new design with the other side thereof being the same;  
Figure 2 is a top plan view;  
Figure 3 is a front elevational view; and  
Figure 4 is a rear elevational view.  
The dominant features of my design reside in the full line portions of the drawings.

I claim:  
The ornamental design for an automobile, substantially as shown and described.

References Cited in the file of this patent  
Motor Trend, April 1955, page 20, Eldorado Brougham, top of page.  
Cadillac Brochure, 1956, Eldorado Seville (received November 25, 1955).

GM "C" body patent, like the 1957 Cadillac example pictured below.





raytookthis.com  
*Ray Green - Photographer*









# RetroRacing







Bede Hollis bangs and barges his way under Frank Nacastri at the Newcastle Motordrome in 1974. Hollis evidently saved money by using the right side numbers on the left side. Minis did well on dirt speedways for a couple of years in the early 1970s. They were rendered obsolete almost overnight by the introduction of purpose-built full chassis V8 sedans from the USA.





When Eric Schloss was racing his FJ at Morriset, Heddon Greta and Newcastle Motordrome speedways in the late sixties and early seventies, his brother Mervyn was taking to the drag tracks in his "Black Knight" FJ, and winning against HK Monaro 327s. These images are from Surfers Paradise Raceway . Thanks to Eric for the photos on this and the next page







Top left: Blurred and faded with time, this photo is of Jim Reed's V8 Anglia. Jim went on to become the drag racing king of Australia.

Top right: That's Peter Dykes' Ross Auto Accessories Anglia.

Above left and right: Do you remember who raced these cars at Surfers?

Below: Dick Brookes takes his winged Dodge Daytona in the 1971 Daytona 500. This was the last of the famed "aero" cars allowed to race in NASCAR, only because of the impossibly small motor it was required to use. With just five litres, and down 30 horsepower on his rivals, Brooks finished seventh. Winner Richard Petty had a 6.9 litre V8 in his Plymouth.







Above: It is the 1970 Motor Trend 500 NASCAR race at Riverside in California and Don White in #93 runs high and lets Neil Castles slip underneath and race away to a 7<sup>th</sup> place finish. Don ran out of brakes and collected \$US880 for his 39<sup>th</sup> place finish.

Below: Dan Gurney ran a Petty Enterprises Plymouth, but a poor pit stop put him 13 laps off the lead for a sixth place finish. His boss, Richard Petty, went one better, at 5<sup>th</sup>. Gurney won the MT 500 five times, and 1970 would be his last year as a full time driver.







Above: Race winner AJ Foyt in his Ford Torino Cobra owned by Jack Bowsher. Mr Foyt banked \$US19,700 for his win. That's the equivalent of \$US250,000 in today's money.

Below: USAC Indy and Sprintcar Champion Roger McCluskey in a rare NASCAR outing. He ran 2<sup>nd</sup>.







Above: Back in the day they made up the fields with some sad and slow race cars. This is the '68 Chevrolet Biscayne two door sedan of German born Lothar Motschenbacher. It looks like he has just bought the Chev off a used car lot, painted #144 on the side and started racing it. He finished 40<sup>th</sup> and put \$US800 in his pocket.

Below: Parnelli Jones in the famed Wood Brother Mercury. PJ was out on lap 168 with no clutch.







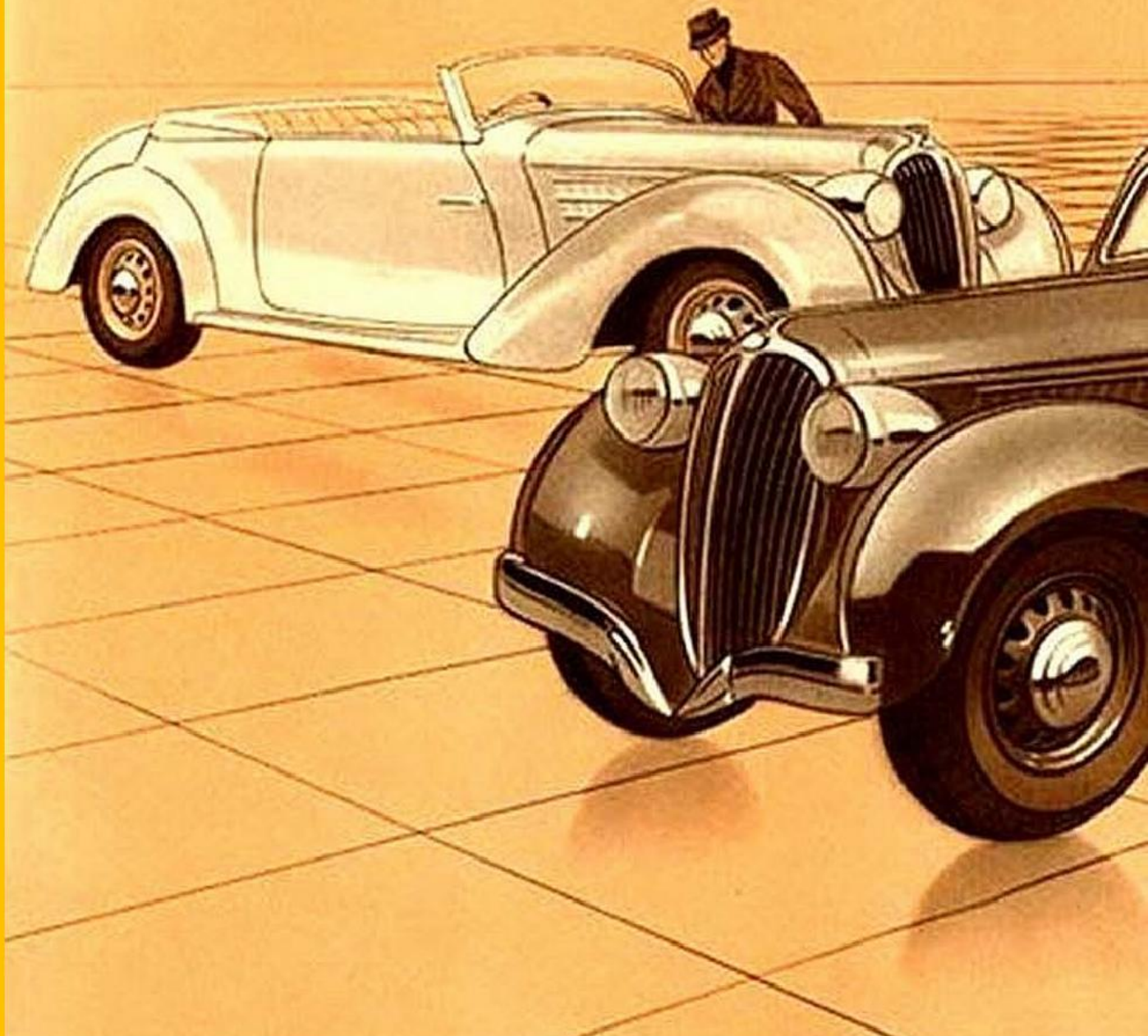
Above: In #32 Plymouth is Dick Brookes ahead of Steve Froines in his 1968 Oldsmobile Cutlass. Brookes exited on lap 37 after coating the front stretch in engine oil. The slick tracks caused Buddy Young to roll his Ford Torino end for end and spend the next 11 months recuperating. Steve Froines crashed his Cutlass on lap 83 and was awarded 27<sup>th</sup> place. Froines was more of a sports car racer and drove a Sunbeam Alpine to great success across California in the 1960s.

Below: On lap 94 Jim Cook skidded his Ford into the 9<sup>th</sup> turn crash barrier trying to avoid spinning cars. The terrifying accident put Jim in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. In 1983 he was murdered in his apartment by an intruder in Oceanside, California. In 2006 Jim Cook was inducted into the West Coast Stock Car Hall of Fame in the USA.



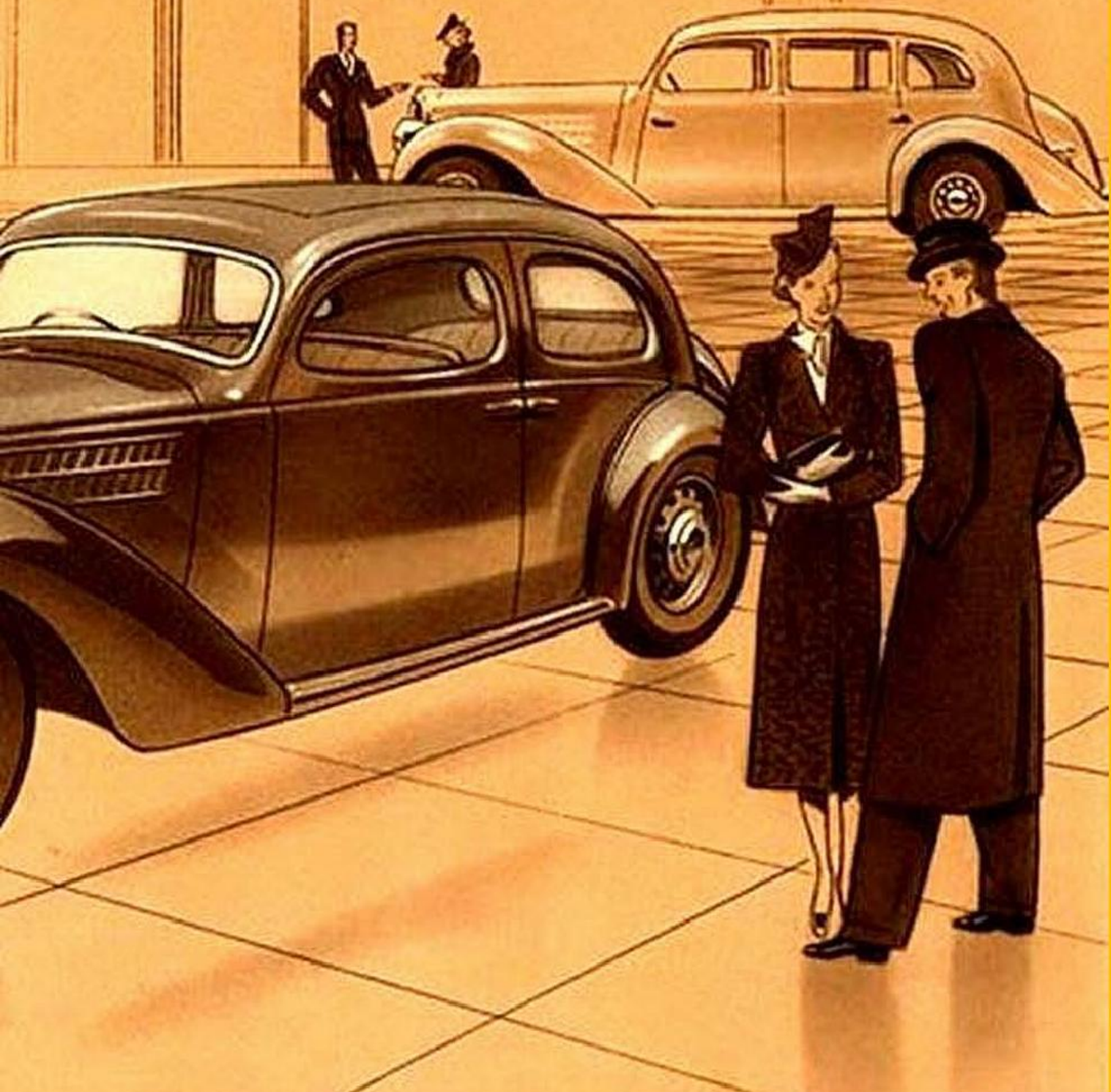


# *Retro Ads*

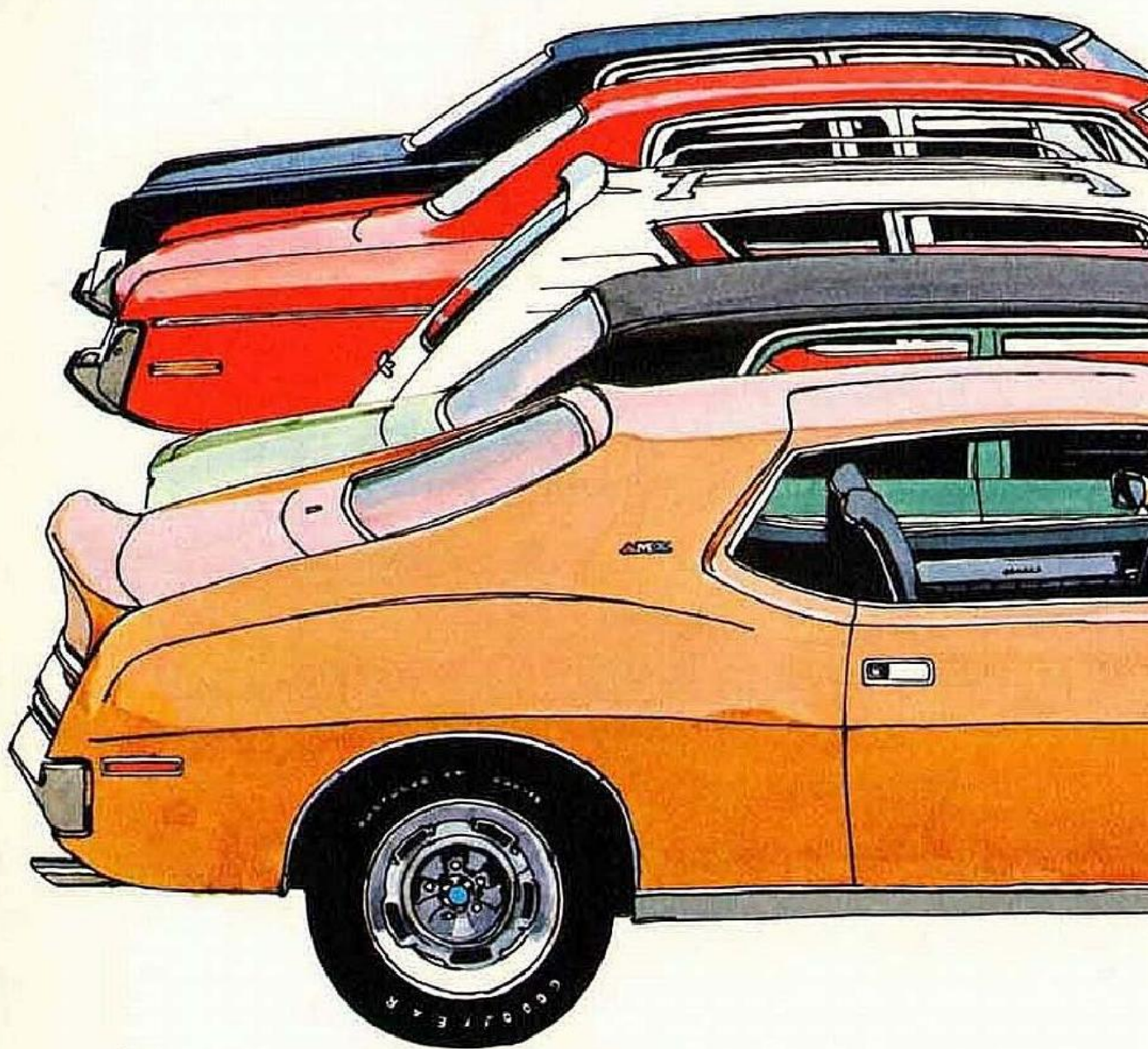




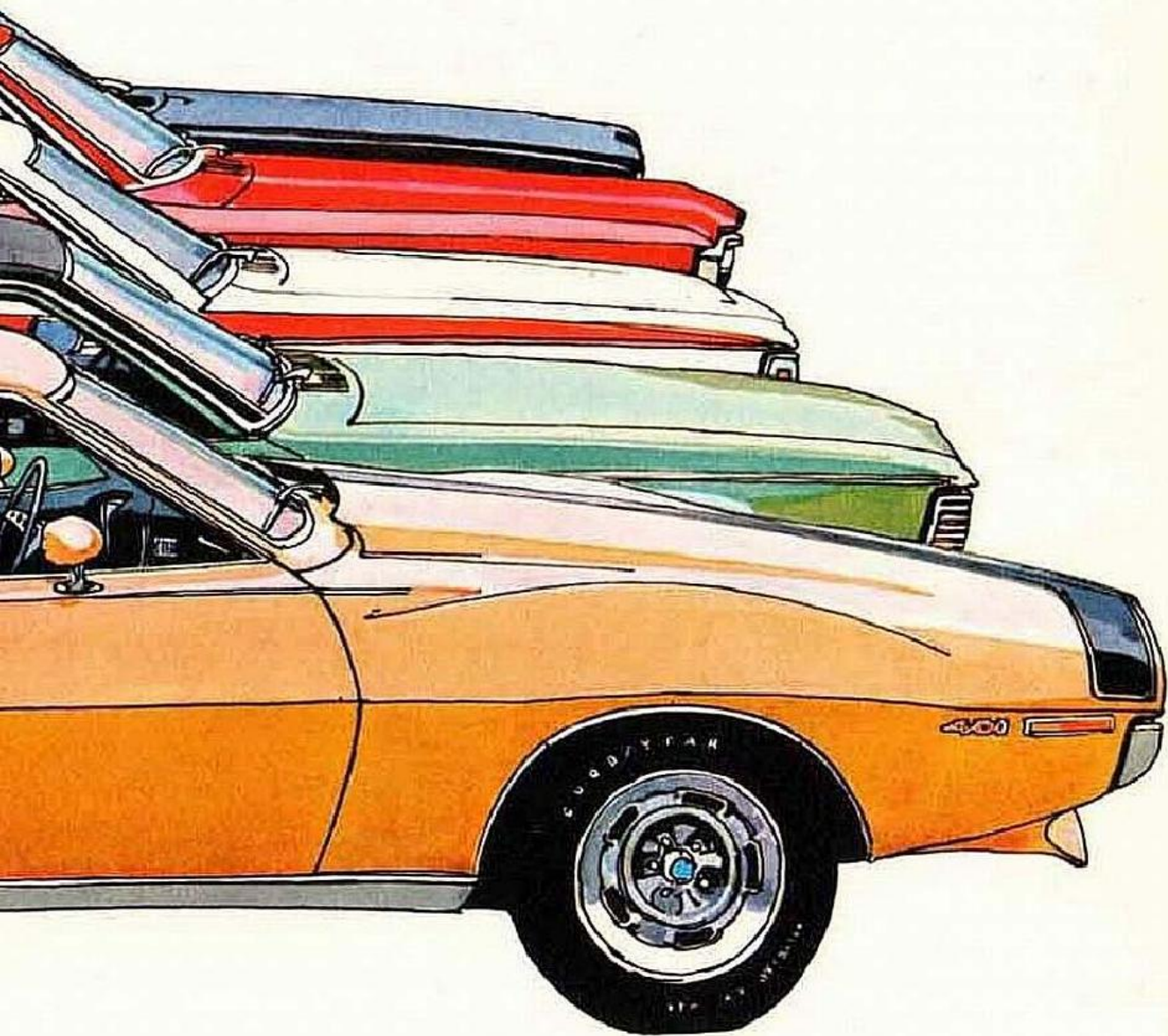
# *Celebrating the Art of Automotive Advertising*



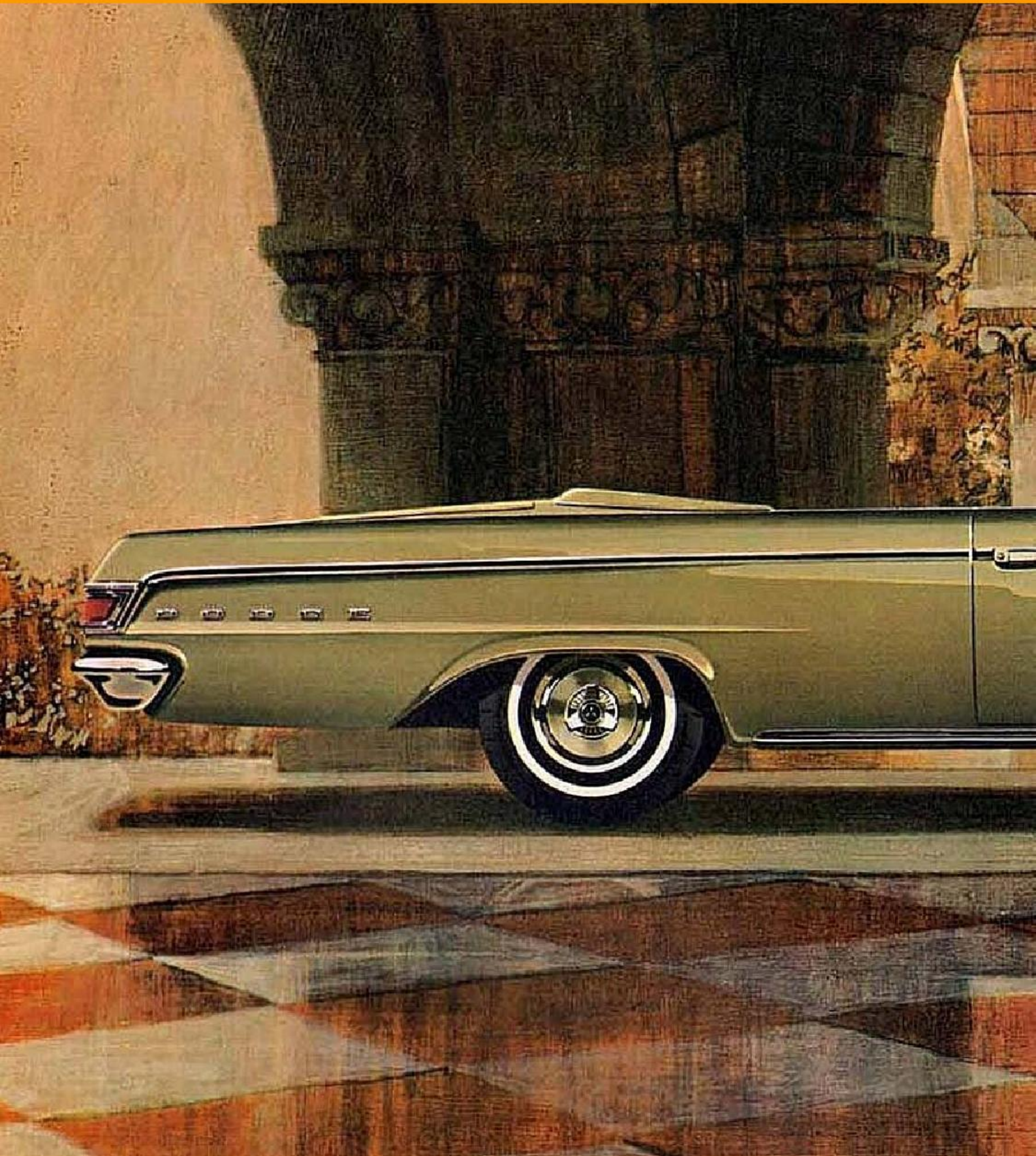








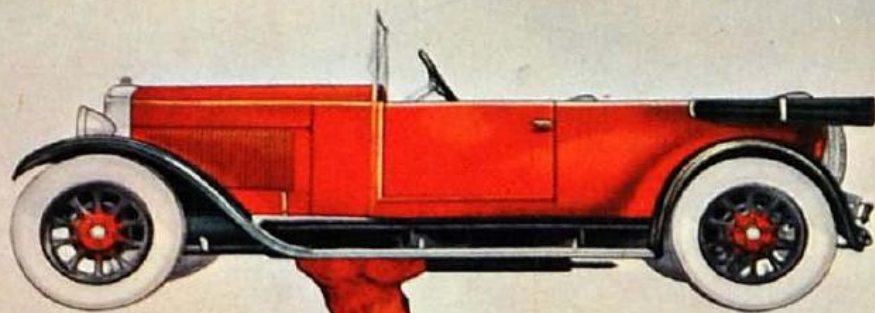












**FIAT**

**509**



*Adolf Hitler*



## Quiet

**I**F ANY type of car requires a quiet, flexible motor, it is a closed car.

No type of motor excels the Willys-Knight in these respects.

In addition it is the *only* type of motor that improves with use.

This means higher efficiency, longer life, freedom from troubles, and economy!

In no other car are these five essentials for complete satisfaction provided as in the Willys-Knight — appearance, performance, comfort, service, price.

With its exclusive features, combined with the finest of body styles, it is self evident why the Willys-Knight leads in high class closed car efficiency.

Willys-Overland Inc.

Toledo, Ohio

Willys-Knight and Overland Motor Cars  
and Light Commercial Cars

*Canadian Factory, West Toronto, Canada*

**Willys**  
**KNIGHT**  
Sleeve-Valve Motor

Eight  
Limousine

**\$2800**

f. o. b. Toledo—Tax Free  
Price subject to change  
without notice





**1939 DODGE**

*Lux*

**DODGE'S SILVER ANN**





# *Luxury Liner*

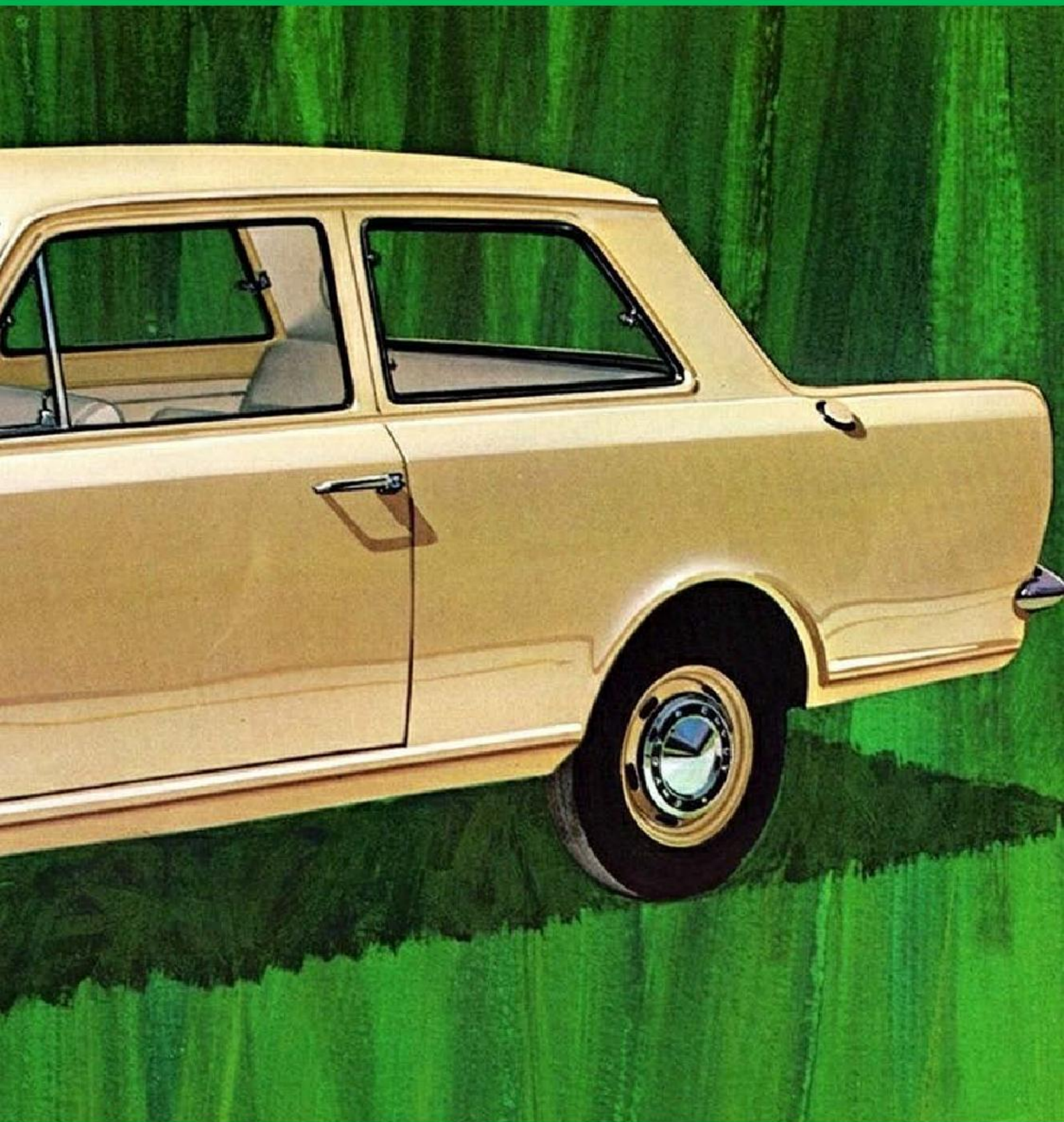
IVERSARY TRIUMPH







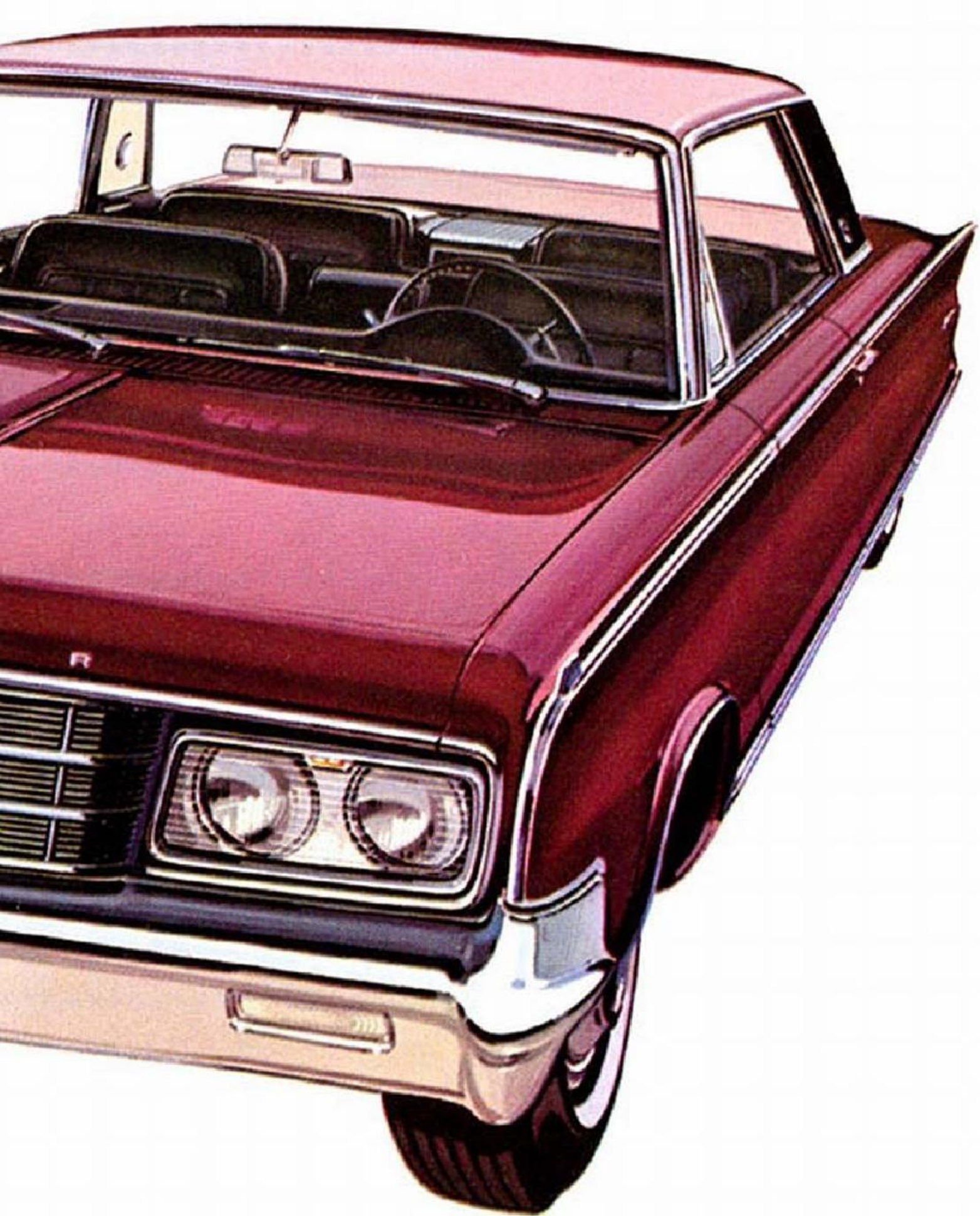




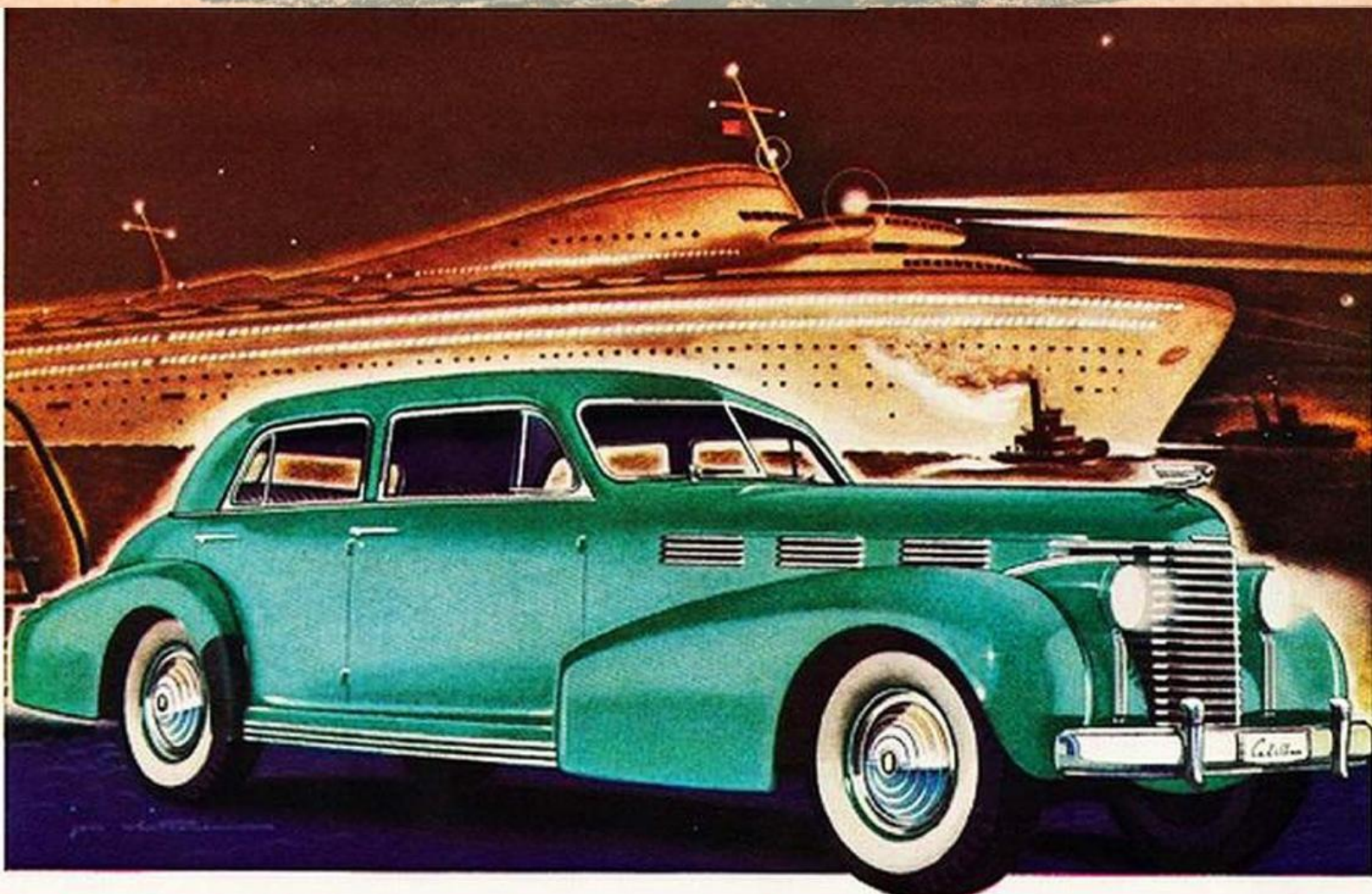
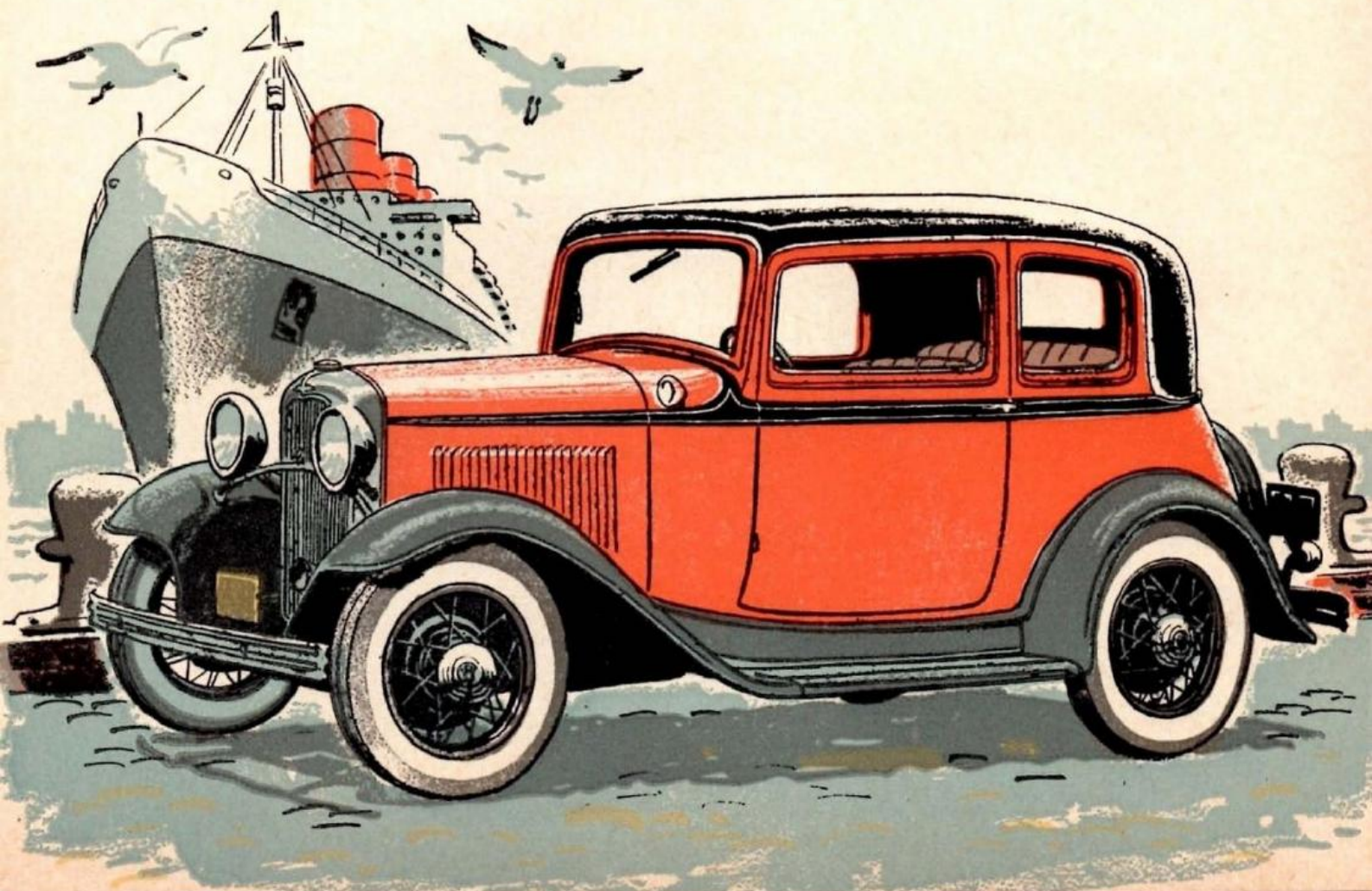














Invitation...

DRIVE THIS MODERN CLASSIC



*Ninety-Eight*









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# RACV



## Benalla and District **CLASSIC CAR AND MOTORBIKE TOUR**

### **FRIDAY MAY 27th 2016**

### **10.00 am. Benalla Art Gallery**

**( assembly and registration from 9am at Art Gallery )**

Entry \$10 per vehicle. Includes RACV rally pack and RACV trophies for most interesting vehicles

For further details contact  
**VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**  
**03 5762 1749**

*The Austin  
Seven  
CLUB*



In conjunction with  
**HISTORIC  
WINTON**



**SYDNEY  
MACHINA**  
SOCIAL CLUB  
presents...

# Machines & Macchiatos

Sunday 13th December  
8am - 10am



**2nd**  
**Sunday**  
EVERY MONTH  
Le Montage Cafe  
8am - 10am

**Come join us** for our Machines & Macchiatos, **Sunday 13th December**

Our Machines & Macchiatos event is a very friendly, relaxed & fun event. It is where proud owners of all makes & models unite over their common interest - their Machines. Great coffee, a nice brekki & wonderful location are a big bonus too.

## Everyone is Welcome

Our Machines & Macchiatos event is not only for motoring enthusiast, but it's open to all the general public too. It's a fun event for all types of people: young, old, families, kids, male & female, we welcome you all.

## Location

It's all happening at Le Montage  
The General & Co Cafe. All the Machines  
will be parked in the Le Montage Carpark.

**LE MONTAGE**

Address:  
Maliyawul St Lilyfield

## Fund Raising

At each Machines & Macchiatos event, we run raffles to help fund raise for our 3 Charities.



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Cure Brain Cancer  
FOUNDATION



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- Adam's Polishes \$200 online voucher
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Discover Your Shine Potential.



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THE CENTRE



**SYDNEY  
MACHINA**  
SOCIAL CLUB

Sydney Machina Social Club is a brand new, modern motoring social club, dedicated to the motoring enthusiast community. It's where proud owners can unite over their common interest, their machines. We welcome all makes & models, everything from new to old, vintage, classic, custom, exotic, motorcycles & everything in between. For more information on the club or to join:

[www.sydneymachinasocialclub.org](http://www.sydneymachinasocialclub.org) Sam - M: 0438 060 821 E: sam@sydneymachinasocialclub.org



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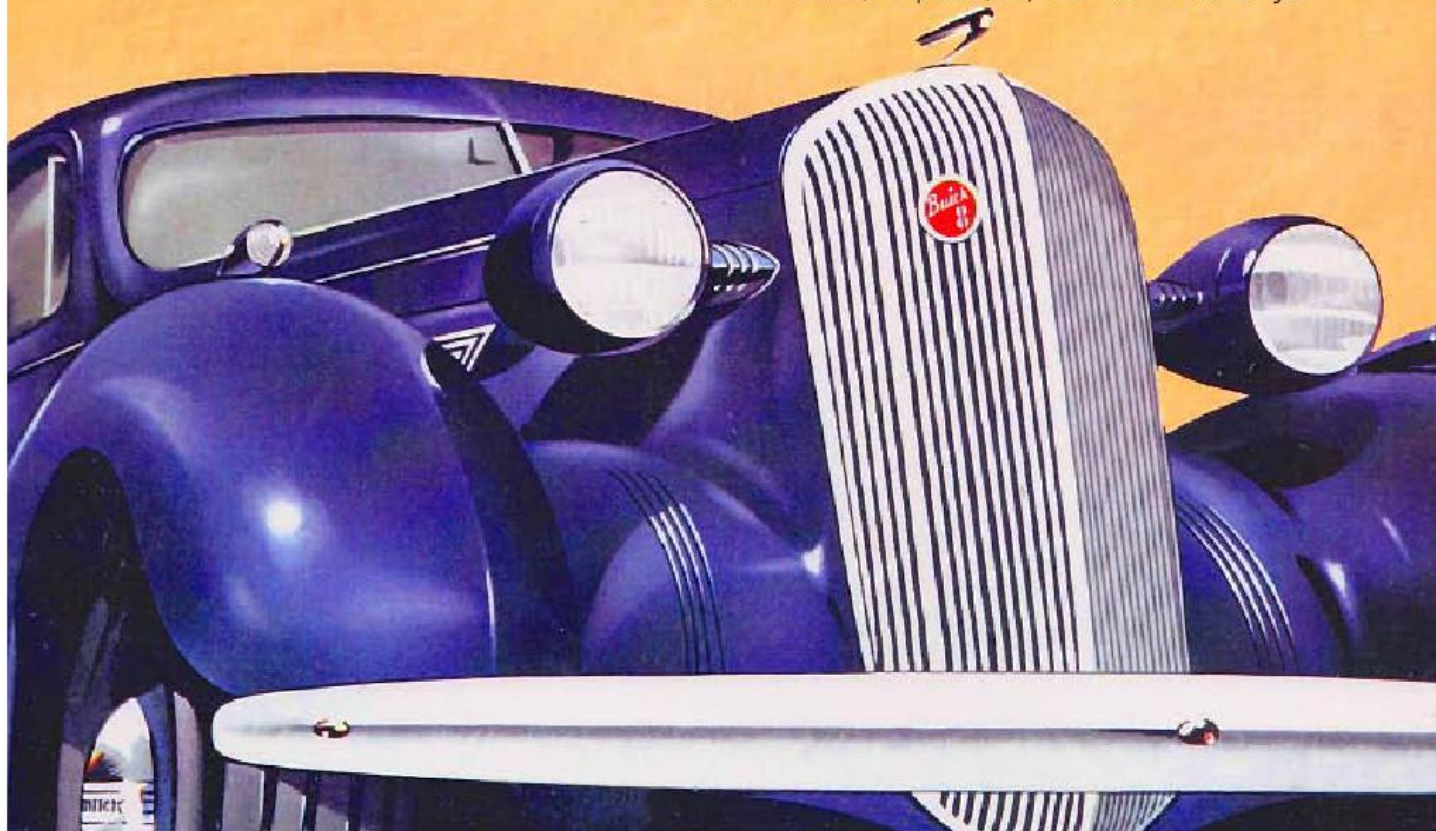
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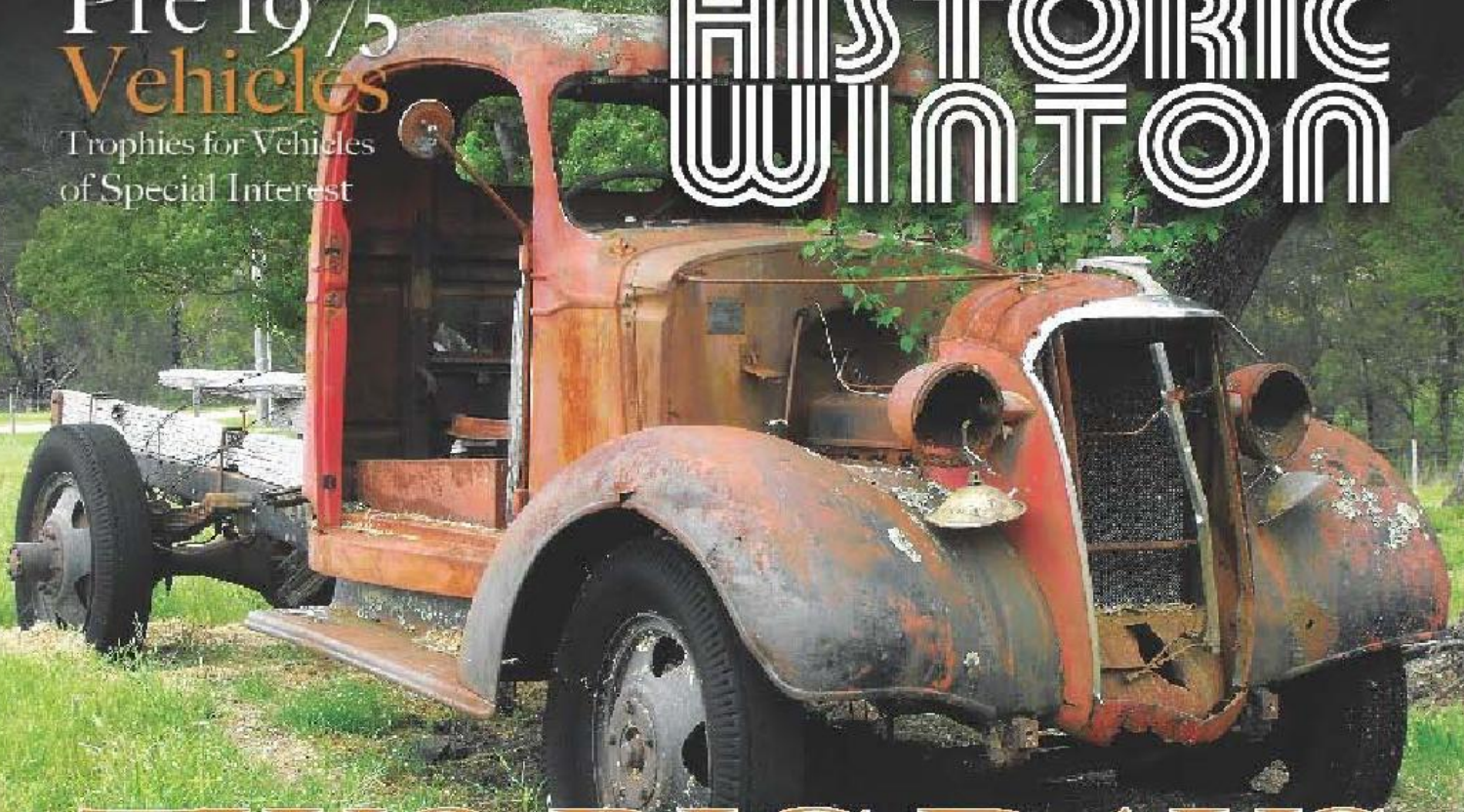
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