

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 15, 2004

Contact: Media Relations  
202-268-2155  
Stamp News Release No. 04-056  
www.usps.com

## POSTAL SERVICE REVS UP FOR SPORTY CAR STAMPS

WASHINGTON – Postage stamps featuring images of five classic cars from the 1950s were unveiled today by the U.S. Postal Service at the world’s premier event for classic car enthusiasts in Pebble Beach, CA. The Sporty Cars of the 50s commemorative postage stamps will be issued in 2005.

“We understand the power our stamps have in helping to celebrate our American history and culture — in this case, the innovative brilliance of our automotive technology and design,” said Anita Bizzotto, Chief Marketing Officer, U.S. Postal Service. “They will be a reminder of the unique style and culture of the 1950s.”

Featured on the stamps are a 1952 Nash Healey, a 1953 Chevrolet Corvette, a 1953 Studebaker Starliner, a 1954 Kaiser Darrin, and a 1955 Ford Thunderbird. The new stamps highlight the sporty look of American cars designed in the 1950s with sleek, aerodynamic lines and the innovative looks of the types of European sports cars American GIs favored upon their return from World War II.

“America’s love affair with the automobile stems, in a large part, from its use as a form of personal expression,” said Sandra Kasky, co-chairman of the 54th Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance. “We are what we drive. These stamps represent our love of style and performance, the same attributes we celebrate every year at the Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance.”

The Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance is an international gathering of automotive enthusiasts for “a celebration of the automobile” at The Lodge at Pebble Beach™



on the Monterey Peninsula. The Concours combines a scenic location – the famed 18th hole at Pebble Beach Golf Links® along the Pacific Ocean – with the opportunity to view rarely seen examples of automotive style, performance and history.

In 1952, Nash Healey was an elegant little sports car and the product of the creative genius of three countries in its development: The Nash 6-cylinder engine created in the United States; the Donald Healey-engineered chassis developed in England; and Pinin Farina's sports-car-body design from Italy. Only 150 Nash Healeys were made in 1952, and it came in first in its class and third overall in the 1952 LeMans sports car race in France.

Widely considered "the first American sports car," the 1953 Studebaker Starliner was developed to appeal to younger drivers. It was low-slung, long and wide, and light on the chrome, with such a sophisticated look that the Museum of Modern Art in New York proclaimed it "a work of art," and featured it as the lone American representative in an auto exhibition that year.

At the GM Motorama in New York City in January 1953, the new fiberglass-bodied, two-seater Chevrolet Corvette was unveiled to the public, and quickly captured its imagination while setting the bar for competition. Only 300 models were produced that year, all hand-built and white, with a red interior and black convertible top, a marked departure from other GM designs. Its sporty appearance promised speed and high performance for its fun-seeking drivers.

Sand and gravel entrepreneur Henry J. Kaiser teamed up with master designer Howard "Dutch" Darrin (formerly of Packard fame) in 1954 to develop the fiberglass beauty the Kaiser Darrin. A two-seater featuring retractable doors that slid forward into the front fenders; a unique pointed, compact grille; long sloping lines; and a three-position Landau top, a total of 435 were made that year before poor sales led Kaiser to return to the sand and gravel business.

The 1955 Ford Thunderbird, "a sports car with luxury," was designed to compete with the Corvette, as it featured a steel body, interchangeable hard and soft tops, an overhead valve V-8 engine and roll-up windows, and its road performances were virtually identical to the Corvette's. Over 16,000 models were produced that year, and the styling remained the same until 1958, when Ford revamped Thunderbird's sports car status and added a back seat, which actually quadrupled sales.

The 50s Sporty Cars stamps were illustrated by Art Fitzpatrick of Carlsbad, CA, and the designer/art director is Carl Herrman of Carlsbad, CA.

Current U.S. stamps and stationery, as well as a free catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. In addition, a selection of stamps and other philatelic items is

available at the online Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). Custom-framed art prints of original stamp art are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail.

An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to about 141 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world.

Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume — some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide