

SHOPPING EXPERT SIDNEY MARGOLIUS CHOOSES

YOUR BEST BUYS IN AUTO INSURANCE

CAR LIFE

JANUARY 1957 35c

**FIRST
CONSUMER
TESTS:**

**FORD
MERCURY**

SPECIAL AUTO SHOW SECTION:

**MERC'S '57 TURNPIKE CRUISER
CADILLAC'S '57 BROUGHAM**



THE REAL REASON JAMES DEAN DIED

On with the



Cadillac's new Eldorado Brougham, debuted at the Show, features dual headlights and a host of automatic accessories that includes a "magic memory" seat adjustment dial.



Mercury's production model Turnpike Cruiser, another Show debutante, also features dual headlights. The Turnpike's roof overhangs rear window, air intakes are over windshield.

Show

The curtain rises again on the National Auto Show after a 16-year intermission



Members of the Auto Show planning group gather around a scale model of the New York Coliseum to discuss placement of exhibits. Meticulous planning went into every phase of the brand-new Show.

By FREEMAN FOSTER

ON THE EVE of what promises to be the greatest free-style automotive sales race in recent American history, the car manufacturers have stopped their vigorous individual competition long enough to rent a hall, hire a band and throw a party. The hall is the New York Coliseum, 35 million dollars worth of exhibition space; the band is even more than a band, it's a "fast-moving, well-paced Broadway type musical, with original songs and dances;" and the party is the 42nd National Automobile Show, the first since 1940.

The Automobile Manufacturers Association has revived the Auto Show to present to the public a full-scale panoramic view of the industry's achievements for 1957. With this thought in mind, the Show's AMA sponsors decided to display only actual production models, illustrating the theme, "America on the Move," with solid examples of present-day design that can take to the nation's roads this year.

The briefings, discussions and conferences which laid the groundwork for the first National Auto Show in sixteen years resulted in a cluster of new model introductions in October, paving the way for this collective show, which was scheduled for December 8 through 16. The AMA Planning Committee, looking back a little nervously to pre-War Auto Shows, imposed several restrictions upon the kind, size and number of the entrants' displays, to keep the competition friendly and to consolidate the exhibition around the Auto Show theme.

Automobile manufacturers responded enthusiastically to the idea of a general showing which would focus world-wide attention on the industry's products, and they agreed to combine their efforts to promote the Auto Show as "a renewal of a significant annual automotive event, the highlight of the introduction of new 1957 model vehicles."

The October introductions attracted the spotlights of publicity toward the 1957 cars and acted as prelude to the formal start of the new model year at the Coliseum. Some

companies went even further to heighten the interest in the renewed Auto Show. Cadillac held back its new Brougham for unveiling at the Show, and Mercury waited until the December 8th event to display its dream-car-turned-reality, the Turnpike Cruiser.

In promoting the National Auto Show as "the renewal of a traditional event," automobile manufacturers stressed the dignity of the occasion. Ballyhoo was restrained, and throughout the summer and fall the drum beating had an almost stately rhythm. The strident huckstering of the 1900 Auto Show has given way to the quiet persuasion of 1957.

In the plans for the 1957 National Auto Show, the individual company displays were subordinated to the 30 minute stage musical, which was scheduled to be presented six times a day. At each of these stage presentations, five production automobiles—one from each corporation—were to be "spectacularly presented, and emphasis was on luxury and pleasure."

During the stage show, exhibitors were required to dim the lights in their display areas, and to silence their "lecturers, picture-projection machines and other similar activities which would interfere with the opportunity of the audience to enjoy the stage presentation."

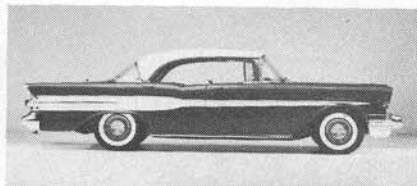
The smooth, well-coordinated exhibition at the Coliseum gave the public a chance to see what was new, to compare the 1957 models and to examine what this giant industry has produced for the consumer—no high pressure, no lapel grabbing. In fact, the Rules and Regulations of the 42nd Annual Automobile even had a word to say about trumpet-tooting *outside* the confines of the exhibition hall. "If any outside displays are desired by the Exhibitor, such as in a hotel lobby in New York City, this has been limited by mutual consent of Exhibitors to single vehicles, nothing more extensive or elaborate."

This spirit of amiable cooperation has not always existed during Auto Show week. In the rough-and-tumble days of

(Continued on next page)

ON WITH THE SHOW

Continued



PONTIAC



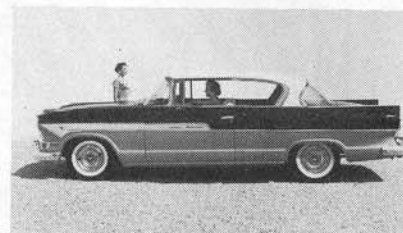
CHEVROLET



MERCURY



NASH



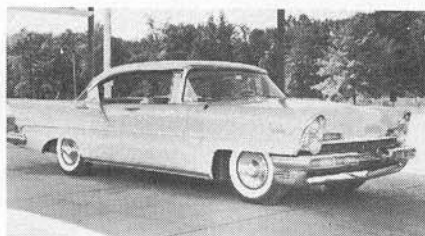
HUDSON



IMPERIAL



FORD



LINCOLN



CADILLAC



CONTINENTAL



PLYMOUTH

the 7th Annual Show, in 1906, exhibitors literally blew their own horns so loudly and persistently that the management removed the Klaxons from all automobiles. And as late as 1938, the National Auto Show had to compete with private exhibits by General Motors, Chrysler and Ford, and with a separate Motor Truck Show held at the Port Authority Building.

Past Auto Shows have had their share of spectacular stunts and exhibits.

At the first Auto Show, in 1900, Mobile Company of America built a ramp on the old Madison Square Garden roof for demonstrating the hill-climbing ability and good brakes of the Mobile steamers. The ramp was 53 feet high, 200 feet long and had four sections with grades up to 42 1/2 per cent. Lillian Russell drove up the ramp, and her manager awarded her a new car for her feat.

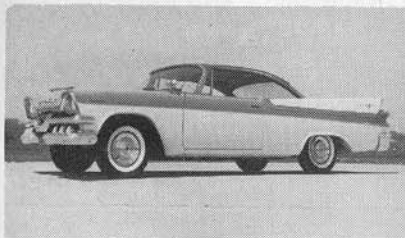
In 1915, Studebaker displayed a gold-plated sedan; in 1922 visitors were entertained by a seal that balanced piston rings on its nose; in 1934, De Soto presented a \$10,000 marionette show depicting the history of transportation from 1539 through the Auto Show.

But the production models themselves, the cars that actually went on the market, proved to be the biggest and most consistent drawing cards. An increasingly car-conscious public wanted to know what was new each year and what advances had been made over previous models.

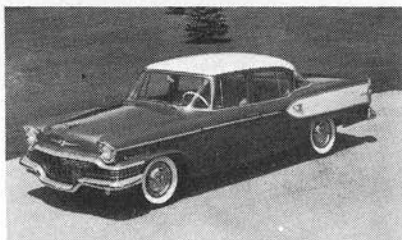
The long succession of National Auto Shows mirrored the growth of the industry and the directions of its expansions. The trend in engineering was usually toward standardization.

The phenomenal rise of the gasoline engine is reflected in the earlier Auto Shows. In the second Show, in 1901, 55 of the cars exhibited were gas driven, 58 were steam and 24 electric; by 1905, the number of gasoline engines displayed had increased to 177, the 31 electrics included nine trucks, and there were only four steam cars on exhibition.

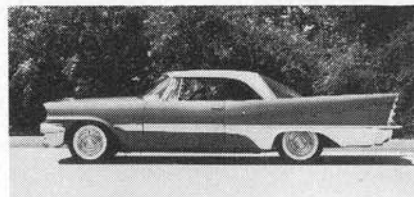
Through the years, people flocked to the Auto Show to see such things as these: Cadillac's first appearance, in 1903, with a seven horsepower, one cylinder runabout; the introduction of the Chevrolet and the De Soto in 1913; the first Pontiac in 1926, a year which also saw the disappearance from the roster of the Apperson, Cole, Haynes, Maxwell, Mercer, Rollins, Stanley and Westcott.



DODGE



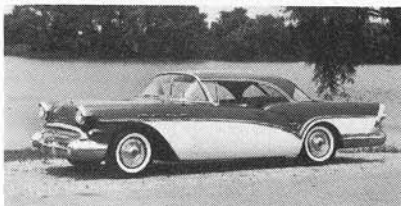
STUDEBAKER



DE SOTO



OLDSMOBILE



BUICK



RAMBLER



CHRYSLER

In January, 1931, in the depths of the depression, the 31st National Automobile Show saw the introduction of new 16 cylinder limousines by Cadillac and Marmon. Manufacturers had cut prices on the heels of a crash which had reduced vehicle production by nearly two million units.

At the 1933 Show, visitors saw a Pierce-Arrow with power brakes and automatic valve lifters. The new no-draft ventilation by Fisher Body, introduced on General Motors cars, caused considerable talk and press notice at the same show. Interested observers at the exhibits tried to find air leaks with air hoses and smoke. The year 1934 saw the introduction of the Chrysler "Airflow." It attracted much attention but few sales.

At the 1936 Show there were 50 trailers exhibited, and one day of the Show was set aside as Trailer Day, in recognition of America's restless urge to be up and going.

In 1937, Oldsmobile introduced its Automatic Safety Transmission, an automatic gearshift. Several of the cars on display featured the new location under the hood for the storage battery, which made it more accessible and put it in a category with regular service items.

The 41st annual National Automobile Show, in October of 1940, was the last such exhibition for sixteen years. "For Peace and Freedom" was its theme, with emphasis on Western Hemisphere unity. By this time the automobile companies were turning to the mass production of armaments for defense.

The decade since the Second World War has seen the automobile industry take tremendous forward strides in design and engineering. The post-war period has seen changes in selling techniques, too, and in the relative market-positions of auto manufacturers.

The harmonious atmosphere of this latest National Auto Show, with the low, sleek cars arranged on the Coliseum's 300,000 square feet of display area, and the low-keyed competition among the exhibitors, has shown the industry in its dignified maturity—a far cry from the infant days of 1903, when horns blared, flags waved, and chauffeurs and skilled drivers were paid to circulate among the crowds, swearing by the superiority of this or that kind of horseless carriage. The Auto Show has come of age. And with it, the manufacturers are off and running in the New Car Derby for 1957.



View of the first National Automobile Show, held at old Madison Square Garden in New York. Visitors were urged to take the tiller and drive a horseless carriage around the indoor wooden track.

By 1932, annual Auto Show had become an event of impressive, if cluttered, elegance. This picture shows Hudson exhibit in foreground, Chrysler display in center, Nash exhibit at top right.

