

1932

THE MAGIC YEAR FOR AUTOS



Meadow Brook Concours proudly presents 1932 American car showcase - "the magic year recreated".

August 10, the Meadow Brook Concours d'Elegance will present, as its featured marquee, not a single car, but rather a model year - 1932. This legendary year in automotive history is considered by many to be the most important since the auto's birth. It is with great excitement that the Meadow Brook Concours organizers go about recreating the 1932 American Car Showcase - a restaging of the famous 1932 Auto Show of New York.

The Concours Committee will assimilate the year that automobile historians believe produced the most beautiful cars ever made, and is often called the "last year of the classics."

"It was the last year of the "classic" look," explains Committee member Dave Holls. "After that single point in time, cars grew more streamlined. In 1932, every car was a jewel." The year

Above, a collection of cars from 1932, "The Magic Year" and a legendary moment in automotive history, recreated at the Meadow Brook Concours d'Elegance.

also marks a great number of breakthrough engineering innovations.

The concept has been a dream of the Meadow Brook Concours Selection Committee since the Concours was founded 15 years ago, according to Holls, who is former director of design for General Motors.

Holls leads the search for and presentation of 1932 automotive gems and has located 37 different makes of cars with approximately 50 different models to be displayed.

The quality cars debuted in 1932, crossed all price ranges, and were consistently built with the utmost craftsmanship, adding to the mystique of the model year.

There will be seven different groups of six to ten cars each, arranged according to the cars' original price tags in 1932, ranging from under \$600 to over \$5,000.

Among names to look for are: the

Cadillac Madam X Car, the Marmon V 16, the Lincoln V 12 Razor Edged Town Car, Walter P. Chrysler's own Special Convertible Coup, the Rockne Roadster and the Auburn Speedster 8.

Wasn't this The Depression?

It is not without irony, points out Holls, that the year 1932 emerged as a stellar one, in the history of automobile design, because it also marked the height of the Depression and signaled an unparalleled blow to the auto market and the demise of numerous auto companies.

The key factor that made it possible for 1932 to transcend history was that the new autos had already been tooled. This was done in preparation for 1931 introductions, during the boom times, before the stock market crashed in 1929. By the time the autos were built, labor was, of course, plentiful, cheap, and workmanship was unparalleled. The 1932 auto

introductions featured the most multi-cylindrical cars ever produced, including Auburn, Cadillac, Lincoln, Marmon, Packard and Pierce-Arrow; and Duesenberg offered a supercharged model with an unheard of 320 H.P.

The 1932 Auto Show opened in a year destined to be the industry's worst production year since wartime, 1918. Nevertheless, there was optimism everywhere! In the exhibits, people talked confidently of the likelihood of "another 1922". That year marked the short and sharp post World War I depression. This depression ended so suddenly that there was a shortage of cars just a few weeks after there had been big inventories and no demand.

Recreating the milestone automotive year of 1932 harvests for the 1993 Meadow Brook Concours d'Elegance a group of cars that will absolutely astound Concours attendees.