

Walter P. Chrysler Museum to Host First-Ever Collection of Chrysler Classic, Custom and Concept Vehicles

April 6, 2004, Auburn Hills, Mich. -

- Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving runs May 27 – Sept. 19, 2004
- Extraordinary Chrysler automobiles spanning eight decades
- Retrospective heralds introduction of 2005 Chrysler 300

The Walter P. Chrysler Museum will present *Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving*, an all-Chrysler special exhibition featuring extraordinary cars spanning eight decades, Thursday, May 27 - Sunday, Sept. 19, 2004.

The exhibition will showcase vehicles recognized for design and engineering excellence from distinguished private collections, the Museum Collection and the Chrysler Design Group. Among the more than 25 cars - including several one-of-a-kind models - assembled for *Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving* will be:

- 1924 Chrysler B-70 Phaeton
- 1928 Chrysler Model 72 LeMans Race Car (replica)
- 1932 Chrysler Imperial Speedster, custom-built for Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.
- 1932 Chrysler Imperial CL Limousine, custom-built for Walter P. Chrysler
- 1937 Chrysler Airflow Limousine, custom-built for Major Bowes, producer of one of the decade's most popular radio entertainment shows
- 1941 and 1993 Chrysler Thunderbolt concepts
- 1941 Chrysler Newport Phaeton concept
- 1995 Chrysler Atlantic Coupe concept

Vehicles will be exhibited in retrospective displays featuring original advertisements and fashion, design and color elements representing each automobile's era. Original Design Office artwork and contemporary photographs of vintage Chrysler cars will round out the exhibition.

"This is the first-ever all-Chrysler exhibition and it's clearly overdue," said Walter P. Chrysler Museum Manager Barry Dressel. "Cars with the Chrysler name exerted more significant influence on automotive design and engineering than most of the other premium old marques."

Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving also heralds the introduction of the 2005 Chrysler 300 featuring an entirely new design based on the company's all-new rear-drive architecture. Classic proportions, a long hood, short deck and dramatic profile give the Chrysler 300 its stunning presence. The 2005 model also marks the return of the HEMI® engine to the Chrysler brand after nearly 50 years. Variations of the 2005 Chrysler 300, Crossfire, PT Cruiser, Pacifica, Sebring and Town & Country will also be displayed on the Museum's grounds throughout the exhibit.

The origins of *Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving* date back 80 years. Walter Chrysler's original idea was revolutionary - to produce a quality light car for modest cost with unprecedented performance. After a decade of success, including production of some Chryslers now considered classics, the Airflow appeared in 1934. That car

helped transform the idea of the automobile worldwide.

In the '40s, the handsome Town & Country models transformed the station wagon's status from functional to fashionable, and glamorized the suburban lifestyle. In the 1950s Chrysler re-emphasized design, and the new head of product design, Virgil Exner, was responsible for a string of significant Chryslers. Exner's design savvy helped ensure the success of the 1955 Chrysler 300 - a car that was a true sport coupe. It combined the HEMI® engine and power steering introduced by Chrysler in 1951 with 1953's Torqueflite transmission. Exner's designs also gave the newly separate Imperial Division the first distinctive models since the 1930s - formal limousines, some built by Ghia, and big convertibles.

In the 1970s, Chrysler cars symbolized the American auto industry's struggle to produce downsized, fuel efficient vehicles. Despite several attempts to give Chrysler back its premium identity during the 1980s, with designs such as the 1987 LeBaron convertible, it wasn't until the 1990s that the market and technology led designers to explore Chrysler's bloodlines. For the first time, what Chryslers had been influenced what Chrysler would be . . . distinctive and identifiable.

The 1990s saw a string of concepts and cab-forward architecture that made Chrysler an industry pacesetter. As a result, Chrysler's 2005 models - the 300C and the Crossfire - are the latest in a long line of design and engineering innovations.

The 55,000 square foot Walter P. Chrysler Museum is on DaimlerChrysler's Auburn Hills, Mich. complex. The Museum offers three stories of more than 65 vintage, classic, muscle and concept vehicles interspersed with interactive displays and historical exhibits.

The Museum also features a 125-seat movie theater highlighting three continuously running short films and a gift shop brimming with exclusive and hard-to-find scale models and collectibles.

The Walter P. Chrysler Museum is located at Featherstone and Squirrel Roads in Auburn Hills and is accessible from I-75 at exit 78.

Museum admission is \$6 for adults and \$3 for seniors and children 6 -12. Admission for children under six is free and group rates are available. There is no additional charge for *Inspired Chrysler Design: The Art of Driving*.

The Museum is open 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tuesday - Saturday and noon - 6 p.m. Sunday.

Visit the Museum's newly redesigned Web site at www.chryslerheritage.com or call 888-456-1924 or 248-944-0001 for further information.

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