



SHANE COLLECTION

4625 Fairfield St. • Metairie, LA 70006

February 18, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

HISTORIC PLAINSMAN CONCEPT CAR RETURNS AFTER 60 YEARS AND EXHAUSTIVE RESTORATION

Metairie, LA – Mopar fans and vintage concept car lovers alike will have a rare treat in store when *Cars of Yesteryears* proudly re-introduces the iconic 1956 Plymouth Plainsman dream car. After a painstaking, no-holds-barred full restoration, this pioneering concept car returns to take the stage after more than 60 years since it debuted at the Chicago Auto Show. The fully restored Plainsman will be featured at this year's **Amelia Island 2018 Concours d'Elegance held March 10-11.**

Also known as *the MoPar Show Car That Escaped Cuba*, the Plainsman has perhaps the most interesting history of any concept car ever built. Plainsman has survived over sixty years not in museums, but rather being driven on roads all over the world.

Built for Chrysler Corporation by Ghia in Italy, Plainsman's tires first touched ground in Europe. Then Plainsman was displayed and driven all over the USA. But the Plainsman narrowly escaped clutches of the Castro rebellion when it ended up in Cuba just before the communist revolution. After a harrowing escape from Cuba, Plainsman went on to freedom in Puerto Rico. From there it returned to mainland USA, followed by several years in Australia.

While historians considered it destroyed during all those years out of the public eye, Plainsman was actually in regular use on highways. Ultimately this concept car ended up back in the USA, still owned by the same family that acquired Plainsman from Chrysler

Corporation in the 1950s. Plainsman's first complete history was published February, 1980 in Hemmings *Special-Interest Autos* magazine with inside information about its construction and sole designer, David Scott.

A few years later, Plainsman was sold and then sold again. The show car finally landed in the hands of Peter Vicari and Henry Shane of Metairie, Louisiana. From here, Mr. Shane's *Cars of Yesteryears* (COY) museum immediately began a restoration that would take several years and untold thousands of dollars to complete. *Amelia Island 2018 Concours* will be the first public showing of the Plainsman since restoration work was completed.

Aside from its colorful history, the Plainsman may be the most pioneering concept car ever. More of its features were transferred to immediate production (notably for the 1957 Chrysler Corporation vehicles) than any single dream car known. In addition to its novel external access spare tire mounted in the rear quarter, Plainsman is the progenitor of what became known as the 9-passenger station wagon with rear-facing third-row seat. For the next three decades, the internal seating, cargo area, one-piece tailgate with retracting window became the template for station wagons from all Detroit car makers. And many of Plainsman's features continued to influence interiors on minivans and luxury SUVs even today.

In addition to the restoration, *Cars of Yesteryears* has also commissioned the first and only book on the Plainsman. The Plainsman book entitled *Saga of The Plainsman*, was written by noted automotive historian, Leon Dixon and will debut with the new return of Plainsman. Mr. Dixon wrote the original history of Plainsman and has known the concept since it debuted in 1956. This new book contains the most complete and authoritative history of Plainsman ever. It will reveal photos and inside stories no one has ever seen or known up until now.

Cars of Yesteryears museum is now 36 years old. It began with about 25 cars but today houses about 160 cars in 40,000 square feet. In addition to the cars themselves, the museum has over 10,000 collectible items on display. These include a vast array of automobilia items from gas pumps to neon and other signs. Additionally included are in excess of 200 vintage promotional scale model cars and a library of automotive books. The collection also includes about 300 vintage pedal cars and 150 old bicycles along with 25 or so assorted motorbikes and scooters ranging from Vespas to Whizzers. A large second floor houses a toy collection numbering approximately 1,000 items. Finally the museum has numerous arcade machines, antique slot machines, roulette tables, juke boxes and more.

While COY is not open to the public, it does open as many as four times per month for use by charities, special fund-raising events and special community activities. Perhaps up to 50 such events are held yearly. The museum is also open about three times yearly for car club visits. There is no charge for use of the museum. Nor are there any fees for set-up or clean-up. COY has special arrangements with each charity to charge donation fees to attendees that are then retained by the respective charity.