

collectible & classic

RETROAUTOS

Exclusive Photos! Prototype '55 Chevy

December 2014 #39

1955 Chevrolet
60th Anniversary



GM Heritage
Centre

1963 Valiant
Restoration

The Last
American Falcon

Fabulous Greek
Car Museum

Regular Features: Rust in Peace, News, Racing, Ads and Auctions



The Mustang Owners Club OF AUSTRALIA NSW INC.



NEW SOUTH WALES

HOSTS OF THE

33rd annual

★ ALL AMERICAN DAY ★

SUNDAY 18TH JANUARY 2015



AT CASTLE TOWERS SHOPPING CENTRE, CASTLE HILL (ENTRY OFF OLD CASTLE HILL ROAD) EXTENDED CAR PARK FOR A BIGGER DISPLAY AND UNDERCOVER FACILITIES IN CASE OF RAIN

★★★ EXCLUSIVELY FOR AMERICAN BUILT VEHICLES ★★★



REGISTRATION BY 10AM ON THE DAY TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR 29 TROPHY CATEGORIES CATERING FOR VINTAGE AND VETERAN CARS ★ HOT RODS ★ CRUISERS COMMERCIALS ★ MUSCLE CARS ★ CONVERTIBLES ★ AND MUCH MORE

ASSOCIATED TRADE STANDS, CINEMAS, DEPARTMENT STORES AND SPECIALTY SHOPS, FOOD OUTLETS AND COFFEE SHOPS, AS WELL AS OVER 400 OF THE BEST AMERICAN CLASSICS IN AUSTRALIA. AND IT'S FREE FOR THE PUBLIC.

★ THERE'S SOMETHING FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY! ★

\$15 ENTRY PER CAR WITH ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE DAY IN AID OF THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AT WESTMEAD



★★★★★★★★★★★★★ MUSTANG.ORG.AU ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



HD **HOLDEN**
PROTOTYPES
RETROAUTOS EXCLUSIVE



NEVER-SEEN
HK HOLDEN
PROTOTYPES

5 BIG THINGS
THE FALCON
DID FOR US!

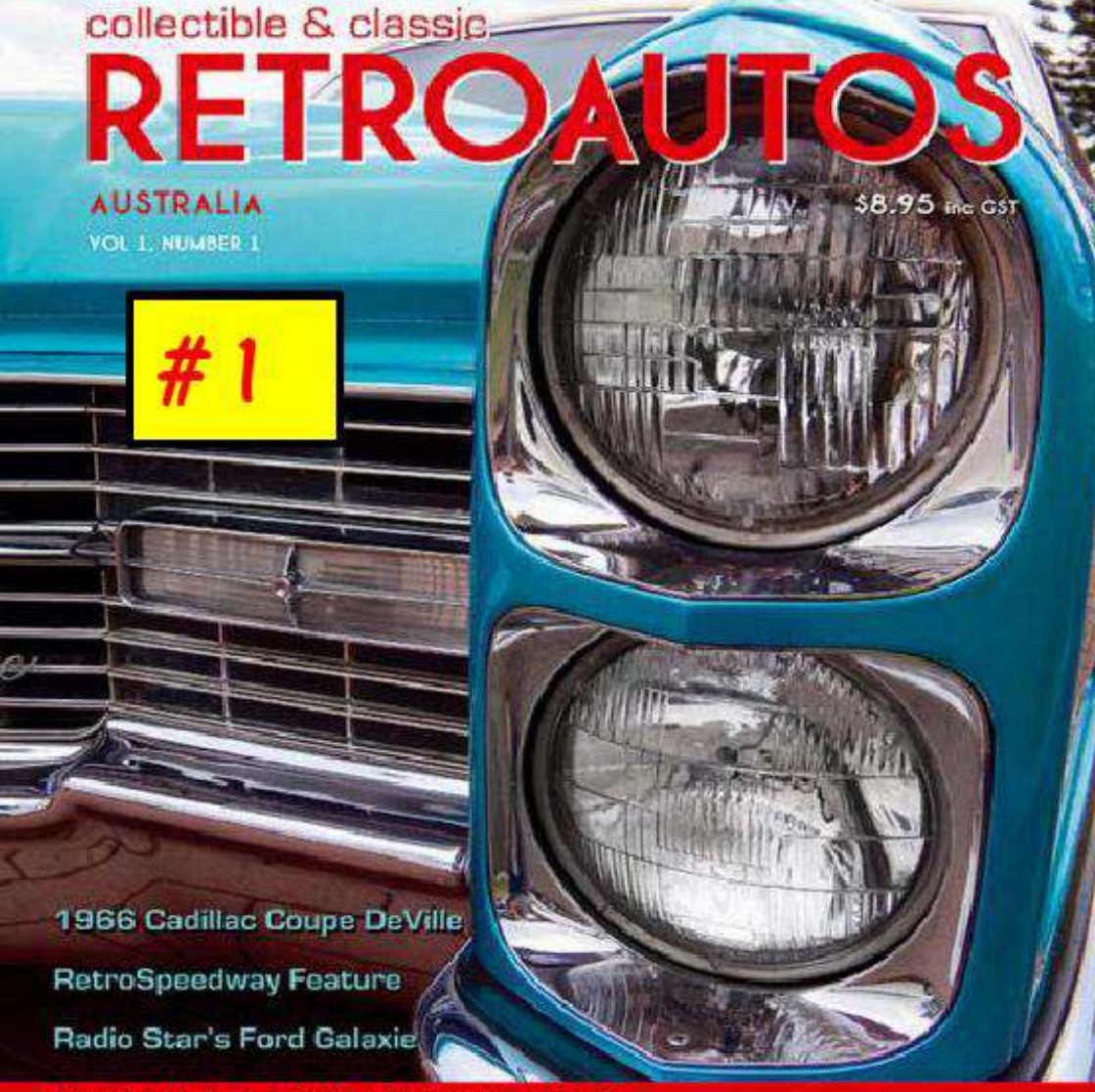


collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

AUSTRALIA
VOL 1, NUMBER 1

\$8.95 inc GST

#1



1966 Cadillac Coupe DeVille
RetroSpeedway Feature
Radio Star's Ford Galaxie

CHEVROLET, DE DION, VAUXHALL, BRISTOL,
AUSTIN HEALEY, BUICK, DATSUN, DIAMOND T & MORE!

WWW.RETROAUTOS.COM.AU

EJ & HQ HOLDEN PROTOTYPES



collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

VOL 1, NUMBER 2

\$8.95 inc GST

#2

A9X



Telstra Kombi



Lotus Cortina



1948 F100



1957 Cadillac

VALIANT, RUST IN PEACE, MERCEDES, VAUXHALL, F100 TRUCKS,
LOTUS AND GT CORTINA, FORD CORSAIR AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

VOL 1, NUMBER 3

\$8.95 inc GST

#3



Falcon GT-XR & XA



Shelby



Rolls Royce



EJ Premier

PONTIAC GTO, AUSTIN, RIP, ROLLS ROYCE,
TECHNICAL: DRUMS TO DISCS, DEPT OF YOUTH

Back issues of *first three, and only*, print editions now available.

A very limited number of the first three printed issues of Retroautos is now available.

\$10.00 (AUD) each or \$25.00 (AUD) for all three including postage and handling within Australia (overseas postage extra). All prices include GST.

Contact us at:
david@retroautos.com.au
for payment information.

About Us

Sub Editor: Lee Burrell
Managing Editor: David Burrell

Website:
www.retroautos.com.au

Postal Address
PO Box 243
Jannali
NSW 2226

Email:
david@retroautos.com.au

Contributions

Want to have your car profiled in Retroautos? Please contact us at david@retroautos.com.au

Club Publicity

We encourage all classic car clubs to let us know what they are doing. If you want publicity for a major event, then simply email us.

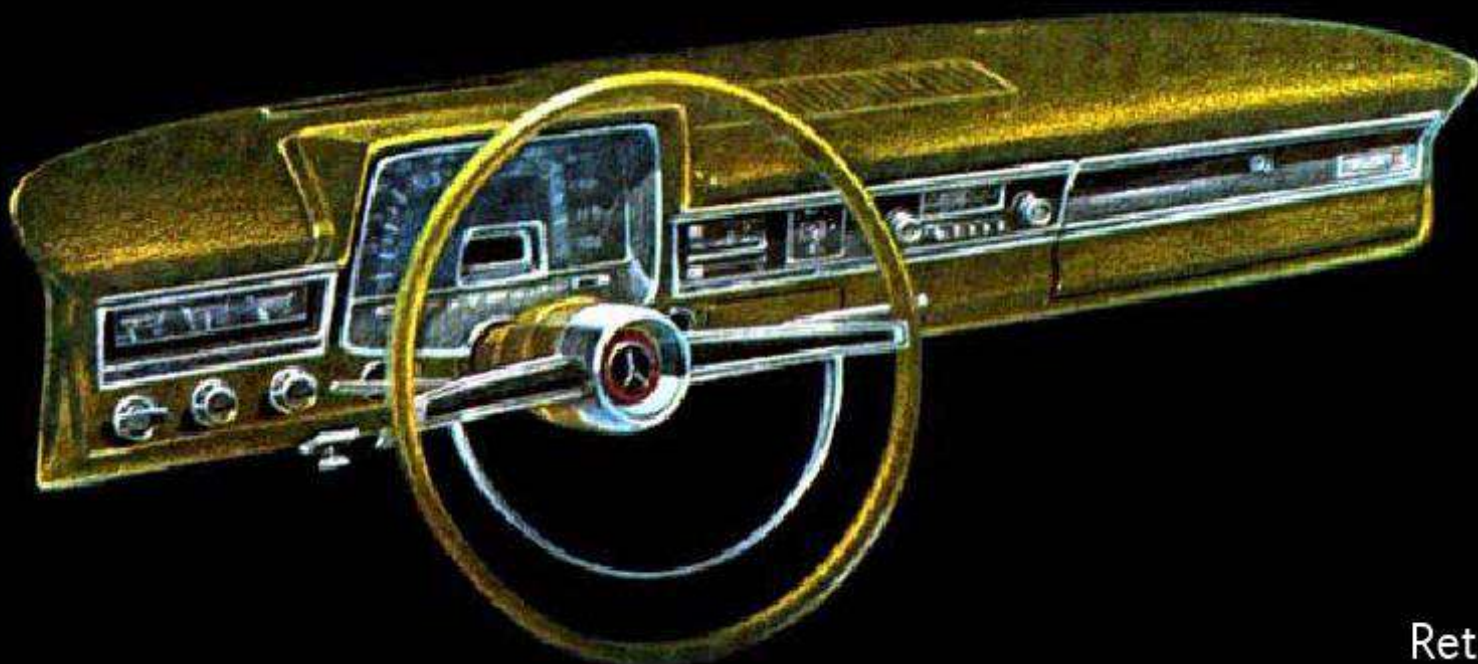
In this Issue

Special Features

- 16 1955 Chevrolet: 60th Anniversary
- 18 Styling the '55 Chevy: Prototype Photos
- 32 Chevrolet Nomad: Low Sales, High Value
- 36 Valiant AP5 and AP6 Restorations
- 50 The Last American Ford Falcon
- 64 GM Heritage Centre
- 112 Hellenic Motor Museum

Regular Features

- 5 Retro Voice
- 8 Retro News
- 56 Retro Auctions
- 82 Retro Racing
- 88 Rust in Peace
- 90 CarPark
- 92 Retro Ads
- 115 Rear Vision





Actor Bert Reynolds's Firebird is being auctioned in the USA. See [Retro Auctions](#) for details

Welcome to the December 2014 edition of Retroautos online, and we hope you have a wonderful festive and holiday season.

It is 60 years since the iconic 1955 Chevrolet was first seen in dealerships. To celebrate we have brought you exclusive photos of the styling proposals that were being considered by General Motors in 1952 and 1953 for what would become the car we have known so well.

Ruben Razmoski has two mid-sixties Valiants, a restored AP5, and an AP6 V8 which is currently in the shed and halfway through its refurbishment. We talk to Ruben about why he is such a devotee of Valiants and take a look at these two great cars.

Roger Day, President of the Borgward club recently visited Europe and found a wonderful classic car museum in Athens, Greece. See what he saw in our photo feature.

The overseas auction scene is gearing up for the early new year with the traditional extravaganzas in Scottsdale, Arizona and Kissimmee, Florida. We take a peak at what's on offer. Two Pontiac Firebirds with links to the TV and movie industry are up for grabs. The first is one of 18 Firebirds used on the Rockford Files TV show and the other, pictured above, is Burt Reynolds's personal "Smokey and the Bandit" Firebird.

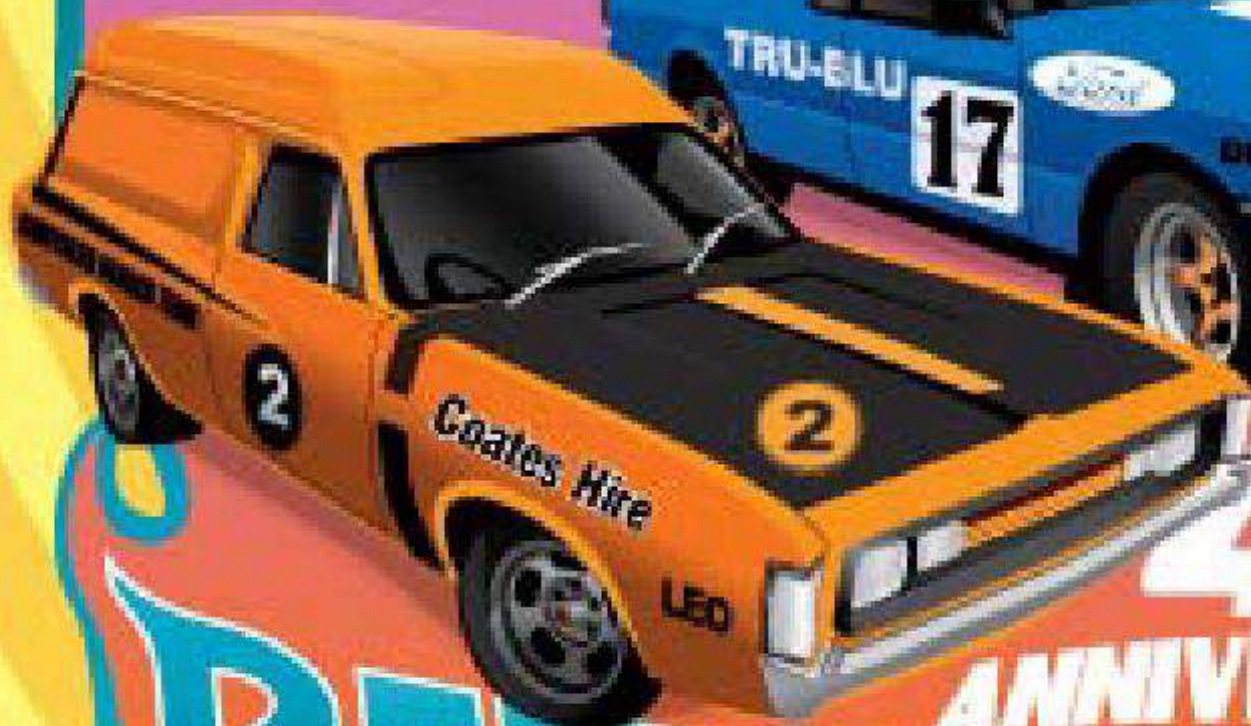
For holiday reading we take you to the GM Heritage Centre in Sterling Heights, Michigan, for a look through their collection. So big is this collection we have split the story into two parts. Part 2 continues in the January 2015 issue of Retroautos.

We have been asked by a number of you who have recently found Retroautos if we would re-run stories from previous online issues which no longer appear on the website. And that we will do during 2015.

AUSTRALIAN

PANELVAN NATIONALS

2015

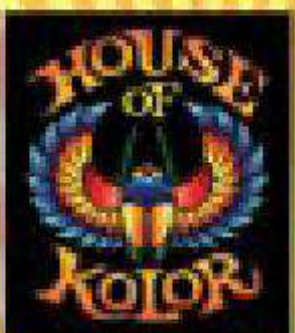
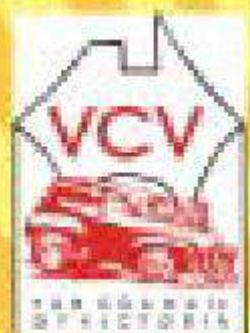


40TH ANNIVERSARY

BATHURST



BathurstVanNationals.com



**40TH
ANNIVERSARY**

**9am-3pm, April 5th,
Bathurst
Show Grounds**

AUSTRALIAN PANELVAN NATIONALS 2015

Easter Sunday

Car Show

Easter
Bunny
@10am

**Trophies Awarded for Vans, Utes,
Hot Rods, Street Machines & Classics**

Vehicle Entry 6am-9am (Sharp)

Show Judged \$30 / Display Only \$20

(Incl Driver & One Passenger)

Rocker
Cover &
Hot Wheels
Racing

**Public Entry from 9am
Entry \$5**

Live
Music

Kids Under 10 years free (When accompanied by an adult)



Proudly Supporting
**Prostate Cancer
Foundation of Australia**

Supporting
Bathurst
Volunteer
Units

SES



BATHURST



For entrant & sponsorship details go to
www.BathurstVanNationals.com or call 0438 123 322

Retro News

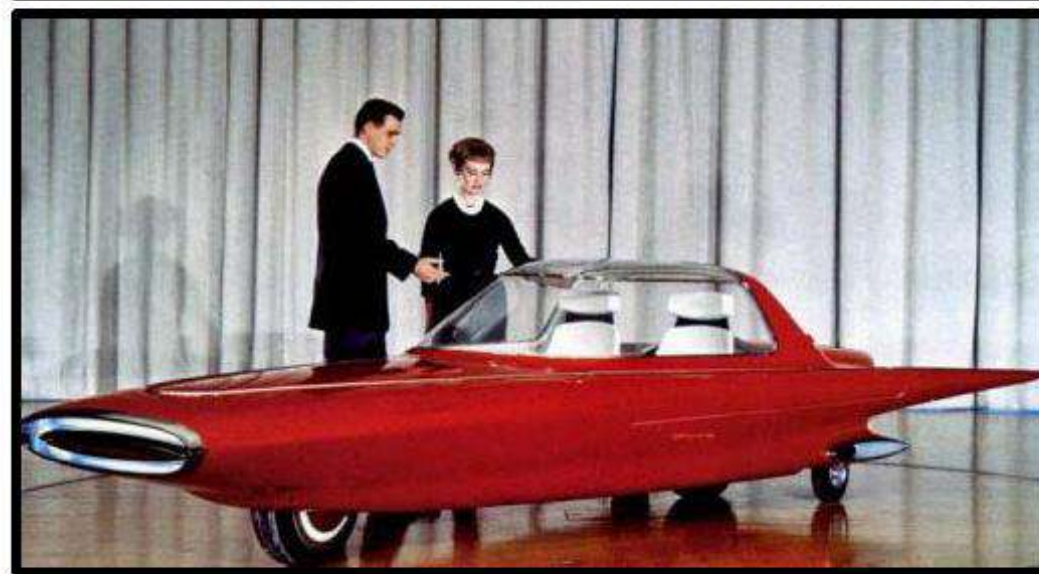


Wright Design

Wright Auctions in the USA have one of the small styling models of the General Motors dream car, the Firebird III, on their list for hammering on 11th December in Chicago, Illinois (see image below). Estimates of between US\$20,000 and US\$30,000 are doing the rounds.

Two years ago Wright sold a styling studio model of the Ford Gyron for US\$40,000. The Gyron was first shown by Ford in 1961, and was a three wheel experimental car.

The Gyron, pictured at right, was destroyed in the fire at Ford's Rotunda building in Detroit in 1962. Only the small model remained.





What a Blas(t)

The Gnoo Blas Classic Car Club in Orange, NSW is keeping alive the history of the former Gnoo Blas road racing circuit with their annual classic car show on February 7th and 8th, 2015. The car show is held in Sir Jack Brabham Park in the centre of the old track.

There will be 10 award categories, including car of the show, and special awards for the best Club display and best Volvo. Special guest in 2015 will be New Zealand driver Robbie Francevic, the 1986 winner of the Australian Touring Car Championship in a 240T Volvo.

The old Gnoo Blas road racing track opened on Saturday January 24, 1953, with a motorcycle meeting followed by a car meeting on Monday, January 26.

Petersen Closed for Renovations.

The Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles, California has closed for renovations and extensions, inside and outside. It will reopen on December 1, 2015 (an artist impression of the remodelled building on Wiltshire Blvd is shown above.)

Meanwhile, if you are wanting to see the Petersen collection it has been shipped up to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, located in the Simi Valley, California, an 80km drive north east of LA.

The Reagan Library also has the old Presidential Boeing 707 Airforce One on display. It is in an air-conditioned hanger attached to the main building. Visitors can walk through the plane.



What the FCA !

Fiat, who now own Chrysler, have quietly retired the iconic Chrysler Pentastar logo.

From 1963 the symbol of Chrysler Corporation was a thin, white, five-pointed star within a blue pentagon. It was seemingly everywhere on Chrysler cars, spare parts, accessories and even literature.

Mercedes first killed it off when they took over in 1998. After they exited the place the Pentastar logo made a triumphant return in 2007.

But now, under new owner Fiat, the logo has been junked in favour of a new FCA logo, signifying the birth of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.

The original Pentastar logo was developed in 1962 by Chrysler's advertising agency. The idea was to create an easily recognizable symbol which could represent all of Chrysler's brands and have a strong engineering look to it.



CHRYSLER

FCA

FIAT CHRYSLER AUTOMOBILES

2005 Mustang

Here are a couple of styling proposals for the 2005 Mustang, from 2001.



Ute @ 80

Another Australian automotive milestone has slipped through largely unnoticed. It is the 80th anniversary of the release of the world's first Ute, by Ford.

Like all good ideas, the first integrated passenger-car based Ute was born out of necessity.

In mid-1933 the then managing director of the Ford Motor Company of Australia, Hubert French, received a letter from a farmer's wife in Gippsland, Victoria. She wrote: "My husband and I can't afford a car and a truck but we need a car to go to church on Sunday and a truck to take the pigs to market on Monday. Can you help?" French passed the letter on to a 23 year old design engineer, Lew Bandt.



Bandt's take on the passenger car-based utility was considered revolutionary at the time. Until the early 1930s, auto manufacturers and vehicle body builders had constructed wooden or metal 'utility' bodies on car chassis. They called them "pick-ups".

Where Bandt's design differed was that he developed his Ford utility as a coupe (two-passenger, steel-panelled, glass-windowed car) with an integrated steel-panelled load carrying section at the rear. What Bandt did was to blend the 'pickup' sides into a coupe body, which provided a cleaner profile and increased the load area behind the cabin.

Bandt sketched out his ute on a 10 metre blackboard in October, 1933, and quickly produced two prototypes for testing. By January 1934, he had the final drawings and the new Ford ute went into production

In its day, the Ford coupe-utility boasted a V8 engine and three-speed manual gearbox.

Its suspension was by transverse leaf springs with shock absorbers at the front and heavy duty semi-elliptic rear springs and shock absorbers at the rear.

You can trace the lineage of the Ute directly from Brandt's idea to today's SUVs. The principle is still the same: a vehicle with passenger car style, comfort and power that has a go-anywhere capability and will also carry loads.

Bandt sadly died in 1987, after being involved in an accident driving a restored version of the Utility he helped make famous.

Would you like your car profiled in Retroautos? Please contact us at david@retroautos.com.au

The “Hot One”



All images: Copyright 2014 GM Corp. Used with permission, GM Media Archive.

“That’s It!”

Harlow H. (Red) Curtis, President of General Motors, on seeing the full sized styling prototype of the 1955 Chevrolet in early 1953.

Hits 60



“Your task: imagine and design the hottest consumer product of the day, one that will have folks lined up at the store to get their first glance of it. And creates a national buzz about its new power and speed, not to mention its fabulous new looks unlike anything seen before. And smashes all sales records for any comparable device before or after it. And makes your company the most profitable and highly valued in the world. And one so capable and durable, folks will still prefer to buy it used instead of the newer competition. And becomes a timeless product, an icon of the whole industry, one that folks are still talking about and lusting over a half century later.”

Paul Neidermeyer writing about what it must have been like to be given the job of developing the 1955 Chevrolet, in *Curbside Classics*.







1955 Chevrolet 60th Anniversary

Every now and then a new car arrives just at the right moment and immediately sets the standard for all others.

But rare is the automobile that sets the standard, defines an era forever more and becomes one THE most collectible cars of the 20th and 21st Century.

Such a car is the 1955 Chevrolet.

Sixty years ago, during the last week of October and first week of November, Chevrolet dealers across the USA started taking delivery of the 1955 range.

The sensationally styled 1955 Chevy shouted out its American optimism and General Motors' styling and engineering dominance.

The '55 was the complete package. It boasted "sweep sight" wrap around windscreen, Ferrari inspired chromed grille, lowered roof line and two-tone livery inside and outside.

Chevrolet advertising summed it all up with one word: "Motoramic". This was an intentional link to the Motorama dream cars of that year.



The range went from the poverty pack two door sedan all the way to the svelte pillarless hardtop Bel Air sports coupe and dream car inspired Nomad wagon.

And then there was the new V8 engine. Chevrolet's chief engineer, Ed Cole, developed what would become the most iconic of V8 power plants, the "small block". At 4.3 litres Chevy's groundbreaking V-8 gave the line-up much needed zest and zip.

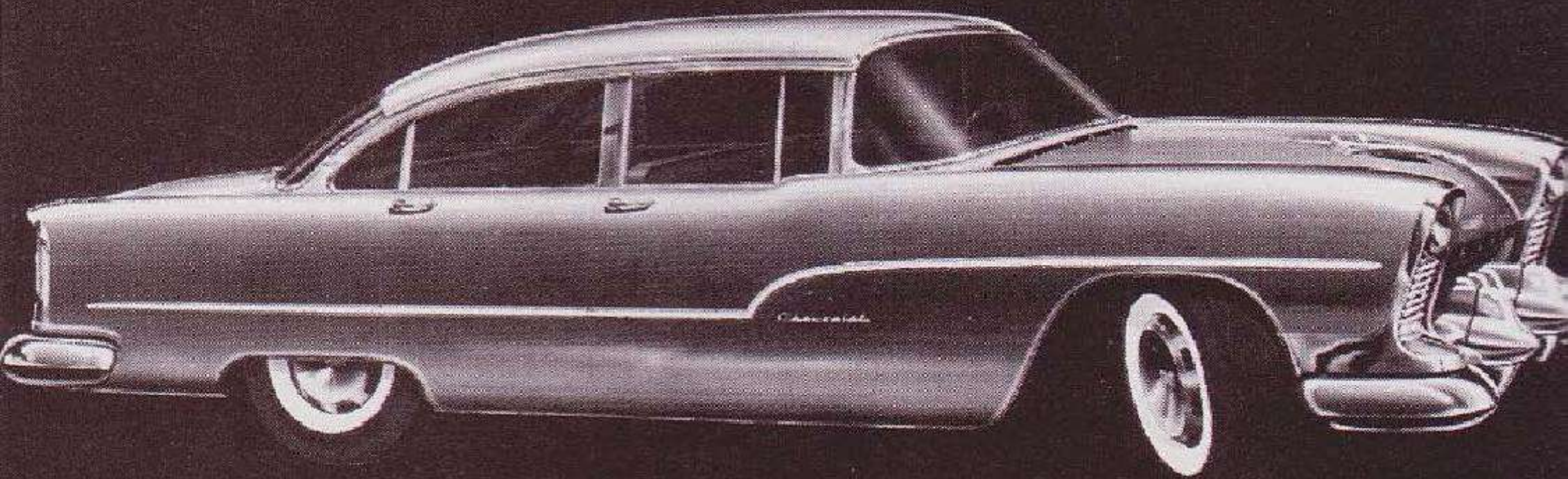
The V8 was quickly enlarged to 4.7 litres and progressively expanded all the way to 6.6 litres over the next 15 years. It is still the design template for GM V8s today.

As the year progressed Chevy ads started calling the '55 "The Hot One," referring

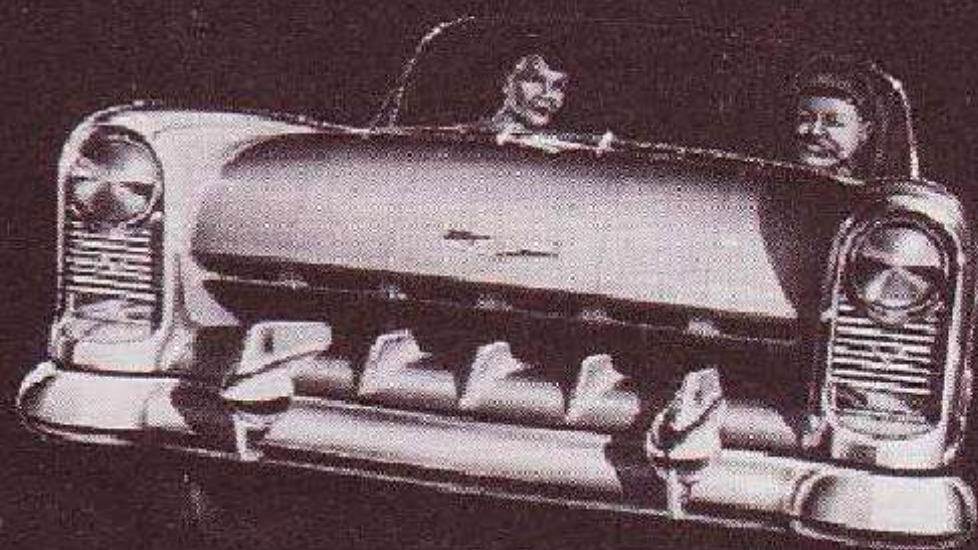
to its V8 performance and its record-breaking sales. Americans bought a staggering 1.7 million of them that year. By comparison Ford sold 1.45 million.

The rarest car in the range is the two door Nomad wagon. Not very popular when released, it has become the world's most collectible station wagon. Based on the 1954 Corvette Nomad dream car, Chevrolet's designers and engineers took it from concept to reality in just twelve months.

The 1955 Chevrolet could have looked quite different Take a look at our exclusive prototype images in our photo feature *Styling the 1955 Chevrolet*. While the basic shape was agreed in 1952, many crucial styling motifs were debated for 18 months.



Styling the 1955 Chevrolet



Continuing Series: Drawing Board to Driveway

All images: Copyright 2014 GM Corp. Used with permission, GM Media Archive.



On 1st November, 1954, Time magazine carried a hand drawn image of the President of General Motors, Harlow H. (Red) Curtice. Behind him, bursting out of a blueprint, was the 1955 Chevrolet.

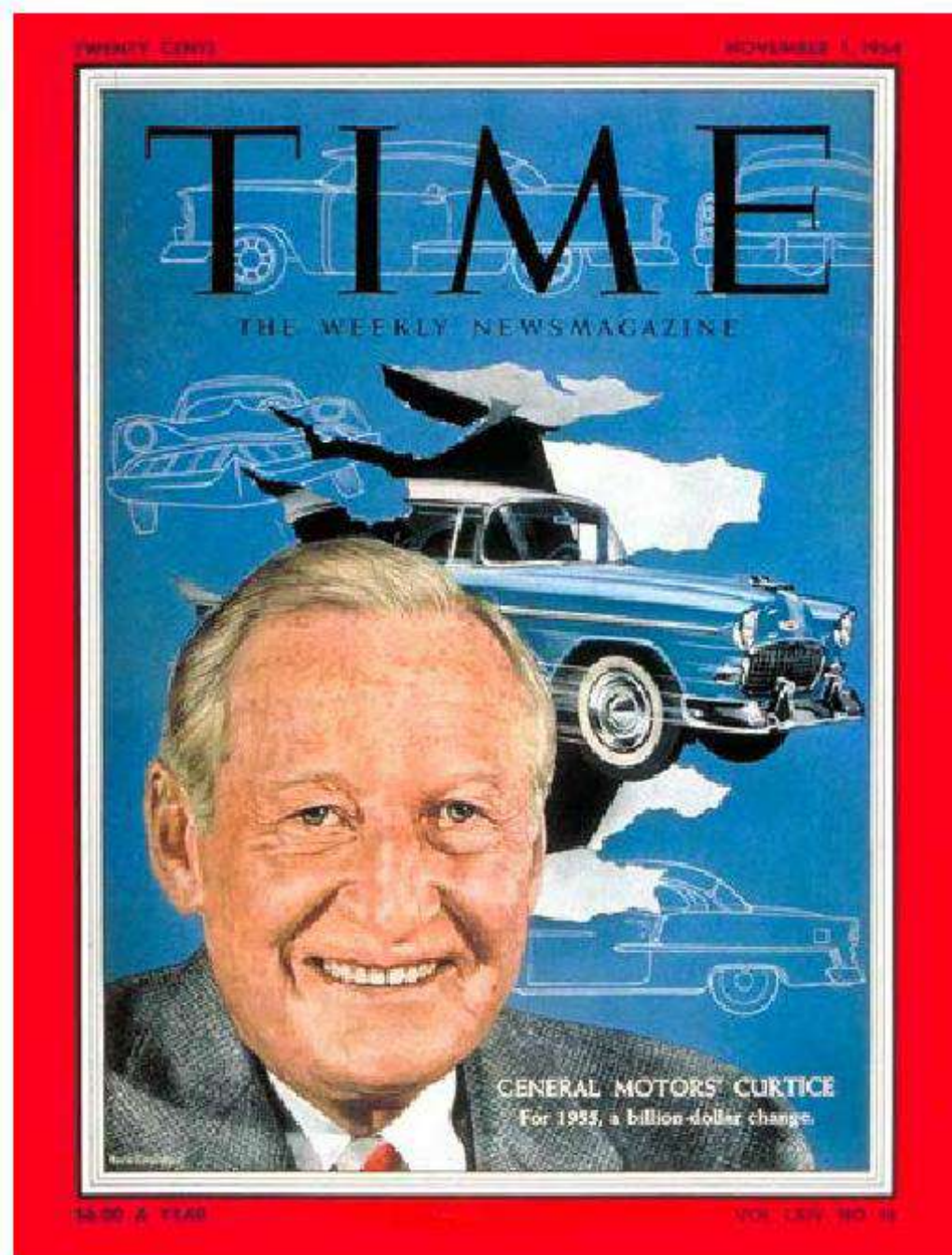
Inside the magazine was a comprehensive story explaining how the car had been approved for production. A billion dollar change, Time called it.

The article captured the moment perfectly. It said: “back in early 1953 a trim, lean man with the suave good looks of an ambassador and the cheery smile of a salesman strode into a large, cluttered Detroit studio.

“Around the room were barrels of clay and modelling tools; on the walls were blueprints of cars yet to be born.

“Only a handful of people were allowed in the room; few even knew its location. On a platform in the center stood the reason for the tight security.

“There for inspection by Red Curtice, was the topmost secret of the greatest manufacturing corporation in the world - a full-sized, blue-and-ivory clay model of



the Chevrolet four door sedan for 1955.

“Curtice had followed the progress of the new Chevrolet from first sketches to drafting board to quarter-scale model to clay mock-up very closely.

The crease line across the boot that Harlow asked to be eliminated.

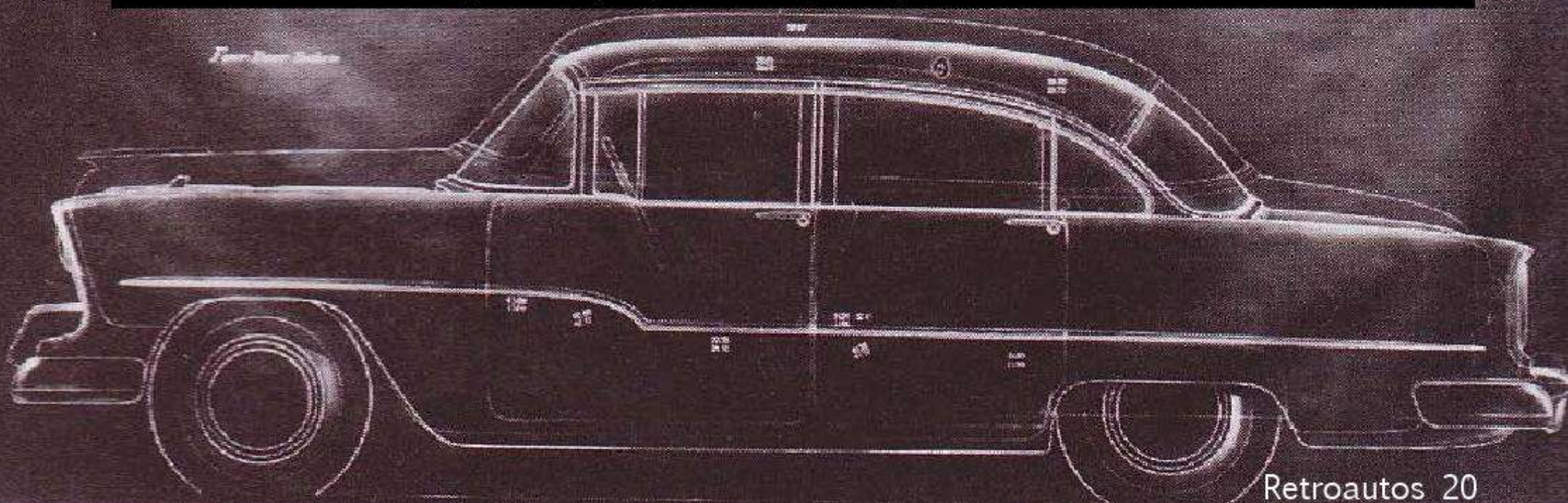


“Now he slowly circled the car, squinting at its lines and lightly touching its smooth surface. When his eye lighted on a horizontal crease in the molding of the trunk, he shook his head. “That’s not good,” said Curtice. “You’ll see that it casts a shadow on the bottom half of the lid. That shadow makes the car look higher and narrower. What we want is a lower automobile that looks wider.”

“At the side of the four door car, Curtice stopped again. Why should the belt line be straight and unbroken? (see below).

“When a designer explained that only the two-door models would have a racy dip in the belt line, Curtice suggested: don’t you think we might try it on a four-door type, too?”

Mid 1952 line drawing of the proposed '55, compared the current Chevrolet .





An early 1953 mock-up, with straight beltline. The split windscreen was an idea to save money.

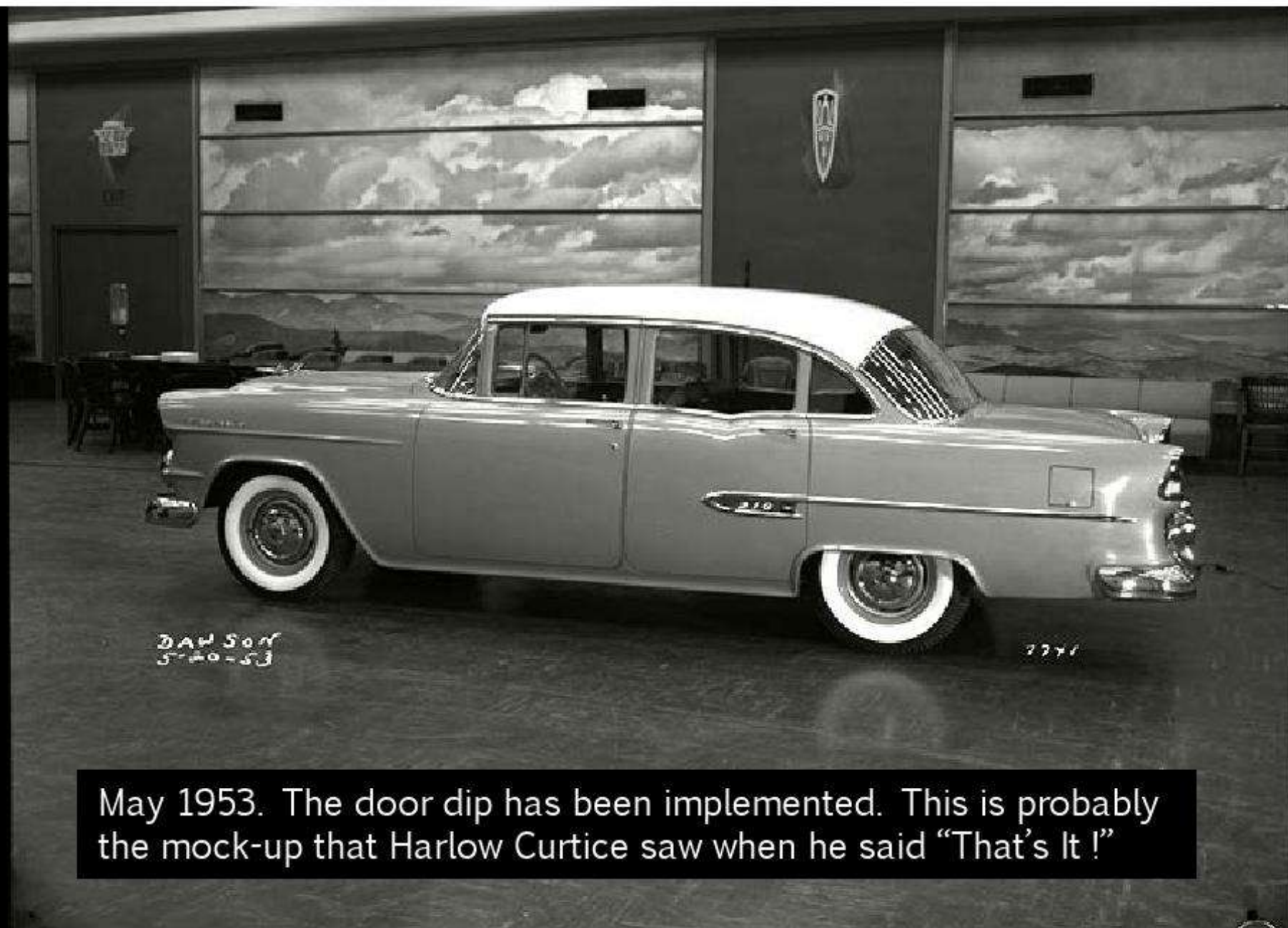
“As he left the room, molders set to work making the suggested changes.

“A few days later, Red Curtice was back to see the results. Said he: “That’s it !”

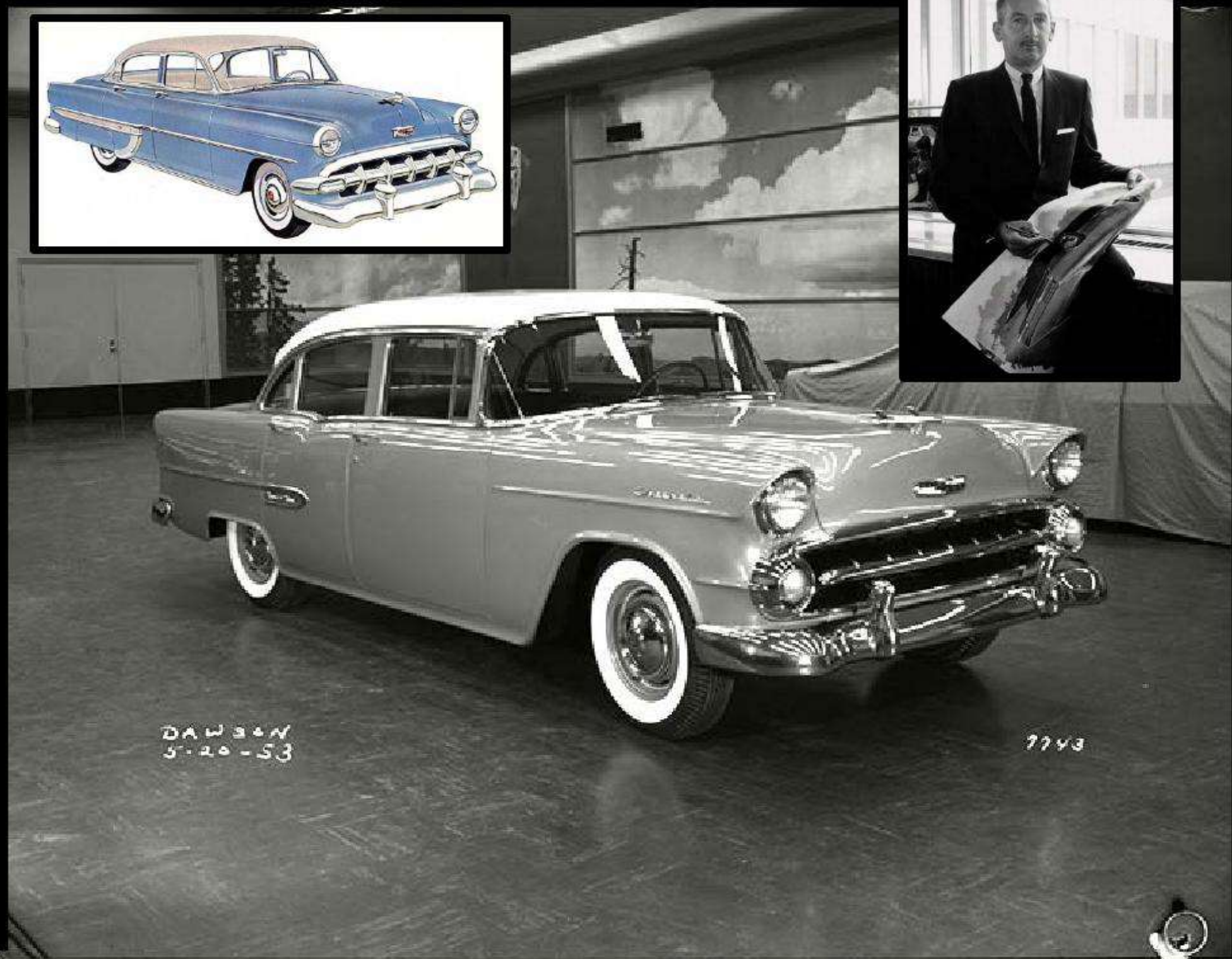
“Those two words were the signal for G.M’s Chevrolet division to spend some US\$300 million to turn the clay model

into a car on the production line - the biggest expenditure for a new model in auto history.”

With more changes to the grille, which had been modelled on the 1954 version, the complete package started to emerge. By 28th October 1954 cars were moving into dealerships.



May 1953. The door dip has been implemented. This is probably the mock-up that Harlow Curtice saw when he said “That’s It !”



By May 1953 the car's overall shape was locked in, only trim grille, and trim placement remained unresolved. Compared with the '54 Chev (inset) the '55 was eight centimetres lower.

The styling of the 1955 Chevrolet was overseen by Chevrolet studio head Clare MacKichan.(see inset above)

MacKichan ran the Chevrolet studios for all of the 1950s, and then moved to Opel in 1962, before retuning to the USA in 1967 to be the boss of the Advanced Studios.

Work on the '55s started in June 1952.

The clues to what the '55 would look like, especially the belt line dip and wrapped windscreen, came in 1954 in the form of the new Cadillac, Oldsmobile and Buick cars. and the '53 Cadillac Eldorado.

That Chevrolet (and Pontiac) would inherit the wrap around windscreen in 1955 from their more expensive siblings was an industry given, and caused Ford to match GM for their full sized cars. (Ford had considered straight front pillars for 1955).

The '54 Buick, Oldsmobile and Cadillac hardtop coupes all featured a distinct dip in the beltline aft of the door. It was a motif that GM carried through it cars until 1958.

Helping MacKichan on the '55 was stylist Carl Renner and body engineer Chuck Stebbins. It was Renner who had a hand in styling the first Corvette and the Corvette Nomad.

Had Curtice not asked for the dip in the sedan door, the '55 might have looked somewhat different. With a little photo shopping we have recreated it in these two images. In fact, the station wagon and Nomad were never changed and have a straight door line (see below).



The grille on the May 1953 mock-up was a re-work of 1954. Note the Buick in the background.



Dawson
5-24-53

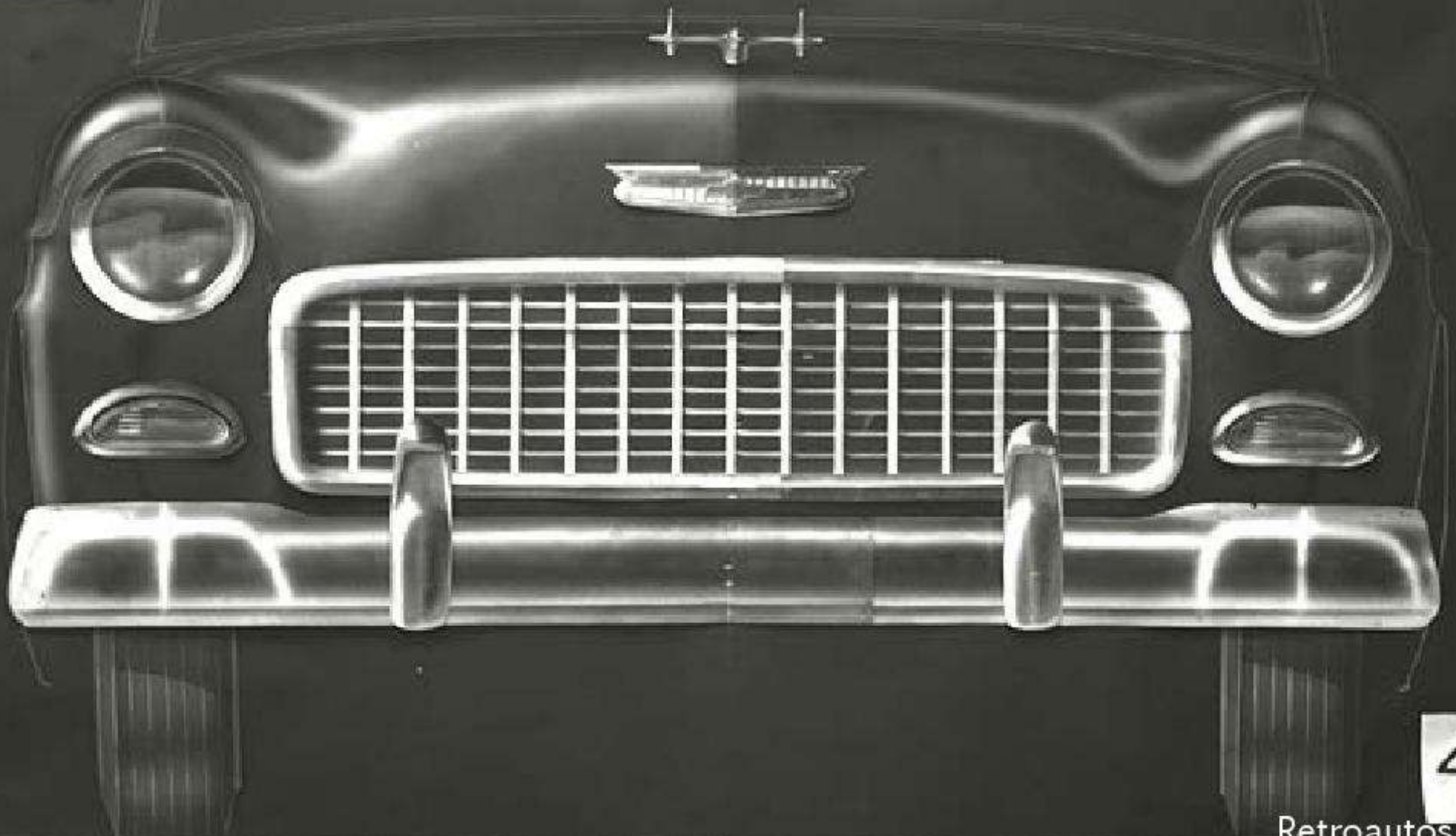
773r



EVANS
3-14-54

8553

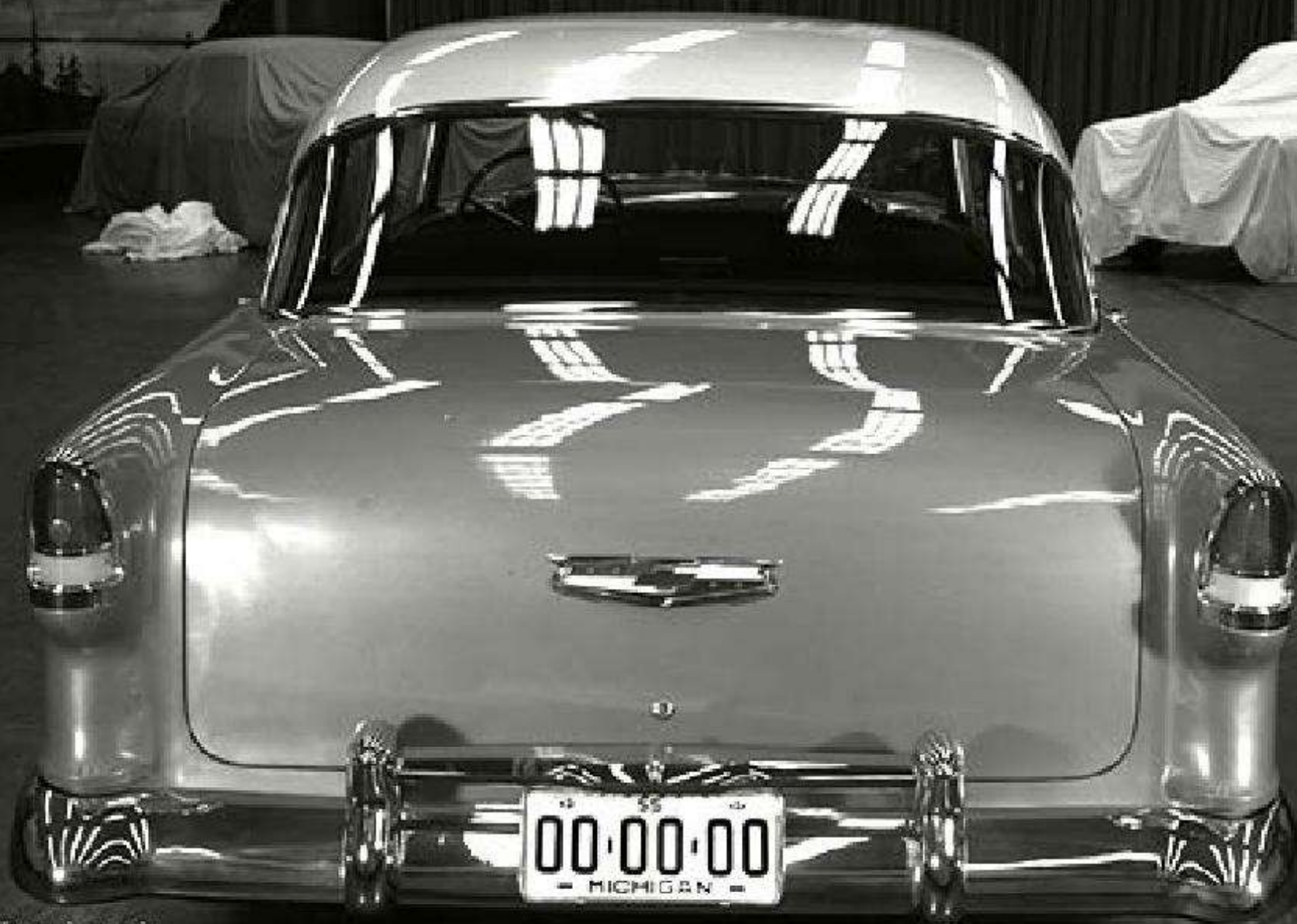
As of March 1954 the iconic grille was in place.



EVANS
3-14-54

4

By May 1953, the boot lid had lost the crease line. On this page is the four door sedan, and opposite is the hardtop coupe. Note that the number plate is located in the bumper bar. On the final version it was fixed to the boot lid.



Dawson
5-20-53

7737



DANSON
5-20-53

7933

Final version of the '55 Chevrolet,
this image dated 24th March, 1954.



EVANS
3-24-54

8552

This grille with extra chrome under the turn indicators was proposed for the Bel Air, by Joe Schemansky, who later became the first Styling Director at Holden, and was responsible for the HK Monaro and the HK range.





In late 1954, after the '55 was in the showrooms, Chevrolet was looking at this close-coupled coupe as an addition to the line up. It was to be called the *Grand Prix*.



This is the Chevrolet **NOMAD!**



The Nomad got its name, along with its unique roofline and rear body treatment, from a 1954 GM Motorama Corvette concept wagon (pictured above) styled by Carl Renner.

Encouraged by the Nomad's public reception, and mindful that America's burgeoning suburbs were absorbing ever more station wagons, the decision was made very late in 1954 to develop the Nomad into Bel Air-level sports wagon.

Renner, one of GM's most innovative stylists in the 1950s, was given the job of transferring his Nomad roof from the Corvette to the full size Chevrolet, as quickly as possible.

The design was still being finalised in November 1954, as the image on the

next page shows. The car was released for sale in January 1955, along with its Pontiac companion, the Safari. And whilst it never captured many sales, and suffered from troublesome water leaks in the tailgate, it has become an icon of the 1950s.

Every now and then GM attempts to revisit the Nomad, either as a concept (see below 2004 version) or re-badging an existing station wagon. The Holden Commodore Sports Wagon is the closest General Motors have ever come to replicating the idea of the Nomad.





Top: This 3rd November, 1954 image still has the rear wheel cut outs similar to the standard wagon. The slanted "B" pillar has more rake and curvature to it than the production version.
Above: The first production Nomad, minus the front mudguard chrome trim.
Below: The Bel Air wagon, Chevrolet sold 24,313 of them in 1955, compared to 8346 Nomads.









From this.....

Valiant Success

In the classic car world the 1963 AP5 Valiant is quickly gaining in collector appeal.

With American styling, plenty of power from the slant six engine and the novelty of a push-button automatic transmission selector, these family cars stand out from Falcons and Holdens.

Styled at Chrysler in Detroit, the AP5 was a counterpart to the Dodge Dart and Plymouth Valiant.

Indeed, Chrysler Australia used the American windscreen frame and wipers, firewall and front assembly frame during the part of early AP5 production to save costs.

Ruben Razmoski has always liked mid-1960s Valiants.

“My father had Valiants when I was growing up and then I bought an AP5 to bash around the paddocks on our property,” he says. “It cost me just \$100.”

While in his teens Ruben bought more AP5s to fix up and re-sell. One of these he kept and over seven years slowly restored it.

The car was his daily driver until family commitments led him to sell it. “The guy who bought it still has it and still uses it all the time,” Ruben says.

.....to this.



In 2010 Ruben decided the time was right to get another AP5. A search led him to upmarket Regal. "I bought it sight unseen on EBay," he says. "It had sat in a shed for 25 years under a tarpaulin".

Despite the car being housed in less than ideal storage facilities for such a long time, it was in surprisingly good condition. Ruben explains: "It had its original paint, the panels were all straight and there was very little rust. The interior was also ok, though all of the chrome and diecast was pitted."

The restoration comprised re-chroming all the bright bits, rebuilding the engine, re-wiring and repainting the exterior.

Although it is not driven daily, Ruben ensures his Valiant is given a good work out on weekends. "It is built to be driven" he says.

During the restoration work Ruben discovered that his car had a very early build number. The ID plate indicates the car was the 511th AP5 built. This means it went down the assembly line during the first couple of weeks of the model's production, probably even before the official release date.

The car also has the American left hand drive windscreen wiper configuration and left hand drive steering box mounting points on the frame, which supports the early build number.

Now the AP5 is finished, Ruben's next project is a 1965 AP6 V8, the first locally produced V8 in Australia.

He is well underway with the project, as the images on the following pages show.



Valiant Regal luxury, 1963 style.



Above: Push button automatic selector ensure that '63 Valiants stand out in the crowd.





The AP5 was developed in the USA at the same time as the '63 Plymouth Valiant and Dodge Dart. The Dart was the bigger car, with a 111 inch wheelbase. The Valiants sat on a 106 inch stretch. The AP5 was the simplest design of the trio, with less manufacturing complications, a larger boot thanks to a higher boot line and flattened rear window with a wider C pillar.



Dodge Dart



Plymouth Valiant

The American Plymouth Valiant was not a pretty car, with a fussy rear end and a sour-looking grille. But it sold well. 198,000 went out of dealer show rooms. It came in a multitude of body styles.



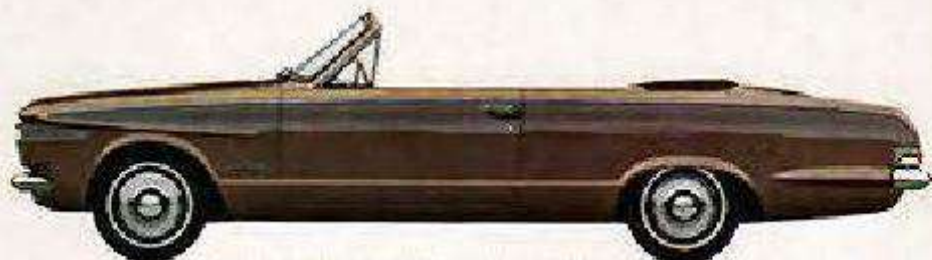
Except for the grille and placement of badges and chrome trim, there was no difference between the AP5 wagon and its Plymouth counterpart.



Valiant Signet 200 convertible/metallic gray



Valiant Signet 200 2-door hardtop/black



Valiant V-200 convertible/metallic brown



Valiant V-200 4-door sedan/light beige



Valiant V-200 2-door Sedan/red



Valiant V-200 4-door station wagon/dark metallic blue



Valiant V-100 4-door sedan/medium beige



Valiant V-100 2-door sedan/metallic green



Valiant V-100 4-door station wagon/blue

Ruben's AP6 V8 Restoration



Ruben's recently acquired AP6 V8.





The basic body shell is in wonderful condition for the car's age.





Original clean floors are always a help in restorations







Attention to detail will be a highlight of this restoration





Hard work always deserve a reward.



Ruben has spent considerable time ensuring the panels are free of blemishes.



The Last American Ford Falcon

As the sun set on 1969, everyone thought this would be the last year of the American Falcon.



Although the Falcon has soldiered on in Australia until the 21st century, over in the USA Ford terminated the brand name *over 44 years ago*.

Despite a stellar start in 1960 when over 450,000 were sold, the Falcon's sales were eroded by the Mustang, and from 1965 onwards its production numbers declined significantly and by 1968 they were down by 75%.

And there was more pain to come.

Ford had decided to re-invent the Falcon as the Maverick. Supported by aggressive and youth oriented advertising, and priced 20% below the Falcon, it hit the streets in April 1969, and delivered a jaw dropping 578,000 units in its first year.

And to top that off, Ford unveiled the stylish new Torino, that fitted in the

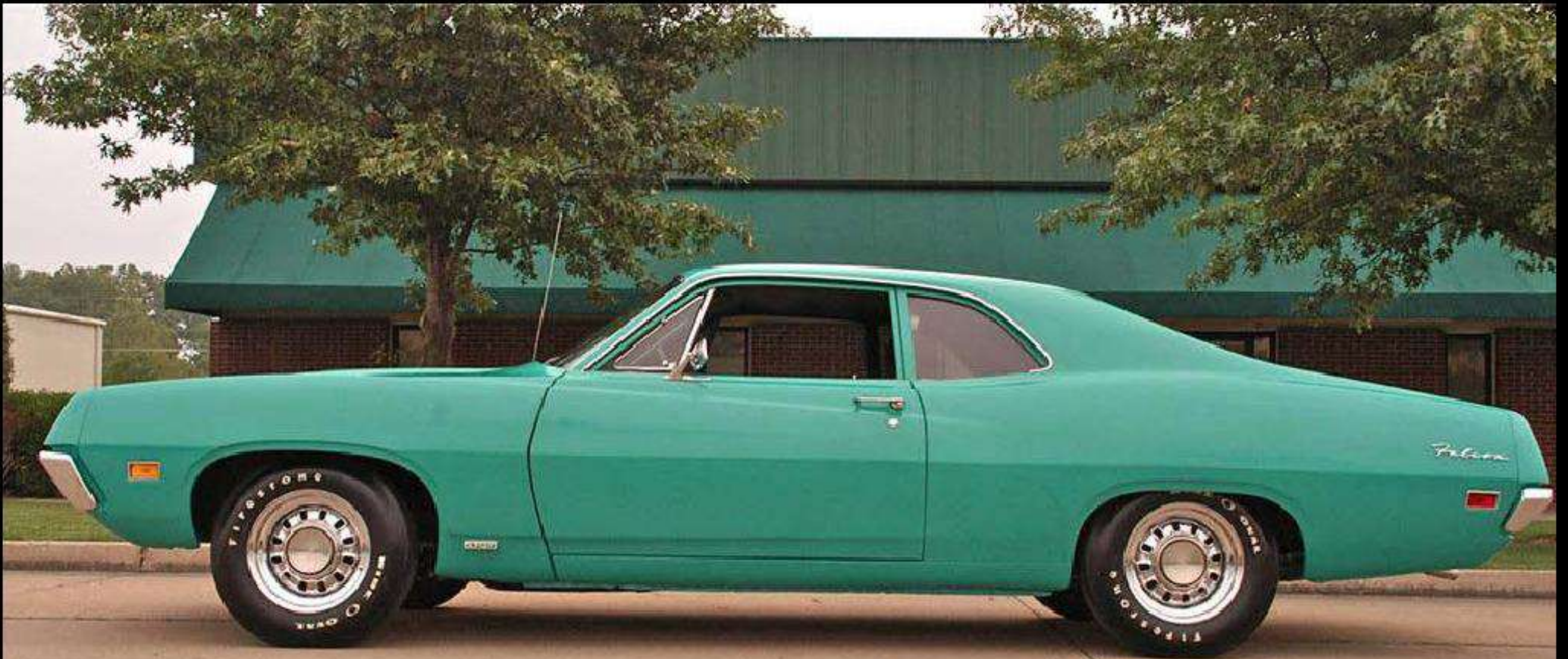
market above the Falcon, and drew upwardly aspiring buyers away from it.

Meanwhile, ever since the Mustang's release, the Falcon was portrayed as an econo-box car. Advertising positioned it as a vehicle for young families and older folks.

Finally, the Falcon could not meet new American automobile safety requirements, and would have to be re-engineered in total if it was to survive. And there was no way that was going to happen.

Quite simply, the Falcon had served its purpose and been undercut by the more stylish, cheaper and smaller Maverick, and overshadowed by the bigger and more luxurious Torino.

So the decision was made to "retire" the brand name at the end of 1969. Well, almost.



The real Last American Falcon

For reasons that are still not totally clear, even to Ford Falcon devotees, Ford went back to the market in January 1970 with a “new Falcon”.

But it was not really a Falcon.

The last of the breed was a poverty pack subseries of the new Torino line-up, and a half hearted offer at that.

Sold in only two and four door sedan and wagon variants, as a mid-year model (they called it a '70½), it was clothed in a basic Torino body.

It had a couple of *Falcon* badges glued to its flanks to call out its lowly status.

The advertising continued with the young families and pensioners theme.



The 1970 Torino shares design cues with XA/XB/XC Australian Falcon coupes.



No, not a Falcon, it's a Torino

Nobody was fooled and just 67,000 were sold before the axe fell on 4th July, 1970.

By a strange quirk of corporate fate, a 1970½ Falcon could be ordered with every engine and transmission combination in the Ford line up.

Sixty nine smart folk took advantage of the cheapest muscle car offer on the planet when they ordered the Falcon with the massive 429 CobraJet V8.

In January 2014 Barrett-Jackson auctioned one of these ultra rare super cars and got US\$31,000 for it.(see the green coupe pictured on pages 52 and 54).

We reckon it is the muscle car bargain of the year!

Not many of the '70½ Falcons exist today. Built to a price they suffered rust and reliability problems.

Many people get them confused with the Torino until they see the Falcon badges.

Those cars that have survived tend to fall into two categories: well maintained V8s and scrap metal.



The smaller, cheaper Maverick



Poverty pack Falcon, with the 429 Cobra Jet



It even looked cheap !

The Last American Falcon

falcon '70½



FORD'S ALL-NEW
EDITION OF
AMERICA'S ALL-TIME ECONOMY CHAMP

Retro Auctions



The winter auction season in the USA is gearing up for its annual extravaganza of money spending in Arizona, at Phoenix and Scottsdale, and Mecum's 3000 car sell-a-thon in Florida.

Barrett-Jackson has been quick out of the blocks and talking up its roster of automobiles, which includes all of Ron Pratte's collection.

And who is Mr Pratte? Apparently he is a construction magnate worth upwards of \$300 million and started buying classics and concept cars in 2003.

In 2003 Pratte bought 52 cars (you read it right) at the Barrett-Jackson auction in Scottsdale, and he's been coming back ever since. His collection includes a GM Futurliner, one of two Shelby Super Snakes (he paid US\$5.5 million for it), the first production Ford Thunderbird, and one of

two 1954 Pontiac Bonneville dream cars. Pratte paid US\$3 million for the Bonneville in 2006 and US\$4 million for the Futurliner.

The Futurliners were a group of stylised buses designed in the 1940s. They were used in GM's Parade of Progress and Motorama, which travelled USA in the 1940s and 1950s exhibiting new cars and technology.

Another Pratte car which caught our eye is the car in which Carroll Shelby won his first race, a 1949 MG TC (pictured above).

Pratte also has one of the "Christine" Plymouth Fury movie cars and Howard Hughes's 1953 Buick, which he bought for US\$1.62 million in 2005.

All images copyright of respective auction houses.



1954 Pontiac Bonneville. This was seen as Pontiac's attempt to have its own Corvette.

GM Futureliner.





From Gooding's Scottsdale offering comes this 1988 929 Porsche. Would you believe they have a price guide on this of US\$1 million to US\$2 million.



1967 and 1968 Yenko Chevrolet Comaros. Each has a US\$500,000 price guide from Gooding. Will there be a discount if you buy both?

Top: 1956 Maserati A6G 200 coupe. Gooding's price guide for Scottsdale is around US\$750,000 to US\$950,000.
Above: Wait for it...the price guide for this 1976 Landcruiser is US\$75,000 to US\$100,000.





RM Auctions are getting in early with a new concept called Bid Anywhere. It launches on 21st November 2014, and is totally internet based. One of the cars up for grabs is this 1953 Aston Martin "barn find". The guide is US\$20,000.

See more at: www.rmauctions.com



Another RM "barn find" in the field. A 1963 Studebaker Avanti, somewhat worn.



RM: A 1928 American La France Fire Truck.



Mecum are setting a cracking pace. On December 4th to 6th 2014 they are in Kansas City with 750 cars. Then, it's over to Austin, Texas, and 600 cars go under the hammer on 12th and 13th December.

After Christmas, they all move down to Kissimmee in Florida for a 3000 car auction held from 16th to 25th January 2015.

The Austin auction boasts one of eleven 1967 "Eleanor" Mustangs from the 2000 remake of the movie *Gone in 60 Seconds*. This example on the block is one of three which actually appeared in background shots, which makes it even more collectible, they say.

More Star Cars

At Kissimmee the star power ramps up even more with two iconic Pontiac Firebirds. One is a black 1978 Trans Am which was owned by Burt Reynolds, as in *Smokey and the Bandit*. The other, also a '78, was one of the *Rockford Files* Firebirds. Both have been authenticated.

Given this is the first time in years that a Rockford Bird has come up for sale, it will be interesting to see the value achieved now that James Garner has passed away.

Both 'Birds are from the Steve Wellborn Collection, which comprises muscle cars and mostly Dodge, Plymouth and Chrysler. Wellborn owns a construction company and established a muscle car museum in 2010 in his home town of Alexander City, Alabama. Half of the Museum's inventory will be auctioned. See more at www.mecum.com

At Kissimmee will be this 1941 Lincoln Zephyr, one of 725 convertibles built that year.



1942 Chrysler Windsor Coupe, Kansas City.



You'll find the '73 Chevrolet Caprice coupe and the 1929 Chevrolet at Austin, Texas.



You can meet an original Eleanor in Austin, Texas.

Inset: two BMW Isetta's will be at Kansas City.

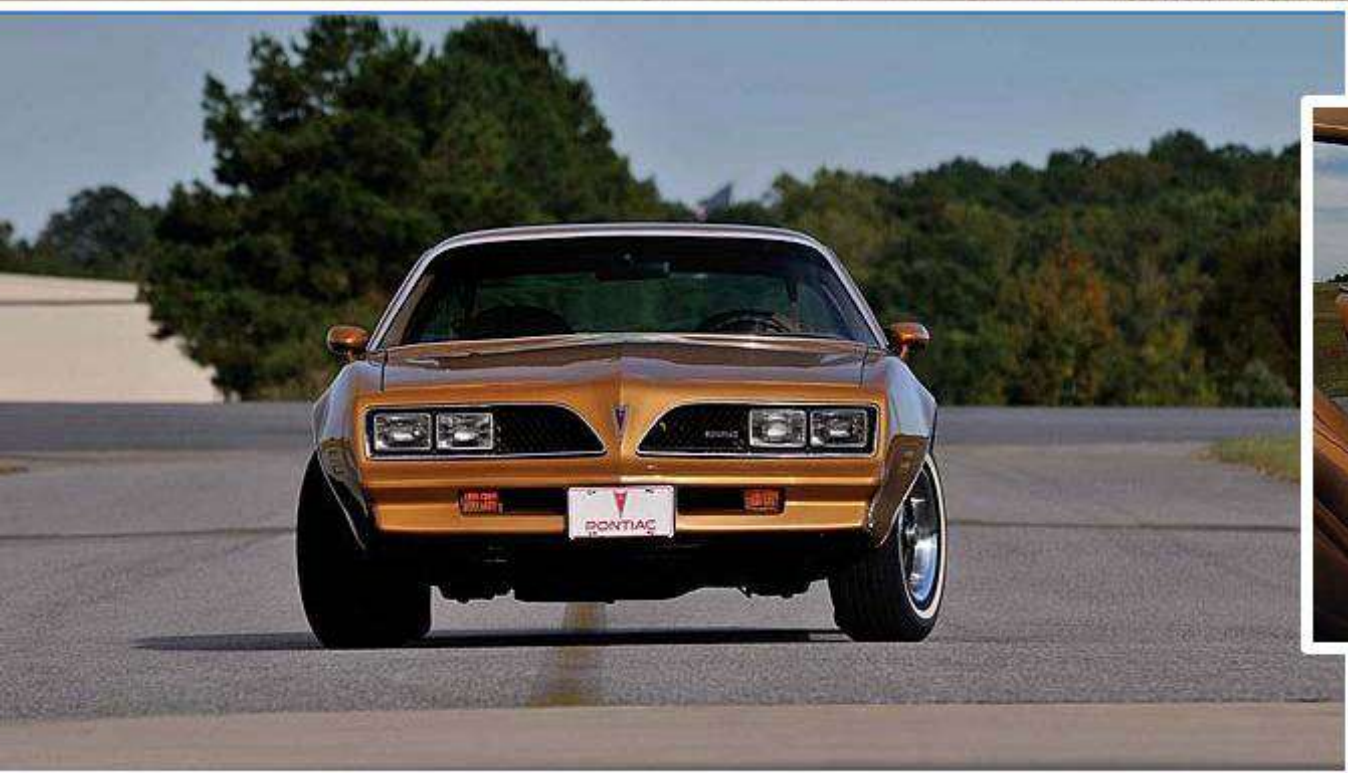


A 1945 Diamond T at Austin, Texas.



At Kansas City will be this 1973 Eldorado.

One of only 18 *Rockford* Firebirds used in the TV series.



Bert Reynolds's Firebird.



Above: This 1971 Dodge Hemi Super Bee was the feature test car in the December 1970 Motor Trend magazine. It was especially prepared on the production line ahead of the road test. (Kissimmee)
Left and below: A "poverty pack" 1967 Mercury Comet hiding a 427 inch V8, at Austin, Texas. This is our pick of the lot.





Heritage CENTER

Tucked away in a non-descript industrial park, in a warehouse and office complex, in Sterling Heights, Michigan is the General Motors (GM) Heritage Center.

Inside are all of the most significant cars in the company's 100 year reign. Some are on display, some are in crates, some are on loan to dealers and others are loaned out to museums.

For car enthusiasts, this is like finding the Holy Grail.

The Heritage Center is also a vast and rapidly growing repository of files, information and photos going back to the very formation of the corporation just waiting for historians and academics to dissect and interpret.



One of the true purposes of the General Motors Heritage Center is to share the history and accomplishments of GM and inspire ideas for the future.



Behind the files and a big roller door are the cars. GM has 600 in its inventory.

Over in one corner is the 1938 Buick Y Job. This is the first concept car ever built by a car maker and was a design template for GM for the next decade and a half.

Next to the Y Job is the 1951 Buick La Sabre, another significant concept car.

Both convertibles are drivable and even now they stun you with their sleek styling and waist-height silhouettes.

Alongside the Buicks are the Firebirds I, II and III. These were GM's integration of airplane and car, and graced motor shows and magazine covers in the late 1950s, with turbine engines and all manner of technical innovations for their time.

In fact there are so many significant cars in the place--200 on the floor when we visited--it is hard to take them all in. But here's a taster: The first production Oldsmobile Toronado, the first production Chevrolet Volt, the 1962 Corvette Stingray prototype called the Mako Shark, the Buick Rivera Silver Arrow III concept, six Cadillac concepts including the stunning "Sixteen" of 2003, four Corvette prototypes including one with a rotary engine.

Add to this the 1966 "Electron Van", an electric powered truck, with batteries charged by on-board fuel cells.

There's a car for almost every year of manufacture, dating back to 1910. And not all of the vehicles in the collection are on display!

The Center is not open to the public but the facility can be booked for car club gatherings and GM uses it meetings, conferences and training.

In Part 1 of this photo feature, we take you through the Centre, using images we took on our visit and others supplied by the Heritage Centre. Part 2 will be in the January 2015 issue of Retroautos.



1951 La Sabre



1939 Buick Y Job



Firebirds I, II & III



The actual Indy Pace Cars, from 1969 , above, and 1967, below.





The Center contains a diverse range of automobiles. A 1949 Cadillac, 1966 Chevrolet Nova and the 1961 Corvette Mako Shark which was the personal car of Styling Chief, Bill Mitchell.



All images: Copyright 2014 GM Corp.
Used with permission, GM Media Archive.



The 1973 Chevrolet Corvette Aerovette. Built to accommodate a rotary engine mid-ship, it now has a V8 behind the seats. The car's V shaped windscreen owes much to Vauxhall's XVR.



Concept cars are everywhere at the Center.



Centre left: 1914 Chevrolet "Baby Grand", built to compete with the Model T Ford.
Centre right: One of the wonderful brass era cars on display, a 1911 Oldsmobile Limited Tourer



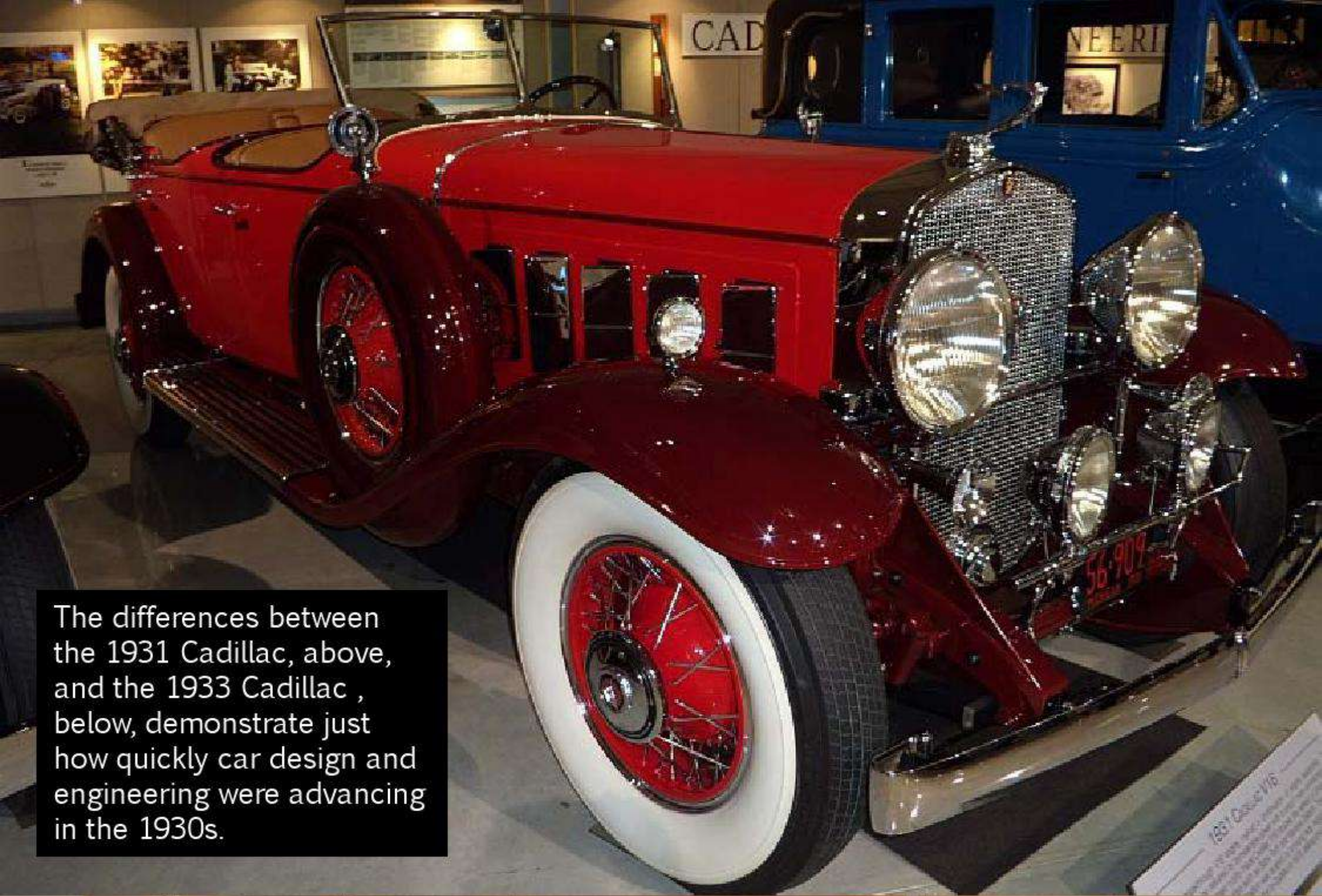
Below: 1912 Cadillac , the first car with an electric starter motor as standard.





1920 Cadillac. Note the early attempt at a "wrap around" windshield





The differences between the 1931 Cadillac, above, and the 1933 Cadillac, below, demonstrate just how quickly car design and engineering were advancing in the 1930s.





1937 Cadillac contrasts with the 1986 Chevrolet Corvette Indy concept.

1937 Cadillac Parkwood Sedan
The 1937 Cadillac Parkwood Sedan was a luxury automobile designed by Harley Earl. It featured a prominent chrome grille and round headlights. The car was powered by a 301 cubic inch V8 engine and had a top speed of 100 mph.



1986 CORVETTE INDY CONCEPT
The Corvette Indy concept was created in 1985 and first shown at the 1986 Detroit Auto Show. The inspiration for the car was provided by a 1985 Indy race car. The car was designed by John Paul DeJoria and was powered by a 3.0 liter V6 engine. The Corvette Indy concept was created to showcase Chevrolet's advanced aerodynamic technology and featured a wheel drive, 4 wheel steering, rear view camera with 300 mile view system and other hi-tech systems. The concept was intended to mark a new level of performance.



The first production Volt, above, and the amazing Electron Van gas turbine hauler, below.





The first production Oldsmobile Toronado





Above: Commercial vehicles are well represented at the Heritage Centre.
Below: One of the surviving Futureliners,





An immaculate 1945 GMC Tanker .





From the 1953 Motorama comes this Cadillac Le Mans concept, where it debuted alongside the Corvette concept. GM made four Le Mans, and toured them across the USA. One was trashed in a fire, two survived and one disappeared while in Oklahoma, never to be seen again. The one here was changed in the late 1950s. It was given new, cleaner fins and quad headlights, and a new motor. This car stands just 1.3 metres high, and fits three across the bench seat.





Also from 1953 is this Oldsmobile Fiesta convertible. In the background it the Firebird I.





The dramatic, chop-top 1972 Buick Riviera Silver Arrow III show car. It had a device called Max Trac, an early version of traction control. This was another of Bill Mitchell's company cars.





The 1989 Cadillac Solitaire concept has a .28 co-efficient of drag. Power is from a 60-degree, 48-valve, dual overhead camshaft, V12. The Solitaire features include electrically-powered articulating doors. Two miniature video cameras take the place of rear view mirrors.



We continue with Part 2 in next month's Retroautos.



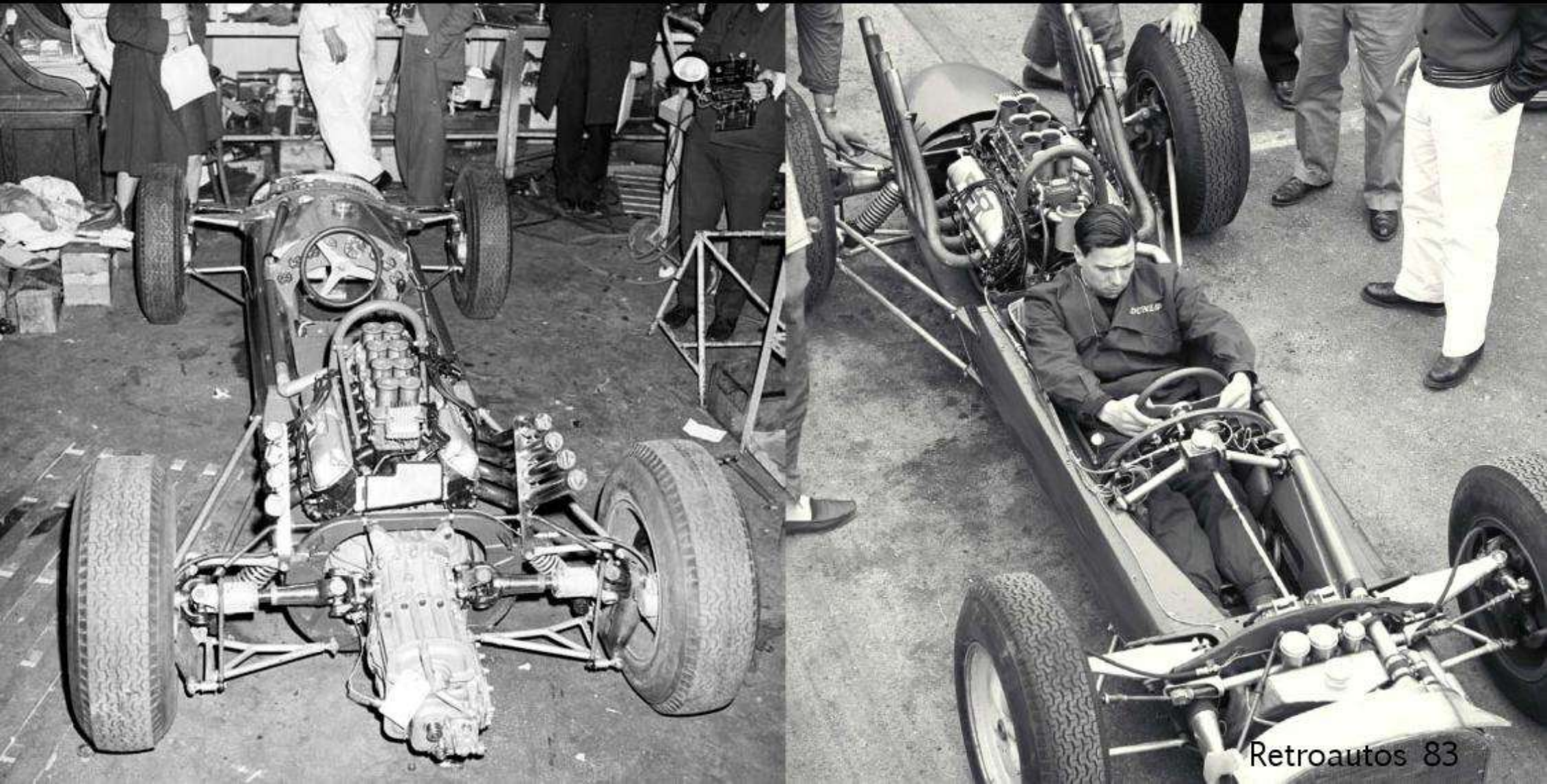
Retro Racing



A much modified Fiat Topolino, owned and driven by Ronnie Coxhob and Ray Hain, at Morisset in 1969. How much negative camber do you really need?



Top: 1969 Brands Hatch Race of Champions, Jack Brabham in his Brabham Ford.
Below: Jim Clark checks out the fit of his car at Indy in 1963.





Top: Dan Gurney and Carroll Shelby at Indy.
Below: The start of the 1966 Daytona 500.





Top: 1949 Ford at the 1949 Monte Carlo Rally

Below: Jack Brabham leads Denny Hulme at Snetterton in the Guards 100 in 1967.





The Bo Ljungfeldt, Monte Carlo Rally class-winning Ford Falcon.

Bathurst, 1949.



Rust In Peace

Please send your Rust In Peace photos to david@retroautos.com.au.





Retro CarPark

Classic cars we have seen on the street, still being used. If you spot a classic at the kerb, send the photos to david@retroautos.com.au.



A Hertz Mustang at Bunnings one Saturday morning (Mike, Sydney NSW)



Valiant AP7 wagon, Sydney NSW



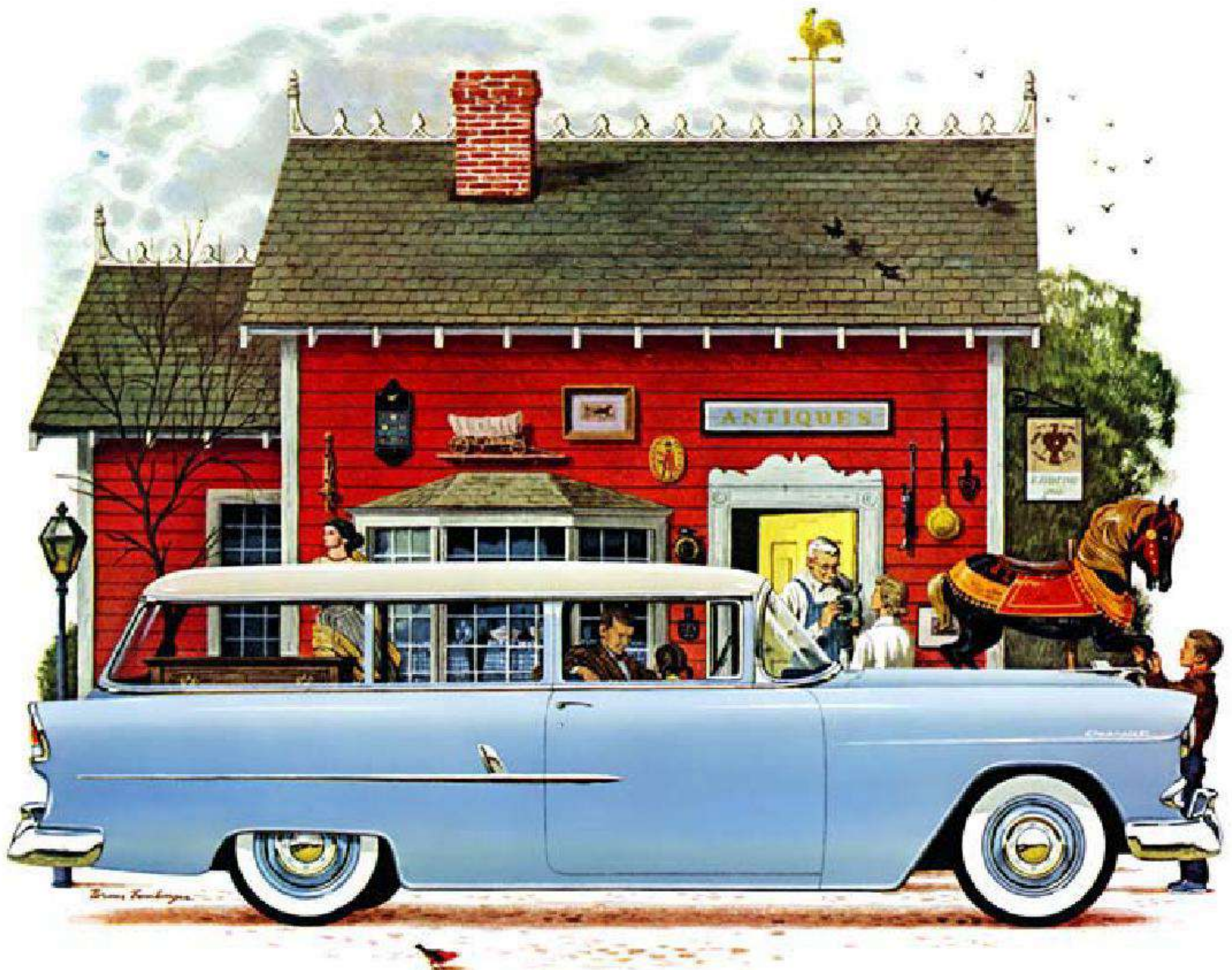
Above and right: HQ Ute, Lake Macquarie. (Steve Parker)

Below: 1982 Cadillac Eldorado, at a rainy "coffee and cars", San Francisco. (John Gutierrez)



Retro Ads

Celebrating the Art of Automotive Advertising



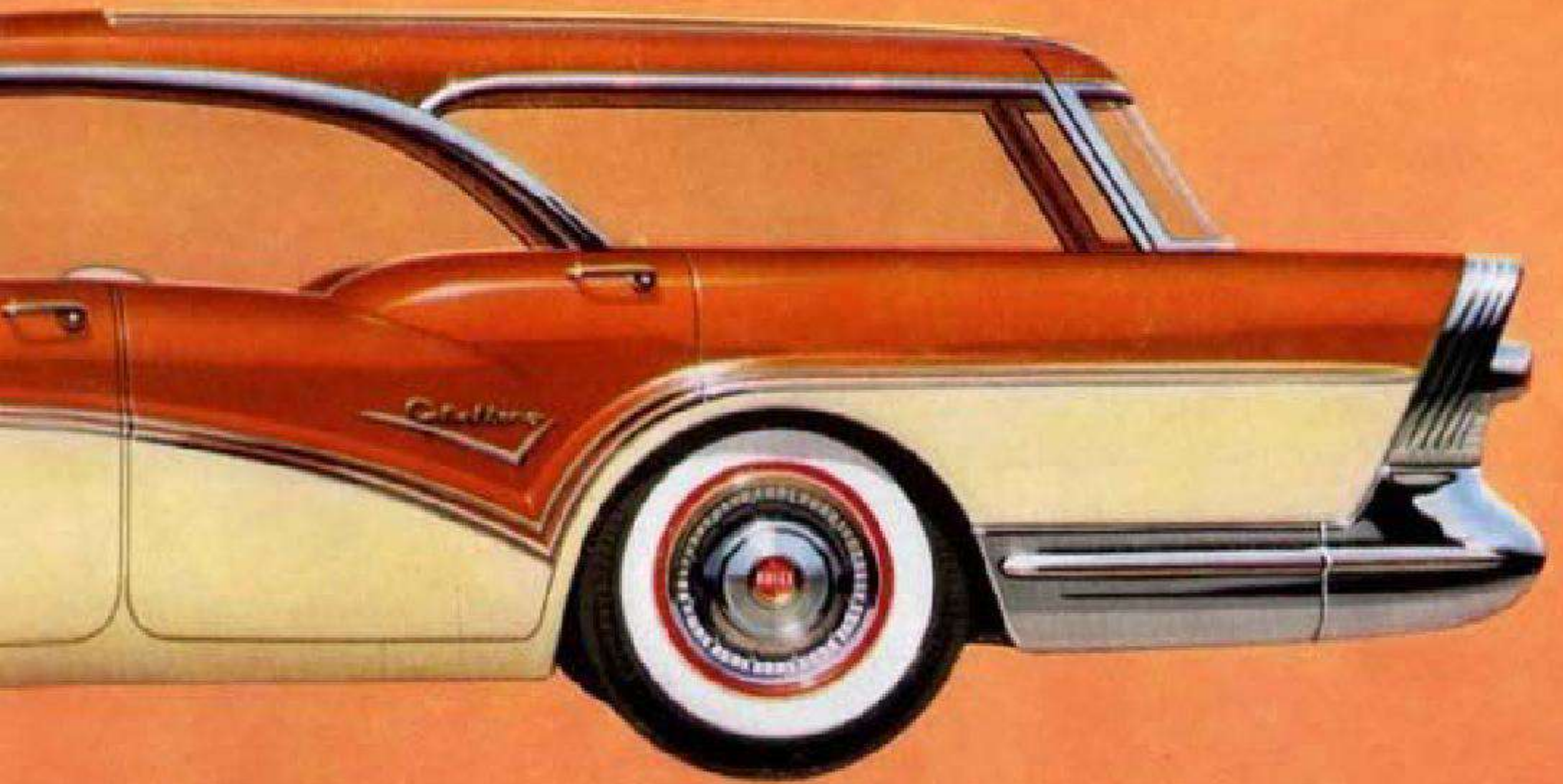




CENTURY 4-DOOR 6-PASSENGER CABALLERO ESTATE WAGON, MODEL 49, 122-IN.



SPECIAL 4-DOOR 6-PASSENGER ESTATE WAGON, MODEL 49, 122-IN.



MODEL 69. 122-IN. WHEELBASE. 300 HORSEPOWER



WHEELBASE. 250 HORSEPOWER





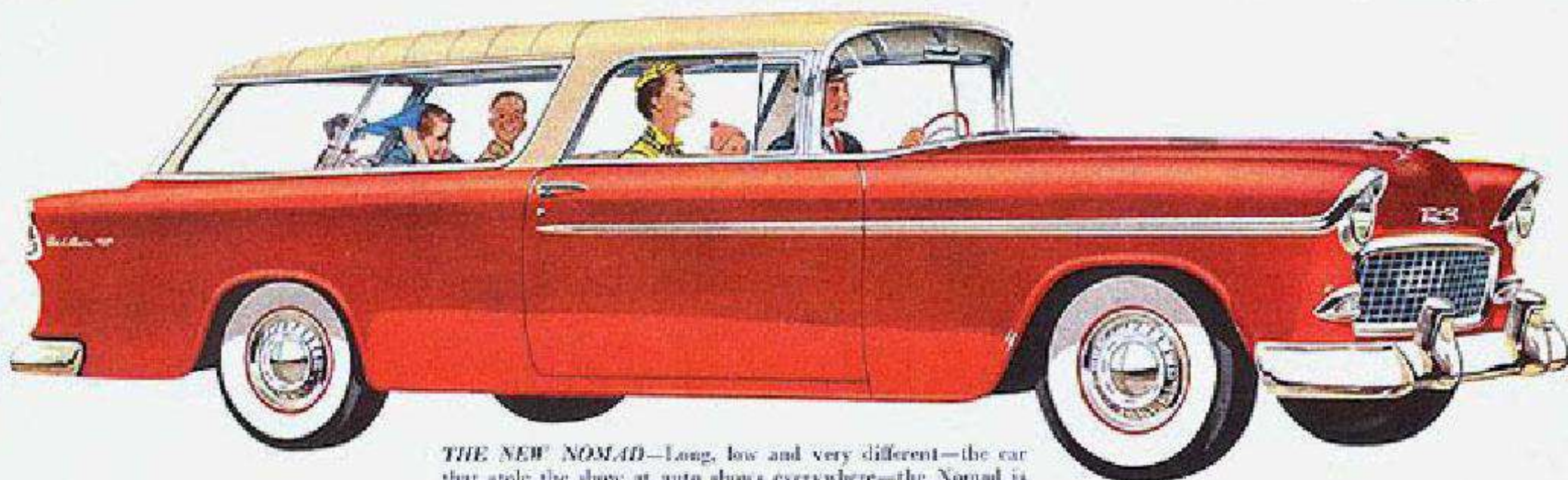
The Plymouth Savoy, shown at the Meadow Brook Polo Club, Long Island, New York.

Dignity of design, quiet good taste in styling and appointment, assure this car's welcome in any company. Another measure of satisfaction is its mechanical excellence, its brilliant engineering. From the lowest-priced field, Plymouth owners have selected the car most liberally endowed with quality, the car from which they will enjoy the greatest value.

PLYMOUTH

Chrysler Corporation's No. 1 Car





THE NEW NOMAD—Long, low and very different—the car that stole the show at auto shows everywhere—the Nomad is the newest achievement of Chevrolet Station Wagon styling.

Stylish Wagons by Chevrolet!

More and more people are joining the Station-Wagon set—and no wonder, with this spanking quintet of Motoramic Chevrolet wagons to choose from! Beautifully styled inside and out and with space to spare . . . from

the luxurious Nomad to the rugged Handyman, an entirely new concept of stylish low-priced Station Wagons. See them at your Chevrolet dealer's, now . . . and sample their versatility in a demonstration drive!



THE "TWO-TEN" HANDYMAN—At work or at play, this 2-door Station Wagon is a pleasure to look at—a joy to drive. Front-seat backs swing way up for easy access to rear seat and cargo area. Interiors—even roof linings—are of colorful, tough and easily washable vinyl.



THE BEL AIR BEAUVILLE—The rakish dash of the Bel Air sport series combines with utility in this sleek 4-door model. Only Chevrolet in the low-price field gives you Sweep-Sight vision, fore and aft—shoulder-to-shoulder windshields and curved rear quarter windows.



THE "TWO-TEN" TOWNSMAN—Rugged and handsome in every detail—because Chevrolet gives you something no other low-priced car can . . . Body by Fisher. Extra tough under the hood, too; your choice of two new "Blue-Flame" 6's or the surging new "Turbo-Fire V8."



THE "ONE-FIFTY" HANDYMAN—Like all Chevrolet Station Wagons, this 2-door boasts more load length than ever—fully ten extra inches, for both rear seat back and cushion fold into the floor. Glide-Ride front suspension and outrigger rear springs give new driving ease.

Stealing the thunder from the high-priced cars!

See Your Chevrolet Dealer

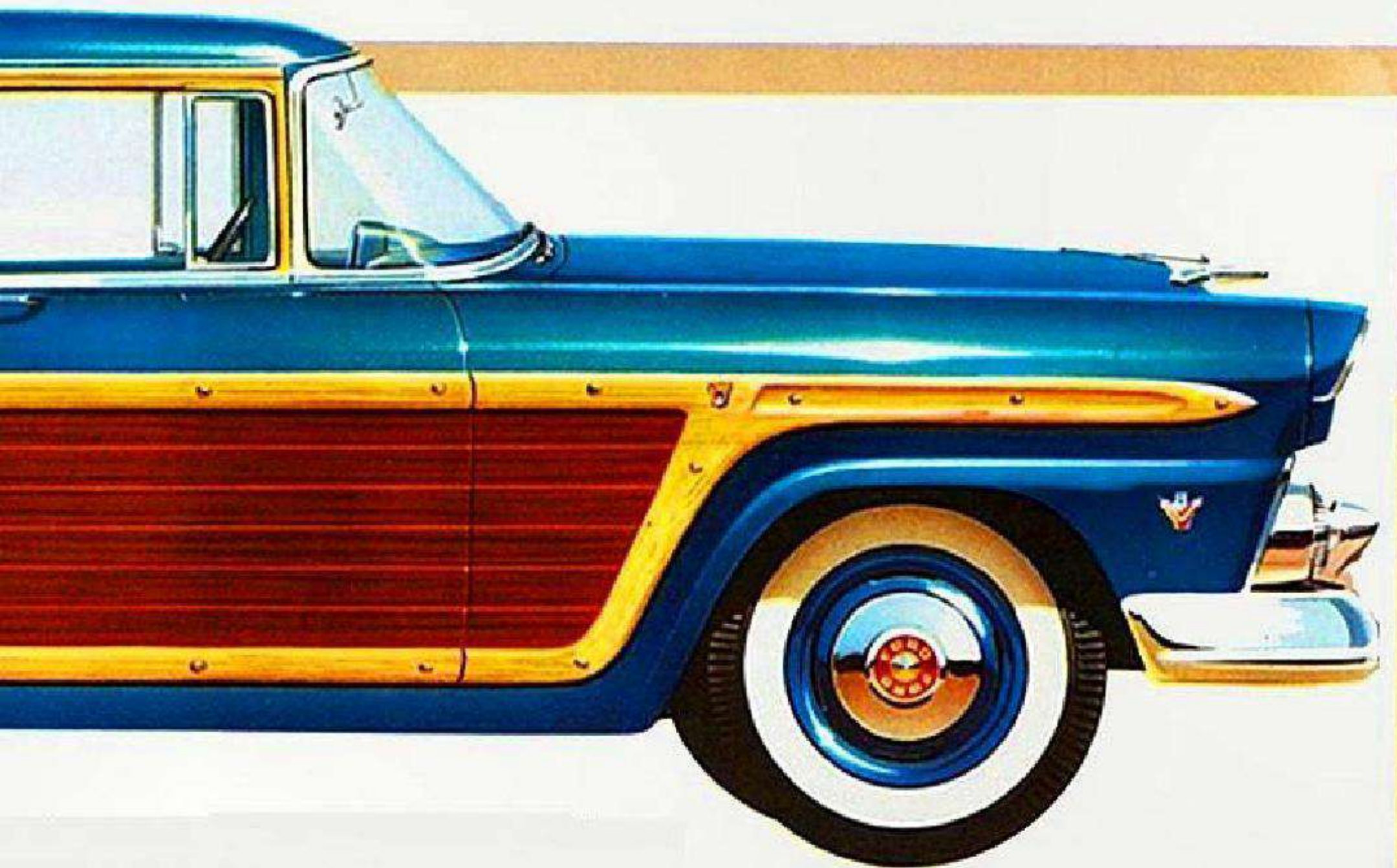


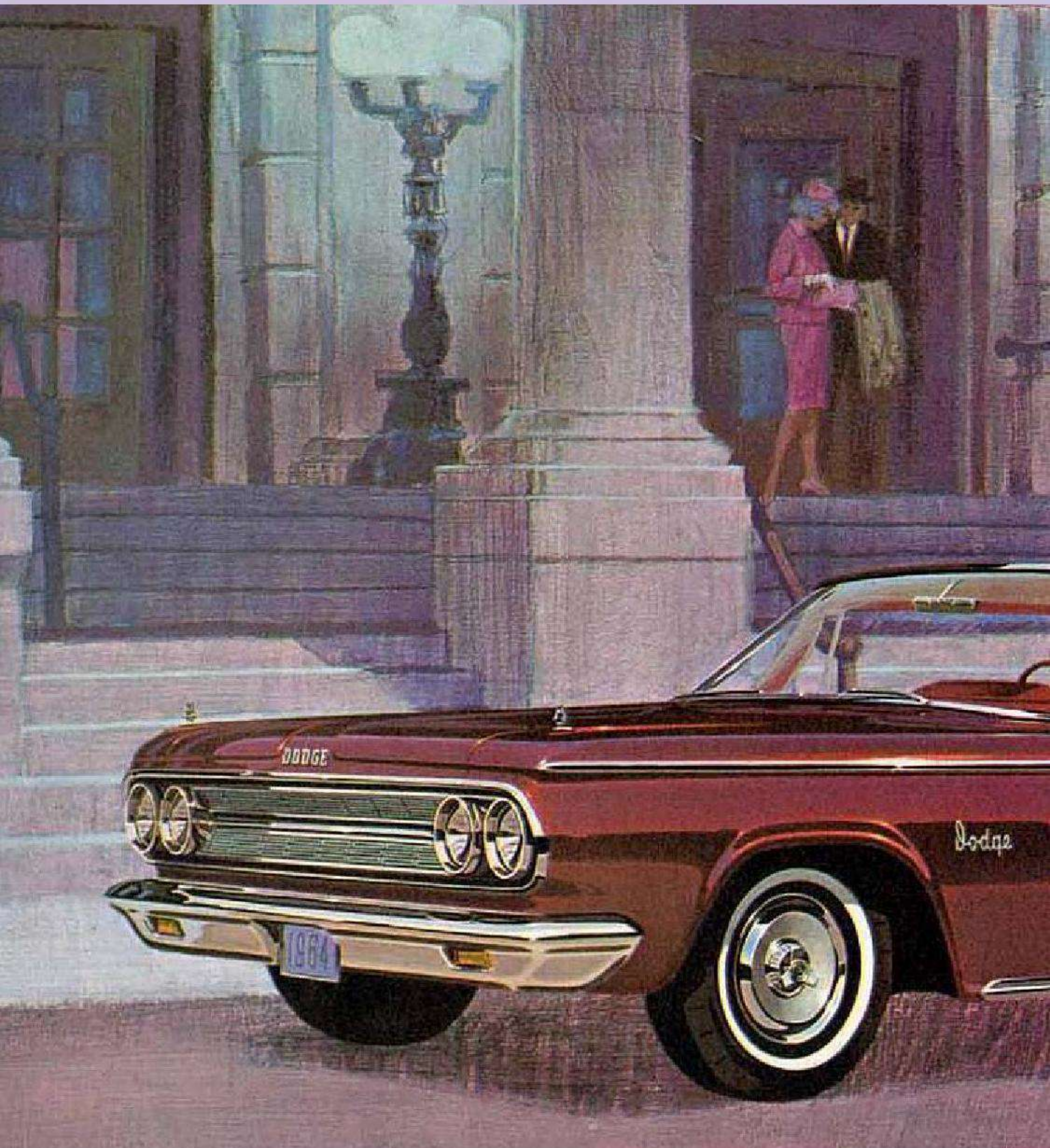
THE *Colony Park* SERIES

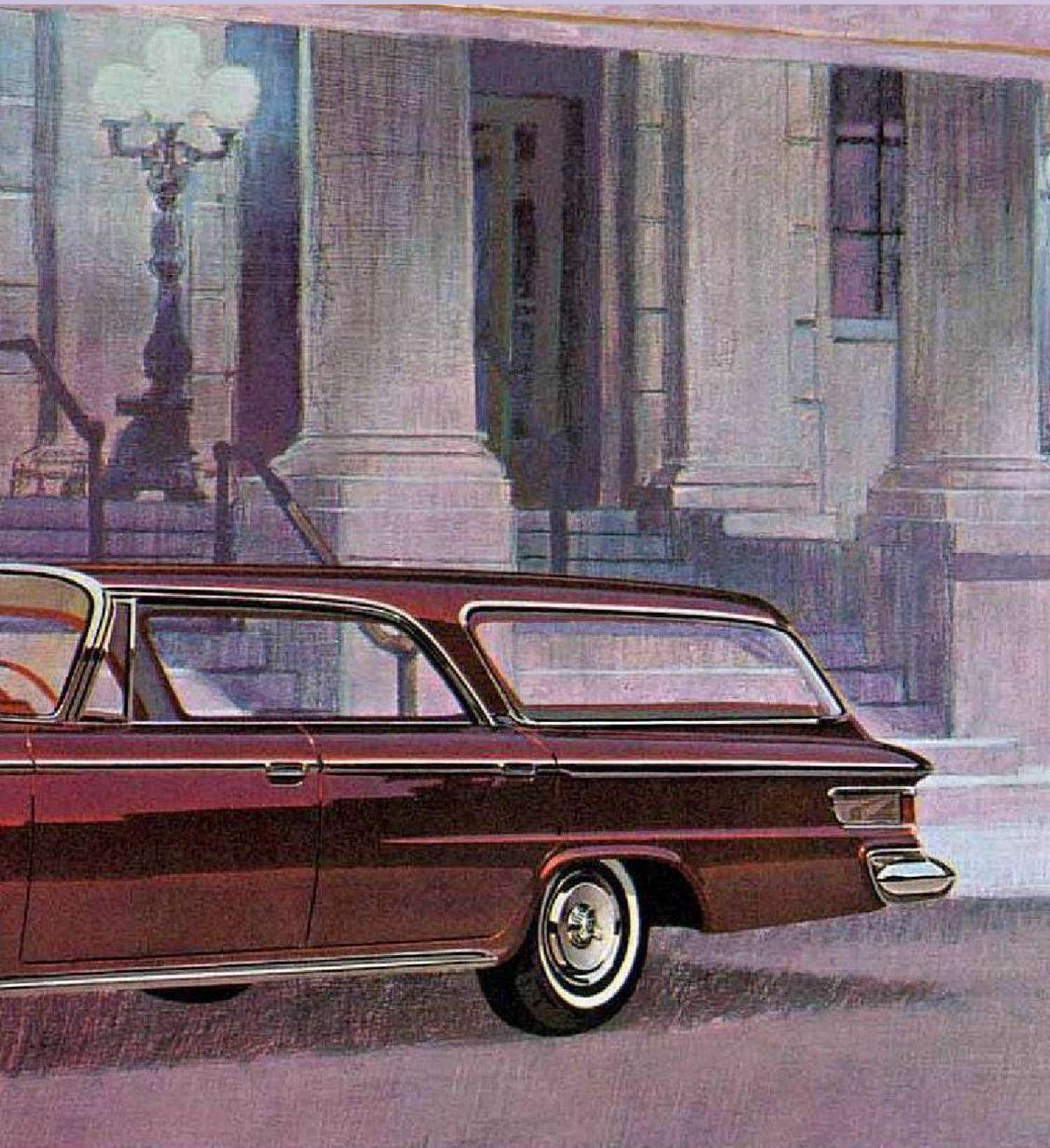


Ford Station Wagons for 1955

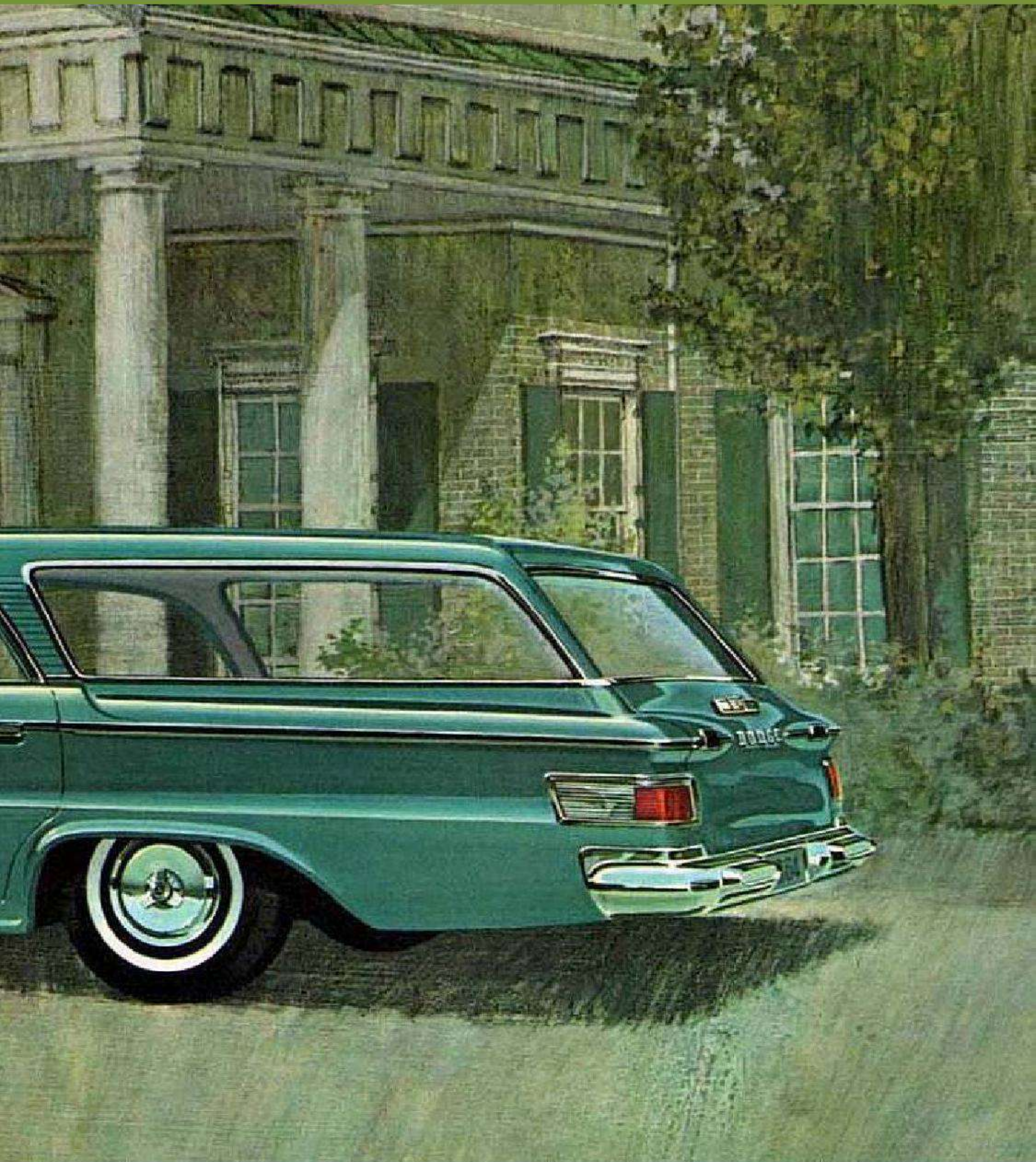








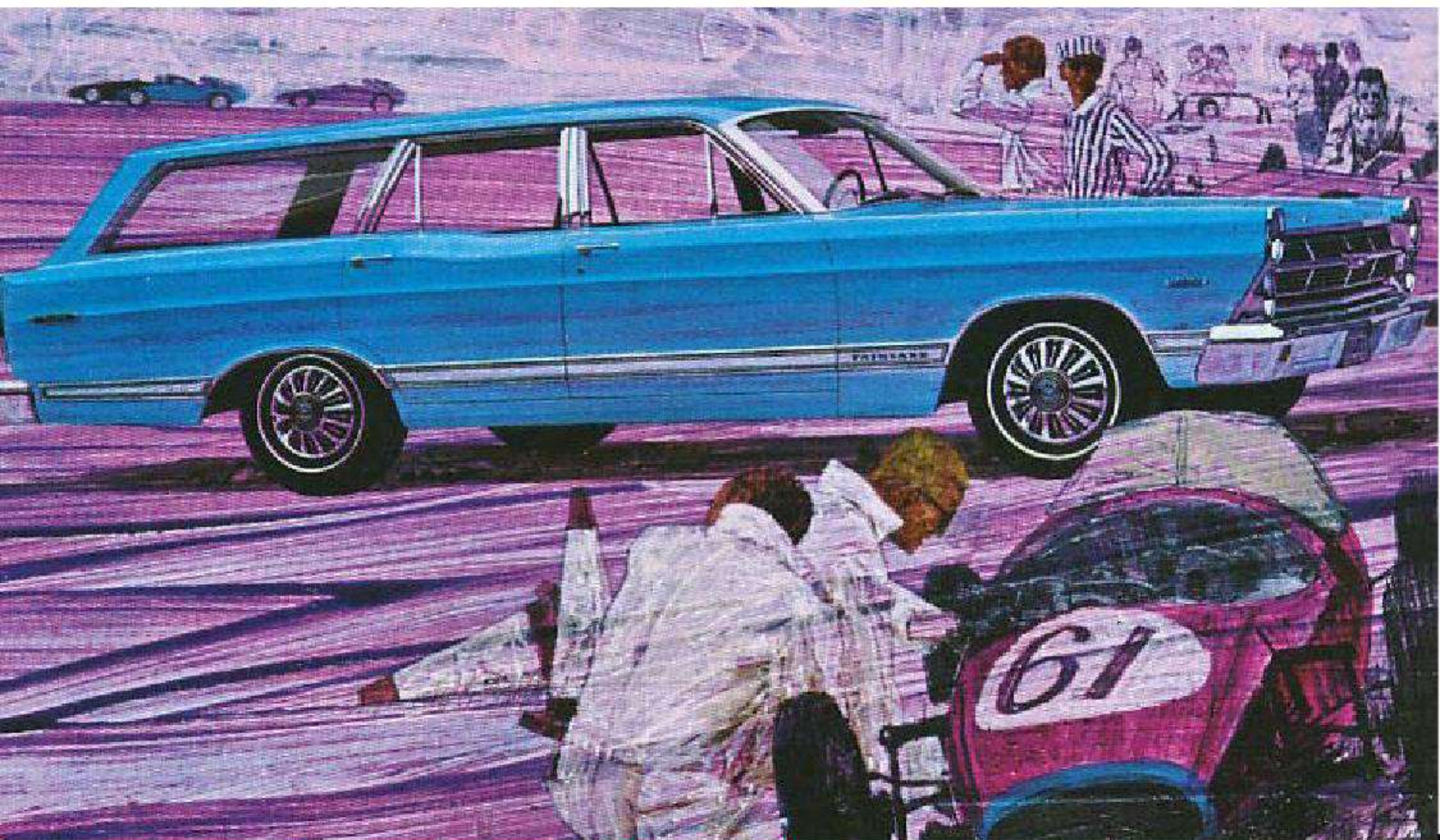






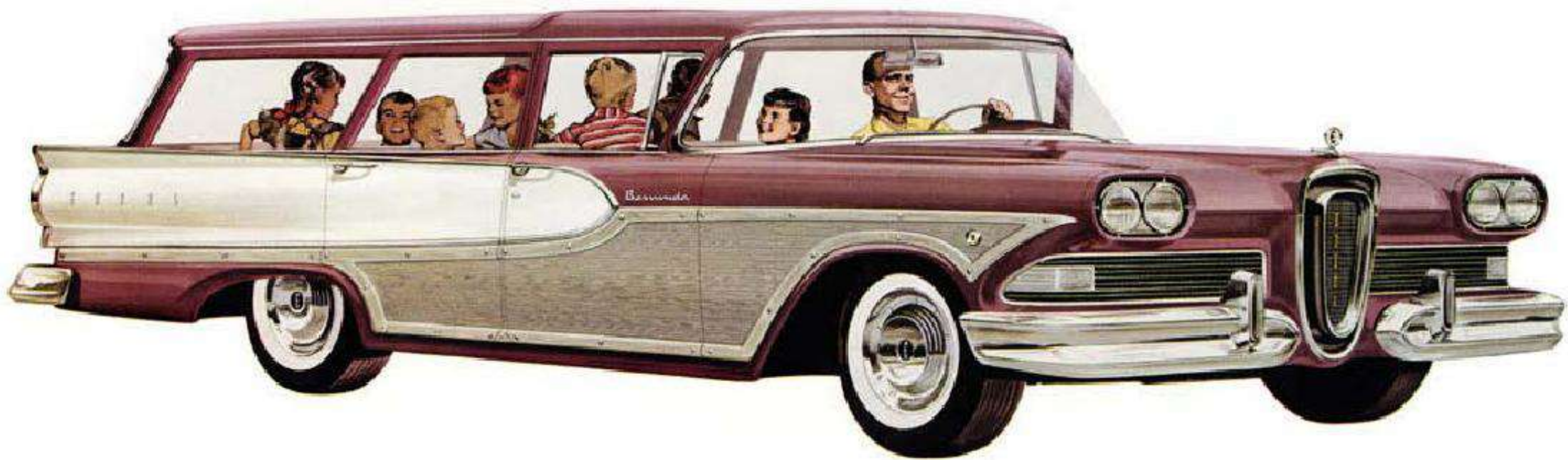






EDSEL STATION WAGONS

Everything they do, they do in style





HILLMAN MINX ESTATE CAR

Practical Load Carrying Plus Stylish Elegance.





Hellenic Motor Museum

THEODORE & JOANNA
CHARAGIONIS'
FOUNDATION 1977



1947 Alfa
Romeo R6C
2500 Sports



1970
Attica
200 mini
car, built
in Greece



1934 Delage



Roger Day, President of the Borgward Club recently visited the Hellenic Motor Museum in Athens. Here are some of the images he brought back.

The Museum occupies three floors of the Capitol Mall in downtown Athens. The visitor can admire masterpieces of the automotive industry, drive an F1 in the F1 simulator, and walk through an old car workshop with all its features.

The museum also gives the opportunity to its visitors to learn about the evolution of the car through the history of the wheel. While ascending a spiral ramp they can admire 72 unique exhibits dating from 300 B.C. to the end of the 20th century. This exhibition is permanent and is offered free of charge.





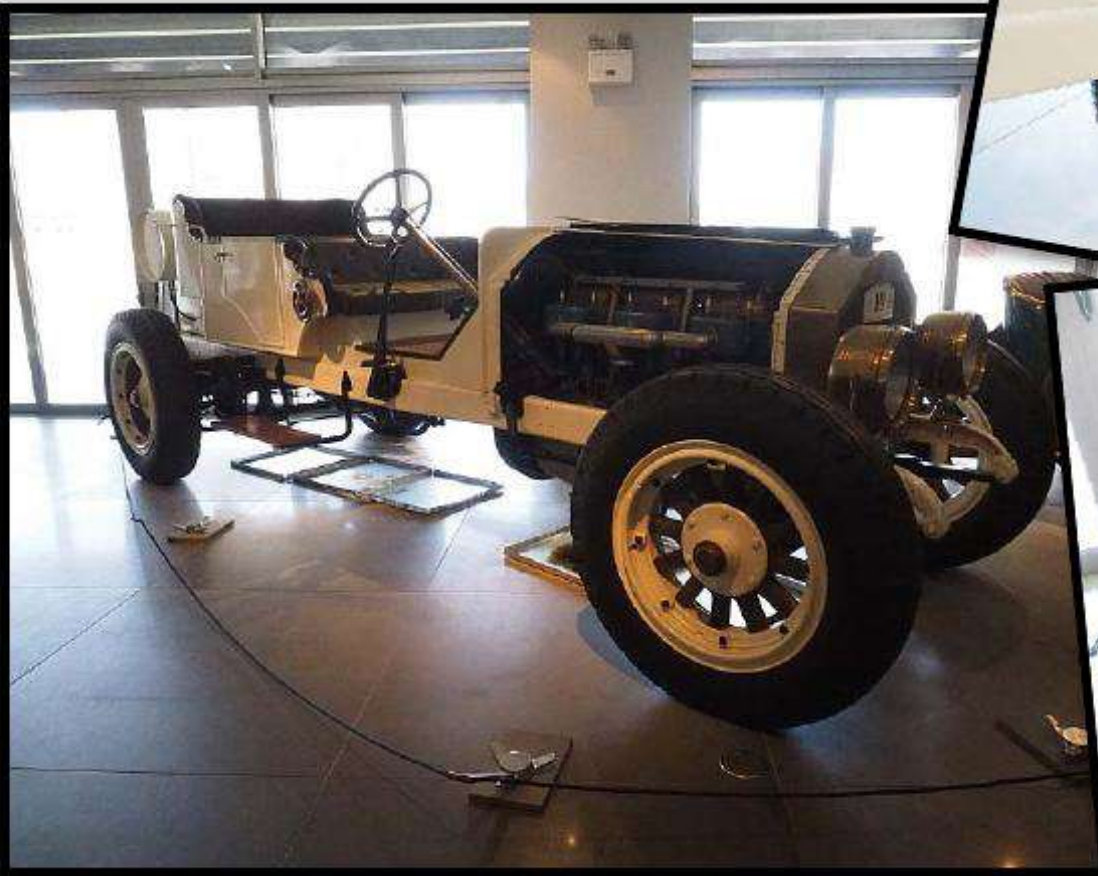
Custom built Min Beach car. Check out the wicker seats



Bristol 405 four door sedan



1928 Packard



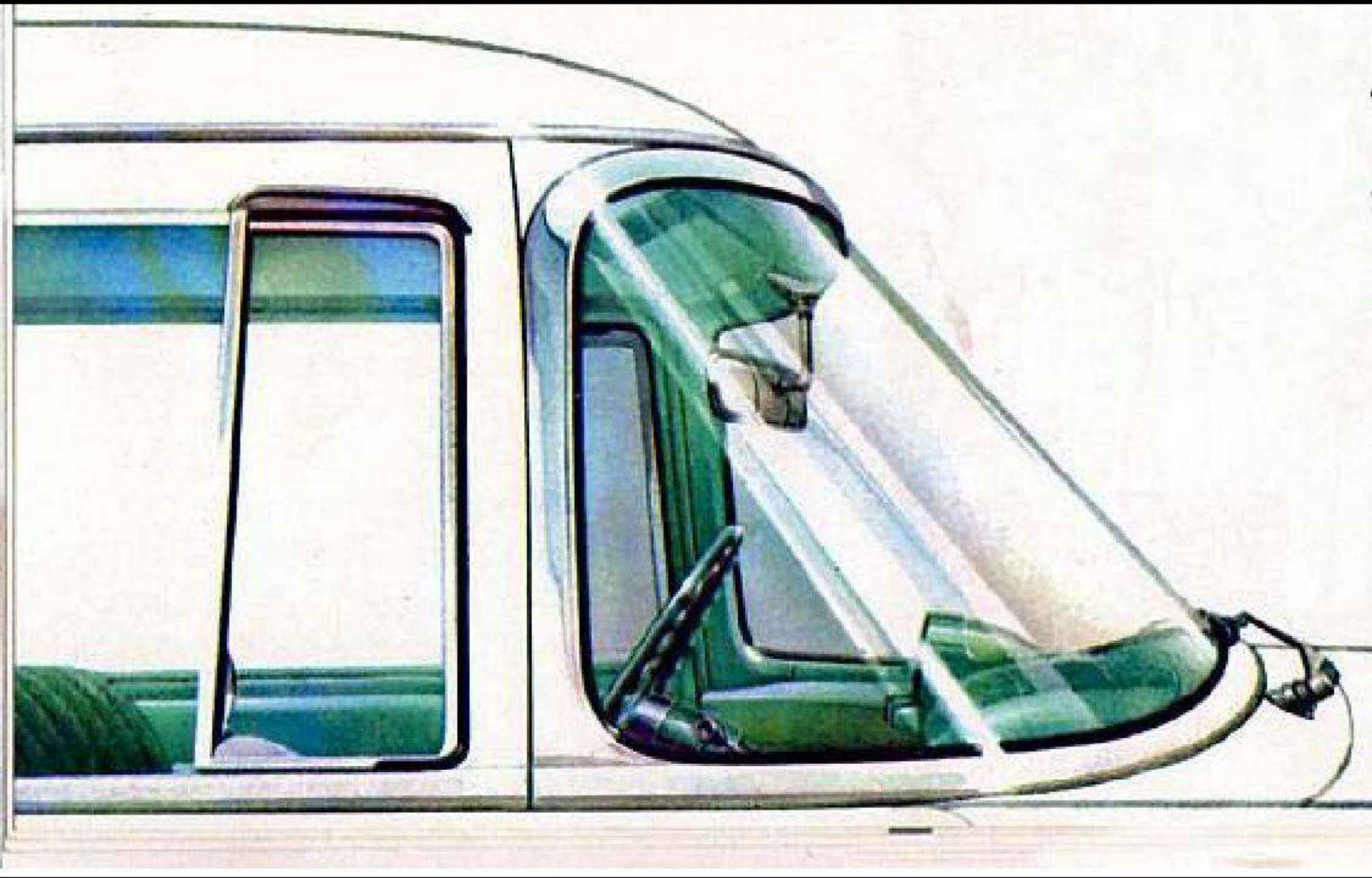
1901 American La France. It is chain driven



Contributions

Retroautos welcomes contributions accompanied by excellent quality images. Information supplied must be accurate and checked for accuracy before sending to us. We reserve the right to use any contributions at our discretion and to edit as we believe necessary and appropriate. All material submitted are at the contributor's and owners' own risk.

Whilst care is taken to avoid damage and/or loss of material supplied we do not accept liability for such damage or loss if it occurs. We do not return information or photos emailed to us. If contributions are mailed we will not be responsible for unsolicited contributions not accompanied by a stamped self addressed envelope. The publisher will not accept responsibility nor any liability for the accuracy and correctness of any information contained in the magazine or for any opinions expressed in the magazine.

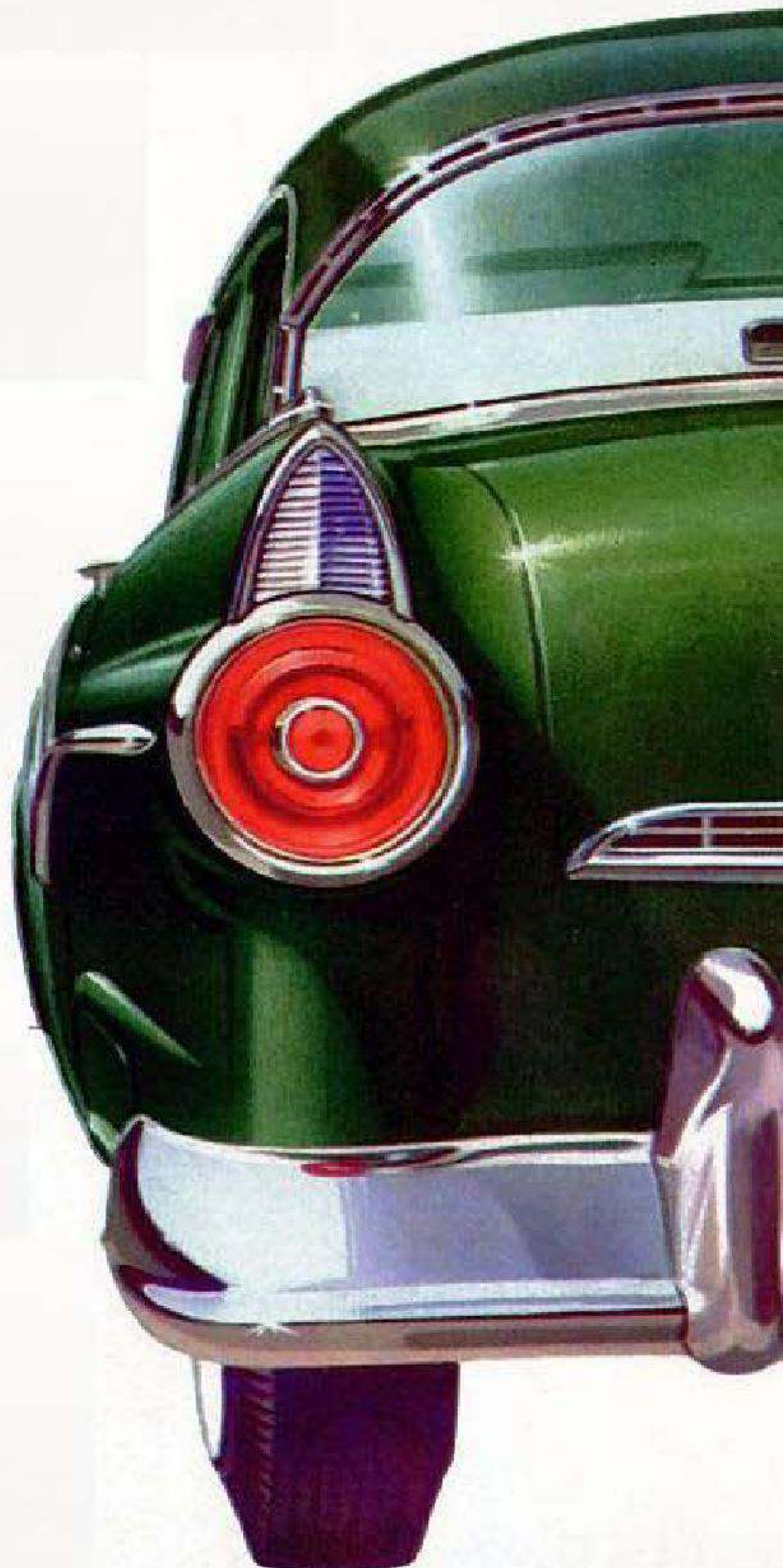


Copyright and Other Information

Published by LDKS Consulting Pty Ltd. Copyright Reserved. Retroautos used due care and diligence in the preparation of this publication. It is not responsible or liable for any mistake, misprint, omission, or typographical error. Retroautos gives no warranty and makes no representation as to the truth, accuracy, and sufficiency of any description, photograph or statement in any advertisement.

Retroautos accepts no responsibility or liability for any loss which may be suffered by any person who relies either in part or in whole upon any description, photograph or statement contained herein. Retroautos reserves the right to refuse or edit any advertisement for any reason. The Advertiser is absolutely responsible for ensuring advertisements conform with all legal requirements. Published sales dates may vary.

Copyright of this publication is held by LDKS Consulting Pty Ltd which owns the rights to the name Retroautos. All rights reserved. This publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part by any means what so ever without the written permission of LDKS Consulting Pty Ltd.





HOLDEN PROTOTYPES
RETROAUTOS EXCLUSIVE



NEVER-SEEN
HK HOLDEN
PROTOTYPES

5 BIG THINGS
THE FALCON
DID FOR US!

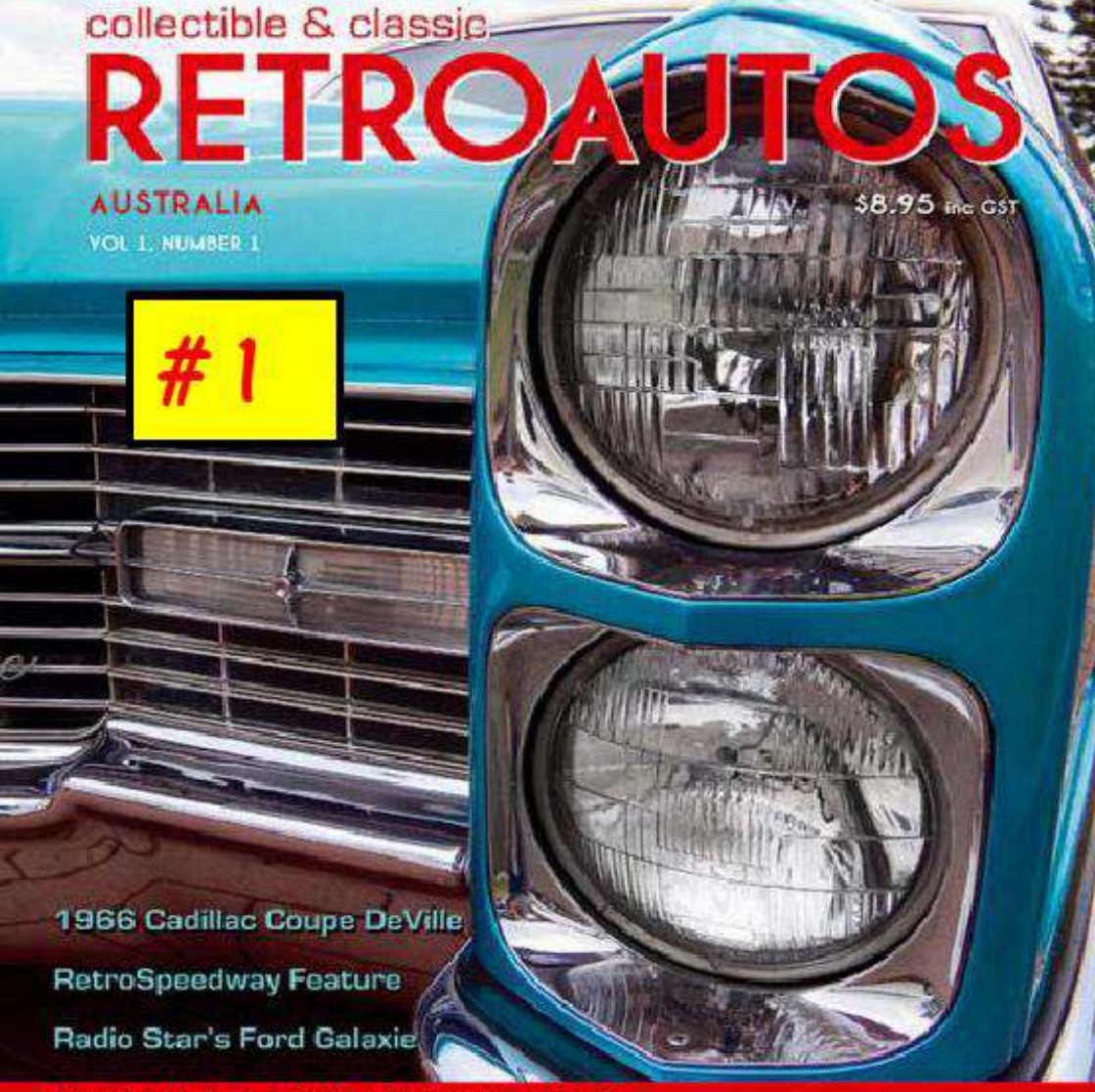


collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

AUSTRALIA
VOL 1, NUMBER 1

\$8.95 inc GST

#1



1966 Cadillac Coupe DeVille
RetroSpeedway Feature
Radio Star's Ford Galaxie

CHEVROLET, DE DION, VAUXHALL, BRISTOL,
AUSTIN HEALEY, BUICK, DATSUN, DIAMOND T & MORE!

WWW.RETROAUTOS.COM.AU

EJ & HQ HOLDEN PROTOTYPES

collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

VOL 1, NUMBER 2

\$8.95 inc GST

#2



A9X



Telstra Kombi



Lotus Cortina



1948 F100



1957 Cadillac

VALIANT, RUST IN PEACE, MERCEDES, VAUXHALL, F100 TRUCKS,
LOTUS AND GT CORTINA, FORD CORSAIR AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

collectible & classic
RETROAUTOS

VOL 1, NUMBER 3

\$8.95 inc GST

#3



Falcon GT-XR & XA



Shelby



Rolls Royce



EJ Premier

PONTIAC GTO, AUSTIN, RIP, ROLLS ROYCE,
TECHNICAL: DRUMS TO DISCS, DEPT OF YOUTH

Back issues of *first three, and only*, print editions now available.

A very limited number of the first three printed issues of Retroautos is now available.

\$10.00 (AUD) each or \$25.00 (AUD) for all three including postage and handling within Australia (overseas postage extra). All prices include GST.

Contact us at:
david@retroautos.com.au
for payment information.