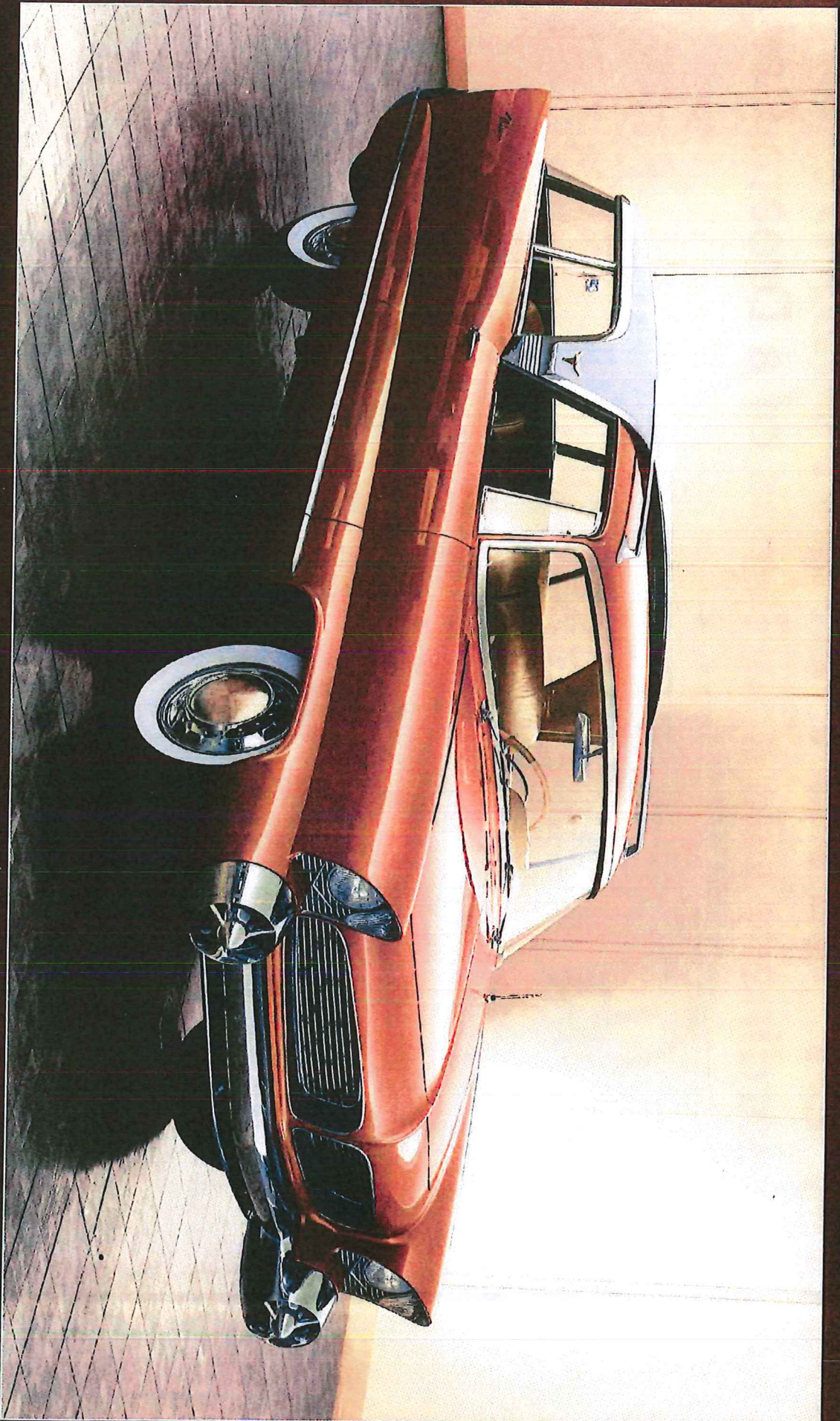


SAGA OF THE PLAINSMAN

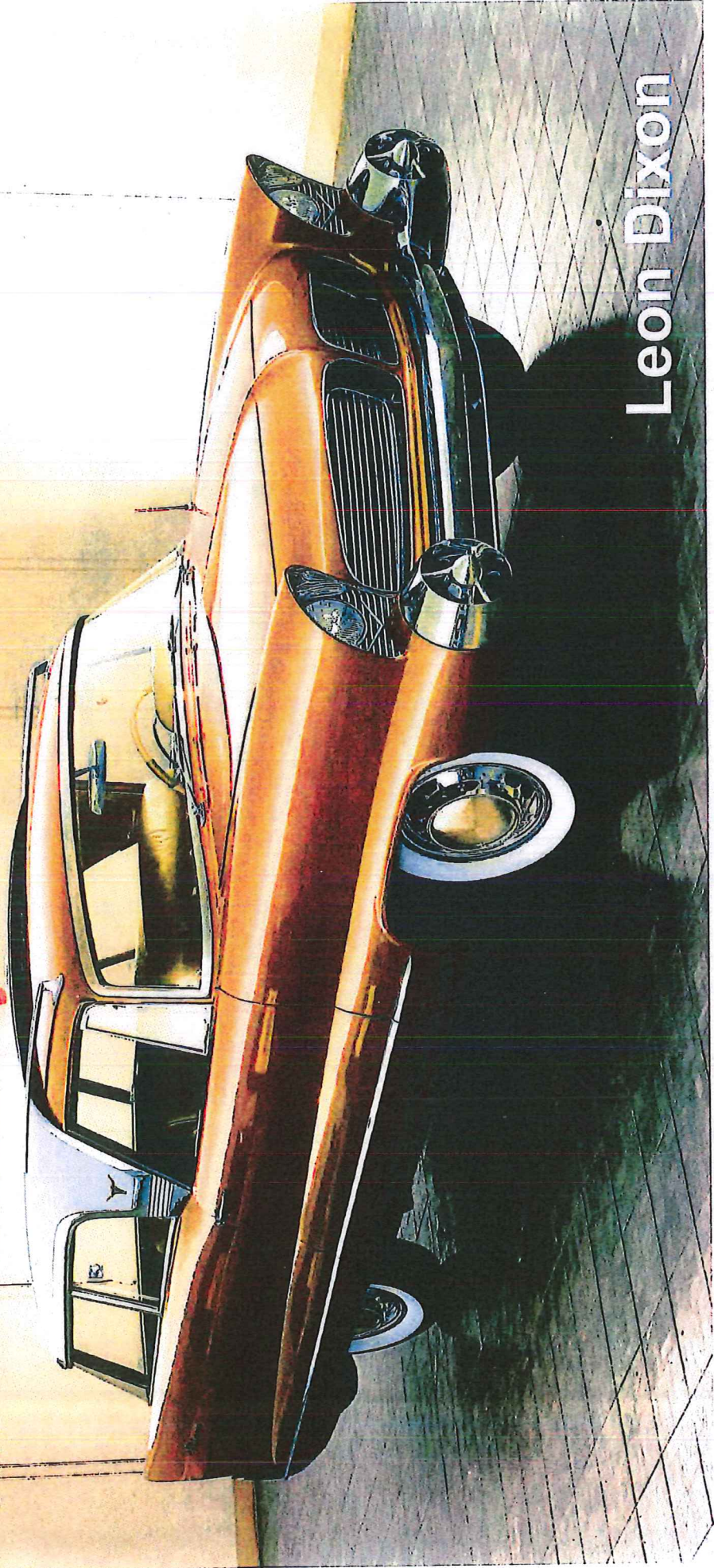
The Extraordinary Life and Time of a Dream Car



Leon Dixon

SAGA OF THE PLAINSMAN

The Extraordinary Life and Times of a Dream Car



Leon Dixon

History of the Chrysler "Plainsman" with body by Ghia

This car is one of a series of design idea cars commissioned by Chrysler Corporation to Ghia Studios in Torino, Italy. In late 1955 a Chrysler chassis and engine was sent to Ghia with the instruction to build the "dream" station wagon of the future. It was Chrysler's lead show car at the 1956 Paris Auto Show. Ghia proceeded to build a unique car based on an "old west" United States Theme thus the name "Plainsman". The theme was set by using brown and white unborn calfskin as the upholstery material. This was accentuated by the use of tanned brown leather as edging material. The interior has controllable air vents for the rear seat passengers. The instruments for the first time in the industry were concentrated in a pod and elevated from the dash for easy visibility.

An internal body innovation was the industry's first rear facing third seat which has been incorporated in many Chrysler Corporation station wagons. One exclusive feature of this seat in the Plainsman has not yet entered production. The seat was constructed so that it raises and lowers by remote control from the dashboard. In addition the rear window glass lowers, the tail gate comes down and steps come out of the rear bumper so that passengers can easily step up into the seat.

Exterior body features include the first 'step down' roof over the front seat. The first Chrysler production model to incorporate this feature was the 1958 Imperial which featured a stainless steel roof panel. The rear 3/4's of the Plainsman roof is covered with white sailcloth making it the first of the luxury padded tops.

The original engine was a 260 cubic inch V-8 which did not have sufficient power to adequately handle the 4,900 pound weight of the vehicle. A Chrysler 440 Magnum with Ansen Stick/automatic shift has been incorporated to provide adequate power.

Although originally built as a left hand drive car the owners were forced to modify it to right hand drive when they moved to Australia; on one of their overseas assignments.

The Plainsman is owned by Dorothy and Elwood Parrish and is in daily use in California. No one but Chrysler and the Parrish's have ever owned the car. They acquired the car when Mr. Parrish was Vice President of Latin American Marketing for Chrysler International Corporation

At that time the Parrish's were resident in Havana, Cuba which was the Latin American headquarters for Chrysler International. When Castro's communism took over Cuba Mr. Parrish was forced to flee to Puerto Rico. He then arranged for Mrs. Parrish and the Plainsman to be picked up by a Spanish ship and transported to Puerto Rico.

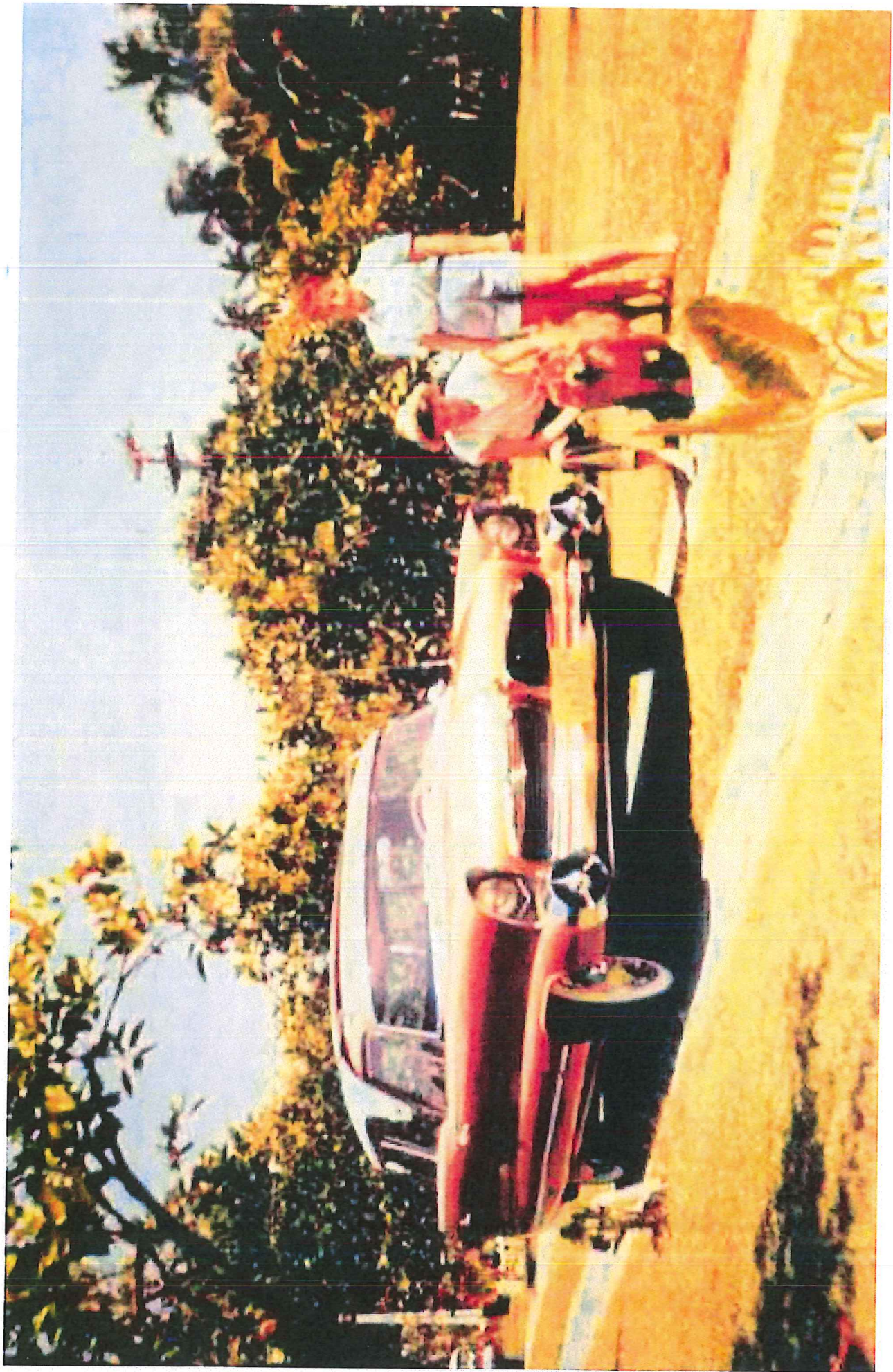
The Plainsman is in amazingly good condition considering it's age and the number of countries in which it has been operated. The Parrish's are currently in the process of completing a full mechanical, interior and exterior restoration of the Plainsman.

**Statement typed up by Elwood Parrish and
Given to Leon Dixon in 1979...**

Note mention of no other owners ever!



PLAINSMAN STEERING WHEEL
ON REAR COUNTER AS PER
LEON DIXON 7-24-41



HAVANA CUBA 1958



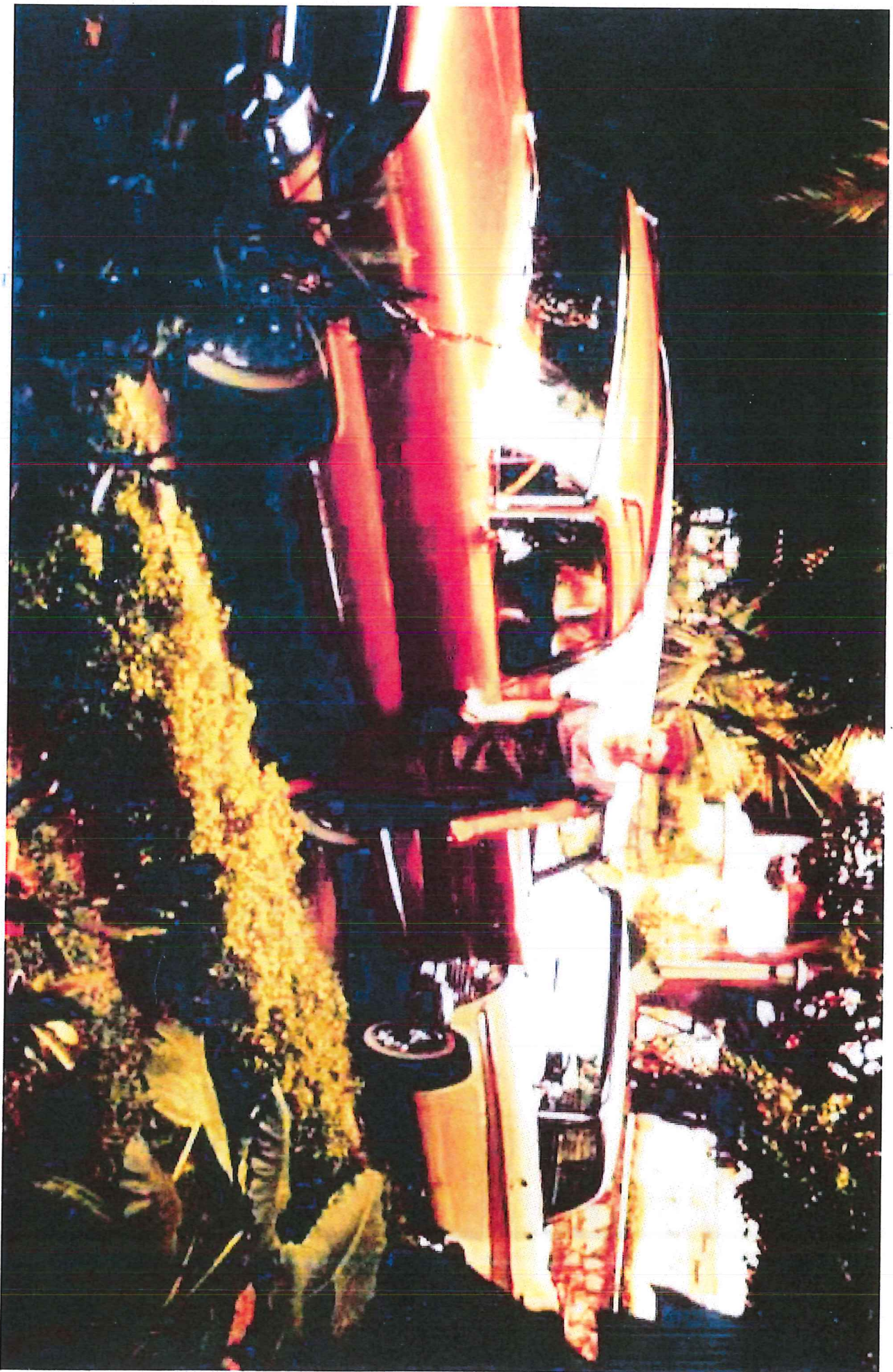
HAVANA CUBA 1950



HAVANA CUBA . 1958

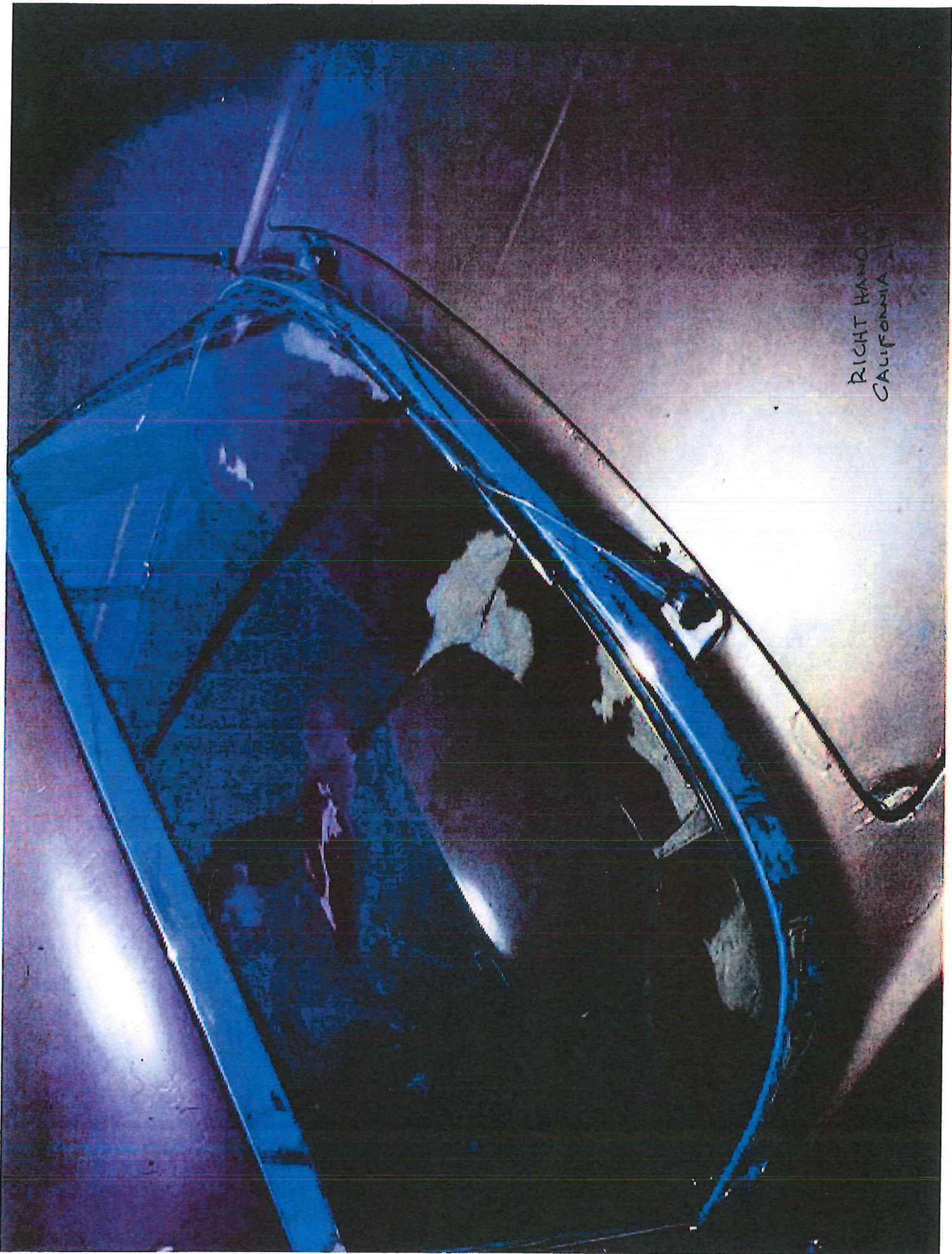


HAVANNA CURSA 1958



HAVANA CUBA. 1958

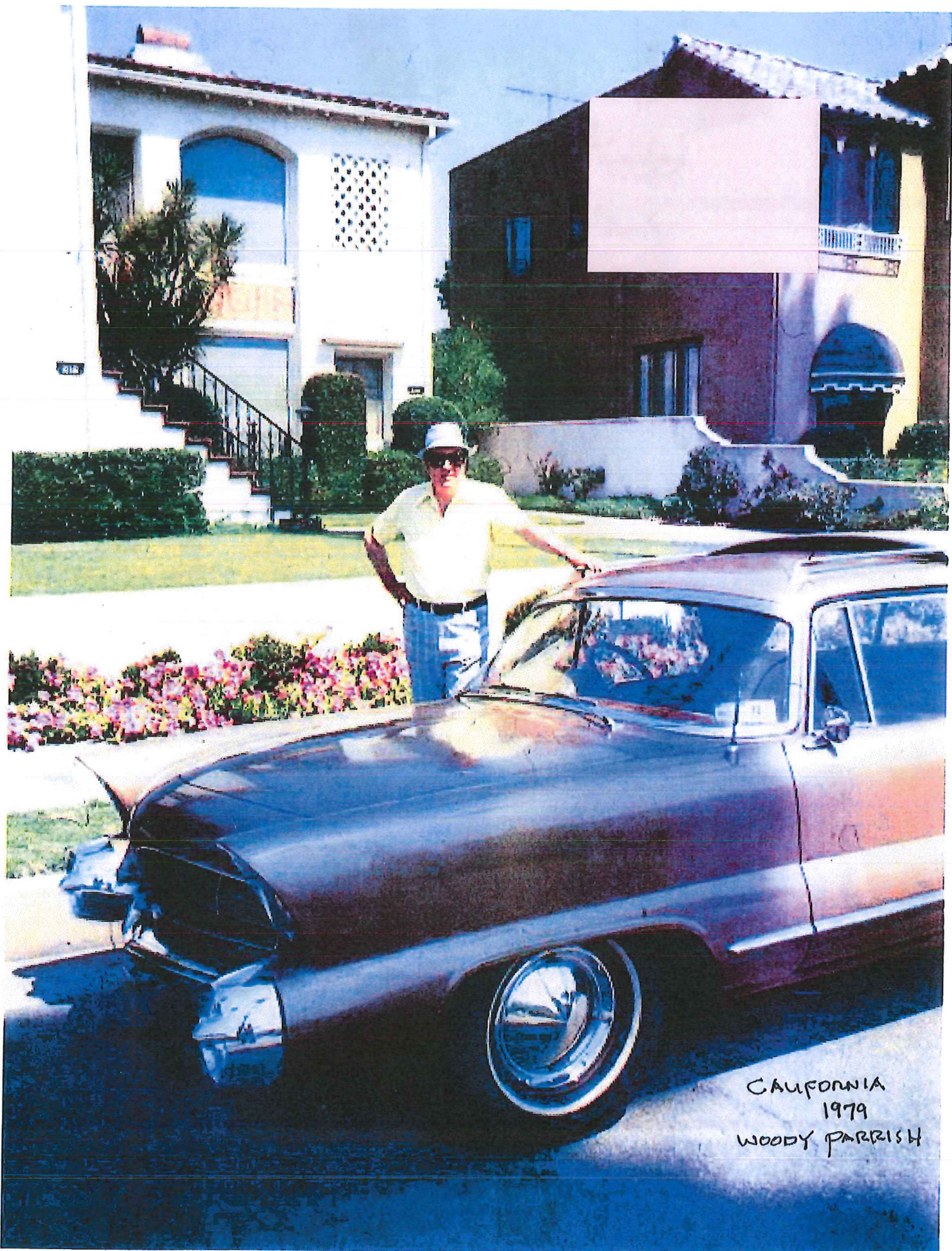




RIGHT HAND
CALIFORNIA



California 1919



CALIFORNIA
1979
WOODY PARRISH



LEON DIXON PHOTOGRAPH.
CALIFORNIA 1979



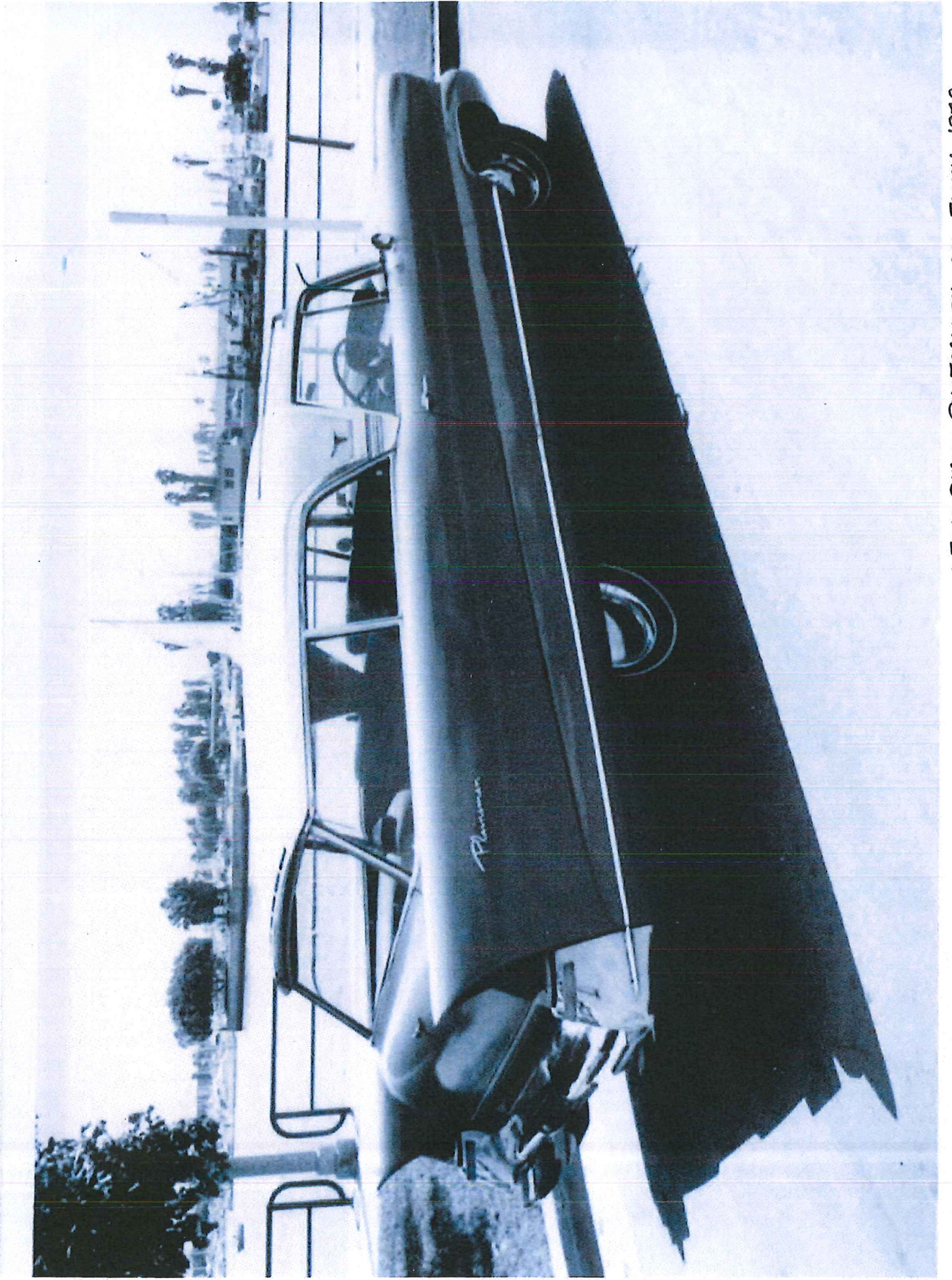
LEON DIXON PHOTOGRAPH
CALIFORNIA 1979

LEON DIXON PHOTOGRAPH.
CALIFORNIA 1979





LEON DIXON PHOTOGRAPH
CALIFORNIA 1979

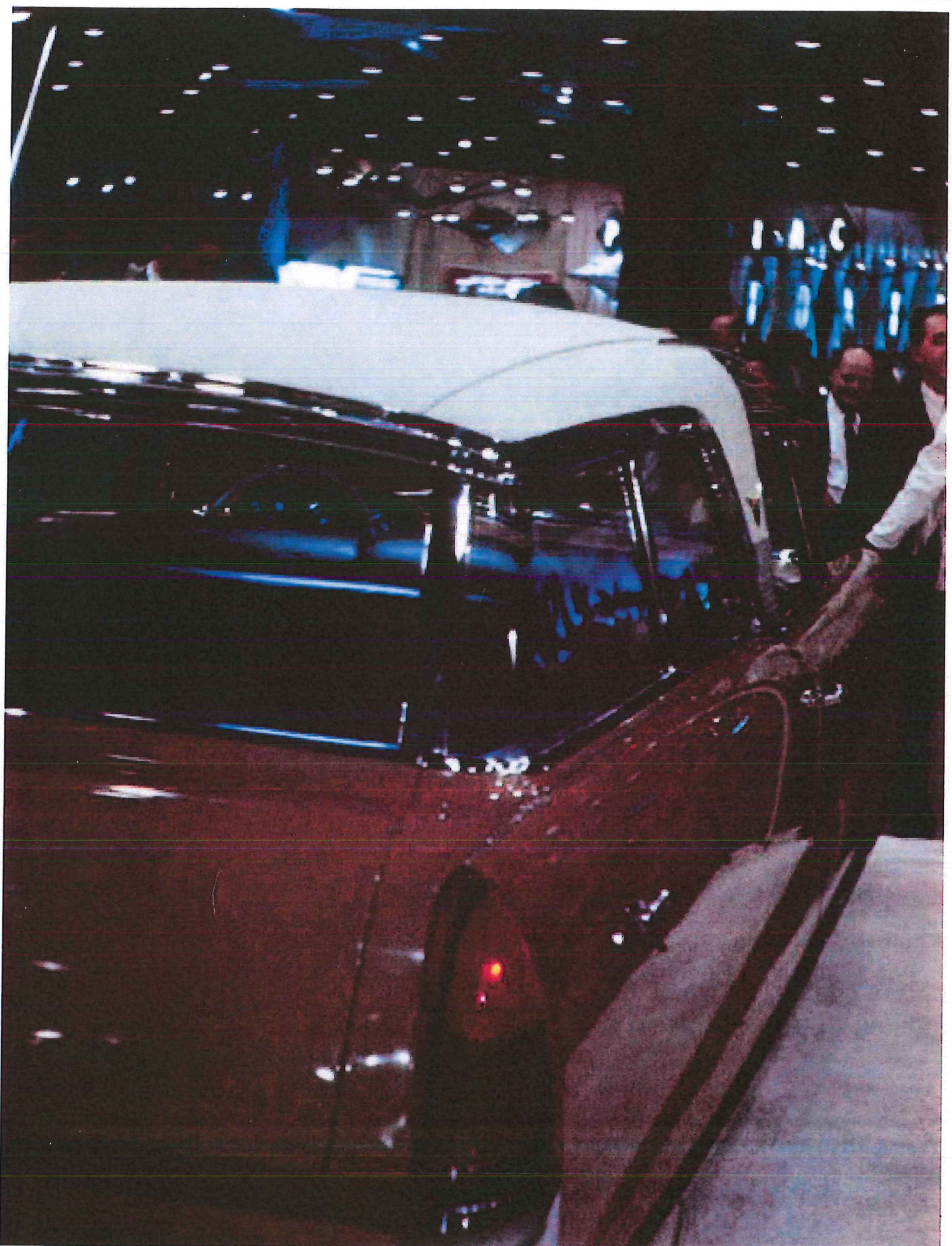


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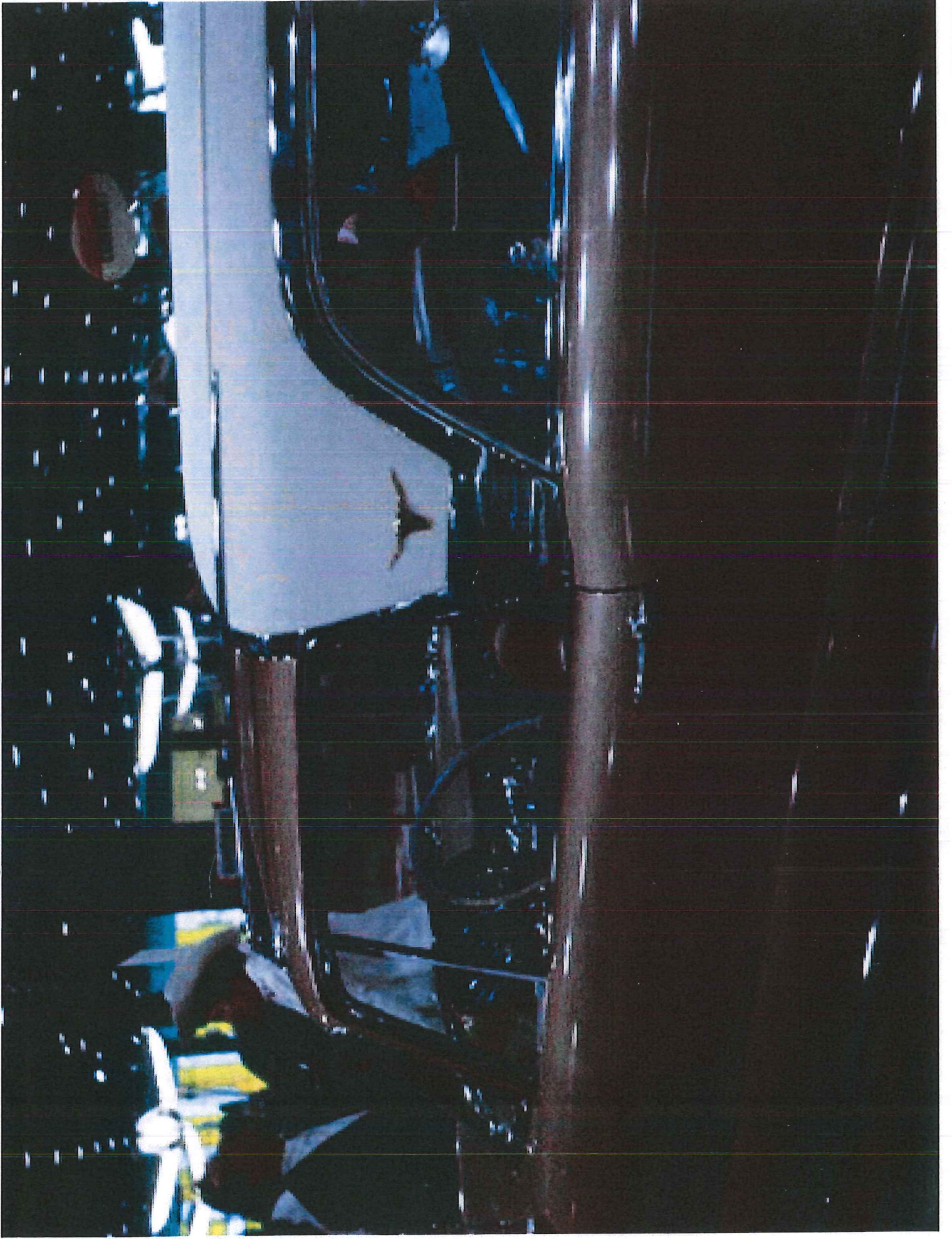
LEON DIXON PHOTOGRAPH CALIFORNIA 1919





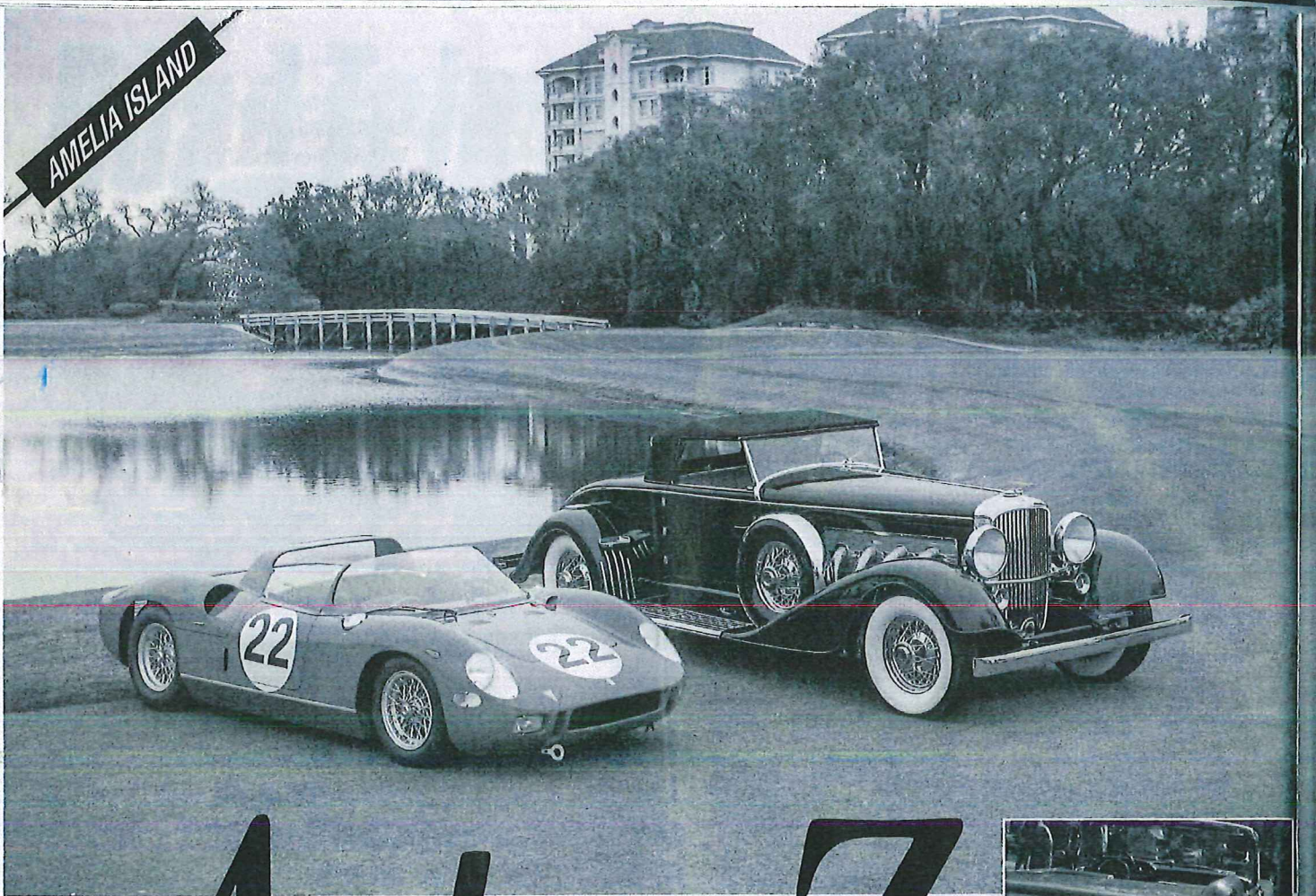
1956 CHICAGO AUTO SHOW

ORIGINAL 1956 CHICAGO AUTO SHOW





AMELIA ISLAND



A to Z Concours



■ *Story and photos by Rich Luckin*

They say variety is the spice of life and the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance fits that saying and then some. Due to a gloomy Sunday forecast, the 23rd annual event at Amelia Island, Fla., moved its elegant, chrome-laden concours to the preceding Saturday for the second time.

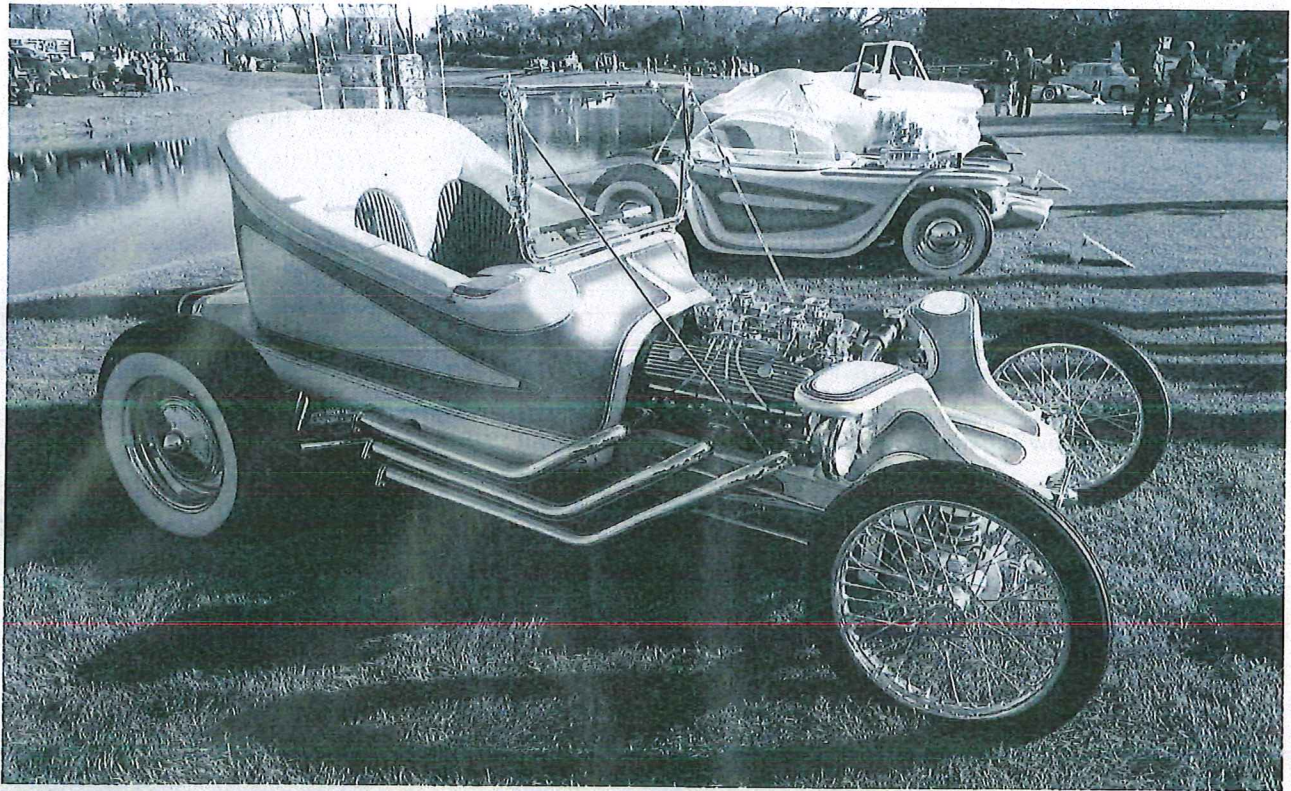
The March 10 show included a variety of vehicles from A (Auburn) to Z (Zagato) and everything between. In addition to this vast variety, the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance also packs many wonderful surprises each year. Often, those sur-

prises are vehicles spectators have only seen in pictures.

For example, the Chrysler *Thunderbolt* (one of five produced in 1941) was on display, as was the finally restored, one-of-a-kind 1956 Chrysler *Plainsman* concept car. This station wagon concept features a body built by Ghia of Italy trimmed with door panels made of unborn calfskin.

The variety this year encompassed more than 300 automo-

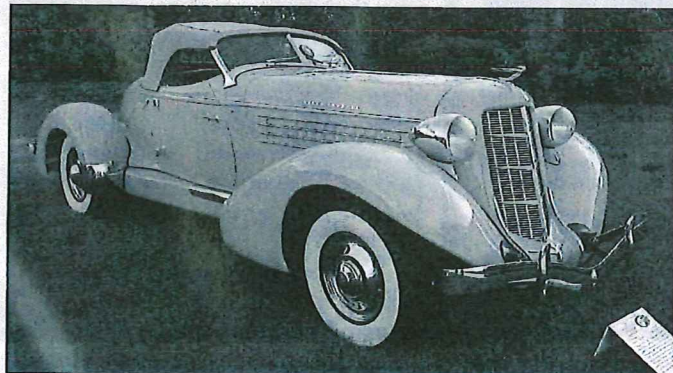
Top: The two Best of Show winners at this year's Amelia Island Concours were this 1963 Ferrari 250/275P and 1929 Duesenberg convertible coupe.



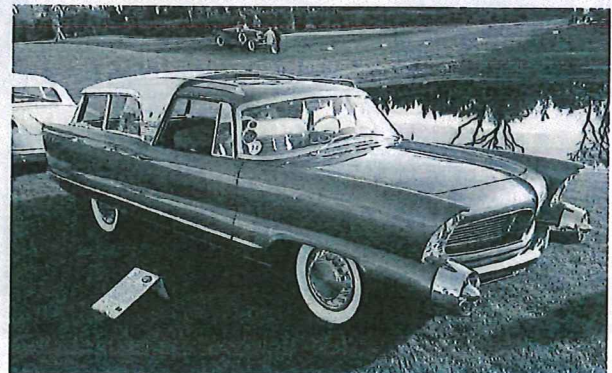
Above: Ed "Big Daddy" Roth's 1959 "Outlaw" was one of the first custom rods with a fiberglass body. The engine is from a Cadillac.



Left: This 1941 Chrysler Thunderbolt is one of five produced and was one of the earliest concept cars.



Auburn was featured at this year's Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, and several Speedsters were on display.



The Ghia-built 1956 Chrysler Plainsman was a bold concept wagon from Virgil Exner's studios.

ORIGINAL FACTORY
PHOTOGRAPHS AND PRESS
RELEASES
CHRYSLER HISTORICAL RECORDS

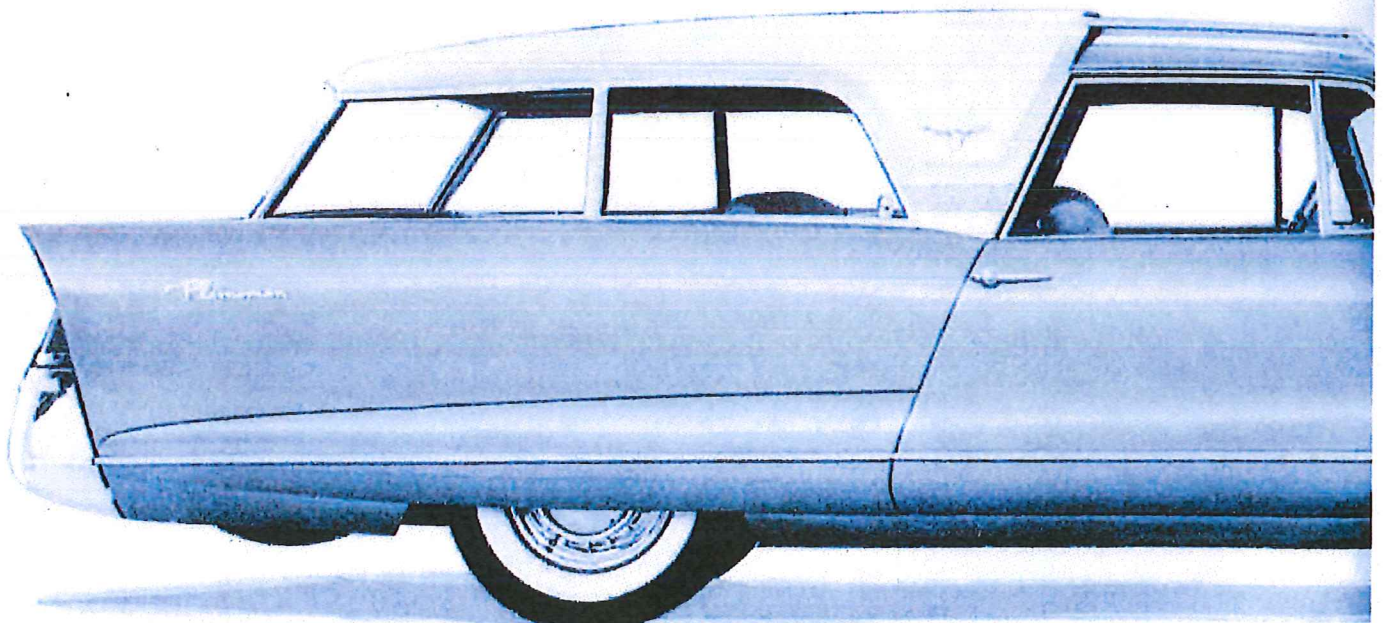


THE PLAINSMAN

A BOLD NEW CONCEPT IN STATION WAGON DESIGN, the Plainsman "Idea Station Wagon" reflects the colorful and casual way of life that typifies the nation's westward movement. It seats eight passengers in "sedan comfort" and features such striking innovations as an "observation car" rearward-facing third seat and a spare tire concealed in the right rear fender. Third seat and

tailgate operate electrically. Safety access steps, used to enter the rear seat, disappear into the end of the bumper when the tailgate is closed. Interior trim is natural calf hide with leather bolsters and the all-steel cantilever top is two-thirds covered by padded white fabric. The Plainsman's exterior finish of Palamino beige metallic fully complements its western flavor.

Over-all length	208 inches
Over-all width	79.4 inches
Over-all height	60.2 inches
Wheelbase	115 inches
Engine	Special Chrysler Corporation V-8
Transmission	PowerFlite
Maximum cargo deck length (Tailgate open).....	106.5 inches
Cargo deck length with tailgate closed.....	86.7 inches
Maximum cargo deck width.....	63.5 inches
Steering	Coaxial Power
Brakes	Safety Pedal Power

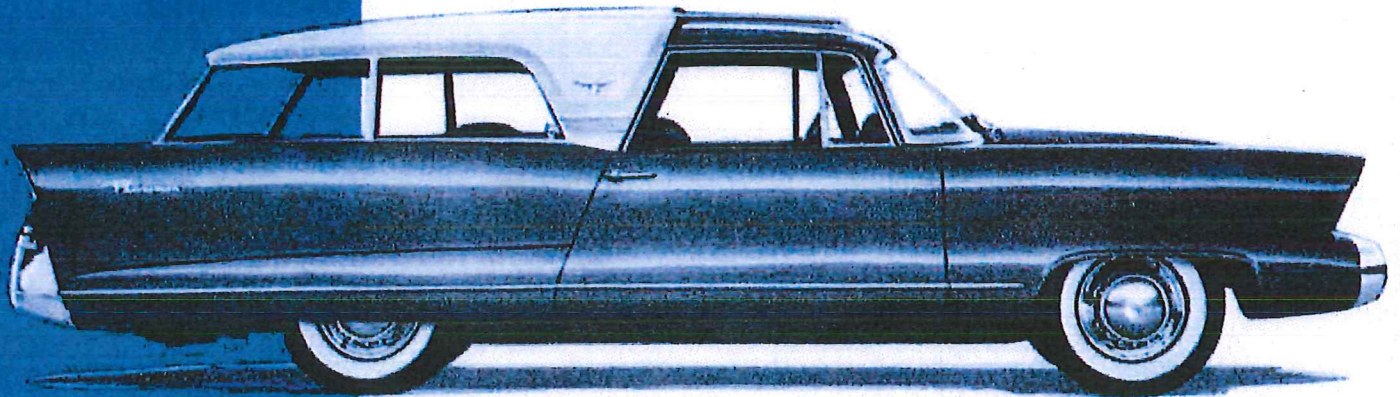




THE PLAINSMAN

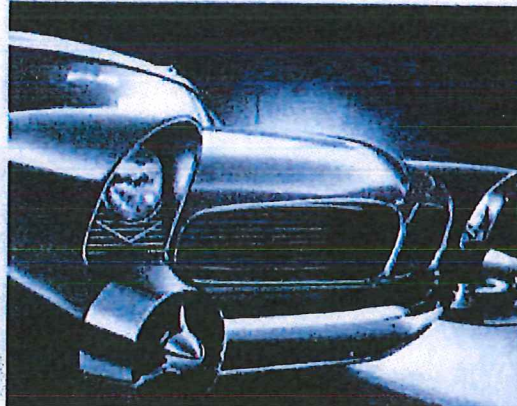
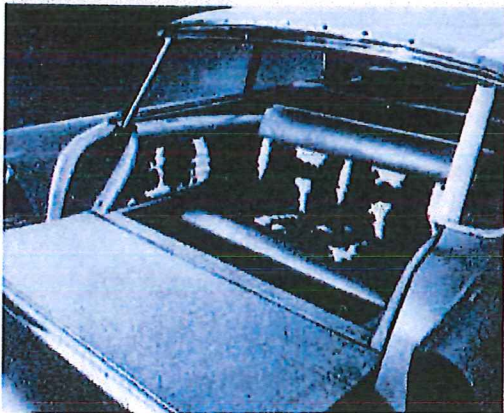
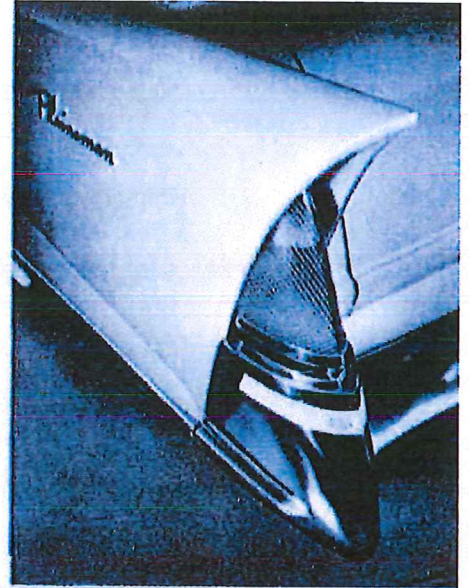
Sets the Pace in Advanced Styling

A bold new concept in station wagon design from the forward-looking stylists in Chrysler Corporation's Engineering Division, this 8 passenger "idea station wagon" features such striking innovations as an "observation car" rearward-facing third seat and a spare tire concealed in the rear fender. The Plainsman reflects the colorful and casual way of life that typifies the nation's westward movement. From its creation and testing come valuable ideas for future cars of THE FORWARD LOOK. Sorry—the Plainsman's not for sale. However, we're sure you'll find all your heart desires in automobile beauty and power in one of the outstanding cars of THE FORWARD LOOK '56. Drop in on your Plymouth, Dodge, De Soto, Chrysler, or Imperial dealer soon.



PLAINSMAN SPECIFICATIONS

Color.....	Palomino beige metallic
Over-all length.....	208 inches
Over-all width.....	79.4 inches
Over-all height.....	60.2 inches
Wheelbase.....	115 inches
Engine.....	Special Chrysler Corporation V-8
Transmission.....	PowerFlite
Tires.....	7.10 x 15
Maximum cargo deck length (Tailgate open).....	106.5 inches
Cargo deck length with tailgate closed.....	86.7 inches
Maximum cargo deck width.....	63.5 inches
Steering.....	Coaxial Power
Brakes.....	Safety Pedal Power



THE NEW SHAPE OF MOTION

THE FORWARD LOOK 57

CHRYSLER CORPORATION • PRESS INFORMATION SERVICE • DETROIT 31, MICHIGAN • TUIsa 3-4500

For Use in Afternoon Newspapers of
Monday, October 1, 1956

NEW STATION WAGON IDEAS

NEW STATION WAGONS AND SUBURBANS INCORPORATE

MANY FEATURES INTRODUCED BY "PLAINSMAN"

DETROIT--In just nine months Chrysler Corporation has transformed the widely acclaimed experimental "Plainsman" into a glamorous production station wagon.

Rear-facing third seats, first introduced by "The Plainsman" at its Chicago automobile show debut in January, 1956, will be available in the 1957 four-door, nine passenger Plymouth Suburbans and Dodge and DeSoto station wagons.

Folding away flush with the car floor is the new arrangement eliminating the task of taking out and storing third seats as is done on all competitive-make station wagons when cargo space is needed. The seat back then becomes part of the floor, providing greatly increased carrying space.

As in "The Plainsman," the action and positioning of the third seat is made possible by relocating the spare tire in the right rear fender behind a clip-on access panel and by locating the gas tank in the left rear fender.

Entry to the third seat is by way of the tailgate, with passengers using carefully located rubber-covered step pads mounted on the bumper. The tailgate window may be operated electrically by switches located on the instrument

panel, and adjacent to the third seat. The tailgate window may also be opened by inserting a key and turning it in the tailgate keyhole located on the outside of the vehicle.

Among other features to be found on all Chrysler Corporation six and nine passenger Suburbans and station wagons are extra wide tailgates that employ a torsion bar hinge, permitting one-hand raising and lowering; wrap-around rear corner windows, with no corner posts to give better visibility for both drivers and passengers, and a gas tank located in the left rear fender. Air conditioning is also offered for the first time as an option.

The fender mounted spare tire is offered as an optional feature on some of the companies six passenger Suburbans and station wagons.

CHRYSLER CORPORATION
Press Information Service
Detroit 31, Michigan
Tulsa 3-4500

35455-A

THE PLAINSMAN

An "Idea Station Wagon" Designed by Chrysler Corporation

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- * Rearward-facing "observation car" rear seat for two adult passengers. Safety access steps, used to enter rear seat, disappear into ends of bumper when tailgate is closed. Rear seat unfolds, tailgate opens and closes electrically.
- * Interior trim of natural calf hide, with leather bolsters.
- * Aircraft-type instrument panel controls.
- * Seats eight passengers in "sedan comfort".
- * Spare tire carried in right rear fender panel.
- * All-steel cantilever top, two-thirds covered by padded white fabric.
- * "Automatic" gasoline filler pipe, located in left taillight opens in one motion as taillight is lifted forward.
- * Parking lights integrated in massive front bumper guards.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Over-all length ----	208 inches
Over-all width ----	79.4 inches
Over-all height ----	60.2 inches
Wheelbase ----	115 inches
Tread, front ----	58.4 inches
Tread, rear ----	58.5 inches

(more)

For Use in Afternoon Papers of
Thursday, January 5, 1956

NEW CHRYSLER PLAINSMAN "IDEA STATION WAGON"

FEATURES SHARPLY SCULPTURED FENDER LINES

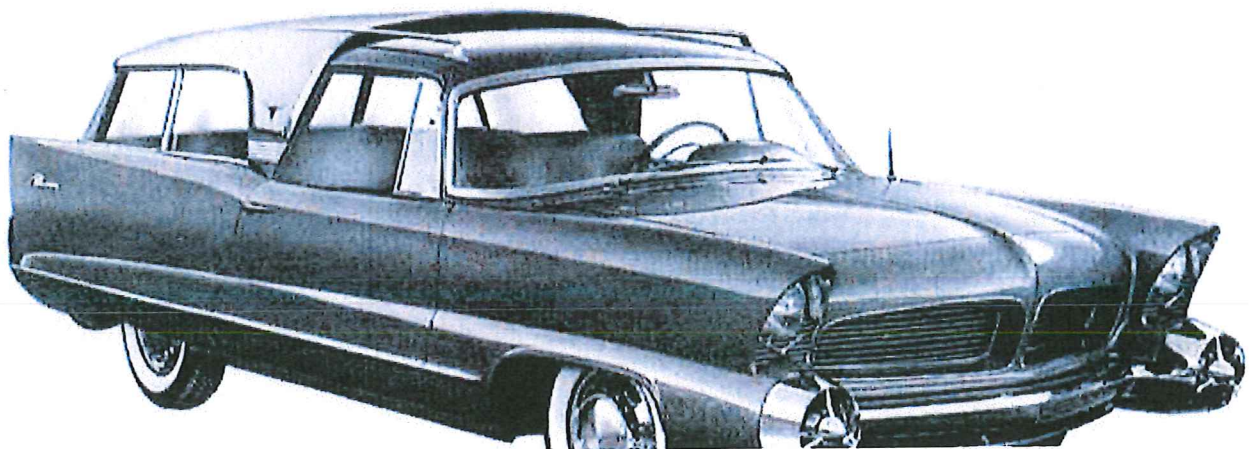
Conceived as an experiment in station wagon styling, the new eight-passenger Chrysler Corporation "Plainsman" makes its public debut at the Chicago Automobile Show, January 7-15. One of the most interesting features of the new "idea wagon" is the rearward-facing third seat in the back, which comfortably accommodates two adults. The car, which has a definite Western flavor, is finished in a metallic "Palomino beige", with two-thirds of its all-steel, stepped cantilever roof covered by a padded white weather-resistant fabric. Chrysler Corporation has no plans for commercial production of the Plainsman, which was built primarily to get public reaction to its novel features.

(122855)

Plainsman

The Plainsman, the latest addition to Chrysler Corporation's family of "Idea Cars," is a unique two-door, eight passenger station wagon. It represents a new and vigorous type of automobile design: luxurious, versatile, able to cope successfully with the rapidly changing needs and demands of the American motorist. For its inspiration Chrysler Corporation stylists looked to the Great Western Plains of America--to their vivid, colorful, and casual way of life. Materials, colors, and finishes have been dramatically keyed to the Western motif, from the Palomino Beige exterior to the white and brown natural calf skin trimmed interior. Gold Texas Longhorn medallions on the tailgate and both sides of the roof add to this theme.

Measuring 208.0 inches from bumper to bumper, 60.2 inches in height, and 79.4 inches in width, the Plainsman exhibits clean sweeping lines that give it the appearance of being much longer and lower than it actually is. It is powered by a special Chrysler Corporation V-8 engine and is equipped with numerous automatic and power assisted accessories such as PowerFlite, power brakes, power steering, electric window lifts, and an electrically operated tailgate and rearward facing third seat.



from the heater is ducted through the door directly into the rear compartment. Full cargo area is available simply by folding the rear seat back forward on top of the seat cushion. A folding panel attached to the seat back is then firmly fixed to the floor by chrome support rods, and provides a completely flush, carpeted loading area 86.7 inches long with the tailgate raised.

Function and convenience are especially noteworthy in the aircraft type instrument panel. All of the engine gauges and instruments, including a clock, are clustered directly in front of the driver in one large, hooded console. Six levers located on a flat projection of the instrument panel operate the PowerFlite controls, windshield washer control, windshield wiper, and lights. Below this projection are located the controls for the heater, defroster, and cigar lighter. The entire top surface and leading edge of the panel is padded and covered with natural cowhide.

SPECIFICATIONS

Over-all length	208.0 inches
Over-all width	79.4 inches
Over-all height (unloaded)	60.2 inches
Wheelbase	115 inches
Tread, front	58.4 inches
Tread, rear	58.5 inches
Engine	Special Chrysler Corporation V-8 engine
Transmission	PowerFlite
Tires	7.10 x 15
Steering	Chrysler Corporation Coaxial Power Steering
Brakes	Chrysler Corporation Safety Power Brakes
Max. cargo deck length, tailgate open	106.5 inches
Max. cargo deck width	63.5 inches

CHRYSLER CORPORATION
Press Information Service
Detroit 31, Michigan
TUlsa 3-4500

MASTER FILE COPY
PUBLIC RELATIONS 1556

For Use in Newspapers of
Sunday, January 15, 1956

AUTO SHOW OPENS AT CHRYSLER SALON

NEW YORK, January 15--An 18-car exhibit, featuring an "idea" station wagon and many other new styling and engineering developments from Chrysler Corporation, will be open to the public in the Salon of the Chrysler Building, January 18-27.

Headliners in the show include:

The Plainsman--an "idea" station wagon embodying an entirely new concept in automotive design. Unique in the Plainsman are an "observation car" rear seat facing toward the back, an electrically operated tailgate and a spare tire concealed in the right rear fender.

The Fury--Plymouth's latest production model combining the features of a high performance sports car and the conveniences of deluxe American production car design.

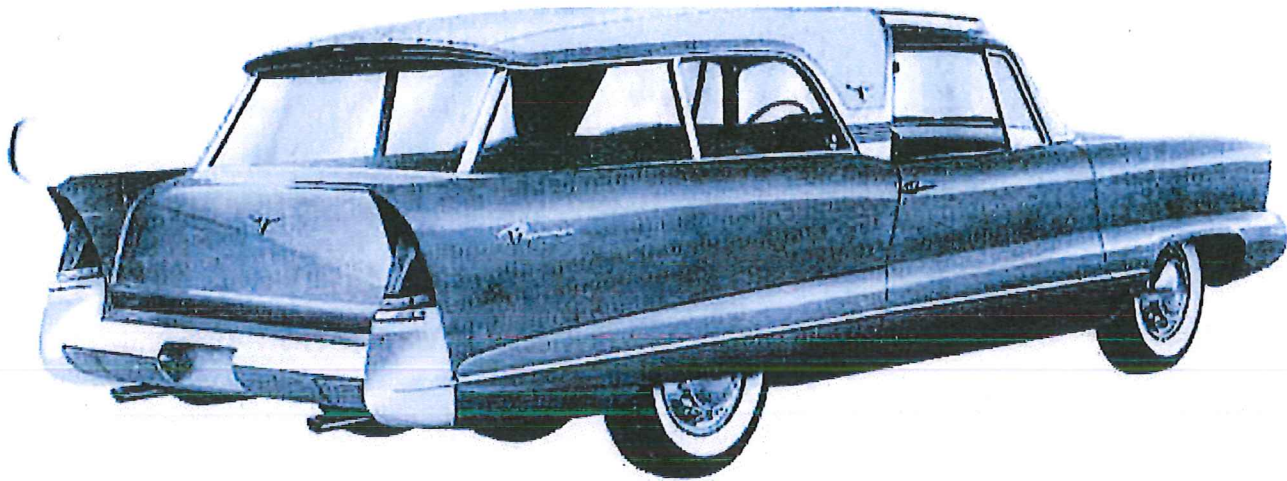
The Chrysler 300-B--America's highest powered car with a 340 horse power engine and special sports type suspension.

The Dodge LaFemme--The 1956 car designed exclusively for women, even to the extent of being equipped with a complete woman's rain ensemble to match the interior trim.

The DeSoto Pace Car -- a special DeSoto Fireflite convertible selected to pace the 500-mile Memorial Day race at Indianapolis.

The exhibit is entitled "The Forward Look Sets the Pace" and will be open to the public at no charge from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m. on weekdays and Saturday and 12 noon to 6 p. m. on Sunday, January 22. The Salon is located at 405 Lexington Avenue.

(1956)



left taillight lens. When the lens is pushed in, the filler cap automatically opens. Pushing the lens slightly further releases the lens and it returns to its normal position, simultaneously closing the filler cap.

Another outstanding feature of this advanced vehicle is the location and operation of the third seat. The tailgate window and tailgate are both lowered electrically, actuated by switches located at the instrument panel and in the rear compartment. Another button causes the rearward facing third seat to unfold from its completely concealed position in the floor. Entry to this seat is by way of the tailgate, made convenient by steps which automatically project from the bumper after the tailgate is lowered, and by a neatly designed grab handle forming the trailing edge of the roof.

The interior of the Plainsman harmonizes perfectly with the Western theme embodied by the exterior of the car. Pleated natural calf skin upholstery is used on the seats, the door panels, and the rear wheel housings.

Natural cowhide trim, luxurious tan carpeting, and the novel cowhide and fabric headlining complete the interior appointments. Retractable arm rests, built into the seat backs, are another of the luxury features of the Plainsman. For extra comfort, front seat backs are individually adjustable to tilt through an angle of about fifteen degrees. Sliding inside door handles are another of the many design innovations found on

From front to rear, top to bottom, the Plainsman embraces the true concept of the "Idea Cars"--the stylist's laboratory on wheels. Its graceful and eye-appealing proportions are enhanced by a cantilever type all-steel roof covered with a white synthetic fabric that gives the car a light, airy appearance. The low, sleek appearance is achieved by an unusual stepped-roof design that allows the use of a lower section over the front seat compartment. A fresh air intake is provided in this step; on the inside, louvers can be conveniently regulated by the passengers so that air is circulated freely but never directly on the passengers themselves.

Accenting the road hugging appearance of the Plainsman is a bomb-like projection which flows from the massive front bumper guards along the full length of the lower body and gives the feeling of mass concentrated close to the ground. On both sides of the car, hinged portions of this projection lift to provide access to the rear wheels. On the right side, behind the rear wheel is a completely new location for the spare tire. No lifting of the spare tire is required because of a built-in jack which raises and lowers it quickly and easily. By utilizing this ordinarily wasted space, it is possible to incorporate the flush folding third seat.

An exceptionally wide door provides extra entrance space for the convenience of rear seat passengers.

Highlighting the front-end of the Plainsman is a simple, functional divided grille flanked by large round bumper guards with integral parking lights. Added air flow and engine cooling is accomplished by the use of a slot in the underside of the front bumper. The hooded headlights are framed by the curved reverse angle of the fender and set against a background of thin horizontal chrome bars. As the fender and belt line flows back toward the taillight, it flairs up slightly just behind the door, creating a fin-like rear fender--a further expression of Chrysler Corporation's well known Flight Sweep theme.

At the rear the Plainsman displays several completely new design innovations. One of these is the concealed gas filler tube located behind the

